CATEGORY OF HEDGING USED ON SUPPORTING CHARACTERS' DIALOGUES IN *KNIVES OUT* MOVIE

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Abstract

This is the study of the use of category of hedging that is taken from the supporting characters' dialogues in Knives Out movie. There are total 8 supporting characters who spoke with hedges contained in the dialogues. The method used is descriptive qualitative which describes the situation factually. There are 20 data found which are dialogues containing of hedging. Researcher uses the theory of the category of hedging by Yu which are modal hedges category, performative (mental hedges), pragmatic-marker hedges, and quantificational hedges. From the study, researcher found all category of hedging in the dialogues spoken by the supporting characters there 2 data found from modal hedges, 1 from both performative and quantificational hedges category, and the most found category is pragmatic-marker hedges which are 16 data found.
Keywords: *Hedging, Dialogue, Knives Out movie*

Abstrak

Ini adalah studi tentang penggunaan kategori lindung nilai yang diambil dari dialog karakter pendukung dalam film Knives Out. Ada total 8 karakter pendukung yang berbicara dengan lindung nilai yang terkandung dalam dialog. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif yang menggambarkan situasi secara faktual. Ada 20 data yang ditemukan yang merupakan dialog yang berisi lindung nilai. Peneliti menggunakan teori kategori lindung nilai oleh Yu yaitu kategori lindung nilai modal, performatif (lindung nilai mental), lindung nilai penanda pragmatis, dan lindung nilai kuantitatif. Dari penelitian ini, peneliti menemukan semua kategori lindung nilai dalam dialog yang diucapkan oleh karakter pendukung di sana 2 data ditemukan dari modal lindung nilai, 1 dari kedua kategori lindung nilai performatif dan kuantitatif, dan kategori yang paling banyak ditemukan adalah lindung nilai pragmatik-penanda yang 16 data ditemukan .
Kata Kunci: Hedging, Dialog, film Knives Out

I. PRELIMINARY

To communicate and get interact with people is one of the function of language. Language facilitates people around the world to deliver and share idea to be able to be understood by other people. Different people with different thought and culture make it possible to a misunderstanding situation happens during the communication activity. Many cases of wrangle are because of invalid or irresponsible information. The knowledge of hedging strategy is very useful to avoid delivering error information.

Sapir (1921:05) states that language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced sounds. The definition of Sapir expresses that language is mainly concerned with only human beings and constituted a system of sounds produced by them for communication.

Chapman (2011:1), "pragmatics is one component of the study of human language, and can therefore be described as a branch of the academic discipline of linguistics." Pragmatics involves communication skills of using language for different purposes, such as greeting, informing, demanding, promising and requesting. Chapman (2011:1) continued,

"Concepts, theories and approaches developed within pragmatics are being used by those working in many other areas; both in other branches of linguistics, such as sociolinguistics, stylistics, and psycholinguistics, and in different disciplines, such as artificial intelligence, clinical psychology and even law."

II. THEORITICAL REVIEW

Hedging

Lakoff and Zadeh in Hashemi and Shirzadi (2016:33) stated that hedges are linguistic devices that control the degree of fuzziness in communicating messages. It is a strategy used by speaker on their utterances that do not have any strong commitment. It is used to cover the uncertainty of statement therefore people can not judge whether it is corrector incorrect.

Lakoff (1972:195) stated hedges as "words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy. It is Livytska (2019) stated that since Lakoff introduced the notion of hedges into linguistics by defining them as "words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy. It is added by Liviytska that hedges have been given different definitions by different researchers (Crompton, 1997; Hyland, 1996, 1998; Myers, 1989; Salager-Meyer, 1994, 1997).

According to Hyland (1996b:478), " A hedge is any linguistic means used to indicate either (a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth of an accompanying preposition or (b) a desire not to express that commitment categorically.

Category of Hedging

Yu (2009:77) distinguishes four broad hedging categories, namely modal hedges, performative (mental) hedges, pragmatic-marker hedges, and quantificational hedges. The category of modal hedges includes modal auxiliary verbs (e.g. *may, might, could, can*), modal adjectives (e.g. *possible, likely, proba-ble*), modal adverbs (e.g. *possibly, perhaps, probably, maybe*), modal nouns (e.g. *possibi-lity, chance*). The category of mental hedges is generally represented by lexical verbs with epistemic meaning (e.g. *think, suppose, guess, and believe*). Quantificational hedges encom-pass those devices that indicate quantity, frequency and degree (e.g. *some, about, near-ly, approximately, almost, quite, sort of, kind of*, etc.). Pragmatic-marker hedges (implicit hedges), which are "apparently a feature of oral rather than written discourse" (Yu, 2009:93), include such expressions as *actua-lly, in fact, generally speaking, in my opinion,*

for me, in other words, I suppose, I mean, if you like, you know, etc.

