TYPES AND FUNCTIONS OF FILLERS USED BY THE FEMALE TEACHER AND LECTURER IN SURABAYA

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Abstract. This research deals with the production of fillers used by teacher and lecturer in the teaching process. The study involved two subjects: one female teacher and one female lecturer in Surabaya. The problems to be examined in the study were the types, the frequency of occurrences and the functions of fillers used by the two subjects. In the study, the writer mainly adopted Rose's (1998) theory on the types of fillers, combined with similar notions on the types and functions of fillers from Stenström (1994) and Baalen (2001). The the study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on the types and the functions of fillers. As the source of data, the writer took two class meetings, in which each teaching process was done by the two subjects. In the data analysis, the writer 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. Secondly, 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.

Key words: *spoken discourse, classroom interaction, types and functions of fillers*

INTRODUCTION

Fillers and other phenomena of spoken interaction have been dealt with in discourse analysis, a primarily a branch of linguistic study examining the use of language by its native population whose major concern is investigating language functions along with its forms, produced both orally and in writing. Moreover, identification of linguistic qualities of various genres, vital for their recognition and interpretation, together with cultural and social aspects that support its comprehension, is the domain of discourse analysis. To put it in another way, the branch of applied linguistics dealing with the examination of discourse attempts to find patterns in communicative products as well as and their correlation with the circumstances in which they occur, which are not explainable at the grammatical level (Carter, 1993:23).

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), 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. Simply defined, Yule (2006:242) identifies fillers as a break in the flow of speech. Most people produce fillers in their spoken interaction. Here are some examples:

(1) A: "What do you do to enjoy your free time? *I mean* on the weekend."

B: "*Umm, You know* I don't have much free time although at the weekend. *Actually*, I want to go to vacation."

According to Stenström (1994:222), filler is lexically an empty item with uncertain discourse functions, except to fill a conversational gap. It means that filler commonly occurs to mark of hesitation or to hold control of a conversation while the speaker thinks what to say next. In the next explanation, the writer would present about

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the kinds of fillers and the frequencies of the fillers used by the male and female lecturer.

Fillers in spoken interaction can be divided into two types (Rose, 1998). The first type is 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. Stenström (1994) also said that one type of fillers, which is similar to the lexicalized fillers, is verbal fillers consist of *well, I mean, sort of.* Furthermore, Baalen (2001) 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).

The focus of this research is the use of fillers in academic settings that are produced by lecturers as they deliver their lectures in classes. A brief observation of the teaching situation shows that there are a lot of fillers being used, for example, *uh, umm, oh, you know, well*, etc. The situation of the teaching process can affect the production of fillers by the male and female lecturers. This study specifically focuses on the fillers, which are common or appear in teaching process. The reason for the selection is because the feature of people's speech, such as pitch, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, vary not only at different gender, but also at different ages (Holmes, 1992).

This research aims to pose the following questions:
1. What are the types and the frequencies of the fillers used by the female teacher and lecturer in Surabaya?
2. What are the functions of the fillers used by the female teacher and lecturer in Surabaya?

This study is expected to give more insights on the mechanism of spoken interaction, and on the particular roles of fillers in maintaining the flow of conversation.

METHOD

This section discussed the details of some steps that the writer used in performing the analysis. The steps discussed in this chapter are the research design, data collection, and data analysis.

The study will be conducted by using descriptive qualitative approach since it intended to analyze more on words than numbers and the findings of this research were reported in the form of statement as Bogdan and Biklen (1982:28) say that the written word is very important in qualitative research to record data and disseminate the findings.

As the source of data, the writer recorded the female teacher and lecturer utterances for the whole class meeting in natural setting. The writer did an analysis based on the utterances of the subjects. The writer uses one teacher and lecturer as his subjects. The teaching process occurred about 90 minutes and the writer observe the teaching process in one class meeting for the teacher and lecturer, it means the writer only record once for each class meeting. He took the data from two teaching processes that occurred about 90 minutes each. The teaching process would be taken in one class meeting that consisted of twenty to thirty students as the audience and they had probability to interrupt the teacher or lecturer. Then, the data would be the utterances from the female teacher and lecturer which contained fillers.

RESULT

The result of the study on the types and functions of fillers used by two female teacher and lecturer may be summarized in the following table.

No.	Types of Fillers	Female Teacher		Female Lecturer	
		Fillers	Number and Frequency of Occurrences	Fillers	Number and Frequency of Occurrences
			N		n
1.	Unlexicalized Fillers	*ee- {ə:m}*	176	Ok	15
		ya {yes}	50	*ee- {ə:m}*	147
		ok	23	ya {yes}	25
		ya {well}	2	ya {well}	2
2.	Lexicalized Fillers	Repetitive words	60	Repetitive words	32
Total Number and Frequencies			311		221
			532		

The table above shows that the female teacher and lecturer use two types of fillers, which are lexicalized and unlexicalized fillers. The types of fillers used the most frequently by the female teacher and lecturer were unlexicalized fillers with the number of occurrences 440 then lexicalized fillers with the number of occurrences 92. From the total number of each type of fillers, the most popular fillers were *ee-{ə:m}*, followed by *repetitive words* in the second position. Then, fillers *Ya {yes}* in the third position.

