

## Fluencemes in EFL Learners' On-screen Communication

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### Abstract

Nowadays, on-screen communication is more popular than face-to-face communication. Since people have an advanced communication facility, communication is unlimited, and people-to-people connections are made from home with computers and telephones. Through on-screen communication, people are more accessible to express themselves. Nevertheless, hesitation is always present. Fluency-enhancing strategies are present to lessen hesitations through fluencemes. Fluenceme is the disfluency in the flow of conversation. However, fluencemes are not always hesitant. Indeed, they act as strategies. This qualitative study identified the types of fluenceme while ELF learners were making on-screen communication and the functions of fluenceme in enhancing the strategy of fluency. Ten pairs of EFL fifth-semester students were taken by adapting a purposive sampling approach. The observational method was applied for data collection by watching and listening to video recordings and noting the dialogues. By applying the identity method, the utterances which show fluenceme issues were analysed by identifying and revealing them to classify their types. The finding was described descriptively. The investigation uncovered that the participants naturally presented filled pauses, discourse markers, explicit editing terms, false starts, identical repetition, modified repetition, and morphological substitution. They had relaxed conversations because there was speaker-and-hearer-only on screen. Thus, the disfluency was not a hesitancy but a strategy to cover disfluency. Hoping that future researchers may explore a wide variety of fluencemes and develop a solution to avoid the excessive fluencemes use in communication. Finally, this study may become an incentive for further research to describe profound insight of fluenceme as a wealth of linguistic knowledge.

**Keywords:** *disfluency, fluencemes, hesitation, on-screen communication*

### Introduction

“Well, **um**, the deputy secretary, **I think** would be the best person to answer what’s going to happen on the trip and **um**, so, we’ll see **it’s a**, it’s a couple ten days away and **am**, with regard to the second question again. **I think, um**, the vice president and others will probably...” This quote was taken from the new ambassador to Australia, Caroline Kennedy's answer, on July 25, 2022, in Canberra. In identifying the speech, there are some unimportant words or sounds. As a native speaker, she sprinkled her speech with **um**, **am**, and **I think**. These sounds, words, phrases, or sentences were not related to the speech.

Furthermore, in English as a native language, these unimportant words occur with considerably high frequency (Wolk et al., 2021). However, these unimportant words are able to help the speakers negotiate their way of thinking (Carter & McCarthy, 1997; Fatimah et al., 2017), and they reflect the speaker's strate-

gy to control speech production (Clark & Tree, 2002) because speakers while delivering their thoughts, experiences, and assessments, are required to continuously employ a variety linguistics markers and constructions as well as non-verbal means (Ogi, 2017). Muller (2005) said this is a pragmatic signaling or the sequential relationship between the current basic message and the previous discourse. In line with Schifffrin (1987), she stated that these sequentially-dependent elements bracket units of discourse.

The failure to maintain the flow of overt speech through error repair and hesitation has been the focus of a growing number of studies within speech production (Lickley, 2015). Arrasul et al. (2024) stated that the nervousness of 4th and 6th-semester learners of the English Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Luwuk when speaking was indicated by their fillers. Soma (2023) described that the English major students at public universities in Jambi experienced disfluency when speaking English because they mostly did repetition. EFL learners of Taiz University showed hesitation and disfluent speech from their filler production (Alghazali, 2019). English Education Master Programme students produced speech disfluency in their presentation performances due to the filler production (Sanjaya & Nugrahani, 2018).

Yule (2020) addressed this phenomenon as fillers and agreed that fillers are a break in the flow of speech. Although this issue shows hesitation and disfluency, some scholars agree that these fillers benefit speech. **Y'know** is the filler that many Americans produce while doing some speeches. Moreover, **you know** is the most frequent filler in British Academic Spoken English (BASE) (Farahani & Ghane, 2022). The 45th United States American President, Donald Trump, produced the fillers in his speech: "**Look at...** What happened last week in California. **With... with... you know...** 14 people died". Fillers are very important while speaking. The function of fillers is to spin out the time. In English, the most common filler sounds are **uh** and **um**. Among speakers, the fillers **like**, **you know**, **I mean**, **okay**, **so**, **actually**, **basically**, and **right** are among the more prevalent (Stenström, 1994).

