



HEDGES USED IN THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES

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Abstract

This study attempts to describe the used hedges in the United States Presidential Speeches. This study is intends to identify the types of hedges and the reason for choosing hedges in the Three United States Presidential Speeches by Salager-Meyer's theory (1997). They are President Bill Clinton, George W Bush, and Barrack Obama. This study used qualitative descriptive approach the data collected by The Three Unites States Presidential Speech in inauguration speech result find out they are mostly used the types of hedges is approximates degree. They used approximate degree is to anticipate or minimize the mistake in starting confirmation in the proposition. Finally, the reasons choosing hedges in the three United States Presidential speeches generally used to show the confusion and vagueness. The point is the speaker may hope the strength of statement that should be claims and would not be justify by experimental data present, choosing instead to remain vague in their statement. In addition, in the three United States Presidential Speeches used few or less reasons choosing hedges to show the positive or negative politeness.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Mayer (1993: 23) language is the way to communicate logically by expressing oneself in logical terms in the same as to speak logic. It means that language is one of the ways for people to express their idea logically to make communication effective. Moreover Moulton in Hawgen and Bloomfield (1998: 3) says that language is a wonderfully rich vehicle for communication. We can use language to express everything like wishes, commands, request, to tell the truth or lies, and to influence the hearer. Simplify, language is also to express our emotion and to formulate the idea.

To communicate means to understand and express feelings, thought, to gain information and to develop science, technology and culture. However, in communicating with others, people do not simply uttering words or sentences. She or he is doing certain things. Austin (1962)

In communication, sometimes the speakers need to express their politeness, doubtfully, etc. In expressing those expressions, the speakers need hedges. According to Hyland (1995: 33) hedge is crucial to scientific writing where it is rarely made without subjective assessments of truth. Therefore, one of the important things in scientific writing is the usage of hedges to strength the truth. Salange-Mayer and Bank (1994) add that hedge is expression of doubt and uncertainly, it means that hedge can make the text becomes interest. Additionally, by hedge, it can make the reader sure with the text. Based on the function of hedges Brown and Levinson in Paltrige (2000: 49) say that this function is given as mitigation of what may otherwise seem to forceful and politeness or respect to stranger and superior. In other words, hedges have function to give contribution in scientific writing in term of the politeness, comfortable, and respect.

The term of hedges was used by Lakoff (1972: 195) he says that words whose job is to make things more or less “fuzzy” and has subsequently been applied to caveats such as “I

think, perhaps, might, and maybe” which we routinely use to qualify categorical assertions. It means that hedging is the words which the job is to make something more or less.

The purpose of the research is to describe the types and the reasons using hedges in the United States Presidential Speeches. The objectives of this research are to identify the types of hedges used in the United States Presidential Speeches and to find out the reasons using hedges in the three United States Presidential Speeches.

One of the studies to focus on hedges phenomenon in new writing was carried out by Misbakhul Munir (2011) says in his thesis about hedging with his title the hedges in English Thesis Abstracts Written by Students of Semarang State University Graduate Program. His result found the general frequency percentage in the English thesis abstract of the students of graduate program of Semarang State University indicates, towards preposition function is found 52.44%, and towards writer is 35.36%, and towards the reader is 12.19%.

The investigation of hedges studied was also conducted by Mahanani (2013). She investigates the use of hedges in the texts of the opinion of The Jakarta Post. In her result found the reliability hedge is most prominent category of hedge used in the text of the Opinion Column of the Jakarta Post, which the frequency is 44%. The second frequency distribution of hedging devices according to their function is attribute which is 32%. The third mostly used hedges function is reader oriented hedges 14% and the last is writer oriented hedge 10%.

On the other hand, other hedges were conducted in journalism field. Another researcher studied was done by Noorian and Bria (2010). They investigated hedges as interpersonal metadiscourse markers in persuasive journalism as a study of text by American and Iranian EFL columnists. This study is based on a textual analysis of 12 opinion articles of The New York Times and Tehern Times as 6 from each newspaper. The findings relieved that hedges as personal metadiscourse markers were present in both set of data, but that

there were significant differences between the two groups regarding the occurrences of hedges, especially in the case of commentaries. The result suggests that different factors interacted in the choice of hedge in newspaper opinion article written by American and Iranian EFL columnist. They are culture driven preferences, genre driven conventions, and Iranian EFL writers' extent of foreign language experience. The study also stressed the need for more attention to this important element in L2 writing course.

