



---

## A Socio-Pragmatic Study Of Hedging In Selected Economic News

Asst. Prof. Sarab Kadir Mugair (PhD), College of Basic Education, University of Diyala, Iraq. [sarabkadir@gmail.com](mailto:sarabkadir@gmail.com)

Received: 20.8.2019

Accepted: 21.9.2019

Published: 21.10.2019

---

### Abstract

The current study attempts to check and analyze the term hedging in the selected economic news from a socio-pragmatic view point. The study aims at identifying the forms and kinds of hedging that English native speakers commonly utilize when talking about economic news and also identifying functions of hedges which mostly take place in the rhetorical sections of economic news. This study is qualitative one since it deals with content analysis. The study adopts Hyland's model (1996) to determine the forms and kinds of hedges commonly utilized via English speakers. The data of study is taken from two channels: CNN and BBC. The results of study display that content-oriented hedges are utilized more frequently in terms of types of hedging, while reader-oriented are also the hedging which being utilized mostly as forms of hedging in economic news. As a result, it is obvious that hedging is an essential aspect of economic news since hedging makes a text more readable as those hedges permit speech to take place between the speaker and the listener. Hedges too permit the message to be achieved more precisely and obviously.

**Keywords:** Hedging, Hyland's Model (1996), Economic news.

### 1. Introduction

In the case of Van Dijk (1931), pragmatics is conveyed by the speaker / author and characterized by the audience as a study of autonomous implications. Yule (1996: 3) states that the meaning provided by the speaker is the main excitement here, as what is proposed by the speaker is completely deciphered by the audience. He also characterizes it as an investigation of undetectable meanings. Similarly, Meyer (2009: 48) presents the task of deciding to determine the expected importance for accurate decoding. He is trying to show the importance of the external components that the setting plays. In this sense, pragmatics could be introduced as a study of the criteria governing the use of language (Van Dijk, 1931: 23). All mistakes in the planned range are not the direct result of misuse of calm means (discourse behavior, entanglement, assumptions). In Austin (1962), when he says he does not just say a word, but performs a particular activity, it

refers to the term discourse. His book, "How to Do Things in Words," encourages others to think in new ways, paving the way for others to see what they say as actions, not just words. He changes the gaze of others to find the word as a speech act.

Next, in practice, we will focus on how speakers and writers use knowledge to convey meaning. In short, a pragmatic study of how language is used in actual speech interactions. This is because people studying pragmatics say when, when, where, how, and what the language is used for, and perhaps most importantly. In particular, it means that you are interested in how it is interpreted by doing what it is used for, the people who use it when they do it. Yule (1996: 47) states that we should not stick to the idea that we are only talking, but that we are taking action while uttering them. Therefore, speech act is the smallest unit of equivalent discourse. Searle (1969: 16) claims that "speech is the basic or smallest unit of speech act." In conclusion, we can say: Speaking is an important subdivision of pragmatics. Speech act has a valuable place, especially in pragmatics, as it is very useful in our daily lives. This study deals with it in detail. Pragmatics includes many perspectives and disciplines, one of which is discourse. Discourse is a lot of verbal activity. Simple words like this line are just an evolution of this topic and should be viewed more critically. Discourse is not a separate topic, but is focused on by many researchers and linguists. Austin (1962) hints at the concept of discourse when he says we are engaged in a particular activity rather than just speaking. His article, "How to Do Things in Words," encourages others to take a different perspective and prepares to see not only meaningless words, but also words that are clearly expressed as an activity. He moves the eyes of others and discovers words as an act of discourse. In most cases, there is an act that critically involves language formation and explicitly presents the act of discourse. To Austin (1962:108) the types of acts can be stated as follows:

'/performing/ a locutionary act ... is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference, which is again equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense. Secondly, we said that we also perform illocutionary acts such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, etc., i.e. utterances which have a certain conventional force. Thirdly, we may also perform perlocutionary acts: what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring and even, say, surprising or misleading'. (ibid)

