Hedging in Emma Watson's Speech about Gender Equality

[1]Petter Hans Heavenly, [2]Sri Mulatsih
[1,2] Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Semarang, Indonesia
(311202102316@mhs.dinus.ac.id)

Abstract: Hedging is a linguistic resource which conveys the fundamental characteristics of science of doubt and skepticism (Salager-Meyer, 1994). Salager-Meyer also affirm that hedging is the process whereby the authors turn down their statement to reduce the risk of opposition and minimize the "threat-to-face" that hide in every act of communication. This research examines the used of Hedges and to categorize the types of Hedges in online speech. The research adopts Salager-Meyer (1994) theory as a framework and applied descriptive qualitative method. In this study it was showed that several types of hedges were used in the article, such as Modal Auxiliary Verbs; Modal Lexical Verbs /Speech Act Verbs; Adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases; Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time; Introductory Phrases; "If" clauses; and Compound hedges. Meanwhile, the source of the data of this research was obtained from a YouTube video entitled "Hedging in EmmaWatson's Speech about Gender Equality". Furthermore, the finding of this research showed that the speaker dominantly use Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time and Modal Auxiliary Verbs. It shows that the hedging is useful for decreasing someone statement's power because the speaker is not sure about his statement. It also helps the speaker to avoid problem in confronting with others.

Keywords: *Hedging, Hedges, Speech, Pragmatics, Linguistics*

Abstrak: *Hedging adalah sumber linguistik yang menyampaikan karakteristik mendasar dari ilmu keraguan dan skeptisisme (Salager-Meyer, 1994). Salager-Meyer juga menegaskan bahwa lindung nilai adalah proses di mana penulis menolak pernyataannya untuk mengurangi risiko pertentangan dan meminimalkan "ancaman langsung" yang tersembunyi dalam setiap tindakan komunikasi. Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan Hedges dan mengkategorikan jenis Hedges dalam pidato online. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Salager-Meyer (1994) sebagai kerangka dan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Dalam penelitian ini, ditunjukkan bahwa beberapa jenis lindung nilai digunakan dalam artikel, seperti Modal Auxiliary Verbs; Kata Kerja Leksikal Modal / Kata Kerja Tindak Pidato; Frase modal kata sifat, adverbial dan nominal; Perkiraan derajat, kuantitas, frekuensi dan waktu; Frasa Pengantar; "Klausa pengandaian; dan Lindung nilai majemuk. Sedangkan sumber data penelitian ini diperoleh dari video YouTube yang berjudul "Hedging dalam Pidato Emma Watson tentang Kesetaraan Gender". Lebih lanjut, temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penutur dominan menggunakan Approximator derajat, kuantitas, frekuensi dan waktu serta Modal Auxiliary Verbs. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa hedging berguna untuk menurunkan kekuatan pernyataan seseorang karena penutur tidak yakin dengan pernyataannya. Ini juga membantu pembicara untuk menghindari masalah dalam berkonfrontasi dengan orang lain.*

Kata Kunci: *Hedging, Hedges, Pidato, Pragmatik, Linguistik*

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Language is a media that people usually use in their social life (Agha, 2007). In social life, we can divide language into 2 types, there are formal language and informal language. People adapt their use of formal and informal language based on the situation they are experiencing at that time (Kukulska-

Hulme & Shield, 2008). When having interaction with friends, people usually used informal language. However, when having interaction with people of older age or higher position, they will use formal language. Every day, people use language in several kinds of aspects for instance in writing and speaking (Chafe & Danielewicz, 1987). In speaking aspect, people often use language when having spoken conversation with the other people (Gaita, 1990). In conversation, there are several components such as speaker, message, and receiver (Barlow, Morse, Watson, & Maccallum, 2023). The process when speaker deliver his message to the receiver can be called as communication (Prabavathi & Nagasubramani, 2018).

Communication commonly used by people to exchange information and idea between 2 or more people (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011). In aspect of delivering information, communication can be categorized into 2 categories, for example non-verbal communication and verbal communication (Febriantini, Fitriati, & Oktaviani, 2021) In verbal communication, the speaker will deliver his information by speaking or oral ways, for example teacher teaching students, talking with friends, and presidential speech.

