

THE PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF THE PARTICLE *EH* IN INDONESIAN BLOG DISCOURSE: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

Hyunisa Rahmanadia
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest
hyunisa@student.elte.hu

Abstract

The particle *eh* in the Indonesian language has some pragmatic functions that need to be explored. This paper aims to show the pragmatic functions of the particle *eh* in Indonesian blog discourse. A corpus-based study was conducted in order to investigate the pragmatic functions. The data were taken from the Indonesian Web Corpus that was accessed from the Sketch Engine platform. A collection of two hundred random samples was analyzed qualitatively using the interpretative language analysis from the relevance theory proposed by Sperber & Wilson (2012). The corpus is a collection of blogs written in the Indonesian language on various topics. The results show that there are five pragmatic functions of the particle *eh*, namely, to initiate self-repair, indicate unexpected events, indicate exclamatory expressions, initiate topic changes, and lastly, indicate irony.

Keywords: particle *eh*, pragmatic functions, Indonesian blog discourse

Abstrak

Partikel *eh* dalam bahasa Indonesia memiliki berbagai macam fungsi yang perlu digali secara mendalam. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menelaah fungsi pragmatik partikel *eh* dalam wacana blog berbahasa Indonesia. Dalam mempelajari fungsi partikel ini, sebuah penelitian korpus telah dilakukan. Data penelitian diambil dari Indonesian Web Corpus yang diakses melalui platform Sketch Engine. Dua ratus sampel acak dikumpulkan dari korpus ini dan dianalisis secara kualitatif menggunakan analisa pengguna bahasa interpretatif yang berlandaskan pada teori relevansi dari Sperber & Wilson (2012). Korpus data penelitian merupakan kumpulan tulisan dari berbagai macam blog yang mencakup berbagai topik dalam bahasa Indonesia. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada lima fungsi pragmatik dari partikel *eh*, yaitu, mengawali perbaikan tuturan sebelumnya, mengindikasikan kejadian tak terduga, sebagai penanda ungkapan seru, mengawali pergantian topik, dan yang terakhir sebagai pemarah ironi.

Kata kunci: partikel *eh*, fungsi pragmatis, wacana blog bahasa Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

The occurrence of particles in discourse has not received much attention in past research due to its lack of contribution to the structural and conceptual meanings of utterances (Fraser, 1996). Its presence is seen as somehow unimportant and optional (Schiffrin, 1987). In Indonesia, this condition can also be seen in the definition of a particle written in *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Language Big Dictionary). In this official Indonesian language dictionary, the particle *eh* is defined as *kata seru untuk menyatakan heran, kaget, dan sebagainya* ‘an interjection expressing shock, wonder, and et cetera.’ Lack of attention to the definition of the particle is

reflected in the brief explanation of the function of the particle, leaving the other functions as *dan sebagainya* 'and et cetera'.

In this paper, the author argues that the particle *eh* in the Indonesian language is actively used in spoken and written discourse to indicate various functions in communication. To date, this particle has not been sufficiently researched by Indonesian scholars. Some scholars who have based their research on Indonesian particles are, among others, Wouk (1998, 1999b), Sari (2007), Ikranegara (1974), and Miyake (2015). The particles which became the focus of their studies are *dong, deh, sih, kan, ya, ye, kok, ah, kek, and loh*. In the most recent research, some studies about Indonesian particles were conducted by Karaj (2021) and Mutiara (2021). Both of them focused on the four most frequently used particles in communication: *lho, kok, sih, and dong*. Even though the particle *eh* has not received as much attention as the other particles, the importance of studying this particle as a pragmatic marker is obvious. Let us consider the following example.

- (1) *Ada koruptor yang sudah ngebet pengen bebaskah? Eh, apa kabar Pak Yasona?*
exist corruptor who PRF impatiently want free PM? PM what news Mr. Yasona?
'Is there a corruptor who impatiently wanted to be free? **Eh**, how are you, Mr. Yasona?'

