Teaching Fillers and Students' Filler Usage:

A Study Conducted at ESOGU Preparation School

Selcen ERTEN

Selcen Erten: Foreign Languages Department, Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey. Email: selcenerten@anadolu.edu.tr

Abstract

The aim of this paper was to emphasize the importance of teaching fillers to students in ESL / EFL classrooms, and investigate whether students use fillers after they have been taught and if so, which fillers they tend to use and why. Although there might be no teaching issue for acquisition of fillers, being spoken discourse markers, the aim was rather increasing the learners' awareness of fillers when they hesitate in the foreign language, which is actually the very nature of speaking. Two speaking session recordings were conducted with 7 elementary-level preparation class students at Eskişehir Osmangazi University in the autumn semester of 2013/2014 academic year. Fillers were taught in between the sessions, and the filler use of students was investigated before and after teaching. The whole process was conducted in 5 week-time. Through voice recordings and related transcriptions, the results basically revealed that the students used fillers in the second session after they were taught and were provided related activities to practise fillers. Although what fillers they tended to use in the second session speaking and what they would use generally differed at certain points, they generally preferred the fillers *uhm / ehm, well* and *how to say / how can I say.*

Key words: Fillers, speaking, voice recording, transcription, uhm / ehm, well, how to say / how can I say.

Özet

Bu makalenin amacı ESL/EFL sınıflarındaki öğrencilere 'filler' öğretiminin yapılmasının önemini vurgulamak ve öğrencilerin öğretimden sonra 'filler' kullanıp kullanmadığını, eğer kullanıyorlarsa hangilerini, neden kullanma eğiliminde olduklarını araştırmaktı. 'Filler'ları edinme söz konusu olduğunda öğretme konusu mümkün olmayabilse de amaç, daha ziyade öğrencilerin konuşmaları esnasındaki duraksamalarında - ki yabancı bir dilde bu çok doğal bir süreçtir - 'filler' kullanabilecekleri farkındalığını arttırmaktı. Bu bağlamda, 2013 / 2014 akademik yılında, Osmangazi Üniversitesi temel seviye hazırlık sınıfında olan 7 öğrenciyle, iki konuşma oturumu kaydı gerçekleştirildi. 'Filler' kullanımı bu iki oturum arasında öğretildi ve öğretimden önce ve sonra, öğrencilerin 'filler' kullanımı araştırıldı. Tüm süreç 5 haftalık bir sürede gerçekleştirildi. Ses kayıtları ve ilgili çevriyazı ışığında, sonuçlar, öğrencilerin, 'filler' öğretiminden ve ilgili aktivitelerin sağlanmasından sonra, ikinci konuşma oturumunda 'filler' kullandıklarını ortaya koydu. Her ne kadar öğrencilerin ikinci oturumda hangi 'filler' kelimeleri tercih ettikleri ve normalde hangilerini tercih edecekleri, belli noktalarda değişiklik gösterse de genel olarak onların *uhm / ehm, well* ve *how to say / how can I say* 'filler'larını tercih ettikleri görüldü.

Anahtar Kelimeler: 'Filler', konuşma, ses kaydı, çevriyazı, uhm / ehm, well, how to say / how can I say.

"If a foreign language learner says five sheeps or he goed, he can be corrected by practically every native speaker. If, on the other hand, he omits a *well*, the likely reaction will be that he is dogmatic, impolite, boring, awkward to talk to, etc. but a native speaker cannot pinpoint an 'error'."   (Svartvik, 1980, p. 171)

1. Introduction

In a conversation, people utter some sounds as well as words, especially if it is a daily talk. A daily talk is of differences from a well-prepared lecture in many ways, as Swerts pointed out (1998, p.485). However, one of the most obvious differences is that a daily talk contains disfluences while a well-prepared lecture is aimed to be fluent. Daily talks, which form the 'speaking act' in a true meaning, contain pauses, ideally filled pauses, for the native speakers as well as the non-natives. In fact, many spontaneous speakers of various languages have pauses, and there are certain pause fillers that those speakers resort to when needed. English speakers are no exceptions. There are a number of discourse markers either the English-speakers or the non-natives use for different purposes. "Well, Ehm, Uhm, How to say" are only some of them when they want to 'buy time' during their speech. As Khojastehrad put (2012, p.10), very few of the speakers speak completely fluent without any sort of disfluency-creating pauses, hesitations, words and sounds. Thus, a spontaneous speech naturally includes some disfluencies.

