

Speech Errors Performed by Former American Presidents in “60 Minutes” Interview: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

This study has the purpose of depicting the kinds of speech errors, the comparison of speech errors' frequency, and the causes of speech errors made by former American Presidents Barack Obama (BO) and Donald Trump (DT) as the interviewee in an interview program entitled "60 Minutes". This study used a qualitative approach. The data source was BO and DT's video in "60 Minutes" Interview. The data in this study were in the form of words, phrases, and clauses transcribed from the speech made by BO and DT. Based on the analysis, it was found that BO made 111 speech errors and six (6) types of speech errors, while DT made 90 speech errors and nine (9) types of speech errors. The causes of speech errors made by former American Presidents in "60 Minutes" 2020 interview are caused by social factors, both situational anxiety, and social circumstances.

Keywords: psycholinguistics, speech errors, interview, comparative analysis

1. Introduction

1.1 The Background of the Study

Humans communicate using language through speech, interpreting sounds that have meaning to express their ideas from the mind into spoken sentences. Communication is a two-way process involving the speaker and the listener; the role is to transfer any ideas or information, and the listener is to grasp the information of what they hear from the speaker. As social creatures, language is important for human life. The smoothness of conversation or interaction is affected by many factors (Hanafiah et al., 2021). Sometimes speakers make errors during the execution process of speech, and it can interfere with the effectiveness of the communication process, the error in speaking is referred as speech errors. Speech errors (some says slip of tongue) are unintentional mistakes made by a speaker from the target form intends to produce, it is general errors in speaking that can happen to anyone during verbal communication (Tampubolon & Lubis, 2021; Utami & Malihah, 2018; Vahlevi et al., 2020; Yahya, 2022; Zhu & Liu, 2018). To conclude, speech errors is regarded as a discrepancy between what the speakers want to convey with what they actually said.

Speech errors can occur in any kinds of communication, both for one way or two ways communication. The example of two ways of communication can be seen in interviews (Zein et al., 2021). Irmayana et al. (2020) explain that interview is a conversation between the interviewer and the resource person who aims to get information from the resource. In this analysis, researcher analyzed the communication that occurs in an interview entitled "60 Minutes", which involves two speakers as the object of analysis, which are the 44th president of the United States of America i.e. Barack Obama (BO) and the 45th President of the United States i.e. Donald Trump (DT), writer analyzed speech errors that made by both speaker as the interviewee in "60 Minutes" interview. BO and DT are two famous American position who have ever hold position as the president of the United States of America. As politician, communication skill are critical (Amin et al., 2022; Humaizi et al., 2019).

Many scholars conducted the study of speech errors in some field such as in students' utterances in speaking English (Irmayana et al., 2020; Kafifah & Aini, 2020; Pravitasari, 2017; Utami & Malihah, 2018), lexical errors in Mandarin (Wan & Allasonnière-Tang, 2021), speech error in L2 (Pepito, 2019), speech error in Female singer (Harastasya et al., 2020), Indonesian daily conversation (Lapasau & Setiawati, 2021; Syukri, 2018), South Korean TV shows (Tampubolon & Lubis, 2021; Yahya, 2022), phonological speech error (Frisch & Wright, 2002), morphological speech error (Sadapotto et al., 2021), and movie (Mutmainnah, 2014; Vahlevi et al., 2020). Researcher analyzed BO and DT speech in "60 Minutes" used nine types of speech errors proposed by Clark & Clark (1977), there are nine types of errors namely: silent Pause,

filled pause, repeats, retraced false start, unretraced false start, correction, stutter, interjection and slip of tongue. In brief silent pause is the period where no speech is produced or a pause occurs between words; filled pause is the period of no word between the speeches is filled up by the expressions such as; er, ah, mm, uh ,or any other sounds that fill; repeats error exist when a speaker repeats the same word that should not need to be repeated; retraced false start, when the speaker corrects a word include one or another word before the corrected word, unretraced false start correcting the wrong word without being followed by another word to be repeated; correction is repairing the word by using terms such as “I mean”, or “rather”, or other expressions; stutter exist when there is hesitation and abnormal repetition during speech; interjection is when a person stops to think of the right words to say next by using common expressions like *eh, ah*; slip of tongue is a normal error in speaking that often happened when speaker slip while speaking.

