

## Hedges in Queen Rania's of Jordan Speeches

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### ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the findings of a study that aimed to identify the linguistic items which act as hedges in the speeches of Queen Rania of Jordan, as well as to examine the pragmatic functions of these devices. Twenty speeches of Queen Rania, selected from the official website of Queen Rania (see Appendix), were analyzed adopting Laurinaitytė (2011) taxonomy. The study revealed that the most frequently used hedging device in Queen Rania's speeches is approximators, and the most frequently used hedging device subcategory is the indefinite quantifier "many". The findings suggest that these hedging devices fulfill several pragmatic functions.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

There are very few studies that have analyzed the political speeches delivered by women in general, and by Arab and Muslim women in particular (Amaireh, 2013). In recent years, hedges caused a lot of curiosity and received plenty of research, for they are used across various disciplines, discourses, genres, and registers. Currently, the main focus is on the usage of hedges across different disciplines and discourses such as medicine, chemistry, economics, or psychology (Recski 2005). The purpose of this paper is to explore hedges in Queen Rania's speeches. The paper is based on a set of English data composed of twenty speeches delivered between February 23, 2016, and November 15, 2017, by Queen Rania of Jordan (see Appendix). The total number of words of the speeches will be counted by Ant Conc 3.2.1w. Then, the linguistic devices functioning as hedges will be subject to the analysis.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several researchers have investigated the use of hedges in different disciplines, discourses, genres, and registers. Rabab'ah & Rumman (2015, 157) attempted to describe the used hedges in King Abdullah's II of Jordan speeches, as well as to analyze the pragmatic functions hedges used. Rabab'ah & Rumman's confirmed previous findings and contributes to our understanding of that politicians avoid commitment and express politeness or fuzziness by using a wide range of hedging devices. The study showed that political, social, or humanistic discourse use hedges to express fuzziness and lack of precision. Though, the study showed that King Abdullah's II second language (i.e., Arabic) did not have an effect on His Majesty's use of hedging devices or the functions they perform. Unexpectedly, His Majesty King Abdullah and other native speakers of English showed similar use of the major subcategories of hedging devices. According to the study, monolingual or bilingual politicians use hedges as rhetorical devices to perform various pragmatic and rhetorical functions for several reasons, such as mitigating claims, expressing a lack of full commitment to their propositions, expressing politeness, attempting to be accepted, avoiding direct criticism, and requesting listeners' involvement.

Rukmini & Yuliasri (2015, 1-6) examined the hedges used in the United States Presidential Speeches; particularly the speeches of Bill Clinton, George W Bush, and Barrack Obama. The Three United States Presidential Speeches used different types of hedges approximates to assume the possibility in their statements and also employed the modal auxiliary a verb with a low level. The function is to make a strong commitment and absolute statement. Taweel et al. (2011, 194) identified, quantified, and analyzed hedging employed in spoken political discourse in both Arabic and English. The study attempted to describe the means and strategies by which politicians show their disengagement to their propositions and whether these strategies are influenced by the language used and recipient design. The findings have shown that avoidance is the most frequently occurring strategy of hedging that characterizes spoken political discourse, conversational and discourse strategies including Grice's maxims are rarely adhered to in spoken political discourse, and finally, the recipient design directly and widely affects hedging. Fraser, B. (2010) was interested in investigating the use of hedging while Bush responding to challenging questions posed to him by reporters. The researcher found abundant examples of neutral hedging, hedging where there was no indication that it was being used for evasion or politeness purposes but rather conveying a lack of

precision. Also, he did not find that hedging was used in the Press Conferences for mitigation purposes leading to polite effects. Unexpectedly, the researcher found only a few cases of hedging for purposes of evasion when the question was challenging, and Bush might be expected to avoid a direct, forthright answer on point.

