“HEDGING” KONSEPTINING PAYDO BO‘LISHI VA TARAQQIYOT BOSQICHLARI

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ANNOTATSIYA

Ushbu maqolada “hedjing” istilohi, uning kelib chiqishi va tilshunoslikda qo'llanilishi, shuningdek, turli tadqiqotlarda “hedjing” istilohining tasnifi o'rganiladi. Hedjing so'zlovchining nutqini bilvosita va xushmuomalalik bilan yetkazish orqali yumshatish uchun ishlatiladi. Shuningdek, u so’zlovchining noaniqlikni yoki shaxsiy shubhasini ifodalashda ham ishlatiladi. Bu tadqiqotda tilshunoslarning hedjingni tasniflashlari va bu istilohdan foydalanishlari muhokama qilinadi.

KALIT SO‘ZLAR

hedjing, kuchaytirish, yumshatish, yuzga tahdid soladigan harakatlar, yuzni saqlash strategiyalari, qalqonlar, taxminni ifodalovchi so’zlar

АННОТАЦИЯ

В данной статье исследуется техника «хеджирования», ее происхождение и использование в лингвистике, а также классификация техники «хеджирования» в различных исследованиях. Хеджирование используется для смягчения речи говорящего путем передачи высказываний косвенно и вежливо. Он также используется при выражении неуверенности или личных сомнений говорящего. В исследовании лингвисты обсуждают свои классификации «хеджирования» и использования этого метода.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА

хеджирование, усиление, смягчение последствий, угрожающие действия, стратегии спасения лица, щиты, аппроксиматоры (слова, обозначающие предположение)

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the “hedging” technique, its origin, and it is usage in linguistics as well as the classification of “the hedging” technique in different research. Hedging is used to soften the speaker’s speech by conveying statements indirectly, and politely. It is also used when expressing the speaker’s uncertainty or

KEY WORDS

hedging, reinforcement, mitigation, face-threatening acts, face-saving strategies, shields, approximators

personal doubt. In the research linguists discuss their classifications in “hedging” and the use of the technique.

INTRODUCTION.

Humanity is differentiated from other creatures through communication. The ability to communicate well has always been appreciated and valued. People not only communicate with each other but also build their interpersonal relations. It is a kind of “art” or “skill” to become good communicators with your interlocutors. Therefore, people must be aware of using special linguistic devices such as “Hedging” or “Cautious language”.

The word “hedge” originated from the Old English word “Hecg” which meant “fence”(living or artificial). Its verb form means to avoid by a sudden quick movement first used in the 1590s [1].

However, the “Hedging” strategy in the economic field started to use in the mid-1800s in Chicago, the USA. At that time Chicago was an important commercial center and farmers along with dealers used the “Hedging” strategy to sell grains. This helped them to plan production, secure monetary gains, improve supply and demand equilibrium, and reduce waste and financial hardship [2].

Hedging refers to a risk management strategy that is used to protect an investment or a financial asset from a major loss due to adverse price movements. Investors and traders use hedging to limit their losses due to the risk of any adverse price movements of their financial assets. A hedge is a kind of trade in which investors and traders purchase an asset to reduce the potential loss of another asset [3].

For instance, a company that makes cereal from corn may purchase corn features before raising their price. At the same time, a farmer may sell their corn features before decreasing the price in the market before harvesting to avoid damage to their budget [2].

Also, people can buy insurance such as life insurance, car insurance, or health insurance to protect themselves or their belongings from possible health issues and damage.

What does “Hedge” mean in linguistics? Its lexical meaning is as follows in several dictionaries:

In the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English [4:488] and Collins English Online Dictionary [5] the term “hedge” means a row of small bushes or trees growing close together, normally dividing a field or garden from another; something

that protects you against possible problems, especially financial problems; protects yourself from potential issues; avoids giving a direct answer to a question.

In the Dictionary of Stylistics the term "hedge" means "qualification and toning down of utterances and statements to reduce the riskiness of what one says" [6:215].

"Hedging" is a linguistic device used in both speaking and writing to express opinions indirectly and demonstrate politeness, uncertainty, and hesitation. It is important to be cautious when deciding between facts and claims in speaking and writing. Hedges are used for one's claims but not for facts.

"Hedging" explored in different areas, however, it became an object of linguistic research in the 1960s. It was studied in logic, semantics, philosophy, and later pragmatics and the term "hedge" is identified differently in each field.

LITERATURE REVIEW.

