

## **Contextual Effects and Processing Efforts of Gradable Adjectives in TV Interviews: A Lexical Pragmatic Study**

**L. Dr. Khamail Ali Waheeb Al- Azawi**

**Al-Suwaira Education Section/ General Directorate of Education in Wasit/ Iraq.**

[Khamail78k@gmail.com](mailto:Khamail78k@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Interpreting the meaning of gradable adjectives (GAs) is not always an easy feat. These context-sensitive expressions have been broadly approached in linguistics due to their continuous and scalar nature which has made defining their meaning a challenge. In Semantics, GAs have been interpreted logically using standards and degrees that can be expressed quantitatively. In Pragmatics, GAs have been considered vague expressions which meanings are interpreted relying on their actual use in context rather than their formal meaning. Lexical pragmatics, however, studies the processes by which the meanings of GAs are modified and defined in context. The present study, then, explores how GAs are approached in Lexical pragmatics. GAs are essentially selected as they have not deeply been explored within Lexical Pragmatics. In effect, it aims to identify the contextual effects used to interpret GAs meanings in naturally-occurring discourse (TV interviews) and showing how processing efforts influence their interpretation. The paper hypothesizes that speakers balance the relevance of their utterances through maximizing contextual effects of their utterances like strengthening existing assumptions and minimizing their processing efforts as in using easily accessed utterances. Hence, the study begins with an overview of the literature of GAs. It develops a model of analyze two TV interviews aired on 'BBC One' based on Sperber and Wilson's (1995) model. The analysis led to a number of conclusions, the most central of which is; Because relative adjectives offer more flexibility in conveying

views to persuade the listener's without giving obvious attitudes, speakers maximize contextual effects and minimize processing efforts in relative adjectives more than absolute ones.

Keywords: (Gradable adjectives, lexical pragmatics, contextual effects, processing efforts).

## التأثيرات السياقية وجهود معالجة الصفات القابلة للتدرج في المقابلات التلفزيونية: دراسة

### تداولية معجمية

م.د. خمائل علي وهيب العزاوي

مديرية تربية واسط/ قسم تربية الصويرة

### الملخص

إنَّ تفسير معنى الصفات القابلة للتدرج (GAs) ليس بالأمر السهل دائما. لقد تم تناول هذه التعبيرات التي يعتمد تفسيرها على السياق على نطاق واسع في علم اللغة بسبب طبيعتها المتدرجة مما جعل تحديد معناها يعد تحديًا. في علم الدلالة، يتم تفسير GAs منطقيًا باستخدام المعايير والدرجات التي يمكن التعبير عنها كميًا. أما في التداولية، تعتبر GAs تعبيرات غامضة يتم تفسير معانيها بالاعتماد على استخدامها الفعلي في السياق بدلاً من معناها الدلالي. يدرس علم التداولية المعجمية العمليات التي يتم من خلالها تحديد معاني GAs وتعديلها حسب السياق. تستكشف الدراسة الحالية كيفية التعامل مع GAs في التداولية المعجمية، وقد تم اختيار GAs لأنه لم يتم تناولها بصورة دقيقة، ومعقدة ضمن التداولية المعجمية. وبالتالي، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد التأثيرات السياقية المستخدمة لتفسير معاني GAs في الخطاب الاعتيادي (المقابلات التلفزيونية مثلاً) وإظهار كيف تؤثر جهود المعالجة على تفسيرها. تفترض الدراسة أن المتحدثين يوازنون أهمية الصلة في أقوالهم من خلال تعظيم التأثيرات السياقية كما في تعزيز الافتراضات الحالية وتقليل جهود المعالجة كما هو الحال في استخدام الأقوال التي يسهل الوصول إلى تفسيرها. تبدأ الدراسة باستعراض ادبيات GAs في علم اللغة كما تضع نموذجاً لتحليل بيانات مأخوذة من مقابلتين تلفزيونيتين تم بثهما على BBC On بناء على نموذج سبيربر وويلسون (١٩٩٥). كما تستعرض النتائج وتناقشها للوصول إلى الاستنتاجات، وقد توصل التحليل إلى عدد من الاستنتاجات، أهمها؛ يعتمد المتحدثون على تعظيم التأثيرات السياقية وتقليل الجهود المعالجة في استخدام الصفات النسبية أكثر من الصفات المطلقة وذلك لأن الصفات النسبية تتيح قدراً من المرونة في إيصال الآراء لإقناع المستمع دون إعطاء مواقف واضحة. الكلمات المفتاحية: (الصفات القابلة للتدرج، التداولية المعجمية).

