



**Ministry of Higher Education
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University of Babylon
College of Education of Human Sciences
Department of English**

**Investigating The Performance of EFL Learners' Use of
Thanking Expressions.**

A paper

Submitted to the Council of the Department of English/ College of
Education for Human Sciences/University of Babylon In Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements of the B.A. in English Language and
Linguistics.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الظَّالِمُونَ)

صدق الله العلي العظيم

[العنكبوت: 49]

Dedication

Praise be to Allah who always beside me , listens to me , takes care of me and gives me the best thing ever.

My beloved parents , my mother and my father who always pray , guide and motivate me to become a better person

Acknowledgements

I would like to express special thanks and respect to my Supervisorer Asst. Prof. Wafaa Mokhlos Faisal (Ph.D.) for her continuous cooperation , advice and guidance in the Process of writing this paper.

Abstract

This research paper which is titled Investigating the Performance of EFL Learners Use of Thanking Expressions .

The research will be limited to study Thanking Expressions and their types (direct and indirect speech act). Investigating the performance of students in the response of direct and indirect speech act. The performance of students in the response of direct is better than indirect speech act. The students use direct more than indirect speech act.

The research is consist of five chapters .The first chapter is about an introduction about the topic . This chapter will discuss the problem, the aim , hypotheses, procedures, limits and significance.

chapter two about Literature Review , the definitions and types of pragmatics, speech act , thanking and thanking expressions and thanking strategies.

Chapter Three about The Test , definitions of the test , features of a good test and design the test.

Chapter four is about Results of the test and will discuss the results of direct and indirect speech act.

Finally, chapter five is a Conclusion . The students use direct more than indirect speech act. The students face difficulty in using indirect speech act. The students use different of Thanking Expressions.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The problem

This research paper will discuss the topic of Thanking expressions and will discuss the situations and their ways direct and indirect speech act and finding each way the Iraqi EFL learners use direct or indirect speech act .

Based on the background above the researcher formulates research question is ;

1-What kind of Thanking Expressions students use (direct or indirect speech act)

1.2 The Aim

1-Investigating the performance of EFL learners in the use of direct and indirect speech act.

1-3 Hypotheses

Its hypothesized that :

1-EFL learners face difficulty in using indirect speech act.

2- The performance of students in the response of direct is better than indirect speech act.

1-4 Procedures

1-Presenting a theoretical background about Thanking expressions.

2-Testing (30) students from the Department of English / University of Babylon at Fourth Stage in the academic year

(2022- 2023).

3-Analyzing the test results .

4-Giving conclusion of the study .

1-5 Limits

The research will be limited to study Thanking expressions and their types(direct and indirect speech act). The test will be applied to 30 EFL learners , from University of Babylon / College of Education for Human Sciences / Department of English / during the academic year(2022-2023).

1-6 Significance

From pedagogical point of view , its useful to study it in educational institutions . It's Provide valuable input for lectures or teachers and readers who are interested in doing further researchs related to a descriptive analysis of students ability in use thanking expressions from a practical point of view , studying and analyzing the test indicates the extent to which the difficulties that learners face in using thanking expressions.

Chapter two

Literature Review

2.0 Introductory remarks: Chapter two about the definition of the pragmatics , speech act , thanking and thanking expressions and thanking strategies.

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatic is covering the study of human Language that is related with the context and the society . It means pragmatics study language used and linked With the context. There is the limitation of the Pragmatics used in a language. It is the form and the meaning which linked with the speakers' intention , the context/ areas of communication, and the situation. In Short, pragmatics are the study of the meaning of speech That is related languages with a context that involves How a speaker produces an words to convey their Intentions and how listeners interpret them. It covers Several scopes of language such as deixis, implicature,Presupposition, and speech acts.However, pragmatics undertanding will help the Speaker in undertanding of language of communication. The speaker can cacth the idea or meaning from the way of communication and the context used of communication. Furthermore, pragmatics give the Contribution in obtaining the explicit and implicit meaning of language used. The concept of pragmatic competence was Early marked by Chomsky(1980, p.224) as the knowledge of language's conditions and manner of appropriate use which corresponds with various Purposes. One important aspect of pragmatic competence is the production and understanding of speech acts and their appropriateness in a given situation (Cheng, 2005).

