SPEECH PAUSES IN STUDENTS' PRESENTATION

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Abstract

The study entitled Speech Pauses in Students' Presentation is designed to find out types of pause produced by third-semester students, and to describe the factors affecting pause. It uses descriptive qualitative research applying Dardjowidjojo theories. The research presented types of pauses, and the factors influencing the production of speech pauses by third-semester students, particularly thirty-three students (aged 18-28 years old). There were two types of pauses made by the third-semester students of School of Foreign Language Pontianak, particularly silent pause and filled pause. The data analysis showed that silent pause was made by 27,3% of students, and filled pause was made by 57,6% of students. Meanwhile, only 15,1% of students who didn't make any pauses because they read their note whole time. Briefly, silent and filled pauses made by the students because of less preparation, nervousness, lack of lexical knowledge, and distraction.

Keywords: speech pause, silent pause, filled pause.

Abstrak

Studi yang berjudul Senyapan pada Presentasi Mahasiswa ini dirancang untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis senyapan yang diproduksi oleh mahasiswa-mahasiswa semester tiga dan untuk mendeskripsikan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi senyapan. Studi ini menggunakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif menggunakan teori Dardjowidjojo. Penelitian mempresentasikan jenis-jenis senyapan dalam bicara dan faktor yang mempengaruhi produksi senyapan oleh tiga puluh tiga mahasiswa semester tiga (berusia 18-28 tahun). Terdapat dua jenis senyapan dalam bicara yang dibuat oleh mahasiswa semester tiga STBA Pontianak, yaitu silent pause *(senyapan diam) dan* filled pause *(senyapan terisi). Analisa data menunjukkan bahwa 27,3% mahasiswa melakukan* silent pause*, dan 57,6% mahasiswa melakukan* filled pause*. Sedangkan, hanya 15,1% mahasiswa yang tidak melakukan senyapan karena mahasiswa tersebut membaca catatan sepanjang waktu. Singkat kata,* silent *dan* filled pauses *terjadi karena kurangnya persiapan yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa pada saat presentasi, kegugupan, kurangnya pengetahuan leksikal dan gangguan eksternal.*

Kata Kunci: *senyapan, senyapan diam, senyapan terisi.*

INTRODUCTION

In the field of English as a foreign language, four interrelated skills include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are standard competence for students. The competence in four skills is absolute especially for non native students to measure their proficiency, and to make sure that they are able to make effective communication. A student as a speaker or interlocutor is required to use

speaking and listening skills because when he/she is speaking, he/she is also listening. A student is also driven to be a fluent reader to comprehend an instruction in English. At the same time, he/she should have adequate writing skill when he/she has to convey a message through formal or informal letter. Shortly, a student is fluent enough when he/she has complete mastery of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

In general, non-native speakers of English find problems to comprehend the skills since they automatically will process the use of language, from the first language to foreign language. Practically, a student who has to write a research paper tends to write a draft in Bahasa Indonesia at first, then he/she will translate the text literally. The differences of structure between first and foreign languages obstruct students in the learning process. Therefore, students generally have problems in lexical knowledge, grammatical rules, and pronunciation. In learning English, students should memorize and comprehend lexical knowledge and grammatical rules in order to make sure that they can use it appropriately in oral or written communication. Differently, the pronunciation difficulty is greatly influenced by personal's mother tongue/first language sound systems.

The differences of sound systems between mother tongue/first language and foreign language (English) are quite significant that can lead to speech error (slips of the tongue) and pause; students tend to make a spontaneous error when they are not familiar with the vocabulary, and students probably paused when they are hesitant about the speech content. Chaer (2003: 256) supports this thought, he stated that influence of first language tends to lead a learner to make speech error, switch code, or mixing code consciously or unconsciously. Practically, students of School of Foreign Language in Pontianak make pause. Pauses are made when students try to express their ideas or reading the course materials (Dardjowidjojo, 20013: 141). The students of School of Foreign Language are prone to make pause in the presentation because of lack of lexical knowledge, poor comprehension on grammatical rules, and lack of awareness of sound system differences.

The students of School of Foreign Language in Pontianak did not start their foreign language (English) education at very-early age, it is also publicly known that students from district and sub-district areas of West Kalimantan started learning English at Junior High School. Consequently, the initial competence of the students is basically inequitable. Therefore, the writer is strongly interested to conduct the study about pauses in the speech presentation of students of School of Foreign Language.

The study was conducted in the School of Foreign Language, specifically focuses on the Diploma Study Program particularly third-semester students who take speech course. Speech course offers twelve meetings to the third-semester students. In general, the purpose of course is to improve students' public speaking skill. The course introduces three types of speech (informative, demonstrative, persuasive speeches) to the students by reading outstanding speech texts, or observing speeches of notable speakers. The course also requires students to do routine practices in order to find out and overcome their weaknesses. The study focuses on speech pauses in the speech production. The study uses psycholinguistics theory as the speech production study is under psycholinguistics domain. Psycholinguistics focuses on comprehension, production, biological and neurological fundaments, and language acquisition (Dardjowidjojo, 2005: 7).

