

# A Contrastive Study of Hedging in English and Kurdish Editorials

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**Abstract**— This study deals with the phenomenon of hedging in English and Kurdish editorials. In terms of linguistics, hedging is used potentially for certain purposes among which are uncertainty, doubtfulness and possibility. It is also used to avoid an embarrassing situation when somebody is believed to be wrong. The aim of the study is to make a comparison between the types and forms of hedging devices used in both English and Kurdish languages in the field of editorials as well as to find the frequency of the use of these devices in the editorials of both languages. It is hypothesized that the change in the language and culture determines the forms and types of hedging devices. English writers use hedging constructions more frequently than their Kurdish counterparts due to the formality of English style. To achieve the aims of the study and verify the hypothesis, a literature of the previous studies in this field is reviewed in the theoretical part of the study and a number of selected economic and political editorials from both languages are analyzed in the practical part. Based on the analysis and results of the study, a number of conclusions will be drawn..

**Keywords**— hedging, modality, approximators, metalinguistics, mitigation.

## I. ON DEFINING HEDGING

Hedging as defined by Hyland (1998) is the means by which speaker/ writer can present a proposition as an opinion rather than a fact. It is a crucial process which is used in everyday conversation. It is also used both in spoken and written forms of the language. The term hedging was first coined by Lakoff (1972) to indicate the fuzziness of the language. It became the topic of linguistic investigation in 1966 and it was called metalinguistic operators by Weinreich (1966).

Tang (2013:155) refers to the hedging as a group of words used to conduct the communication. Hedges have been tackled from different perspectives in linguistics including pragmatics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, methodology, semantics, cognitive linguistics, philosophy, logics and so on. It is the discourse transfer of the rhetoric implication of the words.

It is the relation between the speaker/ writer and the listener/ reader on one hand and the language and the culture on the other hand specifically in daily conversation which is used to reduce the impact of the meaning of the words or to soften the utterances in rhetoric situations. Brown and Levinson (1978) define hedges as the means of a negative politeness used as a strategy to avoid disagreement. Hedges

are used by the speakers to avoid impoliteness or danger to the listeners that is why they do not want to give the information which is required to get the cooperation from the listeners' side. Hedges (Clemen:1997) are referred to as strategies and devices at the same time. Impersonal, passive and parenthesis constructions with 'if' conditional are good examples of hedges which are used as strategies means. Hedges can also be counted for as devices when they are used as modal verbs, modal particles and hedged performative. It is the general use of linguistic means used to increase the likelihood of a better acceptance as well as minimizing the risk of rejection.

Hedges could be sometimes problematic especially for non native speakers of English language. It attenuates either the full semantic value of a particular expression or the full force of a speech act. For this reason when non-native speakers fail to hedge appropriately they might be considered as impolite, offensive, arrogant or simply inappropriate. They may misunderstand a native speaker's meaning when they fail to recognize hedged words and utterances. (Fraser: 2010).

Hedges are used as a characteristic of writing to convey the statements with the degree of doubtfulness and certainty. It is also used to display not only or necessity the degree of confidence the speakers have in their perspective but also how much confidence they feel it is appropriate to display in their statements. (Crompton: 1997;281)

Hedges can serve as a signal of a mismatch between what a speaker says and what s/he actually means. It is a metalinguistic reason of not knowing the correct word or phrase to use at the time of utterances or as a rhetorical strategy to soften the impact of what is actually said by the speaker. (Siegel: 2002)

Hyland (1998) mentions hedges as a strategy to obfuscate or confuse propositions or statements. It is considered as a convention of academic style in writing. This can prove that hedges are crucial aspects of linguistic behavior in academic genres.

Buitkiene (2008:12) states that even though most of the linguists agree upon the opinion that hedges are mitigating devices which tone down utterances and statements but they reduce the riskiness of what one says or mitigating what might seem too forceful.

One can conclude that hedges are linguistic constructions used both as devices and strategies in the language in both spoken and written forms to reduce the effect of the statements uttered by the speaker/writer for the sake of securing the bias between agreeing and disagreeing to the information given in the statement. Hedges are used to minimize the threat of

accepting or rejection of the ideas given.

