A Study of Gratitude Strategies of Indonesian EFL Students

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Abstract

This study is a small scale study investigating the gratitude strategies used by Indonesian EFL learners in responding to certain situations. The aim of the study is to find out the gratitude strategies used by EFL learners and the pattern of the strategy in responding to each of the different situations. Data were taken using a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) questionnaire from twelve students of English department and five teachers who have had the experience of living in English speaking countries for more than one year. The study revealed that the students’ pragmatics use of the English language is in the development stage, and that thanking is the most extensive strategy in respond to all situations that necessitate the use of gratitude. The use of apology in some situations hints that there is some influence in the form of cultural transfer from L1. The pattern of strategy in response to specific situations is not much different from those to general data on the strategy; repayment and positive feeling strategies are the most used in situation where high indebtedness is present.

Keywords: Inter-language pragmatics, gratitude strategies, Indonesian EFL learners

Introduction

Learning a foreign language often concerns with how the grammatical and lexical rules work and how to apply those rules in producing correct language (dePablos-Ortega, 2010). Most of the time and effort are put into this, whereas there are other important factors to learning a new language such as the pragmatics and social factors of the language use. It is as important to produce a correct language as using appropriate expressions in many different occasions where the language is spoken. Failure to respond or utter in an
appropriate context may lead to misunderstanding of the certain cultural elements that are embedded in the language.

Gratitude is one of the realization of speech acts native speakers of the language use which is taken for granted. To them, these expressions are some of the conventional expressions (Bardovi-Harlig et al, 2008) that are part of their culturally made agreement among members of their society, which Coulmas (1981, in Bardovi-Harlig et al, 2008:113) termed it as “tacit agreement”; unconscious agreement shared by every member of the community in daily situational contacts.

Expressing gratitude in interpersonal interaction is an important act of maintaining good relationship. Although the expression of ‘thank you’ may have different function in different culture, for example for the British this expression is one of the formal markers while for the Americans it is an expression of gratitude. However, for EFL learners learning how English is used socially appropriate is as important as learning how an utterance is grammatically correct.

Inter-language pragmatic and the development of pragmatic competence among English learners as a foreign language are not extensively researched. Cheng (2005:1) asserts that research on developmental pragmatics is relatively few. In fact, the result of the study is important in understanding the relationship between second/foreign language learning and inter-language pragmatics. With the inclusion of communicative competence approach in the teaching methods in Indonesian English classrooms, pragmatic strategy should be one of the focuses in competency training. It is also logical to assert that the development of this competence for EFL learners may not be similar to the development of grammatical and lexical knowledge.

This study is learning how far Indonesian EFL learners achieved this competence after years of learning English throughout their schooling time of more than six years. It is a small scale research aiming to investigate the strategies in expressing gratitude in English by the Indonesian students studying English in
Bandung State Polytechnic. Specifically, some research questions are developed to guide the study to find out what strategies used by these students in responding to situations that necessitate expressions of gratitude, and what pattern of strategy in responding to the different situations.

**Theoretical Framework**

Understanding and producing speech act appropriately in given situations are important aspects in pragmatic competence (Cheng, 2005). This has important impact on the second/foreign language learning, which determines the development of the learners’ knowledge and skills in producing the language. The development of skills and knowledge of appropriate language use in the second/foreign language is the domain of inter language pragmatics.

Inter language pragmatics focuses on how learners develop ability to communicate in the second/foreign language (L2) successfully within their limited linguistic and socio-pragmatic conditions of the L2. In this condition, to be able to interact in L2 learners need not only to have linguistic proficiency but also the norms of communicating pragmatic meaning (LoCastro, 2012:113). The study on inter language pragmatics therefore focuses on the investigation of speech acts, conversational structure and conversational implicature (Soler & Martinez-Flor, 2008). The theoretical bases for the study of interlanguage pragmatics are the combination between the theory of pragmatics, including speech acts and conversational implicature, and the theory of second language acquisition (Huang, 2010). Some issues concerning this area are in this cross section which relate to development of second language which may be similar to that of the first language (L1) and the possibility of influence from L1 to the learning of L2 (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). The latter has been the concern which continues until recently; LoCastro (2012:113) reported that although it is not yet clearly understood; the evidence from some studies show that there is transfer
from L1 to L2 in cross-cultural and inter-language pragmatics. In other words, there might be influence or transfer from L1 in L2 speech act realization.