2. Review of the Literature

Being a key concept, hesitations are pauses with varying length, which are not usually left unfilled. They occur when the speakers are in the need of words or when they plan their next utterance. Speakers do this by stretching sounds, repetitions or fillers (Rieger, 2003, p.41). As for another key concept, disfluencies; they can be defined as phonema which interrupts the flow of speech. Disfluencies are about silent pauses, fillers, false starts, grammatical errors and hesitations. As hesitations and disfluencies are inevitable and in fact, natural, some speakers prefer to resort some filler words or pause fillers. What a speaker wants to convey while using fillers may be actually a signal showing that he is in a cognitive process; in other words, he is thinking. As suggested in O'Connell and Kowal (2005), Chafe (1980) claimed that the main reason for hesitating is the creation of speech production. According to Chafe, hesitations do not interfere with the speaking; on the contrary, "pauses, false starts, afterthoughts, and repetitions do not hinder that goal, but are steps on the way to achieving it."

Wiese conducted a study in which he focused on the fact that L1 and L2 production are different processes, and proposed that L2 speakers need more time to plan their speech than L1 speakers do, and thus have less automatization (Khojastehrad, 2012, p.12). This may mean that hesitation occurs to the non-native speakers more often than the native ones.

2.1. Discourse Markers

The studies on discourse markers were rooted in discourse analysis. The popularity of discourse markers has increased within the last two decades. Scholars started to focus on these markers and analysed them from various aspects. A lot of studies have been conducted to see whether discourse markers contribute to pragmatic and communicative competence, and if they do, in what ways. In fact, the popularity of the topic to do research on discourse markers has even created fuzziness in terminology (Aşık, 2012, p.16). According to Aşık, different researchers gave different names to the phenomenon. To give some examples, Schiffrin (1987), Blakemore (1987), Halliday and Hasan (1992), Fraser (1993), Andersen (2001),

Aijmer (2002), Trujillo Saez (2003) called the phenomenon as *discourse markers*, Fraser (1999) as *pragmatic markers,* Schiffrin (1987) as *discourse marker,* Schourup (1985) as *discourse particles,* Blakemore (1987) as *discourse connectives,* Knott and Dale (1994) as *cure phrases* while some others as *interactional signals, pragmatic extrressions* and so and so forth.

Discourse markers are words and phrases used to mark boundaries in conversation between one topic and the next (Carter and McCarthy, 1997, p. 13). They could be words or phrases such as *right, OK, I see, I mean, you know*, *like*, etc. and help the speakers in a conversation negotiate their way of thinking. As Carter and McCarthy put (ibid), discourse markers indicate whether the speakers want to open a topic or close in the conversation, whether he agrees with the interlocutor or disagrees, and the like. While in informal talks, the discourse markers such as *like* may be more appropriate, in general conversations the ones such as *you know* or *you know what I mean* may be used to 'check understanding, to soften and personalize the interactive style and keeping the listener involved.' However, discourse markers have been regarded as examples of careless or lazy speech, probably because they do not basically carry information or propositional content.

Discourse markers are grammatically optional and semantically bleached; but they are not pragmatically optional. If the markers are omitted, "the discourse is grammatically acceptable, but would be judged 'unnatural,' 'awkward,' 'disjointed,' 'impolite,' 'unfriendly' or 'dogmatic' within the communicative context" (Brinton, 1996, p.35-36)

2.1.1. Pragmatic functions of Discourse Markers

According to Castro (2009), discourse markers have two main pragmatic functions as textual and interpersonal. The functions, types and related examples are the following:

