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Master's thesis

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Abstract

This thesis presents an analysis of pauses in spontaneous speech in media, focusing on examples from the British talk show *The Graham Norton Show* and the Croatian talk show *Večer na 8. katu*. A theoretical overview of pauses sets the foundation for understanding their significance in conversational dynamics. The study examines six episodes, three from each show, allowing for a comparative analysis of pause occurrences among hosts and guests.

Results reveal several key patterns: hosts exhibited a greater number of pauses than guests, reflecting their active role in guiding conversations. Furthermore, the analysis showed a significant prevalence of filled pauses over unfilled pauses, with hesitation markers outnumbering fillers within the filled pauses category. These findings underscore the cognitive processes involved in spontaneous speech, illustrating how speakers navigate real-time interactions.

This research contributes to the understanding of conversational behavior in spontaneous speech in the media, demonstrating that while patterns of pauses share similarities between Croatian and English, the types of fillers used vary. The insights gained from this analysis enhance our comprehension of communication dynamics in media environments and the strategies employed by speakers in managing spontaneous dialogue.

Key words: speech analysis, pauses, filled pauses, silent pauses, hesitation markers, fillers

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1. Introduction

Often, we tend to think of speech as a continuous stream of words and phrases. Various disfluencies, i.e., disruptions or inconsistencies in the smooth flow of speech, are therefore frowned upon. However, we tend to forget that disfluencies are a common occurrence in spontaneous speech, coinciding with the claim that human "speech is highly disfluent, marked by frequent starts, stops, restarts, stammering, *ers*, and *erms*" (Rose, 1998: 1-2). Prepared speech, on the other hand, is different in this aspect if well-rehearsed.

Listeners tend to notice and are bothered by disfluencies to a various degree, much more so in prepared speech, where they could easily get annoyed at such occurrences. In spontaneous speech this linguistic phenomenon is more likely to be ignored (Rose, 1998). Although disfluencies are highly present in spontaneous speech, they can also be irritating and distracting to listeners.

The focus of this thesis is on hesitations, a specific kind of disfluencies, which are moments in speech where the speaker pauses or delays their utterance. We will reduce the focus of this thesis on a specific category of hesitations, pauses, which can be either silent pauses or filled pauses (using sounds or words like *um*, *uh*, *well*, *you know*).

Moreover, in this thesis, pauses as a linguistic phenomenon are studied in terms of spontaneous speech production in the media, specifically in TV talk shows, with examples from a British and a Croatian TV talk show, namely *The Graham Norton Show* and *Večer na 8. katu* respectively. These two shows were chosen because of their similar format.

The research investigates several key aspects of pauses in spontaneous speech, aiming to shed light on a range of questions. Firstly, it examines the prevalence of different types of pauses, specifically focusing on the frequency of silent and filled pauses. The study also delves into the nature of filled pauses, identifying hesitation markers and fillers. Additionally, the study explores whether there is a noticeable difference in the number of pauses uttered by TV hosts compared to their guests. This analysis is based on the hypothesis that TV hosts, owing to their professional training and experience, are likely to make fewer pauses than guests.

Lastly, the research compares pause patterns between English and Croatian to determine if there are differences in the frequency and type of pauses in these languages. The goal is to assess whether pauses are more prevalent in one language or whether they exhibit different characteristics in the two languages. Through these investigations, the study aims to

provide a deeper understanding of how pauses function in spontaneous speech and of which factors influence their occurrence.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Types of pauses

Gósy (2023) affirms that the flow of speech often includes gaps, such as various types of pauses, which result from the process of planning what to say. While these gaps might seem like mere disruptions compared to meaningful words and phrases, they are a natural part of speech and can interrupt smooth speech production. Various gaps, including pauses, coughs, laughs, and other sounds, are common and can affect the fluency of speech. However, from a functional perspective, these pauses are not random; they play important roles in the speech production process.

Human speech, especially spontaneous, often includes pauses. Maclay and Osgood's overview on pauses (1959) notes that pauses can arise from both breathing and hesitation. Breathing pauses occur naturally, while hesitation pauses happen when the speaker is unsure or needs time to think, temporarily disrupting the flow of speech. This thesis focuses specifically on hesitation pauses, which are categorized into silent and filled pauses.

Silent pauses, as their name indicates, are simply instances when the speaker briefly pauses and stops talking during their speech, moments of silence. Silent pauses, sometimes also called unfilled pauses, come in two main forms: unusually long silences and the non-phonemic lengthening of sounds.

Non-phonemic lengthening involves extending the duration of speech sounds without changing the meaning or phonemic composition of words. This can occur for reasons such as emphasis, where sounds are lengthened to highlight specific words or phrases, or for expressiveness, to convey emotions like excitement, frustration, or surprise. Essentially, non-phonemic lengthening affects the rhythm and emotional tone of speech without altering the meaning or phonemic details of words.

It is important to note that what one speaker might clearly recognize as an unfilled pause could be perceived differently by another speaker, particularly if they speak more slowly. This factor may be an issue in the analysis of the said category as it does not give us a clear criterion that would help in the analysis of silent pauses.

Filled pauses are also hesitations in speech, but instead of being silent, they are filled with either sounds or words. When these pauses are filled with sounds like *um* and *ah*, they are referred to as hesitation markers. If they are filled with meaningful words like *you know*, *like*, or *well*, these words are called fillers.

Deese (as cited in Mead, 1996) suggests that a skilled speaker likely aligns hesitations with natural syntactic breaks in their speech. It is important to understand that silent pauses are not always disfluencies, whereas noticeable filled pauses are almost certainly considered disfluencies, particularly in professional public speaking contexts.

Research on filled pauses has generated varied and often conflicting findings regarding their function and meaning. Given their significance in speech production and analysis, this thesis explores their role in greater detail. Key questions include their function, frequency, typical occurrence in speech, potential meaning, whether hesitation markers *um* and *uh* can be considered words, and how listeners perceive them. These topics have been central in all existing studies on filled pauses.

2.2. Function of filled pauses

Several researchers have linked the function of filled pauses to cognitive processes occurring in the speaker's mind. This perspective is commonly referred to as the Symptom Hypothesis, as argued by de Leeuw (2007). The symptomatic interpretation of filled pauses suggests that these speech elements reflect underlying cognitive activity.

Maclay and Osgood (1959) suggested that filled pauses serve a similar purpose as unfilled pauses by offering the speaker additional time for verbal planning. Just as unfilled pauses create a silent interval that allows for cognitive processing and organization of thoughts, filled pauses offer a verbal placeholder. This verbal placeholder helps the speaker momentarily halt the flow of conversation while they think of the next word or phrase to use. In both cases, these pauses are crucial for ensuring that speech is well-organized and effectively communicated, giving the speaker time to formulate their ideas and maintain fluency in their delivery.

Schachter et al. (1991) demonstrated that filled pauses frequently occur when a speaker is confronted with a challenging decision or choice. These pauses tend to appear as a speaker processes complex thoughts or searches for the right words, phrase or idea. Essentially, filled

pauses can signal moments of cognitive effort or uncertainty during speech, reflecting the speaker's struggle to articulate their thoughts clearly in the face of challenging decisions.

