

# Fillers Used by Kindergarten Students

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**Abstract**— This research was carried out to investigate the fillers used by kindergarten students. The objective of the research is to find out the types of fillers used by kindergarten students. The subjects of this research are 20 kindergarten students, they are the students of RA Melati Secanggang. The utterances of the kindergarten students when telling picture were the data of this research. Descriptive qualitative method was used in this research. The instrument of the research was observation. The types of fillers were analyzed by using theory of Rose (1998). In this research found two types of fillers used by kindergarten students. The types found in this research were lexicalized and unlexicalized fillers. It means all the types of fillers were found in this research.

**Keyword**—filler; types of filler; kindergarten students

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fillers are discourse markers speakers use when they think and/or hesitate during their speech [1]. In another words, fillers are sounds or words or phrases that could appear anywhere in the sentences and that could be deleted from the sentence without a change in content [2]. Several researchers have carried out to investigate the phenomenon of fillers used in conversation, language study and so on. Other investigation about fillers used by male and female students of English education study program [3]. The research aimed to find out the types and function of fillers used by male and female students of the English education study program in argumentative talks. Another investigation about fillers was done , it analyzed the fillers used by Asian students in Busan, South Korea. The aimed of his research was to find out the types, frequencies and the function of fillers[4]. Other research about fillers did, about EFL students' uses of *um* as fillers in classroom presentation. This research aimed to find the occurrences of *um* or in terms of location. And the result of this research was found all three locations of *um* in classroom presentation [5].

Infants do not produce their first words until age one or later, but by three or four, they can talk quiet fluently about some topics. They begin to use language for a larger array of function – telling stories, explaining how a toy works, persuading a friend to do something, or giving someone directions for how to get somewhere. Between age one and age six, children acquire extensive skills in using language and sound quite adult like much of the time [6]. When the

kindergarten students of RA Melati Secanggang, five years old, telling a picture. They also used fillers in their speaking. There are some fillers in their utterances as showed below as the preliminary data:

*“ada pohon, apa ya? (lexicalized filler ) lupa, ada matahari, ada gajah, em, (unlexicalized filler) ada apalagi ya? (lexicalized filler) . Ini ada pohon kelapa, yakan bun?”*

*“there is a tree, what’s tree ? (lexicalized filler), forget, there is a sun, elephant, em (unlexicalized filler) what else? (lexicalized filler). This is a coconut tree, is that right mam?”*

That is the preliminary data found in the field. The kindergarten students use fillers when they tell a picture. It makes an ineffective teaching learning while in their speaking they always used fillers, and also wasting time, because the kindergarten students only have to tell the picture, or in other word the kindergarten students already have a media to tell, that is the picture. The fillers in preliminary data above showed the similar types of kindergarten students and adult students in several previous researches. In the real phenomenon, the Kindergarten students use fillers in their speaking. And this research is important to be done, in order to find the types of fillers used by Kindergarten students in telling picture.

The objective of this research is:

1. To find the types of fillers used by kindergarten students in telling picture.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### A. Fillers

Fillers are discourse markers speakers use when they think and/or hesitate during their speech [7] . Fillers are “expressions like *well, erm, you see*, used in speech to fill in pauses”. During oral interactions, speakers are highly likely to use expressions such as *well, I mean, actually, you know, let me think* to create a delay that enables them to carry on the conversation during times of difficulty[8]. Fillers are also known as pausing or hesitation phenomena which are “a commonly occurring feature of natural speech in which gaps or hesitations appear during the production of utterances” [9]. According to the theory of spoken discourse, a speaker may produce a large of prefabricated fillers, such as *err, ehm, well, I think, you know, if you see, what I mean*, and so on in his or her utterances [10].

Along with that, those prefabricated fillers are sounds or words or phrases that could appear anywhere in the sentences and that could be deleted from the sentence without a change in content [11]. Other states is that actually fillers are lexically empty item with the most common used to fill a conversation gap and mark of hesitation [12]. 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. Moreover, Hatt defined fillers as words used in conversation that has no apparent semantic content. In simple word, it means that when a speaker produces fillers, they are not certain has the purpose meaning in their utterances. Fillers is that filler as indications of time out while the speech production searches for the next word, phrase, or idea.

#### Types of Fillers

Fillers also divided into two types. They are: lexicalized and unlexicalized fillers [13].

#### Lexicalized

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).

#### Unlexicalized

Unlexicalized fillers is filler with contains of lexical empty such as *ee*, *erm*, *err*, *ehm*, and *eh*. Unlexicalized fillers are non-lexemes (non-words) fillers pauses which speakers use to indicate hesitation while the speaker think what to say next utterances [14].

