PAUSE FILLERS AND GENDER IN JAPANESE AND KOREAN: A COMPARATIVE SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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In our daily lives, we engage in many types of linguistic activities, establishing various relationships with each other as members of a society. These linguistic activities seem to vary according to culture and gender. For example, despite the strict hierarchical relations in a society, an Asia culture is regarded as a "harmony-oriented culture" while American culture is an "argument culture" (Tannen 1998). According to Tannen, Asian cultures such as Japanese, Chinese, Thai, and Vietnamese, place great value on avoiding open expression of disagreement and conflict because they emphasize harmony. Therefore, Asian cultures are often regarded as "feminine" because of the universal characteristic of indirectness, unassertiveness, and politeness while Western cultures are regarded as "masculine." It is also generally assumed that Western people value clear statement of facts and avoid politeness, hesitation, indirectness, etc., which may be due to the intention towards others. It is considered to be characteristic of Western culture, therefore, not to use expressions that would add to ambiguity, indirectness or uncertainty.

However, from my experience as a speaker of Korean and Japanese, which are Asian languages, and English, a typical Western language, this view seems to be too general to be realistic. Asian languages vary considerably in the use of the above-mentioned features such as ambiguity, indirectness, and uncertainty. I have especially observed that such features are much more conspicuous in Japanese. When I started learning Japanese, I found some interesting linguistic aspects to keep the conversation going smoothly. I often wondered why Japanese people used expressions such as *hee* ‘oh yeah’, *a soo*? ‘really?’, *ne* ‘right’, *sooyo ne* ‘yeah, I think so, too’, and *hontooni?* ‘really?’ with exaggeration and often while moving their head. At first, this kind of linguistic behavior gave me a rather positive impression because Japanese people seemed to
encourage me to continue to speak although I couldn’t speak very well. Their reaction was heart-warming and I started to regard the Japanese as the most polite people in the world. Later, as I became more competent in Japanese, I was disappointed, noticing that Japanese used such expressions as part of the interactional convention rather than to make the speaker feel comfortable. Such expressions were used with equal frequency among Japanese speakers themselves.

As I observed their interactions with more care, I realized the functions of these interactional expressions were not the same. I soon learned that there was a group of expressions for the purpose of a speaker’s discourse planning, such as anoo, koo, ee, and nanka which can be called “pause fillers.” To those who are not proficient in Japanese, these pause fillers are convenient because they give the speaker time to think of what to say and because their use is not only socially acceptable but also makes the nonnative speaker sound more Japanese. These fillers function to make the speaker sound more humble and unassertive.

These impressions point to a contrastive difference between Japanese and Korean. The use of pause fillers is socially acceptable in Japanese society to express hesitation, while it is not necessarily considered as such in Korean society. Japan and Korea are geographically very close and it is known that the two cultures have constantly interacted with each other since prehistoric time. Since they share many essential aspects of Asian culture, Korean and Japanese are perceived as the same or as very similar in terms of cultural values.

It is true that Japanese and Korean cultures have a great deal in common, but it is misleading to think of them only in terms of their similarities. It is important to examine the difference between the two languages and cultures as well as to enhance mutual understanding. In this study, I assume that the use of pause fillers reflects the prevalent
cultural values, and that a comparative analysis of pause fillers should reveal the commonality as well as differences of the two cultures.

The purpose of this study is hence to show that the two cultures are in fact different in the use of pause fillers and in their attitudes towards the use of fillers. Japanese speakers tend to perceive pause fillers as expressions of politeness and perceive them more positively. Koreans on the other hand tend to consider pause fillers as manifestations of psychological uncertainty and perceive them negatively. In both cultures, social factors such as age, social status and gender play significant roles in the use or non-use of pause fillers.

I will also pay particular attention to gender in this study since gender is an important factor affecting the phenomenon of pause fillers. By exploring pause fillers in Japanese and Korean, taking into consideration gender differences, I hope that we can look at aspects of culture from a cross-linguistic approach.

This thesis, consisting of eight chapters, proceeds as follows: In Chapter 2, I will review the existing studies of English, Japanese and Korean pause fillers. Chapter 3 reviews my preliminary study of Korean pause fillers which I wrote as a term paper for a sociolinguistics class in 2003. This will provide useful information to understand Korean discourse features and culture, and it will also be a preparatory step for the main discussion of this study. Chapter 4 presents the research methodology I used for this study. Chapter 5 presents quantitative analysis of pause fillers based on the data collection. I will also discuss, with ample examples, the relationship between two pragmatic categories of conversational discourse, pause fillers and backchanneling, demonstrating that pause fillers work in response to backchannels. Chapters 6 and 7 provide qualitative analysis of pause fillers taken from collected Japanese and Korean data. Chapter 8 is the conclusion of the study. It will be suggested that the different use of pause fillers between Japanese and Korean reflects cultural traits of the two societies.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Spoken discourse is different from written discourse. It is fragmented by numerous pauses, false starts, fillers, and repetitions. These features are hesitation phenomena and reflect the "speaker's need for language planning" (Ochs 1979). Although they certainly reflect the speaker's personal style, they are constrained by the pragmatic rules of society to a considerable extent. Therefore, the pause fillers have been studied in the field of psycholinguistics as major tools for investigating the speaker's hesitation or anxiety (Rochester 1972) and in the field of sociolinguistics as multi-functional communicative devices (Schiffrin 1987). In this chapter, I will review the literature of English pause fillers in the field of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. I will also review the literature of Japanese and Korean pause fillers.

2.1 English Fillers

2.1.1 Psycholinguistic Studies of Pause Fillers

In psycholinguistic studies (Maclay and Osgood 1959, Goldman-Eisler 1961, Rochester 1972), pause fillers are divided into "filled pauses" (i.e., vocalized), or "unfilled pauses" (i.e., silence). Filled pauses are further divided into "unlexicalized" (e.g., uh or um) and "lexicalized" (e.g., well and you know).

Maclay and Osgood (1959) have suggested that the distinction between filled pause and unfilled pause is mainly "the duration of the non-speech interval." According to them, long duration of unfilled pauses may give the hearer a chance to leap into this gap, so the speaker produces filled pauses such as um and uh to indicate "I'm still talking, don't interrupt me." Therefore, "filled pauses occur just before points of highest

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uncertainty, points where choices are most difficult and complicated" (1959:41). They also have discussed the position of filled and unfilled pauses in relation to the grammatical function in the sentence: filled pauses occur relatively more frequently before function words and at phrase boundaries while unfilled pauses occur more frequently before lexical words and within syntactic phrases.

Goldman-Eisler (1961) observed that a certain condition which the speaker undergoes can affect the use of pause fillers. She asked subjects to describe the content of brief cartoon stories and to formulate the essential point of each. She measured both filled and unfilled pauses under conditions of increasing task difficulty. The result of the experiment suggests that the ratio difference between filled pauses and unfilled pauses varies according to individuals. The rate of filled pauses is stimulated by emotional factor such as the speaker’s emotional involvement in the topic whereas unfilled pauses are more likely associated with cognitive factors such as word searching.

Therefore, speakers employ pause fillers to indicate uncertainty or to maintain control of a conversation while thinking of what to say next. Cognitive factors, emotional factors, and situational based anxiety are highly sensitive variables in the formation of hesitant speech. However, as Rochester (1972) points out, we should never overlook the fact that pauses and other phenomena of spontaneous speech are functionally related to changes in the interpersonal situation. It indicates that to examine social motivation as “social interaction variables” underlying speech pauses will contribute to providing abundant insights into understanding functions of the pausal phenomenon.

2.1.2 Sociolinguistic Studies of Pause Fillers

Pause fillers are one of the characteristics which distinguish spoken language from written language. Brown (1977) distinguishes “verbal fillers,” (e.g., well and of course) from “hesitation noises,” such as er. He claims that verbal fillers and hesitation
noises do not contribute to the new information content of an utterance but they have the function to fill pauses and help the speaker maintain the right to speak while he/she organizes what he/she wants to say. He suggests that this is the primary distinguishing feature of informal conversation stating "there is a greater amount of the speaker's time devoted to signaling that he is still holding the floor, than there is in actually contributing something new to the conversation" (1977:117). He also emphasizes that the normal function of informal conversation is to form social relationships rather than to exchange information. Brown's "introductory fillers" such as well, er, I think, and of course play an important role in avoiding a direct statement to work out a mutual problem holding a successful social interaction.

Since fillers are unnecessary for semantic purposes but have important values in spoken discourse, many sociolinguists have examined the functions of pause fillers more closely. For example, Schourup (1985) focuses on like, well, and you know. He calls them "discourse particles." He also characterizes like, well, and you know as "evincives," which are items that "enable speakers to express the importance of what they have in mind at a particular point in a conversation, without fully displaying their thinking" (1985:20). To explore the role of these items in discourse, he suggests a tripartite model of disclosure: the private world -- what the speaker has presently in mind but has not disclosed; the shared world -- what is displayed through the conversation and other behavior between the speaker and someone else; the other world -- the covert thinking of other participants which is inaccessible to the speaker. Schourup (1985) concludes that the function of like, well, and you know is related to the disclosure problem and, based on that use, the items can carry a variety of secondary functions depending on specific conversational contexts.

In Schiffrin's (1987) study of discourse, she defines discourse markers as linguistic items which have multiple functions at the discourse level. She claims that each
discourse marker has a primary function and there is a direct relationship between a discourse marker’s lexical meanings and its primary discourse functions. That is, the referential meaning of a discourse marker may influence its primary function.

Even though it is difficult to give an exact definition of individual fillers, these sociolinguists seem to believe that fillers indicate certain cognitive functions as well as serve some very significant communicative functions in reflecting cultural values.

2.1.3 Pause Fillers as Discourse Markers

In recent years, as the study of spoken discourse has gained popularity, many linguists have become interested in the functions of pause fillers. It has been found that pause fillers have more functions than previously thought. Because of this characteristic, the issue of how to define pause fillers has been argued among scholars. Some scholars name individual fillers according to what they are supposed to contribute to discourse. For example, Labov and Fanshel (1977) call pause fillers “discourse markers.” They explain that in their analysis of therapeutic interviews, the discourse markers such as well, now, and you know have functions of temporizing and delaying as well as organizing discourse. Schourup (1985) calls them “discourse particles” in his discussion of pause fillers such as like, well, and you know. Fraser (1990) proposes that pause fillers be considered a well-defined pragmatic category within the grammar of a language. He analyzes pause fillers as a class of “commentary pragmatic marker.” Ameka (1992) has analyzed “interjections,” and suggested that certain interjections have a discourse-marking function.

Although these researchers do not necessarily use the terminology “pause fillers,” they describe those items according to the functions they may serve in discourse. This pattern is similar to Korean. In Korean linguistics, items such as incely ‘now’ and kulae ‘well’ in spoken discourse are called 담화표지 (tamhwa phyoci) ‘discourse
markers,’ and Korean linguists (K. Lee 1995, H. Lee 1996, 1999, Im 1996, 1998) place it as the highest rank of discoursal phenomenon. That is, ‘discourse markers’ in a broad sense can include all expressions observed in discourse. As for the Korean pause filler, I will discuss it in detail in Chapter 3.

On the other hand, Japanese researchers approach pause fillers somewhat differently, paying particular attention to their sociolinguistic values. When we look up words such as *maa, anoo, ee...*, in dictionaries or reference books, we find the term *kuhaku hofuu-go* ‘words to fill empty space’ with an explanation that they are used to avoid silence in discourse. However, Japanese fillers have important communicative functions in addition to the primary function of filling pauses. Japanese people utilize pause fillers for the purpose of maintaining harmony in communication. Being able to use pause fillers adequately is very important in their communication because the use of a filler should be appropriate for the situation. Therefore, Japanese pause fillers have a broader sense of function than in other languages such as English and Korean, reflecting the unique social value of the Japanese.

As we observe above, different terms emphasize different aspects. Whether they are called “discourse markers” or “pause fillers,” they are used in various situations and relationships with others, and their multi-functions are faceted in spoken discourse. For the purpose of analyzing the phenomenon in sociolinguistic perspectives, whether to use “discourse marker” or “pause filler” is not crucial. I will use “pause fillers” for my study and focus primarily on sociolinguistic functions of these items. The most important thing is that pause fillers utilized as conversational devices do provide significant cultural insights in language societies.

2.2 Japanese Fillers

Pause fillers in Japanese have been studied actively in the field of
sociolinguistics and they are known as one of the important categories to make Japanese more conspicuous. The first scholar who noted the importance of pause fillers in Japanese discourse was John Hinds, who was the pioneer of Japanese discourse studies. Hinds (1975) discusses pause fillers kono, sono, and ano as “interjective demonstratives”, and emphasizes that they are used to establish “a connection between the deictic and anaphoric sets of demonstratives in Japanese” (38). He argues that studying such communicative elements as these is very important in order to grasp a thorough meaning of an utterance. In a series of following studies, some scholars of Japanese sociolinguistics, such as Ide (1981), Reynolds (1984, 2000, 2001), and Maynard (1989) began to study Japanese pause fillers more carefully and found that Japanese fillers have various functions and play an important role in Japanese communication.

2.2.1 Types and the Functions of Fillers

Ide (1981) classifies the type of Japanese fillers into three categories in terms of their linguistic forms as follows: (1) fillers which have no substantial meaning; (2) fillers whose original meanings have been bleached to various degrees; (3) fillers that indicate some vague meanings and different connotations. The first type of fillers includes vowel prolongation, and vowel fillers such as ee, aa, etc. The second type includes demonstratives such as, ano ‘that over there’, sono ‘that’ and kono ‘this’. The third is further divided into four subtypes: (a) adverbials such as maa, koo, yappari, nanka, and nanto, forms which originally had adverbial meanings but due to frequent use, the original meanings have become ambiguous or vague; (b) pronouns such as nani; (c) interjections such as soo ne, this is sometimes called aizuchi ‘backchanneling’ because it is used to conclude the speaker’s thought to express her/his agreement to a hearer’s utterance; (d) anone type which is used to involve the hearer. She also classifies pause fillers into three types in terms of the position where they occur: (1) in the beginning of a
turn to get the hearer’s attention (e.g., ano ne, soo desu ne, eeto, aa, ee, etc); (2) in the beginning of the sentence to arrange the stream of a sentence (e.g., ee, anoo, etc); (3) in the middle of a sentence to organize the information in a speaker’s mind (e.g., vowel fillers).

Reynolds (1984) defines Japanese pause fillers as non-grammatical elements occurring at the beginning or within a sentence, but not at the end of it. She notes that Japanese women and men use different types of fillers. The two fillers she analyzes are, on the one hand, demonstrative fillers, which Hinds called “demonstrative interjections,” and, on the other, what she calls “vowel fillers.” The latter refers to vowels a, e, i, o, and u, which are inserted to fill potential pauses. They are reduplications of the final vowels of the preceding words separated by a glottal stop.¹ Both Ide (1981) and Reynolds (1984) observed that vowel fillers are masculine.

Maynard (1989) divides Japanese pause fillers into two groups based on the motivation for their use: “language-based fillers” and “socially motivated fillers.” The language-based fillers occur when the speaker has difficulty either cognitively (word-searching process) or productively (articulation process) exemplifying something, such as uuunto, are, hora ‘uhh...that’. Socially motivated fillers are frequently used in Japanese conversation and have a function to create an impression that the speaker is somehow hesitant and less certain about the utterance so that the speaker can be perceived as having a modest attitude.

Maynard (1989) introduces iiyodomi ‘hesitation fillers’ which were first described by Koide (1983). According to Maynard, Koide claims that hesitation fillers such as ee, aa, anoo and soo desu nee occur most frequently in three different contexts; “one, when a speaker approaches the most important point of the message; two, when a speaker attempts to summarize the content; and three, when the speaker designs his or her

¹ Reynolds formalized the reduplication as o → C(+stop, +glottal)V/V #____ (#: word boundary).
talk to be situationally appropriate” (1989:32). Maynard also emphasizes the function of those fillers by saying that hesitation fillers are to express politeness and soften the statement in conversation, and that “consideration for others and softening of the statement are part of the effects that careful social packaging of the message can achieve” (1989:32).

Koide’s and Maynard’s notations on pause fillers suggest that Japanese fillers carry an important function for softening the message, which is the speaker's consideration for others. Reynolds (2000), claiming that pause fillers constitute an important part of the Japanese communication, which places a great emphasis on harmonious interaction, presents results of a text counting study of lexical fillers, *nanka*, *ano*, *yappari*, and *ma*. Through the analysis of pause fillers that these studies provide, we can see that Japanese pause fillers are worth studying in more detail. Japanese contains a wealth of examples of discourse features which would provide a wealth of cultural insights.

2.3 Korean Fillers

Pause fillers in Korean have not been studied as much as those in Japanese. In the 90’s, however, as discourse markers were translated into Korean as 담화표지 (*tahmwa phyoci*) “談話標識”, some researchers began to study pause fillers, focusing on the linguistic items such as *incey/inca* ‘now’ (Lee 1995, Im 1996), *kulay* ‘well’, ‘so’ (Lee 1996), *ani* ‘not’ (Kim 1997), *mwe* ‘what’ (Lee 1999), *way* ‘why’ (Lee 1997), and *ilehkey/ikhey* ‘like this’. In this section, I will look through the general information of Korean pause fillers studied by Im (1996).

2.3.1 Types and Characteristics of Korean Pause Fillers by Im (1996)

Im (1996) asserted that defining discourse markers is difficult and is different
according to scholars, and suggests that discourse markers\textsuperscript{2} are sub-categorized as "hedges," "particles," "interjections," "stuttering" and "redundancy." He also suggests that discourse markers should satisfy at least the following six conditions: (1) occurrence in spoken discourse; (2) fixed form or low conjugation; (3) high independency in a sentence; (4) universality in each linguistic community; (5) possibility of random use in discourse; (6) functions transformed from their lexical meanings.

According to these characteristics of discourse markers, he classifies Korean discourse markers largely into two categories: lexical discourse markers and non-lexical discourse markers. The lexical discourse markers include \textit{mwenya hamen} 'what I want to say is', \textit{malha camyen} 'that is to say', \textit{inca} 'now', \textit{kesiki} 'that' \textit{kulssey} 'well', \textit{cham} 'really, very', etc. The non-lexical discourse markers are further divided into three subtypes in detail: 1) the first type includes demonstratives such as \textit{ce} 'that over there', \textit{ku} 'that' and \textit{i} 'this' and vowel fillers such as \textit{e}, and \textit{ey}; 2) the second type is interjections, which are expressions of feeling or emotion such as \textit{aiko}, \textit{appwulssa}, 'oh, my god', 3) the third type is segmental sounds such as pause, accent, and intonation.

Im (1996) also reports that in his study, which is based on the record of a legendary story told by several old people, the proportion of the pause fillers occupies more than 14% of the total utterance. His study focuses on the pause filler \textit{inca} and emphasizes its function as a transitional marker in discourse. According to him, the temporal adverb \textit{icey} 'now' implies "contrast" and "transition," and the pause filler \textit{inca} behaves as a weakened form derived from the temporal adverb \textit{icey}. What is important in Im's study is that he finds that the pause filler \textit{inca} serves various discourse functions. He suggests that the pause filler \textit{inca} has the function of holding the floor. Because the

\textsuperscript{2} Im (1996) sub-classifies discourse markers according to their functions, forms, situations, and appearances: the types of function include hedge, discourse initiator, attention getters; particles and interjections are the types of form; discourse marker is the type of situation; the types of appearance are things such as redundancy and stuttering.
intonation of *inca* is part of the intonation phrase of the previous sentence and is followed by a pause, he points out that *inca* is closely connected with the previous sentence. That is, it gives an impression that the speaker still has something to say about the previous content. As a result, it also makes the hearer pay attention to the information which follows.