2.2 Speech act

Speech act is one of the most fundamental parts of pragmatics. To Express themselves, people, in their real day-to-day life interactions. According to Yule (1996:47), a Speech act is generally defined as “an Action

via utterances”. The utterances do not only contain the Grammatical Structures and words, but also contain the actions in the utterance .Speech act occurs among different groups of people in Speaking of different topics over a broad range of situationscc and According to Austin (1962:

94), Speech act is everything which we do at The time of conversing or set of verbal Discussion.

Speech acts are not Descriptive, instead they are pronounced To affect an actual situation. Speech acts usually do not refer to the past event it is the action performed by language to modify the state of the object on which the action performed. According to many scholars, the speech act of thanking is a universal illocution across languages and cultures (Coulmas, 1981; Aijmer, 1996; & Scneider, 2005). Jautz points out that gratitude expressions are used "when a Speaker wants the addressee to know that s/he is grateful for What the addressee has said or done" (Jautz, 2008, p 142).

Aijmer (1996) states that expressing gratitude is considered a stereotypical speech act because the form of thank you or thanks is almost always used by Speakers every time they want to express gratitude (1996, p.78).The Speech act of thanking is concerned with how we express gratitude in Communication. The expression of gratitude is conveyed by the speaker on a past act performed by the hearer. The speaker believes he/she benefited from the act and feels appreciative or indebted toward the hearer and thus makes a statement which expresses his/her appointment (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986). Gratitude can be expressed In response to various situations such as receiving a gift, favor, reward, or service.

Speech acts can be classified into direct speech act and indirect speech act futhermore, Yule (1996) state that :

2.2.1 Direct Speech Act the message of the speaker is conveyed or reported in his own actual words without any change. Direct speech act is that direct Relationship between the structure and the utterance's communicative function (Yule,1996, p. 129). He(ibid,p.45-55) illustrates that the relationship between the three 'structural forms' which are (declaratives, interrogative and imperative) and the three "communicative functions" which are (statement, question and command) are easy and recognizable relationships. For example, declaratives are used to make statements, interrogatives are used to make questions and so on , e.g.

1. You wear seatbelt. (declarative)) (1)
2. Do you wear your seatbelt?(interrogatives)(2)

2.2.2. Indirect Speech Acts the message of the speaker is conveyed or reported in our own words and this will happen if there is indirect relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance .Indirect speech act is an act achieved by “means of others” (Searle, 1978, p.60). For Instance, making a request can be made by uttering a statement like; ‘I’m getting thirsty’. (3)and For example,when some one Says “it’s cold outside”(4), the direct speech act of this utterance is to inform the hearer about the real conditions outside,But the indirect speech act of this utterance is to request or to give command to close the door, so the cold will not affect the speaker. Examples of speech acts are refusals, suggestions, apologies, compliments, compliment responses, tanking and so on. One of the most commonly used speech acts is the speech act of Thanking.

2.3 Thanking

Thanking is realized when the speaker expresses gratitude for the hearer’s participation in a prior action that was beneficial to the speaker (Cheng, 2005; Yoosefvand and Rasekh, 2014). Thanking is a fundamental speech act with high social importance, as it constitutes a widely used language component in every-day communication, both formal and informal. Prototypically, it expresses gratitude and constitutes a reactive speech act . This means that it is always preceded by an action or utterance that calls for gratitude or acknowledgement (Coulmas, 1981 & Haverkate, 1993).

2.3.1 Thanking Expression

Thanking expression is a part of speech acts. The part of speech act can be found in the representative of speakers’ intention. Furthermore, the expressions of thanking are the mutual relationships between the speakers and the hearers. These expressions appear when the hearers get something or the hearers give the feedback to the speakers. In other words, the actions of thanking expressions are obtained from the relationship between the speakers and hearers . In same way, thanking expression can be meant as the meaning of the part of speech acts such as apology, request, promise Etc. In other words, there are some implicit meanings of thanking expressions. Two statements above explained that there was a strategy in expressing thanking expressions and also

followed by actions from both the speaker and the listener. Furthermore, thanking expressions are always used to represent the nice thing, because there is a good thing or a benefit one from the previous actions. In addition, thanking expression meant feeling happiness or good sense of the previous. However, the others study investigates thanking is a response of receive thing, an expression to refuse the invitation, a response of the services' feedback, an expression of ending the dialogue and keeping a good feeling.

