



# **“Well; I think...”, the Dominant Hedges Uttered by Males in Daily Communication: A Sociolinguistic Study**

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## **Abstract**

Hedges are linguistics features that were previously considered by some researchers as the characterization of women's speech to show hesitation and uncertainty of the speech regarding the character of discussion and the sensitivity of the questions. However, this claim remained debatable by another researcher since the use of hedges cannot be correlated to any specific gender. This study was conducted to reveal the use of hedges that could also be employed by males, the effect given through the employed hedges, and to understand why the hedges are normal in an informal daily conversation by discussing the light topics. The type of this study was qualitative research. The conducted study was supported by the transcription from the recorded online meeting with males native and non-native English speakers. The transcribed recorded online meeting was useful to examine the hedges as the participants' expressions in the discussion. The hedges employed were analyzed using Salager-Meyer's, Lakoff's, and Coates' theories. The results of the study showed that males also utilized hedges in an informal discussion, and the most frequent one is verbal filler will. The hedges uttered by both males native and non-native were various such as to give them chance to think and to reduce the impact delivered, also for self-disclosure and appraise someone's idea. The findings also found that the use of hedges by males in casual daily conversation is normal, regarding saving the speaker's name toward the interlocutor when discussing a sensitive topic or answering a sensitive question.

**Keywords:** hedges; males; non-native English speaker; native English speaker; daily conversation.

## Introduction

Hedges are linguistics features that appear as previously believed as commonly used in conversation by females. Hedges can represent speakers' ideas mainly to support the speakers' utterances to conceal the deficiency of knowledge (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018), lessen the effect of the expressed arguments, to show certainty (Lakoff, 1975 as cited in Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018) or uncertainty (Coates, 2004 as cited in Mohadjer and Jan, 2015). Hedges cannot be separated from gender (Wray et al., 1998) since gender becomes a significant to be observed (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018). However, according to Lakoff (1975) as quoted from Holmes (2013) hedges are believed to characterize women's speech, since hedges used by women show the hesitations and uncertainty which always related to women (Lakoff, 1975 as cited in Mohajer and Jan, 2015). These findings by Lakoff remain debatable since the use of hedges cannot be correlated to a specific gender. Holmes (2013) rebranded Lakoff's findings as the 'powerless forms' considering that the findings by Lakoff were only based on her findings and observations, and in her findings, Holmes (1990) challenged Lakoff's claim that females use more hedges to show uncertainty while there are no significant differences of the employed hedges by males and females.

Furthermore, the use of hedges by the speaker can soften the impact of the utterances toward interlocutors (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018), also in Holmes (1984) as cited by Mohadjer and Jan (2015) hedges have modal meaning intendedly to deliver uncertainty statements and effective meaning to deal with the intention by speaker toward the interlocutors, and according to Hübler (1983) as quoted from Kholisoh and Setiawan (2018) the use of hedges can bring the conversation to become more interesting and acceptable, also the politeness to respect the interlocutor's name can be delivered well through hedges (Mohajer and Jan, 2015). On the contrary, hedges are likely used more by the males in casual conversation to show politeness to the interlocutors of the same gender since the tentativeness and uncertainty through the use of hedges cannot be correlated to a particular gender (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018), and the use of hedges by males according to Kholisoh and Setiawan have more purposes than females' hedges that lead to the differences of the effects and perceptions of the interlocutors. Thus, this study can lead to interesting findings on the hedges used by males in their daily casual conversation which show other purposes of hedges than uncertainty and tentativeness in talking about some particular topics, with various intentions they will deliver.

The previous studies on the use of hedges have been done by Mohajer and Jan (2015); Kholisoh and Setiawan, (2018); Vlasyan (2019) among males has various functions regarding the sensitiveness of the topics. Thus, the use of hedges can show the speaker's regret, save the speaker's name, save the interlocutor's name by reducing the sensitiveness of the topics through the hedged opinion, create

solidarity between the speaker and the interlocutor, and hedging his opinion with adjusted his tone just in case his argument is false toward the topics given (Mohajer and Jan, 2015; Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018; Vlasyan, 2019). The findings automatically reject Coates' (1987) findings that the use of hedges in daily conversation is most likely used not only to save the speaker's name but also the interlocutor's name.