a. Modal hedges

1. Modal auxiliary verbs: *may, might, could, can*

   E.g. *It **may** be said that the commitment to some of the social and economic concepts was less strong than it is now.*

2. Modal adjectives: *possible, likely, pro-bable*

   E.g. *There is possible to make new English report before tomorrow.*

3. Modal adverbs: *possibly, perhaps, probably, maybe*

   E.g. *just to train and such. It **probably** won't be any more than that. I'm going to need you to look after your mother while I'm away.*

4. Modal nouns: *possibility, chance*

   E.g. There is a very little chance win-ning the competition without practice.

b. Performative (mental) hedges:

1. Epistemic lexical verbs: *think, thought, suppose, guess, and believe*

   E.g. *Snap! **Thought** I wasn't looking, didn't you?*

c. Pragmatic-marker hedges: *actually, in fact, generally speaking, in my opinion, for me,*

in other words, I suppose, I mean, if you like, you know

E.g. ***I suppose*** *it's dull for you here, after the excitement of London.*

d. Quantificational hedged: *some, about, nearly, approximately, almost, quite, sort of, kind of*

E.g. *His commission just came through. He's had to report to **some** barracks in the middle of nowhere.*

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method which describes a situation systematically or area of interest factually and accurately. It is a line with Sherman and Webb (1988), "Qualitative research is concerned with meaning as they appear to, or is achieved by persons in live social situation." It is useful for describing information that has facts. The related theories to the topic by the experts are also used to empower the explanation of the category of hedging. The data used are taken from the dialogues which utter by supporting character in Knives Out movie. The steps of data collecting is done by the following; 1. Watching the movie; it is done to understand the story and decide which utterances will be used; 2. Taking utterances; this activity is done by watching the movie and collecting the dialogue utters by the supporting characters such as Linda, Richard, Walter, Wagner, Elliot, Joni, the lawyer, and Meg; 3. Identifying the category of hedging; this is the last step to classify the utterances by the category of hedging based on the experts' theories. The major objective of this research is to analyze the category of hedging used in illocutionary acts.

IV. RESEARCH RESULT

Finding

There are 20 collected data which are dialogues that utter by supporting characters below:

Supporting Characters	Amount of utterances	Percentage
Linda	2	10%
Richard	3	15%
Walter	6	30%
The fireman	1	5%
Elliot	4	20%
Joni	2	10%
The lawyer	1	5%
Meg	1	5%

The data was taken after identifying the dialogues by the utterers. The identifying results can be seen from the table.

Discussion

Data 1

Marta : "How are you?"

Linda : "You know, the funeral helped, **I guess**. Just seeing him."

(00.04.50 – 00.04.53)

In this dialogue, Marta came to fulfill the summons of the investigator who would request information from her. When she met Linda, she tried to start a conversation by asking Linda, who had just left by her father, Harlan Thrombey. Linda stated that she was in good condition, but in fact, she could not be sure of her feelings at the time, therefore she said with the word "I guess" as an expression that no was not really sure of her current condition. Therefore, the writer states that this sentence is including to the category hedging of pragmatic-marker hedges category because the utterer uses the phrase "I guess" to disguise her true state.

Data 2

Linda : "**I'm assuming** this will all be wrapped up before the memorial tonight."

Wagner : "We'll do our best, ma'am."

(00.05.19 – 00.05.21)

The dialogue above occurs when Linda would be questioned by detectives who handled case of the death of her father, Harlan Thrombey. Linda expressed her opinion, which was actually more of a hope for herself because she could not be sure whether her thoughts about this case which would soon be revealed, would soon be revealed properly or not. Therefore, the writer states that the phrase Linda used "I'm assuming" belongs to the category of hedging of pragmatic-marker hedges because it is only based on personal opinion of Linda.

Data 3

Richard : "Harlan started out with a rusty Smith Corona and built himself into one of the best-selling mystery writers of all time."

Elliot : "Wow **seems** like all his kids are self-made overachievers."

