

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Communication has become the most essential thing in human interaction. One way to communicate is by using argumentation. Lamm and Everett (2007) states that an argument shapes the way people think, offering them alternative ways of seeing what is “true”. One important means to argue is the language that people use. It will be easier for a person to argue if he acquires a language well. However, in argumentation people do not only need language but also the matter that they bring into their arguments and their attitude in conveying their arguments in front of public. It includes controlling their tension and maintaining their proper politeness expressions when debating.

Considering the need of the students to learn how to argue in academic debate with an appropriate manner using correct language and accurate content of their arguments, the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University provides the students Speaking 3 course. In Speaking 3, students learn how to make good arguments and to hold debate in public. In a debate, a person is not only given a chance to express his ideas, but also to argue and defend his ideas before an audience. A speaker must be able to follow the rules of arguing having regard to the correct manner and reliable claims in their arguments.

The objective of Speaking 3 course as quoted from Speaking IV Course Outline (2006) is that the students are able to carry out English debate and argumentation with ease and in acceptable manners using spoken English. To be successful in debating, students need to comprehend reasoning skill, for example, they have to be able to state what their assertion is and support it with evidence. According to Pfau, Thomas, and Ulrich (1987), reasoning is the process of inferring a conclusion from evidence presented in a debate.

Toulmin (1958) as quoted by Pfau, Thomas, and Ulrich (1987), states that an argument has two parts, the claim and the data. The claim is the statement that the advocate hopes to establish. The data is the evidence, facts, or reasoning used to support the claim. In arguing, one is supposed to be careful in making a certain claim. An acceptable claim is a claim which is sufficiently supported by reliable evidence. Besides, the claim needs to be stated carefully and properly. Lamm and Everett (2007) state that an argument at the least has two parts.

Our definition of an argument—“giving reasons to change the way one thinks or acts”—... The desired “change” is expressed as a claim, which is any statement that needs proof before its acceptance. The “reasons” are the support for the claim; they take the form of evidence and explanations (Lamm & Everett, 2007, p. 6).

In the effort of speaking properly including in debating, one must not forget the maxims of cooperative principle by Grice (1975). The maxims of cooperative principle are maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner. Grice (1975) as quoted by Renkema (1993)

states that the maxims provide a clear description of how listeners (and readers) can distill information from an utterance even though that information has not been mentioned outright. Yule (1996) mentions Gricean maxims of cooperative principle are unstated assumptions in the conversations. Assumptions that commonly occur in a conversation are the assumptions that the speakers are telling the truth, being relevant, and trying to be as clear as they can. However, Yule (1996) states that there are certain kinds of expressions speakers use to mark that they may be in danger of not fully adhering to the principles which are called hedges.

The term ‘hedge’ was first used by Lakoff (1972, p. 194) to mean “words whose job is to make things more or less fuzzy.” Joyce (1976) defines fuzzy set as ‘a term applied to a set of elements for which membership ... set is gradual rather than absolute’. Salager-Meyer (1997) investigates hedges as threat minimizing strategies, strategies to deal with certainty of knowledge which include politeness strategies in the social interactions and negotiations between writers (speakers) and readers (listeners). Bunano (1982) as quoted by Nugroho (2002) states hedging means the way people express their uncertainty about something or state something uncertain and “hedges” are words or phrases which carry the speaker’s uncertainty.

The application of hedges might contradict Grice’s maxim of manner. It states that a speaker is supposed to be perspicuous. In detail, a speaker must avoid ambiguity. Meanwhile, the use of hedges suggests a strategy which

deals with the speaker's uncertainty. However, the contrary fact is that the hedges support the clarity of what a speaker means.