Studies on speech acts have been carried out on its realization and most of them are cross cultural studies comparing and contrasting between English and other languages (Pishgadam & Zarei, 2012). This is also what has been the focus of some studies on the speech act of gratitude. Farnia & Suleiman (2009) studied on the inter language pragmatic development of gratitude expressions used by Iranian EFL learners compared to that of English native speakers. Their study found that Iranian learners used more thanking strategy than the native speakers and that the use of these strategies was not dependent on their proficiency. Özdemir & Rezvani (2010) studied the gratitude strategies used by Iranian and Turkish EFL learners compared to English native speakers. Their finding showed that both native and nonnative speakers used two most similar strategies of thanking and attention getter.

Ahar & Eslami-Rasekh (2011) studied Persian natives, Persian EFL learners and English native speakers. They reported that the native speakers used thanking more extensively than the other respondent while the Persians were more sensitive to the social status difference and the size of imposition, they changed responses according to these such as expressing thank for big favour and not for smaller ones. This study also reported inappropriateness to the English social norms of the use of thanking strategy in some situation. Cui (2012) in her study reported that the use of more strategies after the main strategy of simple thanking is the characteristics of English native speakers producing what she termed as a speech act set of gratitude expressions.

In the Indonesia context, the study on pragmatics concern mostly on speech acts, eg. Amarien (1997) studied inter language pragmatics of refusal strategies made by Indonesian English speakers. The study found that these English speakers’ refuse to offers was intercultural, and that the refuse strategy
they used were not influenced by L1 patterns although not yet the characteristics of L2. Another study is Kartomiharjo (1990 in Amarien, 1997.), who studied refusal strategy used by East Javanese. The finding indicated a cultural influence in using the strategy, such as indirect refusal of hinting in refusing to offers or invitation and that politeness in refusing is used to the interlocuters who had higher status. The present study may contribute, although in a small scale format, to the preliminary study of the gratitude speech act of the Indonesian EFL learners.

Methods

The subjects of this study are 13 students studying English at Politeknik Negeri Bandung (Bandung State Polytechnic), and five of their lecturers. The student participants are from two different levels, nine students from semester 4, and four students from semester 6.

Design

The underlying conceptual framework in this study is the inter-language pragmatics which concerns the development of strategies in the use of second language (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). The studies on developmental pragmatics by Cheng (2005) and Ozdemir and Rezvani (2010) are used as the bases in developing the design of the present study with some modification to the breadth of the study and the instruments used. Both studies investigated the developmental strategies of EFL learners in the speech act realization of gratitude. The present study, which is a small scale research, focuses on finding out the strategy of Indonesian EFL learners in the situations that necessitates the performance of gratitude, as well as the pattern in responding to certain different situations.
Instruments

The instrument used to get the data is a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), in which eight situations are included. DCT is used traditionally to elicit participants’ performances in certain speech act. By using a DCT the researcher is able to examine what the speakers would say in certain context controlled by factors such as the interlocutors relationship or the size of the imposition that the gratitude is expressed (Schauer & Adolphs, 2006). The DCT developed for this study is a modification from those used by Schauer & Adolphs (2006) and Ozdemir and Rezvani (2010). It contains eight situations which are different in the size of imposition and the relationship or the social distance between the interlocutors (Ahar & Eslami-Rasekh, 2011). The factors that controlled the situations are the power and social distance between the interlocutors determined by age and status, and familiarity or closeness; and the size of imposition which is determined by big favour that requires hard work and considerable time, money, and physical burden for the hearer and the small favour that involve momentary action less expense in the part of the hearer, such as returning a pen. Table 1 shows the controlling factors for the eight situations used in this study.

