ABSTRACT: Hedges are a kind of negative politeness strategies used by a speaker to minimize threats on other people’s face. Kinds of hedges are investigated in Avril Lavigne’s songs lyrics. In this research, primary data are the lyrics and were analyzed based on the hedges taxonomies of Salager-Meyer (1997) and Iragiliati (2007). Findings showed that Modal Auxiliary Verbs mostly appeared in the songs’s lyrics which are the representations of hedges in social interactions.

Keywords: hedges, negative politeness, social interaction

People communicate with other people by using language. They try to deliver their messages by using the right diction that can be understood by the hearers. Delivering our purpose in conversation, for example, we should choose the best diction to represent our feeling. Conversation can be done by talking face to face, by phone, and also by using songs as the tool. There are possibilities that we will find one of the Face Threatening Acts (FTA) in the conversations we do. FTA can be used to minimize the threat to other people faces. A Speaker (S), according to Brown and Levinson (1987: 90), must decide to what extent he/she wishes to minimize the FTA. He/she rationally decides this by choosing a strategy that yields opportunities of minimization proportional to the face threat of the particular FTA. The strategy provides a range of degree of politeness (of face-risk minimization), so S will bear in mind the degree of face threat in choosing appropriate expressions. One of the strategies is negative politeness strategy.

Negative politeness strategy can be seen in the art works. Amazing art works of Avril Lavigne can be seen in her fourteen (14) songs that she produced and become very popular all over the world. In this research, from each album the researcher randomly took two songs.

In relation to the songs mentioned above, the use of politeness strategy especially in terms of hedges can be seen in the development of song lyrics produced by Avril Lavigne. Lavigne was born September 27th, 1987. She is a very famous Canadian singer and songwriter. Lavigne began her career and creating songs’ lyrics when she was 18 years old. Through her songs, she tried to deliver her messages to her hearers in order to make them understand her feelings. The researcher assumed that Lavigne’s songs consist a lot of hedges in the construction of the lyrics. The research will try to find out whether the hedges in her songs increase or decrease in her albums in every age levels. Thus, in this research, the researcher will analyze hedges in lyrics of the fourteen songs.

Hedging is a linguistic resource which conveys the fundamental characteristics of science of doubt and skepticism. Salager-Meyer (1997: 105-118)

1 A graduate student of B.A. and B.Ed in Applied Linguistics and Education Program of State University of Malang
2 Senior Lecturer, English Department, Faculty of Letters, State University of Malang
stated that hedging is expressed through the use of the following strategic devices: a) Modal auxiliary verbs (may, might, can, could, would, should); b) Modal lexical verbs (to seem, to appear, to believe, to assume, to suggest, to estimate, to tend, to think, to argue, to indicate, to propose, to speculate); c) Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases (possible, probable, un/likely, assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion, perhaps, apparently, etc); d) Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time (approximately, about, often, occasionally, generally, usually, somehow, somewhat, a lot of); e) Introductory phrases (I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that, we feel that); f) If clauses (If true, If anything); and g) Compound hedges (it would appear, it seems reasonable, it may suggest that, it seems likely that, it seems reasonable to assume that). As can be seen then, all the forms of hedging strategies presented above imply that the statements in which they appear contain personal beliefs based on empirical data. Another research on hedge in EAP Medical was conducted by Iragiliati (2007).

Iragiliati (2007: 107) in her article in medical discourse, also discussing about hedging, stated the types of hedges as lexical verbs (indicate, appear, and propose); adverbials (quite, almost, and usually); words that convey the truth of a statement (probably, generally, evidently); modal verbs (would), adjectives (likely and most); modal nouns (possibility, assumption, and estimate). Beside that, Iragiliati also mentioned that hedges are also combined with the use of emphatics (of course, clearly, obviously, definitely) and strong words (significant, substantial, and powerful). Table 1.1 shows the results of hedges from the previous researches by Salager Meyer (1997) and Iragiliati (2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Kinds of Hedges</th>
<th>Salager-Meyer’s Taxonomy of Hedges</th>
<th>Iragiliati’s Taxonomy of Hedges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Modal auxiliary verb</td>
<td>may, might, can, could, would, should</td>
<td>Would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Modal lexical verb</td>
<td>seem, appear, believe, assume, suggest, estimate, tend, think, argue, indicate, propose, speculate</td>
<td>indicate, appear, propose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrase</td>
<td>(probability adjectival: possible, probable, un/likely), (noun: assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion), (adverbs: perhaps, possibly, probably, practically, likely, presumably, virtually, apparently)</td>
<td>possibility, assumption, estimate, likely, quite, almost, usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Words that convey the truth of a statement</td>
<td>probably, generally, evidently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time</td>
<td>approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally, generally,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hedges used in songs’ lyrics are related to the choice of words of the writers and it is related to the development of the writers’ intellectual. Jean Piaget (1972 cited in Brown 2007: 65) outlined the course of intellectual development in a child through various stages: (a) sensorimotor stage (birth to 2); (b) preoperational stage (ages 2 to 7); (c) operational stage (ages 7 to 16); (d) concrete operational stage (ages 7 to 11); and (e) formal operation stage (age 11 to 16). Those were the development stages provided by Piaget.