Textual Functions

To initiate discourse, including claiming the attention of the hearer	Opening frame marker	*so; okey; now*
To close discourse	Closing frame marker	*ok; right; well*
To aid the speaker in acquiring or relinquishing the floor	turn-takers (Turn givers)	*um; eh; and*
To serve as a filler or delaying tactic used to sustain discourse or hold the floor	Fillers (Turn keepers)	*okey; well; now*
To indicate a new topic or a partial shift in topic	Topic switchers	*and; because; so*
To denote either new or old information	Information indicators	*so; then; and then; because*
To mark sequential dependence	Sequence/relevance markers	*well; I mean; you know; like*
To repair one's own or others discourse	Repair markers	*well; I mean; you know; like*

Interpersonal Functions

Subjectively, to express a response or a reaction to the preceding discourse including also back-channel signals of understanding and continued attention while another speaker is having his/her turn.	Response / reaction markers Back channel signals	*yeah, oh; ah; but; oh yeah; well; eh; oh really?* *mhm; uh huh; yeah*
Interpersonally, to affect cooperation or sharing, including confirming shared assumptions, checking or expressing understanding, requesting confirmation, expressing difference saving face (politeness)	Cooperation, agreement marker Disagreement marker Checking understanding markers	*okey; yes; yeah; mhm* *but; no* *ah; I know; yeah; mhm; yes*

2.2.   Fillers

The first resarchers who studied on fillers, specifically on *Uh* and *Um*, were psycholinguists. Maclay & Osgood (1959), Goldman-Eisler (1961), linguist Stenström (1990), Kjellmer (2003), Gilquin (2008), being the names who conducted corpus-based studies on the topic, pointed out that they are *filled pauses* (Tottie, 2011, p.174). Clark & Fox Tree (2002) called them *fillers* while Corley & Steward (2008) referred to them as *hesitation disfluencies*. The definition or categorization of fillers is seemingly a vague issue. However in this paper, the term filler will be used.

Fillers are discourse markers speakers use when they think and/or hesitate during their speech. Clark and Fox Tree (2002, p.97) claimed that fillers served a communicative function, having a place in the speaker's vocabulary. Nonetheless, they are not for primary message in a communication. They rather convey collateral messages. In other words, the use of a filler only helps the meaning. It's not the meaning in the communication. Nevertheless, according to Clark and Fox Tree (ibid), fillers can be used to convey a variety of interpersonal messages such as 'holding the floor'. However, according to Corley and Stewart (2008, p.592), considering fillers in the sense of communication function is not that certain. Fillers are used when the speaker is uncertain about his next utterance or he has choices to make in his utterance, but this does not prove that the speaker signals there will be a delay in his speech due to a uncertainity. In fact, it may be hard to determine why a speaker hesitates by using some fillers. Seemingly, considering such a complex process in his brain during the speech, being certain about why he hesitates is not quite possible. If this process is working in the brain of an L2 speaker, things may be even more complex.

According to Tottie (2001, p.174), however, linguists or psycholinguists indicated that fillers are often treated as flaws in speech. This way of thinking is not different from one of some scholars in that discourse markers are the signal of 'lazy and careless speech'. On the contrary, though, some scholars stress the positive aspects of fillers. Spontaneous speech is often a better communication means than fluent, read speech as Swerts pointed out (1998, p.486). Swert also put that some scholars had presented evidence of fillers' information value.

3. Statement of the Problem

Several studies have shown that discourse markers are of a place in language teaching, yet the majority of those studies were related to the native speakers' uses of discourse markers. Some researchers like Müller (2004), however, focusing on the American and German students' use of *well,* stated that non-native speakers use discourse markers more than native ones. The length of the hesitation for the non-native speakers explains the reason why they may use the discourse markers more often.

Teaching how to hesitate in speaking has been a neglected part of teaching L2. Although some wise students try to be exposed to the language outside the classroom via watching films, listening to music, playing some computer games and chatting with international friends, and thus acquire many aspects of language including how to hesitate in L2, the number of those sort of students are a few. Some of the students are even not aware of hearing or maybe using a discourse marker, to be specific, a filler. As Crytal and Davy (1979) mentioned (cited in Khojastehrad, 2012, p.10), very first thing to learn in a foreign language is how to hesitate. Teaching, in this respect, is a significant matter for such learning. Furthermore, according to Nakatani (2008, p.78), it is reasonable to underline the importance of raising learners' awareness of strategies to raise their oral proficiency when they encounter problem in communication. Fillers are no exceptions as a strategy.