Schachter et al. (1991) also claim that many researchers concur that filled pauses typically signal a "time out" for the speaker to find the next word or phrase. They act as a momentary break in speech, allowing the speaker to gather their thoughts and determine the most appropriate way to continue, but also, allowing him the time to contemplate the next thing to say, which may also indicate hesitation or uncertainty.

Additionally, Reynolds and Paivio (as cited in de Leeuw, 2007) argue that pauses were found to occur more frequently when people talked about abstract concepts than when they discussed concrete ones. This increased use of pauses with abstract topics may reflect the greater cognitive effort required to organize and express these less tangible ideas.

Hesitations indicate problems with the planning stage during speech production (Clark and Wasow, 1998). Since planning involves several cognitive processes, hesitations in speech can signal that there was a disruption or difficulty in this planning phase. Consequently, a speaker might insert a pause as they work through these issues. Their conclusion suggests that hesitations have historically been used as indicators of the cognitive processes involved in speech planning.

Swerts, Wichmann, and Beun (1996) propose that filled pauses in conversation can serve a purpose, such as signaling the speaker's intent to continue speaking, i.e., "hold the floor", or expressing uncertainty about their response. Similarly, Jiang, Ekstedt, and Skantze (2023) note that filled pauses are common in spontaneous speech and "can serve as a turn-holding cue for the listener, indicating that the current speaker is not done yet" (Jiang, Ekstedt, and Skantze, 2023:1).

Clark and Fox Tree (2002) suggest that, contrary to the idea that filled pauses help speakers keep their turn, hesitation markers can sometimes indicate a willingness to give up the turn. For example, a speaker may use a hesitation marker when forgetting a word to invite the listener to fill in the blank and help them finish the sentence.

Jiang, Ekstedt, and Skantze (2023) examined how filled pauses affect the likelihood of a speaker maintaining their turn in conversation. They found that while filled pauses do help retain the turn, their impact may be weaker than expected due to other contributing cues. The prosodic features and position of the filler also significantly affect turn-holding probability.

Based on the above studies, it is evident that filled pauses serve various important functions in spoken communication.

2.3. Frequency of filled pauses

In her 2023 research, Gósy collected data from numerous experts and concluded that the frequency of filled pauses is influenced by a wide range of factors. These factors include the speaker's age, with less experienced speakers potentially using more pauses; their mental state, where anxiety, stress, or cognitive load may increase the occurrence of disfluencies; and their behavior, such as habits or speech patterns developed over time.

Additionally, the phonetic context plays a role, as certain sounds or word combinations may naturally lead to more pauses. The syntactic structure of the speech is also important; more complex or unfamiliar sentence constructions might prompt a speaker to pause more frequently. The length of the utterance matters, too, with longer sentences or monologues often requiring more pauses for breath or thought. Furthermore, the topic of discussion can influence pauses, with unfamiliar or challenging subjects causing more hesitation. Finally, the communication situation itself, such as a formal presentation versus a casual conversation, can affect how often speakers use filled pauses. Gósy's research highlights how these diverse factors interact to shape the frequency and nature of filled pauses in speech.

2.4 Typical locations of pauses in discourse

Maclay and Osgood (1959) emphasized that pausal phenomena generally acted as minor, non-essential events. However, they can help identify important linguistic units, such as breaks at boundaries of phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences and therefore bring attention to an important role of pauses. Their research suggests that most filled and unfilled pauses occur at the boundaries between words, and as a result, they typically happen between words of any type.

Filled and unfilled pauses are not in free variation or complementary distribution with each other. Although both types of pauses are equally likely to appear in different phrase sequences, their occurrence is not evenly distributed across all positions within phrases. Filled pauses are more common before function words and at the boundaries of phrases, whereas unfilled pauses tend to occur more frequently before lexical words and within phrases. Despite this, neither type is restricted to specific positions exclusively, as both can and do appear in any position where the other type might occur.

Research by Barr (2001), Beattie (1979), and Maclay and Osgood (1959) indicates that hesitation phenomena, among which are pauses, are most likely to occur at the beginning of an utterance or phrase. This is because these points require greater cognitive effort for planning. This indicates that the cognitive load significantly influences disfluency, as interruptions like these are more common before longer utterances (Oviatt, 1995) and when discussing topics that are unfamiliar (Bortfeld et al., 2001).

Furthermore, disfluencies, among which are pauses, frequently occur before content words, including rare terms such as specific color names, underscoring the impact of cognitive load on word-by-word disfluencies (Maclay & Osgood, 1959). Beattie and Butterworth (1979) discovered that disfluencies were more frequently occurring before content words that were either low in frequency or considered contextually unlikely in two-person conversations. They proposed that these disfluencies might stem from speakers being conscious of selecting less likely words, rather than from experiencing cognitive load.

2.5. Can hesitation markers *um* and *uh* be considered words with meanings or not

Although this is not the primary focus of this research, it is important to acknowledge the ongoing debate over whether hesitation markers *uh* and *um* should be considered as words that carry meaning which listeners recognize and comprehend or are they simply a tool similar to prosodic features and gestures.

On the one hand, Clark and Fox Tree (2002) argue that *uh* and *um* should be regarded as words within a speaker's vocabulary. Although these sounds lack propositional content, they still align with pragmatics, prosody, semantics, phonology and syntax of English words. From this perspective, hesitation markers function like interjections (such as *ah* and *oh*), signaling that the speaker intends to maintain control of the conversation. Clark and Fox Tree (2002) also suggest that *uh* and *um* convey different meanings, with *um* indicating a longer upcoming delay. This claim is supported by an analysis of the pause lengths following these fillers in the LL, AM, and Pear speech corpora.

On the other hand, when humans communicate, their messages are conveyed through more than just words; prosodic features and gestures also play a crucial role. According to Corley and Stewart (2008), disfluencies, such as hesitation markers like *um* and *uh*, function as communicative tools similar to the tone of voice.

The research on this topic is highly ambiguous, with no clear consensus on whether hesitation markers like *um* and *uh* should be considered meaningful words or if they are better classified as prosodic features. Some studies suggest that hesitation markers like *um* and *uh* function as words with specific communicative purposes, while others argue that they are primarily elements of prosody, reflecting hesitation or speech planning rather than conveying distinct meaning.

2.6. Difference in speech between professionals and non-professionals

The speech difference between professionals and non-professionals is evident in several ways. Professionals typically use precise language and industry-specific terminology, demonstrating a command of nuanced vocabulary suited to the conversational context. They prepare extensively for interviews and discussions, possessing a clear understanding of topics, guest backgrounds, and potential questions, which helps them handle unexpected situations smoothly.

Being trained professionals, who earn their income through a job pertaining to the domain of public speaking, their delivery, as Fox Tree (1995) states, is characterized by smoothness and clarity, meticulously crafted to impart information without interruptions, repetitions, or revisions. She goes on to say that such a level of fluent speech takes a lot of time to perfect through practice. Such people, due to their professions, are frequently encouraged to practice their presentations to improve their fluency. This puts practice and fluency into direct correlation, indicating that through practice higher fluency can be achieved. It can be thus concluded that if speech is more fluent, it is also less prone to pauses in its delivery.