The other discourse function which he suggests is that *inca* is used for making up the time gap for an upcoming idea. He enumerates those pause fillers used for temporizing, such as *e, ey, um,* and demonstratives, such as *i ‘this’, ku ‘that’ and ce ‘that over there’.* According to him, these pause fillers frequently occur after *inca* so that the speaker has enough time to think of her/his next utterance.

To manipulate pauses is, of course, different according to the individuals, the given situations, the age, and the speaker’s social role, but Im’s observation of Korean fillers indicates that pause fillers play an important role in Korean discourse. That also implies that if we investigate functions and characteristics of Korean fillers in a sentence, we can possibly derive a speaker’s emotional and cognitive effort to manipulate an utterance.

I studied Korean pause fillers from the sociolinguistic perspective in a Japanese sociolinguistic course in 2003. The study turned out to be valuable in understanding Korean discourse features and culture. In the next chapter, I will present the preliminary study of Korean pause fillers.
CHAPTER 3
PRELIMINARY STUDY OF KOREAN FILLERS

I have studied the types of pause fillers and their functions in Korean communication from a sociolinguistic perspective. This study was for the purpose of getting empirical data about Korean pause fillers and finding out some patterns of Korean fillers. I summarize the preliminary study in this chapter. This will also be a preparatory step for the main discussion of this study.

3.1 Methodology

To examine Korean pause fillers, I chose a Korean TV program, *kil-keli thukkang 'A·Special Lecture on the Street'*. The program consists of two parts: the interview part and the lecture part. Program guests are nominated by ordinary people through the internet, so the guests vary in career and lifestyle. The range of their ages is between early 40s and late 60s. In the first part of the program for about five minutes, the interviewer asks the guest mostly about her/his personal experience and life story. In the second part, the guest gives a lecture for about five minutes to an audience of about fifty people. There is no prepared script. The content of the lecture is mostly based on the content of the interview. I randomly chose three men and women for my project and recorded and transcribed their speech. Then I did a text count of pause fillers.

3.2 Types of Pause Fillers

I classified Korean fillers into two main categories in text counting: lexical pause fillers and non-lexical pause fillers. The lexical pause fillers include demonstratives.\(^3\)

\(^3\) Im (1996) in his categorization of discourse marker suggested that demonstratives are non-lexical discourse markers. However I suggest that demonstrative are lexical in that they have original meaning and their lexical meaning influences their primary functions in discourse.
such as *this*, *ku* ‘that’, *ce* ‘that over there’; adverbial phrases such as *ilehkey* ‘like this’, *icey/incey* ‘now’, *cengmal* ‘really’; conjunctational phrases such as *kulenikka/kunikka* ‘so, therefore’; interjections such as *mwe* ‘what’, *way* ‘why’, *cham* ‘well’. The non-lexical pause fillers are vowel fillers such as *e* and *ey*, and vowel prolongation, in which the vowel in the sequence of CVC/CV is prolonged. 4

3.3 The Functions and Gender Difference

The results shown below are the total types and the frequency of individual pause fillers observed for four minutes in interviewing and in lecturing.

![Figure 1. The Types and the Frequency of Pause Fillers in Interviewing](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>f total</th>
<th>m total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>icey</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ku</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kunikka</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mwe</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>way</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cengmal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ilehkey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 A vowel, which is the same articulation as the vowel preceding the filler position, is attached to the CV (Consonant Vowel) Korean syllabic construction, but sometimes to the (C)VC construction (e.g., *UL*). Therefore, we can assume a vowel insertion in the word boundary of CV construction or VC insertion in the (C)VC construction. This can be formally captured with the rule as follows; \( a \rightarrow V/ CV \# \text{ or } V(C) (C)VC\# \) (\#: word boundary).
The graphs indicate some interesting points about Korean pause fillers. First, pause fillers are more frequently used in the interview part rather than in the lecture part. The variety of pause fillers is also greater in the interview part rather than in the lecture part. As Brown (1977) suggests, the interview part of the TV program requires cheerful and builds solidarity. Therefore, pause fillers, such as backchanneling, are possibly used as an interactional device to have a comfortable conversation. As for the decrease in the use of pause fillers in a lecture, one possible factor that we should consider is a traditional understanding of Korean public speakers. Unlike natural conversation, Korean people, especially Korean men who have been main speakers throughout history, believe that the fluent public speaker should speak smoothly without stopping, should never show her/his tension toward the hearer, and should present her/his ideas straightforwardly in public.

Because this study of pause fillers is for getting general knowledge of the types and the function of Korean pause fillers, I did not focus on the context of the conversation and the lecture. This will be examined further in the next chapter.
speech. For this reason, Korean people have had certain limitations to fulfill skillful and confident speech so that if possible, the use of pause fillers is avoided in public speech.

Second, Korean male speakers use pause fillers more frequently than female speakers even in the lecture part, despite the social expectation of the fluent public speaker that I mentioned above. As Ide (1981) claims, as interpersonal relationships are getting complicated in a society, the use of pause fillers increases as a whole. And men are apt to use fillers more frequently than women for the purpose of discourse planning and to avoid the impression that they are too straightforward or too confrontational.

Third, Korean male speakers use vowel fillers, e and ey and a demonstrative ku 'that' frequently while female speakers use lexical pause fillers such as kunikka 'so, therefore' and way 'why'. Incey/icey 'now' is frequently used by both male and female speakers. According to Reynolds (1984), vowel fillers are less perceptible or audible so that they easily escape the hearer's attention. Therefore, she asserts that the vowel fillers are frequently used by male speakers rather than by female speakers as a strategy for covering up hesitation. This is supported by the way in which fillers are used in Korean. In the next section, I will analyze the function of Korean pause fillers.

3.4 The Analysis of Individuals in the Use of Pause Fillers

In order to explore the function of Korean pause fillers, I analyzed the use of pause fillers individually (see Appendix). When we look at the individual graph of fillers used by female speakers, we notice that the patterns of female speakers' fillers are significantly different from male speakers'. While male speakers mostly use vowel fillers and demonstratives, there is no regular pattern in female speakers' use of fillers. Why do the female speakers exhibit such a difference? The female speakers are all in their mid-40s, and they are speaking in the same situation. Therefore, their social roles may be the factor which contributes to different manipulation in the use of fillers.
F1 is a housewife who does not seem to be used to speaking in public. She uses the greatest variety of fillers, particularly vowel prolongation. She talks more slowly than the others and the overall frequency of fillers in her speech is also greater than the others. The interesting thing in her use of pause fillers is that the frequency of fillers increases even in a lecture where other speakers used fillers less frequently. Women who lack public-speaking experience had difficulty in controlling their hesitation, and the use of fillers significantly increased. Thus, we can assume that those fillers uttered by F1 are mostly caused by the speaker’s anxiety.

F2 is a copywriter who is more accustomed to speaking in public than other female speakers. She is a very proficient speaker who can entertain people intellectually. In both interview and lecture she frequently uses *kunikka* ‘so, therefore’, which is a consequential connective. *Kunikka* occurs even where there is no logical connection between the sentence in which it is inserted and the preceding sentence. She also frequently uses the filler *way* ‘why’ frequently, which makes a declarative sentence into a question. She is, of course, not asking for a direct answer from the audience. By using the filler *way*, she can involve the audience in her lecture. She uses these fillers as a strategy to make the lecture serve as a kind of connection between the audience and herself. In fact, her lecture is the most harmonious with the audience compared to any other speaker.

The characteristic of F3 is that she uses vowel fillers and a demonstrative *ku* ‘that’ the most. These are likely to be used by male speakers. She is a physically handicapped speaker and is professionally in charge of orphans who are physically and mentally handicapped. She has the responsibility of keeping the children she supervises out of danger. Since she is expected to be strict and straightforward, her speech is very concise and clear. The traditional female role cannot fulfill her social role and her way of speaking is more like that of a man.
M1 is a university professor in his late 60s. The interesting thing in his speaking is that while he uses the demonstrative filler *ku* 'that' with great frequency in the interview, he uses the vowel filler *ey* the most in lecture and the use of the filler *ku* decreases. When he was asked questions by the interviewer, his response was not prepared or planned. He made an effort to think of some referents or ideas to answer the question by using the filler. However, in lecture since he had been asked in advance to tell his life story to the audience, his lecture might have been prepared even though the lecture was not prescribed. Since *ku* occurs most frequently before problematic words in interview and *ey* occurs at the beginning of a sentence or clause, we can assume that both *ku* and *ey* have a cognitive function for discourse planning. One more thing that I consider in M1's speaking is that the use of vowel filler *ey* gives some nuance that he already knows what he is going to say, but he wants to speak slowly with regular intervals. The Korean vowel filler *ey* is normally used by old people in public speaking. However, the frequent use of *ey* may make him sound somewhat arrogant and haughty because his self-confident manner in speaking seems to lack consideration for the hearer.

M2 is an athlete and instructor at a university. While he uses the demonstrative filler *ku* 'that' the most in the interview, he uses the lexical filler *cengmal* 'really, indeed' the most frequently in the lecture. His use of *cengmal* seems to be stimulated by his emotional involvement with the topic. In his lecture, he talks about his widowed mother who raised him in poverty. Looking back on the past he becomes very sentimental. The use of *cengmal* evokes the audience's emotional chord and achieves a sense of empathy with the audience.

M3 is a pastor. He uses the vowel filler *e* more frequently both in lecture and interview than the other male speakers. Like the vowel filler *ey*, the vowel filler *e* frequently occurs at the beginning of sentence or clause. However, they seem to be used differently. *E* sounds more hesitant than the vowel filler *ey* but humble in his speaking
attitude. M3 avoids speaking straightforwardly and by using the vowel filler e he gives some impression that he is giving consideration to the audience for better understanding and for maintaining a good relationship. Therefore, the use of the vowel filler e is his conversational strategy to soften his utterance so that he can maintain a mild and comfortable atmosphere. I observed that the use of the filler e is characteristic of Korean pastors. In fact, compared to other people, pastors rarely use pause fillers. However, the pastors who employ pause fillers prefer to use the vowel filler e. Rather than any other filler, the vowel filler e is the best to fulfill their social role. If they use the vowel filler ey frequently in a message, they may be considered very rude and arrogant because it sounds like they are lecturing not preaching. Therefore, we can tell that the use of the vowel filler e also has cognitive and emotional functions to the message.

3.5 Discussion

So far, I have observed the characteristics of Korean pause fillers and explored the functions of each of the Korean fillers used in my data. As we can see, it is hard to clarify the function of Korean pause fillers because of their multi-functional characteristics. However, according to the purpose of the use of Korean pause fillers we can largely divide the main functions as follows.

First, anxiety or tension seems to be a factor in the use of fillers. As we observed in F1's speech, excessively frequent use of pause fillers is perceived as an indication of psychological insecurity. That is, the use of fillers is considered as hesitation. The frequent use of fillers seems to be interpreted negatively in Korean as “unskilled speech,” “lack of confidence,” and “lack of preparation.” Those fillers such as vowel fillers and demonstrative fillers, which are perceptually less prominent and can easily escape the hearer’s attention, have been preferred by Korean male speakers, who have become the main speakers in public discourse throughout Korean history.
Second, people use pause fillers for the purpose of interaction. For instance, the use of pause fillers softens the utterance so that the speaker can provide a more comfortable conversational atmosphere. This can also elicit the hearer's attention to the utterance so that it makes it possible to have a more interactive conversation between interlocutors. And also the conversation is made more collaboratively using backchannels such as *kulay yo? 'is that so?',* *ney 'yes'* and *aa 'oh.'* These backchannels are not for providing new information to the speaker, but for encouraging the speaker to continue to talk. Therefore, the use of pause fillers plays an important role in order to have a comfortable and interactive conversation, thereby reducing the social distance.

Third, cognitive factors seem to trigger the use of pause fillers. As Im (1996) mentions in his study of the Korean filler *inca,* the primary function of Korean fillers is for holding the floor in utterance and buying time for word or idea searching. The use of pause fillers can give some impression that the speaker still has something to say. As a result, it keeps the hearer from interrupting the speaker in the middle of a story and forces the hearer to pay attention to upcoming information. It helps the speaker carry on his utterance without cessation and avoid potential embarrassment.

Fourth, Korean fillers are used as a means of expressing the speaker's emotional involvement with the topic. As we observed individually used pause fillers, emotional factors are influenced by the speaker's relationship to the psychological, social, and situational context. The use of lexical fillers such as *cengmal 'really, indeed'* and *cham 'really, truly'* plays an important role to indicate the speaker's attitude toward the utterance as a whole. These fillers connect the speaker and the hearer emotionally and achieve a sense of empathy with the hearer.

Lastly, the use of pause fillers under the same circumstances can differ according to the speaker's proficiency in speech, age, gender, and social role. Among these factors, the social role in my data, in which the age of participants is between early 40s and late...
60s, seems to be the most decisive factor in the use of Korean fillers. Therefore, in order to use appropriate pause fillers, it is very important for the Korean speaker to know where s/he stands in the society.

3.6 Approach to the Present Research

One of the significant findings in the preliminary study is that the use of Korean fillers naturally decreases in public speaking. Furthermore, the social role is a more important main factor in using pause fillers. Comparing these findings with what have been discussed by researchers of Japanese fillers, it seems that the difference between Korea and Japan in the use of pause fillers suggests that Japanese and Korean have different sets of rules for politeness and humbleness.

However, there were some problems in my preliminary research. I collected the data only from Korean, and could not find samples collected in similar situations for Japanese. The information on the use of pause fillers in Japanese was obtained from existing studies which are based on data collection from casual or informal discourse of young Japanese people. Therefore, the question remains as to whether or not we can predict frequency and type of pause fillers based on social variables such as sex, age, speaker status. In the present study, I take into consideration this problem to make the comparison more valid.

To examine the different use of pause fillers between the two languages in spoken discourse, I collected samples from natural conversation of young speakers. The more detailed information about data collection for the present study is described in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

The main goal of the present study is to examine the differences in the use of pause fillers between Japanese and Korean in spoken discourse. For this study, it is very important to provide empirical evidence for comparing the two languages and cultures. My analysis is based on data collected from dyadic casual conversation. For the purpose of this study, I limited my observation to social variables such as gender, social status, age and situation, so that the potential effects would be minimized.

I collected conversational data from young Japanese and Korean native speakers in their twenties. The participants conversed naturally and informally in a setting where they did not feel excessive anxiety or tension. Using the collected data, I investigate what types of pause fillers are used in each language and how frequently they are used. The type and the frequency of pause fillers are important to characterize each language. By analyzing the context where pause fillers occur, I can focus on the function of each filler and take a more comparative look at the two languages.

4.1 Data

The Japanese and Korean conversational data presented in this paper were collected in a classroom at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa in Honolulu, Hawai‘i in October 2003. The conversation was audio-recorded with the participants’ consent. Each session lasted approximately 30 minutes. In order to elicit natural conversation, the following efforts were made: (1) the participants were instructed to talk about whatever they wanted, and (2) a conversational pair consisted of the same gender friends who usually got along. However, for those who did not have something to talk about, I
suggested several topics, such as life in Hawai‘i, their favorite place to visit, their future plans, and the latest economic or political news of their own country.

4.1.1 The Participants

All the participants were native speakers of either Japanese or Korean. Four male speakers and four female speakers of each language participated in this study. Eight dyads in total were made. See Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad Number</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Dyads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>JM1-JM2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>JM3-JM4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>JF1-JF2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>JF3-JF4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>KM1-KM2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>KM3-KM4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>KF1-KF2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>KF3-KF4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2 Japanese Participants

The Japanese participants are shown in Table 2. To protect the identity of participants, their last names remain anonymous.
Dyad 1 is Katsuhisa and Kazuki, dyad 2 is Yasuhiro and Daisuke, dyad 3 is Chiho and Sayaka, and dyad 4 is Kiyoe and Sayuri. All participants except the pair of Kiyoe and Sayuri were attending the NICE (New Intensive Courses in English) program at the University of Hawai'i. Kiyoe and Sayuri were undergraduate students at the University of Hawai'i. Their ages ranged from twenty one to twenty eight years old, and the period of residence in the U.S. was less than three years.

4.1.3 Korean Participants

Table 3 below is the list of Korean subjects. To protect the identity of participants, their last names remain anonymous.
Table 3. List of Korean Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sang-swu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Cencwu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thay-ung</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yong-kwi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sung-un</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ok-mi</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Ceycwu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Keng-Ian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Taykwu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yeng-sin</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Masan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hyen-ceng</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dyad 1 is Sang-swu and Thay-ung, dyad 2 is Yong-kwi and Sung-un, dyad 3 is Ok-mi and Keng-Ian, and dyad 4 is Yeng-sin and Hyen-ceng. The pair of Yong-Kwi and Sung-un was attending the University of Hawai‘i as undergraduate students, and Keng-Ian was a graduate student. All the other participants were attending the HELP (Hawai‘i English Language Program) at the University of Hawai‘i. Their ages ranged from twenty one to twenty eight years old, and the period of residence in the U.S was less than six years.

4.2 Transcription

All conversations were audio-recorded and transcribed with Romanization. The Hepburn style was used for Japanese transcription and Yale Romanization was used for Korean transcription. This included those conversational features such as backchannel expressions, false start, fillers, repetitions, laughing and restarts. Pause, overlaps, the length of the pause, and head movement were not counted. Although each pair engaged in
a conversation for as long as 30 minutes, only 20 minutes after the initial 5 minutes and before the final 5 minutes were analyzed for my purpose.

In this chapter, I presented the research methodology that I used for the present study. For the purpose of this study, I presented more valid and empirical settings for data collection by limiting my observation to social variables such as gender, social status, age, and situation. Based on the data collection, I will make quantitative analysis of Japanese and Korean pause fillers in next the chapter. I will also discuss the relationship between pause fillers and backchanneling, which are the two pragmatic categories of conversational discourse.
CHAPTER 5
PAUSE FILLERS AND BACKCHANNELING

In this chapter, I will make quantitative analysis of pause fillers based on collected data. And to explore more comparative study of the two languages, I will investigate the five most frequently used pause fillers among all fillers. In the last section of this chapter, I will add the important speech activity, backchanneling, which is inseparably connected with pause fillers so it must be taken into consideration to understand the use of pause fillers. The study of pause fillers together with backchanneling will provide a significant cultural insight to understand the two languages.

5.1 Types of Pause Fillers

As discussed in Chapter 2, the classification of Japanese pause fillers (Ide 1981, Maynard 1989) refers to a broad range of utterances. This includes backchanneling fillers, which are characterized as the hearer's responses in interactional conversation. Although defining the pause fillers is difficult and their definition differs among scholars, it is important to have a consistent view to classify the type of pause fillers for my study. I will define pause fillers as non-grammatical elements which appear freely in a sentence and maintain the speaker's right to speak.

In my study, I will not consider those fillers which have sentence structure as well as backchannel expressions and interactional particles. Examples of fillers which have sentence structure are Japanese nandaroo, and nante yuu no kana 'what is that?', 'how can I say?', Korean mwect?, kukey mwetela? 'what's that?' Examples of backchanneling expressions are Japanese soone, 'yes, you are right', un, ee, 'yes' and hontooni? 'really?', Korean kulssey 'well', kulay? 'is that so?', um and ung 'yes'. Examples of interactional particles are Japanese ne and na.
5.1.1 Three Categories of Pause Fillers

Below are the results of Japanese pause fillers found in the data. I divided them into three categories according to their linguistic forms:

(1) Fillers which have no substantial meaning: vowel fillers such as a/aa, e/ee, and eeto, and noise sounds such as un and unto.

(2) Demonstrative fillers: kono ‘this’, sono ‘that’ and ano ‘that over there’.

(3) Connectives and adverbial fillers: dakara ‘therefore, so’, de ‘so, and’, hontoo/hontooni ‘really, very’, nanka ‘something, somehow’, yappari/yappa ‘as expected, as we understand’, ma/maa ‘such as it is, somehow’, koo ‘like this, in this way’ and chotto ‘somewhat, a little bit’.