Masoomah and Afghari (2014, 1168) investigated whether men and women differently use intensifiers, hedges, tag questions, empty adjectives, and adverbs in English. To conduct the study, the researchers investigated R. Lakoff's (1975) ideas concerning linguistic differences between males and females. The findings revealed that there were significant differences between the groups in the use of hedges, tag question, intensifiers, and empty adjectives, but not in the use of adverbs. Mohamad & Sahib examined the types of hedges used and found out which types are most dominant in TV debates. They also introduced a pragmatic analysis of the use of hedges in language especially male's and female's social roles to identify their distinctive functions. The study demonstrates two conclusions. First, hedges keep the TV debates smooth and avoid conflict. Secondly, the study also shows the significant role that context plays in the interpretation of hedging. It also confirms that males tend to use hedges more than females do owe to their awareness of the undesirable effects of certain topics. Dubar (2012, 1) adopted Lakoff's work as a starting point for the discussion of gender-related features in conversations to discover whether these features can be found nearly four decades after Lakoff's work in the use of the hedge you know. Dubar found that women tend to use you know as a marker of politeness particularly when the addressee is a female; moreover, they use it as a marker of an optional element. By contrast, men tend to use it as a marker of obligatory constituents in case of imprecise utterance. These findings support previous studies, but some findings do not support them.

Rababah (2013, 208) investigated the use of hedging devices in two academic disciplines, specifically, nursing and education. The findings showed that all writers favor the use of these devices as rhetorical strategies. However, the analysis specified that there were significant differences between the education and nursing writers' use of hedging devices in favor of the education writers. This means that the education writers resorted to various hedging devices in the nine categories more frequently than the nursing writers, with the number of occurrences recorded as 2,737 and 1,476 for education and nursing articles, respectively. Serholt (2012, 11) attempted to identify the overall frequency of hedges and boosters use in the academic writing of Swedish advanced learners of English; and if there seem to be gender-related differences. The findings showed that although both males and females displayed a substantially higher use of hedges than boosters, females were more inclined than males to offer stronger commitments to the propositional information they supplied. Kim & Lim (2015, 606) explored the realization of hedges in the sampled English research article discussions based on Hyland's (1996) pragmatic framework of hedging orientations. The findings suggested that generally, the use of hedges in L2 student academic writing is critical to display that claims have been appropriately managed for accuracy, mitigation, and claim negotiation. Duman (2016, 52) focused on the use of hedging in Chem Corpus. The study revealed that the most frequently used copula was 'become' in terms of the base, present, and past form. Additionally, the use of hedging was investigated considering gender differences and it was concluded that similar hedges were frequently used by both male and female students. Alward (2014, 5) investigated hedges and boosters in the persuasive texts written by 120 Yemeni EFL students. The findings reveal that Yemeni EFL students tend to use hedges and boosters largely associated with spoken features. The findings also show that the students tend to use more hedges in their EFL than in their L1 persuasive essays due to lack of vocabulary. In contrast, boosters appear to be almost similar in their L1 and EFL persuasive essays while they appear to be used more in their L1 job application letters. The findings of the experiment indicate the positive impact of teaching hedges and boosters through the genre approach. Alward (2014, 5) attempted to identify hedges and boosters in the persuasive texts written by 120 Yemeni EFL students. The findings show that Yemeni EFL students have a tendency to use hedges and boosters largely associated with spoken features. The findings also show that due to lack of vocabulary, the students tend to use more hedges in their EFL than in their L1 persuasive essays. In contrast, boosters appear to be almost similar in their L1 and EFL persuasive essays while they appear to be used more in their L1 job application letters. The positive impact of teaching hedges and boosters through the genre approach appeared in the findings of the experiment. Neary-Sundquist (2013, 149) identified the use of hedges in the speech of learners of English at multiple proficiency levels as well as native speakers. Hedges are used to moderate the force of an utterance or the certainty of its content and therefore play an important role in interpersonal communication. The results of this study showed that learners generally underuse hedges in comparison with native speakers, although learners at the highest proficiency level use hedges at a rate comparable to that of native speakers.

