

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of six sub chapters. They are background of the study, statement of research problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a tool used by people to communicate with others. They provide information, express feelings, ideas, emotion, etc. by using language. In communicating with their interlocutor, people often give statements which contain hedges. Coates (2004), states “hedges are linguistic forms such as *I think*, *I’m sure*, *you know*, *sort of*, and *perhaps* which express the speaker’s certainty or uncertainty about the proposition under discussion”. The phrases as examples of hedges given by Coates are often found in human’s daily conversation. Another linguist who gives opinion about hedges is Holmes. She does not use the term “hedges” but “pragmatics particles”. The pragmatics particles are similar to Coates’ hedges. The pragmatics articles are *I think*, *you know*, *sort of*, and *of course*. Holmes says that the pragmatics particles serve as hedging or boasting devices in different context, and their contribution to politeness also varies in context (Holmes, 1995).

Hedging is one of the ways to convey interpersonal messages in spoken language. Nikula states that hedging is a communicative strategy which enables

speakers to, for example, soften the force of their utterances in order to make them more acceptable to the hearer (in Riekkinen, 2009). Certain speech acts for example criticisms are often hedged since if not they might sound threatening to the interlocutor. It becomes clear when considering the following utterances (cited in Riekkinen, 2009):

A: “you are mistaken”.

A: “*I think you might be mistaken*”.

The two examples above show the differences between non-hedged and hedged utterance. The second example shows that using hedges helps the speaker to make his utterance less threatening to his interlocutor. The speaker intends not to sound too direct or rude by hedging his utterance. Riekkinen states “Hedging is closely related to politeness” (Riekkinen, 2009).

Collins explains hedge as “if you hedge against something unpleasant or unwanted that might affect you, you do something which will protect you from it, if you hedge or hedge a problem or question you avoid answering the question or committing yourself to a particular action or decision” (in Markkanen, 1997). In daily life, people widely use hedges in their conversation even though they do not realize that their statement actually contains hedges. According to Holmes (1995) for example in English, the modal auxiliaries may, could, and might, and the modal adverbs such as perhaps, possibly, maybe, can be used as hedges, and thus function as negative politeness strategies.

A movie is the entertainment which most people love to watch. It is one of the media to find a language variation that happens in the society since it represents how people interact with others in the real life. Sometimes, the

audiences of the movie are influenced by the language variation, for example hedges, used by the characters of the movie. Thus, they often adopt the variation in communicating with their interlocutor from the movie they watch. So, it is interesting to analyze the example of language variation, in this case hedges, in the movie.

The Great Gatsby is a movie which was adapted from F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel in the same title. Film which was starred by Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire, Carey Muligan, and Amitabh Bachan and won the Oscars 2014 tells a story about Nick Carraway who gave his favor to the fabulously wealthy guy named Jay Gatsby. After attending one of Gatsby's great parties Nick was asked by Gatsby to arrange a meeting with his cousin, Daisy who married a philandering man named Tom Bunchanan. Daisy was Gatsby's true love before they were separated each other. Then, Gatsby tried to win Daisy back.

The writer is interested in analyzing this movie since it has just won the Oscars 2014 as the best costume design and production design. The movie contains conversation between characters in the film which provides examples of hedges. Besides, the conversation in the movie is a quite same as in the real world. In addition, the writer is going to take the utterances produced by all the characters. The writer only focuses on the conversations which contain hedges produced by the characters.

There are some related studies that have been conducted beforehand. Most of the previous studies are conducted to analyze hedges uttered by the main characters in a movie like what has been done by Fauzi and Irigiliati (2012) and

Unola and Mardjiono (2013). Two of the studies concerned with theory of hedges proposed by Salager-Meyer. However, this study applies classification of hedges proposed by Hana (2012). In addition, the aim of this study is to analyze hedges used by all of the characters in a movie entitled *The Great Gatsby*. There is no research done with that movie so far.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

In this study, the problem is the hedges used in “The Great Gatsby” movie. As the guidelines, the writer had several questions in dealing with this problem:

1. What types of hedges are found in the conversation between characters in “The Great Gatsby” movie?
2. What are the functions of the hedges found in the movie?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statements of the problem, the purposes of this study are:

1. To describe the types of hedges found in the conversation between characters in “The Great Gatsby” movie.
2. To explain the functions of hedges found in the movie.

1.4 Significances of the Study

By conducting this study, it is expected this study can give both theoretical and practical contribution on the field of discourse analysis particularly on the analysis of hedges used in spoken language.

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the reader's knowledge about the use of hedges and functions of hedges in a conversation, in the case "The Great Gatsby" movie. It is also expected that this study will give a contribution to the existing knowledge in linguistics field of study. Besides, it is also expected to give a foundation for those who want to conduct such a study.

Practically, from this study, hopefully the readers can get information about hedges words so they can implement them in their daily conversation since hedges are closely related to politeness.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on analyzing the hedges found in *The Great Gatsby* movie by using the theory of types of hedges proposed by Hana (2012) and functions of Hedges proposed by Coates (2013). Therefore, the scope of this study is pragmatics which concerns the discussion of hedges in a movie. The limitation of this study is only the utterances that contain hedges in *The Great Gatsby* movie.