## II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF HEDGES

Scholars agree that hedging was used as long ago but they were not necessarily called hedges. The concept of hedging is relatively very young in linguistic studies. Based on the literature review and studies, hedges were first used by Zadeh (1965) and Weinreich (1966) who they referred to them as metalinguistic operators. Later, Lakoff (1972) introduced the concept of hedging as a semantic genre giving a wider and pragmatic meaning. This concept is parallel to the evolution of the study of pragmatics in linguistic fields which emerged later in 1980s. Lakoff (1972) dealt with the fuzziness of the meanings in the language and suggested that any attempt to limit truth conditions for natural language sentences to true, false and nonsense would try to destroy the concepts of the natural language by having then sharp rather than vaguely defined boundaries. (Anderson: 2013:5)

Later on, Crystal (1975:11) describes the concept of hedges as a huge meadow of research, especially in linguistics. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), hedges can be dealt with on the bases of speech act theory and can be considered as strategies used for minimizing the threat to face. This introduced the relations of hedges with both face and politeness in discourse.

On the other hand, Kasper (1975) dealt with hedges from the pragmatic point of view and analyzed the modal verb of hedges from the perspective of pragmatics. Following Brown and Levinson (1978), Prince et al (1982: 85) studied affectively the idea of hedges as discourse markers and the truth-conditions of propositions. While Leech (1984) found out that hedges could be discussed with the method of discourse analysis.

Hedges have been continuously dealt with by scholars and have become the topic of discussion especially in pragmatics in which Zuck and Zuck (1986) tried to expand the scope of the concept of hedging in a way which concentrates on the pragmatic uses of the terms in the discourse both in spoken and written.

Conversely, the impact of hedging devices can be valued and measured by their overall effect on meaning or the message of the text either in oral or written language. As it was illustrated by Hyland (1996) hedges are used to indicate a lack of complete commitment to the truth of the proposition or a desire by the speaker or the writer not to convey the commitment of the message categorically.

Markkanen and Schroder (1997:15) studied the hedges and stated that the concept of the hedges has lost some of its clarity and sometimes seem to have reduced a state of definitional chaos as it overlaps with several other concepts. Hedges are sometimes used to capture the probabilistic nature of reality and the limits of statements. This proves that hedged words are used in the statements to diminish the strength of the claims that are made in an argument and undermine persuasive attempts in multiple ways.

## III. CLASSIFICATION OF HEDGING

Hedges have been classified in various ways by different scholars based on the variety of studies and researches they have made but still many of them emphasize the fact that there is no specific list of hedged words till now. As hedges became the matter of researches later in 1980s, a number of scholars, linguists and scholars started to categorize the types of hedges as well as to list them. Although the classifications they have made are not radically different but rather they are supplementing each other. (Laurinaityte: 2011:21)

Prince et al (1982) were the first scholars to make a clear classification of hedges and to make the difference between them. They distinguish two types of hedging:

- a-Propositional hedging
- b-Speech act of hedging

Propositional hedging involves the propositional content and affects the truth condition of the proposition conveyed. While speech act hedging contains the relationship between the propositional content and the speaker and it serves as an index of the commitment of the speaker to the truth of the propositional content it conveyed.

According to the types of hedging listed by Prince et al (1982) hedges are classified into two categories:

### A. *Approximators*

This type of hedging operates on the propositional content proper and contributes to the interpretation by indicating some markedness. It can change the true value of the conversation or making a certain degree of amendments based on the facts given or providing certain range of variation to the original discourse. It is a non-prototype with respect to the class membership of a particular item. This type is also sub-classified into:

- i. *Adaptors*: are those words which make certain amendments to the original meanings of the communication such as (somewhat, sort of, almost, more or less, describable as, some, a little bit, ....etc)
- ii. *Rounders*: are those words which provide certain range of variation such as (about, approximately, roughly, over, something around, ....etc)

These two sub-classifications of hedging are used when the speaker/ writer wants to correlate an actual situation with some prototypical, goal-relevant situation. These hedged words play the role of indicating that the actual situation is close to but not exactly the expression mentioned.

### B. *Shields*

This type of hedging changes the relationship between propositional content and the speaker by having a level of uncertainty with respect to the speaker's commitment. They do not change neither the value of the conversation nor its content. They convey the doubtfulness or reservations of the speakers towards the discourse and show the attitudes of the speakers indirectly to moderate the tone. (Tang: 2013:2).