The utterance in example (1) clearly represents that the speaker used the particle *eh* to add information related to the first statement. Omitting this particle in utterance (1) will make it less coherent. However, in the interpretation of the utterance, as the audience understands that with regard to meaning there is no literal relation between the first statement and the new information in the second statement. In the second statement, the speaker is not genuinely asking for news from Mr. Yasona. With the knowledge that Mr. Yasona is the Minister of Law and Human Rights, the hearer will comprehend the clue that the speaker was telling that there was a problem with the minister. Thus, the particle *eh* is deliberately inserted as a hint to direct the attention of the audience to the speaker's hidden intention in the second statement. This example shows that the particle *eh* has a significant function in marking the speaker's intention that needs to be explored.

In this paper, the particle *eh* is believed to have some pragmatic functions in communication. Based on this hypothesis, the present research investigates the pragmatic functions possessed by the particle *eh* in the Indonesian language. Thus, the main research question of this paper is: What are the pragmatic functions of the particle *eh* in the Indonesian language in the discourse of blogs?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section begins with the explanation of the terminology used in this paper. The relevance theoretical approach in understanding the function of the particle will be outlined to support the analysis.

This paper investigates the role of the particle *eh* in the Indonesian language as a pragmatic marker. Despite the fuzziness of the definition regarding pragmatic markers, Levinson (1983) first proposed the term 'discourse deixis', Schiffrin (1987) suggested the term 'discourse marker', and Blakemore (1992) employed the term 'discourse connective'. For the purpose of this research, the author used the term 'pragmatic marker' proposed by Fraser (1996) to indicate a non-propositional part of sentences signaling the speaker's potential communicative intentions. Fraser (1996) categorized pragmatic markers into four broad groups: basic markers (e.g., 'I promised', 'I request'), commentary markers (e.g., 'frankly', 'reportedly'), parallel markers (e.g., 'ladies and gentlemen', 'as your superior'), and discourse markers (e.g., 'thus', 'however'). Based on the

standardized forms, particles belong to pragmatic idioms (subtypes of basic markers) as “expressions for which there is no plausible inferential path leading from literal, direct meaning to the accepted basic pragmatic signal” (Fraser, 1996, p. 174). Thus, it is obvious that a particle does not carry any conceptual meaning independently. Its function is defined according to the context of the utterance. Moreover, its function does not add any extra meaning to the utterances, although it indicates “the ongoing metalinguistic activity in the speaker’s cognition” (Aijmer, 2013, p. 4).

In relevance theory, pragmatic markers help interlocutors signal to the speaker and indicate to the hearer the intentions of the communication. It also helps the hearer make a proper inference and implicate it coherently with the context and situation. For example, the sentence ‘I need the pencil’ can be easily understood but does not tell the hearer the speaker’s feeling or intention while making this utterance. Using a pragmatic marker, the utterance ‘Anyway, I need the pencil’ provides more detailed information, that the speaker reluctantly tells the hearer that he needs the pencil. The pragmatic marker ‘anyway’ does not give extra meaning to the sentence, but it wraps it in a specific situation. Sperber & Wilson (2012) proposed that pragmatic markers do not have any conceptual meaning as they only contribute to procedural meaning.

To analyze how utterances are produced and perceived in conversation, Sperber & Wilson (2012) introduced relevance theory, which was based on Grice’s maxim of cooperation. They explained how communication could be understood from the cognitive perspective.

“Relevance, as characterized in relevance theory, is a property of inputs to cognitive processes. These inputs include external stimuli (e.g. utterances) and internal representations (e.g. memories or conclusions of inferences, which may then be used as premises for further inferences).”

