

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with definition of hedges and intensifiers, hedges and intensifiers in academic use, category of hedges and intensifiers, and hedges and intensifiers in academic writing.

A. Definition of Hedges and Intensifiers

The writing product should have something different among another. Hedges and intensifiers played important roles in writing. In this case, there is different in stating the word to height or strength the statement in writing product. They are boosters and intensifiers have similar meaning in giving the claims of writers' statements.¹¹ Holmes states hedges and boosters are about the expression of doubt and certainty that are written in writing product. It is related with the statement is written by Holmes on *Doubt and Certainty in ESL textbooks* about hedges and boosters expression that are usually used in written and spoken corpuses.¹²

Salager-Meyer stated the hedges devices are really different with boosters. It is about the emotionally statements that the writers show to the others through the written media, such as the flow of writing, the

¹¹ ,Imraatu Salichach & Enny Irawati & Yazid Basthomi, “ ...

¹² Janet Holmes, "Doubt and Certainty in ESL Textbooks," *Applied Linguistics* 9, no. 1 (1988): 21-44.

vocabularies , and the emphasize of statements.¹³ It is little bit different in Crompton's statement, the hedges expressions are only found in academic writing only because hedges are about the doubt of writer in stating the statements.¹⁴ Meanwhile, Hedges are about the words that have meaning to shield the claims for the meaning that is not really believed. Then, intensifiers are the words that are used in writing the academic writing product to strengthen the claims that the writers use.¹⁵

However, the importance of hedges and boosters usage was underlined by Hyland in his researches. They are about the hedges and boosters that were used in academic writing to create the rhetorical and interactivity. The significance of the use of hedges and boosters was made clear by Hyland in his research which discovered that hedges and boosters were used in academic writing to ultimately realize rhetorical and interactive part in writing product.¹⁶ Based on Hyland researches, hedges and boosters have some main usages, such as to balance the writers' main points, to reflect the writers ideas whether the writers' confidence or the writers' doubt about the statements, to make the claims from the writers about the statement that the writers want to share the opinions or explanation to the readers.¹⁷

¹³ Françoise Salager Meyer, "Language is Not a Physical Object," *English for Specific Purposes* 17, no. 3 (1998): 295-302.

¹⁴ Peter Crompton, "Hedging in Academic Writing: Some Theoretical Problems," *English for Specific Purpose* 16, no. 4 (1997): 271-287.

¹⁵ Eli Hinkel, "Hedging, Inflating, and Persuading in L2 Academic Writing", *Applied Language Learning*, 15, (2005): 29-53.

¹⁶ Ken Hyland, "Boosting, Hedging and The Negotiation of Academic Knowledge," *Interdisciplinary Journal for The Study of Discourse* 18, no. 3 (1998): 349-382.

¹⁷ Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (London: Continuum, 2005).

B. The Usage of Hedges and Intensifiers

Hedges and intensifiers are not about linguistic forms and do not have a clear definition based on linguistic characteristics, but based on Lakoff's statement that understanding hedges and intensifiers in a clear description of linguistic features, there are several languages that hedges and boosters do, such as English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, and Bulgarian.¹⁸ Even hedges and boosters are challenging to define. Lakoff stated that hedges are used to express writers' doubt of what is written, while boosters are used to show the writers' believe that the written statement is true.¹⁹

Brown and Levinson refer to hedging as a strategy for minimizing face threats because they base their research on hedging differently on speech act theory.²⁰ Similar to Brown and Levinson's theory, Myers proposes the politeness strategy as another perspective to explain hedging concepts. Myers' further explanation is hedging as a signal to indicate social distance and power differences found in particularly in academic writing. While some authors claim a body of theoretical knowledge, other peer researchers in the same field may perceive this as a face threat or a face-threatening action.²¹

Salager and Meyer view hedges as a textual device for adjusting

¹⁸ George Lakoff, "Hedges: A Study of in Meaning Criteria and The Logic of Fuzzy Concepts," *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 1972: 183-228.

¹⁹ George Lakoff, "Hedges: A Study of in Meaning Criteria and The Logic of Fuzzy Concepts," *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 2 (1973): 458-508.