## 1. Introduction

In linguistic realm, GAs have been widely studied. They are known as adjectives that describe a noun and strengthen it as well as promote its degree on a scale (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002:526-7). Adjectives like 'hot', 'tall', 'expensive' are usually approached in semantics and pragmatics as GAs mostly due to their scalar nature and context-sensitivity. They are associated with underlying concepts on a scale ('hot', temperature, 'tall', height 'expensive', price, etc.) Semantically, GAs commonly defined by certain properties; They are inflected to degrees of comparison (cold, colder, coldest) and could be modified by degree modifiers as (very, too, extremely, etc.). Asudeh (2018:3) refers to further feature that can be attributed to GAs in relation to antonyms. GAs are antonymic adjectives describing concepts (size, length, cost, etc.) on a scale to specify degrees.

Such seemingly obvious grammatical items turn to be perplex in Semantics, Kennedy (2007, 2-3) explains that sentences with GAs as predicate present a challenge in interpretation. He justifies this perplexity by mentioning three reasons: First, their truth conditions are variable. The adjective 'expensive' is true in the context of living in Italian cities but false in the context of living in Chicago. Secondly, the existence of borderline cases. In any context, there are cases in which the truth conditions of the adjective are difficult to be judged. Finally, using GAs in sentences may give rise to *sorties paradox*; as the hypothesis seems to be

true and the premises seem to be valid but they give rise to a false inference. Nevertheless, non-gradable adjectives like ‘extinct and dead’ miss such features. They neither can be inflected nor modified. In fact, their meanings are rigid and discrete in nature. Their interpretation can be either absolute minimum or absolute maximum (Rotstein and Winter 2004). GAs are commonly classified into two categories: relative adjectives (long, near) and absolute adjectives (dry, closed). The difference between the two categories is explained in terms of the type of scale they serve and their sensitivity to context. The relative adjective ‘tall’, for instance, could be used to describe a child but not for a professional basketball player. Their interpretation engages selecting a context-dependent threshold (Kennedy, 2007: 5). Absolute adjectives, as ‘empty and flat’, on the other hand, define properties to closed scales concepts, (‘empty’ indicates 0% capacity and ‘flat’ indicates 100% flatness). Additionally, absolute adjectives are further divided according to degree of property into: Maximum-standard adjectives (‘full’ and ‘dry’) and Minimum-standard adjectives (‘dirty’ and ‘wet’). As such, relative adjectives interact differently with degree modifiers; ‘very’ or ‘slightly’ modify the threshold of relative adjectives based on the context (e.g., ‘very tall’). But with absolute adjectives degree modifiers usually indicate closeness to an endpoint (e.g., ‘almost full’) as Kennedy and McNally (2005: 345-6) suggest.

In Pragmatics, it is broadly believed that communication engages rational speaker and listener. Being rational in communication is necessarily means

being aware of certain norms and standards. The idea of following norms in communication is crystalized by Grice (1975 and 1989) into cooperative principle. Grice develops this principle into maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner. His views are more concerned with what is implied more than stated in communication. His principle has been criticized and developed by Neo-Gricean linguists and philosophers. According to Grice and Neo-Gricean linguists, GAs are ambiguous expressions that can be accounted in terms of implicatures they convey (Blackmore, 1992: 25). More importantly, they create scalar implicatures, as Horn (1984:12) proposes, the adjective 'good' can be understood as 'excellent' or 'was not very excellent', based on the conversational context. The typical statement is that, as scalar implicatures activated by quantifiers and other scale-mates, such implicatures activated by scale-mates (cold/ cool), (hot/ warm) are processed in relation to the negation of stronger alternatives (Alexandropoulou et al., 2022-482). More recently, GAs meanings are inferred based on the speaker's implied meaning and the context of use (Lasersohn, 1999: 523).

