***Fillers and placeholders***

**Workshop at ALT 2022 convened by Françoise ROSE and Brigitte PAKENDORF**

Fillers are non-silent linguistic devices used in disfluencies to gain time while searching for words, such as “search sounds” like *um*, specific words like the Spanish demonstrative *este*, or discourse markers like *y’know*. Among these devices, placeholders are specific lexical items filling in the slot of the delayed word or constituent, and as such are often morphosyntactically integrated, as in the example below (Podlesskaya 2010: 12).



Fillers are mainly seen as participating in self-repair (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977), and various fillers can indicate different disfluency functions (Clark and Fox Tree 2002; Kärkkäinen, Sorjonen, and Helasvuo 2007; Navarretta 2015) but they can also participate in interaction management and discourse planning. Furthermore, it has also been argued that disfluency devices can be used intentionally with communicative goals, such as for generic expressions or as a vague identifier meaning ‘N or whatever’ (see for example Corley and Stewart 2008; Podlesskaya 2010).

Fillers, while very likely present in all languages, are infrequently described in grammars, especially for underdescribed languages. As a consequence, the morphosyntactic typology of the domain is only emerging. A preliminary typological study of placeholders (Podlesskaya, 2010) shows that placeholders fill in for nouns more often than for verbs; in the latter case, verbal morphology can be attached directly to a pronominal root, to a derived stem, or to a bleached verbal root that combines with a pronominal or nominal stem. The morphosyntax of placeholders is often rather idiosyncratic, and languages vary in the degree to which the morphology of the target item is mirrored, from zero replication via only partial replication to the full complement of target morphology. They also vary in the degree of repetition of preceding grammatical constituents such as prepositions.

Besides the synchronic morphosyntactic analysis of fillers, interesting questions are the relation of fillers with gestures (see for example Navarretta 2015), methodological issues in transcribing disfluencies in discourse, especially in the context of language documentation (Himmelmann 2006), and the historical development of such items. Mostly, placeholders develop out of (demonstrative) pronouns (like Russian *eto* in (1), see also (Hayashi and Yoon 2010)) or generic nouns (e.g. ‘thing’ as in Teko (Rose 2011: 176)), but lexicalized constructions that include an interrogative are also common, like English *whatchamacallit* (Podlesskaya, 2010; on the latter point see also Enfield 2003).

By putting together this workshop, our major aim is to instigate typological research on fillers and placeholders on the basis of a larger variety of languages. To do so, detailed and typologically informed analysis of fillers and placeholders in underdescribed languages are needed. We believe this task is nowadays facilitated by the existence of large corpora of natural speech.

We invite talks dealing with one or several of the following research topics on fillers (including placeholders):

* phonological and morphosyntactic description
* relation to prosody and gestures
* fillers in sign languages
* discourse functions, within and beyond disfluencies
* frequency in speech
* historical development

Talks can target individual languages, a sample of unrelated languages, language families or linguistic areas. For more information, please contact the convenors:

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The following specifications are excerpted from the ALT XIV call for papers:

Abstracts should be submitted through Easychair (https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=alt2022)

Abstracts submitted to a workshop will be jointly reviewed by members of the ALT 2022 Abstract Review Committee and the workshop organizers. Abstracts submitted for a workshop but not accepted there will be automatically considered for inclusion in the general or poster session.

**Abstract specifications**

Abstracts must be anonymous: do not put your name or other identifying information on the abstract.

Abstracts should be at a maximum length of one**single-spaced page, 12pt font, with another page (at maximum) for references and examples**.

Please put this information at the top of your abstract: abstract title; abstract category (oral, poster, oral/poster); workshop title (if applicable).

**Abstract submission deadline: April 1, 2022**

Notification of acceptance: June 1, 2022

**References**

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