In contrast, non-professionals often use more casual, everyday language and may not be familiar with specialized jargon or formal speech patterns. Their language tends to be more spontaneous and less structured, reflecting their reliance on immediate thoughts and personal experiences rather than a carefully planned narrative.

This could be due to the fact that, in casual conversation, individuals seldom prepare meticulously or rehearse each statement for precise articulation and delivery. Consequently, their speech is full of pauses, repetitions, and moments of restarting ideas.

In a talk show context, hosts, as trained professionals with preparation and experience, are likely to have smoother and more fluent speech with fewer pauses. In contrast, guests, who

lack the same preparation or training, may be expected to show more pauses and less fluid speech, reflecting their reliance on spontaneous thoughts and personal experiences.

2.7. Influence of filled pauses on listeners

While it is not the topic of this analysis, it is important to note that while most speech research focuses on the speaker, it is crucial to consider the listener's role in communication.

Listeners perceive filled pauses in speech as cues that the speaker is thinking or is uncertain about something, which can aid in message interpretation and engagement. Such pauses signal that the speaker has not finished speaking and allow time to process complex information. However, frequent filled pauses can make the speaker appear less confident, affecting their credibility. While occasional filled pauses may suggest thoughtfulness and maintain attention, excessive use can frustrate listeners, disrupt comprehension, and negatively impact perceptions of the speaker's competence. In this way the listeners' responses to disfluencies significantly shape the communication process.

3. Research

This study aims to examine the frequency and types of pauses, as well as the position in utterances where pauses occur in discourse of both hosts and guests on the selected talk shows. It seeks to identify whether there are differences in pause patterns between hosts and guests. Additionally, the research compares the occurrence and nature of pauses in English and Croatian to assess if one language exhibits a greater tendency for pauses than the other.

The research investigates whether variations in pause frequency between TV hosts and their guests can be linked to differences in fluency due to practice. It examines if TV hosts, typically more experienced in speech production, display fewer pauses compared to their guests, who are celebrities from various professions. Although they are all famous people used to the media exposure, they are not trained to the level of hosts. The analysis aims to determine whether hosts, as professionals, generally make fewer pauses in their speech than their guests.

As it is evident from the title of this thesis, the subject of this research are pauses in spontaneous speech in the media since spontaneous speech is filled with disfluencies (Clark and Wasow, 1998). The biggest number of pauses occurs in spontaneous speech, and the reason for choosing the media, or to be more precise, talk shows, is the nature of that format, which is very chatty and spontaneous, and therefore should provide the author with enough material to investigate the hypotheses and assumptions outlined in the introduction of this chapter.

The research further investigates whether the occurrence of pauses in spontaneous speech varies between different languages. By comparing the most used pauses in Croatian and English-speaking contexts, it aims to determine if there are any similarities between the two languages in terms of the types of pauses used.

Initially, we present the results for each show individually, focusing on the specific findings related to pauses in spontaneous speech. This approach allows us to explore the unique characteristics and patterns observed in each case, providing a detailed understanding of how pauses manifest themselves within the context of each talk show. Then we conduct a comparative analysis to identify and analyze any differences or similarities between the two languages used in shows. This comparative phase helps us draw some broad conclusions about the nature of pauses in spontaneous speech and their potential variations across different languages.

4. Case studies

4.1. Research

As the premises of this research have already been outlined, it is sufficient to state that this first case study investigates all the proposed hypotheses specifically in the context of *The Graham Norton Show* and the second case study investigates all the proposed hypotheses specifically in the context of *Večer na 8. katu*. This includes analyzing various aspects of speech, such as pause frequency and distribution among the hosts and guests, as well as the types of pauses occurring in the speech uttered. However, the hypothesis concerning the differences in pauses between English and Croatian speakers will be discussed separately, in a parallel comparison, to highlight any potential linguistic variations that may influence the findings.

4.2. Methodology

The data for this study were collected from two different television talk shows: *The Graham Norton Show*, a popular British chat show, and *Večer na 8. katu*, a Croatian talk show. To ensure a balanced and comprehensive analysis across both shows, three episodes were selected from each show, resulting in a total of six episodes being analyzed.

From *The Graham Norton Show*, the total speech duration across the three selected episodes amounted to 135.7 minutes. This represents the total speaking time observed from the host and guests in the show during these episodes. Similarly, the three episodes of *Večer na 8.*

katu provided 140.67 minutes of speech for analysis. This indicates a slightly longer combined duration of spoken content compared to *The Graham Norton Show*. In total, across both shows, 276.37 minutes of material were analyzed.

By selecting two different shows with a nearly equal amount of speech, the study aims to provide insights into the use of pauses across similar talk show formats. The total duration of 276.37 minutes offers a substantial amount of material for a thorough comparative analysis of how pauses, both silent and filled, are used in spontaneous speech, contributing to the understanding of conversational dynamics and speaker behavior.

The episodes selected for this study were transcribed *verbatim*, meaning every word spoken during the episodes was captured exactly as it was said. This was done to ensure the highest level of accuracy in the analysis, allowing for a precise examination of the language and pauses occurring in it. The transcription process was carried out using Turbo.Scribe.ai, a specialized transcription tool designed for high accuracy in converting spoken content into text. In addition to simply transcribing the spoken words, the transcriptions were enhanced with timestamps for each segment of the dialogue.

Furthermore, speaker identification was incorporated using initials to distinguish between different individuals participating in the conversation. The host and guests were all assigned initials, allowing easy differentiation of who was speaking at any given time. This makes it possible to examine the distribution of pauses among hosts and guests.

Pauses were identified and each pause was categorized based on its type (e.g., filled or silent) as well as whether it was uttered by a talk show host or by a guest. Filled pauses were further categorized into hesitation markers (e.g., *um*, *uh*) and fillers (e.g., *you know*, *like*).

The study is limited by the subjective nature of categorizing pauses and the potential for variability in transcription accuracy. Additionally, the findings are based on a selected sample of episodes and may not fully represent the entire range of content across different talk shows or formats.

5. Case Study 1 - *The Graham Norton Show*

5.1. About the show

The Graham Norton Show is a British comedy talk show on BBC One that blends celebrity interviews, musical performances, and light-hearted comedy. Hosted by Graham

Norton, an Irish comedian and presenter known for his wit and charm, the show stands out for its relaxed, informal atmosphere and spontaneous humor.

The Graham Norton Show brings together celebrities from various fields like film, music, and sports, encouraging group conversations that often lead to unpredictable, entertaining moments. Norton's natural interviewing style and affable personality create a relaxed environment, allowing guests to share candid, often funny exchanges. This spontaneous setting makes the show ideal for studying pauses in spontaneous speech.

The show's cozy red sofas create a relaxed, living-room vibe. Episodes usually end with live musical performances from global stars to emerging talents, adding variety. *The Graham Norton Show* stands out for its humor, spontaneity, and inclusive atmosphere, breaking down barriers between the host, guests, and audience for a unique and engaging experience.

