



# An Analysis of Compliment Expression Found in the Movie Entitled *Afterlife of the Party*

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Linguistic Form, Topics of Compliment, Functions of Compliment.</i></p> <p><b>DOI:</b> <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.22437/jssh.v7i2.16420">http://dx.doi.org/10.22437/jssh.v7i2.16420</a></p> <p><b>Received:</b> December 27, 2021</p> <p><b>Reviewed:</b> December 3, 2023</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> December 4, 2023</p>	<p><i>This research analyzed the speech act of compliment found in the movie script <i>Afterlife of the Party</i>. This research was a qualitative descriptive study with a content analysis approach. The subjects of this research was all characters in <i>Afterlife of the Party</i> movie. The object of this research was the expression of compliment. This research used document analysis in data collection technique. The researcher applied the approach of Miles, Huberman, &amp; Saldana (2014) to examine the overall data with the following steps: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Based on the findings, the researcher found (1) there are 5 types of linguistic form in the <i>Afterlife of the Party</i> movie namely type 1: noun/pronoun/noun phrase + is/look + (really) + adjective, type 2: I + (really) + like/love + noun phrase, type 3: pronoun + is + (a/an) + (really) + adjective + noun phrase, type 5: you + verb + noun phrase + (really) + adverb, type 7: what + (a/an) + adjective + noun phrase!, (2) there are 4 topics of compliment namely appearance, possession, personality, and ability, (3) there are 5 functions of compliment such as to express admiration, to maintain solidarity, to replacing other speech act formulas, to soften threat, to be a conversation strategy.</i></p>

## 1. Introduction

People create language by forming words that have meaning and can be understood by anyone. Karajagi (2016) states that the study of linguistics helps a person in making effective communication and also in building relationships and achieving instant relationships. Linguistics form is one of the focuses of this study using classification by Vaneva, et al (2018) which divides it into nine types. There are linguistics provides subtle instructs that are executed by the brain such as its structure, acquisition, relationship with other forms of communication (Hornby in Irmawati, 2014). The form or structure of the language that has been used or which is commonly used alone is considered a grammatical form.

In fact, when people say something to the hearer, not only are they providing certain goals, but they are also taking action. Yet not everyone grasp the purpose of the utterances. They have to learn what the speaker means. The study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and explicated by a hearer called pragmatics (Yule, 1996). Pragmatics is the subsidiary of language study that is becoming popular currently. Linguists are conscious that the effort to obtain the essence of language will not provide the best result without understanding pragmatics (Rahardi,

2019). Pragmatics is interested in meanings that words, in fact, convey when used or with the meaning of speaking understood as sometimes indicated.

One of the objects of pragmatics is speech acts. Fauziati (2016) states that speech act is a theory that analyzes the role of utterances in relation to speaker and listener behavior in interpersonal communication. Thus, speech act is an act of communication. Yule (1996) classified that assertive/representative, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative are the type of speech act. This study focus on the expressive speech act. Yule (1996) also examined that by using an expressive like greeting, promising, compliment, refusal, and threatening, the speaker makes the utterances appropriate to the world (feeling). In a conversation, people have many ways to convey his/her feelings. They usually give a compliment to create relational harmony. But sometimes, people give compliments out of compulsion or for satire. They say something deals with the topic, and compliment is one way of putting it. According to Holmes (1996), topics of compliments can be divided into four categories namely appearance, possession, personality, and ability/performance.

Studying compliment itself is important since the compliment can be used as a tool of solidarity and even as a substitute for other speech acts. Válková (2013) states that compliments not only raise one's mood, but they also convey a message to the receiver. It informs them that they are being watched. The compliment can create a good relationship with the hearer as it carries various functions behind it. This statement is bolstered by the explanation from Wu (2008) which emphasizes that the main purpose of compliment is not only referential or informative, but also emotional. Wu (2008) also mentioned that there are several functions of compliment, they are (1) to express administration (2) to maintain solidarity, (3) to replace other speech act formulas, (4) to soften threat, (5) to be a conversation strategy, and (6) to reinforce desired behavior. Since compliment is used by almost people in society, the researcher focus on examining one of the expressive speech act that is compliment expression using framework by Holmes (1996) and classification of compliment function by Wu (2008).