Unlike Abdulla (1989), Austin gives a special meaning and reference to everything we say. Leech (1983) and Meyer (2009) deal with the arrangement of steps to perform a discourse demonstration by expressing a sentence by doing something specific, rather than just saying something. The first step is where the language client expresses the word, and then it is (a clear demonstration). From this point

on, the propositional demonstration goes through creative reference and foresight. Second, certain goals are achieved by the power of discourse known as "spoken internal affairs." The act of speech continues after the speech demonstration (act of expression and proposition). In addition, the generation of a particular effect on others is called a perlocutionary demonstration. Yule (1996: 47) states that we do not stick to the possibilities we just speak, but act through utterances. Salgado (2011: 21) states that "a demonstration of discourse is a tiny unit of similar speech." Searle (1969: 16) accepts that "demonstration of discourse is an essential or negligible unit of semantic correspondence." However, Reiter (2000: 31) not only speaks words, but also uses some words as tools to do certain things in his own language or do something to others. It points out Austin's suggestion as to whether anyone will let you perform certain actions. Similarly, speech act theory is a sub-branch of pragmatics that deals with how words are used to perform actions and present information. The theory of speech act is introduced in the famous book "How to Do Things in Words" by Oxford philosopher J.L. Austin. This theory was further developed by the American philosopher JR Searle. This theory takes into account the extent to which an utterance is intended to perform an illocutionary act, an illocutionary act, and an illocutionary act. Later, in the 1970s, pragmatics was developed as a discipline of linguistics dealing with the origin, use, effects, and interpretation of signs. The symbols focus on subtle movements, gestures, intonation and body language. It often involves speaking.

## **2. Hedging**

Hedges are an important communication tool for scholars because they validate both. To Hyland (1996) An individual professional persona, it constitutes an important element of the rhetorical device used to gain acceptance of the claim. This indicates that hedging allows authors for expecting potential resistance to claims via constructing statements with accurate, careful and diplomatic respect for the audiences' attitude. They being utilized for performing many functions such as: B. Signal distance, show interimism, and give opportunities to soften remarks. In addition, it can be regarded as a discourse device. Hedges can occur when the level of accuracy of an accurate reference or formula is reduced to serve the benefit of a non-professional audience. Zhang (2007:82) argues that business news articles hedging, in other respect, can be used in seemingly opposite ways to ensure that readers draw the desired conclusions from the information presented . Hedges occur in both cases when the target writer aims to adjust the information to the expected prior knowledge of an audience with some familiarity with the hedging device. Backup devices are important in the business context. Backup devices are more than just things.

They avoid conflicts between economics writers and readers, but they also assist to convey the utterances properly and accurately as posted by Hyland (1996).

Economic news requires clarity and brevity, but hedging does exist. The responding business letter briefly describes the content of the message with proper use of hedging so that the reader can understand what to do and when.

In addition, the reader was able to get a good and accurate understanding of the claims mentioned in the news. We accept Because hedging tools not only help avoid and justify conflicts between readers. Indeed (Hyland, 1996), it is important that the author of the business letter can use hedging effectively. For example, we need to present the proper language format to utilize as giving sensitive sentences or expressions to others. But we currently know very little about business writing hedging. Lewin (2005) states that much research on hedging has based on scientific or academic writing. To Plutsky (1996) and Bila (2007) few studies had been tackled the use of hedging in economic news documents. As a result, some scholars suggested that hedging should be given more weight. Element of message composition. Hedges have been studied from a variety of perspectives, including cross-cultural. Comparison, gender studies, translation studies, politeness theory, and academic discourse. However, most of them focus on the pragmatic aspects of hedges. While it is useful to understand how hedges are actually deployed, it is also important to determine how hedges are structurally implemented. Hedging devices can be realized in a variety of syntactically. These hedges consist of auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, main verbs, adjectives, nouns, adverbs, first-person pronouns, thirs-person pronouns, instructions, questions, etc.