### 3. DEFINITION

Zadeh and Weinreich are the predecessors of hedging research. Both of them dealt with the concept; however, none of them used the terms hedge and hedging (Schröder and Zimmer 1997, 250). Zadeh (1965) dealt with aspects of the fuzzy set theory which says that an item fits into a class only to a certain extent (1965, 338-339). He analyzed English hedges such as very, much, more or less, essentially, slightly, technically, and practically from semantics and logic. In the following year, Weinreich in his article On the Semantic Structure of English examined what is now known as hedges, however, labeled them as "metalinguistic operators" (1966, cited in Schröder and Zimmer 1997, 250). Lakoff (1975, 234), the pioneer in this field, published his article Hedges: A Study in Meaning Criteria and the Logic of Fuzzy Concepts in 1972 introduced the terms hedge/hedging to define lexical units "whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy".

A hedge could be regarded as a form of euphemism, is a mitigating device used to lessen the impact of an utterance. Generally, they are adjectives, adverbs, or clauses. Hedging is a phenomenon in which a speaker communicates a lack of commitment to what they are saying. For example:

(1) "I **think** it's a **little** odd."

This phrase contains two hedges, "think" and "a little"; one indicating the speaker's lack of commitment to the proposition "it's a little odd" and the other indicating lack of commitment to the quality of oddness.

Hedges have been given different definitions by different researchers (Crompton, 1997; Hyland, 1996; Salager-Meyer, 1994) since Lakoff (1972) introduced the notion of hedges into linguistics by defining them as "words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy" (p.195). Salager-Meyer (1994, 150) pointed out that hedges are associated with "purposive vagueness and tentativeness. Linguists' opinions are mixed regarding this definition and some researchers prefer a narrower meaning of the term while others keep investigating the phenomenon. For example, Holmes (1995, 73) describes hedges as linguistic devices that soften or attenuate the strength and effect of the utterance or statement. Hyland (2000, 179) takes Holmes's side by saying that hedges are used to mitigate risky and uncertain statements. De Figueiredo-Silva (2001, 1) points out that hedges additionally express the attitude of the author towards the propositional information and the audience. However, Clemen (2002, 44) seems to disagree with such a point of view by pointing out that "hedges can also enforce what is said". Vold (2006, 62) seems to think that hedges not only mitigate the statement but are also used to convince and influence the reader. According to Buitkienė (2008, 12), even though most of the linguists agree upon the opinion that hedges are mitigating devices which "tone down utterances and statements, reduce the riskiness of what one says". Šinkūnienė (2008, 108) explains that hedges are used to mitigate propositional information in the text to avoid disapproval; consequently, a proposition is seen as a probability. Martin-Martin (2008, 134) reported that hedges are expressions that "make messages indeterminate, that is, they convey inexactitude, or in one way or another mitigate or reduce the strength of the assertions that speakers or writers make". Fraser (2010, 201) claimed that hedging is a rhetorical strategy in which the speaker signals a lack of a full commitment. Huu (2016, 1) mentioned that "hedges are linguistic devices, i.e., understatements, used to convey purposive tentativeness and vagueness in communication". To make the utterance more acceptable to the hearer, the speaker adds these linguistic devices to the proposition. Hedges increase the capability of acceptance and reduce the risk of negation.

#### 4. FUNCTIONS

Functions of hedges have received a great deal of attention but they have not been agreed upon by scholars since each hedging device provides specific functions fulfilled by a particular device. According to Falahati (2006, 102), there are two main approaches to hedging functions: hedging in a politeness model and a polypragmatic model. The polypragmatic model deals with the two types of hedges; that affect the truth conditions of the proposition and hedges that reflect the degree of the speaker's commitment to the truth-value of the whole proposition; therefore, Salager-Meyer (1997, 106-108) speaks about two reasons for hedging: to help to conform to an established writing style and to be more precise. Hyland (1996, 436), having in mind this polypragmatic model, divided hedges into two main groups: content-oriented and reader-oriented ones.