There was a previous research on artworks conducted by Prayogo (2005). In this research, he analyzed the content of Bob Dylan’s songs related to Christianity messages. The findings showed that most of Bob’ Dylan’s songs consist of religious messages for the hearers.

Another research on artworks was conducted by Hasana (2009) in analyzing the hedges in Armagedeon movie. She analyzed the movie using hedges and The Grice Maxims.

Based on the review of related literature above, the researcher in this research will follow the findings of the kinds of hedges stated above. There were nine hedges classifications in this research, such as modal auxiliary verbs (MAV); modal lexical verb (MLV), adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases (AAM); approximator of degree, quantity, frequency and time (App); Introductory phrase (IP); If clause (IC); compound hedges (CH); hedges combined with the use of emphatics (HCE) and strong words (SW).

The focus of this research is the hedges on the language word-choice formation that is used by Avril Lavigne on her songs to the hearer based on age levels that can be seen through her song lyrics taken from different levels of age. The general research problem is “What are the kinds of hedges found in Avril Lavigne’s choice of words seen in her songs?” The researcher will try to find the kinds of hedges appeared in Lavigne songs, the frequency of the hedges appeared and the functions of the hedges.

The results of this research are aimed to give significance for the teachers or lecturers, the students of Pragmatics, the fans of the Avril Lavigne and the future researchers.

METHOD

The method in this study was descriptive qualitative since it was aimed at describing the characteristics of a phenomenon which was the performance of hedges seen in the main characters of the movie (Johnson & Christensen, 2004: 347).
The source of data was taken from the song lyrics from Avril Lavigne’s fourteen (14) songs. The songs taken were *I Don’t Give a Damn* and *Why* (1st album), *I’m With You* and *Sk8er Boi* (2nd album), *My Happy Ending* and *Under My Skin* (3rd album), *I Can Do Better* and *Innocence* (4th album), *Girlfriend* and *Alone* (5th album), *When You’re Gone* and *Girlfriend (DrLuke Mix)* (6th album), and *What The Hell* and *Smile* (7th album).

The data collection was carried by using the lyrics of Avril Lavigne songs. In collecting the data, another additional instrument used were a table and check list, which were used in identifying, coding, and classifying the data.

The data analysis was done in several steps as follows: listing the data, coding the data, and describing the result.

FINDINGS

The results showed that there were varieties of hedges appeared in each age range group of Lavigne’s songs’ lyrics. The researcher divided the range of age into three age range group. They were 16 to 20 years old, 21 to 25 years old, and above 26 years old age range. The findings of the research could be seen in the following table.

Table 3.1. Kinds of Hedges found in Avril Lavigne’s songs’ lyrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of Hedges</th>
<th>Age Range Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (16-20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAV</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLV</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAM</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCE</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first age range group of 16 to 20 years old, the findings were as follow. The hedges used were Modal Auxiliary Verbs and Modal Lexical Verbs. The MAV appeared here was “can”, “could”, “will”, and “would”. The MAV “can” and “could”. Another hedge appeared was Modal Lexical Verbs. The MLV appeared were “think” and “thought”. Lavigne used these kinds of hedges to show her ego that she just wanted to show what she felt without concerning on other’s feeling. She believed that everything she did was right and her hearer was able to understand what she felt. She believed that the hearers were just the same as her.

In the second age range group of 21 to 25 years old, the hedges used were Modal Auxiliary Verbs and Modal Lexical Verbs. The MAV appeared here was “can”, “could”, “will”, “would”, and “should”. Another hedge appeared was Modal Lexical Verbs. The MLV appeared were “think” and “believe”. The If-clause hedges also appeared in this age range. Lavigne used these kinds of hedges to show her solidarity to the hearers.

