A Pragmatic Study of Mitigation Strategies in Biden's Political Interviews

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Abstract

Political interviews play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing electoral outcomes. This study investigates the use of various mitigation strategies employed by politicians during interviews to minimize the impact of potentially damaging questions or statements. The current study is concerned with the news of the Ukrainian-Russian war which began on February 24, 2022, and is still ongoing, from a pragmatic point of view. The problem is manifested in the great shortage of pragmatic studies of mitigation strategy in political discourse.

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The present study adopts Caffi's (2007) model to analyze the selected data. The aspects of this model include five main types, which are: bushes, hedges, deictic shields, quotational shields, and topical shields. Each strategy differs from the other in composition. The deictic shields contain six sub-strategies and the topical shields contain two sub-strategies.

The study investigates mitigation strategies in one of Joe Biden's , the current US president interviews . It aims to highlight the mitigation strategies used in Biden 's political interview. To investigate the most frequent type of mitigation strategies are used in the data under study.

To achieve the aims of the study and verify its hypotheses, the study hypothesizes that some mitigation strategies are used in Biden 's interview. The most commonly used strategy is the deictic shields strategy.

Qualitative and quantitative methods are used in analyzing data.The most important conclusions of the study are: 1)It is found that the mitigation strategies employed in Biden's interview are : bushes ,hedges , deictic shields ,and topical shields and 2) the most commonly used strategy in Biden's interview is deictic shields.

Keywords: Mitigating strategies, Political interviews , Biden , Ukraian-Russian War

دراسة عملية لاستراتيجيات التخفيف في مقابلات بايدن السياسية

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الـمستـخلـص

تلعب المقابلات السياسية دورًا حاسمًا في تشكيل الرأي العام والتأثير على نتائج الانتخابات. تبحث هذه الدراسة في استخدام استراتيجيات التخفيف المختلفة التي يستخدمها السياسيون أثناء المقابلات لتقليل تأثير الأسئلة أو البيانات التي قد تكون ضارة. تهتم الدراسة الحالية بأخبار الحرب الأوكرانية الروسية التي بدأت في 24 فبراير 2022، ولا تزال مستمرة، من وجهة نظرتداولية . وتتجلى المشكلة في النقص الكبير في الدراسات العملية لاستراتيجية التخفيف في الخطاب السياسي وتعتمد الدراسة الحالية نموذج كافي (2007) لتحليل البيانات المختارة وتشمل جوانب هذا النموذج خمسة أنواع رئيسية هي: الشجيرات، والتحوطية ، والدروع الايديولوجية ، والدروع المقتبسة، والدروع الموضعية.

وتختلف كل استراتيجية عن الأخرى في تكوينها. تحتوي الدروع الايديلوجية على ست إستراتيجيات فرعية بينما تحتوي الدروع الموضعية على إستراتيجيتين فرعيتين .

وتتناول الدراسة استراتيجيات التخفيف في إحدى المقابلات التي أجراها جو بايدن، الرئيس الأمريكي الحالي. ويهدف إلى تسليط الضوء على استراتيجيات التخفيف المستخدمة في مقابلة بايدن السياسية. للتحقيق في النوع الأكثر شيوعا من استراتيجيات التخفيف في البيانات قيد الدراسة .

ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة والتحقق من فرضياتها، افترضت الدراسة استخدام بعض استراتيجيات التخفيف في مقابلة بايدن. الإستراتيجية الأكثر استخدامًا هي إستراتيجية الدروع الايديلوجية .

تم استخدام الأساليب النوعية والكمية في تحليل البيانات. وأهم استنتاجات الدراسة هي: 1) تبين أن استراتيجيات التخفيف المستخدمة في مقابلة بايدن هي: الشجيرات، التحوطات، الدروع اليديلوجية, الدروع الموضعية,2) الاستراتيجية الأكثر استخداماً في مقابلة بايدن عبارة عن دروع إيديولوجية.

الكلمات الدالة: استراتيجيات التخفيف، المقابلات السياسية. بايدن، الحرب الأوكرانية الروسية.

1.Introduction

Political interviews are crucial platforms for public discourse and decision-making, but they often involve contentious issues and challenging questions. Mitigating strategies (henceforth, Mits) play a crucial role in enhancing understanding, resolving conflicts, and fostering positive relationships. Mitigating strategies encourage individuals to approach problems collaboratively rather than confrontationally. They can help prevent conflicts from escalating or arising altogether. By addressing potential issues early on through effective communication, individuals can nip conflicts in the bud before they become major problems.