There has been a lot of research on compliments. Yusof, et.al (2014), Dörtkulak (2017) used social media as the object of the research. They also used social study for their research framing, meanwhile, this research used pragmatics approach. There are also Abzakh (2018), Behnam, et.al (2011) used speeches to analyzed the research. Meanwhile, the researcher used movie script to conduct this research. In addition, as the data source Kuncoro (2010) Oktavianti (2011), Erviana (2013), Hudustiah (2016), Saraswati (2018), Fatimah (2017) used the main character of the movie in their research. While Fatimah (2017) used the characters in the novel as the subject of her research. Meanwhile, this research used all characters in the movie as the subject of the research.

This research used to expand previous research by examining the speech act of compliment found in the film script *Afterlife of the Party*. The aim of this research is: (1) to identify the linguistic form of speech act of compliment, (2) to identify the topics of speech act of compliment, (3) to identify the functions of speech act of compliment.

## **2. Research Methodology**

The type of this research was descriptive qualitative research. The data of this research were in the form of excerpted containing speech act of compliment expressed by the characters of *Afterlife of the Party* movie. Meanwhile, the data source were collected from *Afterlife of the Party* movie and its script. Documentation method used by the researcher to collect the data in this research. To investigate the whole data, the researcher used several steps to analyzing the data according to Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014). The steps contains four element of analysis, such as data collection, data condensation, data display, and drawing/verifying conclusion.

### 3. Findings

The researcher findings provide answers to the previously defined problem statements that they are (1) what are the linguistic form of speech act of compliment found?, (2) what are the topics in speech act of compliment?, and (3) what are the function of speech act of compliment?

#### 3.1 Linguistic Form of Compliment

The researcher focus on the linguistic form of speech act of compliment that depicted in the *Afterlife of the Party* based on Vaneva, et al (2018) theory. The researcher found 5 types of linguistic form namely type 1: noun/pronoun/noun phrase + is/look + (really) + adjective, type 2: I + (really) + like/love + noun phrase, type 3: pronoun + is + (a/an) + (really) + adjective + noun phrase, type 5: you + verb + noun phrase + (really) + adverb, type 7: what + (a/an) + adjective + noun phrase!.

##### a. Type 1: Noun/Pronoun/Noun Phrase + is/look + (really) + Adjective

This first structure is frequently used to compliment someone's appearance, possessions, or skills. The researcher found 20 data containing type 1 linguistic form in the compliment data. In the sentence "Good. I meant it every single time. *You look adorable*" belongs to type 1 of linguistic form since this sentence begins with the word "you" as a noun then followed by "look" and ends with the word "adorable" as an adjective. This utterance was said by Cassie to Lisa who was locking the door while looking at Lisa's charming appearance.

The other examples of topic of appearance in compliment are as follow:

- (1) Aw, *he's adorable*
- (2) *You look perfect.*
- (3) *You look... awesome.*
- (4) Wow. Wow. I mean, this is... *This is really incredible.*

##### b. Type 2: I + (really) + like/love + Noun Phrase

This structure reflects the speaker's feelings and emotions more than the first structure. Using emotional verbs like "love" and "like" tells the other person how much the interlocutor enjoys the hearer's appearance, behavior, skill, or possession. There are 4 data containing the linguistic form of compliment type 2 that found by the researcher. For example, "*I love this dress on you*". The sentence started with the word "I" as a noun, then followed by "love" and the last is "this dress" as a noun phrase. This utterance was uttered by Cassie when her gaze could not be separated from Lisa's appearance at that time. So, it can be concluded that the compliment belongs to linguistic form of compliment type 2.

##### c. Type 3: Pronoun + is + (a/an) + (really) + Adjective + Noun Phrase

This structure is employed to round out the appearance of someone or whatever they own. The number of objects must be matched by the pronoun. In this study, the researcher found 8 data containing linguistic form of compliment type 3. As in the sentence "Oh wow, *that's great!* Yeah, I compose music for video games all day, so not a lot of human interaction for me either." The sentence is included in the linguistics form of compliment type 3 which begins with the word "that" as a pronoun then followed by "is" and followed by the word "great" as an adjective. This utterance was said by Max when he was in front of his apartment. Lisa talks about her job in the museum and Max likes it.

