



WHY DO SPEAKERS USE HESITATION WHEN PRODUCING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

Siswoyo¹, Yasmika Baihaqi², Yogi Daumarjaya³, Rendika Agustian⁴

^{1,3,4}University of Muhammadiyah Pringsewu

²University of Muhammadiyah Metro

Email Correspondence:

siswoyo@umpri.ac.id

Abstract

It is often found that the speakers hesitate when they are speaking. This article is to investigate the speakers' hesitation when they produce the English language. The investigations were: (1) forms of hesitation, (2) factors affecting hesitation, (3) implication of having hesitation in using English language. The current research used qualitative perspective in investigating the hesitation. The respondents were 23 students who experienced hesitation in producing English language. The results of the research revealed that they used (1) un-lexicalized filler, (2) repetition, (3) no sound before finding the intended words from the mental lexicon. Hesitation is due to limited vocabulary and the speakers' psychological factors.

Keywords: *Hesitation, Language Production, English Language, Mental Lexicon*

INTRODUCTION

Hesitation for language users is avoidable. The language users stop the utterances in the middle of their speaking and conversation. They cannot continue their communication when expressing their willingness from their mind. This hesitation happens when they produce a particular language. Moreover, foreign language speakers use it as a means of communication. On this occasion, they use hesitation before finding specific words in the target language. They need more time to find the intended words. This hesitation involves repeating the same words, lexical pauses, un-lexical pauses, and body movement. The use of “*What do you call this*”, “*ee*”, “*before before*”, and “*amm amm*” are indicators of having hesitation when producing a certain language. Hesitation often happens for English language learners who are asked to speak English. It is known that English is regarded as a foreign language in Indonesia. Therefore, having hesitation in producing speech, especially in English, is natural.

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Researchers have conducted research concerning hesitation in producing a particular language. Researchers see that having hesitation during language production is not always a problem. It can be as an indicator of the process of finding the target word. It means that searching for the target utterances is still in the middle of the process (Merlo & Barbosa, 2010). The speakers still have not found what they want to express in their minds. It needs more time to retrieve the intended utterances from the speakers' mental lexicon. This hesitation is also to inform the interlocutors implicitly that the speakers are still in the process of continuing the conversation (Clark & Tree, 2002). Consequently, the listeners should not leave the speakers during the use of hesitation. The research connected to hesitation also talks about the position of hesitation itself. Hesitation can be in the front, middle, and final of utterances (Boonsuk et al., 2019).

The current research is to investigate hesitation from the point of view of (1) forms of hesitation, (2) factors affecting hesitation, and (3) implications of hesitation in using English language. This article departs from the argument that learning and using English language does not always make the language learners and speakers proud of English. It can create new issues during the teaching and learning process. The issue requires consideration from the language planners, language teachers, and language learners.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study of experiences with hesitation during English language production employs a qualitative approach, with data collected from students' interviews. Sources were collected randomly, based on the research theme: students' hesitation during English language production, including their use of hesitation, factors affecting hesitation, and implications of having hesitation in the brain during English language production. Stories were also selected to highlight the direct experiences of students and cases that reflected their language hesitation.

Data collected from these observations were subsequently verified through consultations with students. Participants were limited to the university students of English Language Study Program who, despite limited prior experience with English mastery, had language conflict in the brain when asked to speak English. Although some

participants had language conflict in the brain, and their English ability remained limited, they were required to use these skills to communicate with their friends in Islamic boarding schools.

Ninety-three students were used for in-depth interviews. English Language Study Program University students were chosen purposefully. Students were selected based on their language conflict in the brain situation, which correlates with students' familiarity with English. Students were selected from different levels the students of Muhammadiyah University of *Pringsewu*: semester 2 students, semester 4 students (illustrating the case of Java), and semester 6 students.

During the data collection process, interview questions were formulated per interview guidelines. Questions used an open-ended design and sought to collect data on three elements. First, students' hesitation forms, a crucial factor in their involvement in communication. Second, students' hesitation factors, which shows students' diverse abilities to access the mental lexicon. Third, implications of hesitation to the use of English in communication.