This type is sub-classified into:

i- **Plausibility shield:** are those words and expressions which indicate doubtfulness. They usually include the first person pronoun either single or plural to show that the speakers/ writers are willing to take the responsibility of the truth of their statements or to offer and give different ideas about it such as (I think, I guess, I wonder, I suspect, probably, I take it, I am afraid, I have to believe, as far as I can tell, I don't see that, .....etc)

ii- **Attributive shields:** are those words and expressions which are used to attribute the responsibility of the message to someone other than the speaker. They do not convey the views of the speaker/ writers but they show the speakers/ writers' attitude indirectly by quoting other perspectives. They usually include some personal structures or the third personal structures to exclude the speakers/ writers. Examples are (according to her estimate, presumably, at least to X's knowledge, Sb says that, according to, its said, its believed, .....etc )

Zuck and Zuck (1985) classify the hedges into verbal or adverbial expressions which involve different degrees of probability. The classification includes the followings:

a-Auxiliaries: such as (may, might, can, could, ....etc)

b-Semi-auxiliaries: such (appear, seem, ....etc)

c-Full verbs: such as (suggest, ....etc)

d-Passive voice, adverbs and adverbials: such as (probably, almost, relatively,..... etc)

e-Adjectives: such as (probable, ....etc)

f-Indefinite nouns and pronouns: such as (I, he , ..... etc)

Brown and Levinson (1987) and Salager-Meyer (1997:152) classify hedges based on the strategies used to deal with the certainty of the knowledge that includes politeness strategies in the social interactions and negotiations between the speaker/ writer and listener/ reader. According to their classification, hedged words and expressions are listed and categorized by:

a-Modal auxiliary verbs: such as (may, might, can, could, would, ...etc)

b-Modal lexical verbs: such as (to seem, to appear, to believe, to assume, to suggest, to estimate, to tend, to think, to agree, to indicate, to propose, speculate...etc)

c-Adjectival, adverbials and nominal phrases:

-Adjectives: such as (possible, probable, un/likely, etc)

-Nouns: such as (assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion, ..etc)

-Adverbs: such as (perhaps, likely, possibly, probably, practically, presumably, apparently, ....etc)

d-Approximators of degree quantity, frequency and time such as (approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally, generally, usually, somewhat, somehow, a lot of, .....etc)

e-Introductory phrases such as (I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that, we feel that, ....etc)

f-If-clauses such as (if true, if anything, ....etc)

g-Compound hedges which is a modal auxiliary combined with a lexical verb with a hedging content such as (it would appear, etc)

h-Lexical verb followed by a hedging adverb or adjective such as (it seems reasonable/ probable....etc)

i-Prosodic and kinesics hedges covers raised eyebrow earnest frown, the um.

Unfortunately, there is no agreement among the scholars on which lexical items, words and phrases or syntactic structures have to be categorized under hedging constructions. Hyland (1994, 1996: 447) notes that modal auxiliary verbs express the lack of knowledge, uncertainty and help to avoid criticism. He refers to the adverbs of certainty such as presumably, possibly and mental perception such as apparently as content disjuncts. Passive constructions serve as the insurance against overstating the assertion. Clausal subjects and constructions of abstract rhetoric to passive constructions as well. He also notes that hedging can also be realized by conditioned sentences which offer a possibility. Hedging also signals a personal opinion so it is a conscious strategy to mark a statement as an alternative view. Qualification as Hyland states can indicate the precise standpoint from which to judge the truth of a claim and he classified hedging devices under the following categories:

a-epistemic qualifiers

b-certain personal pronouns

c-indirect constructions

d-parenthetical constructions

e-subjective/ conditional

f-concessive conjuncts

g-negation

h-if clauses

i-questions

j-time references

Clemen (1997: 6) also classifies hedging and states that there is no limit to the linguistic expressions that can be considered as hedges. He believed that almost any linguistic item or expressions can be interested as a hedge. This is mainly because no linguistic words were created inherently for been hedged but they can acquire this quality based on the situation and the context of the discourse. This is the reason that a word or an expression is usually only recognized as a hedge when it is used in hedging. The main types of hedges as classified by Clemen (1997) can be briefed as below:

a-Adverbs/ adjective such as (approximately, roughly, about, often, generally, etc)

b-Impersonal pronouns such as (one, it, etc)

c-Concessive conjunctions such as (although, though, while, whereas, even though, etc)

d-Hedged performative such as (I must ask )

e-Indirect speech acts such as ( Could you speak...)