The other examples of linguistic form of compliment type 3 are as follow:

- (1) No, you didn't have to do that on my account. *It's a great song* though.
- (2) Okay, okay. *Those are cool shoes.*
- (3) *Vintage.* Nice.
- (4) Yeah, no. Yeah, of course. Um, well, look, thanks for having me. And for the questionable wine. *That was great.*

##### d. Type 5: You + Verb + Noun Phrase + (really) + Adverb

In this structure, attention should be paid to the correct use of adverb. Adverb such as; perfectly, nicely, well, etc. are often used in this structure. There are 3 data containing to linguistic form of compliment type 5. For example, the italicized sentence from the utterance “Hey! *You got the moves perfectly*. There you are” begins with the word “you” then followed by “got” as a verb after that there are the words “the moves” as a noun phrase and ends with “perfectly” as an adverb. This expression was delivered by Lisa to Cassie because of Cassie's ability to dance amazed Lisa. So, it can be concluded that “you got the moves perfectly” belongs to linguistic form of compliment type 5.

The other examples of linguistic form type 5 are as follow:

- (1) Aye, aye, Captain. *Proud of you!*
- (2) *So proud of you.*
- (3) *So proud of you!*

#### e. **Type 7: What + (a/an) + Adjective + Noun Phrase!**

This type of linguistic form is a very useful familiar expression for compliments. By using the prefix “what” and followed by certain positive adjectives, one can easily give compliments that are applicable at any time in any situation. There are 3 data containing linguistic form of compliment type 7 that found by the researcher. For example, “*What an awesome cook you are!*” has a structure that begins with the word “what” which is characteristic of type 5, then after that it is followed by the word “an” and after that there is “awesome” as an adjective followed by “cook” and ends with the noun phrase “you are”. This sentence was said by Cassie when Emme joked with Lisa to make Cassie an éclair. Here, Cassie gave compliment to Emme who is good at making any kind of cake.

### 3.2 Topics of Compliment

The researcher identified the topic of compliment from the data and found 4 topics. The topics are appearance, possession, personality, and ability according to the topic of compliment classification by Holmes (1996).

#### a. **Appearance**

The topic of appearance offers with the physical appearance, which can be supported by clothing or apparel. The researcher found 10 sentences in the topic of appearance that contained a speech act of compliment. In the sentence “Good. I meant it every single time. *You look adorable*”, the word “adorable” is a positive value. When someone says that a woman is “adorable”, they express their pleasure with her appearance or character in a very nice way. That utterance was said by Cassie when she was in front of her apartment door. Cassie and Lisa were talking about Cassie's birthday party at that time. Then, Cassie smiled at Lisa who was locking the door while looking at Lisa's charming appearance with beautiful makeup. It can be concluded that the sentence refers to Lisa as adorable with the aim of pleasing her appearance.

The other examples of topic of appearance in compliment are as follow:

- (1) *I love this dress* on you.
- (2) Hey, guys. How's it goin'? Oh, *you are very attractive*.
- (3) Mmm. *You smell clean*.
- (4) *You look... awesome*.

#### b. **Possession**

Topic of possession mentioned frequently in compliment on material possessions and positive comments that still interconnect with comments about possessions. There are 7 data containing the topic of possession. As in the sentence “... But just so you know, you only get one wardrobe change a day, so make it count. *It's so sparkly*” that Val conveyed to Cassie in a room. Cassie wanted new clothes for her to wear. Then, Val asked Cassie to close her eyes imagining what clothes she wanted to wear until a miracle happened. The clothes that were previously shabby were now replaced with new, shiny silver clothes. Here, Val gave Cassie

compliment because of her admiration to her new clothes. That is why this compliment can be categorized as possession compliment topic.

Moreover, the other examples of topic of appearance in compliment:

- (1) .... Wow. *This is really pretty.*
- (2) Yeah, no. Yeah, of course. Um, well, look, thanks for having me. And for the questionable wine. *That was great.*
- (3) *What a beautiful place*, but it's too quiet huh?

#### **c. Personality**

This topic of personality relates to a person's personality traits, such as internal, emotional, etc. The researcher found 14 data of the topic of personality. In the sentence “Who! Did I tell you *how cute you look* by the way?” is when Cassie and Lisa were standing in front of the apartment door getting ready to go to Cassie's birthday party. Cassie and Lisa were busy talking about how the party was going to be. Until Cassie looked at her best friend Lisa with a warm gaze full of affection. Spontaneously here Cassie gave a compliment to Lisa who looks adorable with her facial expression. Compliments given by Cassie serves a personality compliment topic.

The other examples are:

- (1) See? She agrees with me. *I like your thought*, Emme.
- (2) Aw, *he's adorable.*
- (3) *I like your geekness.*
- (4) Oh, it really did. We spent the entire night just talking. *He's so interesting.* .....