²⁰ Penelope Brown, and Stephen C Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

²¹ Greg Myers, "The Pragmatics of Politeness in Scientific Articles," *Applied Linguistics* 10, no. 1 (1989): 1-35.

propositions to match the shared knowledge between writers and readers more precisely.²² This claim is used to make adjustments in the proposition to satisfy the shared knowledge assumed by the author and meet the expectations of the intended readers.²³ Skelton also states that hedges are a linguistic source used to convey uncertainty and doubt.²⁴ However, it is considered one of the essential linguistic tools for understatement regarding this view of hedging. Hedging is not only used to make things blurry but also to make claims more precise.

Hyland defines a hedge as a tentative expression that reflects uncertainty. Hedges are also called as polypragmatic by Hyland because hedging can interpret their meanings differently depending on the context. Meanwhile, Halliday proposed that the author's attitude towards various statements be demonstrated through hedging.²⁵ Overall, there are various views on hedging that are based on different theoretical assumptions. For example, Salager-Meyer argues that hedging is seen as "inherent culture" to language and that it is, in fact, a "mental phenomenon."²⁶ In a similar vein, Hyland (1994) views that hedging does not assume an objective or precise form; instead, hedging can express it in different forms.

Meanwhile, Holmes defines a booster as a tool that expresses the

²² Francoise Salager Meyer, "Hedges and Textual Communicative Function in Medical English Written Discourse," *English for Specific Purposes* 13, no. 2 (1994): 149-170.

²³ P Rounds, *Hedging in written academic discourse: Precision and flexibility* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1982).

²⁴ J Skelton, "Comments in Academic Articles," In P. Grunwell (ed), *Applied Linguistics in Society: British Studies in Applied Linguistics* 3, (1988): 98-108. London: Centre for International Language.

²⁵ Hyland, *Boosting Hedging.*, 349-382.

²⁶ Meyer, *Language.*, 295-302.

degree of commitment or seriousness of intention. In addition, the booster is a communicative strategy to increase the strength of the statement. Finally, the booster emphasizes certainty and strengthens commitment to claims.²⁷

In addition, boosters are used to express various meanings related to solidarity, evident or implicit truth, and accepted fact, which also depends on the interpretation of the context.²⁸ In particular, Skelton argues that boosters are needed to justify the evident or implicit truth of the author's claim. For example, verbs such as *show*, *find*, and *found* are used to claim that the truth in a proposition is proof, especially by basing it on research results, not just a judgmental claim.²⁹ Following Hunston, verbs such as *show*, *establish*, and *demonstrate* were used as boosters to show certainty, as evidenced by data, rather than being influenced by the author's persuasive skills.³⁰

In the same way that it is used to justify the truth of proof or implicit, the booster uses reinforcement to verify the accepted validity. Hyland argues that devices such as *will*, *must*, and *clearly* convey accepted truth because they underestimate the author's involvement in the truth proposition, implying that the author's claims or statements are widely acknowledged or generally accepted by readers. This reinforce can also be

²⁷ Janet Holmes, "Modifying Illocutionary Force," *Journal of Pragmatics* 8, no. 3 (1984): 345-365.

²⁸ Janet Holmes, *Women, Men and Politeness* (London: Longman, 1995).

²⁹ John Skelton, "The Representation of Truth in Academic Medical Writing," *Applied Linguistics* 18, no. 2 (1997): 121-140.

³⁰ Susan Hunston, *Professional Conflict-Disagreement in Academic Discourse* (Philadelphia: Benjamin, 1993).

called a solidarity reinforce because it states that it is a well-known fact.³¹ Likewise, by using a booster for accepted truth or expressions of solidarity, it can be implied that further explanation of the main points in the actual proposition is not necessary because this necessary understanding or basis is already shared among the target audience of the discipline.³²

In reviewing various definitions of the booster, context is essential in booster research. This is because boosters and hedges can also express different meanings when assuming other forms and functions.³³ Furthermore, the significance of context shows that each context in a sentence can determine a different position of the same reinforcing structure.