To the best of researcher's knowledge, no previous study has been coducted on the use of Mits in the political interviews about the Ukrainian-Russian war . Hence the current study bridges this gap .the study tries to answer the following questions:

1.What are mitigation strategies used in Biden's political interview?

2**.** What are the most commonly used strategies employed in the data under study?

2. Mitigation: An Introduction

Linguists have been interested in the word mitigation since the 1980s, when it was first used in conversation . Many linguists, like Holmes (1984, p.345), Haverkate (1992,p.505), Caffi (1999, p.881; 2007,p.67), and Schneider (2010 , p.255), say that Fraser (1980) is the first person to use the term mitigation in modern pragmatics. He is the first person to think of it as "the modification of certain unwelcome effects that a speech act has on the listener. Fraser (1980, p.341)   states " Mitigation could be thought of as a way to lessen the effects of bad news, criticism, or orders". He has argued that mitigation is neither a kind of illocutionary acts like apologizing, promising, or asking, nor is it the performance of perlocutionary acts like convincing, surprising, or being annoying. As a whole, mitigation is the use of language to change an illocutionary act so that it has less effect on the listener. Most of mitigation is made up of three layers. These layers are the backbones that help people understand the whole framework of mitigation. However, if any of these are missing, there is no mitigation in this situation. Also, these strategies are not only tightly and carefully woven together, but they are also communicated in a very smooth way within the structure of the message sent between the interlocutors. Vlasyan, Pastukhova, and Shusharina (2020 ,p.186)   says that mitigation is a decrease in the illocutionary force of a statement that is based on the individual, psychological, and social parameters of the speech act (norms and rules which regulate speech behaviour of individuals, ensuring successful and effective implementation of their communicative intentions).

Vlasyan, Pastukhova, and Shusharina (2020 ,p.187) say that mitigation is a type of communication that includes both mitigation prescriptions and different ways of attenuating communication" that are based on the social, ethnic, cultural, and situational parameters of communication and are put into action through discourse-specific communication strategies and tactics.

Salih and Ali (2020 ,p. 31) mention different scholars have looked at mitigation from different points of view in their studies. So far, some studies have linked mitigation to being polite, while other studies have looked at mitigation as a separate topic .There is always the question of how to reduce or soften the unwanted effect of the force of the act

being done. If an employer wants to fire an employee, for example, he might say in clear language:

(1) You are fired!

So, there is a different way to say things that will have less effect on the employee than the other way. In this situation, the boss could say:

(2) It is my unpleasant task as Vice President for Personnel to bring you the bad news that we are no longer able to retain you in our employ.

In the second case, the employer has made his words less harsh. Mitigation is surprisingly well-known as a way to analyse situations where the epistemological focus in pragmatics shifts from an introspective, philosophical paradigm to an empirical one that focuses more and more on real, non-constructed data. Holmes (1984, p.346), using Fraser's idea as a starting point, says that mitigation is a way to "reduce the expected negative effect of a speech act. Interlocutors, for example, may soften a criticism, but they don't talk about softening a compliment.

Vine (2010 , p. 339) says that " Mitigation is geared towards interpersonal goals " . Gladwell (2008, p. 194) says that mitigated speech is " any attempt to downplay or sugarcoat the meaning of what is being said " .

Schneider (2010, p. 255) says that in verbal communication, mitigation helps manage relationships because it makes a statement as acceptable as possible to the other person without the speaker having to give up their point of view. In other words, mitigation makes sure that the interaction goes "smoothly" and reduces the risks that the people involved may face on different levels. Schneider (Schneider ,2010, p. 255) calls mitigation expressions 'fine-tuning devices' that help find a middle ground between what the speaker wants to say and what the other person is willing to accept. Suffice it to say that mitigation lowers the obligations of the parties, making it easier for them to reach their different goals.The current study depends on an eclectic model Caffi (2007) which is one of the most comprehensive and recent studies on mitigation .

3.Types of Mitigation
Mitigation has three main types. Below is a brief account of each one of them.

3.1 Bushes

Bushes reduce the propositional content's accuracy, they are often referred to as bushes . The distinction between accuracy and imprecision is used by bushes to minimize or hide responsibility for the statement (Caffi, 2007, p.98).