#### **d. Ability**

The topic of ability is unrelated to appearance, but rather refers to a person's ability in a specific field or, in some cases, includes categorical references to talents, tastes, personal qualities, and skills. There are 17 data containing the topic of ability in compliment that found by the researcher. As in sentence “I will always be your guinea pig. And *you're a smart cookie*” which is housed in Emme's cake shop. Emme asked Lisa to taste her new cake which had just been baked. However, Lisa did not doubt the taste of Emme's cooking because she is already good at baking and gave her a “you're a smart cookie” compliment. The compliment was given based on Emme's ability to make cakes very deliciously. So, it can be concluded that the topic of this compliment is ability.

Furthermore, the other examples of topic of ability in compliment:

- (1) Oh wow, *that's great!* Yeah, I compose music for video games all day, so not a lot of human interaction for me either.
- (2) That would be so cool. Where did you get that idea, *it's so brilliant.*
- (3) Wow. Wow. I mean, this is... *This is incredible.*
- (4) You can hear me too? This isn't supposed to be happening. *This is awesome*, and crazy, but mostly awesome.

### **3.3 Functions of Compliment**

The researcher found 5 functions of compliment in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie according to Wu (2008) classification, namely to express admiration, to maintain solidarity, to replacing other speech act formulas, to soften threat, to be a conversation strategy.

#### **a. To Express Admiration**

This function shows the originality of the expression of admiration, approval from the speaker to the receiver. This characteristic is usually motivated by spontaneous astonishment of the speaker. The researcher found 32 data in the movie. Like the sentence “Who! Did I tell you *how cute you look* by the way?”, when Cassie and Lisa stood in front of the apartment door getting ready to go to Cassie's birthday party. Cassie looked at her best friend Lisa with a warm gaze full of affection. She gave a compliment to Lisa who looks adorable with her appearance wearing a short dress with matching make-up. The compliment which is given by the speaker

shows that she really admires the receiver's appearance at that night. It can be seen that the function of compliment is to express pure admiration since this compliment is spoken spontaneously.

The other examples are as follow:

- (1) *I love this dress* on you.
- (2) That would be so cool. Where did you get that idea, *it's so brilliant*.
- (3) I will always be your guinea pig. And *you're a smart cookie*.
- (4) Wow. Wow. I mean, this is... *This is incredible*.

#### **b. To Maintain Solidarity**

One of the most important functions of a compliment is as a powerful tool for maintaining mutual support and solidarity. Its tendency to be regarded as positively emotional speech actions directed at the recipient can strengthen the relationship between the speaker and the receiver. There are 5 data containing the compliment function to maintain solidarity found by the researcher. As the sentence "No, you didn't have to do that on my account. *It's a great song* though." That sentence takes place when Max comes to the door of Lisa's apartment, meeting her neighbors for the second time after passing in front of Max's apartment. Max was disturbed by very loud music coming from Lisa's apartment which was right next to Max's. When Max came to reprimand, Lisa immediately turned off the music she was playing. Here, Max seems unimpressed by Lisa's loud music, but manages himself to be friendly. Therefore, he gave a compliment to Lisa. The compliment which is given by Max is meant to create solidarity between him and Lisa.

The other examples are:

- (1) *What an awesome cook you are!*
- (2) ... Since you were digging dirt in your backyard, you knew what you wanted, and *I admired that*, always.

#### **c. To Replacing Other Speech Act Formulas**

In some cases, a complement can be used in replacement of other speech act such as gratitude, greetings, congratulation, and apologies. In the compliment function to replacing others, the researcher found 6 related data. First is "*That's brilliant*. Cool." that were said by Max to Lisa at his apartment door. This is Max's first time meeting Lisa. Accidentally, Cassie and Lisa meet Max who is their new neighbor. In that situation, Lisa was sensitive to it and immediately opened the door for Max so he wouldn't be in trouble. Max doesn't know what to say, then he compliments Lisa for being nice to him even though they've only just met. It can be seen if the function of the compliment is as a replacement for the gratitude speech act.