(Sperber & Wilson, 2012, p.279)

Sperber & Wilson’s idea above indicates that the communication process occurs in our cognition, where information is acquired, stored, and manipulated. Relevance theory claims that the more cognitive effect a stimulus has, the more relevant it is. Furthermore, the more mental effort involved in processing a stimulus, the less relevant it is (Clark 2013, p. 34).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a corpus-based study and focuses on qualitative corpus analysis. The data was compiled from the Indonesian Web Corpus accessed from the Sketch Engine corpus application. With more than 90 million words collected in the corpus, 2,487 hits of the token *eh* were found. From the taken hits, two hundred samples were randomly chosen and collected. The collected samples are large enough to show and indicate the main function of the particle *eh* in written discourse. Moreover, the Sketch Engine application provides a useful system where the same concordance lines will always appear with the same keyword and number line entered in the program. This system will make the sample data easy to be traced by other scholars.

The discourse type of this corpus is written articles in various blogs without any topic limitation, including comments from the readers. For instance, there are written blogs about critics to some organizations, shared life experiences, short stories for adults, and even short stories for children. This wide range of themes enables the researcher to analyze the use and distribution of the particle *eh* in various contexts. Furthermore, we have to bear in mind that even though the corpus is collected from written texts, it also covers spoken and direct speech communication.

Data analysis applies two processes to achieve the aim of the study and answer the research question. First, randomly selected samples are categorized to identify the range of the functions of the particle in the samples. In the second process, based on the categorization, the specific sample of each category is investigated by looking at the textual context before and after the utterances. This in-depth analysis of the utterances shows the speaker's intention or the metalinguistic awareness of the speaker.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study found five functions of the particle *eh* from the collected corpus data. The first function is initiating self-repair, where the speaker is intentionally correcting their own previous utterances or adding information to them. The second function is to indicate unexpected events such as shock (sometimes bringing adverse effects), perplexity, amazement (bringing positive effects), and realization. The third function is the use of *eh* as an exclamation. The fourth function is initiating interruption in the conversation or changing the topic of the discourse. Finally, the fifth function indicates an ironical utterance.

4.1 Initiating self-repair

Syntactically, the particle *eh* mostly appears at the beginning and in the middle of utterances. At the beginning of an utterance, this particle functions to initiate the proposition the speaker intended to convey. This function can also be activated when the particle appears in the middle position to initiate a subordinate clause. In example (2), the particle *eh* appears in the middle of the utterance to initiate correction of a mistake that the speaker unintentionally made in the first statement. Wouk (2005, p. 238) explains that "in speaking, speakers may produce utterances that either they or their interlocutors find problematic for some reason and thus need repair". The particle *eh* in this utterance indicates that something wrong was said, and the following statement was an attempt to correct the mistake. Thus, the particle plays the role of connecting the first and the second segments into a coherent utterance. It also clarifies to the hearer that the second statement is a correction to the first statement.

- (2) *Pemilik beruang itu adalah sahabat-ku, eh, sahabat-nya sahabat-ku.*
 owner bear DEM is friend-1SG, PM, friend-POSS friend-1SG
 'The owner of that bear is my friend, *eh*, a friend of my friend.'

The particle *eh* appears to be used for correction of intentionally-made mistakes. This pattern is usually used to make a joke or a subtle mock.

- (3) *Sekarang selain menulis lepas untuk media nasional seperti*
 now besides ACT-write free for media national like
The Jakarta Post, Media Indonesia, Playboy Indonesia, dan
 The Jakarta Post, Media Indonesia, Playboy Indonesia, and
The Appetite Journey, juga nulis media esek-esek, eh, ecek-ecek lainnya
 The Appetite Journey also write media having sex PM valueless other
 'Recently, besides doing freelance writing for national media like The Jakarta Post, Media Indonesia, Playboy Indonesia, and The Appetite Journey, he also wrote in sexually related media, *eh*, valueless media.'

Example (3) is part of a blog post describing someone's experience in publishing articles in various magazines. In this example, the speaker intentionally makes a negative comment as if by mistake, before deliberately inserting the particle to create the effect that the speaker accidentally makes a mistake and intends to correct it. However, he intentionally makes manifest to the hearer that he actually means the first comment. The second comment after the particle is obviously used to soften and hide the negative attitude to mock the magazine in which the writer published his articles.

