

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem of study, the objective, the scope and limitation, the significance, and definition of key terms.

### A. Background of Study

Academic writing is one of the expressions of the language that the humans use to share the humans' ideas and also academic writing is about the evaluation patterns that deal writers to demonstrate the ideas and knowledge, then the writers should express the writing with the certain disciplinary skills of thinking, interpreting, and presenting.<sup>1</sup> The academic writing is usually used for writing something formal, like theses report, the research report, article and others. It is because academic writing is used for interpreting the writers' interpretations.<sup>2</sup>

The writing product of academic writing has many varieties. They are scientific article, thesis, paper, and other writing product.<sup>3</sup> The writing product is actually the writers' ideas that are organized in good organization. So that, the main significance of academic writing is for sharing idea through the writing media that can be read by everyone wherever and

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<sup>1</sup> Irvin, L. Lennie. What is Academic Writing?. (United States of America: Parlor Press, 2010), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Janne Morton, Neomy Storch, and Celia Thompson, "Students' Accounts of Their First Year Undergraduate Academic Writing Experience: Implication of The Use of The CEFR," *Language Assessment Quarterly*, no. 15 (2018): 16-28.

whenever. The writing product can be easy to understand or sometimes difficult to understand. It happens because there are several factors that the writers must face, for instance the writer's way of writing, apart from the writer's ways of writing, the topic that the writer should deal, etc.

In Indonesia tertiary education, one of the requirements for the degree is by submitting a research report. It can be bachelor degree, master degree, and doctoral degree. In this case, the university students will complete the study by finishing the research report. It can be the undergraduate thesis, post-graduate thesis, doctoral thesis. It depends on the degree that the student concerns. The topics and objects that the writers concern is different for each thesis, depending on the students' major and interest. It can be defined that these theses have different language features, explanations flows, vocabularies, and claims that the writers state in their theses. The distinguishable ones that were got from the writer will affect the certainty or uncertainty about the writer's product in writing. It is called hedges and boosters on the writing research reports. On the other hand, this process of writing research reports can be defined as writers' claims in explaining what the writers serve. On the other hand, the hedges and boosters that were found in writing product can be defined as the writer's claims in writing process.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, writing can be seen as good or not from the writers' claims in the theses because claims can bring the reader into the writers' main point

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<sup>4</sup> Ken Hyland, "Academic Attribution: Citation and the Construction of Disciplinary knowledge." *Applied Linguistics* 20, no. 3 (1999): 341-367.

about the specific idea.<sup>5</sup> This one is one of the goals of using hedges and boosters in any writings, especially writing research reports. In specific, hedges are the uncertainty that the writers have in stating the statements of the ideas. While, boosters are about the certainty of the writers in mentioning the ideas of the research report.<sup>6</sup> For the good writing product should have those ones, hedges and boosters because express the writers' claims into the statements that the writers have. These ones are really important, in order to be easily for the readers to understand the meaning of the writing product, theses.

Hedges and boosters are from the relationship between the writers' statements and the language that is used in writing the research report. In this case, the writing product can be easily understood by other about the main point of the explanation, idea, etc. It is can be got if the writer provides hedges and boosters inside the writing product.<sup>7</sup>

Then, the researcher assumes that there will be many beneficial to conduct this present study because the Indonesian EFL learners can learn how to make our research report with hedges and boosters in stating the ideas. Then, the researcher believes that Indonesian EFL learners have hedges and boosters inside their research reports needs to be encouraged more about the forms, the way to use hedges and boosters, the similarities and differences among the Indonesian EFL research reports.

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<sup>5</sup> Ken Hyland, "Stance and Engagement: A Model of Interaction in Academic Discourse," *Discourse Studies* 7, no. 2 (2005): 173-191.

<sup>6</sup> Ken Hyland, "Hedges, Boosters, and Lexical Invisibility: Noticing Modifiers in Academic Texts," *Language Awareness* 9, no. 4 (2010): 179-197.

<sup>7</sup> Hyland, *Stance and Engagement.*, 173-191.

In this case, The researcher defines that the backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners are in graduate, post-graduate, and doctoral theses become the main data of this study. The researcher chooses background to be conducted the research of hedges and boosters because the background of study are always different than other research reports, even there are some similar study, but the background of study is always different. It is because background is about the writers' sides in writing the research, why the researcher conducts that research, etc.

Beside that reason, why the researcher of this present study chooses the backgrounds of studies become the main data of the research because most of the previous studies that the researcher found are about the writing product in essay, spoken and written are produced in L1 and L2. In this case, the researcher chooses backgrounds of undergraduate, post-graduate, and doctoral theses as the object of this present study. These are the main different than previous studies that had already conducted. Then, the main data of present study show about the level of studies in Indonesia that are needed for several people to know how about the writers can wrote them in some levels of education in university.

**B. The Problem of Study**

Based on the background of the study above, the research problems are;

1. What are the words or phrases of hedges and intensifiers that are used in the research report backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners?
2. What is the meaning or function of hedges and intensifiers that are used in the research report backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners?
3. What are the similarities and differences of hedges and intensifiers that are used among the research report backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners?