Clark & Clark (1977) more explain that speaker may has hesitation or unprepared to speak, it can be related to several factors such as cognitive reasons, and social factors. Cognitive reasons related to the hesitation and difficulty when speaker need time to think and choose the right words, appropriate with the situation and explanation of the matter, while social factors divided into two situational anxiety and social circumstances, situational anxiety is when people talk about topics they are anxious about, they tend to produce more silent pauses and other speech errors, and it can affect the fluency of speech, while social circumstances is when the speaker thinks or hesitate too much about what they are saying and it can affect the running of communication, these factors will be the basic for determining the cause of the emergence of speech errors in this analysis.

1.2 The Research Questions

In line to the background of the study, the research questions are formulated as the followings

1. What kinds of speech errors made by BO and DT while they were interviewed?
2. What are the causes of speech errors made by BO and DT in the interview?

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this study are

1. To discover kinds of speech errors made by BO and DT while they were interviewed.
2. To explain the causes of speech errors made by BO and DT in the interview.

2. Method

This study employs qualitative approach with content analysis method. In this study researcher analyzed speech errors made by BO and DT which refers to the analysis of phenomena in communication using language and its relation to human mind in producing language. The data were collected by using documentation technique. The data were in the form of transcription of utterances produced by BO and DT, the data collected from video of “60 Minutes” interview in Youtube. The interview with BO was published on November, 15th 2020 with the duration of the video 27 minutes 2 seconds, while “60 Minutes” interview with DT was published on October 23rd 2020, with the duration of the video 37 minutes 39 seconds.

3. Results

Based on the analysis conducted by the researcher, the data collected from Barack Obama (BO) as Object I and Donald Trump (DT) as Object II, the comparison of the frequency of speech errors made by DT and BO during the “60 Minutes” interview can be seen in following tables:

Table I. Types of Speech Errors made by Barack Obama (BO)

No.	Types of Speech Errors	Frequency of Speech Errors	Percentage
1	Silent Pause	14	12.6 %
2	Filled Pause	62	55.8 %
3	Repeats	10	9 %
4	Retraced False Start	-	-
5	Unretraced False Start	-	-
6	Correction	4	3.60 %
7	Stutter	20	18 %
8	Interjection	-	-
9	Slip of Tongue	1	0.09 %
Total Errors		111	

Table II. Types of Speech Errors made by Donald Trump (DT)

No.	Types of Speech Errors	Frequency of Speech Errors	Percentage
1	Silent Pause	10	11.1 %
2	Filled Pause	5	5.55 %
3	Repeats	47	52.2 %
4	Retraced False Start	4	4.44 %
5	Unretraced False Start	3	3.33 %
6	Correction	5	5.55 %
7	Stutter	12	13.3 %
8	Interjection	2	2.22 %
9	Slip of Tongue	2	2.22 %
Total Errors		90	

Table I shows about the kinds and frequency of speech errors that made by BO during the interview, the total of speech errors made by BO is 111 errors with filled pause as the dominant errors, that made by BO 62 times. While table II shows the types and frequency of speech errors that made by DT, with repeats as the dominant errors 47 times. Both objects have different kind of dominant errors, but we can see that the four kinds of dominant errors made by both objects are the same. DT and BO four highest frequency of speech errors are; silent pause, filled pause, repeats and stutters. Both objects have the same four kinds of highest speech errors but in different order. Therefore, researcher will only explain about the four highest errors that made by BO and DT in this part.

There are some filled pauses that made by BO as the dominant speech error (62 times) he made during interview:

1. When you're time is up *[mm]* then it is your job to put the country first (01:09)
2. *[mm]* My advice to President Trump is if you want,... (01:20)
3. *[mm]* it's time for you to the same thing. (01:30)

BO did filled pause by producing sounds *[mm]* in speaking at certain part of sentences such as in data (1) When you're time is up *[mm]* then it is your job to put the country first, and started the statement by producing sound *[mm]* in data (2) *[mm]* My advice to President Trump is if you want,...