Lexical pragmatics (LP) is a subfield of pragmatics that has been rapidly developed recently. It combines lexical properties and contextual effects in interpreting underspecified word meanings based on conversational implicature (Blutner, 1998:115). GAs are accounted, from the Lexical pragmatic perspective, as linguistic expressions that meanings could be modified and adjusted in use. A key challenge in apprehending the

modified meaning of GAs in context is in determining the speaker's intended meaning. Lexical pragmatists have claimed that interpreting GAs meanings modification includes lexical processes of narrowing and broadening and approximation (Goodman, 2016: 25). Interpreting through narrowing indicates selecting the more restricted denotation. Inversely, in broadening process, the denotation is extended, as in metaphor, hyperbole and approximation (Wilson and Carston, 2007:234). Sperber and Wilson (2004:610), the pioneers of Relevance theory which is one of the most influential theories in Lexical Pragmatics, speculate that when the speaker communicates an utterance, he triggers the listener's attention through a stimulus (evidence). The stimulus is observed by both of them. This hypothesis is the corner stone of the inferential view based on cognitive processes to explain meaning modification in context (Hall, 2017:85).

Relevance theory is possibly an attempt to develop Grice's basic views of relevance. Relevance is viewed to be the key element in human communication and cognition. Successful communication, then, is integrating of the linguistic form used by the speaker to convey his intentions, the intrinsic human inclination to trait beliefs and intentions to each other seeking relevance in what is said. Hence, to guarantee successful communication, the speaker chooses the linguistic form that is compatible with the listener's cognitive abilities and preferences. He takes into consideration the listener's accessible assumptions to direct his cognitive processes to the intended understanding (Carston, 2002: 46-7). Succinctly,

an utterance could be relevant if the communicator could combine the contextual implications (effects) with the existing assumptions to arrive at interpretation (Blackmore, 1992: 29-30). Following Relevance theory, understanding cases of modified meanings of open-class words (nouns, verbs and adjectives) needs extra contextual information (Scott, et.al., 2019:5). The speaker supposes the listener able to infer the intended meaning depending on the contextual information that maximize the principle of relevance through attaining the required cognitive effects and the least processing efforts. Consequently, contextual effects and processing effects are vital mechanisms that are balanced to achieve relevance and successful communication of modified word meaning cases. This study, then, suggests that contextual effects and processing efforts are essential mechanisms to grasp the intended meaning of gradable adjectives.

## **2. Contextual Effects and Processing Efforts**

According to Relevance theory, the interpretation is formed by integrating the contextual information with assumptions in the expectations. An utterance could be relevant if its contextual effects are large enough to be effectively inferred, and the processing efforts required are small. Relevance, then, is a cost-benefit principle that balances between the cognitive effects and the processing efforts. More precisely, the contextual or cognitive effects are the collaboration of the new information provided by the given context with the lexical and encyclopedic information. The cognitive effect can be positive if the collaboration triggers the hearer's

cognitive system and helps him to infer the intended meaning. The cognitive effect, then, engages developments in the hearer's indication of the of the assumption that is expressed as an input in a particular context. Subsequently, the changes that add a new piece of information to old ones, update old information and recognize an existing knowledge are positive effects (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:265-6). They propose three types of positive cognitive effects:

- 1. Strengthening an existing assumption by displaying new assumptions**
- 2. Eliminating assumptions seem to be false in terms of new assumptions**
- 3. The derivation of contextual implication depending on the new information and the existing assumptions.**

As a sort of illustration, Blackmore (1992:30-1) explain, based on the existed information given in (a) and enriched information in (b), the listener can derive (c) as an inference.