Below are the results of Korean pause fillers found in my data:

(1) Fillers which have no substantial meaning: vowel fillers a and e and noise sounds um and ung.

(2) Demonstrative fillers: i ‘this’, ku ‘that’ and ce ‘that over there’.

(3) Connectives and adverbial fillers: kulenikka/kunikka/kukka ‘so, therefore’, mwe ‘what’, icey/incey ‘now’, mak ‘very, severely’, kunyang ‘as it is’ and ilehkey/ikhey ‘like this’, kuke/kukukey ‘that, it’ and ceki ‘there’.

5.2 Quantitative Analysis

Various types of pause fillers are used in the Japanese and Korean data. Almost 14 types of pause fillers were found in my data. To investigate the frequency of pause fillers, I counted the total occurrence of 14 types of Japanese and Korean pause fillers. The following graph shows the total frequency of pause fillers in each language according to gender.
From this graph, we can observe a few interesting points in the use of pause fillers in Japanese and in Korean. First, the total frequency of Korean pause fillers is higher than that of Japanese pause fillers. In Korean, the total number of pause fillers is 379, averaging approximately 95 per pair. That is, pause fillers are used 5 times per minute or a filler every 12 seconds. In Japanese, the total number of pause fillers is 328, and Japanese fillers are used 4 times per minute or a filler every 15 seconds. There is a 3 second difference between Japanese and Korean, and young Korean speakers use pause fillers more frequently in their natural conversation.

Second, as for the gender difference, male speakers use fillers more frequently than female speakers. And overall, young Korean speakers use more fillers than young Japanese speakers. The graph does not show any big difference between male speakers of the two languages. Young Korean male speakers use a filler every 12 seconds while young Japanese male speakers use a filler every 13 seconds. However, it appears that
there is a three second difference between female speakers showing that young Korean female speakers use a filler every 14 seconds while young Japanese female speakers use a filler every 17 seconds.

5.3 The Most Frequently Used Five Types of Pause Fillers

In this section, I will explore the five types of pause fillers used most frequently among the 14 types of pause fillers. More than 70% of the use of pause fillers is limited to these five pause fillers.

5.3.1 Japanese Pause Fillers

![Chart showing frequency of Japanese pause fillers](chart.png)

Figure 4. The Most Frequently Used 5 Types of Pause Fillers and Their Frequency (Japanese)
In Japanese, the most frequently used pause fillers in my data are *nanka* 'like', *ano* 'uh', *yappari/yappa* 'as expected', *ma/maa* 'well', and *de* 'and'. Among those fillers *nanka* is the most frequently used by female speakers while the others are frequently used by male speakers.

5.3.2 Korean Pause Fillers

![Graph showing frequency of pause fillers](image)

Figure 4. The Most Frequently Used 5 Types of Pause Fillers and Their Frequency (Korean)

In Korean, the most frequently used pause fillers are *kulenikka/kunikka/kukka* 'I mean', *mwe* 'well', *mak* 'really', *kunyang* 'just', and *ku* 'well'. Most fillers are used more frequently by male speakers, but the filler *kunyang* 'just' is used more frequently by female speakers.
5.4 Pause Fillers and Backchanneling

Once one is involved in a conversation, both speaker and hearer make great effort to produce interactive and coherent conversation. The speaker actively signals her/his intention to be linked with the hearer, and the hearer also actively expresses her/his intention to encourage the speaker. Reynolds (2000) defines channeling as various strategies to signal the phatic intention on the part of speaker. The use of pause fillers, which is my main focus in this study, is one of channeling strategies conducted by the speaker. However, backchanneling as well as channeling is an important feature that we cannot overlook in comparing the two languages because they work to create “involvement” (Tannen 1989) and “phatic functions” (Reynolds 2000). In my data I found that both Japanese and Korean young speakers used backchanneling so frequently that it would be worth studying the speech acts of the two languages even though it is not my main focus.

5.5 Backchanneling

Backchanneling is the brief comments and utterances offered by the hearer in the middle of the speaker’s utterance or right after the speaker finishes her/his utterance. It exists in all languages and we can hold it up as “umm”, “uh-huh” and “yeah” in English, un, hee, and hontoo? in Japanese, and yey, un and kulay in Korean. Therefore, the phenomenon of backchanneling has been researched in various languages and there are active studies of aizuchi ‘backchanneling’ in Japanese (Maynard 1986, LoCastro 1987, Reynolds 2000). According to Maynard (1993), Japanese people backchannel 2.9 times more frequently than American people. And most scholars agree that the use of aizuchi is particularly conspicuous in Japanese conversation.

The word aizuchi in Japanese is originally derived from the idiom, aizuchi o utsu. This word has its origin from the image of two blacksmiths taking turns striking a heated
piece of iron with a hammer. There is a similar expression for backchanneling in Korean, which is *maccangkwu lul chita*. This expression is from the image of two people facing each other to beat the *cangkwu*, a double-headed Korean drum. The expression of backchanneling in Japanese and Korean is similar in that two people help each other to do something. That is, collaborative interaction between participants is very important. It also indicates that there exists a very similar concept of backchanneling between the two languages. Then, what about the actual use of the backchanneling in the two languages? In the next section, I investigate the actual use of backchanneling in the two languages focusing on frequency and function.

5.5.1 Frequency of Backchanneling

The next chart shows the frequency of backchanneling of Japanese and Korean according to gender.

![Bar Chart](image)

*Figure 6. Total Frequency of Backchanneling According to Gender*
As we can see in the figure, the total frequency of backchanneling for 20 minutes in Japanese is 868 and 599 in Korean. That is, Japanese hearers used backchanneling 1.4 times more frequently than Korean hearers. The difference according to gender is that Japanese male hearers used backchanneling 1.2 times more frequently than the female hearers while Korean female hearers used backchanneling two times more frequently than male hearers. According to the study of Im and Ide (2004), female hearers use backchanneling more frequently than male hearers both in Japanese and Korean, and Japanese female hearers use backchanneling more frequently than Korean female hearers. However, the results in my data are somewhat different in that Japanese female hearers used backchanneling less frequently than Japanese male hearers.

The use of backchanneling seems to be more or less affected by personal style. For example, in Japanese dyad 4, Kiyoe’s speaking style, gave the impression of a Korean male speaker in some ways. First, in her conversation, she mostly held the floor, and even when the conversational partner spoke, she rarely expressed her feeling to the hearer and did not use backchanneling frequently. She used backchanneling only 31 times in the 20-minute conversation. Second, is the position where backchanneling occurred. In many cases, backchanneling occurred not only at the end of a sentence, but also in the middle of a sentence. However, she and Korean male hearers usually used backchanneling at the pause right after the conversational partner finished her/his utterance or sentence. As a result, she sounded so cold and dry that she showed no consideration for others in speaking.

5.5.1.1 Most Frequently Used Backchanneling

The next chart is the percentage of the most frequently used backchanneling in Japanese and Korean.
Table 4. The Most Frequently Used Backchanneling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>un/unun</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>51.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soo type</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>12.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a/aa</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>9.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hontoo</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>23.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>un/um</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>36.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e/ee</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>24.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a/aa</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>11.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kulay type</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>20.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most frequently used types among all backchanneling expressions in Japanese were brief utterances such as un ‘uh, huh, yes’, soo type ‘I see, that’s right’, a/aa ‘oh, ah, yes’ and hontoo ‘really’. They occupied 76.96 percent of all backchannels. Soo type includes many forms such as soo ne, soo yone, soo nan desu ka, soo soo and so on. In Korean, the most frequently used backchanneling expressions show similarity to that of Japanese, such as ung/um ‘uh, huh, yes’, e/ee, a/aa ‘oh, ah, yes’, and kulay type ‘I see, that’s right’, which reaches 79.97 percent of all backchannels. Kulay type includes kulay kulay, kulehkwuna, and kulehchi. Other backchannels observed in Japanese were da yo nee ‘it is true’, iyada na ‘that’s bad, oh, no!’ yappari ‘as expected’, naruhodo ‘as expected, sure enough’ and so on. Korean backchanneling included those such as cengmal?/cincca? ‘really?, are you kidding?’, ani ‘why!, what!, good heavens!’, macta ‘that’s right, you’re right’, cohkeyssta ‘how nice! that sounds good’, and so on. And, even though I did not consider laughing as backchanneling, it also seems quite meaningful in conversational interaction. It plays an important role to express the hearer’s feeling, such as joy, surprise, and agreement or disagreement.

5.5.1.2 Total Average of Backchanneling Frequency and Time

Table 5 shows the total average of frequency and time.
Table 5. Total Average of Frequency and Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Frequency (Per minute)</th>
<th>Average Time (Per one backchanneling)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>5.53 sec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>7.49</td>
<td>8.01 sec</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Japanese hearers in natural conversation used backchannels 10.85 times in a minute, that is, one backchannel occurred every 5.53 seconds. In Korean, the frequency in a minute was 7.49 and one backchannel was used every 8.01 seconds. We can see that compared to Korean hearers, Japanese hearers used backchanneling 2.36 times more frequently in a minute. In the next section, we will explore the purpose of backchanneling in the two languages, and investigate why Japanese hearers used it more frequently than Korean hearers.

5.5.2 Function of Backchanneling

5.5.2.1 Final Particles and Sentence Enders

When we observe Japanese conversation, we can see that backchanneling is used a lot right after the sentence final particles uttered by the speaker, such as *ne, yo, sa*, and so on. Because Japanese sentence final particles share important discourse functions expressing the speaker’s judgment and attitude toward the message and the partner, they are also called interactional particles⁶ (Reynolds 2000). Sentence final particles play an important role in Japanese conversation, and if the particles are not used in conversation,

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⁶ Reynolds (2000) in her study about interactional particles asserts that “it is misleading to call it a ‘sentence final particle’ since it also occurs in sentence internal positions even more frequently than in sentence final position” (94). She also proves that the sentence final particle *sa* occurs only sentence internally in standard Japanese.
it might sound very unnatural. For example, the use of *ne* works for sharing the speaker’s emotion with the hearer and *yo* for giving new information to the hearer. When we hear *kore ii ne* ‘Don’t you think this is good?’ or *kore ii yo* ‘This is good, you know?’ whether our answer is either *un* ‘yes’ or *soo demo nai jan* ‘no, I don’t think so’, the use of final particles induce the use of backchanneling. This can be one of the reasons that backchanneling is conspicuous in Japanese conversation. As for the position where the final particle occurs, it appears not only at the sentence final position, but also in the middle of the sentence so it urges the hearer to use backchanneling even in the middle of sentence.

Even though there is no linguistic form equivalent to Japanese final particles in Korean, various sentence enders exist (Kim 2001). Many sentence enders are frequently used by Korean speakers as interactional strategies toward the hearers. For example, sentence enders *-ketun, -muntey, -ney,* and *-telakwu* convey the meaning similar to English ‘you know’, ‘you see’, ‘I think’ or a tag question. These enders have a hedging function to mitigate the assertion of utterance. Backchanneling most frequently occurs at the pause after these sentence enders, but the degree of request for the use of backchanneling in Korean does not seem to be as great as in Japanese.

5.5.2.2 Functions

There are various functions observed both in Japanese and Korean. The following functions are mainly shown in my data: 1) encouraging the speaker to continue the talk; 2) understanding the speaker’s message; 3) agreement with the speaker’s judgment or opinion; 4) sharing the speaker’s thought or judgment; 5) indicating strong emotional response such as surprise, joy and frustration; 6) corrections or requesting information.
One more function that I found in Japanese is that even though backchanneling is considered to be uttered by the hearer, the speaker also backchannels in the middle or the end of her/his utterance. The following is the example of Katsuhisa's dialog in Japanese.

"tte-yuu-ka yappari nihon to wa raihu sutairu ga chigau kara, Un, hito to no saabisu, tatoeba o-mise toka itte mo saabisu zenzen chigau shi, Un, sono hen wa moo'zenzen nareta tte-yuu-ka, Un, nare-nai hubun to-yuu no wa yappari, yappari maa kotoba"

'Well, (life in Hawaii) is different from life in Japan, so the service, for example, in a restaurant, is totally different, and, well, I can say I have already been used to it. However, the part that I cannot be used to is, as you expect, the language.'

This self backchanneling seems to be related to the personal style of speaking. For example, when Katsuhisa speaks, he inserts backchanneling, and when he listens, he also backchannels. Although this is because Kazuki, his conversation partner, did not backchannel as frequently as Katsuhisa did, the main purpose of his self backchanneling seems to make himself feel relief by maintaining the rhythm of the conversation between the speaker and the hearer. And, also, he can spare time for organizing an up-coming idea while keeping backchannel of hesitation brief to be recognized as pause fillers.

5.5.3 Discussion

A survey about the use of backchanneling in Korean and in Japanese college students shows us an interesting contrast between the two languages. According to Ogoshi (1988), Korean college students backchannel to display their interests and to show a feeling of intimacy to the speaker. And when they agree with the speaker's opinion, they frequently backchannel, but when they do not agree with it, they rarely
backchannel. And they think that frequent use of backchanneling can give the speaker a frivolous and insincere impression so that the speaker might feel rather uncomfortable. He also points out the different use of backchanneling according to the conversational partner. For example, when Koreans talk with older people, the use of backchanneling greatly decreases because listening silently is regarded as good manners towards elders. This is considered as the influence of Confucianism which prevailed in Korean society for a long time. As the Confucian word 'cangyu yuse' 'precedence should be given to older people' indicates, it is one of the five cardinal principles of morality governing human relations. Confucianism values the relation between the young and the old. Korean people think that when one talks with elders, one should not take the floor, nor indicate one's intentions clearly. Therefore, the frequent use of backchanneling with elders is perceived as very rude and ill-mannered. Instead, looking at the eyes of the elder with honor rather than doing backchanneling is better in showing their interest in and understanding of the elder.

As for the use of backchanneling with the elderly in Japanese, it seems to be different according to scholars. According to Im and Ide (2004), in general, Japanese people more frequently use backchanneling with the elderly than with the young. And even in Ogoshi's (1988) survey, frequent use of backchanneling is more positively taken to Japanese than to Korean.

Overall, when we analyze backchanneling according to functions, Japanese backchanneling can be characterized as agreement and sharing while in Korean it can be characterized as encouraging and understanding. The function of agreement and sharing is regarded as the hearer's 'positive' conversational attitude to participate in the conversation with her/his opinion or feelings. However, the function of encouraging and understanding is a 'passive' attitude because the hearer just tends to notify the speaker
that s/he is listening regardless of the content of message rather than to show her/his feeling to the speaker's utterance.

In fact, as for agreement and sharing, the Japanese are well acknowledged as the people who frequently backchannel even when they do not agree with the speaker's opinion by responding with backchannels, such as un, 'yes', so desu ne 'well', 'you might be right.' This is regarded as a Japanese hearer's effort to make the conversation smooth and comfortable. The Japanese highly value relationship with others so that in conversation the hearer keeps showing evidence of 'my thought is the same as yours' to the speaker. By respecting the other's opinion and sharing the speaker's view, the Japanese speaker can make a conversation more comfortable and create a harmonious atmosphere.

On the other hand, Korean backchanneling seems to be greatly affected by the hearer's interest in the talking. The more interesting the speaker's talking, the more backchanneling is offered by the hearer. This can be the reason why a Korean hearer tends to be silent when s/he does not agree with the speaker's opinion. However, minimal use of backchanneling in Korean is required for the conversational manner indicating respect for the speaker as long as the hearer strongly disagrees with the speaker. When the hearer indicates her/his disagreement with the opinion, silence is regarded as a positive attitude not to hurt the speaker's feeling.

In the next chapter, I will focus on the five most frequently used pause fillers, which are our main subject. By analyzing the context where those fillers were used, we will explore the qualitative analysis, such as the characteristics and the function of the pause fillers. This analysis can play an important role to understand the speech acts of Japanese and Korean young speakers so that it can help us infer the cultural differences of the two languages.
In this chapter, I will focus on the five most frequently used Japanese pause fillers in my data; *nanka* ‘well’, *ano/anoo* ‘uh’, *yappari/yappa* ‘as expected’, *ma/maa* ‘well’, and *(sore)de* ‘and’. In analyzing these fillers, I will explore the various contexts in which those fillers were used and investigate significant communicative functions.

6.1. *Nanka* ‘like’

*Nanka* ‘like’ is the most frequently used pause filler in my data. *Nanka* is derived from the pronoun *nani* ‘what’ and the question particle *ka*, and literally means ‘something’ or ‘somehow’. The referential meaning of the pronoun *nani* refers to something that the speaker cannot specify or identify, and *nanka* as a pause filler signifies the speaker’s uncertainty.

The basic sense of the speaker’s uncertainty in the use of *nanka* influences discourse functions in natural conversation. According to Saito (1992), the speaker’s uncertainty has the function of softening the utterance because it makes the statement unassertive and indirect. She also observes in the data collection of casual conversation among young speakers that *nanka* is more frequently used by female speakers. My data also support Saito’s study proving that *nanka* is more frequently used by female speakers. Of the five most frequently used pause fillers, *nanka* is used more than 50% of the time by female speakers. Female speakers also use *nanka* 3.4 times more frequently than male speakers.

*Nanka* in my data primarily shows the following functions: (1) holding the floor to search for an appropriate word; (2) initiating a new turn and shifting the topic; (3)
making an utterance soft to create an impression that the speaker is less certain about the utterance.

6.1.1 Floor Holder

(1)
SH: b. Tebukuro?
MK: c. So so so so. Tebukuro no hanashi.
SH: d. Un, un, un, un.
MK: e. Ato sore to nanka ne, kitsune no hanashi ga ne
   f. ikutsu ka aru n datte kanarazu.
SH: g. Aa.
MK: h. Sore to nanka yoru, ah, dare no dakke na,
   i. Yanagida Kunio kana? Ka dare ka no nanka chotto shita
   j. doowa mitai na yatsu ga aru n da kedo,
   k. nanka sore mo mita. De, notte-ta, kyookasyo ni.
MK: a. 'And, what was it? A fox, the story of a cub's trap.
SH: b. Gloves?
MK: c. Yes, that's right. The story of gloves.
SH: d. Yes.
MK: e-f. And then, like, there must be a few stories about a fox.
SH: g. Oh.
MK: h-k. And, like, the night, well, whose one was it? Was it written by Yanagida Kunio? Like, there is a story which is like a fairy tale. Like, I read it, too. And, it was in the textbook.'

In (1), MK and SH are talking about the stories that were in a Japanese textbook they used in elementary school. MK is the main speaker to take the floor in the segment of this conversation, and she uses nanka for the purpose of holding the floor in (1).
However, she sometimes has a hard time recalling the stories in her memory, and needs the time to think. So, *nanka* in (1e) and (1h) is used to fill the time gap while the speaker organizes an upcoming idea. The combination of *nanka* and *dare no dakke na* 'whose one was it?' in (1h), and *nanka* and *chotto shita doowa mitai na yatsu* 'something like a fairy tale' in (1i) indicate the speaker’s feeling of uncertainty to formulate the utterance. Overall, *nanka* in (1) is used for holding the floor while the speaker searches for an appropriate word, and for a hedging expression to signal the speaker’s uncertainty of the utterance.

6.1.2 Initiator of a New Turn

(2)

**CK:** a. Itte-mi-tai ne.

**SS:** b. Un. Kondo ne, sanpo shi-yoo.

**CK:** c. Un. *Nanka*, kono sa, kono mae ni sa, Fabian no kanojo ga sa,

**SS:** d. Un.

**CK:** e. Ano, aato birudingu ni itta hoo ga iiyo tte itte-ta.

**SS:** f. Un.

**CK:** g. Kakko ii otoko-no-hito ippai iru yo tte itte-ta.

**SS:** h. Maji? Aato birudingu sugu soko jan.

**CK:** a. ‘Don’t you think that you want to go?

**SS:** b. Yes, let’s take a walk next time.

**CK:** c. Sure. **Like**, a few days ago, Fabian’s girl friend

**SS:** d. Yes.

**CK:** e. Well, she said that we had better go to the art building.

**SS:** f. Yes.

**CK:** g. She said that there were a lot of handsome guys.

**SS:** h. For real? Art building is right over there, isn’t it?’
*Nanka* in (2) has two functions. The first function is to initiate a new turn. *Nanka* in my data is used frequently at the beginning of an utterance. By prefacing *nanka*, the speaker can make the utterance unemphasized or vague so that s/he can avoid the impression of abrupt initiation. The second function is to indicate topic change. CK and SS were talking about a good place to take a walk, and promised themselves to go there next time. However, CK suddenly remembered what the girl friend of her instructor had said. And she starts to talk about it using *nanka*. *Nanka* is used to avoid sounding too abrupt in order to shift the topic.