Table 1 Controlling Factors in the Situations

| Situation | Description                          | Social distance | Size of imposition |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1         | Borrowing lecture notes              | +               | -                  |
| 2         | Explanation from lecturer            | +               | +                  |
| 3         | Borrowing a book from a nice lecturer| +               | +                  |
| 4         | Borrowing a book from a difficult lecturer | +             | +                  |
| 5         | Birthday present                    | +               | -                  |
| 6         | Paid for lunch                       | +               | +                  |
| 7         | Computer repair                      | =               | +                  |
| 8         | Scattered paper                      | =               | -                  |

Framework for Data Analysis

The data analysis was carried out utilizing the eight categories of gratitude strategy developed by Cheng (2005). Each category consists of several sub categories which enable to include many possible responses. The following
Table (Table 2) shows the distribution of the categories, its respective subcategories, and the examples for each sub category.

**Table 2 Categories of gratitude strategies and their sub categories (Cheng, 2005)**

| No | Categories       | Sub-categories                                                                 | Examples                                                                                                                                 |
|----|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Thanking         | a. By using the word “thank”                                                  | a. Thank you, thanks, thank you very much.                                                                                               |
|     |                  | b. By thanking and stating the favour                                          | b. Thank you for your help, thanks for letting me borrow the notes.                                                                    |
|     |                  | c. By thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour             | c. Thank you so much for letting me borrow it those extra days.                                                                       |
| 2  | Appreciation     | a. By using the word appreciation without elaboration                         | a. I appreciate it; I greatly appreciate your help.                                                                                   |
|     |                  | b. By using the word appreciate and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour | b. I really appreciate your time and effort; I really appreciate that you could do this for me on such a short notice.              |
| 3  | Positive feelings| a. by expressing a positive reaction to the favour giver                       | a. You are a life saver; I’m so grateful for your help.                                                                               |
|     |                  | b. By expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favour               | b. This book really helps.                                                                                                             |
|     |                  | c. By expressing a positive reaction to the outcome of the favour              | c. I’ll keep you posted on what happens.                                                                                               |
| 4  | Apologizing      | a. By using only apologizing words                                            | a. Sorry or apologize; I’m sorry                                                                                                        |
|     |                  | b. By using apologizing words and stating the favour or the fact              | b. I’m sorry for the short notice                                                                                                       |
|     |                  | c. By using apologizing words and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour | c. Sorry it took me so long to get it back to you; I feel so bad it took up your whole afternoon; I apologize for the inconvenient. |
|     |                  | d. By criticizing or blaming oneself,                                        | d. I’m such a klutz! I should have prepared earlier.                                                                                  |
|     |                  | e. By expressing embarrassment                                                | e. It’s so embarrassing                                                                                                               |
| 5  | Recognition of imposition | a. By acknowledging the imposition,                                          | a. I know you didn’t have to allow me extra time.                                                                                     |
|     |                  | b. By stating the need of the favour,                                         | b. I really wanted to do my best on this, and this week has been so hectic; I usually try not to ask for extra time, but this time I need it. |
|     |                  | c. By diminishing the need of the favour                                      | c. You didn’t have to do that.                                                                                                           |
| 6  | Repayment        | a. By offering or promising service, money, food, or goods                     | d. Can I buy you a drink? Please let me pay for the postage.                                                                          |
|     |                  | b. By indicating his/her indebtedness                                         | e. I owe you big time; I owe you one.                                                                                                 |
|     |                  | c. By promising future self restraint or self-improvement                     | f. It won’t happen again.                                                                                                               |
| 7  | Other            | a. Here statement                                                            | a. Here’s your book; here you go.                                                                                                       |
|     |                  | b. Small talk,                                                               | b. I often see you in class but I haven’t had a chance to talk to you.                                                                |
|     |                  | c. Leave-taking                                                             | c. Have a nice day!                                                                                                                     |
|     |                  | d. Joking                                                                  | d. That’s what you get for driving a truck. Just joking.                                                                               |
| 8  | Alerter          | a. Attention getter                                                         | a. Hey, hi, wow, whoa, oh, well, oh my god, by the way, you know                                                                         |
|     |                  | b. Title                                                                    | b. Professor, Dr., Mr. Sir                                                                                                               |
|     |                  | c. Name                                                                     | c. John, Mary, Smith, Johnson, honey, dude, buddy, man, pal                                                                           |

