

A Study on the Use of Hedges in Filipino Conversations: Towards Enhancing Interpersonal Relationships

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Abstract

This study analyzes the use of hedges in Filipino discourse as a linguistic strategy for avoiding direct conflict and maintaining respect and politeness in communication. Employing a descriptive-analytical design within the framework of Discourse Analysis (DA), the research examined recorded statements containing hedges from José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, as well as selected transcripts of classroom discourse among Filipino language students and teachers at the College of Arts and Letters, Bulacan State University. The identified hedges were classified and analyzed according to their communicative functions and pragmatic meanings. Findings reveal that expressions such as *maaaring* (possibly), *marahil* (perhaps), *kung sakali* (in case), *sa tingin ko* (in my opinion), *kung ako ang tatanungin* (if you ask me), and *makasagot na nga po* (if I may respond) serve to soften assertions, mitigate disagreement, and promote conversational harmony. The appropriate use of hedges reflects both linguistic competence and emotional sensitivity toward one's interlocutor. The study recommends that the concept and function of hedges be emphasized more strongly in Filipino language instruction, particularly in communication-related subjects. Discussing hedges within both linguistic and sociocultural contexts can foster more effective, polite, and harmonious exchanges. By understanding and applying hedging strategies, speakers can enhance their communicative competence across diverse situations. This research aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10: Reduced Inequalities and SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions by promoting inclusive and respectful communication practices.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Filipino Discourse, Hedges, Linguistic Strategy, Politeness

Introduction

Language plays a significant role in effective communication with others, especially in Filipino culture, which highly values respect and humility. Within this context of communication, the use of *hedges* remains relevant (Holmes, 1995). Hedges are not only linguistic tools but also sociolinguistic elements that are deeply rooted in Filipino society and culture. These are words, phrases, or expressions inserted in conversations, arguments, feedback, and reactions in a way that is soft and non-offensive, often through softening the tone, offering apologies, expressing disagreement gently, or using uncertain modals to avoid direct embarrassment (Arguelles, 2000). The use of hedging helps maintain social harmony and good manners in interpersonal relationships (Tuan, 1991). It also deepens the Filipino people's sensitivity and critical thinking, which are now increasingly essential in navigating complex exchanges of reasoning and opinions that can often lead to misunderstandings or conflict.

The use of hedges is an important skill because it reflects an understanding of behaviors rooted in Filipino identity, not just grammatical expressions in language use (Salazar, 2000). It represents a communicative competence that encompasses not only the knowledge of language rules but also the appropriate and effective use of language depending on relationships, situations, and communicative goals (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bautista, 2004).

In this era of globalization and digitalization, it is important to teach and once again highlight the use of hedges among young people, who are increasingly losing their restraint in speaking and are showing less respect for others in conversations. Through this value, understanding, positive relationships, and empathy toward others' feelings can be preserved (Nuncio, 2015). The use of language softeners to lessen the bias or intensity of strong statements is a big help in establishing harmonious interactions and reducing tension in communication. Years of interaction and communication with the youth have shown the need to enhance their sociolinguistic and pragmatic abilities, which in turn elevate the importance of ethics and good behavior.

In Cruz's study (2015), it was identified that Filipinos use hedges to be more polite and careful in their communication, especially in formal situations. The study shows how hedges are used as a communication strategy to maintain positive relationships and respect for conversation partners. Meanwhile, Melon-Galvez (2017) found that hedging strategies in the technical writing of Filipino engineering students reflect their caution in disseminating information, especially when presenting ideas that require complete evidence. Her study revealed that using hedges helped students avoid being dogmatic and allowed them to express their views without asserting their personal knowledge too strongly.

In the psycholinguistic study presentation by Guira and Domingo (2022), the benefits of hedges were also observed. They developed the acronym *REAL*—Referencing, Emotional and Organizational Construct, Agreed Knowledge, and Linguistic Access to identify the various functions of hedges in academic discussions. It was found that the use of hedges is related to the speaker's emotional readiness and language proficiency.

Meanwhile, in a contrastive language analysis study by Gamad et al. (2024) on the use of interactional meta-discourse markers, including hedges, in research articles written in Filipino-English, American-English, and Chinese-English, it was discovered that hedges are used more frequently in Filipino-English, especially in the discussion and conclusion sections. This indicates a more polite and indirect manner of expressing ideas.

Earlier studies by Holmes (1982) and Varttala (1999) also showed that the use of hedges is commonly found in academic writings and formal discussions, serving to demonstrate the author's carefulness in making claims. These studies confirmed that hedges help build interpersonal relationships and avoid conflict in communication.

Furthermore, the study of Schmauss and Kilian (2023) found similarities in how men and women use hedges, though there are slight differences in the type and manner of usage, indicating the influence of gender in scientific discourse.