The research was conducted in 20th, July 2022 when they have finished their lecturing. Participants were interviewed with permission and consent and asked using open and close question. Students were interviewed online, using Google Meet and WhatsApp. Data collected were analyzed through three stages: restatement, description, and interpretation. The restatement was conducted with reference to interviews with students and used to obtain their perspectives. Description, meanwhile, was conducted to identify patterns and tendencies in the data, including students' language conflict with English language production. Interpretation, finally, was used to understand the individual, social, and institutional context of students' language conflict. This analysis enabled the researchers to draw conclusions through inference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Producing English as the foreign language for communication makes its speakers experience hesitation before finding the English words and grammar. It can be seen from the distribution result of questionnaire given to the students as the speakers who study

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English language. The result of the questionnaire showed that the students experience hesitation when producing English language. It can be seen in the following figure (1).

1. Apakah Saudara pernah mengalami keterbata-bataan (ketidaklancaran) ketika ingin berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris?

28 responses

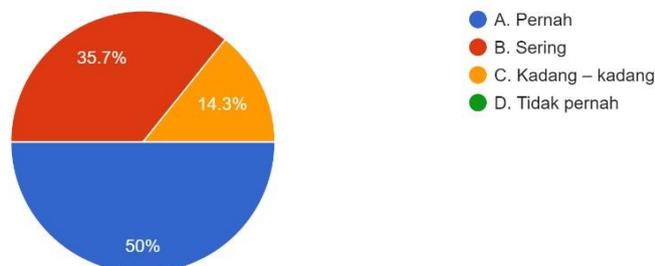


Chart 1: Speakers' Experience in Having Hesitation

Figure (1) above reveals that the students were asked to select the options related to their experiences in having hesitation during English speaking. The options answers are (a) ever, (b) often (c) sometimes, and (d) never. From the chart (1), it can be said most of the respondents experience hesitation during their English production. This research explores (1) the types of hesitation experienced by the speakers, (2) it is also to map the factors that cause hesitation and (3) to investigate the implication of hesitation towards the use of English language in their communication.

Forms of Hesitation

The speakers have various hesitation forms when producing the English language in spoken language. At this form, the students were asked to mention what types of hesitation experienced by the students when producing the English language. From the questionnaire distributed, the speakers expressed their hesitation forms by selecting the options available on the questionnaire. There were certain choices and open choices that the students could fill freely based on their own experiences during the English language production. The close options which were given to the students were: (a) unlexicalized fillers such as “E-e-e-e, e-e-em”, (b) repeating the previous words, (c) asking the questions such as “What do you call this?” and “What is it?”, and (d) silent pauses.

From the questionnaire given to the students, it can be got the answers that students used unlexicalized hesitation like “E-e-e-e, e-e-em” before finding the English words and English grammars. They also repeated the previous words before finding the intended English words and grammar. Besides, the students kept silent without filling sounds before finding the target English words. The students also have another form that is not mention on the provided options. It can be seen in the chart (2) as follows.

2. Bentuk keterbata-bataan seperti apa yang saudara alami ketika ingin berbicara dalam Bahasa Inggris?
25 responses

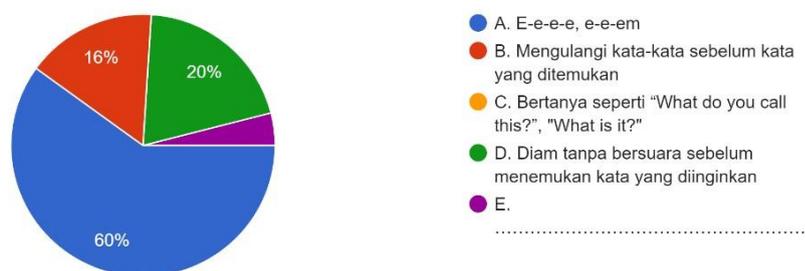


Chart 2: Forms of Hesitation Experienced by the Students

Based on the chart (2) above, it can be revealed that some students used option “e-e-e, e-e-em” when they found obstacles in finding the target English words. From the total respondents, 60.7 % used this “e-e-e-e, e-e-em” in handling the gap knowledge in selecting English words. The respondents chose to repeat the previous English words before reaching the intended English word from their mental lexicon or their brain. The total number of the speakers who used the repetition form is about 14.3 %. While, the speakers who kept silent without any sounds from their mouth were 21.4 %.

