CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Studies

The previous study is needed since it helps the writer and the next researcher.

Previous studies provide examples of how to analyze and conduct good research.

It also has the function of a guide for new research findings. In conducting this

research, the writer has reviewed previous studies related to the topic to support

the analysis. See example:

Tabel 1.1 Previous Studies

No.	Study	Objectives	Method	Findings
1.	Fitriyah, Emzir, & Ridwan. (2019) Indonesia	To examine politeness and its realization in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom Discourse.	A qualitative method.	1) Both lecturers and students use both positive and negative politeness techniques. 2) Positive strategies are frequently displayed by the lecturers and students as indicators of a psychologically close bond, reciprocity, and friendship within a group.
2.	Mahmud, (2019). Indonesia	To discover the politeness strategies proposed by English students at one of the universities in Makassar	A descriptive qualitative research method	Different expressions were used by English students in class to convey their politeness. Those expressions took the form of greetings, expressions of gratitude, terms of address, expressions of regret, and fillers.

3.	Rahmatillah, et.al., (2022) Indonesia.	To discover the types of hedges used by EFL university students in their speaking class within an academic setting, as well as the reasons why EFL university students used hedges in their speaking class.	A qualitative method	Some hedges were used by students in an EFL speaking class. Personal evaluation, expression of limitation, expression of hesitation, and combined hedges are all used.
4.	Vebriyanto, Januarius, and Sri. (2019). Indonesia.	To examine the types and functions of hedges and boosters, as well as their relationship, in graduate student-written research articles.	A qualitative method.	Students used seven different types of hedges and eight different types of boosters. It was discovered that the graduate students used four and three functions of hedges and boosters, respectively. Furthermore, it was discovered that hedges and boosters tend to group together to form a harmonic combination.
5.	Vlasyan (2019). Russia.	To define the most commonly used types of hedges in everyday conversation and specify their functions	A descriptive qualitative method.	The most frequent type of hedges in everyday conversation is plausibility shields.

A study on the use of hedges among EFL students has been completed by Fitriyah, Emzir, and Ridwan (2019). In this study, the writer looked into politeness and its realization in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom

discourse. In this study, the writers focus on the analysis of teachers' verbal realizations of politeness as found in the recordings of three English classes. The data was gathered by video-audio by recording the teachers' utterances and the students' compliance with the lecturer in order to find the lecturer's politeness strategies and the students' compliance with the lecturer's utterances. Finally, the result of this study found that the lecturers and the students use positive and negative politeness strategies, and the lecturers and students frequently used positive strategies as signs of a psychologically close relationship, reciprocity, and friendship in a group.

Research about politeness was done by Mahmud in 2019. The writer attempts to investigate the politeness strategies of English students at one of Makassar's universities in this study. The descriptive qualitative research method was used in this study to investigate the politeness phenomenon in EFL classroom interaction. This study's participants were two classes of 50 students from an English literature program. Individual student presentations that had been recorded were the primary sources of data. The recording contained fifty transcriptions, each lasting five to seven minutes. The transcriptions were analyzed and discussed using Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. This study's findings revealed that English students used various expressions to encode their politeness in class. Those expressions were in the forms of greetings, thanking, addressing terms, apologizing, and fillers. Some terms were derived from students' vernacular language, which was used to soften their presentation. These expressions were categorized as positive and negative politeness. The findings of this study might

be used as input for teachers and students to create effective classroom interaction. Based on previous studies, hedges are often used in English conversation and maintain harmony so that good communication occurs between speaker and listener.

Rahmatillah et al. (2022) explain that there are numerous classifications of hedges that often display noticeable differences. This is because the perspectives of writers on hedges are often different, and the variables taken to classify them are also different. By applying a theory from Riekkinen and Svarova (2009), they found that there are four types of hedges employed by the EFL students in their speaking class, namely; personal evaluation, expression of limitation, expression of hesitation, and the new type of hedge, which is combined hedges. This study also reveals that hedges are used by EFL students for various purposes. The first reason was to express a personal evaluation or a suggestion to put into practice for a current situation, the second reason was vagueness markers that allow students to express uncertainty, the third reason gained in the interview section was to apply a need in a situational context such as request, seek permission, and to give advice, and the last reason was to apply politeness in requesting the listener's attention.