It is also said that the proper use of hedges in student research increases the credibility and effectiveness of their arguments. Their study highlights the importance of hedging in expressing ideas cautiously and with consideration for the readers (Iftikhar et al., 2025). A similar appreciation for hedges was observed in "The Study of Hedging in Peer-Tutoring Interactions" by Abulimiti et al. (2023), which showed that feedback and suggestions were more easily received because of hedges. They noted that students were

more inspired and learned more easily due to the positive relationship fostered by their tutor's use of hedges, as no negative remarks were made, instead, encouragement to continue and do better was given. Another field where hedges are important is political discourse, especially in campaigning, presenting platforms, and participating in meetings with sensitive topics (Taweel et al., 2023). The previously mentioned studies demonstrate that all types of communication can benefit from the use of hedges, as they provide significant moral support to individuals.

This study aims to help sustain the long-standing practice of using hedges in communication by passing down this valuable skill to the next generation, at least initially, through the teaching of this topic in the Filipino subject.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to contribute to a broader understanding of hedging strategies in the Filipino language through the following specific aims:

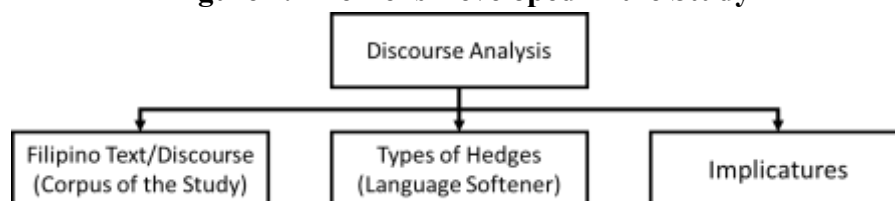
- a) to document the hedges used in the novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, as well as in selected discourses of faculty members and students from the Department of Language, Literature, and Filipino Studies at BulSU;
- b) to classify the documented hedges;
- c) to analyze the discursive functions of hedging in expressing perspectives, opinions, or information.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-analytical research design using the lens of Discourse Analysis (DA) to examine statements containing hedges sourced from the novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, as well as from transcriptions of actual discourse by Filipino language instructors and students at the Department of Language, Literature, and Filipino Studies, of the College of Arts and Letters, Bulacan State University. The use of hedges was analyzed pragmatically, focusing on context, function, and speaker strategies. Language was approached as a form of social action, not merely as a grammatical structure (Gee, 2014).

The general analytical framework was grounded in Grice's (1975) Pragmatic Theory, as applied in Oandasan's (2023) study, and the Politeness Theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), as used by Suerni (2024). Both theories support the social significance of hedging and its strategic use in communication to foster cooperation and politeness. These frameworks emphasize that meaning is not solely derived from literal semantics but from the speaker's intent, contextual cues, and how the message is conveyed in actual communication. Grice's theory guided the interpretation of language in context, while Brown and Levinson's theory informed the analysis of politeness and communicative appropriateness.

Figure 1. The Lens Developed in the Study



Results and Discussions

The hedges analyzed were organized into a descriptive table with four columns. In the first column, the base statements containing hedges and the context or scene in which the conversations occurred are listed. The second column presents the hedge-free version of the same statements, in order to highlight the difference between utterances with and without hedges. The third column identifies the type of hedge used, based on the classification proposed by Fraser (2010). Finally, the fourth column presents the implied meanings of the corpus, contextualized within Filipino society, culture, and communication practices.

Below is a summary of the findings from the analysis of 40 selected statements, each employing different types of hedges. The corpus and its corresponding explanation were retained in Filipino to preserve the organic nature of the data in its original language.

Batayang Pahayag na may Hedges	Anyo ng Pahayag Kapag Walang Hedges	Uri ng Ginamit na Hedges	Pahiwatig na Kahulugan Implicature
1. <u>Tila yata</u> may sariling hangarin ang Kapitan Heneral. Tagpo: Pagpupulong	May sariling hangarin ang Kapitan Heneral. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May larang akusasyon 	Tila/yata: Epistemic Hedges Nagpapakita ng posibilidad o hindi katiyakan ang paggamit ng pandiwang modal May maingat na pagdududa.	May obserbasyon o hinala subalit hindi hayagang sinasabi na totoo. May naiwang reserbasyon o ipinakitang limitasyon ng pananaw o kaalaman May pagpapakita rin ng paggalang sa awtoridad May pagbubukas sa posibilidad ng ibang paliwanag
2. <u>Siguro’y</u> hindi lubos na nauunawaan ng mga prayle ang sitwasyon ng bayan. Tagpo: Pagpupulong	Hindi lubos na nauunawaan ng mga prayle ang sitwasyon ng bayan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May pagsalungat 	Siguro: Epistemic: Lingguwistikong diskarte Ipinahiwatig ang limitadong paniniwala o opinyon ng nagsasalita May di larang pagsalungat	Siguro ang ginamit upang hindi masabing tahasan ang pagpuna. May pagpapakita ng respeto sa awtoridad, kahit may bahid ng kritisismo. Pagbubukas ng posibilidad para sa iba pang interpretasyon, para hindi magmukhang palaban.
3. <u>Marahil,</u> <u>kung</u> tayo’y binigyan ng tunay na edukasyon, hindi	Hindi tayo matatakot magsalita. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May pagsalungat 	Marahil: Epistemic Hedge: Lingguwistikong diskarte	Nagsisilbing panimula sa isang opinyon o posibilidad