- a. DB is a member of German department.
- b. DB has some books on her desk.
- c. DB has some German books on her desk.

In (d), however, it is less relevant than if the contextual effects contradict an existing assumption as in (e):

- d. light goes on in my office when I press the switch.
- e. light does not go on in my office when I press the switch.

Similarly deriving an implication depending on the observation of the context yields relevant assumption is exemplified in (f) and (g):

f. DB has a New Zealand accent.

g. DB is from New Zealand.

One can derive information built on the context as much as possible. Nevertheless, the most relevant assumption is only interested to be processed. In other words, processing can continue deriving assumptions and never stops till the processor finds the assumption that is worth the effort (Blackmore, 1992:32). According to Wilson and Matsui (1998:174-196), the communicator should form his utterances to convey his intention successfully using the maximum contextual effect and the least efforts. The following elements are suggested to determine the amount of the hearer's processing efforts:

**a. The linguistic form of the utterance.**

**b. The accessibility of the context.**

**c. The logical complexity.**

**d. The frequency of use.**

The linguistic form of the utterance is usually reflected in view of its complexity. That means the length of the utterance, its syntactic complexity, order of mention and syntactic position. If the utterance in which the lexical item occurs is long or syntactically complex, for instance, it needs more efforts than shorter or less complex utterances. The easily accessed utterances are common interpreted assumptions. As a sort of

illustration, when the communicator uses the same accent, and shares social or cultural background, his utterance would be relevant with the least processing efforts. Similarly, the logical complexity of the utterance could be accounted for by virtue of thematic roles, the semantics of the main verb and the choice of expressions. The logically complex utterance is far from relevance. Lastly, the frequency of use of lexical items refers to how much the expressions are used in similar conversations or discourse. In Lexicology, the more frequently used lexical items are ranked in dictionaries before the less ones (Dagmar and Harris, 2015:58).

### **3. Research Methodology**

The selected data are two interviews hosted in Andrew Marr Show broadcasted on BBC One on Sunday mornings in October and December 2021 (web source 1). Andrew Marr Show, well-known show in the UK, lasts for an hour. Andrew Marr (a qualified journalist) interviews two politicians or activists from different parties in part of his show. The rest of it is usually newspaper reviews, a weather report, a cultural interview and ends with a concert. This talk show is very basic where the two parties (the interviewer and the interviewee) sit together on a table and exchange the talk in a naturally-occurring conversation. The interviewees often discuss problems that are noteworthy for the public (Vignozzi, 2022: 299). Above and beyond, the language used is rational and justifiable. Besides, the length of the interviews helps pinpoint as many adjectives as possible.

Hence, the analysis could provide more possibilities to yield richer and sustained results.

The data analysis followed goes in two directions, qualitative as well as quantitative. The qualitative analysis is objectively applied to determine the contextual effects and the processing efforts that are represented by analyzing the GAs in the context of selected data. The analysis is done in three phases; identification, analysis and interpretation. First, the identification phase includes reading the transcriptions of the two selected interviews that retrieved from the official page of the (BBC One, 2021) channel to guaranty their authenticity; no change or manipulation is made, carefully; identifying GAs in utterances and classifying them into relative and absolute GAs. Secondly, the analysis phase, the data is analyzed in terms of the positive contextual effects and the processing efforts. Finally interpreting their meaning based on the balance between the contextual effects and processing efforts to yield the optimal relevance. The proposed model of analysis used is based on the views of Sperber and Wilson (1995) on positive contextual effects and processing efforts. It is worth noting that GAs are objectively identified and classified using an electronic tool (Word Smith tool version 7) (web source 2). The quantitative analysis is done through statistics to sustain the qualitative analysis. The frequency and percentage of the occurrences of these strategies are to be considered. Figure (1) below displays the model used to analyse the data under scrutiny.

