

Types and Functions of Fillers Used by Indonesian Celebrities in Seleb English Youtube Videos

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Abstract— When an individual is conversing with a friend or others, attending a lecture, or listening to a public speech, he or she is likely to hear some types of filler. This is used as a strategy to improve credibility which includes slowing down, pausing to collect thoughts, or enhancing preparation beforehand. Descriptive qualitative method was implemented in this research. The objective study is to answer the research question: what types and functions of fillers are used by Indonesian celebrities in Seleb English youtube videos. The researchers applied Rose's theory in investigating the types of fillers and the theory by Stenström to analyze the functions of fillers. The data were taken from youtube videos of Sacha Stevenson in Seleb English section. The finding of the research revealed that from the total number of each type of fillers, the most frequently used were uh for 12 times (32.44%), followed by like in the second position for 8 times appeared (21.62%). Then, filler emm in the third position with the number of occurrences 6 (16.22%). On another hand, the most frequent filler functions as filling pause with the number of occurrences 25. Some Indonesian celebrities are fluent in English because they were born in mixed marriage, experienced leaving in overseas, or even had been in a great quality of schools that affects the fluency of speaking English that runs the conversation by using fillers smoothly.

Keywords—fillers, types of fillers, functions of fillers, youtube

I. INTRODUCTION

The usage of filler words pervades our society in virtually all aspects of speech. It is applied when an individual is conversing with others, attending a lecture, or listening to a public speech or even a talkshow, he or she is likely to hear some types of filler. When someone is speaking, she or he uses fillers as a strategy to improve credibility include slowing down, pausing to collect thoughts, or enhancing preparation beforehand. However, when a speaker overuses the filler words, it is showing that speaker is inexperienced or lack mastery of the materials or subjects he or she delivered. It also makes the audience get hardship to comprehend the main message of the topic.

In spoken interaction, people often produce ee..., err..., ehm..., or well, you know, I mean, kind of, and similar expressions. According to Baalen (2001:7) [1], these kinds of utterances are called fillers. He defines fillers as sounds or

words or phrases that could appear anywhere in the utterance and that could be deleted from the utterance without a change in content.

Learning English as a compulsory subject in Indonesia is done from primary to high school level. However, the fluency of English depends on different factors for everyone who learns it. Some Indonesian celebrities are fluent in English because they were born in mixed marriage, experienced leaving overseas, or even had been in a great quality of schools. And fillers they use might be unlike people who have not similar background with them.

The sample the analysis are presented as following:

The kids we saw today that I had a chance to spend time with in Mary's classroom; uhm they're some of the lucky ones...

In an example above, there was uhm which classified as unlexicalized filled pauses. It was because the utterance was not a word and did not have meaning that had function as filling pause before delivered the next sentence.

This is not babysitting, right.

The word right had the meaning but it was still considered as lexicalized filled pause because those words were not important as a part of their sentence. Therefore, whether those words were in the sentence or not, they could not change the meaning of the sentence which that filler as empathizing purpose usually appeared at the beginning or at the end of a sentence.

Pamolango (2015) [2], carried a study in his research *Types and Functions of Fillers Used by The Female Teacher and Lecturer in Surabaya*, the research adopted a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on the types and the functions of fillers. The researcher found that the female lecturer produces fewer fillers than the female teacher. The female teacher produced 346 fillers in the teaching process, while the female lecturer produced 665 fillers in the teaching process. The data showed that both the female teacher and lecturer produced more unlexicalized than the lexicalized fillers. In the function of the fillers, the writer found that the types of fillers produced by both the female teacher and lecturer had the functions as a holder the turn, as a mark of hesitation, as empathizers, as

time-creating devices, and as an editing term. As a conclusion, the writer concludes that the situation in the teaching process affects the types and the functions of the fillers.

Another previous study related to this research is in *The Types and The Functions of The Fillers Used in Barack Obama's Speeches* by Kharismawan (2017) [3]. The results of this study showed that there were two types of fillers; those were unlexicalized filled pause and lexical filled pause. This study also showed five functions of fillers, namely hesitating, empathizing, mitigating, editing term, and time-creating devices. Based on those findings, the researcher concluded that fillers are not always considered as distraction of speaking. As the learners of foreign language, we should know the fillers not only as a distraction of speaking but also as the way to improve our interaction.