The study is implemented to answer the questions: (1) Do third-semester students produce pauses in speech presentation?; and (2) What are factors affecting pauses in students' presentation?. Therefore, the study is designed to find out types of pause produced by third-semester students, and to describe the factors affecting pause.

The study is expected to have a great contribution in School of Foreign Language and Scientific Research Development. The research is expected to provide academic contribution to School of Foreign Language, particularly in relation with the teaching strategy of vocabulary, speech, and speaking courses. The research paper is also expected to enrich psycholinguistic study specifically speech production research.

In using a language, a speaker produces speech sounds using the articulatory organs in mouth and throat. As explained by Taylor (1999: 187) speakers produce various sounds by modifying the flow of the air expelled from the lungs. The production of speech sounds is influenced by the certain characteristics of a language. In relation with speech production, Dardjowidjojo showed that there are four phases in uttering a speech. At first, message phase is a phase to process a message before uttered. After that, a speaker is dealing with functional phase, a phase where lexical forms are chosen and completed with syntactical function. At the third phase, a constituent is formed and affixation is added, which is called as a positional phase. Eventually, phonology phase is in the last phase, the phase urges the speaker to produce speech structure. According to Anna Lazaraton in Celce-Murcia (2001: 104) a speaker should have four competences to communicate in a language, specifically grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. She also added Bailey and Savage theory that speaking is an activity requiring the integration of many subsystems…all these factors combine to make speaking a second or foreign language a formidable task for language learners…yet for many people, speaking is seen as the central skill.

The process of second language learning is quite difficult, some variables, factors, and constraints determine the success of second language learning (Chaer, 2003: 251). Carnegie (2013: 140-141) argued that fluency is not all about easy and available words, but it is related to speakers' condition and preparation. Muslich (2008: 10) cited Wiig and Semel theory to explain about language disabilities, it is said that language disabilities commonly associated with learning disabilities which can be predicted on the basic of the youngster's rate of acquisition of the linguistic rule. In the area of language, learning disabled children may have problem forming verbal abstractions and performing the logical operations required to interpret the complex relationships expressed in language. Their oral problems may lead to deficits in perceiving and interpreting as well as informulating and producing spoken language. Therefore, speech errors in the speech production are common to non-native speakers who just learn a foreign language.

Generally, *pauses* are made when the speaker is thinking while speaking, pauses tend to happen if the topic discussion is more difficult (Dardjowidjojo, 2005: 142). Furthermore, Taylor (1999: 43-44) showed Goldman-Eisler research results that stated that there are long and short pauses in which long pauses reflect planning phases, and short pauses reflect execution phases. The research also showed that the duration of speaking in a fluent phases proportional to the amount of pause time in the immediately preceding hesitant phase. Speech pauses can be produced after the first word in a clause or sentence. The location of pauses is agreed among experts (Clark and Clark, 1977: 267 in Dardjowidjojo, 2005: 146).

There are two kinds of pause according to Dardjowidjojo (2005: 144-145): silent and filled pauses. Silent pause occurs when a speaker stops speaking and being quiet for a moment as he/she tries to find desirable words. The speaker continues her/his speech when she/he finds words that will express her/his intention, for example "I met ……. Agus yesterday". Meanwhile, filled pause occurs when a speaker uses some certain sounds during speaking. According to Clark and Clark (1977: 268) Dardjowidjojo said that the filled pauses in English have different meanings, specifically: (a) Oh = for choosing referent – I would like, oh, carrot; (b) Ah = for memory success – I would like, ah, carrot; (c) Well = for word similarity – (I would like, well, carrot) or for editing claim – (I'll be done soon, well, in ten minutes); (d) Say = for showing an example – I would like, say, carrot; (e) That is = for editing referent – He hit Mary, that is, Bill did – with a pan; (f) Or rather = for editing nuance – I am trying to lease – or rather, sublease – my apartment; (g) I mean = for editing error – On his head, I mean, his hand, we saw some money.

The researches on pause have been conducted intensively by many researchers. Marc Swerts published his research in Journal of Pragmatics (1998) entitled filled pauses as markers of discourse structure, the research highlighted discourse structure. Meanwhile, Matias Heldner and Jens Edlund (2010) conducted a research entitled pauses, gaps and overlaps in conversation that focus more on the durational aspect.

To date, the research on pauses has been conducted by some researchers who particularly focus on certain type or duration aspect. The previous researches tend to focus on native language, a comparison of two research subjects, or socio-cultural impacts.

