



Lexical Hedges In “*To All The Boys I’ve Loved Before*” Movie

Ni Kadek Kendran Damayanti¹, I Gusti Ayu Vina Widiadnya Putri², Ni Made Verayanti Utami³

English Study Program, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Mahasaraswati Denpasar University, Indonesia

nikadekkendrandamayanti@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims at identifying the variety kinds of lexical hedges employed in the movie script and to determine their purpose. The data for this study were gathered from the 2018 film “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before” using note-taking and documenting techniques. The original version of the film was produced, directed, and written by Susan Johnsons and Sofia Alvarez. Using Lakoff’s theory regarding the characteristics of women’s language, the data were analysed descriptively. Four lexical hedge examples were found in the “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before” movie, according to this analysis. It was discovered that lexical hedges used in the movie are the words “well”, “you know”, “uh”, and “I thought”.

Keywords: *lexical hedges, movie, women’s language features*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkategorikan berbagai jenis leksikal hedges yang digunakan dalam naskah film dan untuk menentukan tujuannya. Data untuk penelitian ini dikumpulkan dari film 2018 “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before” menggunakan teknik pencatatan dan pendokumentasian. Versi asli dari film ini diproduksi, disutradarai, dan ditulis oleh Susan Johnsons dan Sofia Alvarez. Dengan menggunakan teori Lakoff tentang karakteristik bahasa perempuan, data dianalisis secara deskriptif. Empat contoh lindung nilai leksikal terdeteksi dalam film “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before”, menurut analisis ini. Ditemukan bahwa batasan leksikal yang digunakan dalam film adalah kata-kata “Well”, “you know”, “uh”, dan “I thought”.

Kata kunci: *lexical hedges, film, fitur linguistic wanita*

Introduction

Communication is one of the main focuses of linguistic studies, and language is one of those topics. It typically conveys meaning that rises too various textual, aural, and visual representations. However, if we look at language in the context of social relationships, many other social aspects should be taken into consideration. Humans, who are also considered to be members of social communities, constantly depend on

language to convey their ideas and thoughts to others. In addition to its relevance in communication, language plays a significant role in social aspects of human life. Sociolinguistics is the study of language in its social context, and it mainly addresses the society and language in connection to one another. The varying speech patterns employed by various speakers will have a significant impact on how well learned competencies have been mastered. A movie with speech exchanged by men and women throughout the entire film is utilized as the study's major object to illustrate how women's attitudes regarding language change when they work in a field that is predominately occupied by men. Long conversations between a man and woman who initially met by mistake aboard a train but ultimately fell in love as they had never imagined were possible were included in the film. The exchange of ideas went well as both parties sought to contribute. Both the man and the woman engaged in intense conversation throughout the movie both the man and woman spoke their minds and talk deeply about life, love, and every little thing.

In order to understand why people speak differently in various social contexts, sociolinguistics sincerely seeks to provide insight. In addition, it is also interested in identifying any social functions of language and the means through which it communicates social meaning (Holmes, 1992:1). It also covered the many languages that are typically utilized by gender. The difference in gender roles as expressed by the language that men and women often use in daily life is known as gender. The study of women's language in "Too All the Boys I've Loved Before" is an intriguing subject to talk about since it demonstrates the wide range of speech patterns used by men and women, even when they are not close. The movie is chosen based on several reasons. First, it is shown that a variety of women characters and their own characteristics are appeared in the movie. The movie presented the love story of the character. The next is, it is found there are a variety of particular identity based on the character's age and life experiences. Lastly, the focus of the movie is Lara Jean as the main character. An Asian young woman who grew up in America who stands still with her Asian 'polite' culture. These all show a difference of present study with others; as this is discussed about culture issues as well. Lakoff's theory is used in present study as the theory is explicit and straightforward, the theory is related and suitable to discuss Lara Jean's conversation.

