

# AN ANALYSIS OF FILLERS IN JENNIFER LAWRENCE'S SPEECH

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out what kinds of filler Emma Stone used in her speech and how it served its purpose. This study utilized a descriptive qualitative approach. When analyzing the functions of fillers, the researchers utilized Stenström's theory and Rose's theory, respectively. The information came from the speeches that Jennifer Lawrence gave. The results of the study showed that two kinds of fillers were used: both lexicalized and unlexicalized filler (40%). Additionally, fillers serve five purposes: hesitating, empathizing, minimizing, editing the term, and creating time-consuming devices. It can be concluded that fillers are a very common expression in speech. Furthermore, fillers can serve a variety of purposes, depending on the speaker's circumstances.

**Key words:** Analysis, filler, Jennifer Lawrence, speech

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## INTRODUCTION

Fillers in utterances such as speech, conversation, and or presentation are commonly inevitable (Pranoto & Afrilita, 2019), (Kuswoyo & Audina, 2020), speakers use filler when they are thinking about the next thing they intend to say (Al Falaq et al., 2021), (Septiyana & Aminatun, 2021). Fillers is sounds, words, pauses, or repetitions in which it occurs anywhere and at any time in the utterance (K. Sari & Pranoto, 2021), (Suprayogi, Samanik, & Chaniago, 2021) and can be removed without causing a change in content (Gulö, 2018a), (Samanik, 2021). Common examples of filler that speakers produce in utterances are "ee"..., "err"..., "ehm"..., or "well", "you know", "I mean", "kind of", and other similar expressions (Nababan & Nurmaily, 2021), (F. M. Sari & Oktaviani, 2021).

Different opinions emerge regarding the perception of fillers in public speaking and in the academic field (Oktaviani & Sari, 2020), (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2021). Filler is perceived negatively in public speaking because it may lower the fluency grade (Puspita & Amelia, 2020), (Gulö, 2018b). In addition, Fillers can undermine our credibility (Yulianti & Sulistyawati, 2021) and indicate a lack of preparation (Nurmalasari & Samanik, 2018). As stated by (Kardiansyah & Salam, 2020) speakers should try to avoid using filler words. The reason for this is that filler words are considered to be ineffective to speakers (Journal et al., 2021), (Mertania & Amelia, 2020). Nevertheless, various experts claim that filler could also be perceived positively. They believe fillers are beneficial because they encourage learners to think more deeply (Ngestirosa et al., 2020) and to continue speaking with confidence (Qodriani & Wijana, 2020). It is understandable to use filler as it is a way for people to collect or form a thought (Fithratullah, 2019), (Rido et al., 2021).

In their utterances, the speaker may use a variety of fabricated fillers, such as err, ehm, well, I think, you know, if you see what I mean, and so on (F. M. Sari & Putri, 2019),

(Mandasari, n.d.). Furthermore, a filler is a lexically empty item with unknown discourse functions (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020), except to fill a conversational gap (Oktavia & Suprayogi, 2021), (Suprayogi, Samanik, Novanti, et al., 2021). This means fillers are commonly used to express hesitation or to maintain control of a conversation while the speaker thinks about what to say next (Purwaningsih & Gulö, 2021). Fillers contribute significantly to the interactive character of speech because they signal relationships between the speaker, hearer, and discourse (Kardiansyah, 2019), (B. N. Sari & Gulö, 2019).

There are two types of fillers namely unlexicalized fillers and lexicalized fillers.

Unlexicalized fillers are non-words fillers that indicate a process of thinking (Ivana & Suprayogi, 2020), (Fithratullah, 2021). Silent pauses are unfilled pauses that occur in the middle of phrases and words (Suprayogi & Eko, 2020). In addition, gives examples of unlexicalized filler which he labels as “neutral vowel sounds” such as ehm, uh, err, ee, ah, um, and other vocalizations (Al Falaq & Puspita, 2021), (Agustina et al., 2021).

Lexicalized fillers in the form of words or short phrases, such as like, well, yeah, sort of, you know, if you see what I mean, and so on. As stated by (Suprayogi & Novanti, 2021) they also mention verbal fillers, which are similar to lexicalized fillers, such as well, I mean, and sort of.

Fillers have a wide range of functions. determined by the situation of the speaker (Candra & Qodriani, 2019), (Fakhrurozi et al., 2021). According to (Kuswanto et al., 2021) they stated that there are seven functions of fillers, they are filling pause, mark of hesitating, holding turn, empathizing, interrupting, mitigating, and editing term.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

There is a previous study related to this research. The Types and Functions of Fillers used in Barack Obama's Speeches. The findings of this study revealed two types of fillers: unlexicalized filled pauses and lexical filled pauses. This study also revealed five filler functions: hesitating, empathizing, mitigating, editing terms, and time-creating devices. Based on those findings, the researcher concluded that fillers are not always regarded as a speaking distraction. As foreign language learners, we should be aware of fillers not only as a means of avoiding speaking but also as a means of improving our interaction.

In another previous study, Mariam (2014) explained in her qualitative case study approach about "The Use of Fillers and Hesitation Devices as Communication Strategies Among Malaysian Language Learners" that there are differences in the usage of fillers and hesitation devices as communication strategies between high and low proficiency learners.