METHOD

The study used descriptive qualitative research because the research categorized as psycholinguistics study that required descriptive qualitative method. The research descriptively showed the types of speech pauses produced by the students and factors influencing the choice.

The research used purposive sampling to determine the research population. Nunan (2007: 142) stated that purposive sampling is the research subjects are handpicked by the researcher on the basis of his/her own estimate of their typicality. The writer focused on thirty-three students (aged 18-28 years old) in the speech subject in School of Foreign Language.

In doing data collection, the writer collected students' information at first in order to classify the data source. The students were required to complete questionnaire about their identity. The phases of data collection included observation, note taking and interview.

The writer was present as passive observer during students' presentation. There were twelve meetings for speech subject, the researcher only focused on the presentation of informative speech. The students were allowed to use some speech tools for presentation, such as notes, memo, or cue cards. During students' presentation, the writer paid a careful attention to student speech production, and took a note of speech errors. The writer also interviewed the students in order to ensure the reason underlying the production speech pauses, and to review students' speaking skill.

Maxwell (1996: 78) stated that the initial step in qualitative analysis is reading the interview transcripts, observational notes, or documents that are to be analyzed. The data analysis was conducted chronologically. Data analysis used descriptive technique. At first, the data was identified and analyzed based on

Dardjowidjojo theories, particularly type of pauses. After that, the writer described the factors influencing the production of speech pauses by third-semester students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting data collection, Dardjowidjojo's theory was used to explain two kinds of pause: silent and filled pauses (Dardjowidjojo, 2005: 144-145). Silent pause occurs when a speaker stops speaking and being quiet for a moment as he/she tries to find desirable words. The speaker continues her/his speech when she/he finds words that will express her/his intention.

These two types of pause were possibly made by students when they were thinking while speaking. The pauses were made when they presented informative speeches. The data showed that silent pause was made by 27.3% of students, and filled pause was made by 57.6% of students. Meanwhile, only 15.1% of students didn't make any pauses because they read their note whole time.

Silent pause was occurred when a presenter stops speaking and being quiet for a moment as he/she tries to find desirable words. Students made silent pause when they found difficulty in finding appropriate diction, they forgot the steps, and distracted by the audiences. The students have poor lexical knowledge, they only have a limited number of vocabulary; thus, when they can't easily express the idea with appropriate diction. Based on the observation, some students who have better comprehension comparing to another student also experienced lexical misuse as they rarely practiced their skill. They preferred to use their mother tongue or Indonesian language when they were in class or they engaged in conversation. This habit actually influenced students' lexical comprehension because English as a foreign language should be continuously and repeatedly learned by non-native speakers, and learning a foreign language is not an instant comprehension. However, the students are still not aware of these facts. In addition, students tended to forget their steps in presentation because they did not prepare the materials, they didn't collect appropriate sources, they merely depended on their previous knowledge, common sense and personal experience.

They elaborated their idea by showing examples from their own personal experience. Therefore, they deviated from their steps, they were supposed to present introduction, body and conclusion. However, they only presented two of three agreed contents, mostly they delivered introduction and body.

The presenters who can't control their audiences as their audiences dominated the situation became easily distracted. This external distraction was getting worse if the students also experienced internal distraction (presenters' nervousness or anxiety). Silent pause eventually led students to end their presentation right away since they can't tackle both internal and external distractions. The duration of silent pause occurrence were varied.

The silent pause occurred about thirty-seconds until one and half minutes, the longest silent pause was 3 minutes. The silent pauses found in the presentation of the body and conclusion of speech, particularly when students forgot the detail, or realized that they made some mistakes.For example: children nowadays is hard to handle because ….. they spoiled too much by their parents (a minute pause). that is the first person ……. there is a person (thirty seconds pause).

By using Dardjowidjojo's theory about filled pause, the data were categorized. It is found that students made filled pauses for memory success, editing referent, and editing error. Besides the theory, the data analysis indicates that some filled pauses were made for changing the topic and finding diction.

In memory success, some students used words like "ah" to help them remember the presentation step. They used "ah" more than once, it shows that they are used to use "ah" to remember things. For example: the dance, ah, this is. It can be stated that filled pause was used to take time while students were looking for exact word.

In editing referent, it is found that the use of "em" in the presentation is to edit the referent. There is a student made an error because he read the note literally. For example: I'm, um, he is born in Liverpool. He automatically committed grammatical error when he used "um" in his presentation.

In editing error, *some* students who realized that they made mistakes used pauses to revise or edit what they had said before. For example: you exercise in

the, e, at morning. The students realized that they made mistake in grammatical use, then they produced pause to buy time in order to revise their mistake.