Vebriyanto, Januarius, and Sri (2019) also conducted similar research about hedges entitled *Types and Functions of Hedges and Boosters in Graduate Students' Research Articles.* This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. This study aimed to investigate the use of hedges and boosters employed by

graduate students in research articles. According to the findings of this study, students used seven different types of hedges and eight different types of boosters in their research articles. It was revealed that the graduate students used four functions of hedges and three functions of hedges in regard to the functions of hedges and boosters. Furthermore, it was revealed that hedges and boosters like to group together to form a harmonic combination.

Vlasyan conducted another study (2019) entitled Linguistic Hedging in Interpersonal Communication using Lakoff's approach as the first point. This study aims to examine the meaning and function of hedges in daily conversation. The findings of this study indicate that the main tasks of hedging in conversational discourse include: avoiding conflict, minimizing face-to-face actions, and reducing coercion. Vlasyan used a descriptive method in his research and found that the type of hedge most often used in everyday conversation is a sensible shield. This study provides enlightenment to research using Lakoff's approach to analyze hedges in everyday conversation.

Some of those studies discussed politeness and types of hedges in EFL students' conversations. Most of those studies focus on analyzing politeness strategy and types of hedges employed by EFL students in general. However, those studies do not specifically refer to using hedges as a politeness strategy in a more formal academic situation such as oral presentations. Further research is needed to determine the different results between the use of hedges and politeness strategy in general conversation and more specific situations. Therefore, to fill the gap, the

current research focuses on the types of hedges employed by EFL students and their pragmatic function in oral presentations.

2.2 Pragmatic Approach

This study applies a pragmatic approach to analyze the types of hedges and their pragmatic function in EFL students' book review oral presentations. Jingwei (2013) stated that hedges have a strong pragmatic color and are an excellent communicative strategy. Pragmatic is the study of 'invisible' meaning or the ability of the hearer to recognize what is meant by the speaker even when it is not said or written (Yule, 2006; Hutauruk & Puspita, 2020; Sartika &Pranoto, 2021). This phenomenon then requires speakers (or writers) must be able to rely on a large number of shared assumptions and expectations when attempting to communicate.

On the other hand, Levinson (1987) argues that pragmatics is the study of language use. It is a study of the relationship between language and its context, which forms the basic explanation of language understanding and involves making meaningful conclusions that relate what is said to something that has been discussed before. Thus, pragmatic competence is significant to ensure that communication flows as intended (Hutauruk & Puspita, 2020). Hence, pragmatic competence should be given more emphasis in language education because of its value and effect on communication success (Alqurashi, 2019).

2.3 Politeness Strategies

Politeness has emerged as a crucial issue in the study of pragmatics (Rahayuningsih et al., 2020). The politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) was widely used as the theoretical framework for many research (Rahayuningsih et al., 2020; Mahmud, 2019; Jingwei, 2013; Sadeghoghli & Niroomand, 2016). As a theoretical framework, first, Levinson and Brown modified the concept of "face" and provided a more appropriate definition of "public self-image" for the late century. Then, they classified "face" into two categories: positive and negative, where positive denotes the need to understand and be accepted, and negative denotes the requirement for freedom to express oneself (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Therefore, politeness is used when the face is threatened and needs to be defended for facial preservation. Brown and Levinson (1987) divide politeness strategies according to how far the speaker and listener minimize threats when they speak. The strategy includes the bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategies. It starts with explicitly doing Face Threatening Acts without diminishing threats to avoid performing them.

2.4 Hedges

According to Lakoff (1973), as stated in Vlasyan (2019), hedges are words whose meaning implicitly makes the words conveyed blurry or unclear. Hedging is commonly used in conversations for certain purposes. Hedging generally has the objective of modifying and reducing a proposition. Hedging is very common in casual conversation and represents significant interpersonal communication for

the speaker (Vlasyan, 2019). Hedges are often used in conversations in both formal and informal situations. Many words belong to the hedge used in conversations with different uses.