f-Introductory phrases such as (I believe, we feel that )

g-Modal adverbs such as (perhaps, possibly, apparently )

h-Modal adjectives such as (possible, probable, un/likely)

i-Modal nouns such as (assumption, claim, estimate)

j-Modal verbs such as (might, may, can, could, would)

k-Epistemic verbs such as (to seem, to appear, to believe, to assume)

l-Negative question convey positive hedged assertion such as (I do not think)

- m-Reserval tag such as (is not, are not)
- n-Agentless passive such as
- o-Conditional subordinators such as (as long as, so long as, assuming that, given that)
- p-Progressive form such as (hoping, willing)
- q-Tentative inference
- r-Conditional clause such as (if)
- s-Metalinguistic comment such as (strictly, exactly, just about, almost)

Hinkle (2002) makes a classification for the hedging according to modal auxiliary verbs, modal lexical verbs and adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases. She pointed out that a number of adjectives such as (apparent, approximate, essential, broad, clear, comparative, normal, potential, rare, relative ) and constructions such as : the very + superlative adjective + noun

- Most+ adjective
- According to + noun
- Relative to + noun

She also noted that clauses with such conjuncts expounds different points of view and she added that a concessive clause hedge the main one and balancing the sentence. She stated that particular pronouns especially plural (we) is considered as a hedging. She also mentioned that indefinite pronouns such as (every, no, any, some) are functioning as hedges as well as the rhetorical questions which express hesitation and uncertainty.

#### IV. FUNCTIONS OF HEDGING

Hedging is expressed by different forms and types and its functions received a great deal of attention by the scholars. It is used to limit the speaker/ writer's commitment to what s/he proposes and help him/her to avoid errors. Hedging helps the speaker/ writer to demonstrate reserve by emphasizing the universal validity of his/her statements. The use of hedging is conditional by the subjectivity of the speaker/ writer on the specific topics which the discourse is established as well as the relative information which the speaker/writer has of the target language.

He Z.R. (1985) refers to the functions of hedging and stated that hedges are characterized by fuzziness, uncertainty and possibility and fuzziness is inexplicitness, which in fact does not definitely mean a bad thing. So based on what this linguist said, hedges can be considered as a means of expressing fuzziness which is really the nature of the language.

Skelton (1988:38) makes a notice about hedging and made a very strong statement to express the validity of hedging in language saying that the language without hedging is the language without life. This is an indication that hedging is an essential mental attitude that without it would be impossible to discuss or describe the world.

Hedging is considered as an important factor in everyday speech and in different language aspects. Hedging is functioning to avoid dogmatism when the speaker/writer is unsure or lacks the knowledge or belief and then cite higher authority. Falahati (2004: 33) states hedging is a strategy which speaker/writer shows his/her attitude and the degree of confidence that s/he has over the truth value of the statements.

Hedging is used for establishing an interpersonal relationship between speaker/writer and listener/reader. So hedging functions as a barrier, limit, defense or the act or means of protection or defense.

Salager-Meyer (1997:106) says that there are two reasons for hedging:

- a-to help to conform to an established writing style
- b-to be more precise

He states that hedging has three main rhetorical functions:

- a-threat minimizing strategies
- b-strategies to accurately reflect the certainty of knowledge
- c-politeness strategies between writers and editors.

He also adds that hedges are not that hedges are not a tactic how to abdicate the responsibility but rather a way to express some characteristics of modern science such uncertainty, speticism and doubt. Brown and Levinson (1987) deal with hedging as a sign of politeness. They believed that hedging is a strategy employed to reduce the risk of confrontation in social interactions. So hedging is considered as a type of linguistic devices through which negative politeness strategy can be realized. As they stated that hedges are a characteristic of negative politeness, they can also be used in positive politeness as well. The impression has been proved later by Myers (1989) that hedging expressions which are used in the interaction between writers and readers in scientific articles can be interpreted as the politeness markers. He adds that the information which conveys through the hedged words are tentative.