A study by Navratilova (2015) [4] in *Fillers Used By Male And Female Students Of English Education Study Program in Argumentative Talks*. This research was descriptive research. The research found out that the male and female students produced unlexicalized fillers as the most frequently used, followed by lexicalized fillers. Both of male and female students produced fillers in order to fill pause, to hesitate, to hold conversation turn, to emphasize, to mitigate, to interrupt, and to edit their speech error. All those function of fillers proposed by Strenstrom were used by male and female students in their talks. In addition, Filling pause was the most frequently function used by male and female students, followed by fillers as a mark of hesitation. Thus, there were similarities both in types and functions used by male and female students. However, the researcher found female students produced more fillers than men did. This maybe due to women tend to speak less certainty compared to male.

Based on the background above, researcher formulated the problems of study as following: What types and functions of fillers are used by Indonesian celebrities in *Seleb English* youtube videos?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Fillers

Erten (2014) [5] states that fillers are discourse markers that speakers use when they think or hesitate during their speech. Fillers are used by the speaker to fill the time while he or she is elaborating the next topic or sentence. Moreover, Santos, Alarcon, and Pablo (2015) [6] define fillers or also called pausing or hesitation as phenomena that commonly occur as feature of natural speech which appears during the production of expressing words. It can be concluded that it is normal for the speaker to use fillers in speaking. It is supported by the idea from Richards and Schmidt (2012) [7], they believe that half of someone's speaking time is filled with pauses.

Stenström (1994) [8] believes that a filler is lexically an empty item with uncertain discourse functions, except to fill a conversational gap. It means that filler commonly occurs to mark hesitation or to hold control of a conversation while the speaker thinks what to say next.

B. Types of Fillers

Stenström (1994) [8], categorized fillers into two types; those are a silent pause and a filled pause. On the other hand, Rose (1998) [9] also divides the filled pauses into two types. The first one is an unlexicalized filled pauses and the second is a lexicalized filled pause.

Unlexicalized filled pauses are non-lexemes (non-words) filled pauses which speakers use to indicate hesitation while the speaker think what to say next utterances [9][1]. In addition, Baalen [1] also gives some examples of unlexicalized filled pauses, such as ehm, uh, err, ee, ah, um, and so on.

Rose (1998) [9], claims that lexicalized filled pauses are fillers in the form of word or short phrases, such as like, well, yeah, sort of, you know, if you see what I mean, and so on. On the other hand, Baalen (2001) [1] also states a similar statement that lexicalized filled pauses consist of the phrases you know and I mean which are mostly used when a speaker is grouping for words but does not want to give up the claim to the floor. Furthermore, she suggests that one type of the fillers is like (when it is not used as verb or preposition) and well (not in the initial position).

C. Functions of Fillers

Schiffirin (1978) [10] argues that fillers have various functions which depend on the situation of the speaker. The use of a filler only helps the way of speaking, not the meaning in the communication. However, Corley and Stewart (2008) [11] describe that deliberating fillers in the sense of communication function is not certain. Therefore, fillers are used when the speaker is uncertain about his/her next utterance or he/she has choices to make in his utterance

Strenstrom in Kurwanto (2011) [12], states that there are seven functions of fillers, they are filling pause, mark of hesitating, holding turn, empathizing, interrupting, mitigating and editing term.

D. Youtube

YouTube is an American online video-sharing platform. It becomes the largest user-driven video content provider in the world. It is more accessible to the general population, video self-publishing sites such as youtube have cropped up worldwide.

Zhu (2012) [13], believes that youtube is a key international platform for socially-enabled media diffusion. According to public statistics, more than 48 hours of video content is uploaded every minute and 3 billion views are generated every day. To complement the content broadcast/consume experience, youtube connects seamlessly with major online social networks (OSNs) such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ to facilitate off-site diffusion. In fact, 12 million users have linked their YouTube account with at least one such OSN for auto-sharing, and more than 150 videos of YouTube content is watched on Facebook every day.

Berger (2012) [14] states that these websites provide a potential data source for researchers who are interested in the

perspectives, interactions, and recording practices of people from diverse backgrounds and locations. Students in particular could benefit from YouTube as a source of data, as they may have a short period of time in which they can collect data.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative approach based on theoretical and analytical frameworks. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) [15], suggested that the written word was very important in qualitative research to record data and disseminate the findings. The focus on this study would like to investigate the types of fillers used by Indonesian celebrities in *Seleb English* youtube videos which as the object of this research. *Seleb English* is one of the sections in the youtube channel of Sacha Stevenson. She is a Canadian youtuber who makes bilingual vlogs for and Indonesian audience. There were 7 videos which used in this research. They were published on April 21 2018, April 24 2018, May 1 2018, May 4 2018, May 8 2018, May 22 2018, and June 25 2018.