While in Kholisoh and Setiawan (2018), hedges have multifunction effects that reject Lakoff's (1975) claims that hedges belong to women. Kholisoh and Setiawan (2018) found that males use hedges as much as females do such as hedging utterances to show politeness toward interlocutors in a discussion, reduce the tension, and make his arguments become neutral toward sensitive topics. Also, the more we use hedges, the more we give impact to

the interlocutors and the conversation (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018).

The solidarity that comes up through the use of hedges (Mohajer and Jan, 2015; Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018; Vlasyan, 2019) in daily conversation can prevent conflict and harmonize the communication between speaker and interlocutor that can make the conversation more effective (Vlasyan, 2019) while discussing a sensitive topic in daily conversation.

Henceforth, this study will also use the theory by Lakoff (1975) and the theory provided by Coates (1987) to define and to proof the use of hedges by males is as much or more than females and why hedges become normal in males' daily conversation, also this study will use Taxonomy of Hedges provided by Salager-Meyer (1997) to identify hedges with its function and to describe the impact given by the employed hedges by males. Thus, the seven types of hedges are namely: modal auxiliary verbs such as *could, can, maybe, etc.*; modal lexical verbs such as *to assume, to argue, to seem, etc.*; adjectival, nominal, and adverbial modal phrases such as 1) *unlikely, possible, etc.* 2) *suggestion, claim, etc.* 3) *apparently, probably, etc.*; approximators of degree such as *somehow, roughly*; introductory phrases such as *to our knowledge, I believe, etc.*; If clauses such as *if anything true, if true, etc.*; compound hedges: 1) double degrees such as *it would indicate that; it seems like that; etc.* 2) treble hedges such as *it seems reasonable to assume that.* 3) quadruple hedges such as *it may appear somewhat speculative that; etc.* Yet, this study will have both native and non-native English speakers as participants through informal discussion to support the findings of hedges employed by males in daily conversation, and the discussion will be held through online meetings since Covid-19 outbreaks also considering the distance between the authors and the participants.

Furthermore, this study has three research questions namely:

1. What is the purpose of hedges among men?
2. How do hedges affect the conversation among men?
3. Why do hedges become normal in daily conversation, especially among men?

This study purposed to figure out the aim of the employed hedges among men,

the second is to reveal how the hedges employed affected the conversation among men, and the last reason this study conducted is to comprehend why the hedges uttered by men are normal in daily conversation.

## **Methods**

This study used qualitative descriptive data research (Litosseliti, 2010), and focused on the intention of hedges employed by males in daily conversation discussion. This study also described the functions and the impacts given through the hedges used by males in a detailed description. The findings were categorized by Salager-Meyer (1997) in categorizing the types of hedges, there were seven types of hedges provided Salager-Meyer (1997) that were adopted in this study.

Hence, the first step of the analysis of the results is categorizing the types of hedges employed by both males of non-native and native speakers with Salager-Meyer's (1997) Taxonomy of hedges and Lakoff's (1975) theory. The reason for adopting the theory is to reveal the kinds of hedges employed by the participants. And then, for checking the validity of the effects of hedges used Lakoff's (1975) theory, and for validating the normalized hedges among men were used Coates' (1987) theory.

The data were taken from the discussion through an unstructured interview with the speakers who produced utterances in dialogue (Litosseliti, 2010; Levelt, 1999) between one non-native and one native speaker. The non-native and native speakers are two friends who know each other when they studied in Australia. The setting of this study was held through online meetings such as Google meetings or Zoom meetings. Thus, the consent from participants was prioritized since the meetings which contain interviews were documented as collected data that were transcribed into text. Also, the collected data on the use of hedges in utterances delivered by the participants through the transcribed video record was analyzed.

The data collection technique in this study was documentation. The instruments used to collect data were a list of topics and a list of questions. The authors used the made topics and a list of questions that are very uncommon and sensitive to talk about to trigger the use of hedges in utterances and also to hold the interviews stay in the context of the topic discussed. Then, the documentation was useful for the authors to transcribe the utterances delivered by the participants and to analyze the utterances that contain hedges. The authors transcribed a video that contains hedges in every utterance delivered by males through the recorded meeting.

In the analysis of data techniques, the authors categorized the utterances based on the types of hedges employed. Then the data was shown through the condensed data taken from the interviews. The condensed data was analyzed through the data display which showed the hedges as words/phrases and the authors briefly explained the findings. Last, the authors verified the validity of the

found data with the theories provided, and the conclusion was drawn through the verified data (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, 2014).