Hyland (1998:159) says that hedging can function as an array of purposes such as:

- a-weakens force of statements
- b-contains modal expressions
- c-expresses deference
- d-signals uncertainty

Hyland (1995:34) also states that the reason for hedging is to state uncertain scientific claims with appropriate caution. So hedging implies that a proposition is based on the writer's reasoning only.

Markkanen (1997:8) refers to the functions of hedging and described it as a fear of being proved wrong later on. Being afraid of feeling fear makes someone being imprecise or mitigating one's commitment to the truth value of a proposition or a claim makes it possible to say and if this as proved wrong then the claim was only tentative or an approximation.

Martin (2003) notes that English scholars use the strategy of indeterminacy in their works to a much greater extent. They are more careful about the stating their claims. They use hedging devices in order to:

- a-avoid the audience's rejection
- b-mitigate their critical rejection
- c-maintain a social distinction between readers and writers

The function of hedges is to make sentences more acceptable to the hearer/ reader and thus increase their chances of ratification. So in some situations, the desire to protect oneself from the potential denial of one's claims may be greater than the desire to show deference to the addressee. For this reason, one can conclude that the use of hedging and its

functions are considered by the subjectivity of the individuals on the particular contexts where the discourse is established and the relative knowledge that the person has on the target language.

## V. HEDGING AND OTHER CONCEPTS

Hedging has been tackled in the language framework differently having various strategies and devices. It has been studied in linguistics, pragmatics, semantics, sociolinguistics, methodology, philosophy, discourse analysis, logics and so on. Different strategies and devices have been used to express hedging while there are other linguistic means which are very close to hedging in meaning, function and use. Below are some of the linguistic concepts which are in relation to hedging.

### A. Modality

Modality is the linguistic concept which is very widely used in relation with hedging. It refers to the speaker/ writer's attitude towards the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence and the situation or event described in that sentence. (Simpson: 1990).

Downing and Locke (2002:381) define modality as the category by which speakers express attitudes towards the event contained in the preposition. It is sub-classified into two types:

- a- deontic modality which is concerned with the necessity or possibility of acts performed by morally responsible for
- b-epistemic modality which is associated with hedging.

Some other linguists classify modality under other names which are root and epistemic.

-root has almost in common with hedges as it expresses necessity, obligation and permission

-epistemic is a means to show the degree of confidence to the truth of the preposition. It is associated with hedging.

### B. Mitigation

Mitigation is also one of the main concepts which is associated with the idea of hedging. It is obtained through hedging. It is the strategy used for softening or reducing the strength of a speech act whose effects are unwelcomed to the hearer.

It is the means which is used by a speaker/writer to reduce the anticipated negation effect of the speech act. Hedging can create a mitigating effect on the statements uttered. Through hedging, the possible unfriendliness or unkindness of a statement can be mitigated

#### Vagueness

Vagueness means unclear and it refers to the information which is received from the speaker/writer and lacks the expected precision. It is the same as fuzziness and both are attributed with the concept of hedging. Van Rooij (2009) defines it as a feature of a natural language and it is opposed to precision. Many adverbs, for example, are vague in nature so the existence of vagueness is unavoidable as it is connected with the fear of making errors. Through this vagueness is used to interpret hedging by achieving two aims:

- to provide a more accurate representation of reality
- to describe the state of knowledge more precisely

### C. Evasion

Evasion is another linguistic concept which is also described with hedging. Fraser (2010:27) states that evasion happens when the information received by the listener/ reader fails to meet his/her expectations. For that the evasion sentences depend on the information provided by the speaker/ writer. Some hedging results in evasion as some vagueness results in evasion as well. While hedging does not result in evasion and some evasion does not come from hedging as well.