Prince (1982), in his research, stated that there are two types of hedges: approximators and shields. Prince explains that the approach affects truth propositional hedging conditions. Approximators affects propositional content and can be further subdivided into adaptors and rounders. While the shield affects the degree and concluded speaker commitment. An illustration of the types of hedges can be seen in Figure 2.1
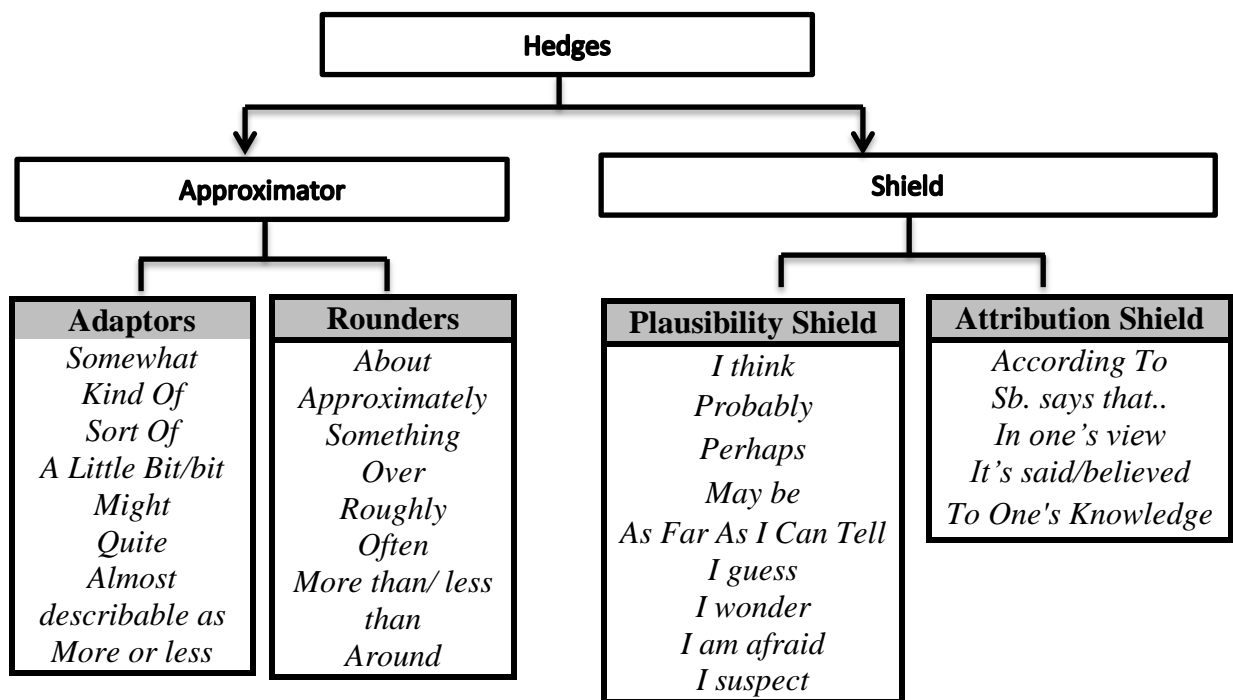
```
                          ┌─────────────────┐
                          │      Hedges      │
                          └─────────────────┘
                   ┌───────────────┴───────────────┐
          ┌────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────┐
          │  Approximator  │              │      Shield       │
          └────────────────┘              └──────────────────┘
        ┌────────┴────────┐             ┌────────┴─────────┐
```

Adaptors	Rounders	Plausibility Shield	Attribution Shield
Somewhat	*About*	*I think*	*According To*
Kind Of	*Approximately*	*Probably*	*Sb. says that..*
Sort Of	*Something*	*Perhaps*	*In one's view*
A Little Bit/bit	*Over*	*May be*	*It's said/believed*
Might	*Roughly*	*As Far As I Can Tell*	*To One's Knowledge*
Quite	*Often*	*I guess*	
Almost	*More than/ less than*	*I wonder*	
describable as	*Around*	*I am afraid*	
More or less		*I suspect*	

Figure 2.1 Types of Hedges Adopted from (Prince, 1982)

2.4.1. Approximators Hedges

Approximators are words that modify the propositional content by either adapting a term to a non-prototypical situation or by stating that a term is a rounded-off representation of a figure. This is the type of hedge that affects the propositional content but not the speaker's commitment. Approximator hedges are divided into two categories which are adaptors and rounders. Both adaptors and rounders may be said to occur when a speaker is attempting to correlate an actual situation with some prototypical, goal-relevant situation, the term chosen, e.g., crusted, ten fifty over five fifty, indicating the prototypical situation, the hedges were chosen, e.g., sort of, about, indicating that the actual situation is close to but not identical with the prototypical situation (Prince, 1982).