## Results

The types of hedges provided by Salager-Meyer (1997) that were depicted by non-native English male speakers namely: approximator of frequency (*often, always*), modal auxiliary (*maybe, would, could*), modal lexical verbs (*believe*), introductory phrases (*I think, I believe*) and hedges provided by Lakoff (1975) that is *well*. While the native English speaker employed multiple types of hedges such as modal auxiliary verbs (*maybe, would, could*), introductory phrase (*I think, I mean*), lexical hedges (*you know*), the adjective of probability modal phrase (*probably*), *if* clause (*if*), compound hedges (*I would probably*) and hedges offered by Lakoff (1975) such as *well*.

Second, the authors showed the multi-purposes of hedges employed by the participants. The authors applied the theories by Kholisoh and Setiawan (2018) based on Lakoff (1975) and Hübler (1983), and Mohajer and Jan (2015) based on Coates (2004).

From the results of the discussion, the non-native English speaker has multiple functions of the employed hedges they are: tentativeness, filler, gaining interlocutor's approval, certainty, reduced impact delivered, disclosing someone's idea, and self-disclose. Surprisingly, the results of the functions by hedges were various even though the forum was completely informal and the participants' age was the same. Not only that, but the English native speaker was also employing hedges with its multi-function toward the non-native English speaker interlocutor, specifically: tentativeness, filler, certainty, self-disclose, reduced the impact delivered.

The native English speaker showed that he employed fewer various functions of hedges than the non-native English speaker when delivering his arguments to the interlocutor. The results of this can be related to the factor of the skills shown between the non-native English speaker and the native English speaker.

The differences in the functions of hedges employed by both participants were the result of the background of the speakers. The non-native English speaker tends to use hedges with more various functions than the native English speaker since the non-native English speaker was someone who learns English as their second language supported with learning conditions such as the place where they study English that give them the convenience to speak English (Shi, Harrison, and Henry, 2017).

While the native English speaker used fewer functions of hedges in a conversation to exchange the ideas (Thornbury and Diana, 2006) since he achieved English as his first language, they have learned in the first place (Cook, 1999 as cited in Dewaele, 2017), that practically and culturally attached to Western (Holliday, 2005 as cited in Jenks and Lee, 2019). Hence, the hedges that were uttered by the native English speaker showed the native participant's skill of language skills, since

he knew how to use the correct linguistics form (Liddicoat, 2016). Also, the use of hedges carries various functions and the frequency of hedges was based on the supply of knowledge of the speakers to face particular sensitive topics (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018).

The results of the kinds and the functions of hedges in this study showed Lakoff's (1975) beliefs were proven wrong, especially about the hedges were commonly used by females in conversation to express their hesitations (Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018) in their arguments while discussing some topics that may carry sensitiveness.

Nevertheless, the use of hedges with their multi-functions by both participants has various intentions. The intentions of the delivered hedges in the participants' arguments and why those hedges were acceptable in the discussion were shown in the following step in the discussion segment.

The last step was to reveal the effect of hedges and to show why the hedges were accepted in daily conversation. This study employed the theory by Coates (1987) that dealt with the intention used by the speaker toward the interlocutor through the employed hedges in their arguments when discussing in an informal context such as daily conversations.

Thus, in answering the three research questions, the authors of this study tends to show the exact purpose, effect, and the reason why the uttered hedges by males in daily conversation were considered normal to use or acceptable for the participants of this study. The results of the discussion were explained briefly supported by the example of hedges used in arguments through the discussion transcribed below.

## **Discussion**

### ***Hedges employed by the non-native English speaker***

The found types and the function of hedges that were uttered by the non-native English speaker above were discussed in this section. Some condensed data transcripts were also included, followed by a brief explanation, and the theories mentioned above were used in discussing hedges.

#### *Verbal filler (well)*

The first hedges that were employed by the non-native English participant was *well*. The non-native uttered filler *well* frequently from the beginning of the conversation in almost all of his answers such as in this discussion on a topic of friendship. When the non-native English participant was asked about how long the participant's friendship going, the non-native speaker answered:

Datum 1

Interviewer: How long have you guys known each other?

M1: **Well...** yes, we are good friends he often helps me *like...* (pause) a bunch of times, too many

times actually.

M2: .....