**C. The Objective**

1. To know the words or phrases of the hedges and intensifiers that are used in the research report backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners.
2. To understand the meaning or function of hedges and intensifiers that are applied in the research report backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners.
3. To find the similarities and differences of hedges and intensifiers that are used among research report backgrounds of Indonesian EFL learners.

#### **D. The Scope and Limitation**

The research focuses on finding out the hedges and intensifiers in the section of the background of study of Indonesian EFL learners' undergraduate, post-graduate, and doctoral theses. The researcher does not use the whole research reports, but only the background of the study sections that the researcher uses. It is because the background of study shows about the writers' claims in the research report and the background becomes the bridge between the writers and the readers to understand the research reports.

#### **E. The Significance**

This study about hedges and intensifiers in undergraduate, post-graduate, and doctoral theses has some significance as follows:

1. The learners

The hedges and intensifiers conducted in this study are needed for the English learners, especially for the students who concern with the linguistic research. It is because hedges and boosters can be found even in writing or spoken English, but it is commonly found in any writing products. The learners can use the result of the present study as one of the reference. It is because the learners can learn how to write well by using hedges and intensifiers.

2. The next researcher

The hedges and intensifiers can be applied in any writing products and any variations. So, the next researcher can use this present study as one of the references. It is because hedges and intensifiers are found widely in any research. So, the next researcher can modify as the studies that will be conducted.

3. The English teacher

The English teacher of writing skill also needs the information about hedges and intensifiers, because the writing skill needs some points of certainty and uncertainty in writing Something. It can be the references for the teacher to teach writing skill.

## F. Previous Studies

This present study is based on the previous studies that follow the previous researchers' recommendations. Three previous studies that were conducting hedges and intensifiers are as follows:

No	Title	Writers	Source	Publication Date	Finding	Relation
1	A Corpus-Based Comparison of Albanian and Italian Student Writing in L1 and English as L2: Hedges and Boosters as Modularizati	Vincenzo Dheskali	Academia.edu	February, 2020	This research was conducted to investigate the usage of hedges and boosters that were used in Italian and Albanian student academic writing in their L1 and L2.	The usage of hedges and boosters in more than fields.

	on by Degree				Then, the result stated that the hedges were favored by Albanians and boosters were favored by Italians.	
2	Hedges and Boosters: L1 and L2 Speakers' Comprehension and Production	Minsun Lee	Askalinguis t.org	May, 2020	The study results showed that native and non-native speakers generally had similar perceptive patterns besides some exceptional cases. It means that bot of them will deal with the hedges and boosters, but they have different perceptions to use hedges and boosters	In what terms hedges and boosters are used in several fields
3.	Hedges and Boosters in US College Application Essays: A Corpus-Based Comparative Study Between US Middle and US Top College Application Essays	Miss Chonlagarn Incharoensak	Ethesisarch iver library.t u.ac.th	January, 2019	US middle class frequently used hedges in their expressions than US top colleges. Unlike boosters, both of them used to give the certain markers	The usage of hedges and booster in any fields

All of the previous studies are from abroad and the previous researchers gave some recommendations to the next researchers that the



studies need more experiences. It is because the students of university have different point of views, so they will show their hedges and boosters/ intensifiers in different ways. It means hedges and boosters/ intensifiers have different characteristic in each student. In this case, the study of hedges and boosters/ intensifiers is still needed because they are important in academic writing.

#### **G. Definition of Key Terms**

To make the readers easy to understand this present study, the researcher has some important points, as follows:

##### **1. Hedges**

Hyland (1998) defined hedges as the expressions of tentativeness that reflect uncertainty.<sup>8</sup> Then, it proposed that writers' attitudes toward various statements can be shown through the use of hedges. This term is usually used in some cases, such as the writers' doubt about the statement that the writers' state, the writers' judgment about statements that need to be studied more, the writers' position that is in balanced statement because the writers do not want to get judgment from the readers.

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<sup>8</sup> Ken Hyland, *Hedging in Scientific Research Articles* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1998), 1-10.

## 2. Boosters/intensifiers

Holmes (1984) defined a booster as a device that expresses “degrees of commitment or seriousness of intention”.<sup>9</sup> Something that the writer believes will be written by boosters. It is because boosters have function to strengthen the statements that the writers’ beliefs. It is not only about the emphasis but also about how the writers believe about the true of the statements that the writers have. In this case, boosters and intensifiers are the same but Eli Hinkel (2005) stated that the writers’ claim about the certainty is mentioned as the intensifiers.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Janet Holmes, "Hedging Your Bets and Sitting on the Fence: Some Evidence for Hedges as Support Structure," *Te Reo* 27, no. 1 (1984): 47-62.

<sup>10</sup> Eli Hinkel, "Hedging, Inflating, and Persuading in 12 Academic Writing". *Applied Language Learning*. No. 15 (2005): 29-53