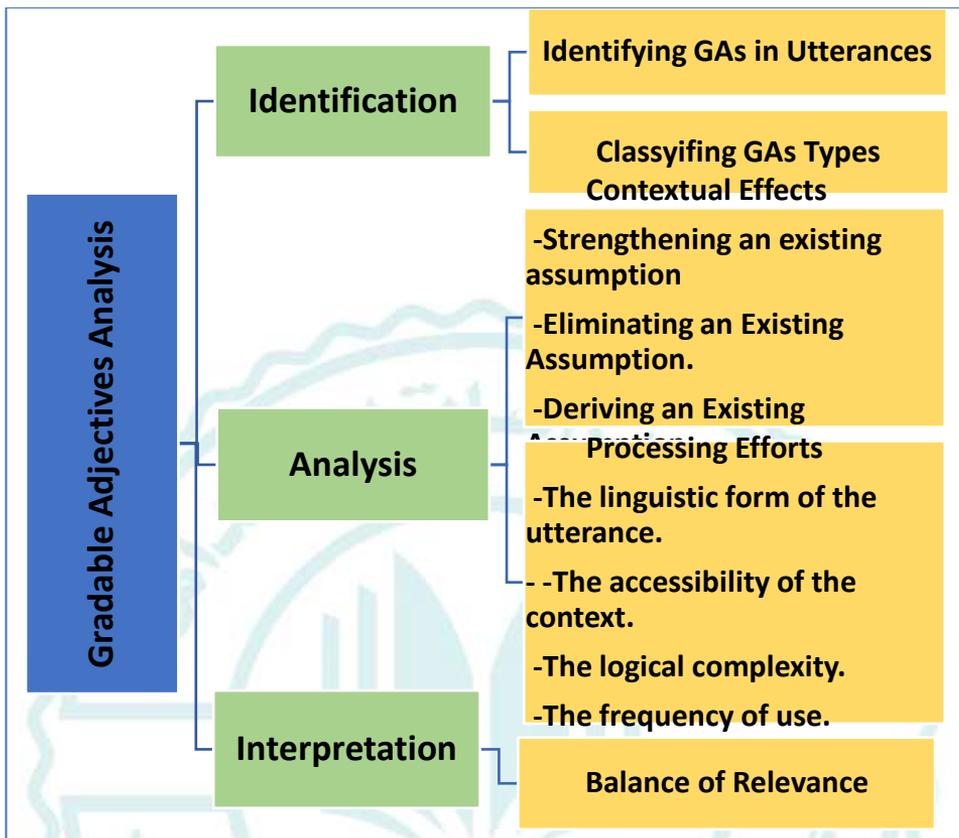


Figure (1) The Proposed Model of Analysis

#### 4. Data Collection and Analysis

The full analysis of interviews takes a sizable space in this study. Therefore, for the sake of economy, only five descriptive examples of the practical side are to be presented. It is worth mentioning the identified adjective is italicized in the postulated extract. Some required information about these interviews is provided before analyzing the target extracts.

##### A- The First Interview

The interviewee is Sadiq Khan; the labour mayor of London. The interview was on 19th December 2021. He was talking about the big

challenge London faces because of Omicron cases and the suggested solutions (web source 1)

### **Extract (1)**

Andrew Marr: “Omicron cases in London are increasing at an *alarming* rate..... a fifth now of what they were last time, so why have you done it now?”

Using the Word Smith tool, the adjective ‘alarming’ is identified and classified to be gradable and absolute. It can be more or less alarming depending on the emergency (context). It activates the listener’s relevant knowledge of the context of use (Omicron cases) which the talk is exclusively about. Linguistically, the adjective is largely used to describe ‘worrying, disturbing, terrifying dangerous, threatening state...etc’. On the world knowledge context, it describes a dangerous terrifying state of virus in London to add emotional impact. It strengthens an existing assumption that the danger of Omicron cases is increasing and becomes a serious threat in London as Marr stated. As far as the processing efforts, the utterance is not linguistically or logically complex. It is easily accessed. Moreover, it is frequently used in such contexts. Hence, the adjective ‘alarming’ could be interpreted as the state of Omicron cases became ‘almost threatening’. The adjective, then, is evaluated to be relevant for the speaker and the listener.