The importance of the maxim of quality for cooperative in English may be best measured by the number of expressions we use to indicate that what we're saying may not be totally accurate.... Cautious notes, or hedges, of this type can also be used to show that the speaker is conscious of the quantity maxim.... Markers tied to the expectation of relation [from the maxim of relation] can be found in the middle of speakers' talk when they say things like 'Oh, by the way' and go on to mention some potentially unconnected information during a conversation. (Yule, 1996, p. 38)

The politeness principle, like the co-operative principle, may be formulated as a series of maxims which people assume are being followed in the utterances of others. The linguist, Lakoff (1973) as quoted by Cook (1990) has formulated the maxims as followed: *do not impose, give options, and make the receiver feel good*. Brown and Levinson (1987), dealing with politeness in verbal interaction from the point of view of pragmatics, viewed hedges as a device to avoid disagreement. They describe hedges as a strategy or an expression of negative politeness.

In delivering an argument, a speaker must be precise in making a claim. Stating a claim is a face-threatening act that warrants mitigation. As a result, a writer or speaker is said to employ appropriate hedging devices as a strategy to mitigate the claim (Heng&Tan, 1999). In line with the politeness strategies, hedges also provide mitigation for a speaker to avoid being attacked because of a certain assertion. The properness of the use of hedges is not only needed in making claim in arguments, but also in rebuttal in argumentative speech.

Lamm and Everett (2007) define a rebuttal as an argument made in response to a specific objection.

The study of hedges has been an important research in pragmatics and discourse studies abroad since the 1970's. Unfortunately, this kind of study has not been done sufficiently in Indonesia. Most previous studies conducted concern on the use of hedges in academic writing. Indeed, this topic has not been an interest for the students of English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University. The writer is curious to study the types and the functions of hedges used in the argumentative speech by the students in Speaking 3 in the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University. The writer investigates the topic and writes a thesis entitled: Hedges Found in Argumentative Speech by the Students Taking Speaking 3.

1.2 Statements of problem

With reference to the background of the study, the problems in this study are formulated as follows:

1. What hedges are used in argumentative speech of the students taking Speaking 3 in the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University?
2. What are the functions of the hedges used in the argumentative speech of the students taking Speaking 3 in the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University?

1.3 Objectives of the study

In line with the background and the research questions stated above, this study intends:

1. to find out what hedges are used in argumentative speech of the students taking Speaking 3 in the English department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University
2. to find out and describe what the functions of the hedges used in the argumentative speech of the students taking Speaking 3 in the English department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University are.

1.4 Significance of the study

The results of the study are expected to enrich the knowledge about hedges used in claims of argumentative speech in Speaking 3. Besides, they are most likely to be taken as input in expanding the readers' knowledge about hedging in argumentative speech in Speaking 3 by the students of English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University. The results are also hoped to contribute the lecturers teaching speaking to teach hedges in Speaking 3, so that the students will be able to use hedges properly in their argumentative speech.

1.5 Scope and limitation of the study

Because of the limited time, energy, and fund available, the study is limited in several ways. First of all, the study is limited to the students taking

Speaking 3 at the English Department in the even semester of 2008. Second of all, it is limited on the area of analysis which focuses on the language used in the debate by the students in the classroom. It is to say that the writer did not pay attention to the content of the argumentative speech. The study is also limited to the arguments and rebuttals in the speech delivered by the speakers.

In the Australasian Parliamentary English debate, there are two teams with three people in each team. Each team has first, second and third speakers. In addition, the first or the second speakers become the reply speaker for each team. As the fourth limitation, the writer only analyzed the first and second speakers of the teams in the debate matches under the consideration that the first four speakers have the role to bring arguments in the debate. The role of first speakers is to lay out the basic fundamentals of the team's case, including elementary argumentations, while the second speakers' task is mainly to continue the case by responding, to rebuild the case and to provide continuity analysis of argumentations.

The writer did not reckon the third and reply speakers because they substantively did not bring any arguments in the debate. In analyzing the data, the writer ignored all of the grammatical mistakes or errors in the argumentative speech since the study did not analyze the grammatical items. In addition, in the study, the writer did not examine any models of argument. The writer used the models of argument as a guidance to decide the data.