The utterances of the Indonesian celebrities in *Seleb English* youtube videos containing the fillers were then transcribed, and being the data in this research. After transcribed, the utterances relate to the fillers were analyzed in terms of the types and functions of fillers, based on the theories. This research used theories by Strenstrom and Rose [8][9].

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A. Data Analysis

This research used two types of fillers by Rose to investigate fillers used by Indonesian celebrities and function of fillers by Strenstrom. All types of fillers by Rose were applied in utterances of Indonesian celebrities in *Seleb English* youtube videos. There were 37 data which would be analyzed. In this study researchers found:

- *Types of Fillers*

Lexicalized Fillers

Lexicalized fillers are fillers in the form of short phrases, such as sort of, you know, if you see what I mean, etc. Moreover, one type of fillers, which is similar to the lexicalized fillers, is verbal fillers consist of well, I mean, sort of, I think. Furthermore, one of the scholars mentioned that one type of the fillers is like (when it is not used as verb or preposition) and well (not in the initial position).

Data 1

You know, working towards a better situation together..

There words you know appeared in the utterances of *Seleb English* videos which was in the form of phrase which occurred 3 times. Those examples also had the meaning but they were still considered as lexicalized filler because those words were

not important as a part of their sentence. Therefore, whether those words were in the sentence or not, they could not change the meaning of the sentence.

Data 2

I don't believe in relationship. I mean, I, It's kinda stabid for me to say..because I've only been in one, and it was a long distance relationship.

As found in the utterance above, the use of I mean is in the form of phrase that has meaning but it will not change the content of the sentences.

Data 3

Like it's 25 hours flight from my country, Indonesia

Among those lexicalized fillers, like is the most frequently used for 8 occurrences. The types of Lexicalized fillers produced by the Indonesian celebrities in answering questions in English were repetitive word that functioned as the filler. It had the meaning but it was not important as a part of the sentences.

Data 4

But yeah like thanks God we can do it

Data 4 shows the word yeah had meaning but it will not change the content of the sentence.

Data 5

Likes really complex like uh still uh uh still good with uh the movement, right.

The word right is type of Lexicalized filler that had the meaning but it was not important as a part of the sentence.

Data 6

My opinion about good neighbor is the one that really takes care of the other neighbor, I think.

Data 6 showed the lexicalized filler. It is in the sentence but whether those words were in the sentence or not, they could not change the meaning of the sentence.

Data 7

It's like, it gives me chill. I didn't notice at the first time.

The phrase it's like shows the lexicalized filler. It is in the sentence but whether those words were in the sentence or not, they could not change the meaning of the sentence.

Unlexicalized Fillers

Unlexicalized fillers are fillers with contain of lexical empty such as ee, erm, err, emm, and eh. Unlexicalized fillers are nonlexemes (non-words) fillers pauses which speakers use to indicate hesitation while the speaker thinks what to say next utterances.

Data 8

I got a chance to really meet in person these great people and see what they have and as their opinion, their real genuine opinion of emm other issues.

In data 8, there was emm which classified as unlexicalized filler. It was because the utterance was not a word and did not have meaning. It appeared in the utterances of Seleb English videos which was in the form of phrase which occurred 6 times.

Data 9

In Indonesia you've basically uh bond with music.

In data 9, there was uh which classified as unlexicalized filler. It was because the utterance was nonlexemes (non-words) fillers and did not have meaning. In lexicalized fillers, uh is the most frequently used for 12 occurrences.

Data 10

So "Damn I love Indonesia" as uhm basically we have one mission in mind ..

Data 10 showed there was uhm which classified as unlexicalized filler. It was because the utterance was nonlexemes (non-words) fillers and did not have meaning which appeared 3 times.

• *Functions of Fillers*

In this research, the researchers presented and discussed five functions of the fillers in the spoken interaction mainly based on the theories of Stenström [8], that is, fillers function as a filling pause, as a mark of hesitating, empathizing, mitigating, and editing term.

Filling Pause

Data 11

In Indonesia you've basically uh bond with music..