### D. Evidentiality

Evidentiality is one of the linguistic concepts in which hedging is expressed through. It is defined as a linguistic expression of attitudes towards knowledge and assessment of its reliability. By knowledge it is believed that knowledge has various modal, beliefs, induction, hearsay and deduction. Hedging is used by such expression which indicates the match between the piece of knowledge and category what may be less than perfect

### E. Equivocation

Equivocation is the linguistic device which is used for a word with more than one meaning with the intention to mislead the hearer. It is defined as Bavelas et al (1990:28) say it is as non-straightforward, commitment, ambiguous contradictory, tangential, obscure and even evasive. They also proposed that speakers/ writers typically equivocate when confronted with avoidance-avoidance conflict at the same time when questions are raised and all at the possible replies have potentially negative consequences but where nevertheless a reply is expected

## VI. THE ADOPTED MODEL

The researcher has adopted a model after making a review of most of the taxonomies made by the scholars in the fields. He discovered that Laurinaityte (2011) has already made a survey to a number of scholars who classified hedges and found that in spite of having various classifications about hedged words and expressions, they are not so much different in forms but they are completing each other. This scholar has summarized all types of hedges in different ways into a table and the researcher has taken this summary as an adopted model for analyzing the political and economic editorials in both English and Kurdish languages. Although it is obvious that most of the hedged words and expressions are categorized according to their part of speech but still they are classified and grouped according to the context they belong to and few of them such as tag questions and pragmatic tags that belong only to the spoken forms while the majority of hedges such as particular conditionals are found in both spoken and written forms of the language.

The adopted model will be based on the types of the classification already mentioned by the researcher here and the taxonomy already designed by Laurinaityte (2011) as shown in Table (1) below:

TABLE I:  
ADOPTED MODEL

Types of hedges		English Economic Editorial	Kurdish Economic Editorials	English Political Editorial	Kurdish Political Editorials
Conventional Hedges	Modal Auxiliary Verbs				
	Modal Lexical Verbs				
	Adjectival, Adverbial and Nominal Modal Phrases	Adjectives			
		Adverbs			
	Nouns				
Passive Voice					
Modal Adverb Expressions					
Introductory Phrases					
Concessive Conjunctions					
Particles					
Approximators	Degree				
	Indefinite Quantifier				
	Indefinite Frequency and time				
Compound Hedges	Model Auxiliary				
	Lexical Verb				
Conditional Clauses					
That Clauses					
Comments on Value					
Comments on Truth					
References					
Qualifications					
Pronouns					
Indefinite Articles					
Questions					
Tag Questions					
Pragmatic Tags					
Conversational Hedges					

## VII. SELECTED SAMPLES

In order to achieve the aims and to verify the hypothesis set for the study, the researcher has taken twenty editorials in both English and Kurdish and analyzed them according to the types of hedging set in the adopted model. Ten newspaper editorials in English have been selected randomly in two genres (Economics and politics) and analyzed for the purpose of the study. In return ten newspaper editorials in Kurdish in both (Economics and politics) have been analyzed and compared. The selected editorials have been quoted from The Guardian, UK published newspaper and Kurdistani Nwe and Hawler, Kurdish published newspapers. The aim behind choosing two newspapers in Kurdish because of the lack of both genres of the editorials in one of them. The selected editorials have been selected randomly for the sake of reliability and the validity of the study. The editorials have been published between October and November, 2017.

## VIII. DATA ANALYSIS

Table (2) shows the frequency of the hedged words used in both English and Kurdish with both types of the genres (Economics and Politics). The table shows that English editorials are more hedged than their counterparts in Kurdish language. This is because of the nature of English language and its culture that requires the writers to use more hedged

words than Kurdish ones. It also shows that hedging is more frequent in Economic editorials than in Political editorials in both languages. This might be because of the type of the language used for economics which needs to use more hedged words and expressions to reduce the impact of the message conveyed during writing. Another reason behind this difference might be because of the attitudes the writers have in both languages in which they limit themselves to what they propose or suggest that the hedged words will help them avoid any errors or misunderstanding of the information given. As it is stated by Clemen (1997) that the writer may intend to use hedges words and expressions to demonstrate reserve by emphasizing the universal validity of his/her statements and if s/he is uncertain or has the lack of knowledge or belief or wishes to avoid dogmatism, s/he can cite higher authority; a poly common in journalism, where sources are often quoted at a length which exceeds the journalist's expression.