The particle *eh* plays another role in adding information to the mentioned items or situation, as demonstrated in the following example.

- (4) *Eh, ada loh sup ikan, dijamin tidak amis*
 PM exist PM soup fish PASS-guarante NEG smell fishy
 'Eh, there is also fish soup, which is guaranteed not to smell fishy.'

In Example (4), the writer/speaker had been previously listing activities that can be done in city of Batam. Before the statement he made in the example, he had suggested that the reader/listener can enjoy special cuisines in the city. While adding more information regarding the food, he initiated the sentence with the particle *eh* to attract the reader's or listener's attention to the new information added.

4.2 Indicating unexpected events

The particle *eh* has a function of showing the speaker's metapragmatic awareness of the new situation or information from the outside environment or inside the speaker's cognition. The outside environment means that the unexpected situation occurs without any intervention of the speaker. The unexpected event from the outside environment could trigger a feeling of amazement in the speaker. Example (5) is the instance where the particle *eh* reveals the speaker's amazement at her former teacher still remembering her. This utterance implies that the teacher and student have not met for a long time. Consequently, the teacher's ability to remember his student, whom he has not met for some time, is incredible due to the possibility of the teacher having had many students during his teaching career. Thus, in this example, the particle *eh* identifies her surprise and amazement. Kövecses (2015) explains that the emotion of surprise can be expressed in many ways. One of them is an expression such as 'wow' in English. The expression is a result of the immediate presence of a triggering event. This function can be seen using the particle *eh* in an utterance in the Indonesian language.

The example of the function of showing surprise is also shown in example (6), where the speaker is surprised by the interlocutor's answer. In (6), the speaker unwillingly offered to give the woman (the interlocutor) a ride without expecting that the woman would accept. Nevertheless she did, and he is surprised that the woman accepted the offer. In this excerpt, the particle *eh* indicates the speaker's surprise.

- (5) *Kami bertemu di bandara, eh, Pak Awal masih ingat lho sama saya.*
 1PL meet at airport, PM Mr. Awal still remember PM with 1SG
 'We met at the airport, eh, Mr. Awal still remembers me.'
- (6) *Terus gue iseng aja nawarin dia bareng. Eh, nggak*
 then 1SG leisurely PM offer 3SG together PM NEG

taunya dianya mau.
 know 3SG want

‘Then, I leisurely offered her a ride. **Eh**, she accepted it.’

Additionally, an unexpected event could cause perplexity. Example (7) is part of a conversation between two young people who are bored because they do not have partners to date. Suddenly, the girl asks him to play a game, which naturally confuses the boy. He probably could not imagine what kind of game they could play to escape the situation and expresses it with the particle *eh* in the interrogative form.

(7) A: *Kayaknya aku ada ide bagus deh. Kita adakan permainan yuk!*
 seem 1SG exist idea good PM. 1PL hold game PM
 ‘I think I have a good idea. Let us play a game!’

B: **Eh?** *Permainan apaan?*

PM game what?

‘**Eh**, what kind of game?’

Example (8) shows the function of the particle *eh* to express sudden understanding by the speaker. The excerpt talks about how the speaker realizes that something she believes to be a TV show is actually a movie. The particle *eh* marks the point once the speaker understands the actual information. It is important to note here that there is no change in the environment regarding the *Paranormal Activity* she is talking about. The change has only occurred in the girl’s understanding of the movie.

(8) *Awalnya gue pikir Paranormal Activity itu semacam live show*
 first 1SG think Paranormal Activity DEM something live show
tentang kegiatan paranormal gitu, eh, nggak tahunya judul film toh.
 about activity paranormal like that PM NEG know title film PM

‘At first, I thought *Paranormal Activity* is a kind of TV show, **eh**, it was a movie.’