### **Extract (2)**

**Sadiq Khan:** “You know, that’s a *smart* Andrew Marr way of asking the same question another way”.

The adjective ‘smart’ is identified as gradable and relative. It activates the relevant context (Marr has already asked an identical question). Linguistically, it means ‘clever, brilliant, bright, astute, cunning, foxy, crafty...etc’. It creates an implicature, as he implies indirect compliment. Khan compliments the crafty journalist’s (Marr’s) way to invite the interviewee to provide more detailed information. The implicature is assessed by his next words as he wished Marr best of luck in his career. The utterance in which the adjective occurred is not complex. Nonetheless, it is logically complex. It is not easily accessed. It is less frequently used in dictionaries signifying cunning. Above and beyond, the utterance is evaluated to be less relevant.

### **Extract (3)**

**SADIQ KHAN:** “And by the way, listen, as somebody who’s sat in the *hot* seat .....

Rather than seeing the adjective ‘hot’ as relative since it can be compared and modified, it makes more sense here to view it as non-gradable. What is clear is that no seat is hotter than another. It activates the context of vocabulary used in interviews. Linguistically, it describes a degree on the scale of temperature. Nonetheless, the phrase is metaphorically used to mean difficult situation or embarrassing condition. Khan creates an implicature. He implies that he is in charged to offer urgent solutions out of the difficult situation. The utterance is linguistically and logically complex.

However, it is frequently employed and easily accessed in such context. Accordingly, it is evaluated to be relevant to the listener.

## **B. The Second Interview**

The interviewee is Stephen James Fitzpatrick, an English businessman, the founder of OVO Energy and Vertical Aerospace companies. In the interview held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (web source 1), he discussed how OVO Energy which is one of the largest energy companies runs risks and faces difficult market conditions.

### **Extract (4)**

**Andrew Marr:** “So that’s a *huge* loss. ... taking over Bulb”.

The adjective ‘huge’ can be compared to be more or less huge and modified to be very huge. Hence, it usually regarded as relative. It activates the interviewee’s world knowledge of the latest loss companies faced. Linguistically, it describes something massive and enormous. It could be on the scale of the start of something huge or extremely huge. Marr creates an implicature. He implies that they will sell at extremely huge loss. The utterance is not linguistically or logically complex. Besides, it is frequently employed and easily accessed in such context. Accordingly, it is evaluated to be relevant to the listener.

### **Extract (5)**

**Stephen Fitzpatrick:** “There are lots of *different* scenarios.... and so on”.

Following the identification standards, the adjective ‘different’ is relative as it can be compared to be and modified. It activates Marr’s previous

knowledge of the previous solutions they used to make to overcome difficulties. Linguistically, it describes something distinct, new, up normal, diverse... etc. It could be slightly different or completely different. Fitzpatrick contradicts Marr's assumption of the big problem companies faced (cold weather). He tells Marr that there have manifold solutions for it. The utterance is not linguistically or logically complex. Besides, it is frequently employed and easily accessed in such context. Accordingly, it is evaluated to be relevant.

## 5. Findings and Discussion

Based on the analysis of the GAs identified in Andrew Marr Show transcript (19 December 2021) interview with Sadiq Khan and (10 October 2021) with Stephen Fitzpatrick, twenty-eight adjectives are observed. Twenty-two of them are relative and only six are absolute. The frequency and percentage of the contextual effects are reflected and listed in Table (1):

**Table (1) Comparison of Contextual Effects in the Two Interviews**

No	Contextual Effects	Frequency of Relative Adjectives	Frequency of Absolute Adjectives	Frequency of Relative Adjectives	Frequency of Absolute Adjectives	Total	
		First Interview		Second Interview		Relative %	Absolute %.
1	Strengthening an Existing Assumption	3	3	6	1	69.3%	30.7.
2	Contradicting an Existing	2	1	2	0	80	20