4. Significance of the Study

There are a growing number of researchers who study discourse markers, but there are only a few who studied specifically *fillers*. In Turkey, although there are some studies concerning discourse markers, studies on fillers, especially teaching issue in such a study, has not been found yet. It is the truth that non-native speakers hesitate a lot when they are speaking in L2. If they are elementary-level English learners, like in the context of this study, the hesitation may be much bigger. If hesitation is an inevitable thing for the above-mentioned learners during their speech, to teach them how they can hesitate in a more native-like way would make sense and is worth teaching. This study was initiated with such a consideration, and it emphasizes the importance of teaching fillers even to elementary-level learners of English.

5. Limitations of the Study

As it is a case study, the replication of this study would not result in the same way if it was done with different participants in different times. The methodology and the results are unique to this study. The duration between teaching and the second session could have affected the filler use of the participants in the way that the participants might have been exposed to fillers outside the class. However, the fact that this typical and uncontrollable time-related factor may become visible in such studies with treatment is not uncommon.

6. Research Question

Do the students use fillers after being taught? And if so, which fillers do they tend to use and why?

7. Methodology

This study aims to find whether the students use fillers after they are taught. Finding which fillers the students tend to use in their speech and for what reason is the other purpose of the study. This is a qualitative study, which contains discourse analysis.

Considering the participant number and the relatively long time of its application, this study can be taken as a case study. It is also a *teacher researcher* type of case study.

7.1.   Participants

Seven students of an English language preparation class at Osmangazi University participated in the study. Being three females and four males, and forming a homogenous group, the students' age were between 19 and 20, and they were from different parts of Turkey. Their departments were International Relationships, Electric and Electronic Engineering, Computer Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. All of them were native speakers of Turkish. They took the Michigan Test conducted at the beginning of the autumn semester of the 2013-2014 education years, and started the same school semester as Beginner level students. By the time the study was done, the students had reached Elementary level, having received 24 hours of English instruction a week via the same course book, from the same four teachers in the same class. The reason why those seven students were chosen for the study was that they had shown a lot better performances in the language than their classmates. The researcher and her three partners in that class together decided that those seven were the competent language users in the class, thus were the ones who would speak in English and handle with the filler words taught.

7.2.   Instruments

Participants' recorded voices during their first and second speaking sessions are one of the instruments in this study. The others are filler teaching; the questions asked by the researcher and the pictures the participants talked during the sessions; and the interview questions asked in Turkish language at the end of the second recording.

7.3.   Data Collection

Every student in the study was recorded for about 20 minutes first. Each student spoke with the teacher alone so that being in the crowd would not affect their performance adversely. The researcher did not examine the seven students in one day. She divided the participants' speaking sessions into days. The students were not given the information of the recording. The researcher hid the recorder, which was Sony ICD-UX 533, during the conversations so that the students would not feel uncomfortable because they were being recorded. They were not informed about the fillers, but they knew that it would be a speaking examination. For this reason, they did their best to speak well. This speaking examination was conducted in four phases. In the first phase, the students were asked some general questions such as introduction of themselves, being a university student in Osmangazi University and Eskisehir, comparison of Eskisehir and their hometowns, their hobbies, their dreams, studying

and learning English. In the second phase, they picked a picture among the others, which were taken from their two course books they had covered. These pictures were rather critical pictures at various units of the book while the other group of pictures were smaller; perhaps a little detailed pictures from the units. Those other group-pictures were about the third phase of the examination. The students chose one from each picture groups and spoke about them. From time to time, the researcher, being the interlocutor in the conversation, asked some questions to elicit responses from the students. In the last phase, the students had to choose one word from 30 words taken from their books, and describe the word by also giving some examples related.

After the completion of the first recordings, the researcher, being also one of the teachers of the classroom, taught the students some fillers. The fillers focused on were *ehm / uhm, well, how to say*, *kind of, like, you know, actually* and *I mean*.

In the teaching process, the researchers first played some examples of native speakers' uses of fillers during their hesitations. The book Pronunciation in Use published by Cambridge and related tracks in the book were used for the teaching. Teaching was done in one lesson, which lasted for 50 minutes. It was rather an awareness-raising lesson about fillers. 20 minute-durations at the end of 5 lessons, which means 2 weeks, were used for practise. The teacher conducted various speaking activities for the students to practise fillers.