(9) *Pas sudah sampai di TKP on time, eh ternyata jadwal semula*
 Right after arrive at place on time PM in fact schedule formerly
diundur setengah jam
 PASS-delay half hour

‘When I arrived at the TKP (*Tempat Kejadian Perkara* = the scene where something took place) on time, **eh**, it turned out that the former schedule was delayed by half an hour.’

An unexpected situation that tends to bring negative perceptions might cause disappointment. Example (9) indicates the function of particle *eh* to mark disappointment at the delay of the starting time of the program. The speaker inserted particle *eh* in the utterance to express his shock and disappointment because he had come early to avoid being unpunctual.

4.3 Indicating Exclamatory Expression

The particle *eh* is also uttered as an exclamatory expression. Sneddon (1996, p. 343) explains that utterances in exclamatory mood “express the speaker’s feelings or attitude, usually in an emphatic

way. They are often uttered forcefully and in writing this may be indicated by an exclamation mark”. Example (10) is taken from a short story from a blog post. The conversation occurred when a wild boar saw a tiger leaning back on a tree, and the wild boar was curious about what caused the tiger to look so bad. The wild boar started the statement with the exclamation *eh* to show the mutual knowledge that they know each other. The use of this particle reveals their close relationship and, in this case, the wild boar’s empathy.

- (10) *Eh! Mengapa engkau ni, Harimau?*
 PM ! why 2SG DEM, tiger
 ‘*Eh!* What has happened to you, tiger?’
- (11) *Eh, Tejo! mau apa kau mengikuti aku terus?*
 PM, 3SG want what 2SG ACT-follow 1SG always
 ‘*Eh, Tejo!* Why are you always following me?’

The function of the particle *eh* as an exclamatory expression can also be seen in (11). Example (11) shows a more straightforward function where the particle *eh* is used along with the addressee’s name. To clarify, this is similar to the expression ‘*hey you!*’ in English, often used to attract someone’s attention.

4.4 Indicating interruption

The last function that can be identified from the corpus samples is initiating interruption or changing the topic of discourse in an ongoing conversation. The interruption is used to cut a topic of conversation or speech and start a new topic. (12) is a comment appreciating how useful he/she found the content of the blog in the first statement. The particle *eh* in (12) is used to stop the previous talk and ask something unrelated to the last topic. The particle *eh* has the function of connecting the two unrelated topics in one complex sentence. The omission of the particle creates ambiguity because the hearer may expect that the second statement is related to the previous statement.

In example (13), the speaker shows a change of direction within the same topic. First, the speaker argues that a national hero can be categorized as national property. Afterward, he introduces his new question about what people can possibly do with the hero, which seems suddenly occur to him. In this utterance, the function of *eh* is to show the new issue that suddenly came to his mind.

- (12) *Pengetahuan saya nggak sejauh ini namun kini saya juga mulai*
 knowledge 1SG NEG far DEM but now 1SG also begin
mengerti dan semakin jelas jika perang tersebut sebenarnya hanyalah
 understand and more clear if war mentioned before actually only
perang karena sebuah kepentingan bukan SARA,
 war because ART interest NEG SARA
makasih mas, eh, kapan mau ke gunung Kelir?
 thank you older brother PM when will to mountain Kelir?

‘I don’t have enough knowledge about it, but now I can understand clearly that war actually occurs because of (some people’s) benefit, not SARA (Suku, Agama, Ras, Antar-

golongan = Tribe, Religion, Race, Between Groups). Thank you older brother. *Eh*, when will you go to Kelir mountain?’

(13) *Kalau tokoh itu seorang Pahlawan Nasional,*
if figure DEM ART hero national

berarti dia milik publik dong?

mean 3SG belong public PM

Milik seluruh bangsa Indonesia kan?

belong all country Indonesia PM

Eh, tapi memangnya dipakai sebagai apa sih tokoh ini?

PM but actually PASS-use as what PM figure DEM

‘If the figure is a national hero, it means he belongs to the public, right? It belongs to Indonesia, right? *Eh*, but actually, what is the role of this figure?’