Bushes often lower the speaker's commitment to the propositional content of the utterance (e.g. a sort of bad moment/something) which generally aim to minimize the problem ibid.

From a practical perspective, the concept of bushes as vagueness-generating mechanisms may be related to Austin's (1962) second B-felicity criterion, i.e., the requirement that the process must be carried through entirely for the act to take effect.Bushes serve as indicators that this standard has not been completely met and often correlate to approximators ibid. Bushes can be found in examples below :

(3) . Dr. I'll give you a cough syru just a little to take .

In the previous example, the doctor says just as he is ready to write a prescription. Even a quick review will reveal that *to give* is a more reduce option than *to prescribe* , which is what the doctor will really do ibid.

3.2 Hedges

Hedges operate on the illocution of an utterance and affect the relational and emotive dimensions (Caffi, 2007 ,p. 3).

The focus of mitigating devices in hedges is the illocution, or illocutionary force indicating tools (IFIDs) (ibid:102) .

Hedges typically reduce the speaker's devotion to the illocutionary force of the speech (ibid:96) .

Hedges ('maybe/who knows') are that focus on that aspect of the assertive illocution which is the commitment to truth : (who knows) is an explicit admission of uncertainty (ibid:248).

Another example of hedges when some one says (If I have understood correctly),This as *a disclaimer* in the sense of Fraser (1980), i.e., a control reformulation, or *a gist* in the sense of Thomas (1989), or a *hedge* in the sense of Caffi , since its scope is the whole

illocution. Since hearer must verify that the reformulation is correct, this reformulation is both self-serving (obeying caution) and altruistic (ibid :105).

Hedges can be found in example :-

(4).Dr. I'd propose to you if you want a special medicine to see if I can make you sleep .

The mitigating devices(hedges) are the following :

a. 'I'd propose to you', a hedged performative, where the verb in the conditional mood is a weaker form than the performative expression 'I propose';

b.'if you want', a routine formula, a consultative device ;

c. the final clause 'to see if I can make you sleep'.

3.3 Shields

Caffi (2007) suggests the following basic types of shields: deictic, quotational, and topical. There is no explicit mitigation operator in shields; instead, mitigation operates at a more abstract level. The act is really affected by means of backgrounding and defocalizing techniques, or even by the source of the speech being deleted, in shields, rather than being mitigated by explicit linguistic devices. Deictic shields, i.e., shields based on the negation of one of the aspects of the deictic triad (I-here-now), function through an overall substitution (e.g., one utterance is substituted by another containing a not-I , not-here , or not-now feature). The quotational and topical shields work on (something) that appears on the discourse surface. In other terms, they both operate on linguistic objects that can be observed. The (quotational and topical shields)techniques for discourse in which mitigation can be inferred as a second-degree/side-effect are identified . The operations involved are of two basic types: a) the suspension of literal interpretation, and b) the strategic backgrounding of a topic, obtained through specific textual devices. The former is called 'quotational shields' whereas the latter is referred to 'topical shields' (ibid :114)

3. Methodology

This section includes the data collection and description in addition to the model adopted.

3.1 Data Collection and Description

There are certain basic criteria which are followed in the selection and collection of the data : The interview is political , the interviewee tends to use different strategies of mitigation ; the interviews is carried out by channel specialized in the interviewing politicians in spoken interaction. Thus, the utterances are spontaneous and suitable for analysis.

3.2 The Model Adopted

The present study adopts Caffi's (2007) model to analyze the selected data. The aspects of this model include five main types, which are: bushes, hedges, deictic shields, quotational shields, and topical shields. Each strategy differs from the other in composition. The deictic shields contain six sub-strategies and the topical shields contain two sub-strategies. She (2007,p. 50) explores the complex area of pragmatic studies using the three kinds of mitigators "works where mitigation, centered on the proposition, is seen as vagueness(bushes); works where mitigation, centered on illocutionary force, is seen as indirectedness(hedges); works where mitigation, centered on the deictic origin of the utterance, is seen as reduction of the responsibility for the utterance (deictic shields) ".

3.2 Data Analysis

This section is devoted to the analysis of data according to the model adopted in the current study. The way used in analyzing data is to present the extract under study followed by contextual hints ,then the qualitative analysis.at last, the quantitative analysis is shown.

Extract (1)
David Muir : Mr President you know as we sit here today it was one year ago today the Russian invasion of Ukraine you said in Warsaw that Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia so how does this war end ? and what does Victory look like ?