In the conversation above the non-native participant tended to use the verbal filler *well* to buy himself a second to answer the question. The M1 was so sure that their friendship has already been for so long because a particular thing such as the help from his friend mostly came in handy for himself. Also, when they were asked about the closeness of their friendship, M1 tended to use *well* as the hedged answer “close” to show his tentativeness besides buying him a time to answer the question. Hence, the use of this verbal filler showed that the speaker tried to save his name regarding his reputation (Voswinkel, 2011) and created solidarity among his friend.

In this second conversation, when the participants were asked about how they befriended each other, this verbal filler *well* was deployed with the same intention by M1.

#### Datum 2

Interviewer: How do you guys befriend each other? Considering you guys are from different countries, how do you guys get along with that?

M1: **Well...** we roast each other and then we talk through memes, we are *like* in the same page so...

M2: .....

M1 also hedged his answer, but this time he explains how they could be befriended and supported by the word *like*, to create the solidarity between his friend even the M1 was not sure about the exact reason why did him and his friend befriend each other. The produced hedges have also lessened the impact on M1’s interlocutor as the hearer that accompanies M1 (Meyerhoff, 2013) since the outcomes might sensitive to the interlocutor (Lakoff, 1975 as cited in Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018). The sensitivity of the topic discussed also pushed M1 to deliver more of these hedges (Hübler, 1983 as cited in Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018).

#### *Approximator of frequency (often and always)*

In this conversation, the M1 hedged his arguments with these hedges to get his interlocutor’s approval. The hedged argument was to show how much help he got from the interlocutor but he was not sure about the detail.

#### Datum 3

Interviewer: How long have you guys known each other?

M1: Well... yes, we are good friends he **often** helps me *like*... (pause) a bunch of times, too many times actually.

M2: \*nods\* yes, I agree with him.

M1 was sure that the interlocutors were helping him for uncountable times so he

hedged his argument supported by the word *like* to seek the approval from his interlocutor by mentioning how frequently the interlocutor helped him. The interlocutor approved the M1 argument by nodding and saying that he agreed with M1.

Then M1 hedged his argument by *always* describing someone else. M1 showed certainty in his argument through these hedges to tell the interlocutor that one of his friends was such a brat through his actions toward himself in discussing the fights they might have been through between M1 and the interlocutor and how they overcome.

Datum 4

M2: .....

M1: We fought *like* with other people *like* inside the group. like Ben...

M2: But Ben is *like*...

M1: Yeah Ben is fine but *like* I'm fine with him \*points M2\* but it's *like* with one of our friends called Alex, he **always** *like*... does not think before he talks.....one day he will grow up because he is *like* 19 years old.

M1 was so certain that one of his friends was annoying and he hedged when describing specific aspects, which made one of his friends a troublemaker to him and M2. These two hedges *often and always* were deployed to show the beliefs and experiences toward the past events of M1 that encouraged him to produce hedges based on (Hübler, 1983 as cited in Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018).

Through this conversation, the beliefs by Lakoff (1975) that hedges functioned as filler and uncertainty did not appear, since the hedges uttered by M1 showed certainty (Coates, 2004 as cited by Mohajer and Jan, 2015) through his past experiences and his beliefs toward a characteristic of someone. The function of hedges employed by M1 was more varied such as looking for the approval of the interlocutor.

*Modal auxiliary (maybe, would, and could)*

The first modal auxiliary maybe appears more frequently than any other modal auxiliaries *would* and *could*. Besides the modal auxiliaries that have more impact in the discussion is *maybe* by M1 when discussing the chance of cultural shock in his friendship with M2, M1 tended to use *maybe* with its function as tentativeness as the modal meaning (Holmes, 1984 as cited by Mohajer and Jan, 2015) when describing the cultural shock of M2. Henceforth, M1 used *maybe* to reduce the impact delivered by him in the conversation below when M2 asked about another cultural shock that he have experienced to M1.

Datum 5

Interviewer:.....

M1: *Ahh maybe* as I still remember *like*... you ... *like* the way we eat Chinese foods and I still remember *like* you \*mimic his friend\* are you doing that?

M2: Yes, my parents used to do that but now *like* ... they don't care

The intention of the use of hedges *maybe* by M1 was to explain M2's cultural shock when the first time M1 and M2 met. M1 told a story about the cultural shock experienced by M2 while eating Chinese food. The tentativeness shown through the use *maybe* supported by the word *like* multiple times when reminding the aspect of M2's cultural shock, which also reduced the impact delivered (Lakoff, 1975) when describing M2. The output of the use *maybe* created a shield for M1 just in case his argument was wrong (Mohajer and Jan, 2015), and the deployed *maybe* functioned as the harmonization to avoid the conflict (Vlasyan, 2019).