The purpose of this study is to identify the types of lexical hedges employed and to ascertain the purposes of lexical hedges used by the main character in the film *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. There have been some studies on the same subject using various data sources. However, the researcher focuses on how women's everyday speech is used to complement the learned sentences in the film. Long conversations between a man and woman who initially met by mistake aboard a train but ultimately fell in love as they had never imagined were possible were included in the film. The exchange of ideas went well as both parties sought to contribute. Both the man and the woman spoke their thoughts throughout the film.

Three researchers from earlier studies who looked at related issues in terms of the language characteristics of women are being presented by the researcher. The first is a piece written by Alan Jaelani and Elfira Dwi Rosanti (2015). The study was named *Female and Male Students' Use of Lexical Hedges in Spoken Language*. The preceding study prepared participants to characterize lexical hedging patterns used by

male and female students in spoken language and to examine lexical hedging patterns used by male and female students in arguing. This study employed a descriptive-qualitative methodology. By utilizing the hedge strategy suggested by Namasaraev (1997). It is demonstrated that male and female respondents have different tendencies when selecting words with lexical hedges. Female respondents usually employ more lexical hedges than male respondents do. The most common lexical hedges of fillers used by male respondents in this respect are “I think”, “uhh”, and “hmm”, whereas female respondents use lexical hedges of fillers like “hmm”, “uhh”, and “you know”. Compared to female respondents, who have access to a wider range of possibilities, male respondents do worse when selecting the words of lexical hedges. The number of lexical hedges used to communicate opinions in a debate context serves as evidence of this. This essay had a different aim than recent study, which solely discussed the lexical hedges employed by the female characters in the film.

A different study, "Hedges Function in Masculine and Feminine Feature's Language: A Pragmatics Analysis," by Dinda Noor Azizah, published in 2021, focuses on analyzing speeches delivered by two different genders in interviews to assess the gender language features presented by Coates (2013) and suggested in Lakoff's theory (1975). In this study, the descriptive qualitative method was used. Data were investigated using Martin's proposed Martin's taxonomy for the hedging approach and Coates' (2013) theory to detect gender-based language features (2008). The research's findings show that the opposing gender can use male-female language qualities by evaluating how hedges and tactics are used in the notion of speech represented by gender (male, female). This study's is similar with Dinda Noor Azizah's study earlier ones in which both studies use Lakoff's theory to examine the lexical hedges.

Another undergraduate thesis written by Sri Wahyuningsih (2016) entitled Hedges in Thesis Abstracts of Graduate Students of Semarang State University, from Universitas Negeri Semarang. The aims of this study were to describe the hedges used by the State University of Semarang graduate students in English, Mathematics, Science, Social, and Education Management in writing their thesis abstracts, determine whether or not there are differences in the use of hedges, and explain why they used hedges in the ways that they did. The data were gathered from the abstracts of the thesis papers and were used in a descriptive qualitative-quantitative way. The unit of analysis is lexical hedges, which are examined using Salager-(1994) Meyer's taxonomy, Hyland's (1998) taxonomy, and non-lexical hedges as proposed by Navratilova (2013). The results show the use of both lexical and non-lexical hedges. These graduate students use hedges differently from one another. More hedges were often used in English, Social Studies, and Education Management than in Mathematics and Science. The difference with current study is clearly shown because the research which written by Sri was using student's paper as the data source, meanwhile current research use dialogue in a movie.