(3)

MK: a. Demo tabun shuushoku, *nanka* hutsuu no  
b. gakkoo no mensetsu dat-tara sore gurai de  
c. ii kamo shin-nai kedo, *nanka* hoka no sa,  
d. shuushoku rio mensetsu toka iku to,  
e. sokora hen o *nanka* myooni tsukkonde kiku


MK: g. Henna oyaji ga iru kara.

SH: h. Hontooni yonde-ru ka mitaina kanji de.

MK: a-e. But, maybe getting a job, *like*, if it is normal school interview, it may be okay with that, but *like*, besides that, when you go to a job interview, *(the person) who keeps asking about that part, *like*, delicately

SH: f. Oh.

MK: g. Because there is a strange interviewer.

SH: h. It seems like asking you read it for real.'

*Nanka* in (3) shows examples of sub-topic change. Before this segment of conversation, MK and SH were talking about the oral interview which took place during the entrance exam for Japanese graduate school. However, in (a) MK suddenly starts talking about a job interview. She realizes that it is abrupt to change the topic, so by using
nanka, she tries to return to the main topic of the school interview. And then, by adding another nanka in (c), she now switches to the sub-topic of job interview. The use of nanka in (3) gives an impression of the speaker’s consideration to avoid the hearer’s potential embarrassment due to the abrupt change of the sub-topic.

6.1.3 Utterance Softener.

(4)
YN: Noru toki ni nanka chokin-bako mitaina chitchai asoko ni...
YN: When you get on the bus, well, inside of the little box, something like a savings box...

(5)
DN: Nanka kazoku to itta rashii yo.
DN: Well, it seems that she ‘went’ with her family.

(6)
DN: Ah, nanka Yunikuro mitaina kanji ja nai?
DN: Oh, well, doesn’t it look like something which was purchased at UNIQLO?

Nanka in (4), (5), and (6) indicates the speaker’s uncertainty toward the information. As these examples show, nanka is often accompanied by those words such as mitaina, rashii, kanji ‘seems like’, which also express uncertainty and vagueness. With the lexical meaning of nanka, these expressions intensify the feeling of uncertainty even more. The speaker’s uncertainty toward the utterance sounds humble and unassertive because it softens the utterance. An assertion with confidence and accuracy is useful to make the statement clear and emphatic in some speech styles, but it seems to be avoided
in the natural conversation among Japanese young speakers. It means that *nanka* with the function of softening an utterance is socially motivated to maintain good verbal interaction.

6.1.4 Summary of *Nanka*

*Nanka* 'like' is the most frequently used pause filler. *Nanka* in discourse is used as a floor-holding function while the speaker searches for an appropriate word, and as an initiator of a new turn and topic shifting. The use of *nanka* has an important discourse function to soften an utterance and to make it unassertive by indicating that the speaker is less certain about the utterance. *Nanka* is frequently used by female speakers, and the gender gap is also the largest among fillers.

6.2 *Ano/anoo* 'uh'

*Ano/anoo* 'uh' (hereafter *ano*) is the second most frequently used pause filler. *Ano* is derived from the demonstrative *ano* 'that over there' referring to something which is a distance from both the speaker and the hearer. According to Reynolds (1984), *ano* has the function to involve the hearer in the discourse process. And, according to Cook (1993), *ano* in discourse functions as "an alignment marker", which aligns the speaker and the hearer on the same side. She also claims that *ano* as an alignment marker has multiple functions as follows: (1) to get the hearer’s attention; (2) to highlight the upcoming information; (3) to indicate the speaker’s disagreement, and so on.

*Ano* in discourse seems to retain shared experience and knowledge between the speaker and the hearer. Accordingly, the use of *ano* involves the hearer in the utterance by stimulating the hearer’s attention so that the upcoming idea is highlighted more. *Ano* in my data shows the following functions: (1) holding the floor by searching for an appropriate expression; (2) initiating a new turn by getting the hearer’s attention; (3)
shifting the (sub)topic; (4) prefacing repairs by modification of information, rephrasing or paraphrasing (5) prefacing disagreement.

6.2.1 Floor Holder

Ano occurs as a floor-holder with great frequency in my data. (7), (8) and (9) are examples to illustrate this function.

(7)
KA: a. Ato, soo, tomodachi to non-dari,
KT: b. Un.
KA: c. Saikin hora, ano, uchi no ie de minna de,
KT: d. Un, minna de atsumatte
KA: e. Atsumat-tari shite-ru ja nai desu ka.

KA: a. ‘And, right, we drink with friends, and,
KT: b. Yes.
KA: c. recently, think, well, all together at my home,
KT: d. Yes, we gather together
KA: e. we gather together, don’t we?’

In (7) KA and KT are talking about recent life. Because they are close friends, they have a common life style. Reflecting that they are getting together with other friends at his house, KA tries to involve KT in his talking by using the interjection hora in (7c) and to hold the floor with ano highlighting the upcoming utterance.

(8)
YN: a. Ato sa, omiyage toka okuroo to suru to, kondo zeekin
b. kakaru deshoo. Kanzee ga. Dakara,
DN: c. Aa, soo nan da.
e. ano uketoru toki ni shinkokusho o dashi-tari toka
f. shi-nakya ike-nai ppoi kara.

DN:  g. Ah, sore dore kurai?

YN:  a-b. 'And, when we try to send gifts, this time we have to pay tax, which is the customs duties. Therefore,

DN:  c. Oh, so it is.

YN:  d-f. Yes. We have to pay customs duty. Even when you take gifts, it is the same, but, well, when you receive them, it seems that you need to submit the customs declaration form.

DN:  g. Oh, how much does it cost?'

Prior to the segment of this conversation (8), YN and DN were talking about a delivery service from Hawaii to Japan. They draw the conclusion by themselves that if the service fee was cheap, they would often use the service. In the first part of (8), YN remembers the fact that if they send gifts, they also need to pay the customs duty. However, DN seems to have no idea about this fact, so YN assures him that they need to pay it. YN also gives him other information. They need to submit the customs declaration form not only when they bring gifts but also when they receive them. Ano in (8c) seems to be used as a floor holder in between two clauses which are connected by the conjunction -kedo ‘but’. By using ano the speaker wants to direct the hearer’s attention to the next utterance because he emphasizes the point that when they send gifts by delivery service, they have to submit the customs declaration form, too.

(9)

DN:  a. Aa. Aa, hanashi kawaru kedo,
YN:  b. Un.
DN:  c. Ano ore nijuuni ni kaeru jan.
YN:  d. Un.
DN:  e. Sore made ni bideo moraeru?

DN:  a. Yeah. Oh, I change the topic, but,
YN:  b. Yes.
DN:  c. You know, I go back on the 22nd, right?
YN:  d. Yes.
DN:  e. Can I get the video back by that day?

In (9), *ano* is mainly used for entering the main point. As DN indicates in (9a), he reveals his intention to change the topic. However, instead of the abrupt initiation of main point, he shows his hesitation using *ano* as in (9c). *Ano* seems to be used here as a floor-holder functioning as initiator of the main point and the hearer's attention getter.

(10)
KT:  a. Kee'eeshan a nkeeto o shite-ru n da kedo,
KA:  b. Un.
KT:  c. Maa, izen yori wa maa, *ano*, nan tte-yuu no?
     d. Keeki ga yoku natte-kite-ru
KA:  e. Un.

KT:  a. 'The employers answered in the questionnaire, but,
KA:  b. Yes.
KT:  c-d. well, compared to before, well, uh, what do you say? The economy is getting better.
KA:  e. Yes.'

In (10), KT is talking about the questionnaire on the Japanese economy. In saying what the employers answered in the questionnaire, he hesitates searching for an appropriate word in (10c) as we can see *nan tte-yuu no* 'what do you say?' preceded by *anoo*. This shows that the speaker uses the pause filler *anoo* to make up a time gap for word searching.
6.2.2 Initiator of a New Turn

(11)
DN: b. E, hoka no chigau, chigau toroorii tte-yyu-ka,
c. ironna iro no toroorii aru desyoo?
YN: d. Anoo, iro no tsuise-ru yatsu, daijoobu ppoi n da kedo,
e. ano jeitibi tte kaite-ru are wa...
YN: a. 'It is okay with you if you have just money.
DN: b. Oh, or else, a different, different trolley, you know, there are various trolleys,
aren't there?
YN: d-e. Well, it looks okay with the ones colored, but, you know, the ones written
JTB on them....'

In my data, ano is often used at the turn-initial position. In (11), YN and DN have
been talking about the trolley that they could ride instead of the bus. After hearing from
YN that they can ride any trolley if they pay, DN is asking about the other trolleys which
have color on them. In giving an answer to DN, YN starts with ano (11d) at the beginning
of his turn. Ano here is not regarded as the speaker’s hesitation or the speaker’s effort to
hold a floor because the answer is requested and expected by DN. However, it seems to
be used to get the hearer’s attention so that he can focus on the upcoming utterance.

6.2.3 Initiator of (Sub)topic Change

(12)
CK: b. Dekake-masyoo ka, I-mashoo ka. Demo, are chau n?
c. Ano mae maiki no toko...
SS: d. Na, nai desu.
CK: e. Nande?
SS: a. ‘How about tonight? Are you going out?’
CK: b-c. Shall we go out or stay at home? But, isn’t it wrong? You know, before, Mike’s place...
SS: d. No, it isn’t.
CK: e. Why?’

Ano is also used at the position of a (sub)topic change. In (12), SS and CK are discussing about tonight’s schedule, but CK suddenly remembers that SS has already ‘another appointment with Mike. As demo, are chau n? ‘but, isn’t it…?’ implies in (12b), CK indicates that something new hits her mind. At this point the hearer seems to be very curious about the next information. However, CK takes time to preface the ‘sub-topic change using ano. Ano here seems to play an important role to get the hearer’s attention to the upcoming utterance.

6.2.4 Repair Indicator

Ano in (13) and (14) is used to indicate the speaker’s repairs of the prior utterance.

(13)
KA: a. Nakamura-ya shitte-masu?
KT: b. Raamen?
KA: c. Raamen.
KT: d. Un, hai, wakaru.
KA: e. Asoko itta n desu yo.
KT: f. Un.
KA: g. De, kuupon atte,
KT: h. Un.
KA: i. Anoo, ichi-mai de minna dorinku ga moraeru tte-yuu
   j. kuupon datta n desu kedo,
KT: k. Un un.
KA:  a. ‘Do you know Nakamura-ya?
KT:  b. Noodles?
KT:  d. Yes, yeah I know.
KA:  e. We went there.
KT:  f. Yes.
KA:  g. And, we had a coupon,
KT:  h. Yes.
KA:  i-j. **Well**, that was the sort of coupon where everybody could get a drink.
KT:  k. Yeah, yeah.’

(14)
KA:  b. Un.
KT:  c. Hun’iki mo, anoo, gayagaya shita hun’iki.
KA:  d. Soo ne.
KT:  a. ‘Yeah. What’s good is that it is cheap.
KA:  b. Yes.
KT:  c. And also atmosphere, **well**, very noisy but cheerful atmosphere.
KA:  d. That is right.’

*Ano* in (13) and (14) is used to preface the explanation of the speaker’s prior utterance in more detail. KA is talking about the bad manner of the waitress that he and his friends happened to experience in a Japanese noodle restaurant. To describe what happened there, he starts to talk about the coupon that one of his friends brought. By using *anoo* (13), he clarifies and explains what kind of coupon it was. KT in (14) also brought *anoo* to represent more specific information of the prior talk. Using *anoo*, he also holds the floor and organizes the appropriate expressions in his mind.

(15)
KT:  a. Demo, ano, kinoo,
KA: b. Un.
KT: c. Toroorii notte kaette-kita n da kedo, ano Waikiki kara.
d. De, matte-ru hito ni kiita n da kedo...

KT: a. ‘But, well, yesterday,
KA: b. Yes.
KT: c-d. I came back by trolley, well, from Waikiki. And, I asked the person who was waiting for a trolley, but...’

Ano in (15c) is used to provide the additional information of prior utterance. KT is talking about the trolley that he has ridden. The segment following ano represents the information about where the trolley comes from. After giving the additional information, the speaker continues what he was supposed to say using another pause filler de (15d), which has the function of a floor-holder.

(16)
SH: a. Demo yoku okaasan toka otoosan toka sa,
b. manga bakkari yonde-nai no toka yuu
c. manga ga aru n jan.
MK: d. Sore wa sa, machigai da ne. watashi wa manga o
e. yonde nihon, ano kotoba o oboeta hito da kara.

SH: a-c. ‘But, there is such a comic book that mother or father often asks “are you reading only comic book?” isn’t that right?
MK: d-e. I think that is wrong. I read comic books, and I’m a person who learns Japan,” I mean, Japanese language.’

Ano in (16) is used to preface a self-correction. MK is supposed to say that people say comic books are not good for language acquisition, but she is the person who mastered the language by reading comic books. However, instead of kotoba ‘the language’ as in (16d), she started saying nihon(go) ‘Japan(Japanese).’ She realizes that
the word is not a good choice so she rephrases the word using *ano* and corrects the error right away.

6.2.5 Indicator of Disagreement

(17)  
KA: b. Sanjuu gurai made shi-tai tte omotte.  
KA: d. Wakai n su ka?  
KT: e. *Ano* iya, *ano* tatoeba jibun ga imeeji shite-ru sanjuu,  
KT: g. Ore koo naru daroo na tte-yuu no to genjitsu ima  
KA: h. Chigai-masu ne.  

KT: a. ‘Oh, you are thinking of marriage.  
KA: b. I’m thinking that I want to marry by about 30 years old.  
KT: c. Oh, is that true? It is too young.  
KA: d. Is it too early?  
KT: e. Well, no, you know, for example, you’re imagining that 30 years old is …  
KA: f. Oh.  
KT: g. The idea that I would be like this and the reality, now…  
KA: h. It is different, isn’t it?’

In (17), KT was surprised by KA’s thinking about marriage in which KA had a plan to be married by around 30 years old. Because KT thought that it was too young to marry, he says *wakai yo* ‘it’s too young’ as in (17c). Then, KA asked KT to make sure if it is indeed too young. KT shows his hesitation with *ano iya* ‘well, no’ because KA’s question is too hard to answer with yes or no since in fact, the age that people imagine can be different from reality. Even though it is not clearly shown in my data, *ano* seems to be used to
preface the indirect disagreement showing the speaker’s hesitation. In (17e), by adding another ano, KT alerts the hearer of upcoming repairs and tries to explain what he really wants to say using tatoeba ‘for example.’ Thus, the second ano seems to be used to preface expansions of the speaker’s idea.

6.2.6 Summary of Ano

Ano ‘uh’ is the second most frequently used pause filler. Ano is derived from the demonstrative ano ‘that over there’, and in discourse refers to shared experience and knowledge between the speaker and the hearer. Ano in my data is used to hold the floor for word searching, to initiate a new turn and (sub)topic shift, to preface repairs, and to preface disagreement. Ano is the most frequently used as a hesitation marker to hold the floor when the speaker is searching for an appropriate word. Unlike other hesitation makers, ano has discourse functions to stimulate the hearer’s attention, so the upcoming utterance is highlighted more.

6.3 Yappa/yappari ‘as expected’

Yappa/yappari ‘as expected’ (hereafter yappari) is the third most frequently used filler in my data. Yappari is an informal variant of the adverb yahari (Kojien Dictionary), and yappa and yappashi are more informal forms of yappari. In my data, only two forms, yappari and yappa appeared, and yappari is more frequently used than yappa at the rate of 52.3% to 47.7%. However, yappa is more frequently used by male speakers rather than by female speakers.

Reynolds (2000) states that “yappari seems to have a discourse function suggesting that what is being said is a general assumption shared not only between speaker and hearer but by the whole world the two belong to” (2000:6). She also claims that in most situations, yappari is usually used as a simple filler that has no significant
meaning. According to Maynard (1991), yappari on the discourse level has the following functions: (1) as “a rapport seeker”; (2) as “a hesitation marker”; and (3) as “a filler which sometimes functions as a planner.” The use of yappari in discourse seems to be based on the evaluated assumption set by the speaker, hearer, situation or context, past experience, and society. In my data, yappari is used in many cases to indicate a mutual understanding between two close conversational partners. That is, the use of yappari is considered as the speaker’s effort to conform his/her understanding to the hearer’s view rather than anything else.

Yappari in my data is used for the following functions: (1) to fill the time gap searching for an appropriate word; (2) to indicate a generally accepted assumption; (3) to indicate a mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer; (4) to confirm the speaker’s assumption.

6.3.1 Filler for the Time Gap

(18)
CK: a. Nanka ima made no na,
SS: b. Un.
CK: c. Nanka ne, nan ya, yappa nan da, benefitto o na, nanka
d. sono mama ni shi-toite-kure to, yuu n yat-tara ii kedo,
SS: e. Un.
CK: a. ‘Well, so far,
SS: b. Yes.
CK: c-d. Well, what is it?, Well, what is it?, benefity, well, it is okay if they require to leave it as it is, but,
SS: e. Yes.’
(18) illustrates the use of *yappa* as a simple filler to fill the time gap while the speaker is searching for an appropriate word. As we can see, CK has a hard time formulating exactly what she wants to say as these words suggest: *nanka ne* ‘well’, *nan ya* or *nan da* ‘what is it?’ The use of *yappa* (18c) is the speaker’s effort to keep holding the floor because the time gap during the utterance such as pause and hesitation can be a chance to initiate a new turn. The use of *yappa* also indicates that the speaker’s upcoming idea is not special. But it indicates that the hearer has the same feeling as the speaker.

6.3.2 Indicator of General Assumption

(19) is an example of *yappari* based on a generally accepted assumption.

(19)

KT: a. Ma, nareta tte-yuu bubun wa seekatsu no shikata ga wakatte-kita
KA: b. Un.
KT: c. tte-yuu-ka *yappari* nihon to wa raifu sutairu ga chigau kara,
   d. un, hito to no saabisu, tatoeba o-mise toka itte mo saabisu
   e. zenzen chigau shi, un, sono hen wa moo zenzen
   f. nareta tte-yuu-ka, un, nare-nai bubun to-yuu no wa
   g. *yappari*, *yappari*, ma, kotoba.

KT: a. ‘Well, the part that I was used to is that I came to know the way of life
KA: b. Yes.
KT: c-g. Well, **as you expected**, it is different from Japan in the life style, yes, service for people, for example, when we go to a restaurant, the service is very different, yes, I may say that I am used to the part, yes, the part that I am not used to is, **well, well**, you know, the language.’

KT and KA are talking about life in Hawaii. By prefacing *yappari* (19c), KT implies that life in Hawaii is different from that in Japan. He also prefaces *yappari* (19g) right before talking about what he is still not used to in Hawaii life. The use of *yappari* in (19g) is perceived as hesitation to articulate the appropriate idea in his mind, and the use of
another *yappari* and the pause filler *ma* proves this assumption. By using *yappari* in (19g) it also indicates that the idea that the speaker is going to say is a generally accepted assumption. In fact, language is the thing that people generally believe that they cannot easily master in a foreign country. Therefore, the use of *yappari* in (19) is for indicating the generally accepted assumption.

