Speech Pauses Used by Male and Female Students in English Oral Examination

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Abstract- **The objective of this descriptive qualitative study were to discover the types of speech pauses used by male and female students in English oral examination. The subject of the study was class XI of MAS Pesantren Arraudhatul Hasanah Medan which had been choosen randomly. The data were obtained from the recorded conversation of English oral examination and then were transcribed. The data were the male and female students utterances in English oral examination. The data were identified, analyzed and categorized based on theory of Rose (1998), Clack & Tree (2002) in relation to the theory of Tottie (2001) about the concept of gender and speech pauses. The finding of the study showed that there were 3 types of speech pause that could be found in both data of the utterances of male and female students, namely 1) silent pause, 2) unlexicalized filled pause, and 3) lexicalized filled pause. Silent pause was the most frequently type used by male and female students.**

Keywords: Speech Pause, Oral Examination

I. INTRODUCTION

Since speaking foreign language is not easy, sometimes people make some pauses during speaking. The phenomena of speech pause has been examined in terms of linguistic and social factors. On the whole, it is worth mentioning that the uses of pauses have been studied by native and non-native speakers of English as well [1]

The oral examination is a practice in many schools and disciplines in which an examiner poses questions to the student in spoken form. The students have to answer the question in such a way as to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the subject to pass the exam. There are some good points of oral examination, it can assess the strengths and students knowledge because it is done by face to face, if the question opposed by the examiner is not clear yet, the students could ask, and the teacher can directly know the competency of the student. It is also very useful to encourage the students to learn seriously.

Based on researcher's observation, many students of Pesantren Arraudhatul Hasanah frequently used pauses in their speech during having their oral examination, as can be seen in the following excerpt.

T   : Furqon, where do you come from?
S   : I come from … Medan City Consulate
T   : what is the most popular place in Medan?
S   : the popular is … cake
T   : ha (filled pause)? what? what is the most popular place to visit in Medan?
S   : Mercy

From the conversation above, it can be seen that the student made some pauses without uttering any word even voice. This kind of pause considered as silent pause.

The following example could account the unlexicalized-filled pause.

T   : coconut is coklat? So your father is a manager?
S   : *eee*, yes, my father is the manager over there
T   : manager in PT Hervinta before Pinang Awan before Rasyid. Ok do you know PT Asam Jawa?
S   : yaa

Based on the example, the vocal 'ee' was also used by the student when he answered the questions. The student used this vocal when he wanted to start his sentence or in the beginning of the sentence. This vocalization is considered as unlexicalized filled pause, because of its function as the filler of pause and it is not a word.

A situation in oral examination room of Pesantren Arraudhatul Hasanah can also create the use of lexicalized-filled pause; for instance:

T   : you can see the government of north sumatera to day and what is your suggestion for them in order to make this city become better .
S   : *aaa maybe* I will … suggest them to make many *… to make many …*
T   : for example?
S   *: I mean aaa* provide the job for people who is jobless.
T   : ok, now we talk about food. What is the best food in Medan city you have eaten.
S   : I have tried in Medan city, there is no the real food from medan, *I mean* the original food from Medan
T   : what is the delicious food you found in this city? your favorite one?

S   : *maybe aaa* mie Aceh.

In this situation the student used the word I mean and maybe. The two expressions indicate that the students use lexicalized filled pause in English oral examination.

The objective of this research is:
1. To describe the types of speech pause used by students in English oral examination.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Pauses are period of silence that occur between linguistic units of an utterance. Pauses are period of breaks that occur during speaking in any duration. Those pauses can be empty or filled set of a words or repetitions to recover disfluency in speaking[2]. Pauses can be added in many places of speech, pauses can be added before or during speaking, or after somebody has spoken and can be desired and intended or it can appear without conscious effort. They appear before or after entire speech acts, sentences, clauses, or words, but tends to occur at significant grammatical locations [3].

A. *Types of Pause*

There are three types of speech pause, namely silent pause, unlexicalized filled pause, and lexicalized filled pause[3].

B. *Silent Pause*

Silent pause is marked by the existence of an empty time any periods while speaking. It is a rest of time in speech production during any duration. These pauses are important for both the speakers and the listeners, that it helps the speaker organize what he/she wants to say, and give time to the hearer to think about what is said. They perform the action of making the boundaries of words in addition to being interactional devices and they mark emphasis [4]

C. *Unlexicalized Filled Pause*

The first type, *Unlexicalized* filled pause, are non-lexemes (non-words) filled pause which speakers use while the speaker think what next utterances to say. Some examples of unlexicalized with any of the following phonetic combinations are /a/, /am/, /u/, /um/, /e/, /em/, /m/. *Ehm*, *uh*, *err*, *ee*, *ah*, *um* and other vocalizations which belong to unlexicalized filled pause are the easiest sounds which made while having a speaking.

D. *Lexicalized Filled Pause*

Lexicalized filled pause is the second structural type of filled pause. This should not be confused with the unlexicalized which is discussed previously. Lexicalized filled pause could be identify easily with the expressions like 'well', 'so', 'okay', and 'let's see'. 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.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research applied descriptive qualitative research method, The present study employed a qualitative research design in order to classify the occurence of speech pause based on its category used by students of in their English oral examination.

Thus, the report of this study was in the form of description of what had been found from the data of the study. The setting is natural, which means researcher do not do anything with the object of the study. The reseracher just finds out how the phenomenon happen.

The source of the data of this study are taken from students' utterances in English oral examination. The utterances considered as data were students' speech those contain speech pause. Therefore, the utterances that do not contain pauses are excluded from the data. To collecting the data, the researcher observed and recorded all the activity to take the visualization and the speech used by the participants in English oral examination.

The data were analyzed through three procedures, namely (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing or verification [5].

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this research, it was found that there were 310 occurrences of speech pause in which each could show the types of pause used by female and male students.

a. The three types of pause could be found in both male and female students' utterances, namely a) silent pause, b) unlexicalized filled pause, and c) lexicalized filled pause

b. Silent pause was the most frequently type used by male and female student with 117 occurances compared to 95 occurances.

c. 17 occurences of unlexicalized filled pause occurred in male students' speech and 67 occurences in female students'. All forms of unlexicalized filled pause are performed by male and female students in English oral examination, namely 1) aa, 2) ee, 3) em, and 4) oh, which the last form was only found in male utterances

d. The percentage of teachers utterances represented as the following;

		Male	**%**	**Female**	**%**
Silent Pause		117	80	95	57
Unlexicalized Filled Pause	Form aa	6	4	15	9
	Form ee	10	7	40	24
	Form em	3	2	12	7
	Form oh	1	0.5	-	-
Lexicalized Filled Pause	Form like	2	1	-	-
	Form like this	1	0.5	-	-

Form okay	1	0.5	-	-
Form I mean	2	1	1	0.5
Form I think	2	1	2	1
Total	**145**		**165**	

V. CONCLUSION REMARK

Most of the pause form were used in oral English examination which suggested that the use of pause was indicated as disfluency marker applied by both students. The three types of pause could be found in both male and female students' utterances, namely a) silent pause, b) unlexicalized filled pause, and c) lexicalized filled pause. However, in terms of the type, male students used more silent pause (80% compared to 13.5% and 4%) and female employed more silent pause (57% compared to 40 % and 1.5%).

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