C. The Forms and The Functions of Hedges and Intensifiers/Boosters

Hedges and boosters that are found in any writing product have different forms for each expert. For the general one, hedges are about the words or phrases that are usually used in giving shield in any words, phrase, or sentences if the writers are not confident enough about the claims. Meanwhile, boosters or intensifiers are about the words or phrases that are functioned as the strength the meaning or claims that the writers state in the explanation of writing product. Here are the forms of hedges and boosters and the functions of hedges and boosters based on some experts;

³¹ Irena Vassileva, "Commitment and Detachment in English and Bulgarian Academic Writing," *English for Specific Purposes* 20, no. 1 (2001): 83-102.

³² Myers, *The Pragmatics.*, 1-35.

³³ Meyer, *Hedges and Textual.*, 149-170.

The first expert is Coates (1983) that he stated several hedges and boosters in any forms as follow;

1. The forms of hedges and boosters can be as the modal auxiliary, as follow:

a. Will/Would

It is about the possibility that the researcher's judgment about the expression that the researcher has in the research report. It means the researcher has the strong belief about the thing that the researcher writes in the research report. It is usually used in boosters of the expression. E.g., this research **will** be useful for the next studies, so the next researcher can use this present study as one of the reference.

b. Can/Could

It is one of the modal verb that means about the strength of expression that the researcher's expressions about the fields. It is similar with *will/would*, but *can/could* can be more strength than *will* and *would* of modal auxiliary. E.g., this one **can** give big contribution of the next studies.

c. Should

It refers to the future events/impacts. E.g, it **should** be the best solution for the further studies.

d. May/Might

It is about the degree of possibilities of the researcher's statements of the research reports. It is about the boosters of the statements that can

make the researchers' research report as the strong statement. E.g., absolutely, it **may** be as the complex statement of the research report.

e. Must

It is about the high degree of possibility of the research statements. It indicates that the researcher really believe about the researcher has in that statement. The example of **must** is I found something freak, it must be known what the problems are.

2. The forms of hedges and boosters can also be in the form of verbs;

a. Non-factive reporting verbs

It is about the verbs that are mainly used in making claims of the researcher's statements. It can be proved as the word, *argues*.

b. Cognition verbs

This type of hedges and boosters are in verb are about the mental status or mental processes of the writers' opinions or the statements. It can be as *assume*.

c. Linking verbs

The linking verbs generally refer to the expression of tentativeness and most of them, therefore, are tentative or hedging verbs, including *seem, appear, tend*.

3. Hedges and boosters, can also be in the form of adverbs;

a. Adverbs of indefinite degree

This type of hedges and boosters are in the writers' subjective assessment through the propositional content, etc. It can be *somewhat*

b. Adverbs of indefinite frequency

It is commonly used in making the categorical assertion without full commitment, or it can be as estimations but without the good precisions. The example is the word *often*.

c. Certainty/doubt adverbs

It is usually used in expressing the modality of the statements and it is used to convey the writers' degree of certainty or doubt. In this case, the example is *presumably*.

d. Evidence adverbs

It is used for giving the emphasize of the statements from the writers' explanation in the research reports. The example of evidence adverbs is *obviously*.

e. Approximation adverbs

This type is usually found in the hedges type that has the categorical of modifying the writers' accuracy of the data that are less exact. The example can be *nearly*.

4. The following forms of hedges and boosters are about the adjective

a. Probability adjectives

The probability adjective is used to give the emphasise of the probability or certainty of the writers' proportions in research report or writing product. For instance, *possible*.

b. Adjectives or indefinite degree

The adjective of indefinite degree enables writers to make claims with the appropriate degree of certainty or accuracy. The example is *significantly*.

c. Adjective of indefinite frequency

The adjective of indefinite frequency are used when the tentative assessment or generalization is sufficient for justifying the numerical data. The example is usual.

5. The following form of hedges and boosters is about nouns

a. Tentative cognition nouns

This form is usually found in hedges, it refers to mental form that deals with the ideas, beliefs about the proposed information. The word *belief* can be as the example of this characteristics.

b. Tentative likelihood nouns

It deals with the possibility of the subject matter in the proposed information. For instance, *possibility*.

c. Non-factive assertive nouns

It has functions to emphasize the claims which have been validated yet. The word of non factive assertive is proposition.