The respondents used hesitation when producing the language is due to the gap between what the speakers think in mind and what best words they should say (Warren, 2013). The speakers used unlexicalized fillers, repetition and silent pauses when they could not find the unintended words. This finding supports the research conducted by (Afriyanti & Andini, 2020; Fatimah et al., 2017; Fitriati et al., 2021; Pamolango, 2015). The use of words repetition is different from unlexicalized fillers (Fraundorf & Watson, 2014). The use of hesitation is to show the listeners that the speakers were still in the

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process of retrieving the words and structure from the mental lexicon (Rahmatian et al., 2014; Zulhemindra et al., 2022). They were still thinking the loss words and the unidentified words. Speakers also use hesitation to tell that the speakers are in the middle of thinking. This is also in line with the result of the research conducted by (Stevani et al., 2018). This hesitation is also due to the language competition between their first language and their second language before finding the intended words in the target language (Marian & Spivey, 2003). Hesitation will appear more often when they communicate in their foreign language.

Factors Affecting Hesitation

Hesitation during spoken language can happen due to the following factors. Based on the questionnaire, the students, as the respondents, experience hesitation because of the following situations. The question that was given to the respondents was “What are the factors that affect hesitation during English language production?”. The respondents freely answer the questions. The available options answers of the questionnaire are (a) Forgetting of the English words and grammar, (b) Anxiety/doubt, (c) Afraid of being mistake, (d) Lack of English vocabulary and grammar mastery. The respondents did not add optional answer though they were given slot to choose their personal choice. The factors affecting hesitation can be seen in the figure (3) that follows.

3. Faktor apa saja yang menyebabkan saudara mengalami keterbata-bataan sebelum mengucapkan Bahasa Inggris?

32 responses

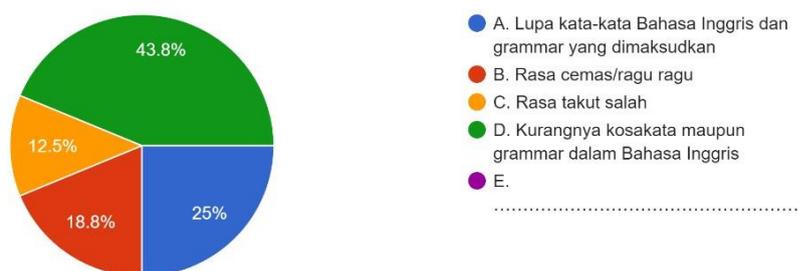


Chart 3: The Factors of Hesitation Experienced by the Students

To forget is human. English in Indonesia is regarded as the foreign language (Rini, 2014). The Indonesian people do not use English as the daily means of communication.

For their daily communication with other Indonesian people, they have their tribal and national language. Generally, the tribal language is used for communication with their family. They use national language when they have ceremonial activities and in public services like in the offices and other public services (Kirkpatrick & Liddicoat, 2017). Therefore, they only use English for certain places and purposes such as at school and other English area (Widodo, 2014). Vocabularies or words which are not regularly used will make the language users hard to retrieve. To make the vocabulary retrieval easy, the language users have to repeat and practice vocabulary more and more (Nakata, 2016). They can watch the English TV Program to recall the vocabularies (Peters & Webb, 2018). It is also to avoid being forgetful from the vocabularies. Although the speakers have more vocabularies, it will be hard to speak English if they do not use those vocabularies in conversation.

Psychological factors determine the performance of speaking fluency. Although the speakers have high competence in speaking material, they will have hesitation with the psychological factors. These factors are fear of making mistakes, feeling hesitation, lack of confidence. The results of the current research support the research conducted by (Ariyanti, 2016; Haidara, 2016; Jon et al., 2022; Patanduk, 2019).

