

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows several points as an outline of this research. It covers the background of the study, the research questions, the objectives of the study, significance of the study. The last scope and limitation are bordering the discussion of the research.

1. 1. Background of the Study

Language is the main tool for humans to communicate, convey thoughts, build social relationships, and understand each other. One of the most basic forms of communication is conversation. In conversation, not only speaking skills are needed, but also active listening skills. Active listening can be demonstrated through short responses known as backchannels.

Conversation analysis is approach to analyze how conversation structures are formed and maintained. According to George Yule (1996. Pp. 71-78), conversation analysis includes elements such as turn taking, pauses, overlaps, adjacency pairs, and backchannels, all of which work systematically to keep the interaction running smoothly.

Backchannels are short responses given by listeners during a conversation to show the message is being received, indicate the listener is following, and not objecting, showing continued attention, show listener's involvement, and agreement. These responses can be verbal, such as *uh-huh*, *yeah*, or *mmm* and non-verbal, such as nodding, smiling, or eye contact (Yule, 1996, pp. 75–76). Backchannels play a crucial role in maintaining the flow of conversation, building rapport, and preventing misunderstandings.

Despite their significance in everyday spoken interaction, backchannels have often been overlooked in linguistic research, particularly in digital media contexts such as podcasts. This issue highlights the need for a deeper exploration of how backchannels both verbal and non verbal function pragmatically within authentic, spontaneous conversations.

The function of backchannels by Yule (1996, pp. 75-76) Backchannels serve several important functions in conversation. They show the listener's continued attention and make the speaker feel heard. They also reflect the listener's active involvement and help maintain engagement. Backchannels can signal agreement without interrupting. Additionally, they provide feedback and indicate that the listener is following and not objecting during conversation.

This research different, because the previous studies have shown that backchannels have been explored in a range of contexts, including political debates, interviews, everyday conversations, and academic interactions. The results suggest that both verbal and non-verbal backchannels are essential in keeping conversations smooth and in signaling listener engagement. Nevertheless, there is still limited research that concentrates only on verbal backchannels within spontaneous contexts such as digital media. To address this gap, the present study examines verbal backchannels in a podcast conversation between Jay Shetty and Kendall Jenner, applying Yule's (1996) framework and conversation analysis.

The researcher chose the podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendall Jenner as the source data because the conversation was natural, emotional, and interactive an ideal condition for conversation analysis. The topics they discussed, such as anxiety, insecurity, and happiness, elicited rich emotional responses from both parties. In the podcast, the use of backchannels is clearly visible both verbal and non verbal, making this data very relevant to analyze backchannels and the function.

This study used Yule's theory (1996) as the main theoretical foundation because it provides a clear and systematic explanation of how listener responses, or backchannels, function in spoken interaction. The theory offers a pragmatic perspective that focuses on how language is used in real life communication to express understanding, agreement, and attentiveness through both verbal and non verbal cues.

These pragmatic features are frequently observed in the podcast conversation between Jay Shetty and Kendall Jenner, which involves spontaneous interaction and active listener involvement. Therefore, this theory is considered

appropriate for analyzing the communicative functions of backchannels within authentic conversational contexts.

This research provide the reader to understanding how form of verbal backchannels also the function in the podcast between Jay Shetty and kendal Jenner. It is expected that the findings can contribute to a deeper understanding of how speakers' messages are interpreted through the use of verbal backchannels in conversation. This research will focus on the conversation analysis especially verbal backchannels and the function in the podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendal Jenner.

Based on explanation of background study above, the researcher formulated, the research under the title *Verbal Backchannels in the Podcast Between Jay Shetty and Kendal Jenner: Conversation Analysis*. This research will analyze verbal backchannels and those function of verbal backchannels.

1. 2. Research Questions

Based on the research background presented above, the researcher formulated the reseach questions as follows:

1. What are words of verbal backchannels uses in the podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendal Jenner?
2. What are the function of verbal backchannels in the conversation podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendal jenner?

1. 3. Objectives of the Study

This research is expected to achieve two objectives based on the reason as follows:

1. To identify words of verbal backchannels uses in the conversation podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendal Jenner.
2. To analyze the function of verbal backchannels conversation in the podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendal Jenner.

1. 4. Significance of the Study

This research is expected to be useful both theoretically and practically. Theoretical significance is theory based significance, the source before doing practical significance. In contrast, practical significance is the practice based on the theory. These implications are listed as follows:

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance

This research contributes to the field of pragmatics by examining how verbal backchannels function as essential elements in spoken interaction. By analyzing the verbal backchannels and those function in a natural conversation, such as the podcast between Jay Shetty and Kendall Jenner, the study highlights the active role of listeners in maintaining coherence, providing non interruptive feedback, and co-constructing meaning with the speaker. It reinforces the idea that conversation is a collaborative process involving both speaker and listener.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

This research offers practical significance for language learners and communication practitioners by providing deeper insight into verbal backchannels and those function in natural conversations. Through the analysis of the podcast conversation between *Jay Shetty* and *Kendall Jenner*, it reveals how backchannels are used to show listener engagement, provide feedback without interruption, and maintain the flow of interaction. These findings can be applied to strengthen speaking skills that involve active participation from both speakers and listeners.

1. 5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research focuses on the field of pragmatics, specifically on the use of backchannels in spoken interaction. It analyzes verbal backchannels and those function found in a podcast conversation between Jay Shetty and Kendall Jenner. The theoretical framework used in this research is based on George Yule's (1996) theory, which supports the identification and interpretation of backchannels in the conversation.

Furthermore, this research is limited to one specific type of conversation analysis, focusing only verbal backchannels and those function. It does not cover other aspects of conversation analysis such as turn-taking, repair, or sequence organization. The data analyzed is taken from a Jay Shetty Podcast episode featuring Kendall Jenner, available at the following link: <https://youtu.be/ZjIRYn7x8sk?si=G6VRYrbl5ueFXgAJ>.