a. Adaptors

Adaptors are a subclass of approximators that are used to do adapting. When the speaker believes that the mismatch is or may be relevant, the adaptation of an old term to the new occurrence, with the adaptation marked, is the most logical alternative. Adaptors contribute to the value of utterance. Here is an example,

(1) "The car hit him on his left side and, as described by his parents, he <u>sort of</u> grazed off the car up and fell to the ground. He didn't-- he wasn't really thrown." (adopted from Prince,1982)

The chosen hedges "sort of" in (1) indicate that the actual situation is close to but not identical to the prototypical situation.

b. Rounders

Rounders indicate the range or approximation in which ideas are approximated, such as about, approximately, something, or around. Here is an example,

> (2). "His weight was <u>approximately</u> three point two kilograms, um, which is essentially what his birth weight was." adopted from Prince (1982)
>
> (3) "Um: the baby's blood pressure on the ride over
>
> here was also <u>about</u> uh <u>something</u> between forty and fifty palpable." Prince (1982)

In this case, as we can look at (2), the correspondence between language and reality is relatively simple because exact numbers for a patient's weight, height, and other characteristics exist. Further, in (3), the speaker tries to give the most appropriate term, but she or he also makes it clear that what is perceived is not exactly like that term's prototypical usage.

2.4.2. Shield Hedges

The next major class, shields, Shields, which imply that the speaker is unsure because she or he speaks from knowledge or beliefs obtained through plausible reasoning or that she or he has no direct knowledge but is attributing the belief to a specific other, has an impact on the degree and type of speaker-commitment that is inferred. Two categories of shields can be distinguished: the Plausibility Shields

and the Attribution Shields, which primarily attribute the belief to someone other than the speaker while only tangentially inferring the speaker's level of commitment.

a. Plausibility shield

A plausibility shield that does involve some element of doubt. The plausibility shield implicates various levels of lack of certainty. Plausibility Shields represent various levels of uncertainty. In each case, the speaker indicates that he or she is not entirely convinced of the truth of the proposition being conveyed. Prince (1982) claims that in particular, unmarked, i.e., unhedged, assertions imply, all else being equal, that the speaker has knowledge via observation or logical reasoning that the proposition conveyed is true, whereas assertions marked by Plausibility Shields imply that the speaker is asserting a belief acquired through plausible reasoning. See the example adopted from Prince 1982:

(3) "And <u>I think</u> we can <u>probably</u> just slow him down to a little over maintenance, since he's out under the-- he's out under the warmer—uh, which will increase his uh fluid requirements uh..ten or twenty percent. But uh, <u>as far as I can tell right now</u>, he's—you can wean him." (Prince, 1982)

This illustrates the lack of certainty. The speaker is indicating that she or he is less than fully committed to the truth of the proposition conveyed.

b. Attribution shield

Attribution shield primarily relates the belief in inquiry to someone other than the speaker, with the speaker's own level of commitment only inferred indirectly (Prince, 1982). At the most basic level, attribution shields serve a distinct purpose from plausibility shields. Attribution shield implies that the speaker is speaking from hearsay information or beliefs, in the broadest sense of the term, where the belief in the truth of the proposition transmitted is to be attributed to another. It is worth noting that nothing is explicitly communicated about the speaker's personal level of commitment in both the unmarked and the case of a proposition accompanied by an attribution shield. Attribution shield consists of expressions that contribute to the truth value of a proposition. They are also often followed by sources of information. Here is the example adopted from Prince (1982).

(4) a. There was a dramatic response after medication.

b. <u>According to</u> Dr. Smith, there was a dramatic response after medication.

c. According to me, there was a dramatic response after medication.