Additionally, for native speakers, fillers mainly occur at the beginning of the utterances or utterance boundaries (Biber et al., 2007). Tabitha and Bram (2024) discovered that Elon Mask produced 932 fillers in his spontaneous speeches, and they stated that fillers are the essence of speaking and are able to enhance verbal exchanges. Finally, Kharismawan (2017) mentioned the importance of fillers in interactions in Obama's speeches,

People, in their daily lives, naturally use these fillers or discourse markers in their conversations without realising them, as many fillers are produced in different languages (Gao, 2023). Schifffrin (1987) claimed that these linguistic expressions establish discourse expression. *Hasa* (now) is the Jordanian Arabic filler (Kayed, 2021). The Japanese interactive markers are *ne*, *na*, *yo*, *sa*, *wa*, *zo*, and *ze*, known as *shuu-josi*, "sentence-final particles" (Ogi, 2017). Turkish children often produced three discourse markers *şey* (uuhhh), *yani* (I mean), and *işte* (y'know) in oral Turkish narratives (Furman & Özyürek, 2007). Çetin & Yıldız,

(2021) mentioned the Turkish fillers are *işte*, *şey*, *evet*, *ya*, and *şimdi*. Mexicans produced *este*, *o sea*, *wey*, *mmm*, *ok*, *y este*, and *estudem* as their fillers in their conversation, *si*, *ya*, *ok*, *entonces*, *eeehh*, *pues*, *¿me hago entender?* and *¿cierto?* are the fillers used by Colombians, and Spaniards produced *¿sabes?*, *¿entiendes?*, *¿no?*, *pues*, *es decir*, and *¿sí o qué?* (Santos et al., 2016). Mutiara (2019) addressed the discourse markers in colloquial Jakartan Indonesian as *deh*, *dong*, *kan*, *kek*, *kok*, *loh*, *mah*, *masa*, *nah*, *nih*, *tuh*, *sih*, *ya/yah*, and *yuk*. Nugraha and Tarmini, (2023) added that fillers produced in Bahasa Indonesia are *menurut saya*, *saya pikir*, *maksudnya*, and *kalau tidak salah*. *Ano* (what) is also the Filipino filler (Evangelista–Pelaéz et al., 2018). In Ukraine, fillers are *ну* (well), *що ж* (what), *так* (so), and *очевидь* (obviously) are known as parasite words (Viacheslav et al., 2021). Then, there are French fillers such as *bien*, *bon*, *euh*, *donc*, *alors*, and *ça va?* (Santos et al., 2016).

This study investigated the typologies of fluencemes produced by ELF learners during on-screen communication. This study adopted the fluencemes theorised by Crible (2018), and they have been famous by other terms, i.e., discourse makers (Schiffrin, 1987), disfluency markers (Ferreira & Bailey, 2004), or fillers (Yule, 2014). Fluencemes are no longer considered disfluency phenomena between fluency and disfluency, but they contribute to the smoothness and flow of the interaction (Kosmala & Crible, 2022). Some studies discussed the issue of speech disfluency when speaking English publicly or in impromptu speeches, indicated by speakers' nervousness or hesitation and producing filled or silent pauses such as gaps in spontaneous speech (Gósy, 2023), stuttering-like disfluency when Spanish-English bilingual children spoke English (Rojas et al., 2023), a student's disfluency while speaking English due to showing fillers, repetition, and prolongation (Permana et al., 2021), and disfluency spontaneous speech or cluttered speech due to repetition (Bóna, 2019). Filled pause or silent pause, which shows disfluency, definitely appears when EFL speakers speak English publicly (Ambalegin et al., 2023; Ambalegin, 2023; Ambalegin et al., 2024) because of their nervousness, anxiety, or hesitation (Miller et al., 2018; Gandeza, 2023). Nowadays, communicating virtually is more comfortable, and speakers freely express their ideas (Ambalegin et al., 2024). Thus, this study captures the use of fluencemes in cyberspace where the EFL learners feel free and comfortable because there were only two speakers in the virtual room. The typology of fluencemes includes ten phenomena proposed by Crible (2018). In this study, the fluencemes are not problematic but reflect the cooperative search for optimal utterance. Crible (2018) mentioned that fluencemes are signals of processing and monitoring. Fluenceme contributes to fluency and disfluency, which does not always involve an error or hesitation (Crible, 2018). This fluenceme is a very promising and fruitful candidate to be more greatly emphasised in EFL because of both the theoretically great possibility for learners to acquire a nativelike proficiency and because of its contribution to perceptive fluency when learners' speech is assessed by native speakers of English (Götz, 2013). Finally, the EFL learners created fluencemes in on-screen communication to show strategy or hesitation.

The fluenceme issues produced by the EFL learners through the on-screen communication are as follows.

- Nurhana - “**Ee**... Do you live with your parents? Or friend?”  
Laila - “Yeah, **my parent**...**eh**...**my parents**.”

There are two phenomena identified. **Ee** is sounded at the start to continue the question. The speaker filled the pause to avoid the blank or empty situation. This phenomenon depicted that the speaker thought to create the appropriate question. It is grouped as a filled pause (Crible, 2018). The repetition of the phrase occurred in the next utterances. This repetition was bridged by sound **eh**, which showed that the interlocutor grammatically corrected the previous responses **from parent** to **parent**. This phenomenon is grouped as a modified repetition (Crible, 2018).