President Joe Biden : well , **that depends on what the Ukrainians decide** but here's what **we** have to do in the meantime **we** have **to put** the Ukrainians in a position where they can make advances this spring and summer and move to a place where a negotiated they can negotiate from a position of strength …… but **you know** that expression you've heard me usually before in others nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine **we're** not going to dictate to them what the end result is .

Contextual Hints

This extract is a conversation   between David Muir (interviewer)and President Biden (interviewee)about the Ukrainian-Russian war, after two years had passed since the invasion. The interviewer asked two important questions about the end of the war and what is the meaning of victory for Ukraine .

America and the West are increasing their support for Ukraine in an effort to prolong the conflict. Leaders increase   support for Ukraine, sending offensive weapons, and increasing the level and quality of weapons will not allow Kyiv to achieve victory; however, Kyiv prolongs the war as much as possible to deplete Russian capabilities with maximum losses.

Between Biden's speech in Warsaw and Putin's speech in Moscow, it is clear that the conflict is being fought between the United States and its European allies on one side, and Russia on the other; Ukraine is just a geographically placed substitute and battleground .

Analysis

The president   Biden uses the verb   *to put*   as he says *we have to put the Ukrainians in a position where they can make advances*. In this political issue, it is considered ambiguous and lacks clarity. It can indicate incitement or continued support against Russia and the continuation of the war . The verb *to put* lacks of specification in meaning . This strategy is   called bushes which uses   mitigators to   reduce the propositional content's accuracy. The distinction between accuracy and imprecise is used by bush to minimize or hide responsibility for the statement .

The second strategy is the sub-strategy of actantial shield which belongs to deictic shield . Biden says *that depends on what the Ukrainians decide.* It refers to the use this strategy by placing responsibility on the other and not shouldering it, which may constitute an accusation directed at the speaker . Statements given to another source rather than the speaker are typical means for this strategy to be communicated . Biden is trying to protect himself here .

The president mentions the pronoun *we* three times where it indicates to sub-strategy objectivization shield. He says *we have to do in the meantime we have to put the Ukrainians in a position where they can make advances , and he says Ukraine we're not going to dictate to them what the end result is* . Objectivization shields , belong to deictic shields, are devices that protect the interlocutor's face by acts of replacement by avoiding a clear statement and an individual responsibility, respectively .

Extract (2)
David Muir : But a reality check for the American people watching this at home tonight could you and I be sitting here a year from now talking about the war in Ukraine still ?

President Joe Biden : I'm not a prognostic Indicator I don't have a crystal ball but look for all the difficulty that the Ukraine has and maintaining the Weaponry having what they need and so on . And so forth the circumstance in Russia is even worse Russia's **you know** they put 180 000 forces into Ukraine a year ago today an invasion …

Contextual Hints

In this extract , David Muir (interviewer)asks President Biden (interviewee) about the Ukrainian-Russian war, and when it will end .

Analysis

The president's answer carries mitigation strategies .The first one is hedges (indirectness (metaphor)) This strategy is clear in phrase *I'm not a prognostic Indicator I don't have a crystal ball* .He use the metaphor because it includes a semantic translation from one conceptual area to another. The president employs this strategy in situations

where candor seems unhelpful , and to serve to strengthen an argument by reducing or eliminating the inherent face-threat contained in it .The second one is another aspect of hedges (indirectness (disclaimers)) . The act of disclaiming hostile intentions in speech may be achieved by using active formulations, such as phrases like *You know* **.**Biden uses this phrase as a device of indirectness *And so forth the circumstance in Russia is even worse Russia's you know they put 180 000 forces into Ukraine a year ago today an invasion* ... This gives the audience the peace of mind that the person giving   .This speech will not be infringing on their sensitivities. Therefore, disclaimers might be considered a kind of evidentiality .

Extract (3)
David Muir : We know the Germans are now sending tanks in after the U.S. said it would send Abrams tanks as well but we know President Zelenski continues to say what he really needs are f-16s, will you send f-16s?

President Joe Biden : look **we're** sending him what our seasoned military thinks he needs now he needs tanks , he needs artillery he needs air defense including another High Mark there are things he needs now that **we're** sending him to put him in a position to be able to make gains this spring ….