According to many scholars, the speech act of thanking is a universal illocution across language and cultures (Coulmas, 1981 & Aijmer, 1996). Thanking in Searle's typology (1976) is defined as the performance of an action by a speaker on a past act done by a hearer for whom it is beneficial. Aijmer (1996) states that expressing gratitude is considered a stereotypical speech act because the form of thank you or thanks is almost always used by speakers every time they want to express gratitude. One has to keep in mind that not all expressions using the word 'thank you' refer to gratitude (Eisenstein and Bodman, 1993). They can also refer to other language functions such as compliments and closings in conversations (i.e., That's all, thank you), or rejecting an offer (i.e. No, thank you or [Thanks], I'm fine) (Rubin, 1983 in Ozdemir & Rezvani, 2010). Thanking or expressing gratitude is one of the acts under the category of expressive speech act. Expressive speech act primarily focuses on representing the speaker's feelings. In other words speakers use expressive speech act to express their feelings by making their words fit their internal psychological world (Yule, 1996). Language speakers in any community can express gratitude through words of thanks, praise, compliment, or appreciation (Fishgadam & Zarei, 2011 & Dalilan, 2012). The first one to classify the speech act of thanking was Austin (1962 in Levinson, 1995) for whom it was a behavioristic act, "a reaction to other people's behavior and fortunes and of attitudes and expressions of attitudes to someone else's past conduct or imminent conduct."

3.3.2 Thanking strategies Taxonomy (Cheng, 2005)

1. Thanking

Participants say "thank you" in three ways:

- .Thanking only by using the word "thank you" (e.g. Thanks a lot! Thank you very much!) (5)

- . thanking by stating the favour (e.g. Thank you for your help! , and thank you for your notice exemplify this sub-strategy))(6)
- Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour (e.g. Thank you for helping me collect the papers.) (7)

2. Appreciation

- Using the word appreciate (e.g. I appreciate it!)(8)
- Using the word “appreciate” and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour (e.g. I appreciate the time you spent for me.) (9)

3. Positive feelings

- By expressing a positive reaction to the favour giver (hearer) (e.g. You are a life saver!)(10)
- By expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favour (e.g. This book was really helpful!) (11)

4.Acknowledging a favour: This expressions is used when the speaker receive a favor From someone that usually happens in usual And daily activity .

- “Thank you Rad, This is last one”(12)

5.Clossing the conversation: Here, the Speakers want to end the conversation by Expressing gratitude and this gratitude Expression also function as a farewell.

- “Very sure, it Was nice to meet You. Thank you So much just Don’t talk to Anybody on your Way out”(13)

6.Accepting an offer: In this case, an offer can Be in the form of suggestion, attempt, Present, and others.

- “Thank you, ok Maybe I’ll take You up on that”(14)

Expressing gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, cherish good experiences, and think more deeply about what they have rather than what they lack. If someone in your life selflessly does something for

you and you want to express gratitude, common expressions of thanks might not seem like enough. Here are several thoughtful ways to express gratitude

- Phrases like “You made my day!” or “You saved my life!” are more potent than simply saying thank you. (15)
- Combining a few of the most common “thank you” phrases, such as “Thanks a million. I appreciate you so much. You’re the best”.(16)
- Thank you for . . . (17)
- I appreciate you for . . .(18)
- I am grateful to you for . . .(19)

Encouragement can also include phrases like “Way to go!” or “Awesome work!”(20)

- I cannot thank you enough.(21)

Words cannot express how much you mean to me.

- I am more grateful to you than you’ll ever know.(22)
- I’m eternally grateful.(23)
- You have my deepest thanks.(24)
- I’ll never forget your support and kindness.(25)

Chapter three

The test

3.0 Introductory remarks :Chapter Three about The Test , Definitions , Features of a Good Test and Design of the test.

3.1 Definitions of The Test

According to Al- Juboury (1999 : 1) the test includes any means of checking what students can do with language and what they can not do with it .Brown (2000: 384) A test in plain word , is a method of measuring a persons ability or knowledge in a given domain.