## **Literature Review**

The terms of fluenceme are not very well-known among the fluency or disfluency discussions. Lexically, the word fluenceme cannot be found in the Oxford dictionary. Crible (2018) and (Götz, 2013) discussed fluencemes and the typology of fluencemes. Fluencemes are used in a fluency-enhancing function (Wolk et al., 2021). A fluenceme is an abstract and idealised feature of speech that contributes to the production or perception of fluency, whatever its concrete realisation may be, and fluencemes build the basis for the distinction between productive, perceptive, and nonverbal fluency (Götz, 2013). She said that the abstract categories of fluency are fluencemes of production, i.e., silence, repeats, filled pauses, and discourse markers; fluencemes of perception, i.e., intonation, accuracy, accent, sentence structure, and pragmatic features; and nonverbal fluencemes, i.e., gestures, facial expression, emblems, and looks (p. 9).

Götz (2013) said that the fluenceme of production embraces a speaker's verbal strategies to minimise the planning pressure and enhance the speaker's fluency (p. 9). In his research, Gandeza (2023) mentioned that the participants used fillers to connect ideas, thoughts, and experiences. Götz (2013) mentioned that the fluencemes of perception subsume to establish nativelike fluency on the listeners' side. In their research, Khau and Huynh (2022) mentioned that the participants tried to become native speakers through the intonation or suprasegmental aspect of pronunciation. Finally, Götz (2013) said nonverbal fluencemes carry semantic or syntactic meaning that accompanies speech unconsciously but systematically. Kosmala et al. (2019) stated in their research that (dis)fluency speech and gestures could be synchronised, and gestural features indicated pragmatic planning functions associated with (dis)fluency.

## Typology of Fluencemes

Crible (2018) typologies fluencemes into ten types, i.e., silence or unfilled pause, filled pause, discourse marker, explicit editing term, truncation, false start, identical repetition, modified repetition, morphological substitution, and propositional substitution. These fluencemes appear in oral conversations. Some scholars developed this with different terminology. Aijmer (2002) labeled these interactional signals and discourse markers as discourse particles. Muller (2005) stated that this phenomenon is a discourse marker. Watanabe et al. (2005) and Gósy et al. (2014) addressed this phenomenon as mazes, delay markers, editing pauses, unlexicalised filled pauses, fillers, interjections, delays, and even noises. Baleen (as cited in Navratilova, 2015) stated that they are generally known as filler words.

### Silence or Unfilled Pause

Speakers experience silence while speaking. It means that the speakers produce no sound at all in milliseconds. Akhavan et al. (2016) stated that silent pauses are periods of silence longer than those in equivalent fluent utterances. Kosmala et al. (2019) gave an example of silence when the American speaker spoke French. It contains prolongation *de:e*, silence (1650ms), and self-repair *de:e* (1650) [//] *d' être*, e.g.,

*“Je suppose que c’est important de:e (1650) [//] d’ être là pour ton ami.”*

### Filled Pause

Vocalisation **ee**, **aa**, or neutral phonetic forms **hmm**, **uh**, and **amm**, produced in conversation functions to support the ongoing speech. This vocalisation was produced by Barack Obama when he visited Indonesia. This indicated that this filled pause gave the speaker time to think about what to say next (Kharismawan, 2017), e.g.,

*“Most of them give way to the unpaved roads and **see** the *kampongs*.”*

### Discourse Marker

A discourse marker is a fluenceme that shows parts of speech as fillers. Schiffrin (1987) stated that discourse markers are sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk. In line with Muller (2005), discourse markers signal a sequential relationship between utterances. Amalia and Heryono (2024) showed an example of discourse markers in their research. It functioned to connect two contradictory segments and was applied to the speaker's previous segment adjustment, e.g.,

*“Oh women! Not all women. **I mean**, the old-fashioned one. The ones with wombs.”*

### **Explicit Editing Term**

This term is a fluenceme, which verbally shows that the speaker wants to say something he or she forgets by starting with a filler. Lickley & Bard (1988) inserted the filled pause to edit sentence with phases, e.g., original utterance-editing term-continuation, e.g.,

“Come down until you are in- ...**uh** two to three inches above that”.

Yule (2020) said that the fillers were placed before and after verbs rather than at the end of the sentence, as the speaker attempted to remember until the speaker said the part after each pause, e.g.,

“I mean his other... **em his later film was much more...** er really more in the romantic style, and that was more what what he was... you know... em best at doing.”