Contextual Hints

The background of this extract is   that Volodymyr Zelensky is interested in American F-16 fighter aircraft. Joe Biden refuses to give them to him . Biden's primary justification for not deploying them is that the Ukrainians are unprepared. Even Ukrainians acknowledge that it would take at least six months for their pilots to learn how to operate and combat with the aircraft. The F-16, a multipurpose jet capable of air-to-air and air-to-ground operations, also requires relatively pristine runways for takeoff and landing. Unlike Soviet-built planes, which were designed to operate from austere bases, F-16s can be damaged by foreign objects sucked into their engines, and they require almost daily inspection and maintenance. Ukraine has few pristine airfields, which Russia could attack repeatedly, requiring an unending cycle of maintenance.

The second reason Biden is wary of using F-16s is because doing so may cross a line that Vladimir Putin might see as an invitation for an increase in the conflict. A fully armed F-16 can go 500 kilometers, placing it within range reach of targets deep within Russian territory if it takes off from one of Ukraine's air bases. This is not true of any other weapon that the West sent to Ukraine.

Analysis

The interviewer asked direct question , the answer could be either yes or no but the interviewee (The president Joe Biden) uses mitigation strategy hedges / (indirectness (evasion)) . The   president Joe Biden answers the question indirectly by using evasion . He utilizes evasion as an essential communication strategy to get out of problems and to save face.

Hedges operate on the illocution of an utterance and affect the relational and emotive dimensions .Where mitigation, centered on illocutionary force, is seen as indirectness   in other words hedges .Joe Biden uses   hedges to avoid   giving clear statement and taking responsibility .

Extract (4)
David Muir : Vladimir Putin told the Russian people this week that China's President XI is coming to Russia likely as early as this spring I know the state department and the Pentagon now have both warned China not to offer lethal military assistance to Russia in this war with Ukraine saying the U.S is concerned that China is considering providing lethal support to Russia, would that cross a line for you?

President Joe Biden : look it's not in China **I had** a very Frank conversation with President XI this past summer on this issue and **I pointed out** to him ……. **I said** and **if you are engaged in the same kind of brutality by supporting the brutalities going on I said you may face the same consequence** ……

Contextual Hints

The relationship between China and Russia is strong and constantly improving, which worries the United States . China may provide military assistance to Russia . The evidence about the strength of relations between China and Russia is many, for example Putin and Xi held their most recent virtual meeting in December, during which Putin described their relationship as "the best in history" and said they could "withstand all tests."The two leaders share deep distrust and hostility toward the United States, which they believe has the power to hold China and Russia back. They also share a vision for a new world order that better accommodates their nations' interests and is no longer Western-dominated.In 2019, Xi referred to Putin as his "best friend"; the two have also developed a strong personal bond. Since becoming China's leader, Xi has met Putin 39 times in person, most recently in September during a summit in central Asia.

Analysis

In Biden's statement, *I said you may face the same consequence,* he uses bush strategy (vagueness) .According to his claim, America has nothing to do with what is happening between Ukraine and Russia, it is just an ally of Ukraine against the brutal Russian war, but by saying *face the same consequence*, he maybe means the sanctions imposed by America on Russia and urged the rest of the European countries to impose sanctions on them, including Germany. He uses bush strategy to cover the truth and protect himself by vagueness .

The interviewer asks President Biden about the support of China to Russia and if it forms a challenge to the U.S. President Joe Biden uses past tense as a narrativization Shield which belongs to deictic shields . This strategy denotes a separation from the current conversation by using the past tense and it is one of self-protection. He says *I had a very Frank conversation with President XI*, and he says *I pointed out to him.*

Extract (5)

David Muir : I want to ask you about a couple of issues here at Home it's been three weeks now since the toxic train derailment in East Palestine Ohio as you know the mayor says he saw you in Ukraine and he says it tells you he doesn't care about us they're asking

is the President coming to Ohio? do you have any plan to travel to Ohio and have you talked with the mayor yet ?

President Joe Biden : let's put this in perspective within two hours of that derailment the EPA was in there within two hours ….. I've made it clear to them anything they need is available **we'll** make it available to them whatever happens here **we've** got to understand is the responsibility of the railroad company who's made **by the way** tens of billions of dollars in profits tens of billions of dollars of profits lately .

Contextual Hints

This extract talks about thirty-eight Norfolk Southern cars (train) derailed on February 3 in a fiery, mangled mess on the Ohio-Pennsylvania border. A train derailment involving toxic chemicals in East Palestine, Ohio, puts pressure on the transport company and US President Joe Biden's administration to address the environmental effects. Many accused the White House of not responding as quickly, and US Transport Secretary Pete Buttigieg voiced regret. Mr Biden has so far opted against visiting the crash site. That decision has come under criticism from leading Republicans, with former president Donald Trump who has announced his 2024 presidential campaign -visiting the town to distribute fast food and water .