As for the politeness model, Hyland (1995, 35) states that mitigating the illocutionary force of speech acts is common because categorical assertions might be face-threatening; therefore, the usage of hedges that minimize the threat-to-face (Salager-Meyer 1997, 106) is linked to the phenomenon of politeness. Brown and Levinson (2000, 18), who analyzed politeness, distinguished between positive and negative ones. According to Šinkūnienė (2008, 98), hedges are associated with the negative politeness because this kind of politeness deals with the respect and distance towards the interlocutor.

#### 5. TAXONOMY

Laurinaitytė (2011, 20-21) points out that opinions are mixed regarding the taxonomy of hedges. The majority of linguists emphasize the fact that a comprehensive list does not exist yet. Therefore, the table below (see Table 1) is a synthesis of several taxonomies that were provided by several linguists (Salager-Meyer (1997), Clemen (2002), Hinkel (2004), and Hyland (2005)) to build up a detailed picture of what is considered to be a hedge. Their taxonomies are not radically different but rather supplement each other.

Table 1. Taxonomy of hedging words

#	Category	Hedging words
1	Modal auxiliary verbs	may, might, can, could, will, would, should.
2	Modal lexical verbs	to seem, to appear, to believe, to assume, to suggest, to estimate, to tend, to think, to argue, to indicate, to speculate, to predict, to calculate, to infer.
3	Adjectival, adverbial, and Nominal modal phrases:	
	a. probability adjectives	possible, probable, un/likely, potential, apparent, approximate, broad, comparative, normal, potential, rare, relative, the very + superlative adjective + noun, most + adjective, according to + noun, relative to + noun.
	b. nouns	the assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion.
	c. adverbs	perhaps, possibly, probably, practically, likely, presumably, virtually, apparently, partially, partly, in (this/that) case, by (some/any) chance, in a way, quite, barely, actually, clearly, comparatively, essentially, indeed, normally, potentially, relatively, theoretically, maybe, fairly, almost, nearly, merely, slightly, sufficiently, hopefully, broadly, somehow, somewhat.
4	Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time.	approximately, roughly, about, often, generally, usually
5	Introductory phrases	pronoun + believe, pronoun + knowledge, pronoun + view, pronoun + feel.
6	Approximators of	
	a. degree	approximately, roughly, about.
	b. indefinite quantifiers	a lot of, a bit of, many/much, some, little/a little, a few/few/fewer, less (than), a number of, a good/great deal of, more or less, more (than) (not as a marker of the comparative degree), most (not as a marker of the superlative degree), at least, over, under.
	c. indefinite frequency and time	frequently, often, every so often, occasionally/on occasion, on many/numerous occasions, generally/in general, usually, sometimes, at times, from time to time, most of the time, (hardly) ever, (almost) never, rarely, seldom, ordinarily, (almost/nearly) always, invariably, once in a while, around, round, roundabout.
7	Conditional clauses	if

#### Aims and Questions of the study:

The present paper is to examine the concept of hedging in speeches. The researcher is going to describe and systemize hedges found in Queen Rania's speeches under investigation, analyze the usage of hedges in Queen Rania's speeches, and determine the frequency of occurrence of hedges in Queen Rania's speeches. Specifically, the study aims to find answers to the following questions:

1. Is the usage of hedges in Queen Rania's speeches specific and, if it is, then how?
2. Which linguistic devices functioning as hedges, does Queen Rania tend to use more and which less?

#### 6. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE AND ANALYSIS

The last Twenty speeches, which were delivered between February 23, 2016, and November 15, 2017, of Queen Rania of Jordan, were selected and downloaded on March 25, 2018, from the official website of Queen Rania (for more, see the Appendix). The speeches were fully transcribed and analyzed to find out the hedges used and to arrive at conclusions regarding their patterns and their pragmatic functions. The total number of words and hedges in the speeches were counted by Ant Conc 3.2.1w. This research is both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitatively, frequencies, and percentages of hedging devices were found and tabulated. Qualitatively, the researchers presented an explanation of how and why such hedging devices are used. The adopted model for

analysis was Laurinaitytė's 2011, presented in Table 1. This model was adopted because it includes the most widely used hedging categories expected to be found extensively in speeches.