TABLE II: FREQUENCY OF HEDGES OCCURRENCE IN ENGLISH AND KURDISH

	Economics	Politics	Total
English	234	176	410
Kurdish	108	57	165
Total	342	233	575

TABLE II FREQUENCY OF HEDGES OCCURRENCE IN ENGLISH EDITORIALS

Types of hedges		English Economic Editorials	English Political Editorials	Total		
Conventional Hedges	Modal Auxiliary Verbs	37	29	66	160	
	Modal Lexical Verbs	16	8	24		
	Adjectival, Adverbial and Nominal Modal Phrases	Adjectives	7	3		10
		Adverbs	26	34		60
	Nouns	-	-	-		
Approximators	Degree	6	3	9	127	
	Indefinite Quantifier	27	16	43		
	Indefinite Frequency and Time	35	30	65		
That Clauses		30	13	43		
Conversational Hedges		24	18	42		
Concessive Hedges		12	8	20		
Particles		6	6	12		
Conditional Clauses		7	4	11		
Comments on Truth Judgments		1	2	3		
Modal Adverb Expressions		-	1	1		
Questions		-	1	1		
		234	176	410		

TABLE (4) FREQUENCY OF HEDGES OCCURRENCE IN KURDISH EDITORIALS

Types of hedges		English Economic Editorials	English Political Editorials	Total		
Conventional Hedges	Modal Auxiliary Verbs	8	6	14	69	
	Modal Lexical Verbs	11	11	22		
	Adjectival, Adverbial and Nominal Modal Phrases	Adjectives	16	3		19
		Adverbs	7	5		12
Nouns		1	1	2		
Approximators	Degree	5	1	6	37	
	Indefinite Quantifier	6	1	7		
	Indefinite Frequency and Time	23	1	24		
Conversational Hedges		19	14	33		
Particles		5	4	9		
Conditional Clauses		5	4	9		
That Clauses		-	4	4		
Concessive Hedges		2	1	3		
Comments on Truth Judgments		-	1	1		
		108	57	165		

The frequency of the hedged words and expressions occurrence in both languages have been identified and classified according to their types in the adopted model selected for the study. As tables (3 and 4) show, the numbers of hedging words occur in Economic and Political editorials in English and Kurdish are identified and counted accordingly. Both English and Kurdish writers more often use hedging in

economic editorials than in political ones due to the reasons mentioned earlier. The frequency of the occurrence of the types of hedges varies from one type to another. Some occur very often and some are not used at all. Conventional hedges and approximators are the most frequent types of hedging used in both languages and in both types of the editorials economic and politics. While passive voice, compound hedges, comments on value judgments, references, qualification, pronouns, tag questions, pragmatic tags, indefinite articles and Introductory phrases have been noted in the editorials analyzed in the study. The other types as shown in tables (3 and 4) occur variously in both languages and types of editorials but more less than conventional and approximators ones. Two types of hedging which are modal adverb expressions and questions are only occurred in English and not in Kurdish.

According to the tables (3 and 4), conventional hedging occur more frequently in both English and Kurdish economic and political editorials. It occurs (86 and 43) times in economic editorials in English and Kurdish respectively. While it occurs (74 and 26) times in political editorials in English and Kurdish respectively. Conventional hedges include modal auxiliary verbs, modal lexical verbs and adjectival, adverbial and nominal phrases which are used as hedge.

Modal auxiliary verbs are used when the writers lack the amount of the knowledge about the context or they are not sure about the information given or they would like to avoid embarrassing situations. These auxiliary verbs may help the writers to avoid direct criticism by the readers. They have been identified (66 and 14) times in English and Kurdish languages. It is more frequent in Economic editorials than political ones. It includes auxiliary verbs such as (can, could, will, would, may, ..etc) in English and (نەتوانی، دەکرێ، دەبیات، دەکات، هەند) in Kurdish as in the following examples:

*-Holding it all together will require all the skills,*  
 نەتوانە ناتوانن نینکاری رەوایتی دۆز و داواکانی طەلی کورد بکەن. -  
 (They cannot deny the legitimate rights for the Kurdish people.)

Modal lexical verbs are used to express doubtfulness, evaluation and sometimes to express personal attitudes. Some of these verbs are judgmental such as (believe, predict, assume) and some are evidential verbs such as (appear, seem) and some are deductive verbs such as (calculate, infer). They have been identified (24 and 22) times in English and Kurdish respectively. It is occurrence is more frequent in economic than in political editorials in both languages. These lexical verbs are verbs such as (appear, seem, like, suppose, etc) in English and (بیردەکاتنۆ، وادیارە، دەقیو، ئیوایە، هەند) in Kurdish as in the following examples:

*-Its prime minister appears to be in denial.*  
 حەق وایە ئیدی لێ بەکنەر نەشکرا بین و ناوێکە و جیھانیش هاوکیشەکتە -  
 وەک هەتە بێخویننۆ  
 (It is supposed that we should be clear to each other and the world and the region should read the equation as it is.)