Analysis

The interviewer asked direct questions about the toxic train derailment in East Palestine Ohio . The president answers *let's put this in perspective within two hours of that derailment the EPA was in there within two hours…* . He uses hedge strategy (Indirectness (Evasion)). President Joe Biden uses   evasion as an essential communication strategy to avoid problems and to save face. He avoids or prevents explicitly responding to difficult political issues such as not visiting the accident site and not providing adequate assistance to the affected people for a reason no one knows.

President Joe Biden uses another mitigation sub- strategy which is strategic digressions . It belongs to topical shields by using the phrase (by the way) *by the way tens of billions of dollars in profits tens of billions of dollars of profits lately* to put the

responsibility on the railroad company and to reduce his responsibility for the toxic train derailment in East Palestine Ohio and lack of travel and presence at the scene of the accident. He is trying to control the topic through the background of the topic and the blame should be placed on the companies instead of him .

Extract (6)

David Muir : So do you plan to travel there and have you talked with the mayor?

President Joe Biden : I can't **recall** that I don't think I've talked to the mayor **I've talked** to everyone else there and I'm multiple times talked about the Senators both like both Governors **I've talked** to everyone there to talk to and we made it clear that everything is available .

Contextual Hints

This extract refers to thirty-eight Norfolk Southern cars (train) derailed on February 3 in a fiery, mangled mess on the Ohio-Pennsylvania border. A train carrying dangerous chemicals collapsed in East Palestine, Ohio, putting pressure on the transport company and the administration of US President Joe Biden to address the environmental effects. The presenter asks the president if he has plans to visit the city where the incident occurred or contact the mayor .

Analysis

The president Joe Biden uses hedges (indirectness) strategy by using evasion . He does not answer yes or no to the question but he provides a response not located on a positive/negative spectrum . He says *I can't recall that I don't think I've talked to the mayor I've talked to everyone else there and I'm multiple times talked*… . The goal of using this strategy is to protect oneself and avoid responsibility . President Joe Biden evades the answer to avoid responsibility by blaming him for not going to the scene of the accident on the one hand and not communicating with the mayor on the other .

Extract (7)

David Muir : let me ask you one of the immediate questions if and when you do announce that you're running again . you and the former president are both now under investigation by the justice department for the discovery of these classified

Documents . I know that you believe these two cases are very different but I do . Discovery at Mar-A-Lago you said I thought data that was in there may compromise sources and methods and names of people who help and it's just totally irresponsible , can you assure the American people that none of the documents discovered in your garage or at your old office compromised sources or methods or U.S. intelligence?

President Joe Biden : I've been advised by the council that the justice department make that decision to not try to alter the case in any way .There's been ***very few documents*** that have   other than I mean in my possession meaning in my home . All the stuff that was moved out the years **I'm told** there were a couple things that were from 1973 or 74 documents were marked classified **I don't know** of anything and maybe **I don't know** of anything that is marked like it was known   Etc but I'm told not to comment on that because **I don't even know** what they are able to what They confiscated .

Contextual Hints

CNN reports that the documents discovered in Mr. Biden's office were labelled "sensitive compartmented information," suggesting they may have contained intelligence-gathering methods and sources. They allegedly contained information regarding Ukraine, Iran, and the United Kingdom and dated back to his time as vice president and senator.

According to the indictment, the secret files discovered at Mr. Trump's Florida home were of the greatest significance .Biden and Trump under investigation . The interviewer asks the president about this topic and whether it will affect his presidential candidacy .

Analysis

President Joe Biden uses as a mitigation strategy bush by using *very few* in his utterance *There have been very few documents that have other than I mean in my possession meaning in my home.* He uses this strategy to minimize the situation and its

effect and to protect himself because this topic and the investigation will affect his voting percentage by utilizing an understatement and minimizer in the utterance.