6.3.3 Indicator of Mutual Understanding

(20)

KT: b. *In Hawaii ni?*
KA: c. *In Hawaii.*
KT: d. *Ma, doko demo.*
KA: e. Maguusu.
KA: g. *Yappa* soo desu yo ne.

KT: a. ‘Favorite place,
KA: b. In Hawaii?
KT: c. In Hawaii.
KA: d. Well, any place.
KT: e. Magoo’s.
KA: f. Magoo’s? Yeah, me, too.
KA: g. As I expected, surely it is.’

In (20), KA and KT are talking about their favorite place in Hawaii. KA answers that he likes Magoo’s, which is a liquor bar. KT also agree with KA’s opinion as in (20f). *Yappa* (20g) seems to be used to indicate that they have mutual understanding of the utterance. Even though they do not say what kind of place *Maguusu* is yet in (20), as the sentence *yappa soo desu yo ne* ‘as expected, it is so, isn’t it?’ in (20g) indicates, we can
expect that it is the place about which they feel the same. Therefore, the use of *yappa* implies that they have the same feeling about the place.

6.3.4 Indicator of Speaker’s Assumption

*Yappari* in (21) and (22) is used to confirm the speaker’s assumption. The speaker’s assumption may be evaluated by the hearer’s utterance rather than by the generally accepted view or the mutually accepted expectation between the speaker and the hearer.

(21)

SH: b. Uso? Saisyo wa ne, chanto ne, chuubu ja nakute
c. raku o shi-nai yooni tte narau koto de,
d. shoo ichi-ni wa kore datta no yo.
SH: f. Iya iya iya.
MK: g. Sono uchi suchiku no nori toka ne.
SH: h. Aa.
MK: i. Anta *yappari* toshi gomakashite-ru n ja nai?

MK: a. ‘It was a tube.
SH: b-d. Are you sure? In the early stage, it was not a tube, but we learned not to be so playful, so we used this in the first grade of elementary school. It may be early time.
MK: e. You are wrong. From the beginning, it was a tube.
SH: f. No, no, no.
MK: g. Later, something like a glue stick.
SH: h. Well.
MK: i. You, **as I expected**, are hiding your age, aren’t you?
SH: j. No.’

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In (21), MK and SH are talking about the glue that they used in their elementary school. However, MK finds that the glue that SH used is different from hers. Then, MK asks SH if she is not telling the truth about her age because MK thought that the glue was too old-fashioned compared to hers despite the fact that SH is six years younger than she is. Yappari (21i) signifies ‘as I expected’, and indicates the speaker’s assumption.

(22)
KA: b. Soo.
KT: c. (laughing)
KA: d. Basu ga yappari yasukute, rentakaa karite made sonna...
e. yappa basu hitsuyoo desu.

KT: a. ‘Yeah, you cannot go to a little quiet place.
KA: b. That is right.
KT: c. (laughing)
KA: d-e. The bus is, when I think, cheap, and we do not have to rent a car to do such a ..., I believe, the bus is necessary.’

KT and KA are talking about the transportation they can use because of a bus driver’s strike in Hawaii. Prior to this conversation (22), they were talking about the trolley they could ride instead of the bus. KT has concluded that if they had enough information about the trolley, they would not need the bus. However, KA disagrees with him saying that he cannot go to a quiet place for a date. If we only focus on the context that yappari are used, yappari in (22d, e) functions as the general assumption because the bus is cheaper than rent-a-car and it is necessary. However, through the whole conversation of (22), yappari in (22 d, e) seems to be used to assert the speaker’s opinion in an effective way contrary to KT’s opinion. KA’s assumption seems to be set by his personal situation or experience rather than anything else.
6.3.5 Summary of Yappari

Yappari 'as expected' is the third most frequently used filler. The use of yappari in discourse suggests evaluated assumption set by the speaker, hearer, situation, and society. Yappari in my data is frequently used for interaction indicating a mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer. By prefacing yappari, the speaker displays that s/he shares the same knowledge or view with the hearer, and accordingly, the frequent use of yappari strikes the hearer's emotional chord so that the feeling of intimacy or solidarity increases.

6.4 Ma/maa 'well'

Ma/maa (hereafter ma) 'well' is the fourth frequently used filler in my data. When we look up ma in a Japanese-English dictionary, it gives the following translations: 'you might say', 'such as it is (was)', 'anyway', 'enough', and as hedging expressions 'well', 'just' and 'please'. According to Ide (1981), ma is used as a hesitation marker when the speaker points out the hearer's unsatisfied aspect, and as a floor holder for word searching.

In my data, ma 'well' is used to indicate the speaker's moderate evaluation suggesting that something is not exactly correct, but almost close to it, or some situations are not the best, but the choice is kind of acceptable. With this characteristic, ma seems to be very useful for the speaker to avoid sounding too direct and assertive about an utterance. However, rather than it being associated with the speaker's modest attitude for the hearer, ma is used to reduce the speaker's responsibility for the utterance. That is, the speaker uses this filler to lead conversation in her/his direction reducing the hearer's impact of an utterance. This seems to be the reason why ma is used by male speakers more frequently than by female speakers (Ide 1981, Reynolds 1984). My data also
showed the same result indicating that male speakers used *ma* 4.4 times more frequently than female speakers.

*Ma* in my data is used for the following functions: (1) as floor-holder while the speaker is searching for an appropriate expression; (2) as turn initiator to avoid an abrupt transition; (3) as repair initiator for modification of information, rephrasing or paraphrasing.

6.4.1 Floor Holder

*Ma* is used as a floor holder. Consider (23), (24) and (25).

(23)

KT:  

a. Un. donna Hawai seekatsu desu ka?

KA:  

b. Boku,

KT:  

c. Un.

KA:  

d. moo kotchi kite, *ma*, go-ka-getsu chotto tatte,

  e. *ma* hawai ni mo chotto narete-kita kana tte kanji de.

KT:  

a. 'Yes, how is your life in Hawaii?'

KA:  

b. I,

KT:  

c. Yes.

KA:  

d-e. Since I came here, well, 5 months have passed, well, it seems like I'm getting a little used to Hawai'i.'

(24)

KT:  

a. Chotto akite-kita na to omot-tara ie-nomi shi-tari,

KA:  

b. Mainichi nonde-n ja nai desu ka.

KT:  

c. Demo, angai, komame ni itte-ru yo ne? Maguusu.

KA:  

d. Soo desu ne. daitai *maa*; ni-shuu kan ni ik-kai gurai

  e. itte-masu ne.

KT:  

a. 'When we feel tired of it, we drink at home, and

KA:  

b. We are drinking just like everyday, aren't we?
KT: c. But, we are going more frequently than we expected? To Magoo's.
KA: d-e. You are right. We are going almost, well, about once in two weeks, aren't we?

(25)
SS: a. 'Ik-kai de gohun?
CK: b. Un, juuni-ji han kara, daitai ma, yoji-han

SS: a. 5 minutes per one time?
CK: b. Yes, from 12:30, almost, well, 4:30.'

(23d), (24d), and (25b) illustrate that ma occurs before the segment of mentioning past time that the speaker may need to take time to reflect. Ma functions as a floor-holding device so that the speaker can hold the floor while searching for an appropriate word. As we can see when ma follows daitai 'nearly, almost' in (24) and (25), the use of ma indicates that something is not exactly correct, but almost close to it. In (23), ma is not followed by daitai 'nearly, almost', but lexically seems to be similar to others. In (23e), KA says that even though he cannot say it is perfect, he feels that he is more or less used to the life in Hawaii. Therefore, the use of ma indicates that something does not reach perfection, but it is almost acceptable.

6.4.2 Turn Initiator

Ma in many cases appears at the turn initial position and right before the statement of the speaker's opinion as in (26) and (27). Like the hedging expressions that mainly have function to make an utterance soften, ma at the turn initial position seems to function for lessening abrupt initiation.
(26)
KT: a. Aa, boku wa moo ichi-nen san-ka-getsu sunde-ru n da kedo,
    b. un, moo nareta bubun mo aru shi, mada nare-nai na
    c. to-yyu no mo aru.
KA: d. Aa.
KT: e. Ma, nareta tte-yyu bubun wa seekatsu no shikata ga wakatte-kita
KA: f. Un.

KT: a-c. 'Well, I have been living here for more than one year and 3 months, yes,
    there is the part that I got used to, and I can’t be used to.
KA: d. Yeah.
KT: e. Well, the part that I got used to was that I came to know the way of life.
KA: f. Yes.'

KT is backchanneled by KA after the first utterance of the segment in (26). He uses ma in
(26e) to keep holding the floor continuing the prior talk. At the initial position of the
utterance, the use of ma is also regarded as the speaker’s device to state his opinion in an
unassertive way.

(27)
KA: a. Aa yuu no sugoi tanoshii desu.
KT: b. Ma, osake nomi-nagara chotto seken-banashi.
KT: d. Un.

KA: a. ‘I like that kind of thing.
KT: b. Well, chatting while drinking.
KT: d. Yes.’

In (27), KA tells KT that he is very happy getting together with friends at home.
Then, KT expresses his feeling suggesting that chatting with friends while drinking is
probably one of his happy activities. The use of *ma* indicates that the speaker's opinion is not the best choice, but it may be acceptable. Therefore, *ma* in (27) also has the function to make the speaker's utterance unassertive so that the speaker can reduce the impact of the utterance.

6.4.3 Initiator of Repairs

(28)
MK: a. Uchi wa, chichi-oya ga watashi ga umarete-kara
b. mada honto ni akan, *ma*, is-sai ni naru koro
c. kurai mae kara, e-hon toka yuu na no o
d. wakaru wake ga nai n ja nai? mada, kotoba toka
e. Dakedo, maibän maiban chichi-oya ga yonde
f. kikaseta no.

MK: a-f. 'As for me, my father, when I was still an infant, well, from before one year old, the age that I did not understand picture books or words. But, he read them to me just like every night.'

*Ma* in (28) is used for self-correction. MK is telling the hearer that her father read picture books to her from the time that she was a baby. However, she stops talking in the middle of saying *akan(boo)* 'baby' to replace it with other words. Instead of *akan(boo)* 'baby', she gives the hearer more detailed information saying that it was when she was about to turn one year old. *Ma* in (28b) indicates that *akan(boo)* 'baby' is not the totally wrong word but not sufficiently specific so she gives more specific description.

(29)
KA: b. Aa. boku no shiriai no onna no ko ga katta jitensha
c. rokujuu-doru desu.
KT: a. 'As I expected, it was sold everywhere, well, because everybody bought.
KA: b-c. Well. The bicycle that a female friend of mine bought was sixty dollars.'

In (29) KT and KA are talking about the price of a bicycle. KT in (29a) is saying that, as he expected, cheap ones were already sold. However, by prefacing *ma*, he paraphrases his prior utterance saying that everyone already bought them.

(30)
KT: b. Kyuuryoo mo zenzen chigau.
KA: c. Um.
KT: d. Dat-tara, ichioo haitte chotto senmon bun’ya demo
    e. *ma*, jibun no yari-tai koto demo shi,
KA: f. Um.

KA: a. 'It is different, isn’t it?
KT: b. A salary is also totally different.
KA: c. Yes.
KT: d-e. If it is so, first of all, one enters (the university) and studies in the specialized field, well, studies what one wants to do, and
KA: f. Yes.’

In (30), *ma* is used to rephrase the speaker’s prior utterance. KA and KT are talking about the different treatment between the high school graduate and the university graduate. KT tells KA that if it is so, it is better that one enters a university and studies in her/his specialized field. However, he prefices *ma* to rephrase her prior utterance saying that one can study whatever s/he wants to. *Ma* for repairs is used to indicate that the speaker is unsatisfied with his/her utterance, but the upcoming utterance is closer to the speaker’s intention.
6.4.4 Summary of *Ma*

*Ma* 'well' is the fourth most frequently used filler. Like other pause fillers, *ma* in discourse carries general functions such as floor holder, a turn initiator to avoid an abrupt transition, and a repair initiator for modification of information. In my data, *ma* 'well' indicates the speaker's moderate evaluation suggesting that something is not exactly correct, but almost close to it, or some situations are not best, but the choice is kind of acceptable. With this characteristic, *ma* seems to be very useful for the speaker to avoid sounding too direct and assertive about an utterance. *Ma* has a function to reduce the impact of the utterance when the speaker leads the conversation towards what s/he is thinking.

6.5 *(Sore)de* 'and'

*(Sore)de* 'and' is the fifth frequently used filler in my data. *De* is a shorter variant of the connective *sorede*, and used primarily in speaking. *Sorede* is the combination of the demonstrative pronoun *sore* 'that' and the copula -*da* 'be'. My data prove that *de* is more frequently used than *sorede* at the rate of 82.6% and 17.4%, and male speakers use *de* 3.2 times more frequently than female speakers. However, *(sore)de* in discourse works as a connective more than as a filler because it appears in a syntactically appropriate place in a sentence and its omission affects the meaning of a sentence. *Kojien Dictionary* defines *sorede* as a causal connector to indicate that the prior sentence is the reason or cause for the following sentence with the meaning of 'for that reason' or 'therefore.' However, *(sore)de* in discourse seems to lose much of its function as a causal connector because it is much used as coordinate connector.

*(Sore)de* in my data shows the following functions: (1) as a floor-holding device for the speaker's continuation; (2) prefacing a new turn to connect idea units in the
interactional function; (3) as an initiator for (sub)topic shift and for additional information; and (4) as a contrast marker.

6.5.1 Floor holder

(31)
KA:  b. Asoko itta n desu yo.
KT:  c. Un.
KA:  d. De, kuupon atte,
KT:  e. Un.
KA:  f. anoo, ichi-mai de minna dorinku ga moraeru tte-yuu
g. kuupon datta n desu kedo,
KT:  h. Un un.
KA:  i. de, boku to Eri-chan to Sawa-chan wa
KT:  j. Un.
KA:  k. hutsuu no raamen tabeta n, ah raamen tanonda n desu yo.
KT:  l. Un.
KA:  m. De, Aya-chan wa onaka suite-nakatta kara,
KT:  n. un.
KA:  o. gyooza dake

KT:  a. ‘Yeah, yes I know.
KA:  b. We went there.
KT:  c. Yes.
KA:  d. And, we had a coupon,
KT:  e. Yes.
KA:  f-g. Well, it was the coupon with which we could get a drink with one piece.
KT:  h. Yes.
KA:  i. And, I, Eri, and Sawa
KT:  j. Yes.
KA:  k. ate regular noodles, I mean, order noodles.
KT:  l. Yes.
KA: m. And, Aya was not hungry, so
KT: n. Yes.
KA: o. only pot stickers.'

KA in (31) describes to KT his experience in a Japanese restaurant in Waikiki. He is frequently backchanneled by KT and encouraged to keep on telling his story. In telling what happened there, KA uses de to take the floor for continuation of his talking. Lexically de signifies 'and', and it indicates coordinative relationship rather than a causal one. Therefore, de in (31) is used to connect the story in a coordinative way, and it functions as a floor holding device for the speaker to continue talking.

6.5.2 Turn Initiator

(32)
SS: b. Chitchai tori wa ne. kawaii kara ne.
CK: c. Un un.
SS: d. Ii n da kedo, ano hato gurai no ookisa-ni naru to,
   e. nanka chotto kowai.
SS: g. Un.
CK: h. De, ammari tairyoo de, waa to tond-tara, kowai naa
SS: i. Deshoo?

CK: a. 'Well, it is a pity that birds get injured.'
SS: b. If they are small birds. Because they are cute.
CK: c. Yes.
SS: d-e. It doesn't matter, but if they become bigger as that dove, well, it is kind of scary.
CK: f. Yeah, that is right.
SS: g. Yes.
CK: h. And, if a lot of birds suddenly fly near me, it is scary.
SS: i. That's right, isn't it?

As we observe in (31), de is frequently used at the turn-initial position right after the backchannel. De in (32) appeared in the conversation that is being made interactionally between two interlocutors using backchanneling such as soo ya na (Osaka area dialect of soo da ne) 'yes, it is' and desyoo? 'it is true, isn't it?', and interactional particles such as ~ne and ~naa. CK and SS in (32) are talking about birds in Hawaii. SS says that small birds are cute, but when birds become bigger, they are scary. CK agrees with SS's utterance saying un, soo ya na 'yeah, that is right' in (32f). Then, SS backchannels with un 'yes', which has no significant meaning, but is used for interaction. By prefacing de in (32 h), CK takes the floor to speak, and initiates her turn. Lexically de is used to connect idea units in a topic. Therefore, de in (32) is used to take the floor to initiate a new turn, and contributes to discourse coherence in the interactional function.

6.5.3 (Sub)topic Change Initiator

(33)
KT: a. Basu hitsuyoo. Aa, ichiban demo chotto okane kakaru kedo,
b. rentaakaa ga at-tara deeto ga shi-yasui shi ne?
KA: c. Takai ssu yo.
KT: d. (laughing)
KA: e. Save money desu.
KT: f. Save money
KA: g. Un.
KT: h. Un.
KA: i. De, basu taimu ga naku-natte-kara,
j. nomikai hueta ki ga suru n desu kedo,
KT: k. A, gyaku ni hue-chatta?

KT: a-b. 'The bus is necessary. Well, the best thing is, even though it takes money, if
there is a rental car, it is easy to go for a date; isn’t it?

KA: c. it is expensive.

KT: d. (laughing)

KA: e. Save money.

KT: f. Save money

KA: g. Yes.

KT: h. Yes.

KA: i-j. And, after the bus schedule was cancelled, I feel that meeting for drinking increases.

KT: k. Oh, did it increase? I thought the opposite.

As we observe, de is frequently used in the collaborative interaction between two interlocutors using backchannels. De in (33) is also used to preface subtopic change in the collaborative construction of a conversation. KA and KT in (33) were talking about the bus strike. KT says that the bus is necessary, but the rental car makes it easier for people to date. KA responds saying that it is expensive, and tells him to save money. Then, KT repeats KA’s utterance saying “save money” as in (33f). Later on, both KA and KT backchannel each other saying un ‘yes’. The backchannel in (33g, h) does not seem to have any significant meaning, but has an important discourse function to avoid the conversational interruption by filling the potential pause. By prefacing de in (33i), the new initiation of KA’s utterance indicates that the conversation is resumed, and as the lexical meaning of de implies, it also indicates that the speaker’s utterance will not get away from the main subject. De in (33) is used to initiate a new turn in the collaborative interaction and to avoid abrupt initiation of subtopic shift.

De in (34) is used to present additional information of the topic.

(34)
SH: b. Soo da yo ne.
MK: c. Tori-aterarete tsukutta ne.
MK: e. De, uchi no gakkoo nanda ka shin-nai n da kedo,
f. kama ga atta n datte, yaki ageru. shoogakkoo.

MK: a. ‘Everyone was given a lump of clay, no, it is not, we fired it.
SH: b. That is right.
MK: c. We were given the clay and made something.
SH: d. Yeah, we used to make something.
MK: e-f. And, I don’t know why, but our school had a kiln for firing. In elementary school.’

MK and SH were talking about what they had done in the art class in their elementary school. MK says that she made something with clay and fired it. She suddenly remembers that there was a kiln in her school. She starts to talk about the kiln by prefacing de. Because it was rare to have a kiln in elementary school in those days, she might think that it would be interesting to the hearer. De in (34) is used as a turn initiator and used to take the floor to tell additional information of the topic.

6.5.4 Contrast Marker

(35)
b. soko made omoikkiri kawaru tt-tsyuu koto wa nakatta.
KA: d. A, soo?
KT: d. Ore ga hataraite-ru toki wa.
KA: e. A, so.
KA: g. Aa.
KT: h. Tokuni, jibun ga sunde-ta tokoro ga inaka datta kara, un.
KA: i. De, niman de, moo, nenkan tooshi-tara kekkoo
   j. chigai-masu yo ne, tabun. Boonasu toka chigai-masu?
KT: k. Boonasu mo sonnani kawara-nai.
KA: 1. Kawara-nai n su ka?

