



**AN ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL HEDGES AND TAG QUESTIONS
FUNCTIONS FOUND IN THE *HILLARY CLINTON'S* SPEECHES**

THESIS

*Submitted to Fulfill a Partial Requirement for S.1 Degree in the Department of
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ORIGINALITY STATEMENT

“I hereby declare that this Thesis is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, or substantial proportions of material which have been accepted for the award of any other educational institution, except where due knowledge is made in the Thesis”.

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Abstract

The research aims to find the functions of lexical hedges and tag questions in the Hillary Clinton's speeches. In analyzing the data the writer uses the theories stated by Holmes (1992,2001), and Lakoff (2001). The data were taken from the speeches spoken by Hillary Clinton and it has been formatted into scripts. After analyzing the data, the results show that there are nineteen lexical hedges and six tag questions in the speeches. And, the results have also shown that all the functions of lexical hedges and tag questions also appear through the speeches. The lexical hedges are *well, I think, like, you know, so*. And, the functions of pause fillers or meaningless particles have also shown up like *actually, seriously, you know, and you see*. And the tag questions are *isn't it?, doesn't it?, right?, don't we?, didn't he?*, and *hasn't it?*. The research of the lexical hedges and tag questions through Hillary's speeches has proved that there are some of women language features that show up.

Keywords: *lexical hedges, tag questions, pause fillers, meaningless particles.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

People is social creatures. They interact each other to create a relationship since they cannot live alone. People encounter things and matters everyday. Sometimes, they cannot solve the matters on their own. They need the helps of the others to figure out the deadlocks. Social interaction is needed to create this relationship. Social and language are significant components that cannot be separated. Language makes people to fathom each other. It is to reveal of feelings, emotions, and ideas. In science, the study of between social interaction and language is called by sociolinguistics. It is a knowledge that allows people to comprehend language and its connection with society.

One of the interesting things that is found in the study of sociolinguistics is the variety of men and women language. Both of genders that exist have dissimilar way of language uses. Naturally, men are identified stronger and solid than women physically. It applies the same way with the usage of language. It is a part of sociolinguistics since it involves the two genders who have different styles of language uses. A study about language and gender focuses on the influence of gender toward language use. A study about the variety of men and women languages has revealed that there is a different characteristic of language used between men and women. The terms of women language and men language are

found a lot in language gender. Both of the terms imply that women and men have language characteristics.

The language used by women have some of features that can be seen and investigated. There are some features in women language such as lexical hedges and tag questions. This theory is brought by Lakoff (2001) that he explains women's speech was characterized by linguistic features. The features of lexical hedges and tag questions have shown the characteristics of women when they speak. These are the identities that make women are different than men. The explanation of these two theories will be explained later in the chapter three. In short, when women speak or use language, they tend to be more careful too choose what they will try to say. This can be categorized as a lack of confidence. They sort out things that are worth to say and things which are not. And sometimes, they include some particles or words such as well, like, and sort of to strengthen the statements.

There are some experts who go deep into the study of language features used by women. One of them is Lakoff. As the writer has mentioned before, the features are lexical hedges and tag questions. He also includes the features such as the use of overly polite forms, the use of question tags, rising intonation in declaratives, the avoidance of expletives, a greater use of diminutives and euphemisms, the use more hedges and mitigating devices, more indirectness and the use of particular vocabulary items such as adorable, charming, and sweet (women's language) versus great, terrific and cool (neutral language). The use of this language, he argued, made women's language tentative and coupled with the

use of demeaning and trivializing terms from women, works to keep women in their place in society.

Lexical hedges shows the lack of confidence and reflects uncertainty. For example: *well, I don't like him actually*. It means, she still confuses about what she says. Meanwhile, tag question is the questions that follow statements or declaratives and some of them are used to show uncertainty to affirm and ensure about something. For example: *She is very kind, isn't?* This statement has shown that the speaker thinks that the girl is kind but the speaker needs an approval from someone. That is why the speaker includes the tag question with the statement to ask for someone else's accord.