3-2 Features of a Good Test

How do we know if the test a " good " test or not ? Does it measure what you want it to measure ? . will these question can be answered by this stages of the classification to Practicality,Reliability and Validity .

3.2.1 Validity

According to Al- Juboury (1999 :24) validity is the degree to which a test measure what it's supposed to measure or can be used successfully for the purpose for which it is intended .

There four kinds of validity .

1-Content validity : it refers to the extent of the test , in which the good test should cover all the material to be tested.

2-Empirical validity : means if we went to achieve the effectiveness and quality of the test , the test score must be linked to some criteria including the scores given at the end of the course or according to the teachers judgment on his students or exams .

3-Face validity : which means the way the test looks to supervisors or specialists the research fulfilled the face validity by exposing test to the jonry mempers when the test provide by them it will have face validity. To fullfil the face validity ,the test is exposed to university teachers of English Department as follows:

- 1- prof. Dr. Riyadh Al-Ameedi (Ph.D.).
- 2- Asst. Prof. Sadiq Al-shamiri (Ph.D.).
- 3- Asst. Prof. Dunya Ijam (M.A.).

4-Construct validity : means the test is designed according to the theory of language behavior and education .

3.2.2 Reliability

According to Al- Juboury (1999 :24) reliability means the stability of the test scores presumably , if the same test is given twice to the same group of students , under the same conditions , it would give the same results.

For this definition we have four elements they are :

1-Multiple Samples : it means that the larger size of the test , the more tasks the students have to solve , therefore the test should be long enough to provide a suitable sample of the area under test.

2-Standard Conditions :it means that all students will complete the test under the same conditions for example in the listening test , all students must be able to hear the item clearly .

3-Standard Tasks : means all students must get the same items or items of the same difficulty.

4-Standard Scoring : means the test should be scored in an identical manner , if the test scores are different , you should give the same score for the same performance.

3.2.3 Practicality

According to Al- Juboury (1999 : 28) this feature of the evaluation it is practicality or usefulness . The test is reliable but difficult to evaluate or expensive may not be acceptable . two kinds involved :

1-Economy : means the cost in money , time and also in the staff of administering the test.

2-Ease : this refers to difficulty when taking and scoring the test . For example in an oral exams requiring the use of tape recorders are not practical if it has given to thousands of students

3.3The Design of The Test

The test will be for thirty students from Department of English / College of Education for Human Sciences / University of Babylon / during the academic year 2022 – 2023 .

The test includes one question on the production level , it consists of twenty items .

Chapter four

The Results

4.1 Results of the test.

Table (1) shows the percentages of the direct and indirect speech act responses while the totally number of the direct responses are

(68,67%) and the indirect speech act responses are (32,32%).

According to this totally number the students use direct speech act more than indirect speech act.

Table (1) The Direct and Indirect Responses and Their Percentages.

No.Of items	No.Of direct responses	Percentage %	No. Of indirect responses	Percentage %
1	8	27%	7	23%
2	11	37%	3	10%
3	6	20%	8	27%
4	10	33%	4	13%
5	11	37%	4	13%
6	12	40%	3	10%
7	14	47%	1	3%
8	9	30%	6	20%
9	7	23%	8	27%
10	11	37%	4	13%
11	14	47%	1	3%
12	6	20%	9	30%
13	14	47%	1	3%
14	10	33%	5	17%
15	8	27%	7	23%
16	10	33%	5	17%
17	12	40%	3	10%
18	10	33%	5	17%
19	10	33 %	5	17%
20	8	27%	7	23%
Totally	201	671%	96	319%

In item (1), eight (27%) students response directly and seven (23%) responses are indirect speech act .The students use direct and indirect speech act in item one but they use direct more than indirect speech act.

Like : Thanks and Thank you.

In item (2), eleven (37%) students response use direct speech act three (10%) students response in indirect speech. In this situation, The students use direct more than indirect speech act because they find this situation more important and It happens frequently in their daily lives.

In item (3), six (20%) students use direct speech act and eight (27%) students response in indirect speech. In this situation the students use indirect speech more than indirect speech act . One of them use direct while the other use indirect speech.