The term "Hedge" was first introduced by a well-known American cognitive linguist G. Lakoff in 1972. He explained the use of hedges in his article: "Hedges: A Study in Meaning Criteria and the Logic of Fuzzy Concepts". His studies became a starting point for further research. According to Lakoff, hedges are words and expressions that are used to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy" [7:195]. He regarded hedges as lexical items that can exist only in context and he mainly focused on pragmatics rather than semantic aspects of hedges. He considered that hedges are used to reinforce or weaken statements. For example,

1. John is **sort of** smart. (He is smart in some way-It is a weaker statement)
2. Although people call a tomato a vegetable, technically it is a fruit. (technically-according to the facts-It is a stronger statement)
3. He is **very, very** smart. I **really** love you (It is a stronger statement)

After Lakoff, L.A. Zadeh investigated hedges in oral and written speeches from a semantic and logical point of view. According to Zadeh, hedges are contextually dependent and cannot exist out of context, and he proved this in his article "Fuzzy-Set-Theoretic Interpretation of Linguistic Hedges" [8:34].

Later, B.Frazer introduced a new term "hedged performative" [9:458-508]. The researcher used the term for combinations of modal verbs with certain verbs such as, apologize, request, and promise. These structures were utilized for softening or reinforcing speakers' speech in warning, requesting, or ordering something. For example,

I **must request** that you come on time. I **should apologize** for making you wait for two hours (or keeping you waiting). I **can promise** I will complete the task by January.

A few years later, the term “hedges” was investigated pragmatically. Researchers P. Brown and S.C. Levinson introduced the term “face-threatening acts” and they have developed positive politeness strategies by softening and reinforcing certain expressions [10:56-310]. (Later they wrote a book “Politeness. Some Universals in Language Usage”)

Investigations on hedges also continued in the next decade. Researchers Prince, Bosk, and Frader conducted research among medical doctors who work in pediatric intensive care departments [11:83-97]. They divided hedges into 2 subgroups: “approximators” and “shields”. “Approximators” were also divided into “adapters” and “rounders” while “shields” were classified into “plausibility” and “attribution”. According to Prince, Bosk and Frader “adapters” are referred to when the speaker talks about less representative members of a category.

Eg. I noticed that she is **a little bit** lazy. The story we read was **somewhat** horrifying. He is **a kind of** materialistic.

However, “rounders” are used when we talk about not exact information and quantity. “Approximately, about, almost, something between” can be instances of “rounder hedges”.

For example, the population of Uzbekistan is approximately 40 million. The baby weighed about 3.5 kilos. In summer, the temperature is something between 35 and 45 degrees in my country.

“Shields” do not affect the information much. “Plausibility shields” are utilized when the speaker expresses different degrees of uncertainty.

Eg. **I believe, perhaps** we should come to a certain conclusion.

As far as I can tell you, you do not have anyone to trust in the village. **I think, probably** everything might change in the future.

Attribution shields are used when the speaker tells the information received from other people. For example,

Eg. The information was unreliable, **according to her estimates**, **as far as anyone knew**.

According to Prince, Bosk, and Frader shields affect the degree of the speaker’s commitment, the speaker being hedged, while we hedge the proportion itself due to approximators.

Later their classification was criticized by other linguists such as Skelton. Skelton believed that the distinction of hedges into approximators and shields could be applied only to the theoretical part but they believed it has nothing to do with authentic language use. Thus, Skelton claimed that approximators could easily function as shields. For instance, “It is made of something like a rock”. “Something like” in this sentence is an approximator, however, if “I suspect” is used in the same

context, it is considered as a shield. So, shields are widely used in speech and can extend over more than one sentence.

Eg. It is made of something like a rock. (Or I suspect it is made of something like a rock. However, it might likely be broken into pieces.

Hubler wrote a book named “Understatements and Hedges in English” and, “Hedges and Understatements” were compared in his book. He used the terms “Face threatening acts and face-saving strategies” that were first introduced by P. Brown and Levinson in his book. “Face-threatening acts and face-saving strategies” were exemplified by criticism and praise. The book's main idea is to soften speakers' speeches to avoid and minimize further possible “threats” using hedges and understatements. In Grammarly block (H. Spinks, November 27, 2023. Literary devices) “understatements” were explained as follows: “An understatement is a literary device used to downplay a situation as less serious, less significant, or smaller than it really is. Reasons to use understatements might include: being humorous, emphasizing the subject at hand, or being polite. There are 3 types of understatements: irony, (eg. As the hurricane approached, they noted that it was “a little breezy today”) litotes, (“Not a bad idea,” she said, after hearing the perfect solution to their problem) and meiosis (He was on the team but mostly served as a “benchwarmer”).