كوردستان هيشنا به تهنه باهرسينطى به فاشيست طرتووه -  
(So far, Kurdistan was only able to stop the fascists)

'If' condition, which is equivalent to (ئەتەر) in Kurdish, is a conditional clause which is considered as a hedge in specific situations. It occurs (11 and 9) times in English and Kurdish editorials respectively. Its frequency is similar in both languages and both economic and political editorials as in the following examples:

-If we were to carry on it, it would take more than that.  
-ئەتەر ريبى خومان جيانەكتەينتووه، ئەتەر هەشمانە لێ دەستمان دەسپێننەتووه.  
(If we cannot separate we will lose what we have)

Comments on truth judgment occurs as a hedge (3 and 1) times in English (both economic and political editorials) and Kurdish (only political editorial) respectively. This type of hedging is used with the sentences which are not questionable such as (undoubtedly, unquestionably) in English and (بەبەڵگە) in Kurdish as in the following examples:

-Hundreds are wounded and the death toll undoubtedly rise.

ئەمە خێتایی راستوویانە و راشکاوانەمى نوخبەى شیعەى دەسەڵاتدارانى -  
بەغدایە و بە کومان شورش بووتووه بۆ نێو شەقام.

(This is the speech of the real ruling elite in Baghdad that undoubtedly came down to the street.)

The last two hedging types are modal adverb expressions and question which occur only one time in English language and only in political editorials. The question is used as a hedge to draw the reader into the deductive process as in the examples below”

-Rejecting it can fully have anticipated.  
-They have no water?

#### IX. CONCLUSIONS:

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher reaches the conclusion that hedging is a linguistic device used in written and spoken language. There is no definite number of hedges words. Hedging is from the open class of words used in writing to mitigate the words and reduce its affect in the context. There is no concord among linguistics about the types and numbers of hedges so there are various types of classification of hedges. Hedges are used in English and Kurdish and in both economic and political editorials but with different frequencies. The frequency of the occurrence of hedging words and expressions in economic editorials are doubled as compared to political ones in both languages. English writers use hedges much more heavily in their writings than their counterparts in Kurdish. The results of analysis show that the frequency of hedges in English is three times in number than the frequency of use of hedges in Kurdish. This might be due to the nature of the language used in economics which requires the writer to avoid errors and lessen the certainty, truthfulness, accuracy and sureness of the statements in comparison with the language used in politics. The results show that conventional hedges and approximators are the most frequent types of the hedged words used in the editorials both economics and politics. This might be due to the style and the structure of writing editorials in which the writer intends to use more modal auxiliary verbs, modal lexical verbs to help them

to lessen their commitment to the reality and facts of the messages they want to convey.

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### ملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة ظاهرة التحوط باللغتين الانكليزية والكردية. ومن الناحية اللغوية، يتم استخدام التحوط لأغراض معينة من بينها عدم اليقين والشك والاحتمال. كما أنها تستخدم لتجنب موقف محرج عندما يعتقد شخص ما بان حالة ما خاطئة. وتهدف الدراسة الى إجراء مقارنة بين أنواع وأشكال التحوط المستخدمة باللغتين الانكليزية والكوردية في مجال المقالات الافتتاحية، وكذلك الكشف عن وتيرة استخدام هذه الاداة في مقالات افتتاحية في كلتا اللغتين. ومن المفترض أن التعبير في اللغة والثقافة يحددان شكل ونوع التحوط. يستخدم الكتاب الإنجليزيون ادوات التحوط بشكل متكرر أكثر من نظرائهم الكورد بسبب الشكل الرسمي للغة الإنجليزية. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة والتحقق من الفرضية، تم استعراض أدبيات الدراسات السابقة في هذا المجال في الجزء النظري من الدراسة وعدد من مقالات الافتتاحية الاقتصادية والسياسية المختارة من اللغتين التي تم تحليلها في الجزء العملي. واستنادا الى تحليل ونتائج التي وصلت اليها الدراسة، سيتم استخلاص عدد من الاستنتاجات.