However, there is no research has been takled to investigate the kinds and forms of hedges in economic news. Thus, the most comprehensive study of syntactic structure of hedges to the present moment, is Hyland's study (1996). Hyland investigates hedging devices in academic researches which in turn assist the researcher to choose his study as a model, i.e., the notions of Hyland (1996) are relavant to the aims of the present study.

### **3.Hedges in Metadiscourse**

As mentioned earlier (Hyland 1998) states that metadiscourse is an important concept of compelling writing. Attitude Another definition considers metadiscourse as "a self-reflexive linguistic material related to developing texts and their authors and fictitious readers" (Hyland and Tse 2004: 156). A rhetorical expression used to "enclose the expressive meaning of what is called a discourse organization in parentheses." . Hyland (1998: 51) points out that there are two main categories of metadiscourse. Text and interpersonal relationships. The former category helps recipient "embed the ideal material in the text in a way that makes sense to the reader in a particular situation." The latter helps recipients "provide opinions and ratings about the circumstances in which they are involved and how readers want to react to the ideal material." Metadiscourses can be

divided into various subcategories, including: B. Logical connectors, code gloss, highlighting and hedging. Highland (ibid.) Is interested in written language, but his views can also be applied to spoken language.

The Interpersonal Metadiscourse, on the other hand, guides the reader to interpret the author's perspective on both the propositional information and the reader himself, establish a relationship between the author and the reader, and anticipate possible opposition to the statement. (Hyland, 1998: 52). In addition, the interpersonal meta-discourse with the writer-reader relationship has a keen interest in the concept of hedging.

Hedge is an item that indicates that the author is hesitant to present or evaluate propositional information categorically (ibid.). These resources provide unproven claims and help mitigate categorical claims.

Oktay, Yagıza & Cuneýt, Demirb (2014) remark that a model of metadiscourse in academic writing, based on the previous model of metadiscourse proposed by Hyland (1998) Interactive Resources and Interactional Resources. It states that it will provide. The first includes preview material to help you switch topics, signal sequences, connect thoughts, and organize discourse. The second, on the other hand, is related to the writer's reaction to the text, with the help of hedges, emphasis, shotmarks, and introspection.

#### **4. News**

News is one of the most important areas of research for those who really want to reveal the linguistic aspects of using language in media discourse. There are many ways to define a news perspective. Hameed (2017) considers the news of 19th century editor Charles Dane to be news that is of interest to most of the community and has never received their attention. This interpretation states that news needs to attract people's attention and if it is common to readers, it will not attract their interest. News is seen as the key to connecting people to improve communication in the community. There is also information for people to exchange ideas about what is happening in the world around them. "News" is the transmission of selected information about a current event that is presented to a third party or a large audience, typically through printed matter, broadcast, the Internet, or word of mouth. Or it may mean works consisting of recent or current events or announcements or statements of new data, and matters of interest in the field of medicine, science, or business.

News differ in the type or type of event that occurs. Generally according to Asst. lecture. Hameed H. states in his essay that there are two main types that distinguish between the following two types, according to Rowe (2005: 18).

A- Hard News is news that covers the events and developments that occur every day. Basic base or ongoing. This message is serious and is a message to people and cannot be postponed to another day. The types of such news are politics, economy, law, science, crime and so on.

B-Soft News refers to News , which adds things to remember and events. Such messages are not urgent and do not need to be delivered on the same day. This message is sociable. These news can be shared tomorrow or other days. Such news include people, places, communities, problems, and more. (Hameed, 2017: 79)

## 5. Methodology

### 5.1. The Model

In brief, the present study is based on Highland's model. It involves the syntactic devices and pragmatic functions of hedging, that's the goal of present study. Hyland (1996) proposed an approach, he argues to provide a "better theory" to explain hedges, as stated in the following figure.