“**e-e-em** What do you call this?” (Siswoyo et al., 2022)

### **Truncation**

Truncation is a fluenceme in which a speaker says an incomplete word and then says the next complete. While speaking, the speaker truncates or breaks the spelling of the words by pronouncing one of the syllables in a word more than once. Stuttering is classified as truncation. Stuttering is known for repeating or prolonging the sounds, syllables, or words or pausing disrupts the rhythm of speech (Laiho et al., 2022). Truncation, in this case, is about the hesitation or anxiety of normal people, not about language disorder. Faiuz et al. (2022) identified truncation in their study. There were a few words pronounced incompletely by repeating the initial syllable, e.g.,

“Yes, **i-i-i** I agree, but to guarantee [//] that the H2O is purified, **i-i-i** it is good to use [//] the heating source, **s-s-s**-Sterno. It's like my mom always says, **b-b-b**-better safe than than sorry.”

Johnson (2008) shows an example of a conversation with truncation.

Wayne	-	"You almost let your friend drown out there in the river."
Kid	-	"I'da rather <b>d-d</b> -died then do that."
Wayne	-	"And you're a liar!"
Kid	-	"It ain't my fault I stutter."

### **False Start**

The speaker does not continue the first sentence or idea by shifting it into a new sentence with no relation to the idea of the first sentence. The speaker leaves the first sentence and then changes to the new sentence semantically and syntactically. A false start is an adjacent repeat (Williams, 2022). When the speaker realises before articulating the complete words that they do not correspond with the target words, the utterance is stopped before the end of the complete production of the given words (Gyarmathy & Neuberger, 2013). The new utterance takes place when the words are already articulated, e.g.,

“We are going to **spring**; I mean Easter **holiday**.” (Gyarmathy & Neuberger, 2013).

“**That is one** of uh; **there is an example** of punishment that...” (Abimanto et al., 2021)

### Identical Repetition

The speaker repeats the same words or says similar words or phrases in one single utterance. To strengthen the statement, repetition needs to be used in conversation. Sanjaya and Nugrahani (2018) found identical repetition in the EFL students' English presentations. They assumed that the use of this term is to emphasise the speaker's statement, e.g.,

“So that ee we... **manage our feelings... manage our feelings** to ee conscious thinking.”

Annisa et al. (2023) discussed the hesitation phenomenon produced by Jackie Chen in Good Morning America. As a non-native English speaker, he used some fillers and repetition in his interview, e.g.,

Michael - “What happened?”

Jackie - “**I was** uhh **I was** accident always... easy things. I was doing jet ski; there behind me, I'm safe, the girl.”

### Modified Repetition

The speaker modifies the incorrect word or phrase in his sentence, then repeats the sentence by deleting the incorrect word or phrase and inserting the new one to change the content. The speaker does not delete a whole sentence but a word or phrase in it by repeating it, e.g.,

“She **went** ... she **was chewing** betel nut, and it's not something we do in Kiribati.” (Nugrahani & Bram, 2022).

Modified repetition occurred in the EFL English presentation, and Sanjaya & Nugrahani (2018) assumed that the speaker thought the following words were going to be said, e.g.,

“And I was I was sad **I was sad, I was devastated**, I was I couldn't I couldn't cry but but thank God.”

### Morphological Substitution

Morphological substitution is a fluenceme in which the speaker replaces one of the words in a previous utterance to continue the next utterance corresponding to any morphological modification. In this repetition, the speaker corrects the structure and lexis of the sentence, e.g.,

“And **I... they** don't understand.” (Krisdianata & Bram, 2022).

“Um there **is** um as you go into another community there **are** bound to be changed.”  
(Nugrahani & Bram, 2022).

“She ah he **gived**... he **gave**.” (Alghazali, 2019).

## Propositional Substitution

The speaker replaces the word in the middle of the utterance as there is a connection between the previous and the next. The substitution fixes the whole sentence in terms of the meaning. Clark & Tree (2002) illustrated that incorrect information is corrected by substituting one word in the sentence.

Announcer - “**Seventy-two** degrees Celsius. I beg your pardon. **Seventeen** degrees Celsius. Seventy-two would be a little warm.”

“So that’s how we use **positive emotions in a positive way**” (Sanjaya & Nugrahani, 2018).

## Theoretical Framework of Fluencemes

There are many different factors or reasons to contribute to fluency. Moreover, it is important to understand how fluencemes are applied to indicate hesitation and strategies or how fluencemes build fluency on the part of the speakers. The elements of fluency in speech are classified into three categories of fluencemes (Götz, 2013): fluencemes of production, perceptive fluencemes, and nonverbal fluencemes. Fluencemes of production connect to speech production and cognitive planning pressure to build up temporal fluency, covering the speech rate, mean length of runs, unfilled pause, and phonation time ratio. Perceptive fluencemes established nativelike fluency, covering notions of accuracy, idiomaticity, intonation, and accent. Finally, nonverbal fluencemes carry semantic or syntactical meanings such as facial expressions and gestures. The typology of fluencemes proposed by Crible (2018) stands on fluencemes of production sub-category fluency-enhancement strategies, which are silence or unfilled pause, filled pause, discourse marker, explicit editing term, truncation, false start, identical repetition, modified repetition, morphological substitution, and propositional substitution. The typology of fluencemes is summarised in a fluency framework.