5.2. Materials

For this case study, the materials consisted of three episodes from *The Graham Norton Show*. The selection of the episodes was based on diversity in guests and topics, to ensure as much objectivity as possible.

Details of the episodes:

Episode 1: *The Graham Norton Show*, Season 19, Episode 9

> **Air date:** May 20, 2016
>
> **Runtime:** 44:29 minutes
>
> **Guests:** Russell Crowe, Ryan Gosling, Jodie Foster, Greg Davies, Tom Daley, Elton John
>
> **Synopsis:** In this episode of *The Graham Norton Show*, Russell Crowe and Ryan Gosling promoted their comedy *The Nice Guys*, set in 1970s Los Angeles, while Jodie Foster discussed directing the thriller *Money Monster* with George Clooney and Julia Roberts, sharing insights from her Hollywood career. Greg Davies entertained with humorous stories from his work, including his role in *Man Down*. Olympic diver Tom Daley spoke about his training for the 2016 Rio Olympics and his relationship with Dustin Lance Black. Elton John closed the show with a song from his album *Wonderful Crazy Night* and shared memorable stories from his music career.

Episode 2: *The Graham Norton Show*, Seasons 10, Episode 6

Air date: December 2, 2011

Runtime: 44:20 minutes

Guests: Jessica Biel, Sarah Millican, James Corden, Bradley Cooper, Lenny Kravitz

Synopsis: In this episode of *The Graham Norton Show*, Jessica Biel appeared on the show to talk about her current projects and share stories from her career in acting. Comedian Sarah Millican brought her signature humor to the episode, offering amusing anecdotes and engaging in light-hearted banter with the other guests. James Corden entertained the audience with his comedic observations and stories, reflecting on his journey to stardom. Bradley Cooper discussed his latest films and shared experiences from his time in Hollywood, while Lenny Kravitz contributed a musical touch, recounting stories from his career and possibly performing a song.

Episode 3: *The Graham Norton Show*, Seasons 20, Episode 19

Air date: February 17, 2017

Runtime: 47:21 minutes

Guests: Tom Hiddleston, Ruth Wilson, Ricky Gervais, Daniel Radcliffe, Joshua McGuire, Tinie Tempah

Synopsis: In this episode of *The Graham Norton Show*, Tom Hiddleston and Ruth Wilson discussed their latest projects and personal experiences, with Hiddleston sharing insights from his Marvel roles and Wilson talking about her work in *Luther* and *The Affair*. Ricky Gervais added his trademark humor with entertaining stories from his career. Daniel Radcliffe, known for *Harry Potter*, spoke about his post-Potter roles and varied acting career. Joshua McGuire brought his own perspective to the conversation, and British rapper Tinie Tempah rounded out the show with insights into his music career and a performance of one of his latest hits.

When combined, the total runtime of all three episodes analyzed amounts to 135.7 minutes of conversational content available for analysis. This comprehensive duration allows for an in-depth examination of the spontaneous speech featured throughout the episodes, providing ample material for a thorough analysis of pauses in the said speech.

5.3. Results and discussion

Table 1. General overview of pauses in *The Graham Norton Show*

Type of pause	Count
Total Pauses	449
Filled Pauses	428
Unfilled Pauses	21

The analysis of pauses, which identified 449 pauses in total, 428 of them filled and only 21 unfilled, highlights the overwhelming reliance on filled pauses in conversation. This disparity suggests that speakers heavily favored filled pauses over silent pauses. Filled pauses serve multiple important functions: they allow speakers to hold their turn in conversation, signal that they are still processing or formulating thoughts, and maintain the flow of dialogue without awkward silences. The minimal use of unfilled pauses may suggest that silence is often perceived as disruptive in spontaneous speech, prompting speakers to fill these gaps with vocal sounds to smooth the conversational dynamics and ensure continuity. This reliance on filled pauses underscores their role in managing speech effectively, maintaining listener engagement, and preventing breakdowns in communication.

Table 2. Distribution of filled pauses in *The Graham Norton Show*

Type of filled pause	Count
Hesitation markers	231
Fillers	197

The analysis of filled pauses, which identified 428 instances, comprising 231 hesitation markers and 197 fillers, offers a detailed look into the role these verbal cues play in spontaneous speech. The dominance of hesitation markers indicates that speakers frequently needed to pause and gather their thoughts, reflecting the real-time cognitive processing involved in conversation. These markers are often used when speakers momentarily struggle to find the right words, plan their next statement, or mentally organize complex ideas. The prevalence of hesitation markers demonstrates how essential these cues are for managing the cognitive load

of speech production, particularly in situations where responses must be formulated quickly and on the spot.

On the other hand, a significant number of fillers highlights their active role in maintaining conversational flow. Unlike hesitation markers, which signal a brief pause in thinking, fillers are more deliberate and serve multiple functions. They help manage speech dynamics by softening transitions between thoughts and introducing new ideas. Fillers gave speakers time to think without creating noticeable gaps in the conversation, which could disrupt the interaction.

The analysis highlights that there were 231 instances of hesitation markers compared to 197 instances of fillers. This indicates a slight predominance of hesitation markers, suggesting that speakers may have relied more on these specific verbal cues to navigate their thoughts during conversation.

Table 3. Types of hesitation markers occurring in *The Graham Norton Show*

Type of hesitation marker	Count
um	193
uh	31
ah	7

The analysis of hesitation markers, revealing a total of 231 instances, 193 *um*, 31 *uh*, and 7 *ah*, offers valuable insight into the way speakers managed pauses and thought processes during speech. The overwhelming frequency of *um* suggests that it served as the primary verbal signal when speakers needed time to think or collect their thoughts before continuing. This prevalence may point to a more subconscious preference for *um* due to its smoother, longer sound, which allows speakers to maintain their conversational flow without the interruption that a full silence would create.

The less frequent occurrence of *uh* and *ah* also plays a significant role in this context. Although they appear in fewer instances, their presence highlights the varied ways speakers use verbal cues to signal pauses. *Uh* might be used for shorter, more immediate pauses. This range of hesitation markers indicates that speakers employed a repertoire of verbal strategies depending on the length and type of pause they needed.

These findings reflect the complexity of real-time dialogue, where speakers continuously balance the cognitive demands of processing information, organizing thoughts,

and maintaining the flow of conversation. Hesitation markers like *um*, *uh*, and *ah* turned out to be essential tools in managing these demands, allowing speakers to buy time without breaking the conversational rhythm.

Table 4. Types of fillers occurring in *The Graham Norton Show*

Type of filler	Count
you know	83
like	39
so	27
yeah	25
I mean	23

The analysis of fillers, identifying 197 instances in total, sheds light on the nuanced role these words and phrases play in conversational speech. With *you know* being the most prevalent filler, appearing 83 times, it is evident that this phrase served as a key tool for speakers to maintain conversational flow. *You know* functions as a way for speakers to check for listener engagement, signal shared understanding, or give themselves a moment to organize their thoughts without disrupting the pace of conversation. Its frequent usage suggests it is deeply embedded in spontaneous speech, acting almost as a bridge between ideas and ensuring continuity in dialogue.