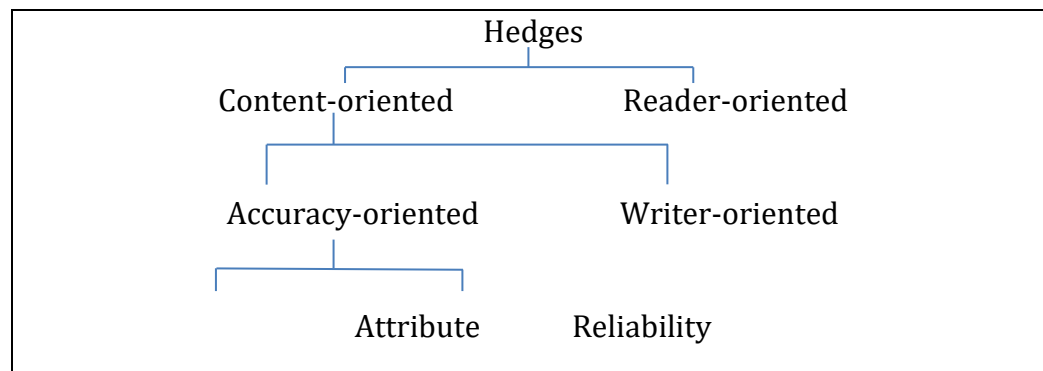


Figure (1): Hyland's Classification of Hedges (1996)

According to the above figure, Hyland states that the main category of hedging is content oriented Hedges and reader-oriented hedges. He (ibid) states that Content- oriented Hedges can be considered an attitude includes properties related to dimensions and how the author presents and portrays himself share their judgments, attitudes and views. Those language resources are the relationship between the content of the proposition and the expression of reality (Hyland, 1996). This means that the means of language ensure a correspondence between what the author guesses about the world and what the world looks like. In Figure 1, accuracy-oriented and writer-oriented hedging are regarded as types of content-oriented hedging, and attribute hedging and reliability hedging are types belonged to accuracy-oriented hedging. While stance hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-naming are belonged to content-oriented hedging as posted by Hyland ( 2005).

### 5.2. Data

This paper relates to a survey of the types of discourse and systems used in economic news. The recommendation discourse demonstration given by the method of discourse act methodology of a particular exhibition is the most commonly used monetary message. Examining the information in this task will give you an idea of the purpose of this investigation. To achieve the social aspect of study the researcher will look up specific banknote articles from the British telecommunications organization BBC and the US Telecommunications Bureau CNN, selected from five books. The article covered a variety of financial topics and was distributed on different days. So let's talk about five examples of research information. As mentioned previously, there are two types of news: hard news and sensitive news. The first hints at horrifying and organized news, and the second hints at news that presents interesting and bizarre events that do not need to be absorbed immediately. The five articles belong to the Hard News class because they contain data about consistent scheduled events.

### **5.3. Data Analysis and Discussion**

Via the verbs, we can know the sort of discourse acts are utilized in news, as needs be to Hyland's hypothesis(1996) which we embrace for examination articulations are doled out to one of five potential discourse act, They will be broke down thusly to comprehend why some discourse demonstrations are worked more than others investigating the writings it shows that as follows :

#### **5.3.1 Content-Oriented Hedges**

This is a demonstration of discourse in which the speaker uses a language to explain a particular belief or information. The assertive basic design is intended to introduce and advise reality. The following model represents one of the emphasized discourse acts used in the article.

(CCN) "With these actions we protect that budget ... against drops in prices of oil below this level," the finance ministry said in a statement. As in previous years, the hedge was also backed by Mexico's budget stabilization fund.

"As a result of these complementary strategies, a price of \$55 per barrel was assured for the Mexican export blend in 2019," the ministry said.

The verbs "protect" and "assured" indicate what the speakers did in a confident way. All through the seven articles, 41 emphatic discourse acts are presented.

(CNN) "For more than a decade, Mexico's government has paid for a hedge in a bid to guarantee its revenues from oil exports by state company Pemex. The program is seen as the world's top sovereign derivatives trade." (2019)

Beside the to-infinitive as in "to guarantee" , the auxiliaries verbs such as "has" and "is" the speaker gives us an example of his confident about the present moment.