KT: a-b. 'Yes. Well, there was no big difference in salary between the university graduate and the high school graduate.

KA: c. Is that so?

KT: d. When I was working.

KA: e. Is that so?

KT: f. It is really just $200.

KA: g. Yes.

KT: h. Especially, because the place in which I lived was the countryside, yes.

KA: i-j. **But**, with $200, well, it will be a big difference through the year, won't it? Is there a difference in bonus?

KT: k. There is no big difference in bonus, either.

KA: l. Isn't there a big difference?

It is rare, but *de* in (35) is used as a contrast marker rather than as a causal or coordinative marker. Prior to the segment of (35), KT and KA were talking about different treatment of Japanese companies between the university-graduate and the high school graduate. KT says that when he was working in a company, there was only $200 difference in a salary. Prefacing *de*, KA expresses his opposite opinion against KT saying that $200 would be a big difference through the year. *De* in (35i) lexically signifies ‘but’ rather than as ‘and’ or ‘so’. Therefore, *de* in (35) is used to take the floor to initiate a new turn and to represent a contrasting idea.

6.5.5 Summary of *(Sore)*de

*(Sore)*de ‘and’ is the fifth most frequently used filler. *(Sore)*de in discourse loses much of its lexical function as a causal connector, but frequently works as a coordinate connector. *(Sore)*de is mainly used as a floor holder for the speaker’s continuation.
(Sore)de also has other functions such as an initiator of a new turn connecting idea units, an initiator for subtopic change and for additional information, and a contrast marker.
CHAPTER 7
KOREAN PAUSE FILLERS

In this chapter, I will focus on the five most frequently used Korean pause fillers in my data; *kukka/kunikka* 'I mean', *mwe* 'well', *mak* 'really', *kunyang* 'just', and *ku* 'uh, well'. By exploring these five most frequently used pause fillers, I will attempt to analyze the characteristics of Korean pause fillers and investigate certain discourse patterns of Korean young speakers.

7.1 *Kukka/kunikka* 'I mean'

*Kukka/kunikka* 'I mean' is the most frequently used filler in my data. *Kukka/kunikka* is derived from the causal connective *kulenikka* 'so' or 'accordingly'. The connective *kulenikka* consists of two elements, the deictic item *kule* and the connective part -*nikka*. It is usually placed at the initial position of a sentence which is semantically conjoined to the preceding sentence and used as a causal linker.

*Kukka* and *kunikka* are used primarily in conversation. The combination of *kunikka* or *kukka* and the topic marker *un* such as *kunikkan* or *kukkan* is also frequently used in natural conversation. In my data, all forms, which are *kukka/kukkan*, *kunikka/kunikkan*, and *kulehikka* appeared. Among them, *kukka/kukkan* is the most frequently used form at the rate of 83.3%, *kunikka/kunikkan* 12.2%, and *kulenikka* is the least used form as 4.4%.

*Kukka/kunikka* in discourse seems to lose much of its function as a causal linker because it is much used to preface repairs of prior talk such as rephrase, paraphrase, or modification of information. According to Kim and Suh (1994), the most fundamental function of *kulenikka* in discourse is reformulation of prior talk. They claim that this function is observed in many contexts such as self-editing, modification of prior utterance,
and providing more elaborate information (1994:85-86). They also suggest that "one important aspect of this function is that, while the prior talk is elaborated, specified, or expanded, the reformulation is often made toward upgrading the speaker's affect or emotional overtone" (1994:86).

The frequent use of *kukka/kunikka* (hereafter *kukka*) in my data has a discourse function for the speaker's continuation. By using *kukka*, the speaker can keep holding the floor to continue her/his talking, and by elaborating on the prior talk, s/he can strike the hearer's attention to an up-coming utterance and it also makes the conversation very interactive. *Kukka* 'I mean' in my data has the following functions: (1) prefacing repairs of prior talk by rephrasing or paraphrasing; modifying; expanding on additional information for the hearer's misunderstanding of prior talk; (2) searching for an appropriate word; (3) as a causal linker; and (4) as a initiator for (sub)topic change.

7.1.1 Repair Initiator

In my data, 70% of *kukka* is used to preface repairs of the prior talk. (1) is an example of paraphrasing the prior talk. (2) is an example of modification of information.

(1)

KL: b. Kuntey ettehkey kulehkey swip-key ka-nya?
OM: c. Manhi yumyengha-ci anh-ko hayoy eyse po-le-on, kuke hayoy phayn,
    d. yuilha-n hayoy phayn-i-lay, kaoli enni ka.
KL: e. (Laughing), michi-keyss-ta.
OM: f. *Kukka*, kaori enni ka wenley hankwuk ey chinkwu ka eps-ess-nuntey,
    g. kheyiphap ku phayn toy-myense, phayn toy-myense ku cwung ey han myeng
    h. *kunika* cepheynicu kholian ul han myeng al-key toy-n-keya
    i. 'kath-i pisusha-n nai tay uy..
KL: j. Um.
OM: k. *Kukka*, ku salami lang kyecysok chaything, chaything ha-ko meyil ha-ko hay-se
OM and KL are talking about Kaori, who is OM's Japanese friend. After hearing that Kaori went to the house of a member of a famous Korean pop-song group, KL could not understand why Kaori was able to visit his house because she thought that visiting a famous star's house was not easy. OM is explaining how Kaori managed to visit his house. In (c), OM says that Kaori is the only foreign fan, and in (f) by prefacing *kukka*, she adds the information of how she made Korean friends. In (h), the use of *kunikka* is also for adding detailed information about the prior talk. *Kukka* in (k) is also used for continuing the prior talk paraphrasing and adding more information. The frequent use of *kukka* in (1) seems to have a discourse function for the speaker's continuation. By using *kukka*, the speaker can keep holding the floor to continue her talking, and by paraphrasing and adding more information of prior talk, the prior talk is elaborated so that the speaker can keep the hearer's attention to the upcoming utterance.

(2)

OM: a. Gentle, kind
OM and KL are talking about how they can describe *chakhada* ‘good, nice’ in English. In (b), KL starts to say “our country, in my thought, our country.” The hearer cannot understand what the speaker really wants to talk about, but by prefacing *kukka* in (c), KL organizes what she is going to say, and says “I mean, if I look up the word ‘good’ in English-Korean dictionary…” Therefore, *kukka* in (2) is used to modify the referent in the process of choosing the appropriate word.

In (3) and (4), *kukka* is used to expand additional information for the hearer’s misunderstanding of the prior talk.

(3)

YK: a. Sam sa payk tanwi nen intulodeksyen tul-ess-e.
SH: b. Aa, ku tepullyu khotu tul-e iss-nun ke?
YK: c. Ani, *kukkan* intulodeksyen khosu nun
SH: d. E.
YK: e. payk tanwi i payk tanwi canh-a.
SH: f. E.
YK: g. Sam sa payk tanwi nun sam sa pak tanwi man tul-e-ya ha-nun ke.

YK: a. I took 300 and 400 level non-introductory courses.
SH: b. Oh, you mean, is it marked with W-code?
YK: c. No, **what I mean is**, introductory courses are
SH: d. Yes.
YK: e. 100 and 200 units, aren’t they?
SH: f. Yes.
YK: g. 300 and 400 level courses are what we must take (as non-introduction courses).

(4)
TU: c. Yekī ka te,
SS: d. Ani ani, **kukka** nay ka hawai ey
TU: e. A.
SS: f. ll nyen, **kukka** il nyen cen man hay-to ilehkey pissa-ci anh-ass-ketun?
   g. Kuntey taykey manh-i oll-ass-e.

SS: a. I wasn’t here last year. I went to the other place. Compared to last year when I left
   b. there seems to be a big price difference in the rent. It has greatly increased.
TU: c. Here is more,
SS: d. No no, **I mean**, I in Hawaii
TU: e. Oh.
SS: f. one year, **I mean**, it was not so expensive even one year ago.
   g. However, it increased a lot.

In (3), YK is talking about a non-introductory course which he took. However, SH misunderstood that the non-introductory course was the one marked with the W (writing intensive) code. By prefacing **ani, kukkan** ‘no, what I mean is’ in (3c), YK is expanding his additional explanation about the non-introductory course. In (4), SS is talking about the big increase of house rent. However, TU misunderstands SS’s point knowing that Hawaii is more expensive compared to the place where SS stayed last year. By prefacing **ani ani, kukka** ‘no, no, I mean’ in (4d), SS explains his point for better understanding saying that compared to last year, the house rent greatly increased.
As we can see, when the speaker deals with the hearer’s misunderstanding, s/he usually prefaces the combination of *ani* ‘no’ and *kukka* ‘I mean’. While *ani* ‘no’ signifies a direct disagreement, *kukka* seems to indicate a mild confrontation so that it makes it possible for the speaker to expand her/his explanation effectively.

7.1.2 Floor Holder

*Kukka* in (5) and (6) is used as a floor holder to search for an appropriate word.

(5)
YS:  b. E.
HJ:  c. Mwe, **kukka** mwe-ci? Phy. 
YS:  d. E, phyo. 
HJ:  e. E, pihayngki phyo ka an-tway-kaci-ko...

HJ:  a. She wants to go, but
YS:  b. Yes.
YS:  d. Yes, a ticket.
HJ:  e. Yes, she couldn’t buy an airplane ticket, so...

(6)
YS:  a. Enni naisu ttay nun te simha-ci anh-ass-e?
b. Ku-ttay wancen kongewu kongewu y-ess-e.
HJ:  c. Ku kkaman sayk mwe-ci? **Kukka** a, meli ilehkey
d. wancen tuleysu ipun kes chelem ta olli-ko, mokkeli wancen

YS:  a. When she was in the NICE program, she was beyond comprehension, wasn’t she?
b. She was totally, a princess, princess that time.
HJ:  c-d. The black, what was it? **That** is, ah, she put up her hair like this as if she
wore a dress. And a necklace completely...

YS: e. Yeah, I know I know. But, she is very popular, very popular.

In (5) and (6), HJ is having a hard time to formulate an appropriate word. In (5c), *mwe, kukka mweci?* ‘what, so, what was it?’ and in (6c), *ku kkamansaek mweci? kukka, a,* ... ‘the black, what is it? so, ah,...’ indicates that the speaker is hesitating to organize the upcoming idea using other hesitation words such as “what”, “what is it?”, and “ah.”

7.1.3 Consequential Linker

In my data 15% of *kukka* is used as a consequential linker indicating that the prior utterance preceding *kukka* is the cause of the upcoming utterance. This use of *kukka* is typically found in writing.

(7)

   b. wancen tokpwul-cangkwun chelem ilena-nun taythonglyeng i-ni-kka  
   c. waynyaha-myen ku cwuwi ey ku salam ul kyencey-ha-nun kasi-seylyek i  
   d. eps-u-nikka, *kukka* caki honca nala lul ikkul-e ka-ki-ka himtu-n-ke-ci.

YK: a. Right, in the case of No Mwu-Hyen, he himself, really, what is it?  
   b. He is the president who rises up with only self-will,  
   c. because there is no restraining influence around him,  
   d. accordingly, it is hard for him to lead the country by himself.

YK in (7) is talking about *Mwu-Hyen No*, who is the present Korean President. He says that there is no restraining influence around President No. By prefacing *kukka* (d), he suggests that the prior utterance is the cause of the upcoming utterance saying that as a result, President No is hard to support the country alone. Therefore, *kukka* is used to express the connection between the cause and the effect.
7.1.4 Initiator for (Sub)topic Change

Lastly, *kukka* is used to avoid abrupt (sub)topic change.

(8)

OM: a. Keki ka-se, keki ka-se-nun han twu sikan tongan hankwuke kongpu ha-ko
KL: b. Ha-yss-néy, onul?
OM: c. Ung.
KL: d. Nemwu coh-ney. (Laughing)
OM: e. *Kukka*, na nun sangtang-hi ku enhi sillyek i taykey noph-un cwul
    f. chakkak ha-yss-e.
KL: g. Ung.
OM: h. Cenhwa hal ttay mata keuy hankwuk-e pack-ey an-ha-ketun.
KL: i. Ung, kuntey silcey lo haypo-nikka?

OM: a. I went there, went there, and studied Korean for one, two hours,
KL: b. You did, today?
OM: c. Yes.
KL: d. That is good. (Laughing)
OM: e-f. *By the way*, I misunderstood that her Korean ability was really good.
KL: g. Yes.
OM: h. Because whenever we call, we use only Korean.
KL: i. Yes, but when you talk with her?

OM in (8) is talking about what she did today. After KL heard that OM finished her Korean teaching to Kaori, she got happy because she could be with OM. In (e), OM initiates her utterance about Kaori's Korean ability. However, this change in topic is rather abrupt because OM was talking about her schedule for today. The function of *kukka* in (e) serves to avoid the abrupt initiation of topic change.

7.1.5 Summary of *Kukka*

*Kukka* is derived from the causal connective *kulenikka* 'so' or 'accordingly', but
it loses much of its function in discourse. In my data, 70% of *kukka* 'I mean' is used to preface repairs of prior talk for rephrasing or paraphrasing, adding more information, and modifying the information. The use of *kukka* makes it possible for the speaker to keep holding the floor to continue her/his talking, and by elaborating on the prior talk, s/he can maintain the hearer’s attention to the upcoming utterance. Only 15% of *kukka* is used as a causal linker. *Kukka* is also used as a hesitation marker while the speaker searches for an appropriate word, and as an initiator for (sub)topic change.

7.2 *Mwe* 'well'

*Mwe* 'well' is the second most frequently used filler in my data. The referential meaning of *mwe* corresponds to English ‘what’, and indicates unknown and unidentifiable information.

There are two different entries for *mwe* in the Korean dictionary: pronoun and interjection. The pronoun *mwe* is a simple form of *mwues* 'what' and there is no meaning difference in the use of *mwe* and *mwues*. However, *mwe* is mostly used in an informal situation, and *mwues* is used in a formal situation. The pronoun *mwe* can be used as an interrogative pronoun or an indefinite pronoun. The former can be divided into an information-seeking interrogative sentence and a yes-no interrogative sentence; the latter is found in a declarative sentence. Examples are shown below:

A. a: Ne cikum *mwe* ha-ni?
   b: kongbu hay.
   
   a.: What are you doing now?
   b: I'm studying.

B. a: *Mwe* com mek-ul-lay?
   b: Ani-yo, sayngkak eps-e-yo.
a: Do you want something to drink?  
b: No, I don’t want anything.

C. **Mwe** la-ko hal mal-i eps-supnita.

I don’t have anything to say.

*Mwe* in A and B is an example of an interrogative pronoun. A is the information-seeking interrogative sentence, and B is the yes-no interrogative sentence. *Mwe* in C is the example of an indefinite pronoun and refers to indefinite things such as something and anything.

Unlike the pronoun *mwe*, the interjection *mwe* has only one form. The interjection *mwe* has several discourse features. For example, it appears at any position in a sentence: initial, middle, or ending. It cannot occur with any particle; it does not affect the propositional meaning of the sentence when it is omitted, and so on. Therefore, the interjection *mwe* works as a pause filler in discourse. It is sometimes used independently to express the speaker’s surprise, uncertainty, and misunderstanding as in *mwe*? ‘what? what did you say? I heard it wrong, didn’t I?’ However, I claim that the interjection *mwe* which appeared in my data serves various discourse functions besides pause fillers.

According to Lee (1999), the pause filler *mwe* has one basic meaning, which is “something is uncertain to the speaker” (1999:137) and this basic meaning is correlated with discourse functions. He claims that *mwe* has the following discourse functions: (1) indicating that something is not certain, but almost close to the fact; (2) searching for an appropriate word or expression; (3) as a hesitation marker when the speaker feels it is difficult to answer; (4) prefacing repairs of prior talk; (5) listing several possibilities; (6) highlighting the utterance; (7) expressing disagreement; (8) indicating the speaker’s certainty or confidence; and (9) indicating the speaker’s humility.
As the referential meaning of *mwe* ‘what’ indicates, it signifies unknown, unidentifiable and insignificant information. According to Suh (2003), *mwe* is “associated less with information and more with emotional expression” (2003:142). She regards *mwe* as “a stance marker” to express the speaker’s non-committal attitude to the utterance. Therefore, she suggests that *mwe* is used “to fill the need of saying something when no words can be found” (2003:142). My data confirm Suh’s observations. *Mwe* is used not only when the speaker says something indefinite, but also for the speaker’s cognitive, emotional, interactional reasons. *Mwe* in my data has the following functions: (1) holding the floor, searching for an appropriate word; (2) downgrading the utterance or the situation; (3) listing the possibilities; (4) indicating speaker’s indirect information; 5) as a initiator for (sub)topic change; and (6) prefacing repair.

7.2.1 Floor Holder

53% of *mwe* is used to search for an appropriate word. (9) and (10) are examples of this function.

(9)

YK: a. Ung, oykwuk-in hoysa, ung cikum intheneys ulo cikum com alapo-nun-tey
   b. cikum intheneys sang ulo han-pen com wense to com naypo-ko
   c. naynyen ul kitali-ko iss-nun-tey
SU: d. Oykwuk-in hoysa to *mwe* kyeyel i iss-ul ke an-ye-yo.
   e. *Mwe*, mwuyek i-na, *mwe*...
YK: f. I don’t care. Nay, nay cenkon ulo naka-l-ye-myen,
   g. na ka-l swu iss-nun-tey ka eps-ke-tun.

(10)

YK: a. Yes, foreign company, yes. I’m looking for a job from internet, but
   b. now, I try to apply from the internet; and
   c. to wait for the next year, but
SU: d. Even foreign companies have, *well*, their fields, don’t they?
   e. *Well*, such as trading, *sort of*...
YK:  f. I don’t care. If I look for a job corresponding with my major,
g. there is no place that I can go.

(10)
b. ely-ess-ul ttay pwuhte wuntong to kath-i
TU:  c. Mwe ha-yss-nuntey-yo?
SS:  d. Mwe, kukka, yakwu, chwukkwu, mwe, nongkwu,
e. wuntong ul côm culki-nun phyen i-e... 

SS:  a. We are intimate. We have exercised together a lot, so we became close.
b. Since we were children, we did exercise together,
TU:  c. What kind of exercise did you do?
SS:  d. Well, that is, baseball, well, basketball,
e. because we used to enjoy exercise... 

In (9) YK says that he is looking for a job for a foreign company through the website. SU asks about the specific field of the foreign company that YK is looking for. *Mwe* in (9d) is used to soften the utterance reducing the impact that the hearer would feel because SU is asking about the specificity of information. *Mwe* in (9e) is used to hold the floor while the speaker is searching for possible examples, and it also indicates the speaker’s attitude not to make the information too clear. By avoiding specificity of information, the speaker suggests that there are other possibilities.

In (10), SS says that he is very close to his younger brother because they have exercised together since they were children. Then, TU asks him what kind of exercise they did. By using pause fillers in (10d) such as *mwe* ‘what’ and *kukka* ‘I mean’, SS fills the time gap while he is thinking of appropriate words. The use of *mwe* indicates the speaker’s interactional device to facilitate the shared world between the speaker and the hearer rather than making the utterance specific. Therefore, *mwe* as a floor holder is used not only for simply the speaker’s cognitive reason to search for words, but also for
interactional reason to make the utterance unspecific so that the interlocutors can easily share a common understanding of conversation.

7.2.2 Indicator of Downgrader

Mwe is used when the speaker downgrades the utterance or the situation.

(11)
SU:  
b. pok o-ley-yo. Po-ko-wa-se ku nukki-n cem ul caki hanthey wa-se malha-lay.
YK:  
c. Cal nukk-eyss-ta kule-myen toy-ci mwe.
SU:  
d. Kulehkey malha-myen an-toy-n-tey.
YK:  
e. Kukey impression i-la kule-myen toy-ci mwe.
SU:  
f. Kuley-to kulen ke an-cwu-n-toy.
SU:  
a. That, well, he asked that we should go to a festival, go to sort of festival and  
b. see it and come back. After coming back from the festival, we must tell our impression to him.
YK:  
c. Just tell him “I felt good.”
SU:  
d. He said that we should not do so.
YK:  
e. Just say “it is my impression.”
SU:  
f. He said that he would never give us credit for it.