Other notable fillers, such as *like* (39 instances), *so* (27), *yeah* (25), and *I mean* (23), while relatively less frequent than *you know*, played an important role in bridging the gap in subjects' speech.

The diversity of fillers in the data reflects the informal, spontaneous nature of conversation on *The Graham Norton Show*. Each filler serves a specific function, whether to manage pauses, transition between topics, or engage the audience. Their varied usage helps create a natural and relatable communication style, facilitating smooth interactions that feel less scripted and more dynamic.

Table 5. Host – guest distribution of pauses in *The Graham Norton Show*

Number of episode	Number of pauses (host)	Number of pauses (average per guest)
Episode 1	27	17.28
Episode 2	25	24.40
Episode 3	16	24.60

Contrary to the hypothesis suggesting that a professionally trained host would exhibit less pauses due to their extensive preparation and control over speech, the data from *The Graham Norton Show* present a different picture. In Episodes 1 and 2, the host made more pauses compared to the average pauses per guest, with 27 and 25 pauses respectively, versus 17.28 and 24.40 pauses per guest. This suggests that, despite the host's training, his pauses were more frequent than those of individual guests. In Episode 3, the host's pauses decreased to 16, aligning more closely with the hypothesis, though this was an exception rather than the rule. The lower pause count in Episode 3 might reflect a more refined handling of the conversation or a more structured approach to the conversation.

The observed increase in the number of pauses by the host in Episodes 1 and 2, compared to individual guests, suggests that the host's speech is highly affected by the unscripted and dynamic nature of the talk show format. Unlike prepared speeches where the host can rehearse and anticipate every word, live conversations with guests involve spontaneous exchanges that cannot be fully anticipated. This unpredictability often necessitates pauses as the host searches for the right words, reacts to unexpected responses, or navigates the flow of the discussion. In contrast, during the prepared segments of the show, such as episode introductions and outros, where the content is pre-planned and rehearsed, the host's pauses were minimal. This highlights the effectiveness of preparation in enhancing fluency and reducing the need for pauses. This suggests that while the host can manage unplanned content with more ease over time, the initial episodes demonstrated the inherent challenge of maintaining seamless speech in a talk show setting where not all dialogue can be scripted or rehearsed.

5.4. Conclusion

This case study examined the dynamics of pauses in spontaneous speech in *The Graham Norton Show*, counting a total of 449 pauses, with a significant majority classified as filled

pauses (428) and a smaller number as unfilled pauses (21). The findings reveal a pronounced reliance on filled pauses, particularly hesitation markers, which accounted for 231 instances, indicating their critical role in managing speech flow and cognitive processing during conversation.

Among the hesitation markers, *um* emerged as the most frequently used, occurring 193 times, highlighting its importance as a verbal cue for speakers to gather their thoughts. This suggests that speakers are often in a state of active cognitive engagement, using such markers to navigate the complexities of real-time dialogue.

In terms of fillers, a diverse range was identified, with *you know* being the most prevalent (83 occurrences), followed by *like* (39), *so* (27), *yeah* (25), and *I mean* (23). This variety demonstrates the strategies speakers employ to maintain conversational momentum and engage listeners, reinforcing the idea that fillers play a vital role in informal communication.

Interestingly, the data revealed that hosts exhibited a higher number of pauses compared to guests, which contradicts the initial hypothesis that suggested hosts, due to their professional training, would have fewer pauses. This outcome underscores the spontaneous nature of talk shows, where even experienced speakers must navigate unpredictable interactions, leading to increased pause frequency.

6. Case study 2 – *Večer na 8. katu*

6.1. About the show

Večer na 8. katu (translated as *Evening on the 8th Floor*) is a Croatian talk show hosted by Danijela Trbović, a popular television presenter and journalist known for her sharp wit and charismatic presence. The show aired on HRT (Hrvatska radiotelevizija), Croatia's public broadcaster, and quickly gained a following due to its distinctive approach to the talk show genre.

Danijela Trbović, with her relaxed interviewing style and ability to engage guests in lively, often humorous conversations, allowing for spontaneity and candid exchanges, is at the heart of *Večer na 8. katu*. She skillfully creates a welcoming and open atmosphere that encourages guests to share personal stories and insights, making the interactions feel genuine and engaging. The show brings together a wide range of guests from various fields, such as actors, musicians, writers, politicians, and other public figures, which leads to dynamic and varied discussions. The set design, which resembles a contemporary living room rather than a

formal studio, further enhances the show's informal tone, making it comfortable for both guests and viewers.

The show covers a wide range of topics, from current events and cultural issues to personal stories and humorous anecdotes, often focusing on themes relevant to Croatian society while still appealing to a wider audience.

6.2. Materials

For this case study, three episodes from *Večer na 8. katu* were chosen, with guests from various fields, which increased the diversity of topics that were discussed.

Details of the episodes:

Episode 1: *Večer na 8. katu*, details on season and episode unavailable

Air date: January 2015

Runtime: 50:07 minutes

Guests: Zlatan Stipišić Gibboni, Ivo Šćepanović, Željko Maretić Žele, Nikša Bratoš, Blaženka Leib

Synopsis: In this episode of *Večer na 8. katu*, Zlatan Stipišić Gibonni, the celebrated Croatian singer-songwriter, is the main guest, sharing insights into his music career and personal life. Ivo Šćepanović, a close school friend, reminisces about their shared childhood experiences and the bond they developed over the years. Željko Maretić Žele offers humorous and heartfelt anecdotes, highlighting Gibonni's personality beyond the stage. Music producer Nikša Bratoš discusses Gibonni's dedication in the studio, while Blaženka Leib shares stories from their time as roommates, showcasing Gibonni's character and friendship. Together, the guests create a well-rounded portrait of Gibonni, celebrating both his musical talent and his deep connections with friends.

Episode 2: *Večer na 8. Katu,* details on season and episode unavailable

Air date: 2011

Runtime: 40:55 minutes

Guests: Kemal Monteno, Tarik Filipović, Ivica Propadalo, Daria Lorenci

Synopsis: In this episode of *Večer na 8. katu*, host Danijela welcomes a group of distinguished guests, all successful public figures from Bosnia and Herzegovina: Kemal Monteno, a celebrated singer-songwriter, Tarik Filipović, a well-known actor and TV host, Ivica Propadalo, a prominent musician, and Daria Lorenci, a talented actress. The discussion focuses on their experiences moving from Bosnia to Croatia, the challenges of adapting to a new country, and how they maintain their Bosnian heritage. The guests also address common misconceptions about Bosnia, sharing personal stories that highlight their identity and the cultural integration they've experienced. The episode offers an insightful look at the resilience of individuals navigating life between two cultures.