The using of filler uh in the middle of sentence functions as filling space in order the speaker took time to prepare for the next utterances in conversation. Among those functions of fillers, filling pause is the most frequently used for 25 occurrences

Mark of Hesitating

Data 12

But where you'll be traveling uhh elsewhere besides Jakarta? Will you be going to Bali?

Based on the context of utterance, speaker used that filler showing hesitation to decide the question asked to listener where the place would to go. In this research found 5 times filler functions as mark of hesitating used.

Empathizing

Data 13

My opinion about good neighbor is the one that really takes care of the other neighbor, I think

Data 13 showed that the speaker showed her/his empathize through his/her opinion, and this function of filler as empathizing purpose of the utterance usually appeared at the beginning or at the end of a sentence. This function of filler in the research used for 4 times.

Mitigating

Data 14

It's like, it gives me chill I didn't notice at the first time.

Data 14 showed that the speaker expressed her/his feeling of ease of something that had been realized after it has done which could be seen on the next utterance. Mitigating function of filler in the research used for 2 times.

Editing Term

Data 15

I don't believe in relationship. I mean, I, It's kinda stabid for me to say because I've only been in one, and it was a long distance relationship.

Fillers are used to correct the speech errors in the utterances' speakers. The phrase I mean, could indicate the speaker's awareness of the speech error followed by her/his attempt to correct or edit it. Sometimes, the speaker also repeats the speech error directly. The speaker used filler in utterance to avoid misunderstanding of his/her previous utterance.

B. Findings

Types of Fillers

After analyzing all data in *Seleb English* youtube videos by using theory the types of fillers by Rose, the findings can be presented as the following:

TABLE I. TABLE TYPES OF FILLERS

No	Fillers	Types of Fillers		Percentage
		Unlexicalized	Lexiclixed	
1	Uh	12		32.44
2	Like		8	21.62
3	Emm	6		16.22
4	You know		3	8.11
5	Uhm	3		8.11
6	I mean		1	2.70
7	Yeah		1	2.70
8	Right		1	2.70
9	I think		1	2.70
10	It's like		1	2.70
		21	16	
Total			37	100

The table above shows that Indonesian celebrities used two types of fillers, which are lexicalized and unlexicalized fillers. In this research, types of fillers used the most frequently were unlexicalized fillers with the number of occurrences 21, then lexicalized fillers with the number of occurrences 16. From the total number of each type of fillers, the most frequently used were uh for 12 times (32.44%), followed by like in the second position for 8 times appeared (21.62%). Then, filler emm in the third position with the number of occurrences 6 (16.22%).

Functions of Fillers

This section delivered the functions of fillers used in *Seleb English* youtube videos by using theory by Stenström. The following table will be presented to see the differences that will be found:

TABLE II. TABLE FUNCTIONS OF FILLERS

No	Function of Fillers	Frequency	Percentage
1	Filling pause	25	67.57
2	Mark of Hesitating	5	13.51
3	Empatizing	4	10.81
4	Mitigating	2	5.41
5	Editing term	1	2.70
6	Interrupting	-	0
7	Holding turn	-	0
Total		37	100

Based on the table above showed that the use of fillers in this research applied in five functions, those are as filling pause, as mark of hesitating, as empathizing, as mitigating, and as editing term. Among those functions, filling pause is the most frequently used by Indonesian celebrities in *Seleb English* youtube videos with the number of occurrences 25 (67.57%).

V. CONCLUSION

This research attempted to investigate types of fillers used by Indonesian celebrities in *Seleb English* youtube videos that produced fillers in different functions. The analysis and findings of this research showed that there were two types of fillers used; those were unlexicalized filler and lexicalized filler. Unlexicalized fillers appeared 21 times, on other hand lexicalized filler appeared 16 times. Furthermore, this research also applied five out seven functions of fillers, namely filling pause, mark of hesitating, empathizing, mitigating, and editing term. The most frequent filler used by Indonesian celebrities was unlexicalized filler that had function as filling pause youtube videos with the number of occurrences 25.

The aims of this research are to introduce the types and the functions of fillers and to increase learners' awareness and

comprehension of fillers when they hesitate in using foreign language, which is actually the very nature of speaking. Learning fillers also help FL learner to master the language and to choose fillers which more comfortable to use in conversation so learning process runs smoothly. Without using fillers, the conversation would be awkward and too formal. It is also expected that this research will contribute in development of the theory especially for EFL learners.

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