tayo matatakot magsalita. Tagpo: Pagpupulong		May maingat na pagdududa Kung: Nagmumungkahi ng isang hypothetical situation	May pag-iwas sa direktang paninisi o pagtuligsa May pagpapakita ng pagka-mapanuri, ngunit may kababaang-loob; bukas para mag-isip
4. <u>Medyo</u> may pagdududa ako sa mga layunin nila. Tagpo: Pagpupulong	May pagdududa ako sa mga layunin nila. • Hayagang pagdududa	Medyo: Approximator Hedge: May pagtantiya/pahiwatig: Kaunti, di lubos, bahagya	Taktika upang hindi masabing mapanghusga o mapanira. May pagtantiya
5. <u>Kung baga sa halaman</u> , ang bayan ay unti-unting nalalanta. Tagpo: Pormal na Usapan	Ang bayan ay unti-unting nalalanta. • Hayagang pagsasalita	Kung baga sa halaman: Hedging through metaphor May metaporikal na pagpapahayag	Magpaliwanag ng isang idea sa paraang mas madaling maunawaan sa pamamagitan ng paglalarawan/paghahambing
6. <u>Kung sakaling</u> mangyari ito, kawawa ang mga Pilipino. Tagpo: Pagpupulong	Kawawa ang mga Pilipino. • Kaagad na pagbibigay ng kongklusyon.	Kung sakali: Hypothetical Marker/Hedge Nagpapahiwatig ng isang <i>di-tiyak na posibilidad</i> ; nagbubukas ng hypothetical scenario.	Ipinakikilala ang isang posibleng pangyayari na hindi pa nagaganap at hindi tiyak kung mangyayari May tonong nagbabala, may empatiya, ngunit hindi tuwiran o agresibo Evaluative statement na nagpapahayag ng emosyonal na pagkabahala
7. <u>Tila</u> naliligaw ang mga kabataan ngayon. Tagpo: Pag-uusap ng Katandaan	Naliligaw ang mga kabataan ngayon. • Hayagang pagbibigay ng obserbasyon	Tila: Epistemic Hedge Nagpapahayag ng kawalang katiyakan	Nagpapahiwatig ng mapanuring obserbasyon upang magpahayag ng hindi ganap na katiyakan, ngunit may palaisipang tono.
8. Siguro’y dapat nating pag-isipan muna ito. Tagpo: Pagpupulong	Dapat nating pag-isipan muna ito • Hayagang pagpapatigil	Siguro: Epistemic Hedge Nagpapahiwatig ng kawalan ng pag-aalinlangan/katiyakan.	May pagmumungkahi; May di lantad na pagpigil o pagkontrol na gawin ang isang bagay/proyekto