From the example, the listener infers that in sentence (a), the speaker does not believe the statement conveyed is untrue and has sufficient

evidence to believe it is true. In some ways, sentence (a) is equivalent to sentence (c). Meanwhile, in a sentence (b), the proposition conveyed is the same, but additional linguistic material is given, 'according to Dr. Smith'. As a result, the hearer concludes that the speaker does not intend to convey 'according to Dr. Smith' and 'according to me' because Dr. Smith's commitment is not required for the exchange's purposes. In other words, the speaker infers 'according to Dr. Smith,' not necessarily 'according to me' because if Dr. Smith spoke, the speaker would listen since Dr. Smith has sufficient evidence for believing it to be true.

2.5 The Pragmatic Functions of Hedges

The use of hedging in conversation results in a reduced value of the accuracy of the information conveyed by the speaker. However, hedging strategy also has different functions. Azizah (2021) states in her research that the function of hedging is to avoid making explicit statements and thus sound more polite. Hedge words used as a politeness strategy have been the subject of several studies. One of them is Jingwei (2013), who is trying to explore the function of hedges in politeness. This study adopts facial theory and politeness strategies to research the function of hedges in communication using the politeness perspective. This study discovered that various kinds of hedges contribute to keeping dialogue respectful. Additionally, it demonstrates how the improper use of hedges results in pragmatism failure and a breakdown in decency.

The findings demonstrated that hedges are the most distinctive feature of fuzzy language and contribute to politeness strategy. Hedging can assist in sustaining and changing the relationship between speaker and listener and keep communication flowing by making it gentle, courteous, and adaptable. On the other hand, hedges will make information blurry and fail to keep the information conveyed properly, which can lead to a reduced value of the accuracy of the information submitted. So then, he classifies the pragmatic functions of hedges in maintaining politeness.

2.5.1. Approximators to Avoid Being Assertive And Makes Words Sound More Polite.

Jingwei (2013) stated that approximator hedges contribute to maintaining politeness in communication by expressing themselves inexplicitly. See the example adopted from Jingwei (2013):

"Your coat is <u>a little bit</u> dirty" *(*Jingwei, 2013)

Criticizing others can lead to conflict and threaten the self-image (face) of others (Face Threatening Act). In this case, certain pragmatic strategies are needed to reduce the threat. The word 'a little bit' indicates the speaker's intention to reduce the "Face Threatening Act" level.

2.5.2. Adaptors Used to Shows The Speaker's Basic Attitude Towards The Information Conveyed And Make The Degree Of Flexibility Towards The Claims.

"Our product is <u>quiet</u> cheap." (jingwei, 2013)

"Quiet" shows the speaker's basic attitude towards the price of their product, indicating there is little space to concede, while it also tells the hearer there is a degree of flexibility for bargaining. Such an approximator can both make clear the

speaker's idea and leave adequate leeway to the hearer and take the hearer's face into consideration.

2.5.3. Rounders Used To Offer A Range Of Alternatives

In many ways, rounder hedges are used to make an estimation or measure things. Jingwei (2013), in his research, gives us an example of how to use rounders to maintain politeness in communication as a range of alternatives. See the example adopted from Jingwei (2013):

> A: What is your annual income?
>
> B: Er...well…It's <u>about</u> the expenditure of a new car.

From the example, we can see that B is reluctant to answer A's question because it is something personal. However, B has no intention of making B embarrassed by refusing to answer his question. So, B then answers with hedges using the word "about." Finally, B managed to make a response to question A without behaving impolitely.

2.5.4. Plausibility Shield Used To Show Respect To Hearers When They Make Hearers Unpleased.

As a shield shows the speaker's attitude towards what she or he is talking about, shields are often used by speakers to maintain their communication with the interlocutors. Look at the following example adapted from Jingwei (2013):

> Boss: <u>I'm afraid</u> this is not the first time you are late for work.
>
> Employee: Sorry, I'm . . . eh . . . <u>just a little bit</u> late. (Jingwei, 2013)

From the example, the boss criticizes his employee with no intention of arousing his internal resistance, so he uses "I'm afraid" to soften the utterance to protect the employee's face. The employee uses "a little" to save his face in response.

