

Exploring the Use of Hedging in Academic Writing: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract. English students in Indonesia have obviously dealt with a tremendous number of scientific researches. Yet, research does not only engage with the content, methods, and results of a study but also with the way it is presented to grab readers' positive acceptance. It also strongly counts on how all of the elements of the study are presented and how the researchers position themselves on the study. One way to arrive at those points is by employing hedges. The aim of this research is to analyze the use of hedging in academic writing across various University in Makassar. The data were taken from some website English journal in Makassar. The collected data analyzed using linguistic analysis software, namely AntConc. The analysis involved categorizing and quantifying the frequency and types of hedging expressions used in the selected academic texts. The research indicated that the student's research publications contained 146 hedging approaches. Of the six types of hedging that were identified, the students used modal auxiliary verbs to hedge the most frequently when they published their research articles with over 93 concordances. The term "modal auxiliary" was used 56 times in "research article 1". Not a single one of the four study articles that were located used this hedging.

Keywords: *academic, writing, hedging*

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INTRODUCTION

Academic writing plays a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge and the advancement of research within various disciplines. One important aspect of academic writing is the use of hedging, which refers to a linguistic strategy employed by writers to express uncertainty, caution, or doubt. The use of hedging allows researchers to accurately acknowledge and convey varying degrees of certainty in

their claims, findings, and interpretations. Understanding the use of hedging in academic writing is essential for researchers to effectively communicate their ideas and contribute to scholarly conversations within their respective fields.

Academic writing becomes one of the requirements when finishing the study in the University. Every student in the university has to fulfill this requirement. Academic writing is the objective presentation of scientific research findings. The target group of scholastic composition, expected to broadcast the commitment of a recently directed exploration to the logical world, is made out of people who work in the significant area (Altunkaya & Ayranci, 2020). Thus, scholars must have sufficient prior knowledge of the subject matter that is relevant to their research area, and be able to support their writing with scientific evidence. Moreover, it is required to support their argument during the thesis writing process.

In English academic writing, the primary goal is to educate the readers in order to make them gain any insight that provides factual information on a particular topic rather than to entertain. To make a good writing, the students must avoid repetition or digression. It has to construct in the consistent structure based on the idea provided. The arrangement of the writing must refer to the idea and be supported by relevant information argument. The irrelevant arguments must be eliminated to create the idea must be arranged in the correct way. It is only permitted to use the standard written form of the English language in academic writing. It has a precise and accurate information and the writer use good lexical choices.

There are eight characteristics of academic writing: complexity, formality, precision, objectivity, explicitness, accuracy, hedging and responsibility (Mytekah, 2013). When writing an academic text, the scholars consider those characteristics in their writing style. Even though, the style of the writing is also determined by the one that is most prominent. These eight characteristics must be adhered to at all times by anyone attempting to become an academic writer, and there are no any concessions should be made to them.

The complexity is one of the characteristics of academic writings. The complexity related to the grammar of written language is more complicated than

spoken language. More subordinate clauses, "that/to" complement clauses, prepositional phrases in long sequences, attributive adjectives, and passives are found in written features than in spoken language. There are some studies that explained about the complexity in the academic writing as one of the characteristics in academic writing. It is related to the research by (Guerra & Smirnova, 2023) stated that linguistic complexity in academic classifications, and that the thorough depiction of the core complexity techniques embraced in proficient scholastic composing will direct the development of discipline-explicit language-learning materials that will successfully address the requirements of students of various sciences.

In addition, the use of complexity is different based on the disciplines. The ideal academic writing is composed by formal words. It is called formality as the characteristics of academic writing. The choices of the words used in the academic writing can give the readers comprehension deeply. This is in contrast to informal English written or spoken, which frequently requires additional information from readers or listeners to complete the message.

When the writers cite facts, dates, or figures in academic writing. It required precision. For instance, you can say "50 million people," instead of the phrase "a lot of people." The information provided in the writing will be clearer and more accurate.

Valuable writing provides objectivity where the scholars take objective views to present, analyze issues in their writing. This position emphasizes logical research over just personal opinion and feeling.

Furthermore, it is the writer's responsibility in English to demonstrate to the reader how the various sections of the text relate to one another. The use of various signaling words can make these connections clearer. This characteristic is called explicit. Scholars will display how academicians are.

Vocabulary has its own level in academic writing. Correct vocabulary is used in academic writing. The majority of topics use terms with specific, narrow meanings. "phonetics" and "phonemics" are clearly distinguished in linguistics; English as a whole does not. It is called accuracy in academic writing.

In academic writing, taking responsibility for the claims and be able to back them up with evidence. It is also the writer responsibility to show that the writer understands any source texts the writer uses.

Those characteristics mentioned above are should be in the academic writing. The most aspect that the writers use is about the objective of academic writing. It will be shown in the previous finding about the academic writing.

The initial idea of this research came from researcher's experience. When she read some journals about academic writings, she found any features of academic writing that must exist in the academic writing. She realized that there are some features of academic writing. Those are formality, objectivity, precision, tentative language and explicit links (Smith, 2022). However, only few writers display those features in their works, some of the features already became the main subject of the studies such as formality, objectivity and others. Based on the data found, hedging is one of academic writing feature that rarely investigated in line with this finding. The writer is interested to explore more about the use of hedging.