The other research of hedges was conducted in Journalism field. The research was done by Anna Prokofieva and Julia Hirschbreg (2010). They investigated hedges as a behavior wherein speakers or writers attempt to distance themselves from the proposition they are communicating. This study is identifying such behaviors is important for extracting meaning from speech and text, and also can reveal information about the social and power relations between the conversant. This study is based on major revision were necessary to make the guidelines appropriate for annotating text as well as speech, which suggests that hedging may be dominant specific. This study compare hedging was more or less prevalent in formal speech among supreme Court Corpus (an instance of less conversational, more formal speech) and NIST Meeting Corpus (arguably a must more informal, conversational setting). These results were surprising given expected more hedging in informal speech. However the high percentage of relation hedges in the SCOTUS corpus. This is only two third of hedge terms identified by labelers in the NIST. In this study suggests that describe expanded and generalized guidelines for the annotation of hedge expressions in text and speech. They represent a more detailed description of this phenomenon, some preliminary experimental result on annotation and automatic detection of hedges.

METHOD

In conducting this study, this research used descriptive qualitative approach. Isaac and Michael (1991: 18) says the descriptive qualitative research describe systematically the facts and the characteristic of a given population or area of interest, factually, and accurately. In this result is qualitative approach is the research focus on the researcher does not set out test hypothesis, but rather to observe what is present with their focus, and consequently, the result is in qualitative data.

The objective of study of hedging used a descriptive qualitative approach. Fraekel & Wallen, (1993: 380-381) argue qualitative approach is because the data will collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers, and it is a preference for narrative description. By using qualitative method this study is intended to find and describe hedges used the United States Presidential Speeches. The purpose of using this method is to explain the types and functions of hedging used in The US Presidential Speeches. The method will used collecting data in documentation one.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Salager-Meyer's (1997) theories describe the types of hedges used in the United States Presidential Speeches regarding to explain the reason for choosing such hedges in the United States Presidential Speeches, the researcher used Salager-Meyer's theory (1997).

Types of Hedges in each US President

Table 1 present the results of the study about relative frequency of each type of hedges found in the three US Presidential Speeches. The types of hedges analysis in this study refer to the seven types of hedges composed by Slang-Meyer (1997). Those eight categories are called strategic stereotype or hedges taxonomy. The terminology symbolizes the sequence of those categories based on how frequent they mostly used.

Table 1. Relative Frequency of Each Type of Hedge in the United States Presidential Speeches.

No	Types of Hedges	BillClinton		George W Bush		Barrack Obama	
		Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 1	Speech 2
1.	Modal auxiliary verbs	12 %	24%	8 %	16 %	22 %	19 %
2.	Modal lexical verbs	0	5 %	12 %	8 %	6 %	4 %
3.	Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrase	12%	3 %	0	4 %	25 %	14 %
4.	Approximate of degree, quality, frequency of time	72%	70%	58 %	56%	44 %	55 %
5.	Introductory phrases	0	0	0	0	0	4 %
6.	If clause	4%	0	16 %	4 %	3 %	4 %
7.	Other hedges	0	0	4 %	12 %	0	0
8.	Question	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		100%	100%	100%	100 %	100%	100 %

From the finding of the research the writer have conclusion based on the Three United States Presidential Speeches. From the table we can show the results of the finding in the Three United States Presidents it is known that most of President used approximates degree in the speeches. Bill Clinton in speech 1 mostly approximate degree is 72%, then modal auxiliary and modal phrase both of the are 12% and the last is if clause 4%. In President Clinton speech 2 approximate degrees is also the most the type's hedges used with percentage 70%, modal auxiliary verbs is 24%, next modal lexical is 5%, and modal phrase 3%. In Clinton speech 1 he does not used modal lexical verbs and in Clinton speech 2 he does not used if clause and introductory phrase.

The types of hedges used in President George W Bush in speech 1 mostly used approximate degree with percentage 58%, if clause is 16%, modal lexical verbs is 12%, next modal auxiliary is 8%, and other hedges 1%. President Bush speech 2 is also approximate degree mostly used with percentage 56%, then modal auxiliary verbs is 16%, other hedges is 12%, next modal lexical verbs is 8%, and last is modal phrase and if clause both of them is 4%. In President Bush speech 1 and speech 2 there is used introductory phrase.