2.5.5. Plausibility Shield Used To Maintain A Better Communication Environment.

Look at the following example adapted from Liu (2020)

> Jane : "If I had anywhere else to go, I should be glad to leave it, but I can never get away from Gateshead till I am a woman."
>
> Mr.Lloyd: "Perhaps you may. Who knows? Have you any relations besides Mrs. Reed?"
>
> Jane : "I think not, sir." (Liu, 2020)

Mr. Lloyd used the hedge Perhaps to show his genuine concern and care for Jane during this conversation. Mr. Lloyd hoped Jane really did have somewhere to go to get away from Gateshead. He used this hedge to protect Jane's tender heart. And Jane used the hedge to show her unwillingness to leave for Mrs. Reed. It reflects her true feelings, and it appears that she did not want to be with Mrs. Reed. And this is where Mr. Lloyd got Jane's idea, and there were no further questions on this topic. Hedges can not only express politeness and respect, but they can also help to maintain a better communication environment.

2.5.6. Attribution Shield Used To Report Others' Words And Maintain Harmonious Relations With Interlocutor.

Attribution shields are often used to borrow thoughts or ideas from others. In this case, the speaker intends to maintain harmonious relations with the interlocutor by using references from other people's thoughts. So that the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor will not be affected by the truth of the information conveyed, whether the information is true or false. See the following example adapted from Jingwei (2013):

According to John, all gentlemen are requested to wear suits at the cocktail party. (Jingwei, 2013)

From the example above, the speaker wants the listener to wear a suit to attend a party. However, it is considered impolite to ask listeners directly and impose requirements on the speaker. So the speaker uses the attribution shield 'According to John' to reduce the requirements and conveys the obvious implication that listeners must wear suits to the party, which both accomplishes the task of advising and avoid letting the listener feel embarrassed.

2.5.7. Plausibility Shield Used To Saving Face And Achieving The Purpose Of Self-Protection

Jane : "I will go, if no better may be. But I don't like it. Shall you be there, Mrs. Fairfax?"

Mrs. Fairfax: "No. I pleaded off, and he admitted my plea."

In this dialogue, Jane decides not to attend the party because she does not want to upset Mr. Rochester and consults with Mrs. Fairfax. Jane expressed her solution with a hedge following discussion. This hedge demonstrates that Jane had no choice but to attend the party. Jane added the hedge into her expression to save face and achieve self-protection in order to avoid embarrassment.

2.5.8. Plausibility Shield To Makes Words More Appropriate And Acceptable

Hedges may express the speaker's attitude and point of view.

(10) Mr. Rochester: Do you believe that?

Jane Eyre: What, sir?

Mr. Rochester: That the shadows are as important as the light?

> Jane Eyre: <u>I believe</u> that none of us is perfect. <u>I believe</u> none of us is without some fault to hide. (Liu, 2020)

Jane used the hedges "I believe" twice in this dialogue to express her attitude and opinion. It is highly subjective and represents her interpretation of Mr. Rochester's question. She did, however, include two "I believe" in her expressions to make the language more acceptable. It also reflects Jane Eyre's valuable independent thought or even shapes a true Jane Eyre, a simple figure who thought "no one is perfect." The specter of Mr. Rochester's marriage had vanished. Underneath his grim exterior was a good heart. Using hedges in this way can make discourses more comprehensive and acceptable.

2.6 EFL Oral Presentation

Supporting the success of EFL classes is language communication between lectures and students; therefore, lecturers must be aware of students' language competence and performance as well as enable them to improve their literary knowledge (Rido et al., 2020). Meanwhile, as to promote their career in the future, university students are demanded to have good communication skills, especially in English (Afrianto & Gulö, 2019). Here, the interaction between lectures and students plays its role. This is because interaction is crucially important in the communicative (speaking) classroom where the emphasis is on real oral communication, group tasks, and interaction (Pranoto and Suprayogi, 2021). By this, one of the supports for this interaction, for example oral presentation, takes a crucial place.

EFL oral presentation is one of the learning processes in academic English courses that aim to improve the proficiency of EFL students (Al Harun et al., 2016). Kheryadi and Hilmiyati (2021), in their research, describe oral presentation as one of the communication competencies that must be carried out by students. Oral presentations are conversations with messages often given to the student's audience by the presenter with audiovisual equipment to encourage, influence, invigorate, stimulate, instruct, upset, or entertain. Not only that, almost every lecturer uses oral presentation as their assessment criteria in college. EFL oral presentations are generally conducted in the classroom directly (offline). However, in this research, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused almost all subjects to be transferred virtually, including the book review process for this oral presentation.