Episode 3: *Večer na 8. katu*, details on season and episode unavailable

Air date: 2015

Runtime: 50:05 minutes

Guests: Zdravko Čolić, Kornelije Kovač, Ivica Propadalo, Metma Đuni, Amika Tomčić Burno Kovačević, Antonija Šola, Maja Sar

Synopsis: In this special episode of *Večer na 8. katu*, legendary singer Zdravko Čolić takes the spotlight as the main guest, sharing personal stories from his illustrious career in the music industry. The episode is enriched by several guests who offer unique perspectives on his life and work. Kornelije Kovač, a longtime collaborator, discusses their early partnership and the creative process behind some of Čolić's iconic hits, while Ivica Propadalo reflects on Čolić's influence on the pop scene in former Yugoslavia. Astrologist Amika Tomčić brings a lighter moment, reading Čolić's horoscope and offering insights into his life from an astrological angle. Songwriters Bruno Kovačević, Maja Šar, and Antonija Šola also appear, sharing their experiences of writing songs for Čolić and discussing his unique ability to bring their compositions to life. With Čolić's reflections and stories from those who have worked closely with him, the episode offers an intimate portrait of one of the region's most beloved musical icons.

The combined total runtime of the three episodes is 140.67 minutes of conversational content. This substantial duration facilitates a detailed examination of the spontaneous speech present in the episodes, offering sufficient material for an in-depth analysis of pauses.

6.3. Results and discussion

Table 6. General overview of pauses in *Večer na 8. katu*

Type of Pause	Count
Total Pauses	303
Filled Pauses	273
Unfilled Pauses	30

The analysis of pauses recorded a total of 303 instances. Among these, 273 were classified as filled pauses, indicating a prevalent use of verbal cues during conversation. In contrast, there were 30 unfilled pauses, which reflect moments of silence or hesitation without verbalization. This distribution suggests that speakers relied heavily on filled pauses to navigate their speech, highlighting the dynamic nature of the dialogue in the episodes. The high number of filled pauses points to the spontaneous character of the conversations and the cognitive processes at play as speakers engaged with one another.

Unfilled pauses, the 30 recorded, typically served as moments of silence where speakers were reflecting or contemplating their next words. These pauses can indicate thoughtfulness or uncertainty, allowing the speaker to gather their thoughts without verbal interruptions. They can also provide an opportunity for listeners to process information.

In contrast, the 273 filled pauses in this case study often reflect hesitation or the speaker's effort to maintain the floor while formulating their thoughts. They serve various functions, such as signaling that the speaker is not finished speaking, indicating a need for more time to think, or even managing conversational flow.

The high number of filled pauses compared to unfilled ones suggests that the speakers often relied on verbal fillers to navigate their speech, which implies a certain level of spontaneity and a desire to keep the conversation flowing. Given the format of a television show, where interactions are typically more dynamic and less scripted, this indicates that the speech was primarily highly spontaneous.

The reliance on filled pauses in such a setting can be attributed to the fast-paced nature of live discussions, where participants must think on their feet and respond quickly to both

questions and each other. This environment encourages natural, unscripted exchanges, leading to a higher incidence of filled pauses as speakers seek to maintain the flow of conversation while organizing their thoughts.

In a spontaneous format like a TV show, the prevalence of filled pauses not only reflects individual speaking habits but also highlights how participants interact in real time, adjusting their language use to suit the context and their conversational partners.

Table 7. Distribution of filled pauses in *Večer na 8. katu*

Type of filled pause	Count
Hesitation markers	151
Fillers	122

The analysis of filled pauses revealed a total of 273 instances. Of these, 151 were classified as hesitation markers, indicating a significant reliance on these verbal cues as speakers navigated their thoughts. Meanwhile, 122 instances were identified as fillers.

Hesitation markers, such as *um* and *uh*, serve as verbal cues that indicate a speaker is momentarily pausing to think or gather their thoughts. The presence of 151 hesitation markers in *Case study 2* suggests that speakers frequently needed to manage their cognitive load during conversations. This reliance on hesitation markers implies that speakers were actively processing information and considering their responses, reflecting a natural aspect of spontaneous speech. This is particularly relevant in a TV show format, where quick thinking is often required. Additionally, hesitation markers can signal uncertainty or a lack of confidence in what is being said. By using these markers, speakers may be attempting to buy time to formulate their thoughts, convey their hesitation about a topic, or soften the impact of their statements. Overall, the frequent use of hesitation markers reveals the complexities of communication in a dynamic environment, highlighting how speakers navigate the demands of spontaneous dialogue.

The remaining 122 filled pauses, classified as fillers, serve several important purposes. Fillers help speakers maintain their turn in the conversation, signaling that they are still speaking and have not yet finished their thought. This is particularly crucial in dynamic environments like talk shows, where multiple participants may contribute simultaneously. Additionally, fillers contribute to the rhythm of speech, allowing for a smoother flow in dialogue and making the conversation sound more natural and less stilted, which is important

in casual settings. Furthermore, the use of specific fillers can reflect individual speaking styles or regional dialects, adding an element of personality to the conversation. Overall, these fillers play a vital role in enhancing communication and fostering engagement among speakers.

Table 8. Types of hesitation markers occurring in *Večer na 8. katu*

Type of hesitation marker	Count
um	117
a	22
am	12

The analysis of hesitation markers revealed a total of 151 instances across the episodes. The most frequently used marker was *um*, accounting for 117 occurrences. This indicates that speakers often relied on this common verbal cue during their speech. The second most common marker was *a*, with 22 instances, followed by *am*, which appeared 12 times.

These results not only highlight the reliance on specific hesitation markers but also provide insight into the cognitive processes of the speakers. The frequent use of these markers indicates that, in the informal context of conversation in talk show *Večer na 8. katu*, speakers are actively navigating their thoughts and managing the flow of dialogue. This reliance on hesitation markers reflects the natural rhythm of speech and the challenges inherent in formulating responses in real-time, showcasing the dynamic nature of communication in the setting of a talk show.

Table 9. Types of fillers occurring in *Večer na 8. katu*

Type of filler	Count
ovaj	71
ono	18
ne znam	15
mislim	11
znaš	6
ovoga	1

There was a total of 122 instances of fillers, highlighting their crucial role in facilitating conversational flow. The most prominent filler, *ovaj*, appeared 71 times, suggesting that it

serves as a key linguistic tool for speakers in navigating their dialogue. Its frequent usage indicates that speakers rely on this filler to buy time while formulating their thoughts or responses.

Following that, *ono* (*that*) appeared 18 times, while n*e znam* (*I don't know*) was used 15 times. The filler *mislim* (*I mean*) was noted 11 times, and *znaš* (*you know*) appeared 6 times. Lastly, the filler *ovoga* (*this*), with just one occurrence, highlights that not all fillers are equally prominent; however, its presence still contributes to the overall tapestry of spoken language.

These results underscore the speakers' tendency to use specific fillers to maintain the flow of conversation and manage their speech dynamics in the spontaneous context of the discussion.

Table 10. Host – guest distribution of pauses in *Večer na 8. katu*

Number of episode	Number of pauses (host)	Number of pauses (average per guest)
Episode 1	36	17.8
Episode 2	22	15.5
Episode 3	26	8.5

The analysis of pauses reveals important dynamics in the conversational structure of the episodes studied. A total of 303 pauses were recorded, with the host contributing 84 pauses. This significant number indicates the host's active role in guiding the dialogue, highlighting moments of hesitation or contemplation that are crucial in maintaining the flow of conversation. The presence of pauses from the host suggests that even experienced speakers engage in thoughtful processing, reflecting the spontaneous nature of the talk show format.