## 7. RESULTS

### 1. The overall frequency and percentages of each hedging category

Table (2) presents the complete list of hedging words identified in the twenty speeches or 18,247 words of Queen Rania of Jordan. It shows that Queen Rania tends using some hedging devices rather than others.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of hedging categories in the twenty speeches

#	Hedging device category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Approximators	274	54%
2	Modal verbs	108	21%
3	Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases	67	13%
4	Conditional clauses	48	9%
5	Introductory phrases	9	2%
6	Special constructions of passive voice	5	1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 shows that the most frequently used hedging device in the speeches of Queen Rania was approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time, such as many, more, over, etc., accounting for 54% of all the hedges found in the data. Salager-Meyer (1997,7) proposed that approximators are used when we are not sure about the exactness of certain figures or when the speaker does not have enough knowledge to be precise and accurate. On the other hand, modals verbs were the second most frequently used hedging devices. According to Lyons, the main function of modals is to show a lack of full commitment, hesitation, and doubtfulness. Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases accounted for 13%, conditional clauses accounted for 9%, and introductory phrases accounted for 2%. However, only five instances of special constructions of passive voice, accounting for 1% of all the hedges found in the data, were found in the twenty speeches. This means that the use of special constructions of passive voice is rare.

### 2. Frequency and percentages of hedging subcategories

#### a-Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time

This category represents the largest category of hedging devices used in the twenty speeches, 274 words. Perhaps, it is due to the meaning they denote. Table 3 shows the frequency and the percentage of approximators concerning degree, quantity, frequency, and time that were revealed as hedges in the speeches of Her Majesty Queen Rania. The function of approximators is to make things fuzzier. Many took first place in the usage of approximators of indefinite quantity. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, many has a meaning of "a large number of [smth]". Yet, many do not specify a certain quantity as shown in the examples below;

1- Many Arab women have faced so **many** tragedies that their lives have been turned around.

2- In Arab countries, there are **many** examples of prominent women who have achieved high levels of knowledge and expertise

Therefore, by using this hedge Queen Rania strives for vagueness. The second hedge was used most often out of all approximators of indefinite quantity is more. (Table 3). More has a meaning of indefiniteness as no one knows how much exactly it is meant; therefore, it is suitable for speeches when the speaker does not want to be specific as shown in the examples below;

3- Let us make sure that no **more** years are stolen.

4- But, the reality is that, in our lifetime, we have never faced a larger, **more** urgent, or **more** heartbreaking humanitarian plight.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of approximators concerning degree, quantity, frequency, and time

Approximators of degree, quantity, frequency, and time	Frequency	Percentage
approximately	0	0%
about	1	0%
almost	5	2%
a lot of	1	0%
a bit of	0	0%
many	43	16%

much	20	7%
some	11	4%
little	6	2%
few	8	3%
less	9	3%
good	10	4%
great deal of	0	0%
more	40	15%
more than	14	5%
most	18	7%
at least	1	0%
over	24	9%
under	6	2%
frequently	0	0%
often	8	3%
every so often	0	0%
occasionally	0	0%
on occasion	0	0%
on many	0	0%
numerous occasions	0	0%
generally	0	0%
in general	0	0%
usually	1	0%
sometimes	2	1%
at times	1	0%
from time to time	0	0%
most of the time	0	0%
ever	8	3%
never	12	4%
rarely	0	0%
seldom	0	0%
ordinarily	0	0%
always	8	3%
invariably	0	0%
once in a while	1	0%
around	16	6%
round	0	0%
roundabout	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **b- Modal auxiliaries & Modal Lexical verbs**