**Data Analysis**

The respondents’ responses are coded according to the categories presented in Table 2, and its subsequent subcategories and are included into their appropriate categories. The occurrence of the strategies under each situation is counted for its frequency; the data are then analyzed using the qualitative descriptive analysis approach. The coding is the basis for the analysis, which is shown in the box below as an example.
Box 1 Example of data coding

**Situation 1: Borrowing lecture notes**

1. **Thanking**
   a. Using the word “thank”: Thank you very much; Thank you very much; Thank you very much; Thank you; Thank you; Thank you very much; Thank you so much
   b. Thanking and stating the favour: Thank you for your kindness; Thank you for giving me the handouts and the notes; Thank you for delivering the handout; Thank you for coming; Thank you for bringing all these notes and handouts; Thank you, it’s a kind of you.

2. **Appreciation**
   a. Using the word appreciation without elaboration: I really appreciate this.

3. **Positive feelings**
   a. Expressing a positive feeling to the favour giver: You’re such a good friend; You are such a good friend; It’s kind of you; It means so much.

**Results and Discussion**

The following part presents and discusses the result of the study in relation to the research questions

*Gratitude Strategies used by Indonesian EFL learners*

The results of the data analysis are presented in the following table, in which frequency of gratitude strategy demonstrated by the students is also presented as percentages.
Table 3 Distribution of categories across situations (in percentages)

| Categories of gratitude strategies | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Thanking                          | 8         | 100%       |
| Appreciation                      | 3         | 38%        |
| Positive feelings                 | 8         | 100%       |
| Apologizing                       | 4         | 50%        |
| Recognition of imposition         | 1         | 13%        |
| Repayment                         | 5         | 63%        |
| Others                            | 0         | 0          |
| Alerter                           | 8         | 100%       |

N= 8

The most used strategies are thanking, the expressions of positive feelings, and alerter to respond to all situations that necessitate expressions of gratitude. In these situations students also used repayment strategy more than the apology and appreciations. Recognition of imposition is not the common strategy; it is only used by one student. Other strategies such as small talk, joking, leave taking and others are never used in all situations.

This general description of gratitude strategies used by the students means that thanking is the most natural strategies when they face situations that need gratitude expressions followed by the alerter in the form of attention getter, addressing the interlocuters and calling names such as guys, pals, sis. This finding is similar to other studies on gratitude strategy (Farnia & Suleiman, 2009; Özdemir & Rezvani, 2010; Ahar & Eslami-Rasekh, 2011) that thanking is the most extensive use strategy; the use of alerter is also consistent with the study done by Özdemir & Rezvani (2010).
The use of positive feelings as the strategy of gratitude by these students shows that this strategy is also used as the maintenance of good relationship and also as the result of the successful performance of gratitude expressions (Özdemir & Rezvani, 2010). Repayment strategy is also natural in situations where there are big sizes of impositions. The use of apology and appreciation show that there is the feeling of indebtedness to the favour giver; whereas the slight use of recognition of imposition may mean that these students have not yet develop an understanding of the imposition caused by the favour.