Lack of Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is very crucial to be able to communicate with other people. It supports Hasan's study that lack of vocabulary has effect towards the language skills such as reading, listening, speaking and writing (Hasan, 2016) Without having enough vocabulary, the communication will be nothing (Min, 2013). Vocabulary is like the petroleum for the machine. Machine cannot work without the presence of petroleum. It is the same as communication. Communication cannot run well without having enough vocabulary mastery (Khan et al., 2019). The speakers have to learn more vocabulary if they want to communicate with other people e. One of the vocabulary mastery practice is to practice it in communication. Practicing makes perfect. Language is to practice and it is not enough by memorizing vocabularies without being practiced.

The speakers have to add more vocabularies if they want to communicate. It is better for the speakers to add vocabulary in a context. They can add vocabularies by memorizing new vocabularies every day. The speakers can list some vocabularies every

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day. Then, they have to memorize those vocabularies in a context. Memorizing vocabularies in isolation from the context is dangerous. The speakers will lose the use of the vocabularies in their appropriate use. Besides, the speakers can read the English written text such as English magazines (Suliyono, 2022), English newspaper (Siahaan, 2022), English songs (Hermida, 2019; Kurnia, 2017). They can also listen to the English news broadcasted on the television. Adding vocabularies can be done by various techniques based on the speakers' willingness (Patahuddin et al., 2017).

Implications of Hesitation towards the Use of English Language

Having hesitation makes the speakers felt various responses. They felt that the presence of hesitation during speaking English caused them do some actions. The respondents can answer based on their own experience. The question is "What is the implication of having hesitation during English Language production in spoken form?" There were given four close option completed with free option to express. The options are (a) Trying to practice English more. (b) Easy going to the hesitation. (c) Avoiding the use of English language. (d) Using gestures in English communication instead. The respondents only selected the provided options on the questioner without giving other own expression. From the results of the questionnaire, it can be found that the respondents tried to use English in communication around 77 %. The respondents who chose the easy-going behavior were about 5.6%. Besides, the respondents who avoided the English conversation were around 11.1. While, those who used gesture and movement before finding the target English words were 5.6%.

4. Bagaimana dampak keterbata-bataan tersebut terhadap penggunaan Bahasa Inggris dalam berkomunikasi?

35 responses



Chart 4: The Impacts of Hesitation Experienced by the Students

Hesitation has impact toward the use of English in communication. The presence of hesitation in producing English language make the students tried to practice English more. Language learning success needs high motivation. It is high motivation from the students to enrich their English in communication. Motivation is one of the important factors in language learning (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009; Dörnyei, 1994; Jianfeng et al., 2018; Lamb, 2017; Saleh & Majeed, 2021; Zareian & Jodaei, 2015). It is known that there are two kinds of motivation. They are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the motivation that comes from inside. While, the extrinsic motivation is the motivation that comes from outside (Ng & Ng, 2015). Intrinsic motivation makes the students have high effort and struggle to reach what they dream. They will do everything to achieve their goal. They encourage themselves to become better performance. Motivation and hard struggle are the key to be a successful English language learners (ChengChiang Chen & Kent, 2020).

The implication of hesitation also leads the students to avoid using English communication. They feel unconfident to communicate in English language. They have burden to communicate in English language. They chose to keep silent when there is English speech and conversation. Speaking in English language makes them hard to understand. The English pronunciations are not the same as their spelling. Their pronunciations are not always the same though they have the same phonemes. This is one of the hard problems in understanding and speaking English language.

CONCLUSION

There were various responses towards hesitation phenomena effects in speaking. Some students felt that they have to encourage themselves to study more but some of them were not confident to use English in communication. They kept silent and avoid English conversation with their environment. This factor is due to the limitation of the vocabulary mastery. They were afraid of being laughed by their friends. The current research is directed to the students who have hesitation in producing the English language. The further researcher should conduct the research with the more various participants.

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