In (11), SU is talking about the assignment that he has to go to a festival and talk about his impression to the instructor of Hawaiian Stuidies. YK suggests that he just tell his instructor that the festival was good. The use of mwe in (c) indicates that YK does not take the matter so seriously than SU thinks. And YK does not make the full commitment to give a clear solution to SU, but he thinks it is fit. Then, SU tells YK that he was told that he should not do so. The second mwe in (e) also implies that the speaker downgrades the situation. The use of mwe in (11) is perceived as the speaker’s non-committal attitude to reduce the responsibility that the upcoming utterance can cause.
*Mwe* in this function is also used when the speaker does not want to get involved in the situation or the speaker does not have any interest in the subject.

### 7.2.3 Indicator of Listing the Possibilities

(12)

SS:  
- a. *Mwe*, kukka, yakwu, chwukkwu, mwe, nongkwu;
  - b. wuntong ul com culki-nun phyen i-ese…

SS:  
- a. Well, that is, baseball, **well**, basketball,
  - b. because we used to enjoy exercise…

(12) is the segment of a conversation that has been used to explain the function of floor holder in (10). When *mwe* is used to fill the time gap while the speaker is searching for an appropriate word, it has the function of a floor holder. However, we can also think that *mwe* in (12) is used for listing possibilities. SS is listing the sports that he used to enjoy. Because he has to recollect the sports from his memory, he needs time to think. By using *mwe*, he takes time to think about the upcoming idea and the use of *mwe* implies the possibility that he enjoyed more than one sport. Therefore, *mwe* in (12) has two functions: (1) floor holder and (2) listing possibilities.

### 7.2.4 Indicator of Indirect Information

*Mwe* is used when the speaker is uncertain about the fact because s/he got it from other people or indirect experience.

(13)

YK:  
- EE, a, **mwe** sa-nyen cen ey w-ass-ta kule-nun-ke kath-ten-tye

YK:  
- Yes, ah, **well**, I’m not sure, but I heard that she came here four years ago.

OM: So, I heard it from Sen-A a little. **Well**, she says that kind of story. The examples of (13) and (14) indicate that the speakers got the information indirectly. Because the speaker is uncertain about the fact, he cannot be so confident of it. **Mwe** seems to be used to avoid sounding too confident or assertive so that he can mitigate his responsibility about the fact.

7.2.5 Indicator of (Sub)topic Change

**Mwe** is used to avoid abrupt initiation of a new turn and (sub)topic shift. This function is illustrated in (15).

(15)

KL: d. 'Ani, **mwe** hankwuk-e kongpu ha-nun-ke etchkey ha-ki-lo ha-yss-nun-tey

KL: a. Oh, she doesn’t remember me.
OM: b. Yeah, but let’s see her together next time. So next week Monday,
c. we promised to meet together every week.
KL: d. By the way, **well**, how did you decide about Korean study?

In (15), KL and OM are talking about OM’s Japanese friend. Because OM’s friend does not seem to remember KL, OM suggests KL to see her next time. In (d), KL shifts the (sub)topic by using **ani, mwe** ‘By the way, well’. The original meaning of **ani** is ‘no’, but in this function it really means ‘by the way’. Like **mwe, ani** ‘no’ is also well used at the turn initial position to lessen the impact of the abrupt initiation.
7.2.6 Indicator of Repair

(16)
SU: a. Kuntey ku salam i taythonglyeng tóy-ki ceï-ey-to kule-n yayki ka iss-ess-e.yo.
b. Nomwuhyen un taythonlyeng kam un ani-lako.
c. Kuntey Ihoychang ul ccik-e-cwu-nuni cincca Nomwuhyen wul ccik-nun-ta nun
d. sik-ulo ha-ko, intheneys, mwe neythicun him to enu cengo
e. palhwi ka toy-kac-ko

SU: a. However, there was such a rumor even before the person became the president,
b. which is that No Mwu-Hyen is not the right person for president.
c. But, rather than vote for I Hoy-Chang, people vote for No Mwu-Hyen
d. in this way. Internet, I mean, the power of netizen was displayed to a certain degree.
YK: f. That’s right.

In (16), mwe has two functions: (1) a floor holder and (2) indicator of repair. SU in (d) tries to say “internet”, but by prefacing mwe ‘I mean’, he holds the floor to search for an appropriate word, and changes his utterance to ‘the power of netizen.’ Mwe sounds as if the speaker needs to say something, but he cannot find the best word. However, the upcoming word is acceptable or close to the speaker’s thought. The use of mwe helps the speaker highlight her/his upcoming idea in an unassertive way because mwe signifies insignificant and uncertain information.

7.2.7 Summary of Mwe

Mwe ‘well’ is the second most frequently used filler. The referential meaning of mwe ‘what’ signifies unidentifiable and insignificant information. Mwe is most frequently used as hesitation maker by a male speaker while he searches for an appropriate word.
*Mwe* is also used when the speaker maintains the non-committal attitude toward the utterance by not making the full commitment for the specific information. Other important functions of *mwe* are: an initiator for (sub)topic change; repairs; listing indefinite things; suggesting possibilities; and an indicator of indirect information. *Mwe* as an indicator of the speaker's downgrading the utterance or the situation is sometimes used when the speaker does not want to get involved in the situation or the speaker does not have any interest in the subject.

7.3 *Mak* 'really'

*Mak* 'really' is the third most frequently used filler in my data. *Mak* is an informal variant of the manner adverb *maku* 'very, severely', and used only in speaking mostly by young speakers. The adverb *maku* in the Korean dictionary has meanings such as recklessly, severely, roughly, and so on. It modifies verbs like other manner adverbs and describes that some actions or the degree of situations are very hard or awful. Examples include: *mak mekessta* 'ate greedily', *ton ul mak ssessta* 'spent money recklessly', and *pi ga mak naelyessta* 'the rain poured down terribly'.

In natural conversation, *mak* is mostly used when the speaker's feeling precedes the utterance. For example, the speaker really wants to say something but cannot find any appropriate word, or the speaker feels so overwhelmed s/he cannot find any word to describe what s/he wants to say. Therefore, the use of *mak* represents the speaker's effort to focus on an utterance and the speaker's desire to load his feeling toward an utterance. However, the appropriate use of *mak* makes conversation active, but too frequent use of *mak* gives the impression to the hearer that the speaker is poor at talking because describing one's feeling is associated with one's speaking ability.

*Mak* in my data has following functions: (1) emphasizing the speaker's overwhelming feeling toward the utterance; (2) connecting the speaker and the hearer
emotionally; (3) filling the time gap by holding the floor and searching for an appropriate word.

7.3.1 Indicator of the Speaker’s Overwhelming Feeling

(17)
OM:  b. Um.
KL:  c. Ee ee.
KL:  e. Um.
OM:  f. Keki **mak** kephi masi-key-sili, **mak** theyipul iss-ko
KL:  g. A, um.
OM:  h. Keki ka-se, keki ka-se-nun han twu sikan tongan hankwuk-e kongpwu ha-ko.

KL:  a. Is that the place where Kimchee Two is? Is that in Waialae?
OM:  b. Yes.
KL:  c. Yeah, yeah.
OM:  d. There is a book store over there, a book store.
KL:  e. Yes.
OM:  f. There, **really**, are **really** tables to be able to drink coffee,
KL:  g. Ah, yes.
OM:  h. I went there, went there, and studied Korean for one or two hours.

In (17), OM is talking about what she did today. She tells KL that she visited a book store. Because OM thinks that KL seems to know the location, but not the book store, OM explains what the book store is like. **Mak** in (f) is used to express the speaker’s desire to describe the features of the place. She tries to describe more clearly, but her feeling exceeds description, and she has a hard time to find appropriate words. She just says that there are tables for drinking coffee. Even though the conversation does not show
if KL really knows the place or not, KL seems to understand OM’s feeling to describe the book store clearly. So, she positively responds with backchanneling expressions such as *aah* and *um* ‘oh, yes’. Therefore, the use of *mak* also has the function to involve the hearer into the conversation emotionally.

7.3.2 Emotional Connector between the Speaker and the Hearer

(18)
OM: b. Um.
OM: d. E, ku hyentay-cek-i-n kamkak i ani-ko *mak*
KL: e. Kuleh-ci, *mak* tengsil-tengsil-lo ileh-key
OM: f. E.

KL: a. At that time, she **really** got a lot of pressure.
OM: b. Yes.
KL: c. And then, **really**, imagine it, her dancing full of joy
OM: d. Yes, it is not a modern style of dancing, but **very**
KL: e. You are right, **very**, dancing with joy like this
OM: f. Yeah.

In (18), KL is talking about Kyong-Sun, who is one of her friends and had a difficult time writing her master's thesis. Prior to this conversation, KL told OM that she heard that after Kyong-Sun’s writing of the thesis, she danced in her dormitory. In describing how she danced, KL feels that to express how joyfully she danced is beyond her description. So, by prefacing *mak* in (c), KL asks OM to imagine her dancing. The use of *mak* calls the attention of the hearer and induces the hearer’s cooperation. Then, OM responds to the question implying that she understands what KL is talking about and
expressing that her dancing might not be modern. However, OM cannot either express in words how joyfully Kyong-Sun danced so by prefacing *mak* in (d), she hesitates to search for an appropriate word. Then, KL also understands her feeling and believes that it is hard to describe so she finally shows the dance that Kyong-Sun might do. As we can see in (18), in describing Kyong-Sun’s dancing, the use of *mak* plays an important role to connect the speaker and the hearer with emotion with regard to the thing they cannot describe. Therefore, *mak* has the function to connect the speaker and the hearer emotionally.

7.3.3 Floor Holder

(19)

TU:  
  a. Mwe, kukka pwunwiki kule-n-ke mal-ko.yo kunyang, ay-tul iss-canh-a.yo  
  b. mwe, tayhakkyo pontho mak com manh-i cha-ta-ko kule-nuntey,  
  c. *mak* yeki-nun-yo, *mak* salam-tul i taychey-lo asian salami-tul i manh-u-nikka  
  d. *mak* chincelha-ko yakkan kule-n...

TU:  
  a. Well, I mean, it is not like atmosphere, but just students,  
  b. well, I heard that the universities on the mainland are very unfriendly.  
  c. Well here, really, people are almost Asian people, so  
  d. they are very kind, and then...

In (19), the use of *mak* functions as a floor-holder. The speaker uses *mak* at regular intervals. It is regarded as the speaker’s device to take the floor. By prefacing *mak*, the speaker can also fill the time gap while he organizes his upcoming idea.

(20)

SS:  
  a. Pwunwiki ka taykey manh-i thull-ye, sayngkakha-n kes pota.  
  b. Yeki nun hakkyo ey wa-to ay-tul i com swulleng-swulleng ha-canh-a.  
  c. Ay-tul i mwe-la-l-kka com tultt-e-iss-canh-a, ta-tul

    f. Nalssi ttay-m-ey ay-tul i kukka keki nun mak chwup-ki-to ha-ko mak kulenika
    g. taykey chapwunha-y ay-tul.

SS:  a. Atmosphere is very different, more than you think.
    b. Here, when you come to school, students are abuzz, aren't they?
    c. Students, well, are lighthearted, aren't they?

TU:  d. Oh.

SS:  e. However, there is not. There is big difference in weather, too.
    f. Because of the weather, students, I mean, there is really cold, and really, therefore,
    g. they are very quiet.

*Mak* in (20) is also used to hold the floor while the speaker is searching for an appropriate expression. SS is talking about a university in Boston where he stayed for a year. He compares a different school atmosphere between Boston and Hawaii. In (f), SS was supposed to say that because of the weather, the students in Boston are so calm and quiet. However, by prefacing *kukka* 'I mean, in other words', he modifies what he is going to say, and talks about what the weather is like. *Mak* is used to hold the floor to describe the weather, but SS has a hard time to find an appropriate word. He prefices the first *mak* to describe the weather which is very cold, and the second *mak* to search for another description. However, he cannot find any appropriate word and by prefacing *kulenika* 'so', he again modifies his point to the student. Instead of the weather, he says "that's why the students are so calm." Even though the speaker cannot give clear information of the weather in Boston, the use of *mak* gives an impression to the hearer that the speaker wants to emphasize the coldness of the weather.
7.3.4 Summary of Mak

*Mak* is an informal variant of an adverb *maku* ‘very’, or ‘severely’, and in discourse it indicates the speaker’s emotion or feeling toward the upcoming utterance. *Mak* is used to fill the time gap when the speaker really wants to say something but cannot find any appropriate word, or when the speaker’s feeling toward the utterance is overwhelming but cannot find any appropriate word to describe it. The use of *mak* is perceived as the speaker’s positive attitude to focus on the utterance loading his feeling toward the utterance. Accordingly, it has a function to connect the speaker and the hearer emotionally. However, too frequent use of *mak* gives the negative impression to the hearer that the speaker is poor at talking because describing one’s feeling is often associated with one’s speaking ability.

7.4 Kunyang ‘just’

*Kunyang* ‘just’ is the forth most frequently used filler in my data. In the Korean dictionary, *kunyang* is usually listed as an adverb meaning ‘as it is’, ‘just’, ‘without thinking’, or ‘all the time’. *Kunyang* in natural conversation seems to be used to express the speaker’s passive attitude indicating that s/he does not want to place importance on the utterance. It suggests that what the speaker wants to say is less interesting or significant than the hearer expects so that s/he can feel free hearing the speaker’s utterance. This is sometimes perceived as the speaker’s non-commitment attitude to reduce the impact of the utterance. However, *kunyang* has an important interactional function to make a comfortable atmosphere by making an utterance inaccurate, less significant, or less interesting, and by downgrading the speaker’s situation. *Kunyang* seems to be the filler that carries the most feminine characteristics. In my data, *kunyang* is the most frequently used by Korean female speakers.
Kunyang ‘just’ in my data has the following functions: (1) indicating that something is less important or interesting than the hearer expects; (2) indicating that the utterance is not as accurate, complete, or clear; (3) downgrading the speaker’s situation; and (4) filling the time gap searching for an appropriate word.

7.4.1 Indicator of Insignificant Information

(21)
OM: a. Yeki ku enni ka yuhak w-ass-ul ttay,
KL: b. Yuhak w-ass-ul ttay? Ku enni yeki yuhak ha-yss-e?
OM: c. Ung.
OM: e. Yuhak ani-ko kunyang layngkwici.

OM: a. When she came here for study,
KL: b. When she came for study? Has she come here to study?
OM: c. Yes.
KL: d. Oh.
OM: e. She came here not for study, but just for language.

In (21), OM is talking about Kaori, one of her local friends. After hearing that Kaori came here to study from Japan, KL was surprised because she did not know that. KL asks OM to make sure if she came here to study from Japan. Even though there is no big difference between yuhak ‘studying abroad’ and language study in that she studied abroad, OM in (e) distinguishes them from each other. She gives importance to yuhak ‘studying abroad’ as college-level study while language study is just a general acquisition for the language. Therefore, the use of kunyang in (e) indicates that the speaker does not want to put importance on the upcoming utterance so the hearer does not have to take it so seriously.
7.4.2 Indicator of the Speaker’s Non-committal Attitude

*Kunyang* is also used to indicate that the speaker’s utterance is not as accurate, complete, or as clear as the hearer expects. This function is illustrated in (22).

(22)
KL: a. Any-a, nay ka al-ki-lo-nun yonge lo-nun chakha-ta-nun phyohyen i good i
OM: b. Mwe, good boy ile-can-h-a. Kuntey
KL: c. E
OM: d. Chakha-ta
KL: e. Na nun kulayse chakha-ta-nun ke ssul ttay, **kunyang** good, **kunyang** good
f. ha-n-ta. Ci ka al-a-tut-keyss-ci ila-myen-se.

KL: a. No, as far as I know, the English expression of chakhata is good...
OM: b. Well, we say “good boy”, but
KL: c. Yes.
OM: d. Good...
KL: e. So, when I use the expression of chakhata, I say, **just** good, **just** good
f. regarding that they understand.

KL in (e) says that when she expresses *chakhada* ‘kind, good’ in English, she uses the word ‘good’. She prefaced *kunyang* two times to say the word ‘good’. *Kunyang* in (e) is used to indicate the speaker’s non-commitment attitude because the speaker does not make full commitment for accurate information. It also serves the purpose for avoiding sounding too confident about the utterance so that the speaker can lessen the impact of the utterance.

7.4.3 Indicator of Downgrading the Speaker’s Situation

(23)
YS: a. Ani, heylphu nun coh-un-tye kunyang naisu hapch-e-se seythem i-myen
b. chwungpunha-n-ke kath-ay. **Kunyang** te isang iss’ki silh-e. Chalali...
YS is taking English courses in HELP (Hawaii English Language Program), which is one of the English institutes at the University of Hawaii. However, she does not want to stay in Hawaii for English study any more because she thinks that she can learn it even in Korea. The use of kunyang in (23) gives an impression to the hearer that the speaker is unsatisfied and resigned to the present situation. Kunyang seems to be used to play on the hearer’s sympathies. In fact, YS’s view about studying English doesn’t sound so general. It sounds self-concentrated. However, by prefacing kunyang frequently, YS leads her opinion towards the intended way, suggesting her unsatisfied or desperate situation. Therefore, the use of kunyang softens the utterance and elicits the hearer’s attention emotionally.

7.4.4 Filler for the Time Gap

Lastly, kunyang is used to hold the floor, filling the need of saying something when an appropriate word cannot be found. Because of the referential meaning of
*kunyang*, this function carries the implication that what the speaker wants to say is not important so the hearer feels free to listen to the upcoming utterance.

(24)
HJ: a. Na cineca *kunyang* cikum i nemwu *kunyang* ku mikwuk kath-ci-n anh-ci-man
   b. kulay-to ttalu-n nala ey sa-nun-key nemwu caymiiss-nun kes kath-ay.
YS: c. Um.
HJ: d. Acik *kunyang* yeki kulehkey kulehkey ccalp-key iss-e-to
   e. na chikum chil kaywel, yuk kaywel ccay-n-tyey, kulay-to na-n kkyesok
   f. han-pen to cilwuha-ta-ko sayngkakha-y-po-n cek i eps-nun kes kath-ay.

HJ: a. I really *just*, now, too much, *just*, it is not like America, but
   b. it is really fun to live in a foreign country.
YS: c. Yes.
HJ: d. Yet, *just*, I stayed here for a short time, but
   e. it is 7th or 6th months. But I have
   f. never thought that it was boring.

(25)
SU: a. Nau ja mychi-n-tay acik to yeca-chinkwu ka eps-e?
   YK: b. E.
SU: c. Maynal yeca-tul ha-ko tani-myen-se
   YK: d. Ee, na nun mwe yeca-chinkwu pota, incey yeca, *kunyang* kel phuleyntu pota
   e. *kunyang* yeca ka coh-a.

SU: a. How old do you think not to have a girl friend yet?
   YK: b. Well.
SU: c. You hang around with girls all the time.
   YK: d. Well, I, well, rather than a girl friend, well, girls, *just* rather than a girl friend
   e. I *just* like girls.
In (24), HJ is talking about life in Hawaii. She enjoys the life in Hawaii so much. By prefacing kunyang in (24a), she holds the floor to search for a word indicating that the upcoming idea is not so serious or significant. Kunyang in (24a) is attached right after an adverb. The first is after cinca ‘really’, and the second is after nemwu ‘too much’. The use of kunyang is regarded as the speaker’s device not to sound so excessive to the hearer about her satisfied life in Hawai‘i.