The lexical marker *I don't know* is lexical linguistic devices of sub-strategy eventualization shields (belongs to deictic shields) , which present the message as one of several potential topics, reducing its significance . President Joe Biden uses this strategy three times in this extract to reduce his responsibility and to protect himself . With this strategy, he distances himself from the subject of doubt and makes the subject more than an explanation .
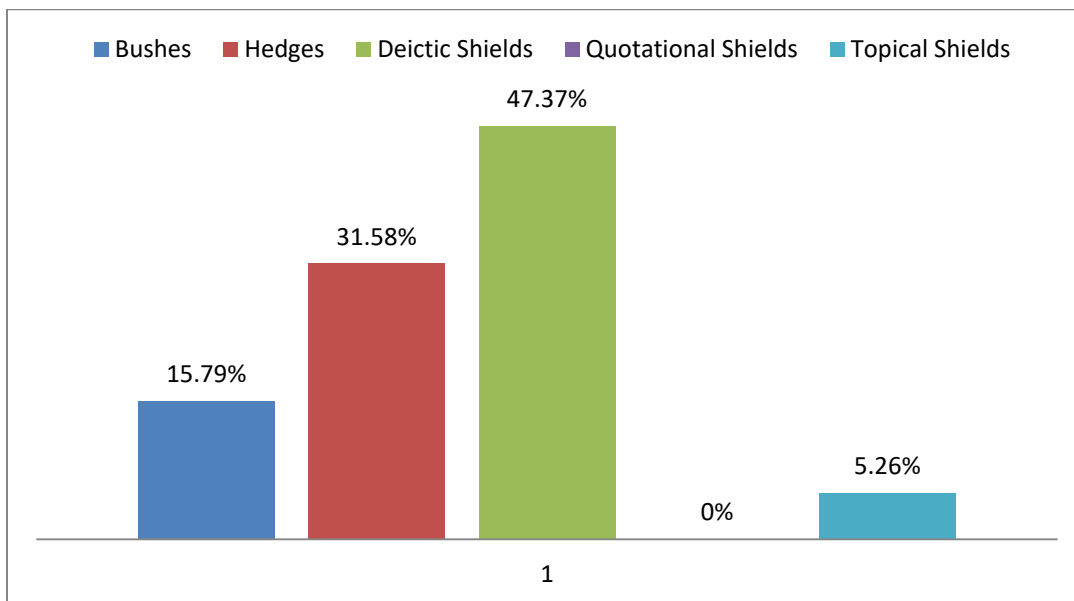
4. Results of Analysis

As shown in Table (1) and Figure (1) , the total number of mitigation strategies used by the president Joe Biden is (19). Deictic shields represent the most commonly used in the data under study with (9) with a percentage of (47.368%) . Within this, objectivization shield is employed at (3) with the percentage of (33.333%%) . The least used strategy is narrativization shields with (2) with a percentage of (22.222%) . It is also found that spatio-temporal and fictionalization shields have not been used. Deictic shields is followed by hedges with (6) with a percentage of (31.578%) . Regarding the percentage , bushes are used (3) with a percentage of (15.789%). Topical Shields are used (1) times with a percentage of (5.263%) . Quotational shields has not been used .

Frequencies and Percentages of Mitigation Strategies Used by Biden in The interview

Mitigation strategies			Frequency		Percentage	
Bushes			3		15.789%	
Hedges			6		31.578%	
Deictic Shields	Sub-strategies	Actantial Shield	1	9	11.111%	47.368%
		Objectivization Shield	3		33.333%	
		Narrativization Shield	2		22.222%	
		Spatio-Temporal	0		0%	
		Fictionalization Shields	0		0%	

		Eventualization Shields	3		33.333%	
Quotational Shields			0		0%	
Topical Shields	Sub-strategies	Strategic examples	0	1	0%	5.263%
		Strategic digressions	1		100%	
Total				19	100%	

Legend: ■ Bushes ■ Hedges ■ Deictic Shields ■ Quotational Shields ■ Topical Shields

- Bushes: 15.79%
- Hedges: 31.58%
- Deictic Shields: 47.37%
- Quotational Shields: 0%
- Topical Shields: 5.26%

The Rates of Politeness Strategies Used by Biden in The interview

5.Conclusion

The following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the present data and research questions :

1-It is found that the mitigation strategies employed in Biden's interview are : bushes ,hedges , deictic shields , and topical shields . Accordingly , hypothesis No.1 is verified .

2-Results of the study reveals that the most commonly used strategy in Biden's interview is deictic shields . Due to this , hypothesis No.2 is   proved .

3-Results of the study reveals that the most commonly used sub- strategy in Biden's interview is objectivization shield and eventualization shields.

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