Well-known French linguist F. Salager-Meyer classified hedges in her article as follows:

1. Shields: can, could, might, would, to appear, to seem, probably, to suggest.
2. Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time: approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally.
3. Hedges expressing author's doubt and direct involvement: I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that…
4. Emotionally charged intensifiers: extremely difficult/interesting, of particular importance, unexpectedly, surprisingly, etc.
5. Compound degrees: could be suggested, would seem likely, would seem somewhat.

She analyzed the frequency of hedges and divisions in different genres. Her findings showed that fewer hedges are used in case reports and research papers than in editorials and reviews in which passive voice is used more frequently.

Researchers C. Swee and H. Tan classified hedges based mainly on F. Salager-Meyer’s theory. According to their research hedges are divided into as following:

A) Adverbials such as approximately, generally
B) Epistemic verbs suggest, seem, appear
C) Modal verbs such as, may, can, would, etc

D) cognition verbs like believe, suppose, think, surmise
E) Hypothetical constructions if- clauses+ adjectives, adverbs, nouns, expressing modality
F) Anticipatory it- clause and there is/are
Examples: A) The population of the city is approximately 12 million.
B) I suggest that the author of the work will also participate in the seminar.
It seems that things are getting worse.
C) I may apply to the University of Foreign Languages in Tashkent after graduation from the Pedagogical College in Karmana District.
It would be interesting to apply this method in your practice.
D) I think it is not appropriate to complete the form in this way.
E) If I agree with you, many things might change.
F) It is likely that to do the project will take 2 months at least.

Researcher Crompton classified hedges into the following types in his article named "Hedging in academic writing: Some theoretical problems. English for Specific Purposes":
A)Epistemic copulas (eg. The price appears to be high nowadays);
B)Non-factive verb phrase structures (eg. The Research suggests that "Hedging strategy" now is used to soften the speakers' speech but not reinforce the speech);
C)Epistemic Modals (eg. The result might be frightening at the end);
D)Probability adverbs (eg. The drink possibly made of lime and lemon);
E)Probability adjectives (eg. It is likely that the result might be good overall).

Caffi introduced his division of mitigating mechanisms in his work "Mitigation". He divided them into subgroups: bushes, hedges, and shields. Mitigation (as a type of Politeness) is theoretically explained in this book [12:881-909]. The main objective of this book is to introduce a fresh, integrated pragmatic approach called "the pragmatics of identity" to communication. Its primary feature is that it aims to integrate concepts from many research fields with practical perspectives (such as studies on politeness, face-work, etc.) to produce a broader framework that takes into account psychological aspects of communication in context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

Current research is qualitative and based on content analysis (hermeneutic method) and comparative method. This study aims to analyze different research on origin of hedges, their use, and the classification of hedges. In this research, the following research articles were analyzed written by Lakoff (1972), Zadeh (1972), Brown, Lewinson (1978), Prince, Bosk and Frader (1982), Lewin (1998), Gribanova (2018) and others.

It should be mentioned that this article is a part of PhD dissertation. (The part of the first chapter of PhD dissertation that is being conducted and the whole dissertation will be published as soon as it is finished.)

ANALYSIS AND RESULT.

Exploring hedges in a variety of fields and genres, such as political discussions, research articles, conversations, courtroom discourse, medical discourse, mathematics, and others, has piqued the interest of numerous scholars since the 1980s. Using hedges mainly depends on genres.

It is important to note that linguists provided many definitions for the concept of "hedge" but sometimes they are controversial and difficult to understand. Initially, the concept was introduced by Lakoff and explained as expressions to make things "fuzzier or less fuzzy" [7:195]. Later, Lewin criticized Lakoff's ideas and argued that "Natural language concepts have vague boundaries and fuzzy edges… and consequently, natural language sentences will very often be neither true nor false, but rather true to a certain extent and false to a certain extent" [13:90].

It is important to note that some linguists such as Lakoff, Prince, Frader, and Bosk addressed the reinforcement and attenuation of hedging aspects. [14:34-43]. However, now "Hedging" does not refer to "Reinforcement" and the words related to making statements stronger are called "intensifiers".

Eg. 1. I **certainly** do participate in the conference. 2. He is **extremely** tall. Now these words in bold are regarded as "intensifiers" not "hedges" anymore. The main difference between intensifiers and hedges is that "intensifiers" make statements stronger while "hedges" attenuate or reduce the force of effect and demonstrate politeness.

CONCLUSION.

"Hedging" was initially introduced in linguistics by a well-known American cognitive linguist Lakoff in 1972 as a technique to reinforce and soften speakers' speeches. But later, intensifiers (or boosters) and hedging are defined as different linguistic phenomena. The "Hedging technique" as a linguistic phenomenon is interesting to investigate. It serves to communicate effectively by softening speakers' speech and conversing politely. In addition, it is a device to express uncertainty to minimize risk or potential unpleasant situations.

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