The researcher will conduct the study about one of the features of academic writing called hedges at undergraduate EFL students in Makassar. The researcher will analyze the students' abstract thesis about the words that they use in their academic writing.

In line with the discussion of hedging as one of academic writing features, Hedging is how a writer expresses certainty or doubt is referred to as hedging language. In academic writing, it's common for the author to be unsure about the claims being made in their field of study, or the writer may have solid ideas but weak supporting data. It is wise to be cautious while making remarks in academic writing so as to discern between facts and claims. Hedging is the name given to the practice. The use of linguistic strategies to communicate hesitancy or doubt as well as to show indirectness and politeness is known as hedging.

Some experts have several beliefs related to the meaning of hedging. According to (Hyland,1995) hedging is a strategy of using ambiguous language to minimize the consequences of a statement's and a claim's assertions. In the other

hands, Lakoff (1972) stated that using vague language to reduce the consequences of a statement's and claim's claims is called as "hedging".

In addition, Hedging usually refers to hesitant language, can make the ideas sound unsure, which is frequently useful in academic writing. Overconfidence might make the assertions look less credible. It is sometimes more appropriate to state that "It might rain tomorrow" rather than "It will rain tomorrow." Hedging statements in academic writing will shield them from negative or harsh critique. Using caution rather than making sweeping claims will strengthen the credibility of the arguments because it shows that it has done some research and analysis.

Being polite means to be thoughtful in academic writing. Concerning negative respectfulness, being polite means to pick the right words to express the idea in the writing for the reader, for example, felt as face- threatening for the addressee such as refusal, criticism or claim in order to prevent conflicts. In academic writing, analysts present their own discoveries or cases by utilizing pragmatics markers. Those markers are called supports.

English students in Indonesia have obviously dealt with a tremendous number of scientific researches. Yet, research does not only engage with the content, methods, and results of a study but also with the way it is presented to grab readers' positive acceptance. It also strongly counts on how all of the elements of the study are presented and how the researchers position themselves on the study. One way to arrive at those points is by employing hedges. From then on, it sounded to conduct a study focusing on hedges used in academic writing, research articles, by non-native English learners, specifically from various university in Makassar which is focused on the conclusion in the articles. Based on the background stated previously, the researcher formulated the problem.

Several studies have explored the use of hedging in academic writing across different disciplines. Smith (2015) conducted a quantitative analysis of articles in the field of psychology and found that hedging was frequently used to express uncertainty in research findings. Similarly, Johnson (2018) examined the use of hedging in scientific research articles and identified variations in hedging strategies

between different scientific disciplines. These studies highlight the significance of understanding the nuances and variations in the use of hedging within specific academic disciplines.

Despite the existing literature on hedging in academic writing, there is a lack of comprehensive research that compares the extent and patterns of hedging across different disciplines. This study aims to address this gap by conducting a comparative analysis of the use of hedging in academic writing across multiple disciplines. Theoretical Framework: This research will be guided by the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework proposed by Halliday (1994). SFL emphasizes the contextual and functional aspects of language use and provides a robust framework for analyzing the choices made by academic writers in expressing uncertainty and hedging their claims.

The aim of this research is to analyze and compare the use of hedging in academic writing across various disciplines. The specific objectives of the study are as follows: 1. To examine the frequency and types of hedging expressions used in academic texts. 2. To identify discipline-specific variations in the use of hedging. Research Questions: 1. What are the common types of hedging expressions used in academic writing? 2. Does the use of hedging vary across different academic disciplines? Significance: This research is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it will contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of hedging in academic writing, allowing researchers to improve their communication skills within their respective disciplines. Furthermore, the comparative analysis across disciplines will shed light on potential variations in the use of hedging, providing insights into disciplinary conventions and expectations. Lastly, this research will inform academic writing pedagogy by identifying effective strategies for teaching and learning hedging in various disciplinary contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research type of the research is descriptive qualitative data. Qualitative data gathers from reading the articles and analyze the hedging from the articles. Then, the researcher will classify the hedges of the articles based on the categorize.

This study will utilize a qualitative approach, the research sample will consist of a diverse range of academic papers from various disciplines. The qualitative analysis will involve in-depth examination of the texts, identifying and categorizing various hedging devices and expressions.

This article will discuss descriptive qualitative research, particularly for those who would like to learn more about it, share their thoughts, refresh their knowledge, or conduct qualitative research in the future.

They try to paint a complex picture of the problem or issue being studied with a holistic perspective. This requires reporting from multiple perspectives. However, as stated by Seliger and Shohamy (Selinger, 1989) and Tarigan, the characteristics could be broken down into a few points. These are: holistic, heuristic or inductive, and without or with limited control.

The subject of the research will be from some universities in Makassar. They are public and state university. The researcher will take 10 articles from various university in Makassar. The articles will be from 2023 because these are the newest articles. The sources of data for qualitative research can come from many sources including documentation, interviews, observation, audiovisual record, and physical artifacts (Creswell, 2012). Data of this research was gathered from the participant and sources. The main data is from students' research articles.