After the teaching, the students were recorded one more time. The questions asked and the tasks for the second recording were no different from the ones in the first session. The aim of this was to control every parameter as much as possible, and only focus on the change in the hesitations. Just like in the first one, the students did not know they were being recorded. For about 20 minutes for each, they were asked the same questions and given the previous pictures and words they had chosen in the first recording. As a difference, this time, the students were interviewed in their native language about the fillers at the end of the session. They were asked if they believed the importance of using fillers in their speech, and which fillers mentioned in the classroom they would like to use and why.

7.4.   Data Analysis

The recordings were listened and analysed, and transcripts were made by the researcher during two weeks.

For the first session, the hesitations in speeches were determined with the pauses 'eh'. The hesitations were specified with dots and the 'eh's were underlined and written in bold forms. All recordings were listened for a second time for checking.

For the analysis of the second session, hesitations and 'eh' uses were determined in the same way, yet this time, the fillers used by the participants were taken into consideration and highlighted.

The numbers of hesitations, 'eh' uses and fillers were counted, the answers given to the interview question were evaluated, and the research question of this study was aimed to be answered.

8. Results

Table 1

Numbers of hesitations, 'eh's and fillers uttered by the participants in the first session

Participant Name	Hesitations	'eh'	Fillers
Bardick	74	38	0
Bendall	21	65	0
Gwen	22	32	0
Ian	25	0	14
Melville	36	26	0
Moreen	34	94	20
Vanessa	69	27	24

Table 1 displays the numbers of hesitations, 'eh's and fillers the participants uttered in the first session of speaking. Hesitations meant in the table were the ones uttered at the word-basis, as in the example of *when I.. when I was a.. child, but...* In other words, hesitations before and after 'eh's , for instance, *yesterday eh I studied eh.. English* were not included.

As can be seen form the table, Bardick hesitated for 74 times in the total speech of his while he uttered 38 'eh's. In the first session, he did not utter any kind of fillers. Bendall hesitated for 21 times, yet his 'eh's were a lot more than his silent hesitations. Just like Bardick, he did not utter any fillers. Gwen's situation was no different from Bendall's. While there is a big difference in the numbers of hesitations and 'eh's of Bendall, he rather preferred saying 'eh' instead of silent hesitations. Gwen did the same. No fillers were used, either. Melville's sitation was similar to Bardick's in the way that he more hesitated silently and less uttered 'eh'.

Ian's situation was an interesting one, because he was observed to use fillers *ehm / uhm* even before the teaching. In this sense, Moreen and Vanessa did not do something different – they utterred fillers in the first session. However, Ian was interesting in the way that, even though he hesitated, he did not use any 'eh's but some fillers.

Moreen hesitated for 34 times, and she used 94 'eh's in addition to the mentioned hesitations. On the contrary to Moreen, Vanessa hesitated more and used 'eh's less. Nevertheless, both of these participants used some fillers in the first session. Considering the number of their hesitations and 'eh's; the fillers, which are *ehm* and *uhm*, may have been naturally used during the speech.

Table 2

Numbers of hesitations, 'eh's and fillers uttered by the participants in the second session

Participant Name	Hesitations	'eh'	Fillers
Bardick	98	24	29
Bendall	58	45	29
Gwen	27	9	13
Ian	64	3	7
Melville	58	14	10
Moreen	12	75	36
Vanessa	75	10	30

Regarding the two tables together, before and after teaching fillers, there is an increase in the numbers of fillers used and decrease in the numbers of 'eh' use for the participants except Ian. Thus, it may be safe to say that as the participants used fillers, they less preferred the traditional hesitation sound for them, which is 'eh'. What, however, is striking is that except Moreen, participants hesitated more in the second session in the comparison with the first one. Although the researcher asked the same questions and the participants talked about the same pictures and words in two sessions, the duration of the participants' speech in the sessions is not the same. In addition, the interlocutor may have changed the nature of the participants' speeches with the questions she asked, thus it may not be proper to evaluate each participant's hesitations, 'eh' use and filler use in one way of thinking. However, Ian being exceptions, for the rest of the participants, fillers were learned. Thus the first part of the research question of this study can be replied with a 'yes': Students use fillers after being taught.