In item (4), ten (33%) response in direct speech act and four (13%) students response in indirect speech act. They use direct more than indirect speech.

In item (5), eleven (37%) students response in direct and four (13%) students response in indirect speech. They use direct more than indirect speech. In this situation use direct speech is important because we used to use direct speech in the same situation.

In item (6), twelve (40%) students response in direct and three (10%) use indirect speech. They use direct speech more than indirect speech in this situation.

In item (7), fourteen (47%) students response in direct and one (3%) use indirect speech act. They use direct speech more than indirect speech act . They find the use of direct is more acceptable or more important in this situation.

In item (8), nine (30%) students response in direct and six (20%) response in indirect speech act. They use direct speech more than indirect speech in this situation.

In item (9), seven(23%) students response in direct speech and eight (27%) response in indirect speech act . In this situation, they use indirect speech more than direct speech act . Like: your support means the world.

In item (10), eleven (37%) students response in direct and four (13%) response in indirect speech. They use direct more than indirect speech act.

In item (11), fourteen (47%) students response in direct and one (3%) use indirect speech. The most students response direct speech act perhaps they find it more easy or more common or they used to use it . Like: Thank you very much.

In item (12), six (20%) students response in direct and nine (30%) response indirect speech. They use indirect speech more than direct speech act perhaps they find use indirect more acceptable than direct in this situation. Like :accept my endless gratitude .

In item (13), fourteen (47%) students response in direct and one (3%) use indirect speech. They use direct more than indirect speech because this situation usually happen with them and they used to use direct with it .

In item (14) ,ten (33%) response in direct and five (17%) response in indirect speech. They use direct more than indirect speech act in this situation.

In item (15), eight (27%) students response in direct and seven (23%) responses indirect speech acts . The students use direct and indirect but they use direct more than indirect speech act .

In item (16), ten (33%) response in direct and five (17%) response in indirect speech. They use direct and indirect but they use direct more than indirect speech act in this situation.

In item (17), twelve (40%) students response in direct and three (10%) use indirect speech. They use direct speech more than indirect speech in this situation.I think with this situation the direct is more acceptable than indirect .

In item (18) , ten (33%) response in direct and five (17%) response in indirect speech. They use direct more than indirect speech act in this situation.

In item (19),ten (33%) response in direct and five (17%) response in indirect speech. They use direct more than indirect speech act in this situation. Perhaps they use direct speech act because this situation is frequently happen with them .

In item (20), eight (27%) students response in direct and seven (23%) responses indirect speech acts . The students use direct and indirect speech act . In this situation some of them use direct and the other use indirect but they use direct more than indirect speech

Chapter five

Conclusions

According to the analysis of the results of the test , the following conclusions have been drawn:

1-the students can differentiate between direct and indirect speech act of Thanking.

2-The students use direct and indirect speech act of Thanking . Direct speech act ,like :

Thank you, Thanks and Thank you very much .

Indirect speech act,like : I appreciate you being in my life , A gorgeous as always , That is so nice of you and I am glad with you .

3-Iraqi EFL learners do not face difficulty in using direct speech act of Thanking expressions. They use different expressions of Thanking like : Thank , thanks and thank you very much .

4-Iraqi EFL learners face difficulty in using thanking expressions especially in the way of indirect speech act. The reason may be they don't know how to express their feelings and they use direct more than indirect speech act.

5-The results of the test was good and this related to everyday the Iraqi EFL learners use thanking expressions and they use thanking expressions in better way may be the reason of that the students was in final stage and they have culture in the ways of situations.

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Appendix I

(The Test)

Question/ write different responses using Thanking expressions for the following situations:

1-Your professor grants you an extension to submit a term paper. When you turn in the paper, what do you say to him/her?	
2-You come to the class, say greeting to your friend and seating near the front of the lecturers' table. At the same time, you ask your friend to take your chair. You seat to the front, and your friend takes it and gives it.. What do you say to him/her?	
3.On your way to class, you accidentally drop your notes and a student you do not know helps you pick them. What do you say to him/her?	
4.You are having lunch with a friend in a restaurant. When you are about to settle the bill you realize that you left your wallet at home. Your friend pays for your lunch. What do you say to him/her?	
5.On the table in the class room, there is a dirty thing on your clothes and your friend takes it. You keep smile and say something good.. What do you say to him/her?	
6.You share an apartment with a friend. You are both sitting and relaxing in the living room. You ask your friend to hand you the newspaper which is nearby . Your friend gives you the newspaper.. What do you say to him/her?	
7.In the end of the class, the lecture closes the class and gives the some homeworks for next meeting, but leave the class, he shares and explains what should do for the homework.. What do you say to him/her?	
8.You learn Drama subject. At the time your group are going to present the paper of your	