Method

The data source of the study came from the film "To All the Boys I've Loved Before." It is a 2018 American romantic comedy movie starring teenagers that was

written and directed by Sofia Alvarez. This movie was chosen as the data source because it features a lot of conversations between the female lead and her male acquaintances, siblings, and family members. This film stands out because it portrays youthful romance in a positive light. The main character and her lovers are not shown in an overly romantic environment, but there is still time for the audience to experience their love. You want to fall in love after watching this movie because of its particular mood. The movie's storyline was undoubtedly excellent and effectively captured the feelings you would experience when reading the book. Everything about the movie the cast, the music, the mood was perfect. This film stands out because it portrays youthful romance in a positive light. The method of collecting the data in this study used notetaking and documentation methods. Then for analysing the data, this study used a qualitative research approach. It relies on observation technique. The data collected is selected and being analysed descriptively based on the theory by Lakoff (1975). The collected data is categorized based on features of women's language based on the theory and then analysing function is done afterwards. The data is presented both in formal and informal methods. The formal method is applied by providing a table contains the data of women's language features sentences found. Whereas the informal method is used to explain both the features and functions of the women's language features sentences appeared in the script, since it is also be descriptively explained in words.

Result and Discussion

The analysis of the lexical hedges employed by the lead character in the film "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" is shown below.

Data 1

Kitty: I forgot I had to drive with Lara Jean now.

Lara : **Well**, feel free to take the bus.

The bolded word in the previous sentence is a lexical hedge. The word "well" in the hedge indicates that the preceding sentence match the criteria for a lexical hedge. The data, which is relevant to the context, displays spoken interactions between Kitty, Lara, and Margot, three of the movie's female characters. They are in the kitchen eating lunch. A special supper is prepared by their father the day before Margot, Lara, and Kitty start school. Lara's answer to her sister's statement indicates that she is considering something. According to the data above, Lara employs the word "well," which is a lexical hedge or filler. By using this feature in the phrase, she is trying to convey her uncertainty and lack of trust in her statements. When Lara offered to take the bus to school, she expressed her doubtness by using the word "well," but in reality, she was planning to go with their father so that she wouldn't have to worry about taking the bus. Anyone may engage in such behaviour if they lack confidence, as everyone does in a given circumstance, although women tend to engage in such behaviour more frequently, according to Lakoff (1975: 54).

The function of the hedging techniques used in this conversation is to give the speakers time to consider their next words because she has been quite reticent about speaking previously or because the statement itself cannot prove its accuracy. She expressed her confusion about her own sentence by using the word "well." From this, it can be inferred that her assertion about the future was not definitive.

Data 2

Josh : If I'm not allowed to kiss you?

Lara: Wait, **you know**, you might be the James Dean of this kind of stuff but I have never had a boyfriend before.

Hedges defines the following category of female language traits as lexical . The word "you know" used as a hedging mechanism in the sentence indicates that. According to the context, the data depicts the spoken conversation between Josh and Lara in which she discussed their relationship and told him she didn't want him to kiss her any longer. Lara used the phrase "you know" as an illustration of a lexical hedge or filler in this context. According to Lakoff (1975), the inclusion of the words "you know" in a sentence is an example of lexical hedges or fillers, as stated in Holmes (2013, p. 302). This demonstrates the opportunity offered to the addressee to voice their viewpoint in a conversation. Lara Jean brought up James Dean in the conversation, and it was clear from the way she phrased her question that she wanted to know whether Josh was familiar with James Dean.

Before mentioning James Dean to Josh, Lara Jean uses the phrase "you know." The use of the word "you know" in her assertions and her subsequent discussion of others served to underscore her sense of doubt and her need for Josh's opinion as the addressee. The employment of lexical hedges in this context also demonstrated that the veracity of the assertion itself cannot be established, causing her to lose confidence in her position. Lara Jean uses the phrase "you know." She displays her uncertainty about her own words by directing it toward her sentence. She weakens her statement by using the characteristic as a hedge. The use of the phrases "you know" and the subsequent discussion of other people served to underscore the confusion she felt as a result of the assertions, indicating that she needed Josh's opinion as the addressee. The employment of lexical hedges in this context also demonstrated that the veracity of the assertion itself cannot be established, causing her to lack confidence in her position.

Data 3

Peter: What's that in your hand?

Lara : **Oh, uh** nothing.