4.5 Indicating irony

In the data collection, it is found that particle *eh* has a specific function on indicating irony conveying a critical or negative attitude to the hearer (or reader of the blogs) or even the third person the interlocutors are talking about. An in-depth analysis of the speaker’s utterances helps the reader identify intention and attitude to uncover any irony in the discourse. In irony interpretation, Sperber & Wilson (1995) proposed an interpretive dimension of language use as opposed to the descriptive dimension analysis. In interpretive dimension analysis, a propositional form does not resemble the truth of the statement but resembles another meaning or thought. Wilson & Sperber (2012, p. 128) also introduce “the echoic use as a subtype of attributive use in which the speaker’s primary intention is not to provide information about the content of an attributed thought, but to convey her own attitude or reaction to that thought”. Like an echo, irony is conveyed by repeating some previously stated or expected utterances in a particular context that make them ironic. Thus, understanding context and prior knowledge is essential for interpreting irony correctly.

Furthermore, based on the echoic theory, Yus (2000) recommends that incompatibility or the dissociation between the proposition of the utterance and the information provided by context suffice to identify the speaker’s ironic attitude. He gives a clear approach to reach the ironic interpretation using leading and supportive contextual sources. Leading contextual sources are the most accessible incompatibility between the proposition and the information itself. Supportive contextual sources are extra information that leads the hearer to access the ironic evidence even faster. Yus (2000) further mentions seven properties that belong to the supportive contextual sources; factual information, physical setting, nonverbal communication, biographical data, mutual knowledge, previous utterances, linguistic cues. The more incompatibilities that occur in the supportive contextual source, the quicker and easier the hearer interprets the irony. Conversely, the lack of incompatibilities in those contexts leads the hearer to misinterpret the irony descriptively.

To begin with, example (14) is a comment about a writing on a blog post about the negative side of a group. This irony is a criticism directed at the content writer of the article in the blog. The first comment before the particle indicates that the speaker is praising the writer of the blog.

The particle *eh* inserted here has a function to express unintended events or notice something surprising. The surprising information in this context is that the addressee has no affiliation with any group. This new information does not mean to inform the hearer that the writer does not belong to any group. On the contrary, the hearer is encouraged to implicate the information as a contradiction of his previous statement. If someone never belongs to any group, it means that he/she would not be expected to have the feeling of brotherhood. However, he intentionally used the second statement to clarify the irony.

(14) *Saya salut atas niat persaudaraan anda terlepas apa golongan*
1SG appreciate of intention brotherhood 2SG PASS-separate what group

anda, eh maaf anda tidak bergolongan ya..

2SG PM sorry 2SG NEG ACT-group yes

‘I appreciate your sincere intention regardless which group you are in, *eh*, you do not belong to any group, do you..’

Here, it is clear that the particle does not spoil the sense of irony in the utterance. On the other hand, it helps the hearer interpret that the last segment of the utterance indicates the dissociation of the hearer’s expectation in the first statement. The incompatibility is built on the previous utterance where the speaker praises the addressee but puts him down indirectly in the second statement.

(15) *Eh, lu itu artis!*
PM 2SG DEM actress
‘*Eh*, you are an actress!’

Example (15) was uttered when a group of journalists got a refusal from an actress to their request to take her photos. The negative attitude of the speaker is revealed by the use of the particle *eh* as an exclamation. Despite calling the actress by name to show respect, the speaker called her *eh* that expresses his anger or disappointment due to the refusal. Moreover, he indicates his anger using irony in the following statement. To understand the statement, it is not relevant to interpret ‘You are the actress’ literally uttered by someone in anger. This utterance needs to be processed interpretively and see the attributed thought behind the utterance. Observation of the context will stimulate the hearer to find the incompatibilities between the physical setting and the mutual knowledge. In the physical setting, incompatibility occurs when the positive statement is uttered after someone has got a negative attitude from the addressee.