	Assumption						
3	Creating an Implicature	3	1	6	0	90	10
<b>Total Number</b>		8	5	14	1	78.6	21.4

The statistical analysis of the two interviews demonstrates that most used adjectives are relative (22). This finding is compatible with Wood's (2006 :46) who argue that rhetorical language, including GAs, are mostly used in TV interviews for manipulative purposes when the communicator does not want to be too obvious. The results also reveal that the three contextual effects were used. Strengthening an existing assumption has the highest percentage in both relative and absolute adjectives. That interestingly refers to the communicators' regular use of GAs. Via such use, they trigger the listener's old information and enrich it with new ones. The second place is for creating an implicature. The speaker, then creates an implicature leading his listeners to infer the intended information. Finally, the contextual effect of contradicting an assumption is the least contextual effect used. The speakers use it in relative and absolute adjectives twice each to surprise the listeners with new information they have not been aware of. Hence, the statistical analysis indicates the regular use of the three contextual types as an effective tool to persuade the listeners and promote their critical thinking. Moreover, the speakers are relevant enough to their listeners through maximizing these contextual effects in communicating descriptive utterances.

As for the processing efforts, the results are presented in Table (2) below:

**Table (2) The Comparison of the Processing Efforts in the Two Interviews**

No	Processing Efforts	Frequency of Relative Adjectives	Frequency of Absolute Adjectives	Frequency of Relative Adjectives	Frequency of Absolute Adjectives	Total	
		First Interview		Second Interview		Relative%	Absolute %
1	Linguistically Complex	1	3	1	1	33.3	66.7
2	Logically Complex	1	3	2	1	33.3	66.7
3	Frequently Used	6	3	14	0	86.9	13.1
4	Easily Accessibility	6	3	14	0	86.9	13.1

It is indicated, out of the analysis of the two interviews, that extracts having relative absolute adjectives are linguistically more complex than that have relative ones. That made their interpretation less relevant. Likewise, the same thing can be said on logical complexity. This finding can be attributed to one of media discourse features, the careful use of language for ideological purposes (Woods, 2007:48). The adjectives used in the two interviews are common for the listeners. They heavily rely on the most frequent expressions to help listeners apprehend their ideas. However, they use less frequent adjectives to describe some technical expressions. As the

adjectives are highly frequent, that necessarily means they are easily accessed and do not need much efforts to be understood.

Consequently, the pragmatic analysis proves the crafted linguistic use of language in media. The speakers on the first interview, obviously, use relative adjectives more than absolute ones because they select their utterances to be less linguistically and logically complex. They tend to make their message plain and clear for the audience in relative to the significance of the topic they negotiate. Moreover, their choice of adjectives utilized is successful as they select the most frequent and easily accessed adjectives. Hence, the communicators were relevant enough as they minimized their listeners' processing efforts. Yet, the topic of the second interview is more technical which requires utilizing some absolute adjectives to express it.

## **6. Conclusions**

This study comes up with several observable conclusions as follows:

1. From Lexical pragmatics perspective, GAs are context-dependence expressions which meanings are commonly adjusted and modified according to the context of use.
2. The interpretation of both types of GAs are shaped by the contextual effects created to make them relevant enough to be interpreted and using the least processing efforts.
3. The pragmatic analysis proves that while relative adjectives are more frequently used to persuade the listener's without giving obvious attitudes,

absolute adjectives are used to convey more specific attitudes and deeper technical information. Speakers, therefore, maximize contextual effects and minimize processing efforts in relative adjectives more than absolute ones.

4. The analysis of the identified utterances reveals the contextual effects created to help maximize relevance. Strengthening an existing assumption was created to reinforce shared knowledge, public assumptions, beliefs and values.

5. Creating an implicature is used by the speakers, with relative adjectives more than with absolute ones inviting the listeners to infer the intended meaning without stating it. Similarly, contradicting is used to attract the listeners' attention to new assumptions.