<p>9. <u>Baka</u> hindi ito ang tamang panahon.</p> <p>Tagpo: Pagpupulong</p>	<p>Hindi ito ang tamang panahon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nagpapahayag ng lantad na pagsalungat 	<p>Baka: Epistemic Hedge</p> <p>Nagpapahiwatig ng kawalang katiyakan/ng pag-aalinlangan</p>	<p>Maaaring nagpapahiwatig ng emosyonal na pag-aalinlangan, pagrespeto sa desisyon ng iba, o pagtatangkang umiwas sa padalus-dalos na hakbang.</p> <p>Hindi ito ganap na pagtanggap, kundi isang mahinahong pagbibigay ng babala o mungkahi ng paghahanda.</p> <p>May agam-agam</p> <p>May pagbibigay ng alternatibo</p>
<p>10. <u>Parang</u> may lihim siyang dinadala. (Noli Me Tangere)</p> <p>Tagpo: Mga tsismosa na nag-uusap tungkol kay Maria Clara</p>	<p>May lihim siyang dinadala.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mabilisang pagbibigay ng konklusyon. 	<p>Para+ng: Epistemic Hedge</p> <p>Naglalarawan ng isang obserbasyon na may hindi tiyak na konklusyon.</p>	<p>Nagpapahayag ng hinala sa halip na tuwirang akusasyon.</p> <p>Nagbibigay ng tensiyon o misteryo sa isang karakter</p> <p>Ginagamit ito kung napapansin ng isang tao na may pinagdaraan o itinatago ang iba, subalit ayaw manghusga kaagad.</p>
<p>11. <u>Siguro</u> ay may dahilan si Ibarra kung bakit siya nawala nang matagal.</p> <p>Tagpo: Usapan ng mga tao sa pagkawala ni Ibarra</p>	<p>May dahilan si Ibarra kung bakit siya nawala nang matagal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lantarang pagsabi ng dahilan na parang tiyak na tiyak 	<p>Siguro: Epistemic Hedge</p> <p>Nagpapahiwatig ng maingat na hinala o posibilidad</p>	<p>Nagpapakita ng <i>pagsuspende</i> ng <i>panghuhusga</i></p> <p>Ginagamit upang ipahiwatig na ang obserbasyon ay hindi ganap na sigurado, kungdi isang palaisipan o hinuha, at hindi kaagad nanghusga.</p>
<p>12. <u>Medyo</u> magulo ang pamahalaan.</p> <p>Tagpo: Usapan sa El Filibusterismo</p>	<p>Magulo ang pamahalaan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agarang konklusyon 	<p>Medyo: Approximator Hedge</p> <p>Nagpapahiwatig ng bahagyang problema na kailangan ng</p>	<p>Ginagamit upang ipahiwatig na hindi ganap na magulo o hindi sobra-sobra ang kaguluhan, ngunit may</p>

		paghahanda o pag-iingat.	indikasyon ng problema o hindi kaayusan. Iwas panic.
13. <u>Marahil</u> , hindi <u>muna</u> ngayon. Tagpo: Kapag may nag-aalok ng posisyon	Hindi muna ngayon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nagpapahayag ng tuwirang pagtangga 	Marahil: Epistemic Hedge Sagot na walang katiyakan subalit may posibilidad Muna: Temporal Hedge: Nagpapababa ng tensyon; nagbibigay ng pansamantalang hakbang; may dapat unahin Nagpapahiwatig ng panandalian o pansamantalang pag-uuna sa isang kilos bago ang ibang bagay	Pagbibigay-daan sa pag-uusap nang hindi pinipilit o dinidiktahan ang sagot Hindi direktang pagtangga o sandaling pagpapaliban Nagpapahiwatig ng pag-aalinlangan o maingat na pagtangga.
14. <u>Baka</u> hindi ako makarating. Tagpo: Simpleng pag-uusap na may nag-aanyaya (faculty room)	Hindi ako makakarating. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hayagang pagsalungat 	Baka: Epistemic Hedge Pagpapasintabi sa posibilidad	Upang hindi umasa nang buo ang nag-iimbita May duda o balakid na maaaring pumigil sa kanyang pagpunta. Hindi niya hayagang sinasabi na hindi siya pupunta —pero mas malamang- may maliit na chance- bukás pa rin ang posibilidad.
15. <u>Kung sakali baka</u> mauna <u>na lang</u> ako. Tagpo: Sa corridor	Mauna na ako. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hayagang pagsasabi 	baka: Epistemic Hedge- Pagpapakita ng pagdududa o posibilidad Kung sakali: Hypothetical Hedge- isang paghinula	Nagpapakita ng isang posibleng sitwasyon o pangyayari na hindi pa nangyayari, isang " <i>what if</i> " na senaryo. Paunang pag-abiso/pagpapaalam sa kausap na posibleng hindi sila magkasabay na mahalaga sa lipunang Pilipino.

