

ABSTRACT

Sari, Fitria. "Hedging Devices Used in the Introductions of Theses Written by Linguistics' Students of the English Department in 2007" A Thesis Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of The Requirement for Sarjana Degree of The English Department Faculty of Humanities, Airlangga University, 2008.

Academic writing differs from speech in a number of ways. Writers, who are doing academic writing, need to convince and influence their readers. The writers need to state their claims with accuracy by using a tool namely hedging. Hedging as one of the features is analyzed in this study. According to Hyland (1994) hedging implies being less than fully committed to the certainty of the referential information given. This study examined the use of hedging in the introduction of theses written by linguistics' students in 2007. Fifteen theses were taken as the sample of this study. In analyzing hedging devices, this study uses Hyland's theory on hedging (1994). The study found four categories of hedging devices occurred in samples: modal lexical verbs, modal auxiliary verbs, adverbial & adjectival and modal nouns. Of the four categories, modal auxiliary verbs most frequently occur. In this category, the word *may* is most frequently used by linguistics' students. The modal auxiliary verbs have two functions: to express probability and to show tentativeness. There are several reasons for the dominant occurrences of modal auxiliary verbs. First, they are placed in the introduction section used to refer to others' opinions. There are 13 theses that use this category in the background of the study, indicating that they are reviewing and referring to the previous work. Second, the speaking attitudes seem to influence the students while they are writing. Third, as non-native writers of English, the students seem to have limited choice of hedging devices. Through this study, the writer hopes that students become aware of the use of hedging devices since they are essential in their academic writing.

Keywords: hedging devices, academic writing, modal lexical verbs, modal auxiliary verbs, adverbial & adjectival, modal nouns

CHAPTER INTRODUCTION