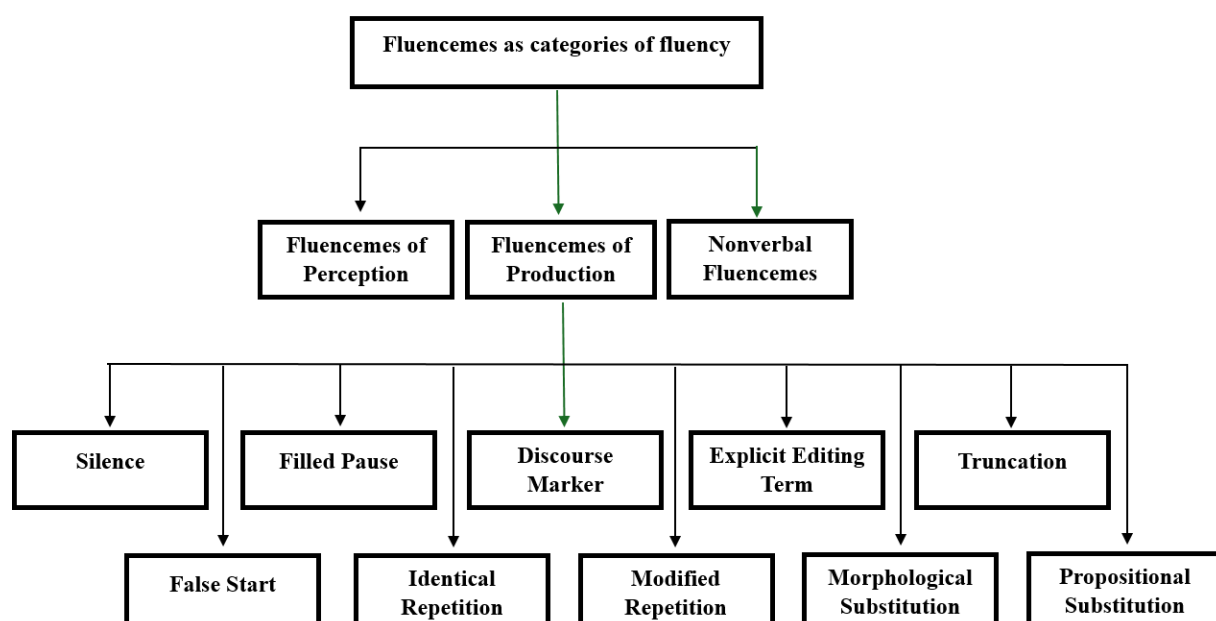


Figure 1. Typology of Fluencemes (Crible, 2018; Götz, 2013)

## **Methodology**

Naturalistic qualitative research involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The result of this research was displayed descriptively. The data taken from the EFL learners' English conversations in on-screen communication were the utterances that accommodate the ten fluencemes (Crible, 2018).

### **Purposive Sampling Approach and Data Collection**

The data were collected from ten pairs of EFL learners' English conversations in on-screen communication transcripts. The students spoke English in two via video call on Teams platform to consolidate and collect primary qualitative data. The EFL learners were the twenty-fifth-semester students of English Literature AY-2023/2024 at Universitas Putera Batam, Batam. Each conversation was made by one pair of students, in which the theme of the conversation was about their daily activities. The duration of the conversation was about thirty minutes. The students were asked to speak naturally by saying no impact to scores or anything related to their studies.

This research applied observation and participatory techniques to collect the data proposed by Sudaryanto (2015). While collecting the data, the researchers carefully observed the students speaking English on video. The researchers did not interfere with the participants in getting the original and natural data. The students' oral activities were converted into written scripts. There were ten students' English conversation scripts. From ten scripts, 151 utterances were identified following the reference to the theory. These identified utterances were highlighted as raw data.

### **Data Analysis and Research Result Display**

The research is designed by adapting the identity method and referential identity technique (Sudaryanto, 2015). This research identified the English conversation in on-screen communication as the data that encompasses the EFL learners' behavior when speaking English. The participants' utterances as the reference are the accurate qualitative data in this analysis. The main point of the research is the information related to the fluencemes in terms of personal action and experience illustration in terms of English conversation. The data were sorted to ease the analysis. The reduction was used to avoid capturing the same data.