While DT dominant speech error is repeats, DT made repeats for 47 times. There are some repeats made by DT during interview:

1. We are / we are positioned like never before (01:14)
2. If he had it / if he had it you wouldn't say that to Biden (01:48)
3. Excuse me. 11.4 million people, why? Because the last report was **just a little bit / just a little bit** off?

In the data (1) DT repeats the phrase "**we are / we are**", he said the same phrases twice, which he shouldn't and it impacted the effectiveness of his utterances. In the data (2), DT repeats the same clause "**If he had it, if he had it**" on his statement.

The second dominant speech errors made by BO is stutter, which made by BO for 20 times.

There are some stutter that made by BO during the interview:

1. Well, a President is a --- a public servant.. (00:56)
2. Well, I --- I--- I look, I think our adversaries have seen us weakened... (02:28)
3. Well, I --- I --- I titled it the Promise Land because even though we may not get there... (03:41)

From the data above show that BO repeating sound in form of syllables and words. In this interview, BO quite often made stutter, even in one sentence or statement, BO could stutter for several times.

The second dominant speech error made by DT is the same with BO which is stutter. DT made stutter for 12 times

There are some stutters made by DT during the interview:

1. Well, ultimately let me, and I --- I'll tell you it was happening (01:28)
2. No, well I --- I am going to say that (02:29)
3. I say that I --- I feel masks possibly work (11:50)

Same with BO, DT made stutter by repeating sound in the form of syllables and sound, it can be seen in the data above.

Next, the third most dominant speech errors made by BO is silent pauses, BO made silent pause for 14 times.

There are some silent pauses made by BO during the interview:

1. I think our adversaries have seen // us weakened (02:32)
2. That when it comes to // our foreign policy (02:59)
3. The sense that // not only do we not have to tell the truth... (04:47)

In data (1) BO paused between the words “*have seen*” and “*us weakened*”, which is not supposed to be, because the sentence is better spoken without pause, this proves that BO made silent pauses in speaking. Same with data (2) and (3), BO pauses for several times in speaking between words that should not need pauses

Same with BO, the third most dominant speech errors made by DT is silent pauses. DT made silent pause for 10 times.

There are some silent pauses made by DT during the interview:

1. I’m saving // Suburbia (07:26)
2. Look at your models // models (08:41)
3. Biden and Obama // and they didn’t have a pandemic. (10:49)

In the data (1) of the utterances, DT silent between the word “*saving*” and “*Suburbia*” for a moment, and the same with data (2) which DT pausing for a moment after word “*models*” before move to the other words uttered which should not need pauses.

The fourth most dominant speech error made by BO is repeats. BO made 10 repeats.

There are some repeats made by BO during the interview:

1. If my daughters in any kind of competition pouted and / and then accused the other side of cheating ... (05:42)
2. Those / those values that we preached ... (06:41)
3. He is / he is / he is a good example of somebody who I think understood ... (08:15)

In the data (1) BO repeats the word “*and*”, he says the word “*and*” then say it again, so there is unnecessary repetition on his statement, that disturbs the effectiveness of the sentence, and included as repeats errors in speaking.

The fourth most dominant speech error made by DT is filled pause. DT made filled pause for 5 times.

There are some filled pauses made by DT during the interview:

1. [ee] I would say China, they’re an adversary (03:14)
2. So we are care about our people but [ah] we’ve done a great job with the ventilators ... (06:19)
3. [ah] we haven’t looking at the recent polls (08:10)

In the data (1), DT begin his utterances with sounds [ee] before he continued with “*I would say China*”, and in data (2), DT, filled his utterances by producing the sounds [ah] before he continued his speech with “*we’ve done a great job with the ventilators*”.