In President Barack Obama speeches used the various types of hedges. Speech 1

approximate degree is 44%, modal phrase is 25%, modal auxiliary verbs is 22%, next modal lexical verbs 6%, and the last if clause 3%. In President Obama speech 2 used the types of hedges are approximate degree is 55%, modal auxiliary verbs 19%, modal phrase is 14%, and the two last are introductory phrase and if clause is 4%.

From the recap percentage types of hedges based on Salager-Meyer's theory in three United States Presidential speeches the researcher get the results in each President employed mostly used the approximate degree, it can be seen from the table above. Approximate degrees are the highest frequency in each United States Presidential Speeches. It conclude that they used approximates to minimize mistake in starting confirmation in the proposition. They might make audience understand and interpret the statement. The used of approximates can anticipate the possibility of negative consequences if they are proved wrong in starting information in the sentences. It deals with avoid of exact point by limiting the personal commitment to things they claims as their knowledge.

Reasons for Choosing Hedges

According Salager-Meyer (1997: 106-108) says that hedges are used for some purpose. There are to minimize the "threat-to-face", be a

way of being more precise in reporting result, be positive or negative politeness strategies and conform to an established writing style. In this study the researcher find out the reasons used hedges in United States Presidential Speeches.

The analysis details under the study it given below.

The result of more detailed analysis of the reasons using hedges used by each President under study is given below.

Table 2. Relative Percentage of reason for Hedges in The Three United States Presidential Speeches.

No	Reason for Hedges	Bill Clinton		George W Bush		Barrack Obama	
		Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 1	Speech 2
1.	Minimize the "Threat to face	33%	20 %	43%	29%	30%	29%
2.	Be a way of being more Precise in reporting result	52%	47%	43%	54%	44%	42%
3.	Positive Or Negative Politeness strategies	15%	33%	14%	17%	26%	24%
Total		10%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In the research finding the researcher concluded based on the Three United States Presidential Speeches reasons choosing hedges. From the table above we can show the results finding in each United States Presidential Speeches. In President Clinton his favorites reason choosing hedges to show the confusion or fuzziness. It means that President Clinton mostly the reason choosing hedges to make the statements fuzzy, doubt, and confusion. The point is the speaker may hope the strength of statement that should be claims and would not be justify by experimental data present, choosing instead to remain vague in their statement. Presidents Clinton is also less using politeness statements in his speeches.

In President George W Bush reasons choosing hedges have different finding between speech 1 and speech 2. In speech 1 President Bush choosing hedges to save the face and to show confusion has same percentage, but in speech 2 President Bush most favorites choosing hedges to show confusion or vagueness. President Bush is also less choosing hedges to show the politeness.

In President Obama Presidential speeches the reasons using hedges is to be a way of being more precise in reporting report in speech 1 and speech 2. From the results percentage we can show that in President Obama Presidential

Speeches mostly using reasons for hedging is to show the lack of certainly. It shows that the speaker's wants to make the statement hopefully should be claims and would not be justify by experimental data present. In President Obama he also less choosing hedges to show politeness in their speeches.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study denote the Three United States Presidential Speeches used various types of hedges and the reasons for hedges. In the three United States Presidential Speeches the researcher gets the result finding where there indication in each United States Presidential speeches that it being used for types of hedges based on the Salager-Meyer theory. In addition researcher finds out the types of hedges in President Bill Clinton speeches in speech 1 Bill Clinton favorites used types of hedges are approximates and also in speech 2. Clinton use of approximate can anticipate possibility of negative consequences if the speakers will be proved wrong in stating information in the statements. The researcher only a few case of types of hedges in speech 1 and speech 2. There are modal auxiliary, modal lexical, modal phrase and if clause. Clinton avoids the less absolute statement.

In President George W Bush and President Barrack Obama are also the favorites used the types of hedges is approximates degree. The researcher only few find the another types of hedges are modal auxiliary verbs, modal lexical verbs, if clause and other hedges in President Bush but in President Obama he does not used other hedges in speech 1 and speech 2. Both of the President favorites used types of hedges is approximates because they can anticipate possibility of negative consequences if the speaker will be proved wrong in starting information in the statements. On the other hand in the three United States Presidential speeches they used types of hedges approximates to anticipate the possibility in their statements. They also employed the modal auxiliary a verb with low level the function is to make the strong commitment and absolute statement.

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