In 20 speeches or 18,247 words, 108 hedges in the form of modal verbs were found as shown in table 4. The modal would, accounting for 22%, and may, accounting for 20%, were used most frequently. Modal lexical verbs have a different meaning; so, they are not as widely used as modal verbs while, according to Hyland (1996, 447), modal auxiliary verbs express a lack of knowledge, uncertainty, help to avoid direct criticism. The dominance of

“would “and “may” is expected since they soften and mitigate the speaker's commitment to certain propositions as shown in the example below:

5- Her husband, arrested; her son, seriously injured; and her business destroyed, Safa'a did what you or I **would** do: she fled for her life.

On the other hand, will was used least frequently. Moreover, could be used significantly and more frequently in the Queen's speeches because used in making suggestions, polite requests, or indicate possibility as illustrated in the following excerpts taken from the speeches of Her Majesty:

6- A small group of thoughtful, committed citizens **could** change the world.

7- And I **could** not be more proud of their selflessness, their sacrifice, and their kindness.

According to Salager-Meyer (1997, 109), modal auxiliary verbs are “the most straightforward and widely used means of expressing modality in English”. Similarly, Hyland (1994, 246) pointed out that modal verbs are used as a means of “expressing an attitude of uncertainty”.

The data in table 4 below shows that think was used as a hedge most often out of all modal lexical verbs accounting for 18%. The reason why this modal lexical verb, in particular, was the one most often used maybe because, according to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, think expresses “a particular idea or opinion about sth/sb”. In other words, this modal lexical verb helps the speaker to express his/her attitude towards the propositional information as an opinion rather than as a fact to ensure that he/she is familiar with alternative views on the subject. For example:

8- Because, now more than ever, I **think** we need to focus on our humanity.

9- ...human empathy that needs an urgent upgrade. I **think** we need to find our way back to ...

Table 4. Frequency and percentages of modal auxiliaries

Modal verbs & modal lexical verbs	Frequency	Percentages out of all modal verbs
may	22	20%
might	6	6%
can	3	3%
could	21	19%
will	1	1%
would	24	22%
should	4	4%
seem	1	1%
appear	0	0%
believe	5	5%
assume	1	1%
suggest	0	0%
estimate	0	0%
tend	0	0%
think	19	18%
argue	0	0%
indicate	0	0%
speculate	0	0%
predict	1	1%
calculate	0	0%
infer	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100%</b>

### c- Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases

Sixty-seven Adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases functioning as hedges were identified in Queen Rania's speeches accounting for 13% (Table 1) of the total of hedges found. As shown in Table 5 below, adjectival modal phrases accounted for 69% while (Table 6) adverbial modal phrases 31%. On the other hand, Nominal modal phrases accounted for 0% as shown in table 7. The main function of adjectival, adverbial, and nominal modal phrases is to hedge the manner of action and the quality of an entity.

In table 5, the occurrence of most was significant and registered the highest frequency accounting for 52% in adjectival modal phrases. It, according to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, denotes "more than half of sb/sth; almost all of sb/sth" as shown in examples from Queen Rania's speeches:

10-They were words of hope, even in the **most** hopeless of places.

11- Fortunately, today, talent is the **most** valuable commodity in the world

In Tables 6 and 7, none of the Adverbial modal phrases or nominal modal phrases were used significantly.