Since this study attempts to sort out the differentiation of the utilization of supporting in research articles. this study utilized purposive examining. In purposive sampling, the case remembered for the example is the premise of judgment of normality or ownership of the specific qualities being looked for (Cohen et al, 2006). The information is taken because of the accessibility of this examination methodology that needs advanced duplicate of exploration articles in a similar major of study. In terms of internal validity, the same university with similar management is

also advantageous because, under certain conditions, the environment and management are nearly identical. The accompanying table represents the exploration members engaged with this review.

Data Collection

There will be one major data collected in this study. It will be qualitative data collected from text that is students' writing research article.

Data analysis will be carried out simultaneously with data collection, interpretation, and draft writing in this study. The researcher will organize the structure of the final report, analyze the earlier data from the preliminary study, write memos that may eventually be presented as a narrative.

In order to arrive at the conclusion depicted in the interactive model in the following image, the researcher proposes to reduce the amount of irrelevant data that has been collected, then categorize the remaining data into a few groups, display them, and verify before drawing a conclusion.

Data Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using linguistic analysis software, such as AntConc or NVivo. The analysis will involve categorizing and quantifying the frequency and types of hedging expressions used in the selected academic texts. Comparative analysis will be conducted to identify discipline-specific variations in the use of hedging.

Concerning the current concentrate on the utilization of supports in the Undergraduate research articles, the information was gathered from website journal specifically in Makassar the selected information will be from some English learner articles program. The information will as dedicative records or documents currently copied onto CD. In the wake of replicating every one of the records onto the computer, the specialist ordered the information by year and major, and in this way into three gatherings, Example., Literature, Linguistics, and Education, in each year.

It will utilize AntConc 4.2.0 (Windows) 2022 as the insightful instrument. This product is helpful to count the recurrence and track down the event of supports in

the thesis of the English Language Studies. AntConc 4.2.0 (Windows) 2022 is the most recent adaptation of AntConc; it gives various capabilities, for example, concordance, Concordance Plot, File View, Clusters, Collocates, Word List, Keyword List, N-grams, and etc. AntConc 4.2.0 (Windows) 2022 is free concordance programming which is created and afterward distributed by Laurence Anthony. AntConc 4.2.0 works with and helps the text examination and computation. Chipping away at the product requires the scientist to change the information into Text Archive (.txt). This will be finished to simplify the measurable examination and more viable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The information came from the research article. The explanation of this section is based on research questions: the typical hedging markers employed by students in some universities in Makassar.

The findings of the investigation showed that the students employed various forms of hedging when drafting their thesis based on the Salager-Meyer hedging categories. Such as, Modal Auxiliary Verbs (MAV), Modal Lexical Verbs (MLV), Adjectival, Adverbial, Nominal, Modal phrases (A,A,N-MP), Approximators of Degree, quantity, frequency and time (A-DQFT), Introductory Phrases (IP), if clause (IC), Compound Hedges (CH).

Table 1. Result of AntConc analysis

Categories of hedges	Modal Lexical Verbs	Modal Auxiliary verbs	Approximators	Introductory Phrases	If clause	Compound hedges
Research Article 1	Seem (4) Appear (1) Believe (2)	May (19) Might (7) Could (3) Would (3) Should (24)	-	-	-	Looks (1)
Research Article 2	Appear (1)	May (3) Could (8) Would (2)	About (18) Often (2)	-	-	-
Research article 3	Seem (1)	May (5) Might (2) Should (1)	About (8) Often (1)	-	-	-

Research Article 4	Tend (1)	May (3)	About (11)	-	-	-
		Could (2)	Often (2)			
		Would (9)				
		Should (2)				

The table showed that 146 hedging techniques were discovered in the students research publications. The table also demonstrates that the students' writing included four distinct categories. Every article journal displayed many hedging categories that the authors employed in their essays.

According to table, there were six different types of hedging utilized in the research proposals, although only "research article 1" used compound hedges in its authoring. When the students published their research articles with more than 93 concordances, they employed modal auxiliary verbs hedge the most frequently out of the six types of hedging that were found. Even "research article 1" used "modal auxiliary" 56 times.

The use of introduction phrases and if clauses is another fascinating discovery. The students seemed to dislike this kind of hedge. All of the four found research articles did not make use of this hedging.

The results also revealed that the students used the hedging tools in each type of hedging in a different way. It was discovered that students utilize the intentional vagueness marker more frequently than the intensifier. Even though three of them serve as the hedging mechanisms for attribute hedge, they never employ down graders when writing it. It suggests that some students might believe that using an intended ambiguity marker is a simple method to make an argument ambiguous.

CONCLUSION

The research indicated that the student's research publications contained 146 hedging approaches. Of the six types of hedging that were identified, the students used modal auxiliary verbs to hedge the most frequently when they published their research articles with over 93 concordances. The term "modal auxiliary" was used 56 times in "research article 1". Not a single one of the four study articles that were

located used this hedging. Thus, the use of hedging for academicians focused on only one of hedging types, namely modals auxiliary.

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