<p>16. <u>Sa tingin ko</u>, mabait <u>naman</u> siya. Tagpo: Sa klase</p>	<p>Mabait siya.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May kongklusyon na kaagad 	<p>Sa tingin ko: Epistemic Hedge Naman:mitigator- mas magaan, mas magalang, o mas mahinahon ang tono ng usapan.</p>	<p>Nagbibigay- balanse sa pahayag para hindi masyadong diretsahan- may pagpapalagay May pagsasaalang-alang sa sariling opinyon na may paggalang sa kausap</p>
<p>17. <u>Parang</u> kaya natin ito. Tagpo: Pagpaplano ng gagawin</p>	<p>Kaya natin ito.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May lakas ng loob kahit hindi sigurado. 	<p>Parang: Approximator/Epistemic Hedge Nagpapakita ng posibilidad o kakayahan, subalit walang katiyakan</p>	<p>May pahiwatig ng pagtantiya o pag-agapay na magagawa May pagsangguni sa iba pang kasapi ng grupo</p>
<p>18. Mahusay <u>naman</u> ang tagapagsalita. Tagpo: Pagkatapos ng Seminar</p>	<p>Mahusay ang tagapagsalita.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hayagang tinukoy na mahusay ang tagapagsalita 	<p>Naman: Mitigator Hedge Binawasan ang tindi ng ipinapahayag</p>	<p>Nakontrol ang pahayag sa pamamagitan ng naman. Ipinahiwatig na hindi sobrang mahusay; saktolang</p>
<p>19. <u>Medyo</u> manipis ang tela at di maganda ang kulay. Tagpo: Pagpili ng Kasuotan</p>	<p>Manipis ang tela at di maganda ang kulay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hayagang pagsabi ng negatibong bagay 	<p>Medyo: Approximator Hedge; may pantantiya May pagpapagaan sa negatibong nais sabihin</p>	<p>May pag-iwas sa pagiging mapanlait at masakit magsalita Nakabalanse dahil sa approximator hedge na “<i>medyo</i>”</p>
<p>20. <u>Sa tingin ko</u>, mali ang sagot mo. Tagpo: sa klase</p>	<p>Mali ang sagot mo.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May pagtitiyak sa sinasabi 	<p>Sa tingin ko: Epistemic Hedge Nagsasaad ng pansariling opinyon na walang katiyakan</p>	<p>Hindi hayagang pagsabi na mali ang sagot Hindi lantarang pagpanig. May pagbibigay konsiderasyon sa iba at may kaunting reserbasyon na nagbigay ng oras sa iba para mag-isip. Ipinapakita na ito ay opinyon lamang at hindi isang matibay na batayan ng katotohanan.</p>

<p>21. <i>Parang hindi siya sang-ayon.</i> <i>Tagpo:</i> <i>Pagpupulong</i></p>	<p><i>Hindi siya sang-ayon.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lantarang Pagsalungat</i> 	<p>Parang: Epistemic Hedge at Approximator Hedge Nagpapahayag ng sariling opinyon at pagtantiya</p>	<p>May espasyo ng pag-aalangan sa pagsabing hindi sang-ayon. Nagpapahayag ng hinala o hindi siguradong obserbasyon sa damdamin o opinyon ng iba.</p>
<p>22. <i>Sa tingin ko, ganito ang dapat nating gawin.</i> <i>Tagpo: Pagpaplano</i></p>	<p>Ganito ang dapat nating gawin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hayagang pagbibigay-mungkahi 	<p>Sa tingin ko: Epistemic Hedge Nagsasaad ng pansariling opinyon na walang katiyakan</p>	<p>Nagpapakita ng di lantad na pagmumungkahi subalit may pakiramdam ng pagggiit. May pakiramdam ng pagmamalasakit at paggabay</p>
<p>23. <i>Makasagot na nga po, tama ba ang ginagawa natin?</i> <i>Tagpo:</i> <i>Pagpupulong/Normal na Paghaharap</i></p>	<p><i>Tama ba ang ginagawa natin?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hayagang pagtatanong 	<p>Makasagot na nga po: Discourse Softener / Politeness Marker po: Politeness Marker: Discourse ng Paggalang <u>ba</u>: Epistemic Hedge- Ipinapahayag ang paghihinala sa pamamagitan ng pagtatanong Tama ba ang ginagawa natin: Epistemic Question Hedged Question: Hindi ito direktang tanong kundi <i>may hamong kailangang pag-isipan o pagnilayan.</i></p>	<p>Magtanong at magsimula ng pagsasalita nang hindi agresibo Humingi ng pahintulot nang may paggalang. Hindi tuwirang pagsaway, kundi pagbubukas sa posibilidad na may kailangang pag-isipan o baguhin Paghingi ng pahintulot–nagpapahiwatig ng paghingi ng abala o respeto bago magsalita.</p>