The highlighted data were carefully classified based on the reference of the theory into ten types. To divide the data into different types, competence in theory equalising was referred to get the correct result. Observing the participants' expressions on the video while analyzing the fluencemes is a way to get crucial information. This information provided ideas on the speakers' conditions for completing the analysis. Seven types were revealed based on the typology of fluencemes. One data represented one type to be declared. Finally, the research result was presented descriptively.

## Findings

Ten English conversations in on-screen communication produced 151 utterances containing fluencemes divided into seven types, i.e., filled pauses, discourse markers, explicit editing, false-start, identical repetition, modified repetition, and morphological substitution. The conversations did not identify three types, i.e., silence, truncation, and propositional substitution.

Among the seven types, filled pauses were the most frequent in the conversation as the participants attempted to correct the previous idea and thought about what to say. It occurred because the participants used English, which is not their language. Followed by discourse markers were produced because the participants agreed with the statements and attempted to emphasise the ideas. The third most frequent occurrence was identical repetition. The participants repeated words, phrases, or sentences to emphasise the ideas.

There were six utterances consisting of morphological substitution in the conversations. To make the previous information correct, the participants substituted the words morphologically. Next, the participants attempted to emphasise the ideas by modifying the words, phrases, or sentences through repetition. Then, the participants attempted to correct the previous ideas by editing the words, phrases, or sentences explicitly, clearly, exactly, and openly. Finally, the false start was the fewest appearance in the conversation. Two utterances showed this expression. The participants attempted to correct the previous ideas.

The fluenceme expressions appeared spontaneously, and the participants produced them based on the functions. Physically, these expressions appeared in any position and different shapes regarding words, phrases, or sentences, which participants had not thought of before. These expressions were produced when needed and worked to achieve the goal of communication, so the participants found using these expressions reasonable. Therefore, one function of these expressions can be depicted by multiple types of fluenceme. Table 1 shows the information on fluencemes from the EFL students' English conversations in on-screen communication.

Table 1: *The Fluencemes in On-screen Communication*

No	Utterances	Fluencemes Types	Expression Samples	Functions
1	70	Filled pauses	mm, ee, uhmm, hmm, aa, ahh, uh, oh, umm, err...	to correct the previous idea to think about what to say
2	36	Discourse marker	okey, oh, I mean, so, yup, like, a kind, it is like, you know.	to agree with the statements to emphasise the ideas
3	32	Identical repetition	but, if you want... if you want, you have to visit Batam also. You have to visit.	to emphasise the ideas

4	6	Morphological substitution	I'm, I make friends	to correct the previous information
5	5	Modified repetition	I don't, I don't, I don't really know.	to emphasise the ideas
6	4	Explicit editing term	I know, I don't really know...	to correct the previous ideas
7	2	False start	The type is a... the type is Persian.	to correct the previous ideas

## Discussion

The fillers were analysed to find out the phenomena of fluencemes in 151 utterances. The discussion explained the characteristics of each fluenceme phenomenon. There were seven phenomena portrayed in EFL students' conversations.

### Filled Pause

- Nurhana - “**Ee**...What movie do you watch...**ee**...recently?”  
Laila - “**Ee**... K-drama and Netflix.”

It was identified that the participants vocalised the filled pauses in the utterances. The participants did not keep silent to start or continue the next utterance, but they filled the empty room by producing **ee**. The participants produced it spontaneously. They tried to create the gap by producing filled pauses. It showed that the participants were not ready to utter. The participants showed disfluency, but they did make a strategy to cover the hesitation or the unreadiness in conversation. Based on the characteristics of the filler, it is grouped as filled pauses. Crible (2018) determined that the filler transcribed as vocals or vocal-consonant sounds **mm**, **ee**, **hm**, or **uh** is categorised as a filled pause. Götz (2013) said that the listeners are more tolerant and perceive them, which is a normal pattern in lengthy connected discourse. However, Wolk et al. (2021) said filled pauses cannot always be accepted as fluencemes. Nugraha and Tarmini (2023) stated that **oh** or **ah** are not hesitant, and filled pauses influence fluency and disfluency.

### Discourse Marker

- Daffa - "Hmmm, my favorite food in Indonesian, I think, is fried rice."  
Winema - “Fried rice?”  
Daffa - “Yeah.”  
Winema - “Just, just one?”  
Daffa - “Uhhh I think so, because, **I mean**, I like uhhh every food in Indonesia but I like the most is fried rice.”