<p>topic. But You do not come on time because your house is far from the campus then your members of your group have presented your papers.. What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>9.In the end of semester, You must pay your semester cost. You do not have money. You talk to your friend Your friend borrow the money by using the check.. What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>10.At classroom, you tell to your friend to bring your bag. She agrees about this and then she comes back to the class again. Then she takes your bag and brings it to your places.. What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>11.At the table in a restaurant a friend says, you have something on your face.’ You ask where. Your friend tells you. You rub your face and ask,’Is it off?’ your friend says that it is.. What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>12.It is Friday. You look in your wallet, only to notice that you only have no more than 10 TL. One of your good friends notices this and hears you say, “I have to ask money to my family”. Upon That, your friend offers to lend you the money you need for shopping.What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>13.In the supermarket, you ask the cashier to bag your groceries. He does this and then turns to begin serving the next customer. You pay and pick up your bags to leave.. What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>14.At the table in a restaurant a friend says, you have something on your face.’ You ask where. Your friend tells you. You rub your face and ask,’Is it off?’ your friend says that it is.. What do you say to him/her?</p>	
<p>15.You board the bus, pay your money and take a seat near the front of the bus. Just before your Stop, you guess that the driver is not going to stop. You move to the front, and ask the driver to</p>	

stop, and he Stops.. What do you say to him/her?	
16- You learn at your classroom seriously. The lecturer gives some question of the previous lesson. The lecturer asks you to answer the questions. You can not answer correctly and nervous, Because you have only been answering some questions. The lecturer says “nice answer”. In fact, the answer is not correctly full. What do you say to him/her?	
17-In classroom break time, your friend advices to get out to have lunch. But You do not care about that because you do not have enough money, and your friend know about yours. He said “I will pay You, don’t matter about the money”. Then you go to the restaurant happily. What do you say to him/her?	
18-In one conversation in the class. You perform the new style of your. It is your favorite one . Your classmate feels something different with you and he said “are you there? There is something cool. What do you say to him/her?	
19-Out the class , you share the slide of your presentation to your friend. You are both discussing and debating the topic. You ask your lecture to hand you explaining the topic. Your lecture gives you more understanding. What do you say to him/her?	
20-in one day, you look to your face become tired and not beautiful but your friend say you are beautiful in every time . What do you say to him/her?	

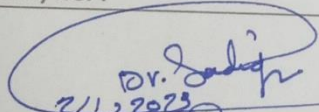
the restaurant happily.. What do you say to him/her?	
16. In one conversation in the class . You perform the new style of your. It is your favourite one . Your classmate feels something different with you and he said "are you there"? There is something cool. . What do you say to him/her?	
17. Out the class, you share the slide of your presentation to your friend. You are both discussing and debating the topic. You ask your lecturer to hand you explaining the topic. Your lecturer gives you more understanding.. What do you say to him/her? <i>lecturer</i>	
18. you learn at your classroom seriously. The lecturer gives some questions of the previous lesson. The lecturer asks you to answer the questions. You can't answer correctly and nervous, because you have only been answering some questions. The lecturer says "nice answer" . In fact the answer is no correctly full.. What do you say to him/her?	

you become

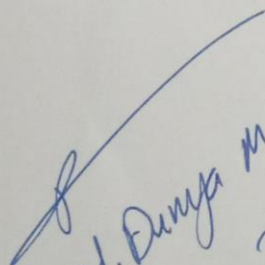
Use ~~10-15~~ situations only

Dr. T. M. A. M. A.
2.2.2023

about yours. He said "I will pay you , don't matter about the money". Then you go to the restaurant happily.. What do you say to him/her?	
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26/11/2023