This data answers the research question on the strategies used by Indonesian EFL learners in respond to the different situations that necessitate gratitude. From the most to the least used, the strategies are thanking; alerter in the forms of attention getter, addressing, and calling names; expressions of positive feeling; repayment; apologizing; giving appreciation; and recognizing the imposition caused by the favour.

Gratitude Strategies in Different Situations

The general description of the gratitude strategies used does not give clearer picture on what specific strategies used in respond to certain situations. The specific description gives an understanding of the pattern of strategies used relative to the situation with specific controlling factors of social distance and sizes of imposition. The following table shows distribution of gratitude strategies in each situation.
| Categories        | Situation 1 | Situation 2 | Situation 3 | Situation 4 | Situation 5 | Situation 6 | Situation 7 | Situation 8 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                   | F  | %     | F  | %     | F  | %     | F  | %     | F  | %     | F  | %     | F  | %     | F  | %     |
| Thanking          | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   | 13 | 100   |
| Appreciation      | 1  | 7.7   | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 1  | 7.7   | 0  | 0     | 1  | 7.7   | 0  | 0     | 1  | 7.7   |
| Positive feelings | 4  | 30.8  | 8  | 61.5  | 6  | 46.1  | 6  | 46.1  | 5  | 38.5  | 1  | 7.7   | 1  | 7.7   | 2  | 15.4  |
| Apologizing       | 2  | 15.4  | 3  | 23    | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 2  | 15.4  |
| Rec of imposition | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 1  | 7.7   |
| Repayment         | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 7  | 53.8  | 6  | 46.1  | 1  | 7.7   | 9  | 69.2  | 4  | 30.8  | 0  | 0     |
| Others            | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     | 0  | 0     |
| Alerter           | 1  | 7.7   | 6  | 46.1  | 1  | 7.7   | 5  | 38.5  | 4  | 30.8  | 3  | 23    | 1  | 7.7   | 1  | 7.7   |

| Table 4  Distribution of categories within each situation (in percentages) |

N= 13

*Situation 1* - *Borrowing lecture notes*
In borrowing lecture notes from a classmate the students show more variation in respond; besides simple thanking such as ‘thank you’ and ‘thank you very much’, most students also express thanking with statement of the favour such as ‘Thank you for your kindness’ and ‘Thank you for giving me the handouts and the notes’. Some of the students show appreciation with the thanking such as ‘I really appreciate this’. Another strategy used is expression of positive feeling towards the favour giver such as ‘You’re such a good friend’, ‘It’s kind of you’, or ‘It means so much’. Besides thanking the students interestingly also use apology as the strategy, by expressing apology and stating the imposition caused by the favour such as ‘I’m sorry I have made difficulties for you’ and ‘Sorry for causing a fuss for you’. A small number of the students also use attention getter of ‘Oh’ as the alerte strategy.

Influence such as transfer from L1 is agreed as possible to be present in the pragmatic use of interlanguage condition (LoCastro, 2012; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). The use of apology by the students might be an influence from L1 culture of Bahasa Indonesia. The imposition of the favour in this situation is not high, it is of medium level as the relationship between the interlocutors is equal (classmates), however, the friend needs to make an effort to come to the participants’ house. The strategies shown by the lecturers are simple, which seems that it is appropriate for the situation. The strategy pattern in this situation is thanking followed by expressions of positive feelings and apology.

Situation 2 - Explanation from lecturer

In the situation where students need to ask a favour from the lecturer they, on the other hand, use more strategies in responding. Besides thanking as the most strategies used, the students also use the strategies of positive feelings, apologizing, repayment and alerte. They use simple thanking of ‘thank you’, ‘thank you very much’ or thanking followed by statement of the favour such as ‘thank you for your explanation’, or ‘thank you very much for your kindness’. The second most used is the positive feeling through the expressions of positive reaction to the favour giver, such as ‘You are very kind to explain the point I didn’t understand’, positive reactions to the object of the favour such as ‘It was really a good and detail explanation’, and positive reaction to the outcome of the favour such as ‘Now I understand the central points’. The students also use apologizing while mentioning the imposition caused
by the favour such as ‘I’m sorry for bothering you and taking your time’ and criticizing or blaming him/herself such as ‘I’m sorry I didn’t pay more attention in class’. A significant use of alerter is obvious with students by using the address ‘Sir’, ‘Maam’ in responding.