In the third age range group of above 26 years old, the hedges used were Modal Auxiliary Verbs, Modal Lexical Verbs and If-clauses. The MAV appeared here was “can” and “would”. Another hedge appeared was Modal Lexical Verbs.
The MLV appeared were “think”. The If-clause hedges also appeared in this age range. In order to get clear understanding, the researcher provides the chart of the flow of hedges used in Lavigne’s songs. Lavigne used these kinds of hedges to be closer with the hearers and make them feel special.

The results were seen in the flow chart of hedges used in Lavigne’s songs below. From the chart, we could see the flow of hedges used in Lavigne’s songs. The Modal Auxiliary Verbs mostly appeared in the first age range group. However, it was decreasing in the second and third age range groups. The Modal Lexical Verbs also appeared and it was stable from the first to the third age range group. If-Clauses did not appear in the first age range group. However, the If-Clauses were increasing in the second and third age range groups. These varieties happened as the effect of the development of Lavigne’s maturity.

![Figure 1.1 The flow of hedges used in Lavigne’s songs](image)

**Figure 1.1 The flow of hedges used in Lavigne’s songs**

ARG = Age Range group  
MAV = Modal Auxiliary Verbs  
MLV = Modal Lexical Verbs  
IC = If–Clauses

As the growth of Lavigne’s maturity, she changed her hedges type. She used the hedges, for the first age range group, to show her feeling forcefully and did not pay attention to other people’s feelings. In the second age range group, she changed her preference of hedges to show her solidarity to others. Whereas the last age range group, she used the hedges to be closer with the hearers and make them feel special.

**DISCUSSIONS**

Seen in the lyrics, the varieties of hedges were different in every age range group. According to the hedges taxonomies proposed by Salager-Meyer (1997) and Iragiliati (2007), there were three out of nine hedges used by Avril Lavigne in her lyrics constructions. There were Modal Auxiliary Verbs (MAV), Modal Lexical Verbs (MLV), and If-Clauses (IC). The hedges appeared in the first age range group are Modal Auxiliary Verbs and Modal Lexical Verbs. The sample of Modal Auxiliary Verbs could be seen in the following lyrics.

I Don’t Give A Damn (the first chosen song from the first album entitled Complicated)

(1)  
U017 01 You thought the way you taste
The first example in the first age range group (16-20 years old) of Lavigne’s song lyrics above, it implied that Lavigne chose this Modal Auxiliary Verbs to show her belief on something that was true based on her way of thinking. She wanted to show her feeling forcefully to the hearers and make them think the same way. She believed that both she and the hearers shared the same context on seeing the phenomena in social life.

In this age range group Lavigne faced a problem of dropping out from school and it gave a stress for her. Young adult who was facing this problem usually had a big ego that led her to show her feeling through her songs. Lavigne here showed her ego that she just wanted to show what she felt without concerning on other’s feeling. She believed that everything she did was right and her hearer was able to understand what she felt. She believed that the hearers were just the same as her. Her hearers had the same life as her that they experienced love and problems at school. She believed that the hearers were able to understand how it felt when we loved or hated someone. They would understand the feeling of being lonely, when we wanted someone we loved to be beside us and many more.

Another hedges appeared in Lavigne’s songs was Modal Lexical Verbs. Below was the sample lyrics of the songs from the second age range group (21-25 years old) which consists of MLV:

I Can Do Better (the first chosen song of the fourth album entitled The Best Damn Thing)

(2)

U01 01 I couldn't give a damn what you said to me
U02 02 I don't really care what you think of me
U03 03 'Cause either way you're gonna think what you believe
U04 04 There's nothing you could say that would hurt me

The above example was taken from the second age range group (21-25 years old), it implied that Lavigne chose this Modal Lexical Verbs to show her feelings but not in the forcefully way. She used solidarity in this age range group. She began to pay attention to other people feelings. She believed that the hearers would have more understanding on her by showing her solidarity to them.

In this age range group Lavigne faced a problem when she had to adapt with new environment, the new environment where she should suit to new things around her. Young adult who was facing this problem usually had a big ego that led her to show her feeling through her songs. Lavigne here showed her ego that she wanted to show what she felt with a little concern to other’s feeling. She believed that everything she did was right and her hearer was able to understand what she felt. She believed that the hearer was just the same like her, especially those who share the same experiences like her, love and new friends.
The hedge was also found in the song *What The Hell* from Lavigne’s seventh album of the third age range group. The following was the sample lyrics of the songs from the third age range group (above 26 years old) which consists of MLV:

What The Hell (the first chosen song of the seventh album entitled Goodbye Lullaby)

(3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>And I don't really care about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>If you love me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>If you hate me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>You can save me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above example was taken from Lavigne’s song from the third age range group (above 26 years old). It implied that Lavigne chose this particular hedge to minimize the distance between Lavigne and her hearers. She wanted to be closer to the hearers and tried to convince the hearers, in this case young people especially mature hearers, which both Lavigne and the hearers share the same understanding Lavigne’s feeling through her songs in her 27 years old.