<p>24. <u>Okey lang ba sa iyo na kuhanin kitang Ninong?</u> Tagpo: Usapang magkaibigan</p>	<p>Kukuhanin kitang Ninong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mas malapit na magkaibigan ang dating. <p>(Sa sitwasyon ng matalik na magkaibigan, mas natural ang mga diskurso na walang hedges)</p>	<p>Okey lang ba sa iyo: Discourse Hedge sa anyong nagtatanong Magalang na nagtatanong Nagpapakita na ang pagsagot ay may limitasyon o hindi tiyak</p>	<p>Naghahanap ng pahintulot, <i>imbes na diretsong gumawa ng kilos</i> Ipinapaubaya sa kausap ang desisyon. Naghihintay ng kumpirmasyon Magalang, hindi mapilit, sensitibo sa damdamin ng kausap</p>
<p>25. <u>Maaari bang makiusad nang kaunti?</u> Tagpo: Faculty Room (Sasakyan/Mga Pampublikong Espasyo)</p>	<p><i>Usad nang kaunti. Umusad ka nang kaunti.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Hayagang nag-uutos.</i> 	<p><i>Maaari ba: Hedge na</i> Nagtatanong-humihingi ng pahintulot Himig nagtatanong subalit ang katotohanan ay nag-uutos o nakikiusap</p>	<p>Iniwasan ang direktang pag-uutos Ipinahayag ang kahilingan nang hindi tuwiran o mapilit. Paggalang sa kausap lalo at mas matanda.</p>
<p>26. <u>Hindi naman sa nakikialam pero mali ka naman talaga.</u> Tagpo: Seryosohang Usapan/Argumento</p>	<p><i>Mali ka naman talaga. Pagtitiyak sa sinasabi</i></p>	<p>Hindi naman sa nakikialam: Discourse Hedge/Epistemic Hedge- Maglang na nagpapahayag ng opinyon Naghahanda sa pagsalungat ng opinyon, o komento.</p>	<p>Ginagamit sa kulturang Pilipino upang pasimulan ang isang sensitibong opinyon o puna, habang umiwas sa pagiging mapanghimasok o mapanghusga. Ipinapahiwatig ng tagapagsalita na may kamalayan siyang ang susunod na sasabihin ay maaaring ituring na panghihimasok.</p>
<p>27. <u>Paumanhin, maaari bang makapagsalita?</u> Tagpo: Pagpupulong/Pormal na Usapan</p>	<p><i>Magsasalita ako.</i></p> <p><i>May pagkamayabang; mataas ang tingin sa sarili ang dating</i></p>	<p>Paumanhin: Discourse Hedge-pinabababa nito ang pagiging assertive Maaari ba+ng: Discourse Hedge; humihingi ng permiso sa anyong patanong</p>	<p>Ipinapakita ang pakikibagay sa sitwasyon at pagrespeto sa kausap, lalo na sa mga pormal na talakayan o grupong may turn-taking sa pagsasalita. Humingi ng permiso sa maayos at magalang na</p>

			<p>paraan upang makapagsalita</p> <p>May mas nakatataas o awtoridad sa pulong na kailangang kumilala sa mga nagsasalita</p>
<p>28. <u>Kung magtutulungan tayong lahat</u>, magiging madali ang proyektong ito kahit na mahirap.</p> <p>Tagpo: pagpupulong</p>	<p><i>Magiging madali ang proyektong ito kahit na mahirap.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hayagang pagbibigay ng konklusyon</i> 	<p>Kung magtutulungan tayong lahat: Conditional Hedge Pahiwatig na kailangang kumilos ang lahat</p>	<p>Nagsasaad ng dalawang magkaibang konsepto subalit magkaugnay depende sa konteksto. May kondisyon na kailangang matupad upang mangyari ang resulta o ang kahingiang dapat na gawain</p>
<p>29. <u>Ayon sa surbey nina Ocsan at Bulaong (2021)</u>, bumaba ang motibasyon ng mga estudyante.</p> <p>Tagpo: Usapang pananaliksik</p>	<p>Bumaba ang motibasyon ng mga estudyante.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hayagang pagpapabatid 	<p>Ayon sa: Hedges na Ginamitan ng Attribution Inichepwera ang sarili sa responsibilidad</p>	<p>Ipinasa ang pananagutan ng pahayag sa ibang awtoridad o sanggunian. Napupunta ang pananagutan sa iba Mas tumitibay ang katotohanan kapag may batayan</p>
<p>30. <u>Parang kulang pa sa pagsusuri ang bahagi ng pananaliksik na ito.</u></p> <p>Tagpo: Advising ng Thesis/Usapang pananaliksik</p>	<p>Kulang pa sa pagsusuri ang bahagi ng pananaliksik na ito.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lantarang pagsalungat 	<p>Parang: Epistemic/Mitigator Hedge Pinahihina ang dating ng pahayag kaya't ginagawang di ito tiyak</p>	<p>May basehan ang obserbasyon subalit hindi pa rin tiniyak ang ibig sabihin</p>
<p>31. <u>Maaaring hindi sapat ang datos para sa konklusyon.</u></p> <p>Tagpo: Usapang pananaliksik</p>	<p><i>Hindi sapat ang datos para sa konklusyon.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lantarang pagsalungat</i> 	<p>Maaari: Modal Hedge Nagpapakita ng posibilidad na ang nabanggit ang dahilan</p>	<p>Nagpapahiwatig ng pag-aalinlangan o pagdududa na hindi hayagang sinabi</p>