(00.07.50 – 00.08.01)

This dialogue occurs when Richard, Harlan Thrombey's first son-in-law or Linda's husband, had a turn to be asked for information about the situation at Harlan's house the night before Harlan died. Began when Richard told the success of his father-in-law, which was then responded by Elliot who stated that the success was transmitted to Harlan's children who are also successful by their own efforts. However, in his sentence Elliot did not say with certainty when he used the word "seems" to express his opinion, this was because besides being not very familiar with the Harlan family member, he also did not definitely knew what had been the achievements of Harlan's children. Therefore, from this senten-

ce, the writer states that the sentence uttered by Elliot is a hedging category performative (mental) hedges.

Data 4

Wagner : "Where do you come up with that?"

Walter : "Well, **Dad said** the plots just popped into his head, fully formed."

(00.08.38 – 00.08.42)

This question was asked by the assistant detective, Wagner, to Walter, Harlan's youngest child. Wagner asked something which Walter then answered uncertainty. So, he answered it by quoting his father's opinion in response to Wagner's question. Therefore Walter's sentence can be categorized as hedging category of pragmatic-marker hedges.

Data 5

Walter : You guys fans?"

Elliot : "**I mean**, I don't do much fiction reading myself, but …

(00.08.25 – 00.08.28)

Asking with pride and full of enthusiasm was clearly seen from Walter to Elliot and Wagner. Unfortunately, it was also very clear that Elliot was not a fan Of Harlan's novels as Walter asked. Therefore, to cover the truth and to explain his intension without offending

Walter's feelings, Elliot used the phrase "I mean" rather than to stated it to the point that he was not a fan of Harlan's novels. From this explanation, it is clear that the sentence used by Elliot belongs to hedging category pragmatic-marker hedges.

Data 6

Elliot : "So, you are in the area, right? So, you guys **probably** arrived around the same time."

Walter : "We all got here **around** 8.00."

(00.08.48 – 00.08.54)

Elliot's question was indeed more a question of his own certainty. Therefore, he used the word "probably" which is a form of category hedging of modal hedges. This was because Elliot did not know the exact time of arrival of each member of the Harlan family.

Data 7

Elliot : "So, you are in the area, right? So, you guys **probably** arrived around the same time."

Walter : "We all got here **around** 8.00."

(00.08.48 – 00.08.54)

Around was used to indicate the quantity so it is including to quantificational hedges category. Elliot cannot make sure the exact time or the mean time when they arrive.

So, for avoiding giving the wrong information he chose to use that word.

Data 8

Elliot : "So the night went well?"

Walter : "**I mean**, we're all gutted, but … I was happy to have that night with him."

(00.09.15 – 00.09.22)

When Elliot tried to confirm the situation the night before Harlan's death, Walter was hesitant to answer Elliot's question with the truth. On one side, that night there was a conflict between him and Harlan, but on the other hand, he did not want others to know about it and wanted to continue to show that he had a good relationship to his father. Walter tried to react to it by giving an explanation as if they were very happy. The explanation he began by using "I mean" as from of his own views. It is including to pragmatic-marker hedges category.

Data 9

Walter : "**It's like** I can still feel his hand on my shoulder."

(00.09.29 – 00.09.30)

The category used here is pragmatic-marker hedges category. Walter also added his assumption in the next sentence that the feeling of longing and loss of his father now made him felt as though his father was still holding his shoulder. The word "like" here shows a situation where nothing really happened but only the feeling of his.

Data 10

Joni : "**I think** Linda was upset. But Harlan understood."

(00.10.56 – 00.11.03)

It took time for Joni, Harlan's daughter-in-law, the wife of the late Harlan's second son, Neil, to explain how Linda seen her daughter, Meg, who left the party early. Joni was not too sure of her views on Linda's feelings at the time, so she used "I think" that such of performative (mental) hedges as a form of negotiation if she had misread Linda's feeling.

Data 11

Blanc : "Harlan's nurse, she was at the party in a professional capacity?

Richard: "Marta? **I guess**."

(00.12.51 – 00.12.59)

Richard enjoyed the birthday party the night before Harlan's death. He laughed and chatted happily so he did not notice whether at the time Marta was an invited guest or as a nurse in charge of taking care after Harlan. One thing he knew that Martha worked as Harlan's care giver. Therefore, when he is

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asked by Blanc whether that night Marta was in a professional capacity, Richard could not answer it with sure. He also used "I guess" when answering Blanc's question, so it couldn't be blamed if the answer did not match the facts. This kind of word is including to pragmatic-marker hedges category.

Data 12

Richard: "Harlan hired her to be around to take care of whatever medical needs popped up. But really **she's like** part of the family."