The other example of compliment function to replacing others are as follow:

- (1) *It's brilliant*.
- (2) *So proud of you*.
- (3) Whoo! *So proud of you!*

#### **d. To Soften Threat**

This type of function occurs when the speaker wants to express their own viewpoint on something while still maintaining a positive relationship with the receiver. This compliment is frequently used with 'but' and other oblique conjunctions. The researcher found 3 data containing this type. In the sentence "Okay. *That's a good idea* but no, no. We're not staying in. It's my birthday week." When in the living room, Lisa and Cassie were talking about Cassie's birthday party. Until Lisa comes up with an idea for Cassie's birthday. Hearing that, Cassie didn't agree because she wanted to have fun on her happy day and wanted Lisa to join in the fun with her. However, she covered it by praising Lisa's idea. The function of a compliment as seen in the sentence Cassie said is to soften the act of threatening her face. Cassie's intention

was to provide criticism. However, to minimize Lisa's feelings of humiliation, Cassie covered up the criticism in the form of compliments.

#### **e. To be a Conversation Strategy**

Since compliments could serve as a basic and neutral topic, they can be used to prolong or establish a conversation. There are 3 data of compliment function to be a conversation strategy. As the sentence "Hey, guys. How's it goin'? Oh, *you are very attractive.*" That is what Cassie said at an outdoor cafe. Cassie and Val are trying to prove the magic that happened to Cassie, whether everyone can see it or just Lisa. Val asked Cassie to try talking to the two men who were having a conversation. Cassie approached the two men and gave them a compliment as a greeting to test whether they saw her or not. He used the word "attractive" because he saw how cool the two boys looked. It can be concluded if the speaker gave a compliment to start a new conversation with a stranger.

### **4. Discussion**

Based on the finding above, there are three components discussed in this research which are linguistic form of speech act of compliment, topics of speech act of compliment, and functions of speech act of compliment found by the researcher in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie.

#### **4.1 Linguistic Form of Compliment**

In this research, the researcher found 5 types of linguistic form in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie from 9 types of linguistic form theory by Vaneva, et al (2008). They are type 1: noun/pronoun/noun phrase + is/look + (really) + adjective, type 2: I + (really) + like/love + noun phrase, type 3: pronoun + is + (a/an) + (really) + adjective + noun phrase, type 5: you + verb + noun phrase + (really) + adverb, type 7: what + (a/an) + adjective + noun phrase!. However, the researcher did not find 4 types of linguistic form in the movie. The findings are not in accordance with the theory due to data limitations.

#### **4.2 Topics of Compliment**

The results of this research showed that there are 4 topics found by the researcher. The topics namely topic of appearance, topic of possession, topic of personality, and topic of ability. This finding are in line with Erviana (2013), Iswara (2013), Hudustiah (2016) since they also found 4 topics of compliment. This finding is also in line with Behnam, et al (2011). The similarity is the most topic of compliment used by the characters in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie is not topic of appearance as this research. The researcher assumes that is because the similarity of the data source that is a movie. However, this research is not in line with Saraswati (2018) because in her research she did not find the topic of compliment. This condition due to the research objectives are different from this research, she only has 2 objectives of research.

#### **4.3 Functions of Compliment**

In this research, the results showed that there are 5 functions of compliment in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie. They are to express admiration, to maintain solidarity, to replacing other speech act formulas, to soften threat, to be a conversation strategy. This finding is in line with Saraswati (2018) which found that function of compliment to express admiration as the most dominant function of compliment. The researcher assumes that it is because of the similarity of the data source. However, this finding is not in line with Kuncoro (2010), Oktavianti (2011), Mahmudah (2011), Hudustiah (2016) since they did not found the functions of compliment with the same types as this finding. This condition maybe due to the different of data source and theory.

### **5. Conclusion**

In this research, the researcher found 5 types of linguistic form in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie, namely type 1: noun/pronoun/noun phrase + is/look + (really) + adjective, type 2: I + (really) + like/love + noun phrase, type 3: pronoun + is + (a/an) + (really) + adjective + noun

phrase, type 5: you + verb + noun phrase + (really) + adverb, type 7: what + (a/an) + adjective + noun phrase!. The researcher also found 4 topics of compliment namely appearance, possession, personality, ability/performance. The last one was the function of compliment found by the researcher namely to express admiration, to maintain solidarity, to replacing other speech act formulas, to soften threat, to be a conversation strategy.

Based on the findings above, the researcher concluded that linguistic form, topics of compliment, and functions of compliment that used by the characters in the *Afterlife of the Party* movie are quite varied. As the native speakers, they have actional competent to express compliment so well.

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