The utterance seen above is an example of spoken conversation between Peter and Lara as Lara attempted to hide the love letter behind her. She appeared too

embarrassed to respond when Peter asked her. Oh, eh," Lara says before making a statement. Since Lara Jean used the word "uh" in her remark while concealing her hands that contained the letters, her utterance is classified as a lexical hedge or filler. This word suggested that Lara was unsure of her reaction since she was swiftly caught by Peter and was unprepared for his rejoinder. She juggled being bashful and joyful. She appeared too embarrassed to respond when Peter asked her. Oh, eh," Lara says before making a statement.

Since Lara Jean used the word "uh" in her statement while concealing her hands that contained the letters, her utterance is classified as a lexical hedge or filler. This word suggested that Lara was unsure of her reaction since she was suddenly grabbed by Peter and had not expected his response.

Lara Jean expressed her hesitation about telling Peter what she was hiding beneath her hands by using the lexical hedge "uh," which is classified as a hedge word. Her remark to the addressee was also made weaker by the inclusion of the lexical hedging "uh" in this instance, making her opinion appear less strong. According to the context provided, Lara Jean emphasized uncertainty by using the lexical hedges "oh" and "er" (Lakoff, 1975). She is hesitant to tell Peter what she was hiding behind her hands because of this. The lexical hedge "uh" was used here to weaken her assertion to the addressee, making it appear as though she was unsure whether to reveal the secret and lacked confidence in her ability to articulate it. Because it makes it clear that Lara was trying to conceal something and wasn't telling Peter about it either, this line served a weakening function.

Data 4

Margot: But I also just don't understand why you didn't tell me all this was happening in the first place.

Lara: 'Cause **I thought** you were going to hate me.

The conversation above happens between Lara and Margot. They were speaking formally. Because Lara is hesitant to speak what she is saying, she began her sentence with "I thought." These words, which are classified as lexical hedges or fillers, expressed the speaker's ambivalence about whether Margot would find her repulsive or not. She said the phrase while indicating using lexical hedges that her claim has not yet been verified.

In order to demonstrate that it is impossible to verify a statement's accuracy, Lara Jean utilized the modifying phrase "I thought" in several of her sentences. This is evident in the conversation Lara uses, which she wrote since she believed Margot would despise her for what she had previously done. The phrase "I thought" she used in this sentence had a weakening effect since it served to soften her assertion and convey ambiguity, preventing her from making a clear declaration of her intentions. This is shown as the dialogue done by Lara is done because she thought Margot would hate her because of what she had done before. This sentence she uttered using words "I thought" contained a weakening function because it is functioned to soften her

utterance and also to show uncertainty, which to avoid making a firm statement of what she means towards her statement.

Data 5

Peter: you have this like, this whole judgy face scenario going on.

Lara: **Well, I guess**, I just think that it's really weird that you still talk to your ex-girlfriend on the phone.

The finding demonstrated that Lara and Peter were conversing and disputing inside Peter's home. Lara was going to Peter's place to assist with dinner preparation. They were only discussing Peter's previous friendship with Gen. She still spoke to Genevieve on the phone after Peter broke up with her; for Lara, it was highly unusual for people to get in touch after a breakup. Lara, who his current girlfriend, believed it was bad for them. Lara was coming to Peter's house to help them cooking for dinner. All that they talking about was Peter's relationship with Gen before. Despite having break up with her ex-girlfriend Genevieve, Peter continued speaking with Lara on the phone. Lara gave him a condescending look and told him that she considered what he was doing with her ex was unusual. As his current girlfriend, Lara thought it was not good for their relationship. By then, as she had never been on a date before, so she was confused of what was proper to say, and had no idea how dating should be. In this case, Lara wanted to show herself feeling uncertain towards her own statement, but she wanted Peter to know what she felt about that. Lara then made a judgmental expression and told Peter that she found what he did with her ex-boyfriend was strange. She had never been on a date before, so she had no idea how it should go and was unsure of what was appropriate. Given that she was speaking about her perspective, Lara Jean's used of the lexical hedge or filler "I think" revealed that she was unsure of what she was saying. She expressed an opinion by first saying, "I thought," and then, "I assume," which indicated that Lara was unsure of whether what she had said was accurate or not. She made a conscious effort to speak carefully because the topic was her relationship with Peter. She didn't feel confident making the statement, which led to the dialogue.