In details, from the table above, it can be seen that the fillers *ee- {ə:m}* with the number of occurrences 323 was the type of unlexicalized fillers used the most frequently by the female lecturers. The filler as *repetitive words* with the number of occurrences 92 in the second position. Then, filler *Ya {yes}* with the number of occurrences 75 in the third position. After that, the fillers *ok* with the number of occurrences 38. Then, fillers *ya {well}* with the number of occurrences 4. In the following section, the writer would discuss further about each type of the unlexicalized fillers and give example for each of it.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of the result of the present study on the types and functions of fillers in conversation within academic situation is presented in the following four parts.

1. The Types of Unlexicalized Fillers Used by the Female Teacher and Lecturer

The types of unlexicalized filler produced in teaching process of the female teacher and lecture were *ee- {ə:m}, ya (yes),ok,* and *ya (well)*. In the following parts, the writer would illustrate from each type of the unlexicalized fillers.

1) *So have you - have you ee- have you read ee- novel - finish? Yes? (Sentence 1)*
2) *ee- what the – ee- telling a movie part, do you want to try? (Sentence 28)*
3) *Hopefully next week most of you will be ready ya- (yes) with the story telling (Sentence 70)*
4) *pardon? passion yes ok- good passion yeah I think so, what else? (Sentence 10)*

2. The Types of Lexicalized Fillers Used by the Female Teacher and Lecturer

The types of Lexicalized fillers produced by the female teacher and lecturer in the teaching

process were repetitive words that functioned as the fillers. Here the writer would explain further about each type of the lexicalized fillers and give example for each of it.

5) *like deny said it's ee- **more value - more value** yes-so this is like **last week - last week** you - **last week** we discuss about - the manusia bumi so that's happen in Indonesia (Sentence 14)*

3. The Function of Fillers used by the Female Teacher

In this research, the writer presents and discusses five functions of the fillers in the spoken interaction mainly based on the theories of Stenström(1994), that is, fillers function as a holder the turn, as a mark of hesitation, empathizers, time-creating devices, and editing term. In the production of fillers by female teacher, it was shown that the female teacher tended to produce more fillers as mark of hesitation (39%). That fillers was followed by fillers as time-creating devices (31,8%) and fillers that functioned as empathizer (27,3%). The other two functions, those are, fillers are functioned as editing term (1,6%) and holder the turn with percentage (0,3%).

4. The Function of Fillers Used by the Female Lecturer

The types of fillers produced by the female lecturer also had several functions in this section, that is, fillers function as empathizer, as a mark of hesitation, time-creating devices, editing term and a holder the turn. The writer presents and discusses each type of fillers occurred in the teaching process of the female lecturers and explain its functions. In the transcribing data of the female lecturer's utterance, based on the Stenström(1994) theory about the function of fillers, the writer found that the fillers could be defined in five functions. The highest position on the functions of fillers produced by the female lecturer was different with the female teacher, that is, fillers as empathizer with percentage (38,4%). Then, the second- fillers produced by the female lecturer functioned as a mark of

hesitation (37%), the fillers functioned as time-creating devices in the third position (19,9%), the fillers functioned as an editing term in the fourth with percentage (3,3%), and the last fillers as holder the turn (1,4%).

CONCLUSION

In this research, the writer observed the types and the functions of fillers produced by the female teacher and lecturer in Surabaya. The writer found that the female teacher produce more fillers than female lecturer. The female teacher produced 311 fillers, while the female lecturer produced 221 fillers. Then, both of the female teacher and lecture produced the unlexicalized fillers *ee- {ə:m}, ya (yes), ya (well) and ok*. Then, there are also several differences in the fillers used by the female teacher and lecture. The data shows that the male lecturers produced more unlexicalized fillers (522 fillers or the same as 51.5%) than lexicalized fillers (143 fillers or the same as 14.6%). Similarly, the female lecturers also produce more unlexicalized fillers (284 fillers or the same as 27.8%), than the lexicalized fillers (62 fillers or the same as 6.1%). Then, both of the male and female lecturers produced the unlexicalized fillers *ee- {ə:m}, ya (yes), ya (well) and ok*. Then, there are also several differences in the fillers used by the male and female lecturers. The first difference is that the male lecturers produce 665 fillers in his speech while the female produced 346 fillers in her speech. Then, the male lecturers used filler *what they call, what you said and what is that* in his speech while the female lecturers did not use it.

As a conclusion, the writer concluded that filler are really useful. It helps to make the teaching process run smoothly and look more comfortable. The writer realized that without fillers, the teaching process would be awkward and to formal.

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