The utterance above was revealed to have the fluenceme of discourse marker. As the one who was asked, the participant did not directly answer. However, the participant said **I mean** in between the utterances before continuing to deliver the utterance. It indicated that the participant showed disfluency, which led to filler production. Filler in the utterance was presented to deal with the blank caused by the unreadiness. In other words, the participant attempted to bind the words together into an utterance by saying **I mean**. In reference to the filler criteria, the filler of the utterance above has a similar criterion as the discourse marker. Crible (2018) argued that discourse marker refers to the filler that presents the words **so, because, well, or I mean**. Tabitha and Bram (2024) stated that **I mean** is used to simplify the preceding statement and self-corrector. Kharismawan (2017) agreed with the importance of clarifying speech.

### **Explicit Editing Term**

- Winema - "Eh, and umm graphic dis, do you know graphic designer?"  
Daffa - "**I know, but I don't really know about it. I know the name, but I don't really know about the activity.**"

It was found that there is a fluenceme of explicit editing terms. The participant signaled trouble regarding the utterance, which does not relate to the characteristics of a filled pause or discourse marker. The participant first stated that the participant did not know about the graphic designer. Then, the participant edited the utterance by declaring that the participant knew the name but not the activity. The participant declared it spontaneously, and the edited utterance came after the previous utterance. It was edited because the participant felt doubtful about what was previously said. It is categorised as explicit editing terms in conformity with the filler characteristic. As admitted by Crible (2018), explicit editing consists of any lexical expressions used to signify a production problem that has not been discovered as a discourse marker or filled pause. Gandeza (2023) said that for EFL learners, it makes a constructive way to speak more fluently, but overusing them can annoy them. However, Santos et al. (2016) said that it indicates a cognitive activity for the speaker. However, Lickley & Bard (1988) inserted the filled pause to edit the meaning explicitly ("Come down until you are in- ...**uh** two to three inches above that.")

### **Identical Repetition**

- Rohit - "Yes. Oh, yeah... Um..., I am from Timor, Indonesian... uh... as Indonesian. And..., you, uh, have you ever been to..., like Makassar or Timor Indonesian?"  
Desinta - "No, I never."  
Rohit - "Oh..."  
Desinta - "**I just went, I just went** to North Sumatra, to Batam. **I just went** to uh..., I don't know,

**maybe, maybe** only two places. Because I actually I, **I come from Pekanbaru, Riau. Have you ever heard, have you ever heard** about Pekanbaru, Riau? But actually, **I come from Pekanbaru, Riau.**”

In the utterance above, it was found that the participant conveyed the identical repetition. It appeared in four different words of the utterance. The participant repeated the exact words several times, and each word was contiguous. In other words, the participant did not say something different to represent what the participant said. Instead, the participant repeated the same words because the participant got blank and unready as the things that signaled disfluency. Even though there was disfluency, the participant handled it by repeating the conversation. Referring to filler criteria, the utterance above has the same criteria as identical repetition. As Crible (2018) specified, repeating a similar word and being presented in a close position is an identical repetition. Similarly, Sanjaya and Nugrahani (2018) stated that the speakers repeated the words, phrases, or sentences to emphasise what to say. Differently, Faiuz et al. (2022) found that whole-word repetition, besides showing disfluency, the speaker was angry and upset, making him unable to control his emotions.

### **False Start**

Rohit - “Yeah... I was born in nineteen ninety-nine.”  
Desinta - “**Nineteen ninety-nine?** Uh...**no**, but actually, I was in born nineteen ninety-eight.”

It was discovered that the participant vocalised false starts. While talking, it was discovered that the participant vocalised false starts. While talking, the participant interrupted by leaving an incomplete segment, and there was no connection with the previous utterance. The participant left the utterance by saying **no**, a word not in the previous utterance. The participants produced it simultaneously, and it infers that it was directly conveyed. By producing the filler, it describes that the participant was unready to respond to the question as the answer was not true. The unreadiness caused the participant to produce filler in the utterance. The participant devised a strategy for utterance to deal with the unreadiness. From the characteristics of the filler, it is evident that there is a false start in the utterance. Crible (2018) acknowledged that false starts are interruptions that leave incomplete segments in a semantic and/or syntactic way, and there are no elements from the previous utterance. Gyarmathy & Neuberger (2013) identified that the existence of false starts between children and adults was due to disfluencies and self-repairs, and it was found that the children produced more false starts. Alghazali (2019) found out that the participants made a false start by correcting the grammar by changing the whole message.

## Modified Repetition

- Imelda - "Yup! What's horror film do you love the most like, your horror film favourite?"  
Ervina - "Me recommend film genre, horror film. **I like the horror film; I like the horror movie**  
"The Conjuring" you know the Conjuring?"