This research will discuss about all hedges that used in Emma Watson's speech about gender equality from YouTube video. Hedging is a linguistic resource which conveys the fundamental characteristics of science of doubt and skepticism (Salager-Meyer, 1994). By using hedges, a speaker shows that they aren't totally sure about what they're saying. Meanwhile, Using of hedges in speaking will helps the speaker to decrease his words, so it can save himself from conflict with other speakers or receivers (Gaeta & Brydges, 2020). Hedges make our communication more accurate and reliable by adding shades of meaning that prevent misunderstandings. According to Salager-Meyer (1994), there are some taxonomy of hedges, such as Modal Auxiliary Verbs; Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs; Adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases; Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time; Introductory Phrases; "If" clauses; and Compound hedges. These taxonomy of hedges can be used for analyzing (Salager-Meyer, 1994).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are some previous studies conducted on used of hedges such as in Aziz, Kamran & Ali (2022) made a research on "A Corpus Based Study of Hedges and Boosters in the Speeches of Benazir Bhutto" using Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of meta-discourse model. This study aims at analyzing the

pragmatic function and frequency of selected markers in thirteen selected speeches delivered from 1989 to 1997 by Benazir Bhutto. Next is Azizah (2021) made a research on "Hedges Function in Masculine and Feminine Feature's Language: A Pragmatics Analysis" using theory of Coates (2013) to find language features based on gender and use the taxonomy of the hedging strategy proposed by Martin-Martin (2008). The purpose of this study is to criticize the gender language features proposed by Coates (2013) proposed in Lakoff's theory (1975) by investigating speeches expressed by two different genders in interviews. The data they got from two videos on the Youtube channel First We Feast: Hot Ones with Halsey, as a female respondent and First We Feast: Hot Ones with Shawn Mendes, as a male respondent. Meanwhile, Mansour and Alghazo (2021) did a research on "Hedging in Political Discourse: The Case of Trump's Speeches" adapting Salager-Meyer's (1997) framework and Rabab'ah's & Abu Rumman's (2015) framework. This study aims to analyses the use of hedging devices and assign functions to hedges. The researcher use data from two speeches of Donald Trump before the UN General Assembly in 2017 and 2018. Next is Manaf and Ermanto (2017) did a research on "Hedging in Refusal Speech Act" using concept of hedging in speech acts from Brown and Levinson (1987), Blum-Kulka (1987), and Trosborg (1995). This study aim to explain the forms of hedging in refusal speech acts, the relationship of hedging use with the politeness in refusal speech acts, and the context of the use of hedging in refusal speech acts. The researcher use resources from observing speech act of Indonesian speaker, and interviewed native speakers of the Indonesian language.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research was descriptive qualitative method. Meanwhile, in collecting the data, the researcher chose a YouTube video. After collecting the data, the researcher classified the data into several types. During classifying the data, the researcher used Salager-Mayer's(1994) theory as a framework to categories the types of hedges. This research was focused on the types of hedges in the speech video. In so doing, the dominant type of hedges used in the YouTube video entitled "Hedging in Emma Watson's Speech about Gender Equality" was also mentioned in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research focuses on the types of hedges in YouTube video entitled "Hedging in Emma Watson's Speech about Gender Equality". Based on Salager-Mayer (1994) theory, he divided taxonomy of hedges into 7 categories, for instance Modal Auxiliary Verbs; Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs; Adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases; Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time; Introductory Phrases; "If" clauses; and Compound hedges. The classification of finding and discussion are explained below.

Table 1 The Result of Hedges in YouTube Video of Emma Watson's Speech

No	Types of Hedges	Hedges	Quantity	Percentage(%)
1.	Modal Auxiliary Verbs	may, might, can, would, should.	21	28,77%
2.	Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs	think, assume, appear, believe	8	10,96%
3.	Adjectival, Adverbial, and Nominal Modal Phrases	possible, certain, assumptions, apparently	5	6,85%
4.	Approximators of Degree, Quantity, Frequency and Time	often, about, nearly, more, less, just, few, many, much	24	32,88%
5.	Introductory Phrases	In my opinion	1	1,37%
6.	"If" Clauses	If you believe in equality	13	17,8%
7.	Compound Hedges	it would possibly make,	1	1,37%
		Total	73	100%

The result of this study reveals 74 words of Hedges that predominant in Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time (32,88%) which followed by Modal Auxiliary Verbs (10,96%); "If" clauses (17,8%); Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs (10,96%); Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases (6,85%); Introductory Phrases (1,37%); and Compound hedges (1,37%). There are some examples of hedges are conducted below.

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1. Modal Auxiliary Verbs

In this research, the researcher found 21 hedges that classified into Modal Auxiliary Verbs. The example of Modal Auxiliary Verbs from the speech are may, might, can, would, should. It consist 8 words of "can", 4 words of "should", 4 words of "would", 4 words of "might", 1 word of "may". Here is one of the example of modal auxiliary verbs

Excerpt 1

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I hope those words might be helpful
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The word "might" indicates a possibility of helpfulness. However, the speaker does not really confident that her words will be helpful in every situation. The word "Might" acknowledges this uncertainty and softens the expectation of being universally useful.

2. Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs

In this research, the researcher found 8 hedges that classified into Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs. The example of Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs from the speech are shown, think, assume, appear, believe. It consist 1 word of "shown", 5 words of "think", 1 word of "assume", 1 word of "appear", 1 word of "believe". Here is one of the example of Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs.

Excerpt 2

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I think it is right that women be involved on my behalf in the policies and
decision-making of my country.
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The word "think" in this sentence introduces a personal opinion. The speaker shows that she want to give their opinion and express their doubting and evaluating.

3. Adjectival, Adverbial, and Nominal Modal Phrases

In this research, the researcher found 5 hedges that classified into Adjectival, Adverbial, and Nominal Modal Phrases. The example of Adjectival, Adverbial, and Nominal Modal Phrases from the speech are possible, certain, assumptions, apparently. It consist 2 word of "certain", 1 word of "possible", 1

word of "assumptions", and 1 word of "apparently". Here is one of the example of Adjectival, Adverbial, and Nominal Modal Phrases

Excerpt 3

Apparently I am among the ranks of women whose expressions are seen as too strong, too aggressive, isolating, anti-men and, unattractive.

The word "Apparently" suggests that the speaker isn't sure whether this information is accurate or not. It creates a sense of distance between the speaker and the statement, implying that they haven't confirmed it themselves.

4. **Approximators of Degree, Quantity, Frequency and Time**

In this research, the researcher found 24 hedges that classified into Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time. The example of Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time from the speech are often, about, nearly, more, less, just, few, many, and much. It consist 9 words of "about", 4 words of "more", 4 words of "less", 2 words of "many", 2 words of "often", 1 words of "nearly", 1 word of "just", 1 word of "few", and 1 word of "much". Here is one of the example of Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time.

Excerpt 4

Because the reality is that if we do nothing it will take 75 years, or for me to be nearly a hundred before women can expect to be paid the same as men for the same work

The word "nearly" in "nearly a hundred" is like saying "around 100," but not exactly. It gives us a general idea of age but isn't quite precise. This makes the statement about waiting a bit less specific and urgent.

5. **Introductory Phrases**

In this research, the researcher found 1 hedges that classified into Introductory Phrases. The example of Introductory Phrases from the speech is 'In my opinion'. Here is one of the example of Introductory Phrases.

Excerpt 5

> In my opinion, because to date, I've seen my father's role as a parent being valued less by society despite my needing his presence as a child as much as my mother's.

The word "In my opinion" implies the personal opinion about something, and it is not certain. This acknowledges the contrasting need for both parents, but frames it as an obstacle facing the speaker's desire for equal parental value, potentially softening the impact of the statement.

6. "If" Clauses

In this research, the researcher found 13 hedges that classified into "If" clauses. Here is one of the example of Adverbs.

Excerpt 6

> If you believe in equality, you might be one of those inadvertent feminists I spoke of earlier.

The word "If" introduces a hypothetical condition, leaving room for those who don't explicitly identify as feminists but still support equal rights. It doesn't explicitly state everyone who believes in equality is a feminist.

7. Compound Hedges

In this research, the researcher found 1 hedges that classified into Compound hedges. The example of Compound hedges from the speech is "It would possibly make" and it only consist of 1 phrase. Here is one of the example of Compound hedges.

Excerpt 7

> I've seen young men suffering from mental illness unable to ask for help for fear it would possibly make them look less "macho"—in fact in the UK suicide is the biggest killer of men between 20-49 years of age; eclipsing road accidents, cancer and coronary heart disease.

The phrase "…It would possibly make..." introduces a hypothetical outcome. It acknowledges the speaker's observations without claiming definitive knowledge about the men's internal thoughts. "It would possibly make them" expresses a potential outcome based on external factors rather than a direct insight into their minds.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and discussion above, it can be concluded that the use of hedges have purpose to avoid in confronting with other. It also use when someone want to deliver information that less certain or unsure. Based on the analysis, Emma Watson's Speech about Gender Equality from YouTube video show 7 types of Hedges' taxonomy by Salager-Mayer (1994). The dominant hedges comes from Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time which appear for 24 times (32,88%) which followed by Modal Auxiliary Verbs for 21 times (10,96%); "If" clauses for 13 times (17,8%); Modal Lexical Verbs / Speech Act Verbs for 8 times (10,96%); Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases for 5 times (6,85%); Introductory Phrases for 1 time (1,37%); and Compound hedges for 1 time (1,37%). As a result, the writers of the article tend to use Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time and Modal Auxiliary Verbs than the other types of hedges.

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