Based on the data of analysis, BO doesn't commit all nine types of speech errors. BO only commits six types of speech errors, namely; filled pauses, stutters, silent pauses, repeats, corrections, and slip of tongue. From the total speech errors of 111 times, BO did not commit retraced false start, unretraced false start and interjection. The highest frequency of speech errors made by BO is filled pauses with 62 times and the least speech error is slip of tongue that commit by BO for once. DT commits all nine types of speech errors with a total 90 speech errors, the highest frequency of speech errors made by DT is repeats with 47 times and interjection and slip of tongue as the least speech errors made by DT, which he commits twice for each kind.

4. Discussion

Based on the comparison of speech errors between BO and DT, researcher found that the types of speech errors made by DT were more than BO. DT made nine types of errors while BO only made 6 types of errors, namely silent pauses, filled pauses, repeats, stutters, corrections and slips of tongue. Based on the comparison of the total speech errors, BO made more speech errors than DT, BO made as many as 111 speech errors, while DT made 90 errors. Both research objects had the same four types of highest errors, namely silent pause, filled pause, repeats and stutters.

This finding is in line with previous research that analyzed the comparison of speech errors done by Mutmainnah (2014). The research compared two main actors in a movie, it was found that actor I committed more types of speech errors than actor II, with the total of 6 types of errors, while actor II made 5 types of speech errors. However, the difference with the findings of the research conducted by Muthmainnah (2014) is that the object that made more types of speech errors also made the most total errors, while in this research, the researcher found that BO made more total speech errors than DT, although DT did more types of errors.

In this study, the former researcher observed interviewee who were interviewed in a news broadcast program and found that the highest frequency made by the speaker were silent pauses, filled pauses, repeats and stutters, the results of this study are in line with the former research that also discussed about speech errors in broadcast program, that is speech errors made by the music program VJ research by Nisa (2009), found that the dominant speech errors made by the speakers of the broadcast program were filled pauses, silent pauses and repeats. Clark in Hasnun (2009) state that common speech errors that are often made by broadcast speakers are related to their psychology which can affect practical problems in speaking, for instance speech errors.

The results of this study the highest frequency of speech errors also in line with another study that discussed the frequency of speech errors in interview program, the research conducted by Volvariety (2011), the research analyze the talk show and found that the interviewer and guest stars commit all nine types of speech errors, with filled pause (27,15%) , repeats (15,46%) and silent pause (11,68%) became the types of speech errors with the highest frequency. Different with this research that analyze about speech errors made by native speaker of English, former researcher analyze Metro TV interview that used English with the speaker of the program is Indonesian.

5. Conclusion

This study also found that BO made six types of speech errors while DT made all nine types of speech errors, based on the comparison of the frequency of the total number of speech errors, BO made more speech errors than Donald Trump, which was 111:90, The causes of speech errors made by BO and DT in "60 Minutes" 2020 interview, based on Clark and Clark source of planning difficulty are caused by social factors both situational anxiety and social circumstances. Both BO and DT dominantly made filled pause, silent pause, stutter and repetition, which related to anxiety and hesitation in speaking

The causes of the speech error were linked with source of planning difficulty proposed by Clark and Clark, there are two factors that cause speech errors, namely cognitive difficulty and social factors that also divide into two; situational anxiety and social circumstances. Cognitive factor is concerned with internal mental stages, it is related to the mental process of speaker, while social factors is an external factor, it is commonly experienced in high pressure situations, impact speaker anxiety and nervousness.

Based on the researcher's observations, the causes of speech errors experienced by both research objects, BO and DT, tend to refer to social factors; situational anxiety and social circumstances. According to Clark and Clark when a person talks about something offend, they mentally respond to this discomfort feeling. When someone feels anxious about the topic being discussed, they will be more hesitating, and careful in responding to the conversation.

Both BO and DT dominantly made filled pauses, silent pause, stutter and repetition, which related to anxiety and hesitation in speaking. In Nisa (2009), it explains that those kinds of dominant errors are causing by nervous, hesitation and fast speaking. Along the interview, both BO and DT were asking by some questions that related to the problem of US and their work during their served as US President, it affects their mentality as speakers, in answering questions, they tend to be careful in responding and sometimes even rash in responding to the question, which automatically affects the fluency of their speech production.

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