#### *Modal lexical verbs (believe)*

Modal lexical *believe* were broadly used to hesitate and to evaluate rather than to depict ideas (Salager-Meyer, 1997). M1 hedged his argument to evaluate and hesitating while disclosing someone's idea on a Covid-19 topic in answering the question that was about the origin of the Covid-19 virus portrayed in the conversation below.

#### Datum 6

Interviewer: Do you guys believe that covid was naturally caused by a particular animal or was it genetic manipulation?

M1: So, our friend **believes** that covid was genetical manipulation, and he **believes** that it does not come from China, but he **believes** that it comes from America.

M2:.....

However, the hedges *believe* became the fewest hedges employed by the participants. It was used to evaluate one of the participants' friends' ideas about the origin of the Covid-19 virus. M1 explained the theories by his friend with a lot of hesitation when his friend believed that the Covid-19 virus was genetic manipulation that came or was created by the Americans supported by the employed hedges *believe* three times. Then M1's doubts were proven through his last agreement when M2 said that their friend's theories were crazy.

#### *Introductory phrases (I think, I believe)*

The last hedges delivered by M1 were introductory phrases *I think* and *I believe*. M1 uttered *I think* as a filler that shows his tentativeness toward the topic Russia-Ukraine war, the M1's doubt in answering the question about the drafting of Australian citizens is portrayed clearly in the conversation below.

## Datum 7

Interviewer: Is there any drafting in Australia considering the Russian-Ukraine war?

M1: I **think** Scott Morrison... uhh... he's planning to send Australian troops there... from the news...

M2: *Umm...* I'm not sure... I have never been in the army... so yeah I don't know about sending troops to Ukraine...

In answering the Australian soldier's drafting question, M1 hedged his argument with *I think* indicated that the speaker has a lack of knowledge (Hübler, 1983 as cited in Kholisoh and Setiawan, 2018) about drafting troops supported the pauses and expression *uhh* and the hedged argument was expressing his most doubt (Salager-Meyer's, 1997).

On the other hand, M1 employed *I believe* to show self-disclose toward his feeling about one of his friends when discussing his friend's nature that he felt that one day his annoying friend will change as his friend grows up. He felt that since one of his friends is only 19 years old when made trouble toward M1.

### ***Hedges employed by the native English speaker***

From the interview conducted for this study, the native English speaker delivered similar hedges that were employed by the non-native English speaker. The same hedges that were employed by M2 were filler *well*, *the* introductory phrase *I would*, *I could*, *I think*, and modal auxiliary verbs *maybe*, *would*, and *could*. However, the other various hedges that were deployed by M2 were lexical hedges *you know*.

#### *Lexical hedges (you know)*

The discussion was about the topic Covid-19 virus. M2 employed lexical hedges when he argued about the regulation in China was opposed to Australia, especially about the lockdowns which overwhelmed the Chinese that their activity was limited during the event in the discussion below.

## Datum 8

Interviewer: .....

M1: .....

M2: And **you know** like in China, Shanghai, they be like lockdown the whole city and you cannot go out.

Lexical hedges *you know* according to Lakoff (1975) were the hedges that functioned as the filler to give time to think for the speakers in their arguments when they have not sure about their arguments. In opposite to that statement, the M2 used the utterance *you know* as an assertion toward his argument when he argued the

lockdowns rule happened in Shanghai, China. In addition to that, these hedges were rarely uttered by M2.

*The adverb modal phrase (probably)*

In this example taken from the discussion M2 used the hedges *probably* to show his tentativeness when he was questioned about the person that has no life goals to achieve, he answered that he had never known such a person in his life since that person did not tell him.

Datum 9

Interviewer: And have you guys ever known someone with no life goals?

M2: Yeah **probably** but they never tell me. \*slow nods\*

M1: Yeah... They never tell me.

M2 did deliver the utterance *probably* in the discussion, he showed tentativeness to answer the question, he believed that he never met a no-life-goals person before but he hedged his opinion that perhaps there were his friends that have no goals but his friends never told him before. These hedges only appeared twice but the other was combined with the introductory phrase hedges.