(CNN) "[T]he combination of the weight of scientific evidence and the dynamics of the financial system suggest that, in the fullness of time, climate change will threaten financial resilience and longer-term prosperity." (2015)

In this above example, the uses of adjective are very clear as in " scientific", "dynamic", "financial" and longer –term" . Also the uses of nouns are obvious such as "the combination", "the weight", "evidence" , "system", "the fullness", etc. make the speaker confident in his speech.

(BBC) "However numerous examiners advised that development could cool in coming months" (2019)

Here, the action word "advised" used by the speaker to reflect the recipient to achieve something belong to the "development". Order expressions are utilized more. This is a situation where the speaker is trying to lead or stop the lead of the demonstration to the recipient. Delegation expressions can be divided into three types: request, order, and proposal. The speaker uses what is called "directive utterance" as posted by Searle (1969).

(BBC) "Media subtitle Trump declares 'stunning' development - and vows to go higher" (2019)

The word "stunning" means a discourse of gratitude, given the investment in the speaker being "high". We plan to decide on future activities. Speakers can conduct demonstrations and plan their implementation.

### 5.3.2. Reader-Oriented Hedges

Discourse that affects the technology they represent. For example, favor, capture, sanctification firing, marriage, offering, etc. Significant discourse is genuine to situations spoken by someone who has the opportunity to make them in situations that seem appropriate as stated in the following example.

(CNN) "One basic measure surveys the volume of news inclusion wherein the words "economy" or "financial" show up nearby "dubious" or "vulnerability" to gauge how much the media is concentrating on worries about monetary soundness." (2019)

In other words, it happens when the speaker has previously conveyed emotions about a particular situation. It is offered in many structures, such as sorry, admit, deny, admit, and so on.



The word “one” is used to emphasize a poor handling of the order. While the use of the word “how much” to identify that there are many serious services.

(BBC) "The Bank admitted one of its suppliers had misused the feed to give hedge funds early access to information" (2019)

In this example, the purpose of using the verb "admitted" is to express emotions.

(CNN) "In coming decades, climate change – and efforts to limit that change and adapt to it – will have increasingly important effects on the US economy. These effects and their associated risks are relevant considerations for the Federal Reserve in fulfilling its mandate for macroeconomic and financial stability." (2019)

The speaker uses “will” to invite the listener to the content of the message, so that the listener would act the event, that is to tell the speaker if the listener cannot be able to face the deadline.

(CNN) “[A]lthough addressing climate change is a responsibility that Congress has entrusted to other agencies, the Federal Reserve does use its authorities and tools to prepare financial institutions for severe weather events.” (2015)

According to the above example, the speaker uses the adverbs "with", "as a result of", "too", "below", "although", "that", "to" and "for", etc. to make his statements look more relative and cohesive.

With this in mind, we can conclude that the results represent how economic news articles are constructed to inspire readers to think broadly about business news and the financial situation on a global scale. It is described as direct and informative, without the abstract interference from the essayist. However, the research shows that articles report reality and data, so they primarily use confident discourse. Therefore, it is considered the most used discourse in economic news.

## **6. Conclusions**

Writing economic news articles is almost always the same. When considered equal, the method of news abuse is not random and relies on a semantic decision to pass the elements of news disclosure to the reader as a first step. Similarly, it is not unpredictable as it adheres to strict and balanced guidelines. With that in mind, the etymological quality of the above articles is determined by communication techniques aimed at providing readers with excellent insightful encounters. The use of discourse in money news articles helps to give the punishment a specific meaning of utilizing the type of discourse used in the sentence. The basic motivation behind the financial news article is to advise readers on budget and financial strategies and how they relate to legal issues. As

a result, self-aware discourse is essentially a concern for reality and is adopted to assert information and beliefs. The remaining four types, on the other hand, weren't used as often as self-aware, as they meet needs other than event discovery and decision making. This research will be inspiring for individuals interested in speech, business insights, and applied etymology. Does this contribute to a deeper understanding of the speech as a basic intrusion that uses language to attract and convince others in everyday life?

Therefore, the current research shows that the message has a cool effect through the action words used in the selected content.