6. More frequent and easily accessed relative and absolute adjectives require low processing efforts, whereas the less frequent and low context accessed are rarely used as they require more processing efforts.

7. The careful choice of GAs to serve different functions in TV interviews context seemingly reflects real-life conversations strategies used to convey standpoints. Moreover, they reinforce the effective role these adjectives play in social interactions.

## References

1. Alexandropoulou, S. Herb, M. Discher & H. Gotzner, N. (2022). Incremental Pragmatic Interpretation of Gradable Adjectives: The Role of Standards of Comparison. In Proceedings of SALT 32: 481–497

2. Asudeh, A. (2018). Grammar and Meaning. In B. Aarts, J. Bowie, & G. Popova (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of English Grammar* (pp. 523–553). Oxford University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198755104.013>.
3. Blakemore, D. (1992). *Understanding Utterances: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
4. Blutner, R. (1998). “Lexical Pragmatics”. *Journal of Semantics* 15, pp. 115-162.
5. Carston, R. (2002). *Thoughts and Utterances: The Pragmatics of Explicit Communication*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
6. Dagmar, I and Harris, C. (2015). “Frequency and Entrenchment”. In Dabrowska, D. and Divjak, D. (eds.). *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, pp. 53–75.
7. DeRose, Keith. (2008). “Gradable Adjectives: A Defence of Pluralism.” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 86(1): 141–160.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00048400701846624>
8. Goodman, N. (2016). *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
9. Hall, A. (2017). “Lexical Pragmatics, Explicature and Ad hoc Concepts”. In: Ilse D. and Raphael, R. (eds.). *Semantics and Pragmatics: Drawing a Line*. Vol. 11, Berlin: Springer, pp. 85–100.

10. Horn, L. (1984). "Toward a New Taxonomy for Pragmatic Inference: Q-Based and R-Based Implicature." In D. Schiffrin (Ed.), *Meaning, Form, and Use in Context*. (pp. 11-42).
11. Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2002). *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
12. Kennedy, C. (2007). Vagueness and Grammar: The Semantics of Relative and Absolute Gradable Adjectives. In *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 30 (1), 1-45.
13. Kennedy, C., & McNally, L. (2005). Scale Structure, Degree Modification, and the Semantics of Gradable Predicates. *Language* 81(2), 345-381. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/lan.2005.0071>.
14. Lasersohn, P. (1999). Pragmatic Halos. In *Language*, 75 (3), 522-551.
15. Rotstein, C., & Winter, Y. (2004). Total Adjectives vs. Partial Adjectives: Scale Structure and Higher-Order Modifiers. *Natural Language Semantics*, 12(3), 259-288. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:NALS.0000034517.56898.9a>
16. Scott, K., Clark, B., & Carston, R. (eds.). (2019). *Relevance, Pragmatics and Interpretation: Essays in Honour of Deirdre Wilson* (326 pp.).
17. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108290593>.
18. Sperber, D. & Wilson, D. (1995). *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (2nd ed.) Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

19. Vignozzi, G. (2022). A Linguistic Analysis of Interviewing Discourse During a Talk Show in the U.K. In: Feldman, O. (eds.) Adversarial Political Interviewing. The Language of Politics. Springer, Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-0576-6\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-0576-6_12).
20. Wilson, D. & Matsui, T. (1998). "Recent Approaches to Bridging: Truth, Coherence, Relevance". In: UCL Working Papers in Linguistics 10, pp. 173-200.
21. Wilson, D., & Sperber, D. (2004). "Relevance theory", In: Horn, L. and Ward, G. (eds.). Handbook of Pragmatics. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 607-635.
22. Woods, N. (2006). Describing discourse: A practical Guide to Discourse Analysis. London: Hodder Arnold.

#### Web Sources

1. BBC. (2021). The Andrew Marr Show. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/3hshxFhHM4dKd3px6Q3NzRF/transcripts>.
2. WordSmith Tools (1996). Lexical Analysis software. Oxford University Press. Lexically. Net. <https://share.google/PA6NJ3ZSmtj5IWA4M>.