The analysis of pauses across the three episodes reveals intriguing patterns in the dynamics of conversation between the hosts and their guests. In Episode 1, the host made a notable 36 pauses, accompanied by an average of 17.8 pauses per guest. This high number suggests a lively exchange where both the host and guests engaged in thoughtful, reflective interactions, allowing space for ideas to develop and for guests to respond fully.

In contrast, Episode 2 saw a decrease in the host's pauses to 22, with an average of 15.5 pauses per guest. This reduction may indicate a more fluid conversation, where the host maintained a steadier pace, perhaps leading the dialogue more assertively or guiding it toward specific topics. The slight decrease in guest pauses could suggest that they felt less need to

hesitate, potentially reflecting a greater comfort level or familiarity with the conversational style.

Episode 3 presents a further decline in the number of pauses, with the host making 26 pauses and guests averaging just 8.5 pauses. This could imply a shift towards a more dynamic interaction, where the host may have taken the lead more significantly, prompting quicker responses from guests. The lower average of guest pauses suggests that they were likely more engaged and responsive.

In all three episodes, the analysis revealed that guests had a lower average number of pauses compared to the hosts. This finding contradicts the hypothesis outlined in this thesis, which suggested that hosts, due to their professional training and experience, would exhibit fewer pauses.

The higher number of pauses among hosts may indicate their role in guiding the conversation, allowing for more thoughtful engagement with the dialogue. It suggests that while hosts may be trained to manage discussions, the spontaneous nature of talk shows requires them to navigate real-time interactions, leading to a greater frequency of pauses. This dynamic emphasizes the complexity of conversational behavior, where even seasoned speakers can experience increased pauses due to the unpredictability of live interactions.

6.4. Conclusion

The analysis of the pause data reveals a total of 303 pauses, with 273 categorized as filled pauses and 30 as unfilled pauses. This significant prevalence of filled pauses indicates that speakers often relied on unfilled pauses to navigate their speech. Such a high count of filled pauses suggests a natural spontaneity in conversation, characteristic of environments like talk shows where quick thinking and immediate responses are essential. The presence of 30 unfilled pauses highlights moments of silence where speakers may have taken time to reflect or organize their thoughts. While these pauses are fewer in number, they play a crucial role in the flow of conversation, allowing space for consideration and signaling the end of certain thoughts.

Overall, the analysis of the 151 hesitation markers compared to the 122 fillers further highlights the complexities of spontaneous speech in a conversational setting. While the numbers are relatively close, the greater prevalence of hesitation markers underscores the

cognitive and social functions of pauses. This suggests that speakers more frequently relied on these markers to navigate their thoughts during lively interactions.

The analysis of hesitation markers and fillers provides significant insights into the dynamics of spontaneous speech within the studied episodes. The prevalence of 151 hesitation markers, particularly the dominant use of *um*, indicates that speakers often relied on these verbal cues to pause and gather their thoughts, reflecting the cognitive processes integral to real-time conversation. This reliance highlights the spontaneous nature of dialogue in a live talk show setting, where participants navigate complex topics and interactions.

In addition, the identification of 122 fillers underscores the strategies speakers use to maintain conversational momentum. The prominence of *ovaj* as a filler demonstrates its effectiveness in keeping the dialogue flowing, while other fillers such as *ono*, *ne znam*, and *mislim* and *ne znam* reveal the varied ways speakers manage their speech.

Even though the original hypothesis suggested that the host, as a trained professional, would have fewer pauses in their speech, the data revealed a different outcome, similar to the findings in the first case study. This discrepancy may be attributed to the spontaneous nature of talk shows, where discourse cannot be completely prepared in advance. As a result, hosts also need to engage in spontaneous speech with their guests, leading to a higher number of pauses. This highlights the complexities of live interactions, where both hosts and guests navigate the dynamics of conversation in real time, contributing to the overall flow and rhythm of dialogue.

7. Comparison of Case study 1 and Case study 2 and joint analysis

7.1. Comparison of *The Graham Norton Show* and *Večer na 8. katu*

Both *The Graham Norton Show* and *Večer na 8. katu* are marked by their engaging hosts, Graham Norton and Danijela Trbović, whose charisma and humor play a crucial role in the shows' success. Both hosts excel at making their guests feel comfortable, fostering an environment that encourages spontaneous and candid conversations. These shows deviate from the traditional talk show format by embracing a more informal, conversational style that feels more like a lively social gathering than a formal interview. This casual vibe is reflected in their set designs: *The Graham Norton Show* features a cozy red sofa, while *8. kat* is styled to resemble a modern living room, contributing to the relaxed atmosphere.

Additionally, both programs feature a broad array of guests from different fields, such as actors, musicians, writers, and politicians, which helps keep the content varied and engaging. The shows thrive on unscripted, spontaneous interactions. *The Graham Norton Show* often uses its group format to facilitate unexpected exchanges among guests, whereas *8. kat* emphasizes personal stories and anecdotes, resulting in a natural and unpredictable flow of conversation.

The choice of these two shows as case studies is driven by their shared characteristics, which make them ideal examples of spontaneous speech in media. *The Graham Norton Show* and *Večer na 8. katu* offer abundant instances of unscripted dialogue, providing a valuable basis for analyzing filled and unfilled pauses within spontaneous speech. By analyzing these shows, we gain insights into not only how often pauses occur and their typical positions within the speech but also whether pauses are more prevalent in one language compared to the other. This comparative analysis is particularly useful as it sheds light on how spontaneous speech may differ between English and Croatian, and between TV hosts and their guests.

7.2. Research

This research aims to take a closer look at the outlined hypotheses and their results across individual case studies, comparing various aspects of pause usage in conversations. We will examine the differences in the number of pauses in both languages, analyze the most frequently used types of filled pauses, and explore the distinctions in pause counts between guests and hosts. Additionally, the study will compare the results from both case studies to identify any consistent patterns or divergences in pause usage. Through this comparative analysis, we aim to provide insights into the complexities of spontaneous dialogue and the factors that contribute to variations in pause usage among speakers.

7.3. Materials

As previously outlined, the materials for this study consist of three episodes from *The Graham Norton Show* and three episodes from *Večer na 8. katu*, resulting in a total of six episodes for analysis. This selection provides a diverse range of conversational contexts allowing for a comprehensive examination of speech patterns. The combined runtime of 276.37 minutes of analyzed speech offers a substantial amount of material for investigation, covering a wide array of topics and reflecting the highly spontaneous nature of the discussions. This spontaneity is particularly relevant in understanding how speakers navigate real-time interactions, contributing to the richness of the data for analysis.

7.4. Methodology

The methodology employed for this segment of the research will focus exclusively on comparing the two shows, *The Graham Norton Show* and *Večer na 8. katu*, along with their respective results. This comparative approach will involve a systematic analysis of the pauses recorded in each show, examining both filled and unfilled pauses, as well as the overall frequency and distribution of these pauses among hosts and guests.