For the reason that lexical hedges and tag questions have been analyzed by some linguists, the functions are needed in order to be understood through the statements. Holmes (1995) says that the functions of the two features of women language can be found anywhere through the statements they utter. The theory reveals through the statement or scripts there can be found four types of tag questions. They are epidemic modal tags, challenging tags, facilitative tags, and softening tags. When one of these functions has been found in a statement, then it can be concluded the speaker has uttered the tag questions. The lexical hedges consists of three functions. The functions are To mitigate the possible unfriendliness and unkindness of a statement-that is, where it is used for the sake politeness, to show speaker's uncertainty about what she is saying, or cannot vouch for accuracy of the statement, and as an apology for making assertion. The last one means, it is a lexical hedge where someone, in this context is a woman,

tries to reduce the assertion of her statement through an apology by adding the words you know, well, you see.

Women speech features can be found in many kinds of communication media. One of them is onelectronic media, especially on internet. Internet as one of mass communication media is used to convey information, entertainment and news. There is news found on internet such as economy, natural disaster, and politic. There are many ways to get information from the news, we can find by watching on television and YouTube, read articles, online newspapers, and magazines. For the news about politics, especially for speech, most of people watch on Youtube or read the script. The hottest news on political currently is the speeches of one of the president candidates that occurred in American few moments ago, the woman is Hillary Clinton.

Hillary Clinton is one of American politician who served as the first lady of the United States from 1993 to 2001 and as 67th United States Secretary of state from 2009 to 2013, and she was the Democratic Party's nominee for President of the United States in the 2016 election. The writer has chosen the speech of Hillary Clinton since it is interesting to be investigated and they have some features of lexical hedges and tag questions. The features of lexical hedges and tag questions have functions in each of them. In other words, the functions of lexical hedges and tag questions through the speeches interviewed by Hillary Clinton are the main focus in this research.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The problems have been formulated in order to make it easier to be analyzed. The problems focus only with the functions that have been shown by lexical hedges and tag questions. The writer has formulated into two questions. The following questions are:

1. What are the functions of lexical hedges used by Hillary Clinton in her speeches?
2. What are the functions of tag questions used by Hillary Clinton in her speeches?

1.3 The Purposes of the Research

The purpose of this research is to find out the answers out of the problems. This is noteworthy because this research comes up with the reason to solve these two problems. The writer has sorted out into two numbers. The purposes are:

1. To explain the functions of lexical hedges used by Hillary Clinton in her speeches.
2. To explain the functions tag questions used by Hillary Clinton in her speeches.

1.4 Data

The data for the paper is taken by collecting the campaign speech scripts of Hillary Clinton on internet. The writer has searched several speeches and sorted them out. This speeches happened when she became the first woman in the history of the United States nominated as a president election 2016. Hillary made some

campaigns during the election. And then she gave her speeches in front of thousands of her supporters who came to watch her. The speeches she made has been recorded and written into words on papers and scripts.

By downloading and collecting these scripts, the writer has decided to make her speeches to be the data for this research. Hillary Clinton has become a subject of precedent snapshot as a representative of women in United States. As a woman, she has shown strong and solid mind and mentality to join the election of presidential. She dares to fight back her enemy through the debates. The style of her speech has made some impressions towards linguists who are interested to research it. And the writer has chosen her speeches to make them as the data of the research.

1.5 Limitation of the Problem

This research is to find and solve the problems of the functions of lexical hedges and tag questions in the Hillary Clinton's speeches. Lexical hedges and tag questions are two out of many features of women language that have been explained by the experts. Beside these two there are some of features are such as polite forms, rising intonation in declaratives, avoidance of expletives, diminutives and euphemisms, mitigating devices, indirectness, particular vocabulary items such as adorable, charming, and sweet, terrific, and cool. Every feature have their functions which can be looked into statements uttered by women by way of their speeches. But, to limit this research, the writer has decided to analyze the functions on lexical hedges and tag questions on Hillary Clinton's speeches during her presidential electio