The results of study also reveal that hedging plays an important role in the economic news articles communication. Data shows that hedging is primarily used for this purpose communicate our message concisely and accurately in our economic news articles. In addition, the most important goal of economic news articles is accuracy, but it is protected.

The present study shares the same view point of Laane (2010) that hedges serve many several functions such as honesty, humility and reasonable attention. Without Hedges, economic writers cannot make statements or create different perspectives to explain new information through persuading and negotiating information. As hedging is essential to business communication, it is considered the essential tools with diverse insights that business writers or speakers must have to reflect their professional character and respect their readers or listeners. This conveys that reader-oriented hedges are also essential for building and maintaining relationships between authors and readers in order to conduct business and grow in the near future. Researcher believes that economic news articles need to combine content-oriented hedges and reader-oriented hedges as reducing offensive language as it relates to the reader by properly using reader-focused hedging, just as the content of the speech needs to be limited to convey the utterances clearly.

Thus, the results provide new insights for economic news trainers and educators. Understand how to improve teaching materials or designs so that learners can study effectively in economics courses and learn how to use hedges correctly. It prepares a learner to a genuine language experience in a business environment, that is, to the extent that the language user is involved in genuine interaction, interpretation and communication. And how the results of real data activate the learner's prior knowledge, interests, and curiosity related to language and structure.

## **References**

Abdulla, H. I. (1989). A pragmatic Analysis of Two Excerpts from Robert's Bolt's A Man All Seasons. University of Lancaster.

- Aijmer, K. (2004). Pragmatic Markers in Spoken Interlanguage. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*. 173-190.
- Al-Sulaimaan, M. M. (2010). *Semantics and Pragmatics*. Mosul: Mosul University Press.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How To Do Things With Words*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Bach, K. & Harnish, R. (1979). *Linguistics Communication and Speech Acts*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Bila, M. ((2007). Structural and Cohesive Devices in Business Letters. *Topics in Linguistics*.1, 23-25.
- Grice, M. L. (1995). *Speech Acts and Conversational Interaction*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1975). "Logic and Conversation", In Cole, P. and Morgan, J. (eds.), *Syntax and Semantics Vol. III: Speech Acts*. New York: Academic Press.
- Hyland, K. (1996). Writing Without Conviction? Hedging in science research articles. *Applied Linguistics*.17,433-454.
- Hyland, K.(2005). *Stance and Engagement: A Model of Interaction in Academic Discourse*. Discourse Studies.
- Hameed, H.(2017). " Using Speech Acts And Maxims In Selected Summary Leads In News Web Version Of American Agencies : Pragmatics Study " University of Kufa.
- Laane, M. (2010). *Strategies of Hedging in Science Writing*. Birkbeck University Of London.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. NY: Longman.
- Lewin, B. A. (2005). Hedging: An Exploratory Study Of Authors" And Readers" Identification Of „Toning Down“ In Scientific Texts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*. 4, 163-178
- Meyer, C. F. (2009). *Introducing English Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics (Second ed.)*. MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- O’Keeffe, A. (2011) ‘Media and Discourse Analysis’, in Gee, J. & Handford M. (eds), *The rout ledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. London: Rout ledge, p 441-454.
- Oktay,Yagiza & Cuneyt, Demirb (2014). "Hedging Strategies in Academic Discourse: A Comparative Analysis of Turkish Writers and Native Writers of English". In *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Volume 158, 19 December 2014, Pages 260-268.
- Plutsky, S. (1996). Faculty perception of students" business communication needs. *BusinessCommunication Quarterly*, 69-77.
- Richard Nordquist, 2019, Pragmatics Gives Context to Language: Body language and tone of voice augment actual words

(<https://www.thoughtco.com/pragmatics-language-1691654>) (accessed March9, 2020).

Reiter, R. M. (2000). *Linguistic Politeness in Britain and Uruguay: A Contrastive Study of Requests and Apologies*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*. 13, 149-170.

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech Act*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Dijk, T. A. (1931). *Studies in the Pragmatics of Discourse*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zhang, H. (2007). The pragmatic function of hedges in business English. *Journal of Hunan Business College*. 3, 117-120