

We flub

6%

of all spoken words.

Umm...it's true. In 2004, Swedish researcher Robert Eklund totaled up filled pauses ("umm," "uh"), mispronunciations, prolongations of individual sounds, truncations, repairs, and explicit editing terms in conversations, excluding other verbal errors like silent pauses. He found that every 17th spoken word is "disfluent." Michael Erard, author of *Umm...Slips, Stumbles, and Verbal Blunders, and What They Mean*, thinks we should embrace our tongue-tiedness. "Verbal mistakes give us insight into people's minds," he says, "and that's good." We think he's right. Uh...right.

Peter Piper It's OK to garble the line. Everybody else does.