Similar transfer from L1 is also obvious from the students’ various use of strategies in responding to the situation, especially the use of apology and positive feeling. The expressions of positive reaction to the object and the outcome of the favour may be seen as the naivety of the reaction which often found in the interaction in the Indonesian culture. In this situation where the controlling factors are high in size of imposition and a distant relationship between student – professor relationship the pattern strategies is as follows, the thanking strategy is followed by positive reaction and apologizing while recognizing the impact of the imposition caused by the favour and the use of alerter in the form of formal addressing.

Situation 3 - Borrowing a book from a nice lecturer

All of the students use thanking strategy in this situation; mostly just stating the simple ‘thank you’ or ‘thank you so much’, some others state thank you followed by statement of the favour such as ‘thank you very much for lending me the book’. The second most used strategies are expressing positive feelings and repayment. In expressing positive feelings students use the strategy of expressing positive reaction to the favour giver such as ‘...you help me so much’, ‘You’re really kind’, ‘Don’t you mind lending it to me?’, and positive reaction to the object of the favour such as ‘It is very helpful’. In using repayment the students express promise which relate to future condition such as ‘I promise I’ll get it back in one week’, or ‘I’ll get it back as soon as possible’. A small number of them also use the attention getter strategy of expressing the word ‘Oh!’.

In this situation, where the size of imposition high and the relationship between the interlocutors are distant, the use of positive feeling and repayment strategies is understandable. The students do not use appreciation strategy showing that the students are not yet aware of the high imposition with a distant relationship. The pattern shown in this situation is as follows, thanking strategies followed by statement of favour, and the use of alerter in the form of formal addressing; expressions of positive feeling both
in terms of the favour giver and the object; and repayment strategy in the form of promise of a future condition when students return the object.

**Situation 4 - Borrowing a book from a difficult lecturer**

All of the students use the thanking strategy by expressing ‘Thank you’ or ‘thank you very much’ and by expressing thanking followed by statement of the favour such as ‘thank you for lending me the book’ or ‘thank you for helping me’. Similar number of students also uses positive feelings, repayment and alerter. In using positive feeling strategy the students express positive reaction both to the favour giver, such as ‘I’m really grateful that you want to help me’ or ‘because of you I can be a good student’, and the object of the favour such as ‘this book helps me a lot’ or ‘Your help is very important for me’. Students also use repayment strategy of promise such as ‘I’ll return it to you as soon as possible’ or ‘I will make good use of this book...’ and alerter in the form of addressing such as ‘Sir’, ‘Maam’.

This situation is similar to situation 3, only the lecturer is a difficult person who is not too popular among the students. This puts more size on the imposition to the favour giver and the relationship; the imposition is higher and the relationship is more distant as the lecturer in the situation is not too popular among the students. The strategies used by these students show that the awareness of this farther distance is realized in the use of alerter strategy of addressing. The strategy pattern for this situation is as follows, thanking strategy followed by statement of the favor and the use of alerter strategy in the form of formal addressing; expressions of positive feeling; apology; and repayment.