In addition some examples of unlexicalized filler, such as *ehm*, *uh*, *err*, *ee*, *ah*, *um*, and so on [15]. The definition of unlexicalized filler is also defined that *ehm*, *uh*, *err*, *ee*, *ah*, *um* and other vocalizations which belong to unlexicalized fillers are the easiest sounds which made while having a speaking.

#### B. Kindergarten

Kindergarten is an educational program serving child age four to six. The educational program Kindergarten shares the common objective of helping the young child's social, emotional and academic development. The letter includes the use of language, the development of an initial understanding of mathematics, beginning of learning in the social, sciences and aesthetic appreciation. In other definition, kindergarten is the next level of education after playgroup before the children enter elementary school. The program helps the children in entering their first formal education [16].

Even though the kindergarten is not the obligation to every children to follow this program, but it will help the children to develop their knowledge, creativity, through their activities in the school. The first educator opened the first kindergarten in Germany in 1837. He understood and respected the nature of young children education before they enter the public school

helping the children education at home but also giving many chances to them to learn about themselves ability, talent and their environment.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive qualitative study based on [17] theoretical and analytical frameworks. The consideration of using the theory is that kindergarten students in telling the picture they used filler.

#### Sources of Data

A total of twenty kindergarten students utterances were collected from a class, studying in RA Melati, Secanggang, Langkat, Indonesia. To collect the students' utterances, a mobile phone used to record the utterances by using voice recorder application. The electronic device was used to record the voices of the students as well as to pick up clear speeches. The advantages of using this recorder were that it did not disturb the learning process, and it could be used for other classroom activities if needed.

#### Data of the Research

The utterances of the students containing the fillers were then transcribed, and being the data in this research. After transcribed the utterances relate to the types of fillers in telling the picture, the data were displayed and analyzed in terms of the types of fillers, based on the theory.

### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

#### A. 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) [18].

#### Data 1

*"ada pohon, apa ya?"*

*"there is a tree, what's tree?"*

Data 1 shows the first type of fillers, that is lexicalized fillers. The word *what* being filler because it is in the form of word that has meaning but it will not change the content of the sentence.

#### Data 2

*"ada apalagi ya?..."*

*"what else?"*

Data 2 also shows the first type of fillers, that is lexicalized fillers. The word *what else* being filler because it is in the form

of short phrase that has meaning but it will not change the content of the sentence.

#### Data 3

“...*pohon pisang sudah mulai, udah mau berbuah pisang nya, mobilnya juga warnanya merah, **yakan** ?*”

“... *banana tree is starting, the banana fruit is existing, also the car the color is red, **right**?*”

Data 3 also shows the first type of fillers, that is lexicalized fillers. The word *right* being filler because it is in the form of short phrase that has meaning but it will not change the content of the sentence.

#### B. Unlexicalized Fillers

Unlexicalized fillers is filler with contains of lexical empty such as *ee*, *erm*, *err*, *ehm*, and *eh*. Unlexicalized fillers are non-lexemes (non-words) fillers pauses which speakers use to indicate hesitation while the speaker thinks what to say next utterances [19].

#### Data 4

“*ada matahari, ada gajah, **em**...*”

“*there is a sun, elephant, **em**...*”

Data 4 shows the second type of fillers, that is unlexicalized fillers. The lexical *em* being filler because it is in the sentence but it has no meaning and also did not change the content.

#### Data 5

“*ee... ada monyet lagi manjat pohon*”

“*ee... there is a monkey climb the tree*”

Data 5 shows the second type of fillers, that is unlexicalized fillers. The lexical *ee* being filler because it is in the sentence but it has no meaning and also did not change the content.

#### Data 6

“...*ada rusa juga, rusa nya **ee** ada dua, yang satunya makan rumput...*”

“*also there is a deer, there are **ee** two deers , one of them is eating the grass*”

Data 6 shows the second type of fillers, that is unlexicalized fillers. The lexical *ee* being filler because it fill

in the sentence but it has no meaning and also did not change the content.

TABLE I. TYPES OF FILLERS

DATA	TYPES OF FILLERS	
	LEXICALIZED	UNLEXICALIZED
1	✓	
2	✓	
3	✓	
4		✓
5		✓
6		✓

From the table above, it was found all the types of fillers they are lexicalized and unlexicalized fillers.

#### V. FINDINGS

In the data analysis, it was found the two types of fillers, they are lexicalized and unlexicalized. The first type of filler is lexicalized shows that the filler can be in form of lexical, even in word, short phrase. The lexicalized filler can attend in a sentence and has a meaning but did not change the content. The second type of filler is unlexicalized shows that the filler can be in form of non lexical or non lexeme. The unlexicalized filler can attend in a sentence and has no meaning but did not change the content. It can be mitigating to the speaker to think what will say next.

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