(00.12.59 – 00.13.05)

It is a pragmatic-marker hedges category. Marta was happy to be able to work for the Harlan's family; moreover that family was very welcome and treated her well. Especially Harlan who had so much faith in Marta, even made her as an important person for Harlan. Being treated as a family did not necessarily make Harlan's family members truly make Marta a genuine family, They just stuttered "like" a part of family and not the real family.

Data 13

Walter : "And **I just think** this is a window that's not gonna stay open."

(00.15.34 – 00.15.35)

The conversation that took place in the night before Harlan died, when Walter told his father that there was an offer from one of TV programs that offered high fees. He doubted that the same offer would come again later because the current financial condition which he said was not good. So, according to his thought, just based on his opinion, this is an opportunity that might not come twice, therefore he used "I just think" to state it. It such as a pragmatic-marker hedges category.

Data 14

Blanc : "In his study?"

Richard: "**I don't think** so."

(00.18.01 – 00.18.03)

Feeling legible by detectives Blanc's guess and question toward him, Richard tried to cover it up by using the phrase "I don't think so" which includes to pragmatic-marker hedges category which was merely to disguise the truth because actually Richard had an argument with Harlan in his study but Richard did not want that to be known by the investigator. That sentence is clearly the hedging that Richard used to cover the reality.

Data 15

Harlan : "Oh, hi, Joni."

Joni : "**I thought** I heard something. Is everything okay?"

(00.39.24 – 00.39.29)

The category of hedges is pragmatic-marker hedges. It can be seen when Joni approached Harlan and Marta who were in another Harlan's study on the top floor of Harlan's house. Joni was disturbed by the noise and commotion coming from that room. However, in order to show politeness in asking the questions to Harlan, Joni did not immediately ask what happened, but she started by saying "I thought" which means it showed her personal opinion rather than being interrogating Harlan.

Data 16

Blanc   : "You think your guys can digitize this so we could scan it properly?

Elliot : "Yeah, **I think** we can do that."

(00.56.31 – 00.56.37)

In Elliot opinion it is possible to when Blanc ask the order, but he cannot really sure about it. That is why he used "I think" which includes to pragmatic-marker hedges category to state his opinion.

Data 17

Linda   : "Ransom, what's that mean?"

Walter : "**I think** it means our father finally came to his sense and cut this worthless little brat out of his will."

(01.03.13 – 01.03.22)

In this situation, there was a fight and a match screaming to each other. Walter, who did not like Rnasom's behavior all this time was satisfied with what was expressed by his son, Jacob. Here, the word "I think" confirms the desires and thoughts that he had wanted to overflow and start with his imagination based on his latent desires.

Data 18

Lawyer : "The other reason **I thought** this gathering would beneficial is because Harlan altered his will a week before he died."

(01.07.56 – 01.08.02)

This statement was stated by an attorney who indeed understood the situation and utterance. The attorney used the word "I thought" that has same meaning with "I think" that meant it was only in his idea, he couldn't take any risk if in any of condition, his statement then stated invalid. So, he used this word to minimize or even to lose the risk of making error statement. I thought is kind of pragmatic-marker hedges category.

Data 19

Meg   : "**I guess**, I wanted to ask, what are you gonna do?"

(01.20.23 – 01.20.25)

Meg asked herself was something she is unconfident to prove. It can be drown by the situation when she was trying to figure out herself to face Martha. She finally used the word.

"I guess" that application of pragmatic-marker hedges category when asking to Martha just to show hat she did it just to satisfy people back her that force her to do that.

Data 20

Fireman : "**It could be** a half hour. **It could be** an hour. It defends."

(01.29.41 – 01.29.43)

Fireman were trying to set the fire of and making it on their control. In their serious activity and under the pressure, he was being asked by someone, off course, made them could not explain what would the situation be going clearly. So, they only could tell the estimation of the time would be. The phrase "could be" is one of hedge that comes up from the dialogue from the movie. It is included in the category of hedging modal hedges category that is used to tell the estimation of something or time that can be stated absolutely.

V. CONCLUSION

Hedging is the strategy that speaker uses when stating something which has less com-

mitment. It makes the utterances stated can not be used or considered as a proved.

When people would like to argue but they are not sure about the fact, they used to use the hedge to protect them.

In this article there are 20 data can be collected to be identified the category of hedging used in each data.

Category of Hedging	Amount of Appears	Percentage
Modal hedges	2	10%
Performative (mental) hedges	1	5%
Pragmatic-marker hedges	16	80%
Quantificational hedges	1	5%
Total	20	100%

From the table it can be seen that the most used hedging category which data is taken from the dialogue of *Knive Out* movie is pragmatic-marker hedges category.

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