To facilitate this comparison, the pauses have already been categorized into filled and unfilled pauses, with the filled pauses further divided into hesitation markers and fillers. Additionally, we have determined the differences in the number of pauses uttered by guests and hosts. With this foundational analysis complete, we will now focus on comparing these results across the two distinct formats. This comparison aims to identify patterns and differences in pause utilization, providing insights into the linguistic strategies employed in these two shows and highlighting the influence of each show's structure on spontaneous speech.

7.5. Results and discussion

Table 11. Comparison of distribution of pauses in Case study 1 and Case study 2

	Case study 1	Case study 2
Total number of pauses recorded	449	303
Filled pauses	428	273
Unfilled pauses	21	30

The comparison of pauses in both cases highlights a clear trend toward a predominance of filled pauses over unfilled ones, with Case study 1 exhibiting a higher overall pause count than Case Study 2.

In Case study 1, there were a total of 449 pauses, with 428 being filled pauses and only 21 unfilled pauses. This indicates that speakers frequently relied on filled pauses to maintain the flow of conversation and manage their thoughts. The high ratio of filled to unfilled pauses suggests a conversational style that emphasizes ongoing engagement and reflection.

In contrast, Case study 2 had a total of 303 pauses, with 273 filled pauses and 30 unfilled pauses. While the trend of filled pauses dominating the dialogue remains consistent, the overall pause count is significantly lower than in Case study 1.

The difference in total pauses may indicate that the conversations in Case study 1 were more dynamic or complex, leading to more frequent pauses. However, it is difficult to determine the exact reasons for the lower number of pauses in Case study 2. This variability could stem from individual differences in speakers' skills, their familiarity with the topic, or other contextual factors that influence speech patterns.

Table 12. Comparison of distribution of pauses in Case study 1 and Case study 2

	Case study 1	Case study 2
Hesitation markers	231	151
Fillers	197	122

In Case study 1, the analysis of filled pauses revealed a total of 428 filled pauses, categorized into two types: hesitation markers and fillers. Hesitation markers accounted for 231 instances, while fillers comprised 197 instances. This indicates a strong reliance on hesitation markers in managing the flow of conversation.

In Case study 2, a total of 273 filled pauses were identified, with hesitation markers totaling 151 and fillers at 122. Similar to Case study 1, hesitation markers were more prevalent, although both types of filled pauses were less frequent overall.

The findings from both cases underscore the significant role of filled pauses in spontaneous speech, particularly the use of hesitation markers. In Case study 1, the dominance of hesitation markers (231) over fillers (197) suggests that speakers relied heavily on these verbal cues to indicate processing time and manage conversational flow. This may reflect a higher level of cognitive engagement or complexity in the discussions, allowing speakers to take their time while formulating thoughts.

In Case study 2, while the total number of filled pauses is lower, the trend remains similar, with hesitation markers (151) again outnumbering fillers (122). The consistent preference for hesitation markers across both cases indicates that speakers prioritize these cues when navigating conversation, likely viewing them as essential tools for maintaining coherence and rhythm.

In both Case study 1 and Case study 2, *um* emerged as the most frequently used hesitation marker, with 193 occurrences in Case study 1 and 117 in Case study 2. This consistent use of *um* across both studies suggests that speakers rely on this marker as a cognitive tool to manage pauses while organizing their thoughts.

The higher frequency in Case study 1 may indicate a more complex or dynamic conversational environment, where speakers felt the need to pause more frequently for reflection or to signal uncertainty. In contrast, the lower count in Case study 2 could imply a more fluid or familiar dialogue, allowing for smoother exchanges with fewer interruptions.

Overall, the prominence of *um* as a hesitation marker highlights its role in spontaneous speech, making it the most used hesitation marker in both cases.

In both Case study 1 and Case study 2, the hosts exhibited a higher number of pauses compared to the guests. The analysis reveals an interesting dynamic in both cases, as the hosts exhibited more pauses than the guests, which contrasts with the initial hypothesis that hosts would have fewer pauses due to their professional training and experience.

This finding suggests that hosts may have felt a need to navigate the conversation carefully, allowing time for thought organization and ensuring that the dialogue remained engaging. This could indicate that, despite their training, hosts still grapple with the spontaneity of live interaction, leading them to pause more frequently as they manage the flow of conversation and respond to guests. This trend may also point to the host's role in facilitating discussion, where taking pauses can serve as a strategic tool to prompt guests to elaborate or to introduce new topics. The increased pauses might also reflect a desire to create a more relaxed atmosphere, encouraging guests to speak freely and share their thoughts.

But mostly, the observation that hosts had more pauses than guests can also be attributed to the spontaneous nature of the shows, where unscripted dialogue is a defining feature. Unlike the structured segments such as intros and outros, where hosts deliver pre-prepared content, the conversational segments are inherently more dynamic and unpredictable. In these spontaneous interactions, hosts have to pause more frequently as they navigate unexpected shifts in topics, respond to guest remarks, or allow for natural breaks in the conversation. This contrasts sharply with the more controlled segments, where the speech flow is uninterrupted and carefully planned. The high frequency of pauses during discussions reflects the real-time cognitive processes involved in managing a lively conversation, where hosts must think on their feet and adapt to the flow of dialogue.

This pattern highlights the difference between prepared and spontaneous speech. While hosts may deliver polished introductions, the unpredictability of conversations often leads to more pauses as they navigate dynamic discussions. The increased pause frequency for hosts in spontaneous segments underscores the complexities of live interaction, where pauses serve as cognitive tools for organizing thoughts and fostering engagement. Ultimately, this insight emphasizes that spontaneity is crucial in shaping communication dynamics, showcasing the adaptability of hosts in managing the unpredictable flow of dialogue.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this analysis reveals several notable similarities between the two case studies. Firstly, both cases demonstrated a significantly higher number of filled pauses compared to unfilled pauses, indicating a reliance on verbal cues to maintain conversational flow. Within the category of filled pauses, hesitation markers were more prevalent than fillers, suggesting that speakers frequently used these markers as cognitive tools to navigate their thoughts during spontaneous interactions.

Additionally, within the hesitation markers, *um* emerged as the predominant choice in both cases and across languages, highlighting its common role as a verbal cue in conversational dynamics. This consistent usage underscores the importance of certain hesitation markers in facilitating smooth exchanges and reflecting cognitive processing during dialogue.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that hosts consistently exhibited more pauses than the average number of pauses made by guests. This trend can be attributed not only to the hosts' roles but also to the spontaneous nature of talk shows, where not all conversation can be prepared. This suggests that hosts use pauses strategically to manage the flow of conversation, invite guest contributions, and enhance overall engagement, even as they navigate the unpredictability of live dialogue.

Overall, these findings emphasize the intricate dynamics of spontaneous speech, illustrating how both hosts and guests utilize filled pauses and hesitation markers to navigate real-time conversations. The similarities across both case studies indicate that, in general, pauses exhibit similar patterns in both Croatian and English, although differences exist in the types of fillers used.

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