In (25), SU is asking YK why he does not have a girl friend even though he always hangs around with girls. In answering SU’s question, YK in (25d,e) uses pause fillers such as mwe ‘well’ and incey ‘well’ and kunyang ‘just’, and says that YK likes just girls rather than making a girl friend. The use of kunyang with other fillers seems to serve two functions: (1) to express the speaker’s hesitancy toward the uncomfortable question about girl friend; and (2) to hold the floor to search for an appropriate word. Kunyang in (25) also seems to be used to downplay the speaker’s feeling about a girl friend so that he can somehow manage the uncomfortable situation.

7.4.5 Summary of Kunyang

Kunyang ‘just’ is the fourth most frequently used filler. It indicates the speaker’s feeling that s/he does not want to place importance on the utterance or the situation. This characteristic of kunyang helps the speaker avoid sounding too assertive and confident. However, kunyang has an important discourse function to achieve a comfortable interaction atmosphere emotionally by making the utterance less significant, interesting, or accurate or by downgrading the speaker’s situation. Kunyang is most frequently used by female speakers. The gender gap between male and female speakers is much larger than for other fillers. The use of kunyang is regarded as the speaker’s humble attitude. It evokes sympathy from the hearer and creates good rapport between the speaker and the hearer.
7.5 *Ku* ‘you know’

*Ku* ‘you know’ is the fifth most frequently used pause filler in my data. The pause filler *ku* is derived from a deictic demonstrative. There are three sets of demonstrative forms in Korean: *i* ‘this’ something near the speaker; *ku* ‘that’ something near the hearer; and *ce* ‘that over there’ something far from both speaker and hearer. The basic use of these deictic demonstratives is determined by the relative distance of an entity between the speaker and the hearer. As an anaphoric demonstrative, *ku* is used to refer to the objects or ideas which the speaker mentioned earlier. When it is used in the conversation, it often establishes a connection between the deictic and anaphoric sets of demonstrative.

Kim and Suh (2001) examine interactional aspects of the Korean demonstratives in spontaneous conversation. They define *ku* and *ce* as “prospective indexicals” meaning that “the speaker has a momentary difficulty retrieving, selecting, or constructing a lexical item or a proposition” (2001:204). According to them, when the speaker uses *ku*, s/he believes that what is pointed to by *ku* is something that can be identified by the hearer. Therefore, they claim that *ku* has a function to elicit the hearer’s effort to identify the projected referent. In contrast, *ce* is often used in the context where the speaker leads the hearer to take the stance of a recipient of the speaker’s explanation until the projected referent is identified.

The function of *ku* and *ce* in natural conversation observed by Kim and Suh seems to be different from Japanese demonstratives. Japanese *anō* ‘that over there’, which as a deictic demonstrative refers to something removed from both the speaker and the hearer, retains shared experience and knowledge between the speaker and the hearer in discourse while *sono* ‘that’ is used if the speaker presupposes that the hearer does not have those shared empirical knowledge as the use of *anō* (Hinds 1975, Reynolds 1984). In certain aspects, Korean *ku* ‘well’ has more in common with Japanese *anō* rather than *sono* in that it serves to create interactional rapport between the speaker and the hearer by involving
the hearer into the utterance. Reynolds (1984) states that the shared feeling between interlocutors in the use of Japanese *ano* conveys the speaker's friendly and polite attitude to the hearer so that the hearer's involvement is actively elicited. And, according to Cook (1993), Japanese *ano* as a filler has a function to align the speaker and the hearer. She claims that it also has the function to bring the hearer to the speaker's side so that the hearer's cooperation can be made easier.

The use of *ku* in my data seems to indicate the hearer's attention getter. As the referential meaning of the demonstrative *ku* suggests, *ku* in discourse indicates that something pointed out by *ku* is closer to the hearer than the speaker. Accordingly, the use of *ku* stimulates the hearer's curiosity so that the hearer's attention is greatly paid to an up-coming idea and it makes the conversation interactive. *Ku* 'you know' in my data has the main function of the hearer's attention getter, and the following functions: (1) holding the floor for searching for a word; (2) initiating a new turn; and (3) shifting (sub)topic.

7.5.1 Floor Holder

54% of *ku* is used to hold the floor to search for an appropriate word.

(26)
YK:  
    a. Um, kuntey sayngkak ey No Mwu-hyen un, ung, mwe-lako ha-y-ya-ci?
    b. nemwu *ku*, mal silswu lul manh-i ha-nun kes kath-ay, cineca.

YK:  
    a. Well, by the way, in my opinion, No Mwu-hyen is, well, what should I say?
    b. very, you know, committing too much impropriety in speech, truly.

In (26), YK talks about the present President of Korea. In (26a), *ung, mwe lako hayyaci?* 'well, what should I say?' gives us a clue that the speaker has a hard time finding an appropriate expression about the President No. However, it also suggests that
by asking a question the speaker wants to involve the hearer in the utterance. 

*Ku* in (26b) is originally used to take the floor while the speaker searches for an appropriate expression, but it has a function to highlight the upcoming idea eliciting the hearer's attention to the utterance.

(27)

OM:  
- a. E, nay ka **ku**, cepheynicu inkullisi, ani, cepheynicu kholian
- b. **ku** tiksyeneli chac-a-se ttak cw-ess-teni

KL:  
- c. Ung.

OM:  
- d. Nay ka ttak cwu-ki cen ey nay ttus ul pw-ass-teni, ike-n ani-ya.

OM:  
- a. Yeah, I, you know, Japanese-English, no, Japanese-Korean,
- b. you know, dictionary, I looked up the word and showed her, then

KL:  
- c. Yes.

OM:  
- d. I had looked up the meaning before I showed it to her, it was not (that I think).

In (27), OM tells KL that she looked up a word in a Japanese-Korean dictionary and showed it to her friend to let her know the meaning of a word. However, OM is having a hard time identifying a referent, which is the Japanese-Korean dictionary. The first use of *ku* in (27a) is used for searching for a word, but she recognizes that the word that she uttered is wrong. By prefacing *ani* 'no', she repairs it for an error, and by using another *ku*, she finally identifies the projected referent. By using the pause filler *ku*, which is an attention getter, the speaker can hide her hesitation for finding a word, and she can rather highlight the upcoming word.

7.5.2 Turn Initiator

(28)

SU:  
- a. Eyksuthula kuleytis to manh-i an-cw-e. Ay-tul i hato
b. eyksuthula kuleytis tal-lako ha-nikka ku sensayng i
c. te cal an-cwu-nun ke kath-ay.

YK: d. E, kulay? Na-n, na nun
SU: e. Ku, ka-se, halwu, halwu, thoyoil nal ka-se, ilehkey com towacwu-nun ke,
f. yenghwa po-ko-w-a-se pheyiphe sse-o-nun ke, kuke pack ey eps-e.

SU: a. He rarely gives us extra credit. Because students too much
b. ask him for extra credit, the instructor
c. becomes more stingy with it.

YK: d. Oh, is that so? I, I,
SU: e. You know, we go and, one day, one day, on Saturday, go and help,
f. after seeing a movie, we write a paper, that is it.

In (28), SU and YK are talking about Hawaiian Studies which YK took before and
SU is now taking. SU in his first turn of the segment is complaining about the instructor
of Hawaiian studies because he rarely gives extra credit to students. Then, YK in (d) tries
to say something responding to SU’s utterance. However, by prefacing ku in (28e), SU
interrupts YK’s utterance, and YK cannot continue his talking because SU initiates his
turn. Ku in (28) is used to avoid abrupt initiation of a new turn, and elicit the hearer’s
curiosity about the speaker’s upcoming utterance.

7.5.3 Initiator of (Sub)topic Shift

Lastly, ku is used to shift (sub)topic. (29) and (30) are examples of this function.

(29)

YK: a. E, cheum un cal naka-ss-ci, yuk kaywel cengto nun
SU: b. Mailityi ka elma-ci?
   d. Cikum hayntul i pan pakhwi tolaka iss-nun sangthay-ko,
SU: e. Ku, eccey Koun.i-n-ka key cha nun mwe y-ess-e.yo? Kolona y-ess-na?
YK: f. E, kolona
YK: a. Yeah, it ran very well for the first time in 6 months,
SU: b. What is the mileage of your car?
YK: c. Now, it is over hundred thousand.
d. Now, the handle condition is turned halfway to the other side,
SU: e. By the way, yesterday was she Ko-Un? What is her car? Was it Corona?
YK: f. Yes, Corona.

(30)
SU: a. Hyeng macimak yeki tul-e-o-l tlay thophul cemswu myeoh i-y-ess-nun-tey-yo?
YK: b. O-payk-osip
SU: c. O-payk-osip i-y-ess-e.yo?
YK: d. Ung, toy-l ppen ha-yss-ci.
SU: e. Ku, ceki, Yongphyo hyeng i yuk-payk cem nem-u-l-ley-ko ha-ta-ka,
f. e, i-nyen tongan kongpu ha-yss-canh-a, thophul man.
YK: g. Kulen hyensang i ilena-ci anh-ki wihayse-nun
SU: h. Na chelem kunyang o-payk wenlay ttak nem-ess-ul tlay
i. ellun ttak tul-e-w-ass-e-ya-ci, kunyang.

SU: a. When you come here, what was your last TOEFL score?
YK: b. 550.
SU: c. Was it 550?
YK: d. Yeah, almost.
SU: e. You know, uh, Yeng-Phyo tried to get 600, but,
f. uh, he studied for 2 years, only TOEFL.
YK: g. Not to happen that kind of situation,
SU: h. Just like me, when the score was over 500,
i. he had better just hurry up to enter.

In (29), YK and SU are talking about YK's car. However, while YK is describing the condition of his car in (29c, d), SU interrupts his utterance by prefacing ku in (29e) and suddenly changes the sub-topic asking about someone else's car. In (30), SU is asking YK about his TOEFL score when he applied to a university. After hearing that YK got almost 550, by prefacing ku in (30e) SU suddenly changes the sub-topic bringing up
someone else’s TOEFL score. The use of *ku* in (29e) and (30e) is regarded as serving two functions: (1) to initiate a new turn; and (2) to avoid abrupt sub-topic shift. Like the function of a turn initiator, the use of *ku* for sub-topic change is very useful to avoid the speaker’s abrupt initiation of the utterance, and get the hearer’s attention so that the upcoming idea can be more highlighted.

7.5.4 Summary of *Ku*

*Ku* ‘you know’ is the fifth most frequently used filler. *Ku* is derived from a deictic demonstrative ‘that’, which refers to something closer to the hearer. The use of *ku* in discourse works as the hearer’s attention getter. *Ku* stimulates the hearer’s curiosity so that the hearer pays great attention to the upcoming referent. *Ku* as the hearer’s attention getter functions as a hesitation marker for word searching, as an initiator of a new turn, and as an initiator for (sub)topic shift.
Through the study of the five most frequently used pause fillers of Japanese and Korean young speakers, I found some general characteristics of pause fillers and contrastive characteristics between the two languages. One of the general characteristics of pause fillers is that, as the term ‘pause filler’ signifies, they have the primary function to fill silence which can occur while the speaker is organizing an upcoming idea and also monitoring what s/he is saying. By filling silence or pause while speaking, the speaker can keep holding the right to speak reducing the risk of being interrupted by the hearer. The other characteristic is that the use of pause fillers functions as a cushioning system to absorb a sudden shock that the hearer can experience during conversation. For example, when the speaker initiates an abrupt new turn, suddenly changes the subject, disagrees with the interlocutor’s opinion, and initiates her/his opinion, the use of pause fillers softens the utterance so that the speaker can avoid abrupt initiation and potential embarrassment.

Even though these general characteristics of pause fillers do not seem to contribute to the new information of utterance, they play an important role in discourse to provide a comfortable conversational atmosphere signaling the speaker’s cognitive aspects such as initiation of a new turn and holding the floor. However, it is also very important for the speaker to decide which types of pause fillers to use to manage the conversation effectively. The types of pause fillers can be different according to the speaker’s social role, gender, age, speaking situations, conversational partner, and so on. But, culture is also an important variable that we cannot overlook because the use of pause fillers carries cultural values of each society. The two languages, Japanese and Korean, show some contrasts in the use of pause fillers.
As the most frequently used filler, *nanka* 'like' indicates, Japanese pause fillers are hesitation fillers except *(sore)de* 'and', which works as a connective. They make an utterance unassertive or indirect. The use of Japanese pause fillers is often associated with the speaker's modest attitude indicating consideration for others. Therefore, the use of Japanese fillers reflects a positive social value and an important cultural trait to keep harmony with the hearer. However, Japanese young speakers seemingly do not seem to be aware of their functions in actual use because the use of pause fillers is so conventionalized. But, they frequently utilize the pause fillers to make it easier to vocalize their thoughts.

In Korean, as the most frequently used filler *kukka* 'I mean' indicates, speakers prefer more accurate and direct utterance by providing more elaborate information of the utterance. Korean speakers often show their consideration for the hearer by providing a comfortable atmosphere in which the hearer can easily gain access to the utterance. The use of *kukka* plays a very important role for interaction between the speaker and the hearer. The use of *mwe* 'well' indicates that Korean speakers, especially Korean male speakers, hide their hesitation by maintaining their non-committal attitude toward the utterance by not making the full commitment for the specific information. *Mak* and *ku* also indicates that Korean speakers use fillers for the purpose of avoiding the hesitation. Unlike Japanese, if the use of Korean pause fillers is perceived as the speaker's uncertainty or hesitation toward an utterance, it can give the speaker a negative evaluation such as, "unskilled speech", "lack of confidence", or "lack of preparation". It indicates that direct and accurate speech without markers of hesitation has a positive social value in Korean. The use of pause fillers does not seem to be associated with harmony as in Japanese.

The two languages also show a contrast in the use of pause fillers between male and female speakers. The Japanese language is known as the gender-explicit language
and contains some expressions that are associated with the speaker's gender. It may be natural to guess that the use of pause fillers would also be different between men and women. My data also show the different use according to gender. Japanese male speakers use pause fillers for good rapport with the hearer while female speakers use them to signify their uncertainty and hesitation toward an upcoming utterance. Ano, yappari, and ma are frequently used by male speakers. They carry important functions not only to accommodate the hearer's feeling, but also to an intimate atmosphere. The use of these fillers seemingly indicates that the speaker dismisses her/his own view to conform to a mutual understanding with the hearer. However, in many cases the male speaker uses them to facilitate easier access to express his thought as he plans.

On the other hand, the pause filler frequently used by female speakers indicates the speaker's uncertainty or hesitation toward an utterance. Nanka 'like' is the most frequently used filler by female speakers, and of the five most frequently used pause fillers, it is used more than 50% of the time by female speakers. By indicating that the speaker is uncertain and hesitant toward an utterance, she makes the utterance indirect or unassertive. It is an important social virtue for female speakers to show their modest attitude. This indicates that among all participants, Japanese female speakers in their language usage carry Asian values the most.

Although it is not as conspicuous as in Japanese, there are also different uses of pause fillers according to gender in Korean. Both the Korean male speakers and the female speakers primarily use the pause fillers to create an interactive conversation, but the use of pause fillers by female speakers marks the speaker's social status. The pause filler kunyang 'just' is the most frequently used by female speakers and it carries an important social value in Korean female conversation. Korean female speakers show their humble attitude to achieve a comfortable level of interaction by making the utterance insignificant or less interesting, or by downgrading the speaker's situation or the
utterance. By downgrading her situation, the female speaker makes herself humble and makes the hearer feel superior. Traditionally, Korean women were in a very low or weak position and the attitude of respecting others and humbling oneself, which is a Confucian principle, should be revealed in language usage. Even though the status and role of woman has changed a great deal and people think that men and women are in equal position nowadays, the attitude or the manner that a woman is supposed to have seems to be obvious in her consciousness.

The different use of pause fillers between the two languages indicates that Japanese places a high value on harmony with others while Korean places a high value on interaction between the speaker and the hearer. The evidence of this observation is also shown in my extra study of backchanneling in chapter 5. Japanese people frequently backchannel even when they do not agree with the speaker’s opinion. The hearer keeps showing that her/his thought is the same as the speaker’s so that it can facilitate a smooth and comfortable conversation. The use of backchanneling plays an important role to keep harmony with others maintaining the hearer’s modest attitude to respect the other’s opinion and share the speaker’s view.

On the other hand, Korean backchanneling is used to show the hearer’s interest or understanding of the speaker. In many cases, Korean backchanneling signifies a simple notification that the hearer is listening to the speaker, or the hearer has a good understanding of the talking. Korean backchanneling is greatly affected by the hearer’s interest in the talking. The more interesting the speaker’s talking, the more backchanneling is offered by the hearer. Unlike Japanese, when the hearer does not agree with the speaker, s/he tends to be silent. Therefore, the Korean speaker makes a great effort to provide an interesting and easily understandable conversation in order to elicit the hearer’s interest and create an interactive conversation. This is the reason why Korean
speakers use pause fillers more frequently than Japanese speakers while Korean hearers use backchanneling less frequently than Japanese hearers.

Judging by the above findings on pause fillers (and backchanneling), Japanese carries more conspicuous Asian cultural values compared to Korean. The most used Japanese pause fillers carry the social value of harmony. Harmony is the key Japanese value which predominates over Japanese life styles. This is based on traditional patterns of behavior not to make trouble with others. Harmony in conversation maintains that Japanese people seek a mutual understanding rather than their own view avoiding clear verbal interaction. It is important for Japanese to see how others react to their views. Therefore, rather than making an utterance clear or accurate, they tend to utter indirectly and vaguely to find a shared view with others. This kind of speech style avoids open confrontation and helps the speaker build a good relationship with the hearer.

On the other hand, the Korean language places high value on the relationship between two different hierarchy groups. This stems from the idea of Confucianism, which is the basic idea of Koreans and has affected Korean lives for a long time. Confucianism places value on vertical hierarchy and harmony. It regards the world as harmoniously made up of two opposite groups such as, the king and the people; husband and wife; the elder and the young. The higher people should show their humility to the lower and the lower should show their respect to the higher and follow the higher people’s opinions. Therefore, Confucian value emphasizes harmony between two opposite groups in a vertical hierarchy society rather than equal levels.

Korean conversation between equal levels shows that Korean carries more Western value rather than Asian value because Korean young speakers prefer more clear and accurate statement avoiding hesitation and uncertainty. And the frequent use of Korean pause fillers indicates that the strategy for politeness is also similar to Western culture because through the frequent use of Korean pause fillers, the speaker makes a dry
and stiff conversation more smooth and interactive maintaining good rapport with the hearer. Even with conflicting views, rather than dismissing her/his own views, the Korean speaker positively argues or maintains silence so as not to hurt the hearer’s feeling. Indirectness, obscurity and vagueness of utterance, which are Asian values, cannot fulfill Korean speaker’s goal in conversation.

So far, I have explored the general and contrastive characteristics of Japanese and Korean pause fillers. My study proves that Japanese and Korean have different social value in the use of pause fillers and reflect the cultural traits of the two societies. It also proves that the use of pause fillers is different according to gender. I believe that the implications of my study provide a useful contribution to the understanding of cultural differences between Japan and Korea. To understand different cultural expectation of conversational devices is important for both learners of intercultural communication and foreign language teachers because inappropriate use of pause fillers can be perceived as impoliteness or rudeness according to the rules of pragmatics within the culture of the address.

In conclusion, I will bring attention to what Tannen (1998) notes about Asian cultures. Asian culture is oriented towards harmony and American culture is oriented towards argument. However, my analysis of pause fillers suggests that Korean culture shares some similarities with American culture rather than with Japanese culture. Therefore, I hope that this study will be a springboard for future studies of Asian languages and cultures.
Appendix: Individual Graphs

1 = e  2 = incey  3 = ey  4 = ku
7 = way  8 = cengmal  9 = ilehkey

**personal frequency in interviewing**

**personal frequency in lecturing**
personal frequency in interviewing  

personal frequency in lecturing

m1

m2

m3
REFERENCES