**Situation 5 - Birthday present**

All of the students use the strategy of thanking by expressing ‘thank you’, ‘thanks a lot’ or ‘thank you so much’ followed by statement of the favour such as ‘thank you for the present’ or ‘thank you for remember my birthday’. The second most used strategy is positive feeling as well as alerter. The positive feelings include expression of positive reaction to the favour giver such as ‘you’re the best’, positive reaction to the object of the favour such as ‘that’s a sweet surprise’ or ‘this gift is great, I like the wrap’, and the positive reaction to the outcome of the favour such as ‘I really happy’. The alerter that they use is the attention getter such as ‘Oh cool!’; ‘Wow!, or ‘Oh my God!’. And the repayment strategy of promising is used by fewer participants.
The controlling factor in this situation in terms of size of imposition is not too high, besides the social relationship is equal, between close friends. The pattern of strategies starts with thanking followed by positive feeling and alerter in the form of attention getter.

Situation 6 - Paid for lunch

All of the students use thanking strategies in the form of simple thanking such as ‘thank you very much’ or thanks; and thanking followed by statement of the favour such as ‘thanks, you help me’ or ‘thank you for lending me the money’. The second most use strategy is repayment in the form of promising a future condition such as ‘I’ll pay you back after we got in the class’ or I will pay you back later’. The third use is the strategy of alerter in the form of attention getter such as ‘Wow!’ and mentioning title such as ‘sis’, or ‘pal’. The least use strategy is positive feeling by giving positive reaction to the favour giver such as ‘I’m glad you’re here’.

The students in this situation are aware of the imposition and they really feel indebted. The pattern of strategy starts with the use of thanking followed by repayment strategies in the form of promise of a future condition; then the use of alerter strategy in the form of informal and casual calling of names.

Situation 7 - Computer repair

The most strategy used by the students is thanking followed by the second most used strategy of repayment. The thanking strategy is in the form simple thanking such as ‘thank you a lot’ or ‘thank you so much’, and thanking followed by statement of the favour such as ‘Thanks for your help’ or ‘thank you so much for fixing my computer, you’re so nice’. The repayment strategy is in the form of offering some service, money or food such as ‘What would you like for dinner? I will treat you’ or ‘and here’s some money’. The students also use apologizing strategy in the form of apology followed by the recognition of imposition caused by the favour such as ‘I’m sorry for causing fuss for you’ or ‘and I’m sorry to make difficulties for you’. The least strategy used is alerter in the form of attention getter such as ‘really’.
In this situation, the size of imposition is high yet the relationship is distant. The strategies used by the students relate to a deep indebtedness shown by the use of repayment strategy after the thanking strategy, followed by giving apology.

*Situation 8 - Scattered paper*

All students use thanking strategies such as ‘thank you’ or ‘thank you so much’, and thanking followed by statement of the favour such as ‘thank you for helping collect the paper’ or ‘thanks for helping’. The other strategy used is positive feeling in the form of expressing positive reaction to the favour giver such as ‘that’s very kind of you’ or ‘you will be my friend’. Apology is also used in the form of simple apology such as ‘Oh, sorry’ or ‘I’m sorry’, and apology followed by statement of imposition caused by the favour such as ‘sorry for bothering you’. The least used strategy is alerter in the form of title of addressing ‘guys!’. The controlling factor in terms of size of imposition in this situation is not high, besides the relationship is distant. The strategies used by the students besides thanking is apology. The pattern of strategy in this situation starts with thanking followed by statement of the favour; apology and alerten in the form of casual calling of names.

**Conclusion**

This study is a small contribution to the rare study of interlanguage pragmatics and the realization of the gratitude speech act. The students in this study have been learning English for more than six years throughout their schooling; the data shows that the years of learning English have resulted in some development in the awareness of pragmatics use of the language despite some inappropriateness which is the characteristics of interlanguage condition (LoCastro, 2012).

Thanking is the most extensive strategy used by Indonesian EFL learners in respond to all situations that necessitate the use of gratitude. Some influence in the form of cultural transfer is present in the use of some strategy of using apology in some number of situations.

The pattern of strategy in response to specific situation is not much different from the general data on the strategy; however, repayment and positive feeling strategies are obviously the most used in situation where high indebtedness is present.
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