The words "well, I think" and such hedging expressions are used by Lara Jean. It served to underline the speaker's feelings of ambiguity about their own claims or the fact that the statement's accuracy cannot be independently verified (Lakoff, 1975). It was made clear that Lara had not made a definitive remark, which lessened the speech's significance. Lara needed to be careful when speaking by expressing hesitation to lessen the effect of her comments since she did not want Peter to be offended by her words. She gave opinion as she said "I thought" then continue with saying "I guess", which shows at the same time Lara is confused whether what she said is right or not. She tried to be really careful to talk because it is about her relationship with Peter. The dialogue happens because she had lacks confidence when delivering the statement.

Data 6

Lara: So, actually, **I think** I'm gonna go and do that, but it was so good to see you, Margot.

Margot: Wait, Lara Jean!

Lara: Okay, bye

Before going to bed at night in Lara's home, Margot made a video call to her. She called because she did not see Lara for a quite long time. Lara had practiced prior to answering Margot's video call. Lara did not want Margot to know that she had been lying all this time. She tried to hide the fact that she liked Peter since the first time they met, when Peter was still Margot's boyfriend. However, Lara was so devastated about her emotions that she desired to cut the conversation short. Lara immediately cut off the conversation by stating her upcoming leave. She did not want to be excessively saying the wrong things to Margot as she was lying before.

Lara was unsure about what she said. Lara uses "I think" which is categorized as lexical hedges or fillers, in which in the dialogue she talked fast and show herself was uncertain towards herself by wanting to end the conversation immediately. She was afraid she could say the secret to Margot, meanwhile she still confused if Margot knew it. She did not want Margot to be mad knowing the secret she kept for a long time. It was happened because Lara was had no confidence at the time she delivered the statement to Margot as she was actually lying at that time.

Lara Jean uses words "I think" as the hedging device to her sentence, in order to avoid the sentence could claim strongly towards themselves, which means it may be not true. She did this so that she conveyed her opinion, but her statement didn't appear to be forceful. This line had a weakening effect since it softened her speech and revealed her hesitation, preventing her from making a clear statement about what she actually meant.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis in the discussion, it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

In relation to the first issue, the results demonstrate that throughout the film, Lara employs a women linguistic characteristic when speaking. The term "lexical hedges" describes the feature. She speaks to every role classification that is created in the film using its features. She communicates with those who share her age, gender, and close relationships using the features. Additionally, to those who are not in close contact with her and are of a different age and gender. In the movie script for "To All the Boys I've Loved Before," there are four lexical hedging examples. These include "**hmm**," "**well**," "**I think**," and "**I thought**." The main character tries to convey her doubt over a past action or set of words by using the features. In essence, the use of hedging, according to Lakoff (2004:79), also has the ability to convey uncertainty or a lack of

trust in what has been said. In response to the second issue about the function, Lara , the movie's protagonist, initially employs lexical hedges to mitigate any potential roughness or unkindness in a statement that was likely intended to be nice. Women's language traits mostly serve to convey a woman's cautiousness when making statements about herself and others of the same gender, as well as her admiration for something or someone. There is no proof that men also used the nine Lakoff-identified characteristics of women's language in the movie's transcript. This leads to the conclusion that Lakoff's theory regarding the characteristics of women's language and its purpose is still applicable to contemporary fiction and is generally true. Second, it is impossible to demonstrate the speaker's hesitation regarding what she previously said or to demonstrate the authenticity of the statement itself. Last but not least, as an implicit apology for making a claim since the speaker does not want to make too much of an assertion. In other words, hedges are employed to both support and refute any claims.

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