As for why the majority of the participants increased the hesitations meanwhile, it might be because the second session created a kind of stress on them. Seeing tasks were the same with the first one, they must have understood that the interlocutor expected them to use fillers as a difference in the second session. This deduction might explain the reason of the increased hesitations. However, it is an unexpected result, so it was not foreseen by the researcher.

In the second part of the research question, the fillers participants tended to use were aimed to be found.

Table 3: The numbers of filler types which participants used in their speech

	Uhm	Ehm	Well	How to say / how can I say	You know	I mean
Bardick	22	3	--	4	--	--
Bendall	2	4	19	2	1	1
Gwen	10	2	1	--	--	--
Ian	3	2	--	2	--	--
Melville	--	1	7	--	--	2
Moreen	14	21	1	--	--	--
Vanessa	5	22	1	1	--	1

When looked at Table 3, it can be seen that the majority of participants tended to use *uhm / ehm* and *well* as fillers in their speech. *How to say / how can I say* was found to be the next popular filler.

However in the semi-structured interview right after the second session, the participants were asked in their native language which fillers they would prefer and why. The answers and reasons varied, and at certain points, they were different from the results in Table 3.

Based on the interview with the participants, the following fillers were found to be preferred with certain reasons. Almost every participant stated more than one filler, so the total number below does not form 100 %.

How can I say / How to say
6 out of 7 participants uttered they tended or would tend to use *how to say / how can I say* as fillers, because;

- It is the same filler in Turkish in the meaning of "Nasil denir / Nasil diyebilirim?"

- *How can I say* sounds nice.

- *How to say* or *how can I say* can be used to resort to the help of the interlocutor when one is stuck with words.

- (For one participant) It is uttered without any specific reason even when she talks to herself in English.

- (For one participant) To use it is like a habit from high school. His teacher taught him that he could use *how can I say* when he is in need of finding words. But to him, *how to say* is shorter and maybe more functional.

Uhm / Ehm

4 of the participants uttered they would use *uhm / ehm*, since they are;

- short,

- easy to remember,

- alternatives to the hesitation sound in Turkish, which is "*eh*".

Well

3 of the participants uttered that *well* would be one of the fillers they tended to use, as;

- It sounds cool.

- People use it quite often in the TV series.

- It is an alternative to "*şey*" in Turkish and has the same function and meaning, so easy and comfortable to use.

- It is short, so one can concentrate the main meaning of the sentence after using it without getting lost.

Like

1 participant stated he tends to use, thus would use *like* because;

- It sounds cool, and

- The participant heard it in TV series a lot, especially when people get slower in speech.

I mean

1 participant stated he might use *I mean* as fillers as;

- It is uttered quickly.

9.   Conclusion and Discussion

McCarthy (1998, p.60) stated that there seems to be no obvious reason why the discourse markers for a language should not be part of the teaching issue, for they are, in fact, very useful items and lexically quite simple and straightforward. Any teacher wishing to incorporate insights in the spoken language has to decide the status of discourse markers in his classroom (ibid), since the spoken language is closely about the discourse markers.

This study was aimed to highlight the importance of teaching fillers, which is a discourse marker, to students. For some, teaching fillers is not possible or purposeful, because people acquire them when they are ready or their language level develops. The researcher's point in this study, though, was to show that teaching fillers, thus raising the awareness of the students in the issue, matters even at the elementary level. Eslami-Rasekh (2005, p.199) noted that teaching the pragmatic aspects of a language is teacher responsibility. Discourse markers are no exception in this pragmatic side. If the students are unaware of fillers' existence, they do not know how to hesitate in a foreign language in spite of the fact that hesitating is something they do quite often during their speech. As Kormos and Dénes cited (2004, p.160), there are certain situations in which native speakers frequently hesitate. Considering even the natives

hesitate in their unprepared, small, daily-talks, the fact that non-natives hesitate is highly natural.