The participant of utterance did the vocalisation of modified repetition. As seen in the utterance, the participant repeated the same word to talk. However, the speaker repeated by also using the insertion of **I like** as the words that modified the previous words **horror film**. The word was indeed repeated the same, but the content was changed. It is considering the participant inserted the different words. Hence, the insertion caused the lexical insertion to happen in the utterance. In repeating, the participant did it spontaneously, which infers that the filler production was produced in the same utterance. The participant repeated this, seeing there was hesitation in stating, which became the disfluency indication. Concerning the characteristic, the utterance was identified to have lexical insertion, indicating the modified repetition involvement. Crible (2018) declared that modified repetition is repeated partially and changes the content through lexical insertion, deletion, substitution, and truncation. Similarly, Sanjaya & Nugrahani (2018) stated that the speakers repeated the text because they wanted to emphasise the statement.

## Morphological Substitution

- Winema - "You like to swim. eemm how old are you when you uhm start swimming, start learning swimming?"  
Daffa - "Aa, I started swimming **when I'm when I was** 17 years old."

The utterance highlights that the participant vocalised the morphological substitution. The participant continued to say the utterance by substituting the word **I am** became **I was**. This infers that there is a morphological modification in the utterance. The utterance was conveyed directly without having the participant fill the blank with other fillers. By saying the different words, the participant tried to substitute the previous word before continuing to answer the question. The participant indeed showed disfluency as he was unready and hesitated.

On the other hand, a substitution was used to overcome the disfluency. By the characteristic, it is recognised as a morphological substitution. Crible (2018) believed that morphological modification is the filler characteristic of morphological substitution. Similarly, Sanjaya and Nugrahani (2018) stated that substitution is used to correct the mistakes in the information. However, Ghazali and Arden (2022) identified that substitution functions to fill in the gaps in the speech due to hesitation, not mastering the topic, and lack of preparation.

## Conclusion

Fluencemes always occur in each speaker's output (Götz, 2013). While non-native English speakers speak English, these fluencemes appear in their conversations. There are many reasons for these fluencemes appearing in conversation, whether the speakers are anxious, hesitant, or doubtful, whether the speakers are unknowledgeable, whether the speakers are stammerers, or whether the speakers make a strategy. In this study, the participants spontaneously produced the fluenceme expressions due to agreeing on the ideas, emphasising the ideas, correcting the previous idea, and thinking about the correct ideas. In accordance with the findings, it was found that there were seven types of fluenceme in conversation through on-screen communication, which contained filled pauses, discourse markers, identical repetition, morphological substitution, modified repetition, explicit editing term, and a false start.

Based on the reasons for producing the fluencemes, the participants made a strategy to let the conversation run smoothly. The participants felt relaxed, as shown by their facial expressions in the videos. The participants said that they enjoyed the on-screen communication with their classmates and were not stressed when speaking because the topics discussed were their daily activities. Despite the fact that they were able to respond, they presented the fluencemes because they needed to answer in English. The participants had to think about the grammar, word choice, and pronunciation, which produced the fluencemes.

Three types of fluenceme were not identified, i.e., truncation, silence, and propositional substitution. There is no truncation in that the participants did not stutter the words because no single word sounded incomplete in conversations. There is no silence because the participants used to fill the pauses with other fluencemes. Moreover, there is no propositional substitution because the participants had already thought about what words appeared at the beginning. That is, the participants produced identical repetition, modified repetition, and a false start.

From the explanation above, the participants produced the fluencemes to show a strategy in conversation. Several factors, such as interlocutors, settings, topics, languages, times, or facilities, influence the production of fluencemes. In this study, filled pauses were produced the most because the participants accepted the spontaneous questions that the hearers had just received. Thus, the participants logically needed space and time to find the answers by filling the voids with lexicalised or unlexicalised fillers. As agreed by Wolk et al. (2021), when EFL learners speak, the planning pressure of formulating an utterance is naturally higher than the native speakers do, and to overcome these planning phases, filled pauses or discourse markers can serve as elegant fillers in comparison to alternative planning strategies while, at the same time, their use can increase the length of a speech run.

Fluencemes (Crible, 2018; Götz, 2013) is a linguistic issue which is crucial to the development of languages, and they needed to be explored through the different and varied interlocutors, settings, topics, languages, times, or facilities so as the findings could be compared. This study has only certain participants

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and conditions, which might limit the findings. However, it is hoped that this study can be a reference for the next research and contribute to developing speaking skills. Several experts' theories about this issue enrich the researchers' insights by digging up this issue through research. The next researchers should conclude those ideas into inseparable writing. Not only the researchers, the readers, the EFL learners, language teachers, and those interested in learning languages may use this study as their reference to learn the language, especially fluencemes. On the other hand, reading more articles teaches the readers to control the production of fluencemes, e.g., excessive fillers can distract the optimal comprehension of the message and the audience's concentration (Seals & Coppock, 2022).

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### **Data availability statement**

The data supporting this study's findings are available in the public domain.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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