<p>32. <u>Kung totoo ang sinasabi nila</u>, wala ng mga General Subject sa susunod na taon. Tagpo: Faculty Room</p>	<p><i>Wala ng mga General Subject sa susunod na taon.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hayagang pagpapahayag/ga noon katiyak ang pagbibigay ng impormasyon</i> 	<p>Kung totoo ang sinasabi nila: Epistemic Hedge Sariling opinyon o pagtingin ng nagsasalita</p>	<p>Nagpapahiwatig na ito ang posibleng epekto kung mangyayari talaga ang plano ng CHED halimbawa.</p>
<p>33. Hindi _____ ba posibleng ganito ang gawin natin? Tagpo: Pagpupulong</p>	<p><i>Ganito ang gawin natin.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hayagang nag-uutos.</i> 	<p>Hindi ba possible? Hedges na nagtatanong Lantarang nagmumungkahi, gamit ang pagtatanong</p>	<p>Kunwari ay nagtatanong subalit ang katotohanan ay nag-uutos o nagmumungkahi Estratehiya sa pakikipag-usap upang pag-isipin o bigyan ng opsiyon ang kausap.</p>
<p>34. <u>Malamang</u> na may pasok na bukas dahil wala na palang bagyo. Tagpo: Usapan ng magkakaguro</p>	<p><i>May pasok na bukas dahil wala ng bagyo.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hayagan pagsabi</i> 	<p>Malamang: Approximator Hedge Pagtantiya na mas malapit sa katotohanan; halos tiyak</p>	<p>Hindi 100% na sinabi ang katotohanan; nagtira pa ng reserbasyon subalit doon naman patungo ang mensahe dahil sa isang malinaw na batayan. Ginagawang ganito ang pahayag upang hindi pagmulan ng maling announcement.</p>
<p>35. <u>I think</u> may kaunting problem lang sa part na ito. Tagpo: Pagbuo ng proyekto</p>	<p><i>May kaunting problema sa part na ito.</i></p>	<p>I think: Epistemic Hedge- pagbibigay ng sariling opinyon sa paraang banayad.</p>	<p>Ganito ang hedges na gamit ng mga kabataan. Karaniwan ay Ingles. Kaya't nagiging Taglish ang pahayag. Subalit ganoon pa rin naman ang ibig ipahayag, hindi hayagang sinasabi na may problema upang di ma-offend ang unang gumawa.</p>
<p>36. <u>Feeling ko</u>, hindi po niya naintindihan ang gagawing plano.</p>	<p><i>Hindi niya naintindihan ang gagawing plano. Negatibo ang dating ng pahayag.</i></p>	<p>Feeling ko: Epistemic Hedge- - pagbibigay ng sariling opinyon sa paraang banayad</p>	<p>Hindi offending kapag may hedges na feeling ko, sapagkat natural naman ang pagbibigay ng sariling opinyon na</p>

Tagpo: Miting ng grupo			walang paglalahat. Hindi isinasama ang iba, kungdi sarili lamang kaya't hindi ito gaanong nakakasakit ng loob.
37. Honestly, kulang sa energy ang performance kanina. Tagpo: Puna ng direktor sa palabas	<i>Kulang ang energy ng performance kanina. Negatibo agad ang dating.</i>	Honestly: Epistemic Hedge na may approximator o pagtantiysa sa konteksto.	Pagsasabi nang totoo na may panubaling honestly na ang dating ay may concern sa kausap. Naging konstruktibo ang pahayag na humamon sa kausap na husayan pa.
38. <u>Maybe</u> , hatiin natin sa dalawang slides para mas malinaw. Tagpo: Paghahanda ng report	<i>Hatiin natin sa dalawang slides para mas malinaw. Hayagang nagmumungkahi na para bagang may kulang o mali sa ginawa.</i>	Maybe: Epistemic Hedge Hindi hayagang pumupuna	Nagmumukhang nagmumungkahi lamang para mapaayos ang gawain; may malasakit sa kausap ang dating.
39. <u>It was like</u> , super weird na umayaw kung kailan patapos na. Tagpo: Rehearsal	<i>Super weird na umayaw kung kailan patapos na.</i>	It was like: Epistemic Hedge	Paglilagay ng konting pa-drama effect sa usapan
40. <u>I think</u> , mas okey ang first part. Tagpo: Pagbibigay ng komento sa isang rehearsal	<i>Mas okey ang first part.</i>	I think: Epistemic Hedge	Pagbibigay ng sariling pagkukuro na magbubukas sa posibilidad ng iba pang puna.
41. <u>That's kinda</u> weird/boring! Tagpo. Komento sa play	<i>Weird! Boring!</i>	Kind of (Kinda-Taglish): Approximator Hedge :	Makatotohanang pagbibigay- puna sa isang tiyak na danas, na may arte kaya't di mabigat ang dating.
42. <u>Same! Parang</u> ibang genre siya this time. Tagpo: Komento sa play	<i>Iba ang genre niya this time.</i>	Same at Parang: Epistemic at Discursive Hedge Constructive and dating, di offensive	Nagiging natural at relatable ang komunikasyon; nagiging casual ang usapan.
43. <u>I mean</u> , ibahin kaya natin ang diskarte. Tagpo: Pagpaplano	<i>Ibahain natin ang ating diskarte.</i>	I mean: epistemic hedge	May pagpapasintabi sa pagsabi ng pansariling pananaw/opinyon