Lastly, Navratilova (2015) conducted research on Fillers Used by Male and Female English Education Study Program Students in Argumentative Talks. This study was descriptive in nature. According to the findings, male and female students produced the most unlexicalized fillers, followed by lexicalized fillers. Both male and female students used fillers to fill pauses, hesitate, hold conversation turns, emphasize, mitigate, interrupt, and edit their speech errors. Furthermore, the most frequently used function by male and female students was filling pause, followed by fillers as a mark of hesitation. As a result, both male and female students used similar types and functions.

Based on the background above, the researcher formulated the problems of the study as follows: What are the types and functions of fillers used by Emma Stone in her speeches?

## METHOD

This study took a descriptive and qualitative approach. Content analysis is the intellectual process of putting qualitative textual data into groups based on similar ideas in order to find consistent patterns or connections between variables and themes. A YouTube video of Emma Stone's speech is the subject of the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on Rose's theory, this research studied the different types of filled pauses. There were two types of filled pauses, including unlexicalized fillers and lexicalized fillers.

### *Unlexicalized Fillers*

Unlexicalized fillers contain lexical empty such as *ee*, *erm*, *err*, *emm*, and *eh*. It is an indication of a thinking process

#### Data 1

*What was my first job, uh babysitting I guess.*

Based on data 1, "uh" is classified as one of the unlexicalized fillers. The utterance was a non-words filler and thus did not have meaning. The filler serves as a thinking process. Jennifer was trying to recall her first job and by using "uh" she was able to pause and think and try to remember. Therefore, the function of the unlexicalized filler in data 1 is a mark of hesitation. Jennifer uses "uh" as a breathing pause to think about what she will say next.

#### Data 2

*Um in the woods outside of this is gonna sound like a murderer story but it was in the woods outside of a uh baseball game the guy who just found err my turtle that I lost.*

Data 2 showed two types of unlexicalized fillers. This was because "um" and "uh" were classified as non-lexemes fillers. It was meaningless. The function of "um" in data 2 is as an editing term that is used to correct speech errors. Meanwhile, the function of "uh" is a mark of hesitation.

#### Data 3

*Uh a double engine failure on a plane so that one's pretty easy for me.*

"uh" is the most frequently used for unlexicalized filler. It is a nonword filler that has no added meaning to the utterance. Which functions as a mark of hesitation. Jennifer pauses to think and at the same time creates a sentence to say next.

#### Data 4

*I guess it had to be when the Triceratops got ill and uh lara dern was like looking at his tongue and I thought that was cool.*

Data 4 showed an unlexicalized filler "uh" which is a neutral vowel sound. This kind of unlexicalized fillers did not have a meaning. However, it functions as a mark of hesitation. Hesitation is pauses that serve as the speaker's thinking process about the next thing they want to say.

### *Lexicalized Fillers*

Lexicalized fillers are short phrases such as *sort of*, *you know*, *if you see what I mean*, and so on. Furthermore, verbal fillers, which are similar to lexicalized fillers, consist of *well*, *I mean*, *sort of*, *I think*.

#### Data 5

**Well** there was my first Oscar dress was **the, the** Calvin Klein red it was a scuba I was just gonna say was like a bathing suit dress.

Based on data 5, “well” is classified as one of the lexicalized fillers. Phrases are the form of lexicalized fillers. As stated, fillers do not have a significant meaning in an utterance. Nonetheless, this lexicalized filler functions as an empathizing or attention-getting device. They often appear at the beginning or at the end of an utterance. Jennifer wanted to invite the listener to be involved in what she said.

Whereas the lexicalized filler “the, the” functions as time creating device. This means the speaker is repeating a single word to remember or think about what to utter next.

#### Data 6

**I mean** obviously my 25th birthday where my friend surprised me with Kris Jenner holding my birthday cake.

Data 5 showed a lexicalized filler “i mean”, which is in a form of short phrases and is non-words. Jennifer used this to clarify what she has to say. This functions as an editing term. The speaker is aware of the error and wants to correct it.

#### Data 7

*I know that that's like a famous person story but **like** when I was a kid my parents would be **like** it was your birthday yesterday **like** I didn't have **like** parties so my only birthday party stories are after I'm famous.*

Data 7 showed four occurrences of lexicalized filler in one sentence. They are classified as lexicalized filler because those four utterances was not a word and did not have meaning. These fillers functioned as mitigating and time-creating devices. Jennifer expressed her feelings and at the same time repeated the same filler words to figure out what to say next.

**Table 1**  
Types of Fillers in Jennifer Lawrence’s Speech

N o	Filler word s	Unlexical ized Fillers	Lexicalize d Fillers	Percenta ge
1	Uh	✓		30
2	Um	✓		10
3	Well		✓	10
4	Like		✓	40
5	I mean		✓	10

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the various fillers Jennifer Lawrence used in her speeches, each of which served a different purpose. The results and analysis of this study showed that two kinds of fillers were used: filler that has been lexicalized and unlexicalized. Filler that is lexicalized (60 percent) and unlexicalized (40 percent). In addition, five filler functions were utilized in this study: putting off the mark, empathizing, wasting time with a device, minimizing, and editing the term. Unlexicalized filler, which also served as a time-creating device and mitigated with a 40% percentage, was the filler that was utilized by Indonesian celebrities most frequently.

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