*Compound hedges (I would probably)*

In the discussion, the compound hedges appeared only once in an argument. M2 uttered the only compound hedges in his argument to portray the tentativeness to answering the question and to reduce the impact given through his argument. Also, these hedges were employed to save his name (Mohajer and Jan, 2015) for his argument would be countered or wrong. Besides that, his utterance deployed with self-disclose function about his desire about the war that happened in Ukraine as in this discussion below.

Datum 10

Interviewer: In the Russia-Ukraine war, who do you guys think the good guy or the bad guy is?

M2: So... yeah...*uhh*... **I would... probably** say... Putin is the bad guy... because he launches the attack... they called "special operation" (mimics the so-called word) ... umm... I don't think it's a special operation... **I think**... it's a declaration of war... because he thinks he threatened Ukraine by joining Nato... and it's totally not the right thing to do... Ukraine...*like*... fighting back and **I think** it's *like*... good.

M1: .....

The use of hedges by M2 showed the M2's skill as a native English speaker in his arguments by producing the compound hedges. Hence, M2 demonstrated his linguistics form skill in his argument as a native speaker (Liddicoat, 2016) through the combination of the introductory phrase *I would* and the adverb modal phrase *probably*. Besides, the tentativeness of the answer toward the topic discussed by M2

was supported by hedging his argument with the introductory phrase *I think* to justify the decision by Ukraine to face invasion by Russia based on his beliefs.

### *If clause*

The last hedges uttered by M2 was the if clause. The emergence of these hedges is only to show self-disclosure, the same as M1 uttered when they were asked would they help their friends when one of their friends asked to help them to achieve life goals. They both used the if clause in disclosing their feeling to help their friends and they would help them as far as they could.

In addition, the employed hedges in daily conversation were normal, because the uttered hedges in conversation could save interlocutor's name when the topic discussed was too sensitive. However, the uttered hedges in daily conversation most likely used to save each speakers' face, especially when each speakers got lack of ideas toward something in the discussed topics.

### **Conclusion**

The contribution of the hedges that are expressed by men participants in conversation in the results and discussions played important roles. In casual daily conversation, the purpose of hedges among males depicted the positive outcomes that through hedges, the participants both native and non-native English speakers have a chance to think about their answers that they hesitate and the others are to assert the answer, disclosing someone's idea, self-disclosure.

In addition, the hedges employed by the non-native speaker were purposed to gain the interlocutor's approval. Both used hedges to reduce the impact given to each other which had the effect to maintain the discussion's harmony. The interesting point of the employed hedges, by both participants, was also affecting the conversation proven by the solidarity they created when their answers were describing each of the participants' sensitive aspects. Thus, this finding rejects the Lakoff (1975) statement, that hedges as the women's language features are a manifest of powerless speech that only shows hesitations and uncertainty.

Not only that, the hedges employed by both native and non-native men were normal. Since both participants had the inclination to save their own names when the question for them was too sensitive or they had a lack of knowledge than to save the interlocutor's name. Thus, the belief by Coates (1987) that in daily or less formal conversation, the speakers intended to use hedges to save the interlocutor is rejected.

The limitation of this study was the lack of comparison of the hedges utilized between men and women, and this study only investigated the use of hedges among males with the reason why the participants used hedges were only based on the theory provided. For the recommendation for the future sociolinguistics study on

hedges, we suggest that there must be a comparison between males and females both native and non-native English speakers, in employing hedges in an informal daily conversation to enrich the findings. Also, we suggest that the future research on hedges, the next study must check the aspects why the participants employ the hedges in the discussion through an interview session.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Transcription Provision

1. **Bold:** The bold letters are the hedges employed by th participants in an interview
2. **Italic letters:** The italic letters are the expression or the word uttered by the participants that support the use of hedges in their arguments
3. **...:** The three dots after the letters are the sign of the pause when the participants give their arguments.
4. **( )::** The parentheses are used to show the clearance of an argument by the participants.
5. **[ ]:** The brackets are employed in the transcriptions to show the expressions by the participants while giving their arguments.
6. **Italic letters & Underline:** The italic letters that underlined are the sound of expression showed by the participants.
7. **\*\*:** The double asterixes are to show the body gesture showed by the participants in the interview session.
8. **M1:** The 'M1' is the non-native speaker participant.
9. **M2:** The 'M2' is the native speaker participant.