44. <u>Well</u> , wala namang mawawala kung susubukan natin. Tagpo: Pagpaplano	<i>Wala naming mawawala kung susubukan natin.</i>	Well: Epitemic Hedge	Pag-uumpisa ng idea; pagbibigay/pagHINGI ng pahintulot
45. <u>You know</u> , may katuwiran naman siya. Tagpo: Pagpupulong ng SG	<i>May katuwiran naman siya.</i>	You know: Epistemic Hedge	Graduwal na nasasabi ang nais na sabihin, at dahil graduwal, nakontrol nito ang intensidad ng emosyon.
46. <u>Kung tutuusin</u> , tama naman ang punto niya. Tagpo: Pagpupulong ng grupo	<i>Tama naman ang punto niya.</i>	Kung tutuusin: Appoximator Hedge: May pagtantiya sa isang idea o katuwiran Pagbibigay linaw o paliwanag	Maayos at malumanay na pagbibigay linaw o paliwanag sa isang bagay
47. <u>Alam mo</u> , kailangang mo talagang tanggapin na di siya para sa iyo. Tagpo: Personal na Pag-uusap	<i>Kailangan mo talagang tanggapin na di siya para sa iyo.</i>	Alam mo: Epistemic Hedge	Discourse marker para bigyang pansin ang sasabihin/mensahe; may tonong malasakit
48. <u>Actually</u> , iba ang nais kong sabihin kanina. Tagpo: Pagpupulong ng grupo	<i>Iba ang nais kong sabihin.</i>	Actually: Epistemic Hedge	May paglilinaw o pag-uulit; simpleng paraan ng pagtatama

Findings of the Study

Based on the conducted analysis of the use of hedges, the following findings were drawn:

- Hedges are commonly used by professionals, particularly educators and researchers, and are less frequently used by younger speakers or students in casual interactions;
- Hedges are more evident in spoken communication than in written communication; especially in formal and serious topics or discussions;
- They are more often used when giving opinions and explanations than when delivering data or providing information;
- Hedges make it possible to disagree or refuse in a polite way but it's not intimidating and comes across as constructive rather than offensive.
- There has been a change in the way young people use hedges; these are commonly in English which are mixed into main statements that are in Filipino, whereas teachers use Filipino.
- Credibility and integrity remain intact in a conversation even when hedges are used;

- g. It's also a way for a person to guide themselves and prevent errors;
- h. This form of discourse reflects a positive communication strategy, wherein speakers avoid direct criticism or assertive confirmation of information without qualifications. Hedges allow for more diplomatic and socially attuned exchanges, which are crucial in maintaining harmonious interpersonal relations.

Conclusion

In summary, the use of hedges is not merely a stylistic choice but a sociolinguistic strategy closely tied to power dynamics, relational sensitivity, and mutual trust among participants in communication. This research highlights that understanding hedging is essential not only in discourse analysis but also in the teaching of communicative competence.

Moreover, appropriate use of hedges demonstrates linguistic intelligence and emotional sensitivity. By learning to recognize and practice hedging in language use, speakers can enhance their ability to engage in effective, respectful, and nuanced communication across various contexts

Recommendations

In response to the findings of the study, it is recommended that the concept of hedges be further emphasized in the teaching of the Filipino language, especially in subjects related to communication. It is advisable that hedges be discussed not only from a technical standpoint but also within their socio-cultural context to cultivate more effective and tactful communication skills among students. The following specific recommendations are also put forward:

- a. Use hedges to maintain an academic tone. When writing essays, research papers, or other formal texts, incorporate hedges such as *maaari* (may/might), *tila* (seems), *marahil* (perhaps), and *baka* (maybe) to demonstrate caution and allow room for alternative interpretations.
- b. Avoid excessive use of hedges. Overusing hedges can result in statements lacking clear direction and may give the impression of uncertainty or lack of confidence in what is being expressed.
- c. Select appropriate hedges depending on the purpose. Use stronger hedges when sufficient evidence is available (*malamang* -probably), and weaker hedges when data is limited (*maaari* or *tila*-might/seems).
- d. Consider the audience. In formal or academic discussions, the use of hedges is more acceptable. However, in informal or more direct conversations, the use of hedges may need to be reduced.
- e. Combine hedges with solid evidence. Even when using hedges, ensure that there is adequate support or data to maintain the credibility of the statement.
- f. Statements that employ hedges often carry respect, humility, and courtesy, making them valuable tools in maintaining decorum in discourse. Hence, hedging should be reintroduced and emphasized in language instruction, especially in Filipino as both a first and second language.

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