The last thing to limit is in analyzing the data; the writer used the categories of hedges types published by Salager-Meyer (1997). The writer

made some changes in the Salager-Meyer's Taxonomy of Hedges in order to adapt the data emerged in the study. While categories of hedges functions used in the study are taken from Nugroho's (2002) study in which she quoted some linguists like Hatch (1992), Brown and Levinson (1987), Frazer (1975), Lakoff (1972), and Drechsel (1989) who have previously conducted researches on hedges and have concluded one of hedges functions as softeners.

1.6 Theoretical frame work

This study is based on the theory of discourse which is theory of debate and argumentation and theory of hedging.

The theory of argumentation was first published by Toulmin (1958) as quoted by Renkema (1993) in which he concerned more on how an argument is structured rather than the logical form of an argument. In his model, Toulmin views argument as the motivation of statement (the claim) by way of another statement (the data). The relationship between the two statements is called the warrant. According to van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984) as quoted by Renkema (1993), an argument is

a speech act consisting of a constellation of statements designed to justify or refute an expressed opinion and calculated in a regimented discussion to convince a rational judge of a particular standpoint in respect of the acceptability of that expressed opinion (Renkema, 1993, p. 133).

In line with the theory of argumentation, Pfau, Thomas, and Ulrich (1987) state that debate is a process in which people argue for opposing sides

of a conflict, using rational rules and methods in preference to force or emotions, in order to obtain a decision for one side or the other by an objective third party. They also say that

An understanding of the nature of reasoning is important to the advocate. This understanding can not only assist the advocate in discovering weaknesses in the position advanced by an opponent, but it can also help the advocate develop the strongest possible case (Pfau, Thomas, and Ulrich, 1987, p. 146).

Reasoning is an important skill in argumentation that a speaker or writer should comprehend. When a speaker or writer knows well how to use the reasoning skill, it will be easier for him to tackle down the opponents' arguments. Meanwhile, a speaker or writer could possibly find the best case for his argument.

Lakoff (1972) defines 'hedges' as words whose function is to make meanings fuzzier or less fuzzy. He argues that the logic of hedges requires serious semantic analysis for all predicates. In the Dictionary of Stylistics, as quoted by Widjaja (2007), hedges are said as belonging to the field of discourse analysis and speech act theory. In the same quotation, hedge is also defined as qualification and toning-down of utterances and statements in order to reduce the riskiness of what one says. Salager-Meyer (1997) provides a Taxonomy of Hedges called the 'strategic stereotypes' which goes by grammatical forms.

The writer uses all of these theories to help her finding out the hedges used by the subject under the study and also the functions of hedges in the context. These theories are used as guidance to analyze the data.

1.7 Definition of keywords

To avoid misunderstanding, some key terms need to be defined. The terms to define are:

(1). Hedges

In the Dictionary of Stylistics, hedge is also defined as qualification and toning-down of utterances and statements in order to reduce the riskiness of what one says.

(2). Hedging

Salager-Meyer (1997) define hedging as “the process whereby authors tone down their statements in order to reduce the risk of opposition and minimize the ‘threat-to-face’ that lurks behind every act of communication”, which “may present the true state of the writers’ understanding and may be used to negotiate an accurate representation of the state of the knowledge under discussion.

(3). Claim

Based on Toulmin’s theory of argument, a claim is the main statement in an argument which is supported by the data (evidence, facts or reasoning).

(4). Argument

White and Billings (2005) also define argument as ‘a form of discourse in which the writer or speaker tries to persuade an audience to accept, reject, or think a certain way about a problem that cannot be solved by scientific or mathematical reasoning alone’.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis of the research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which consists of the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the definition of key term, and also the organization of the study. The second chapter is the review of related literature and previous studies, while the third chapter deals with the methodology of the research. The findings and analysis will be discussed in Chapter Four and the last is Chapter Five which contains the conclusion of the whole research.