Table 5. Frequency and percentages of Adjectival modal phrases

Adjectival modal phrases	Frequency	Percentage
possible	6	13%
probable	0	0%
likely	0	0%
unlikely	0	0%
potential	10	22%
apparent	1	2%
approximate	0	0%
broad	1	2%
comparative	0	0%
normal	1	2%
rare	0	0%
the very	1	2%
most	24	52%
according	2	4%
relative to	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6. Frequency and percentages of Adverbial modal phrases

Adverbial modal phrases	Frequency	Percentage
perhaps	3	14%
possibly	1	5%
probably	1	5%
practically	0	0%
likely	0	0%
presumably	0	0%
virtually	0	0%
apparently	0	0%
partially	0	0%
partly	4	19%
in (this/that) case	0	0%
by (some/any) chance	1	5%
in a way	0	0%
quite	1	5%
barely	3	14%
comparatively	0	0%
normally	0	0%
potentially	0	0%
relatively	0	0%
theoretically	0	0%
maybe	1	5%
fairly	0	0%
almost	5	24%
nearly	1	5%
slightly	0	0%
sufficiently	0	0%
hopefully	0	0%
broadly	0	0%
somehow	0	0%
somewhat	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 7. Frequency and percentages of Nominal modal phrases

Nominal modal phrases	Frequency	Percentage
assumption	0	0
claim	0	0
possibility	0	0
estimate	0	0
suggestion	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

#### D-Conditionals

In Her Majesty's speeches, 9% of hedges were in the form of conditionals (Table 1). Conditionals with if were used most frequently. As shown in table 8, the data shows that type 1 conditionals, which are used for "asking/talking about something quite possible" were used most often accounting for 69% in Queen Rania's speeches. Using this type keeps the balance between the possibility and the likelihood. At the same time the use



of this conditional shows adherence to the phenomenon of politeness as it does not impose opinion or will upon the listener (Laurinaitytė, 62) as in the example below:

12- And **if** we **use** these strengths... **if** we **hold** ourselves and our leaders accountable... **if** we **take** action, together... then these children **will not be** alone.

Table 8. Frequency and percentages of Conditional clauses

Conditional clauses	Frequency	Percentage
if conditional Type 0	0	0%
if conditional Type 1	33	69%
if conditional Type 2	12	25%
if conditional Type 3	1	2%
whether	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>

### E- Introductory phrases

Only 9 introductory phrases were found in Her Majesty's speeches accounting for 2%; therefore, a conclusion might be drawn that they are not frequently used as hedging devices to hedge the Queen's speeches. Moreover, only two kinds of introductory phrases as presented in the taxonomy of hedges of this research were used; knowledge and feel as shown in table 9 below. This type of hedging expresses personal doubt and direct involvement. For example:

13- And no joy is equal to the joy I **feel** when I see the smiles before me here today.

Table 9. Frequency and percentages of Introductory phrases

Introductory phrases	Frequency	Percentage
believe	0	0%
knowledge	2	22%
view	0	0%
feel	7	78%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100%</b>

### F- Special passive voice constructions

Only 5 special passive constructions, subject + passive verb + to-infinitive as shown in table 10, were found in the twenty speeches. They are not widely used as hedging devices in Her speeches, even less than introductory phrases. To sum up, though special passive constructions allow concealing the author of a statement and evading the responsibility towards it, for example;

14- Five hundred other educators **are expected to graduate** from the same program the year after.

Table 10. Frequency and percentages of Special constructions of passive voice

#### Special constructions of passive voice:

##### it + passive verb + with verbs of reporting

	Frequency	Percentage
agree	0	0%
allege	0	0%
announce	0	0%
assure	0	0%
believe	0	0%
consider	0	0%
decide	0	0%
expect	0	0%
explain	0	0%
hope	0	0%
know	0	0%
report	0	0%
say	0	0%

suggest	0	0%
consider	0	0%
suppose	0	0%
think	0	0%
understand	0	0%
<b>subject + passive verb + to-infinitive</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 8. CONCLUSION

The analysis of 20 speeches delivered by Queen Rania of Jordan shows that hedges as mitigating devices are often employed. Her Majesty uses hedges as rhetorical devices to perform various pragmatic functions. Politicians do not state their opinions decisively, so hedges are the nature of their speeches. The findings of the present term paper support previous studies that Queen Rania of Jordan uses a wide range of hedging devices to avoid commitment, express politeness or fuzziness or lack of precision, and request listeners' involvement.

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