In this age range group Lavigne faced a problem of separating from her lover. Young adult who was facing this problem usually had a big ego that led her to show her feeling through her songs. Lavigne here showed her ego that she just wanted to show what she felt without concerning on other’s feeling. She believed that everything she did was right and her hearer was able to understand what she felt. She believed that the hearer was just the same like her. Her hearers had the same life as her that they experienced love and problems at school.

It can be concluded then from the three different age range groups, kinds of hedges appeared differently in every age range group, especially in the function of the hedges themselves. If we looked back to the first age range group, the hedges mentioned the function to express Lavigne’s feeling that she wanted to be equal with boys or we might say that her society made her be like this. In the beginning of her career, she dropped out from school and her family did not really pay attention on the ‘place’ where she should belong. Her family did not treat her like she did something wrong by saying ‘rough’ likes boys. That is why she used hedges here to express herself forcefully to show that she still save other faces.

In the second age range group, the function of hedges differs from the one before. In this range, Lavigne used hedges more to show solidarity to other than expressing herself forcefully. She wanted to show that she is in the same status with her hearers. She shared the same context where she understood her hearers and the hearers also understood her. She believed that they would know how it felt to be her.

Then in the last age range group, Lavigne wanted to be closer to the hearers. She wanted to be more intimate with the hearers. She wanted the hearers to have the feeling of closeness with Lavigne. She wanted to make the hearers that they are special for her that she shares her feeling to them. We can conclude that
the hedges in every age range are different in function. However, they still have the same function to save other faces in the speaking or conversation.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions
Hedges as one term of negative politeness were frequently used by Avril Lavigne in her lyrics’ construction. Kinds of hedges that were frequently used in Avril Lavigne’s songs’ lyrics were Modal Auxiliary Verbs, Modal Lexical Verbs and If-Clauses.

In every age classification, the number of hedges found was different. It was increasing based on the classification of hedges. In the first age range (16 to 20 years old) the kinds of hedges found were only two, the modal auxiliary (74.42%) verbs and the modal lexical verbs (25.58%). Then in the second age range (21 to 25 years old), the kinds of hedges found were three, the modal auxiliary verbs (70.53%), modal lexical verbs (27.67%) and if-clause (1.78%). The same kinds of hedges as in the second age range also appeared in the third age range (above 26 years old), those were the modal auxiliary verbs (41.17%), modal lexical verbs (23.52%) and If-clause (35.29)

The functions of each hedge were different. The modal auxiliary verbs in this research had the function to give emphasize on something that the speaker, in this case Avril Lavigne, believed to be true. The modal lexical verbs in this research had the function to give command and show disappointment, while If-clause had the function to show probabilities on something that the speaker believed to happen.

Thus, from the findings, the researcher concluded that the modal auxiliary verbs and modal lexical verbs appeared in every age range group of Lavigne. The changes on the hedges chosen by Lavigne suggested that the maturity of someone affects their choice of words. The younger a person, he/she would tend to show bigger ego and did not care with others’ feelings. The older a person, he/she would try to pick the best diction which would not harm others’ feelings.

Suggestions
It is suggested then, first, for the teachers and lecturers of pragmatics. The teachers or lecturers of pragmatics might use this research as a reference to teach their students and to give the view how actually hedges were used in conversation and in certain situation which took place in the work of art especially in songs’ lyrics.

Secondly, the students of pragmatics might use this research as a reference to understand the relevance of pragmatics and how it was applied in the daily life especially in songs. In addition, the student also could observe how the hedges used in song lyrics. Thus, they could combine their knowledge in pragmatics and their knowledge in songs in order to apply pragmatics in songs’ lyrics.

The third suggestion was for Lavigne’s Fans. They might use this research to understand how the pragmatics used in their idol songs’ lyrics and why hedges appeared in certain condition. By reading this research, the hearers were expected to be more sensitive in some situation in which Lavigne tried to deliver her feeling through her songs. Besides, it was expected that they knew how Lavigne tried to be closer with them.
The last suggestion was for the future research. This research still needed the improvement. Thus, the future researchers who wanted to conduct the research in the same discipline could take the information from this research in order to get the better research. The next researchers were suggested to develop this research to get more understanding about the pragmatics and how it was applied in the life.

REFERENCES