Although the results for this study are unique to this study, it might not be wrong to state that when the students are taught fillers, they use fillers. They have difference preferences in using fillers and they have their reasons, though. According to the findings, e*hm / uhm, well and how to say / how can I say* are the three markers that present the highest range of functions either during the participants' speeches or in their general preference.

It would not be wrong to say that there is a gap in literature about teaching fillers. Although there are lots of studies conducted on the specific fillers, for instance, which fillers the natives or non-natives prefer and maybe why, there is no study conducted about teaching fillers to students. It might be either because fillers are seen as flaws in speech or because they are not believed to be taught.

This study aimed to fill the gap in literature, even though there were certain limitations. The results may not be generalised, yet, it supports the notion that fillers should be taught by drawing learner attention to their existence, and that non-native learners of English language are able to use different fillers according to their tendency to use. What language teachers need to do is not neglecting this issue and to integrate fillers in their speaking lessons. In this way, they can help learners sound more authentic in L2 speaking as Moreno, Chambers and O'riordan (2006, p.99) suggested.

REFERENCES

Aşık, A. (2012). *Discourse Markers And Spoken English: Nonnative Use in the Turkish EFL Setting.* PhD Dissertation, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

Brinton, L. J. (1996). *Pragmatic markers in English: Grammaticalization and discourse functions.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Carter, R. ; McCarthy, M. (1997). *Exploring Spoken English*. Cambridge University Press, the United Kingdom.

Castro, C. (2009). The use and functions of discourse markers in EFL classroom interaction. *Profile 11*, p. 57-77.

Clark, H. H. ; Fox Tree, J. E. (2002). Using *Uh* and *Um* in spontaneous speaking. *Cognition,* 84, p. 73–111

Corley, M. ; Stewart, O. W. (2008). Hesitation disfluencies in spontaneous speech: The meaning of *um. Language and Linguistics Compass,* 2 (4), p. 589–602

Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2005). Raising the pragmatic awareness of language learners. *ELT Journal*, 59 (3), p. 199-208

Khojastehrad, S. (2012). Hesitation strategies in oral L2 test among Iranian students-shifted from EFL context to EIL. *International Journal of English Linguistics,* 2(3), p. 10-21

Kormos, J. ; Dénes, M. (2004). Exploring measures and perceptions of fluency in the speech of second language learners. *System*, 32, p. 145-164

McCarthy, M. (1998). *Spoken Language and Applied Lingistics.* Cambridge University Press, the UK.

Moreno, C. P. ; Chambers, A. ; O'riordan, S. (2006). Integrating a corpus of classroom discourse in language teacher education: the case of discourse markers. *ReCALL,* 18 (1), p. 83-104

Müller, S. (2004). 'Well you know that type of person': Functions of *well* in the speech of American and German students. *Journal of Pragmatics* (36), p. 1157–1182

Nakatani, Y. (2008). The effects of awareness-raising training on oral communication strategy use. *The Modern Language Journal*, (89), p. 76-91

O'Connell, D. C. ; Kowal, S. (2004). The History of research on the filled pause as evidence of *The Written Language Bias in Linguistics* (Linell, 1982). *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research,* 33(6), p.459-475

Rieger, C. (2003). Disfluencies and hesitation strategies in oral L2 tests. *Gothenburg Papers in Theoretical Linguistics,* (90), p. 41-44

Svartvik, J. (1980). Well in conversation. In: Greenbaum, Sidney, Leech, Geoffrey, Svartvik, Jan (Eds.), *Studies in English Linguistics for Randolph Quirk*. Longman, London, p. 167–177.

Swerts, M. (1998). Filled pauses as markers of discourse structure. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 30, p. 485-496

Tottie, G. (2011). *Uh* and *Um* as sociolinguistic markers in British English. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 16:2, p.173–197

Selcen Erten was born in Turkey in 1989, and completed her Bachelor education in ELT Department at Akdeniz University, Turkey in 2011. She worked as a language assistant in a school in Sweden for one year right after her graduation. Upon her return to Turkey, she started her career as an English language instructor at Osmangazi University and an MA student in ELT at Anadolu University. She is pursuing her profession and Master education at the universities mentioned. Her interests include languages, Foreign Language Acquisition, Phonetics, Discourse Markers, travelling, reading and writing travel materials, dubbing, Rock Music, and North.