Students also changed the topic. Based on the data, it is found that some students used "all right or okay" to switch or change the topic of discussion. There is a tendency that they used "all right or okay" because they wanted to reduce nervousness, and to start a new topic. For example: to define the culture, all right, we will go to the next part. They changed the topic without finishing their speech.

Students tried to find diction when they made filled pause. Some students were not well-prepared, and they had difficulty in choosing appropriate diction, they used words in Bahasa Indonesia first while waited for someone to change the English words. For example: You should tarik, ya pull the. It can be stated that students' mother tongue/first language has a big influence in comprehending English. Students usually write and prepare their presentation by using Indonesian language before translating into English. This process actually influences the result because they translated the text literally and they did not consider the cultural or situation context.

In short, the researcher concludes that long and short pauses respectively reflect planning and execution phases as showed by Goldman-Eisler in Taylor (1999: 43-44). Speech pauses are also produced after the first word in a clause or sentence. According to the types of pauses made by students, and forms filled in by students that closely related to internal and external interferences, there are some factors that affect the pauses, namely less preparation, nervousness, lack of lexical knowledge, and distraction.

The researcher found that students can't master and present their materials very well because they had less preparation before presenting their materials. They didn't prepare the material carefully, and they used their own analogy to support the presentation. In addition, the students also didn't plan steps of presentation, and they didn't use any media to support them such as cue cards or power point. Consequently, they lost track of their presentation, they forgot the steps easily, and at that time they made silent pause. When they realized that they made the silent pause too long, they stop and did not continue their speech.

Students also experienced nervousness during the presentation due to lack of presentation, this situation led to silent and filled pauses. When nervousness came, some students stuttered and lost control. They realized that they can't overcome their nervousness during the presentation, they chose to have a low voice to present their materials. The nervousness became worst when they can't control the audiences (external interferences), they were eventually distracted by the audiences, and the situation certainly affected the presentation. It was found that when the audiences were laughing due to their hesitant pronunciation or entertained presentation, the speaker tended to laugh irrationally. The external interferences occurred when audiences also criticized and made noise of the presenter's English skill, which actually influenced presenter's presentation.

Students made pauses because they found difficulty in finding appropriate dictions. Actually, lack of lexical knowledge occurred as students didn't read more or conduct cross reference to assure that the sources of information were valid and reliable. Furthermore, students who made pauses were easily distracted by audiences. They were unable to concentrate on their presentation as they were not dominant; on the contrary, the audiences dominated the situation.

Aside from pauses made by students who didn't prepare, there was a male student who dealt with nervousness and he was aware of that; so he had a well preparation and he successfully delivered his speech. Preparation helps him to avoid nervousness, however he can't handle spontaneous speech.

Students should be aware that they pass through four phases as mention by Dardjowidjojo in uttering a speech. The phases are message phase (processing message), functional phase (lexical forms and syntactical structure), positional phase (constituent and affixation), and phonology phase (producing speech structure). Therefore, they should have prepared their presentation very well. Preparation includes: (1) noting their weaknesses for a successful presentation; (2) learning the way to tackle external interference that leads to nervousness; (3) designing and organizing outline that presents introduction, discussion and conclusion; (4) looking for apt materials to support their idea; (5) listing new words they found to make sure they use correct words; (6) using presentation aid

that is familiar to the student; (7) practicing intonation and tone in order to make sure that they are able to reach audiences; (8) practicing smart pauses in presentation to attract audiences; (9) being consistent with the speech duration while practicing; and (10) preparing things needed 5 minutes before they are going to perform.

Concisely, the students should recognize their weaknesses as they can use them in speech delivery. The students who are also dealing with nervousness should rehearse their presentation more often as the rehearsal helps them to focus more on their speech and it also distract their nervousness feeling.

CONCLUSION

According to data analysis, there are two types of pauses made by the third-semester students of School of Foreign Language, particularly silent pause and filled pause. The data analysis showed that silent pause was made by 27.3% of students, and filled pause was made by 57.6% of students. Meanwhile, only 15.1% of students didn't make any pauses because they read their note whole time.

The silent pause occurred about thirty-seconds until one and half minutes, the longest silent pause was three minutes. The silent pauses found in the presentation of the body and conclusion of speech, particularly when students forgot the detail, or realized that they made some mistakes. Meanwhile, the students made filled pauses for memory success, editing referent, and editing error. Apart from theoretical approach, the data analysis indicates that some filled pauses were made for changing the topic and finding diction. The filled pause includes the use of "ah, um, e, all right, okay, or Indonesian words" in the middle of sentences.

In short, the pauses made by the students because of less preparation, nervousness, lack of lexical knowledge, and distraction. The students should be aware of their deficiencies so that they are able to overcome their problem in presenting materials. They also have to put Indonesian language behind when they

learn English because their dependence on Indonesia slows them down in acquiring English skills.

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