Furthermore, the statement echoes the speaker’s expectation that an actress should never refuse a photo session by the media. The speaker expects the addressee to have this mutual knowledge. Thus, this utterance can be understood as an irony uttered by the journalist criticizing the actress’s unfriendliness.

(16) *...entar tobat belum eh udah mati duluan ...*
later.on repentance NPFV PM PFV die precede
‘...before you repent, *eh* (you) die already’

Example (16) is irony meant as a critique and a warning to the hearer. It is common knowledge in the Islamic religion that people who commit sins can ask for forgiveness by showing their repentance. In this utterance, the speaker emphasizes that people must not delay seeking

repentance because they may suddenly die. The speaker feels the need to emphasize the condition because he thinks that many people assume that they can make repentance anytime in their life and thus tend to delay it. The irony is created by dissociating that assumption. Thus, the particle *eh* helps the speaker to initiate an unexpected condition that is contrary to the people's assumption.

The particle *eh* also appears in collocation with the particle *malah* to mark irony. This collocation signals to the hearer that the speaker faces a surprising situation that he/she had not expected to happen. Examples (17) and (18) demonstrate the collocation that creates irony.

- (17) *Terkadang ada orang diberi sesi bertanya, eh dia*
 Sometimes exist person PASS-give session question PM 3SG

malah menjelaskan.

PM ACT-give.explanation

'Sometimes there is a person who is given a question session, eh (lit: but ironically) he gives an explanation.'

- (18) *Aku udah manggil-manggil suami-ku, eh malah asyik nonton tv.*
 1SG PFV call-REDUP husband-1SG, PM PM enjoy watch tv.
 'I called my husband many times, *eh* he enjoyed watching TV.'

The situation in example (17) was when someone was explaining some rules that students had to follow in a class. In this context, the speaker felt disappointed because the students did not follow the class rules. The irony was built up in the incompatibility of the previous utterance that dissociated the speaker's expectations and the real environment. The speaker expected the students to ask an appropriate question when given the opportunity to ask questions. However, in his observation, some students unexpectedly gave their explanations in the session. The particle *eh*, collocates with *malah*, signaling the incompatibility of the statement and the expectation.

Another example of irony due to the disappointment of an unintended event can be seen in (18). The woman in example (18) explained that she felt an earthquake. She called her husband to warn him and expected him to heed the warning and respond quickly to the danger. However, she found that her husband enjoyed watching TV regardless of the impending danger. Again, the collocation of the particles *eh* and *malah* signal the incompatibility between the physical setting and the speaker's expectation to express the irony.

CONCLUSION

This study is a preliminary research on the particle *eh* investigating its various function. As demonstrated in the data, this study suggests that the particle *eh* has five pragmatic functions. Those functions are initiating self-repair, indicating unexpected events, indicating exclamatory expression, initiating interruption, and indicating ironical utterance.

As some researchers have emphasized that spoken interactional corpus is more reliable in investigating the function of a pragmatic marker (Fischer, 2006), this paper proves that written corpus to analyze particles is as reliable as the spoken conversation data corpus. The reason behind it is that the collected written data also genuinely represent the natural language used by the native speakers in a written form. Moreover, the data studied was also accompanied by relevant context to understand the speaker's motivation in producing the utterance. However, the

writer believes that further research on this particle using spoken conversational data will show results that support the present research.

Ultimately, this study reveals that the functions of particles, especially the particle *eh* in Indonesian blog discourse, can be examined to find their specific functions in discourses using corpus data analysis. This methodology is also adequate to examine the function of many other particles that are not yet identified. Hopefully, this finding could make a significant contribution to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* regarding the description of the function of the particle.

NOTE

The author would like to thank Dr. Ildikó Vaskó and Dr. Krisztina Károly for their guidance in developing the earlier draft of the paper. I also greatly appreciate the constructive comments of two anonymous reviewers of the paper.

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