Here are the samples of hedges and boosters that are based on the theory of Ken Hyland (1998) that usually found in the academic writing.

HEDGES	BOOSTERS
May	Will
Would	The fact that
Possible(ly)	Show (that)

Could	It is clear/clearly
Might	Actually
Suggest	Indeed
Indicate	Always
Seem	Obvious(ly)
Assume	Of course
Etc.	Indicate
	Suggesting
	Etc.

Therefore, Eli Hinkel in 2005 mentioned that there are 6 forms and functions of hedges and there are 3 forms and functions of intensifiers.³⁴

1. Epistemic hedges

Epistemic hedges are functioned to represent the largest classes of explaining the claims of the writers and it is used for softening the devices of the writers' claims in the statements. It can be formed as adjective and adverb. For example, *According to*, *actually*, *apparent(ly)*, *normal(ly)*, *approximate(ly)*, *broad(ly)*, *clear(ly)*, *comparative(ly)*, *essential(ly)*, *indeed*, *likely*, *most (+adjective)*, *potential(ly)*, *probable(ly)*, *rare(ly)*, *somehow*, *somewhat*, *theoretically*, *the/possessive pronoun very (+superlative adjective + noun)*, *unlikely*.

2. Lexical Hedges

The function of lexical hedges is almost the same as epistemic hedges, but it is different in the form of the word. The word is formed as the lexical word, not phrase. The example of lexical hedges are *(at) about*, *(a) few*, *in a way*, *kind of*, *(a) little + noun*, *maybe*, *like*, *many*, *more or less*, *more*, *most*, *much*, *several*, *something like*, *sort of*.

³⁴ Eli Hinkel, "Hedging, Inflating, and Persuading in L2 Academic Writing", *Applied Language Learning*, 15, (2005): 29-53

3. Possibility hedges

Possibility hedges are about the hedges that are used in giving the meaning of probability or the judgment. The probability or judgment are written by the writer of the claims. The possibility hedges are *by (some/any) chance, hopefully, perhaps, possible, possibly, in (the) case (of), if you/we know/understand (what [pronoun] mean(s)), if you catch/get/understand my meaning/drift, if you know what I mean (to say).*

4. Downtoners

The purposes of downtoners are to restrict the meanings and reduce the qualitative and emotive implications of verbs, adjectives, and abstract nouns. The words of downtoners are *at all, a bit, all but, a good/great deal, almost, as good/well as, at least, barely, basically, dead (+ adjective), enough, fairly, (a) few, hardly, in the least/ slightest, just, (a) little (+adjective), merely, mildly, nearly, not a (+countable noun, e.g., thing/person), only, partly, partially, practically, pretty (+adjective), quite (+adjective), rather, relatively, scarcely, simply, slightly, somewhat, sufficiently, truly, virtually.*

5. Assertive Pronouns

It modifies the meaning of the nouns or noun phrases that will give whether positive or negative presuppositions. The words are *any-* words (*anybody, anyone, anything*), *any*, *some-* pronominals (*somebody, someone, something*), *some*.

6. Adverbs of Frequency

It is usually found in spoken or written text, and it focuses on the adverbs that the writers use in giving the claims. The adverbs give the meaning as the hedges. The words and the phrases of adverbs of frequency are *annually, daily, frequently, monthly, per day/hour/year occasionally, often, oftentimes, seldom, sometimes, sporadically, regularly, usually, weekly*. For example, *Parents who work all day usually spoil their children because they hope that money will cover up their guilt. Children seldom want money instead of their parents.*

Here are the intensifiers that Eli Hinkel stated in 2005. The intensifiers here are like the hyperbole that allows the writer to make a point of the meaning of the sentences. The forms and meaning of the intensifiers as follow;

1. Universal and negative pronouns

This kind of intensifiers is used as marking exaggerative and marking the extremes of the continuum of meanings expressed by indefinite pronouns. The examples are *all, each, every-* pronominal (*everybody, everyone, everything*), *every, none, no one, nothing*.

2. Amplifiers

It is usually formed as the adjectives or verbs that heighten the scalar lexical intensity. The words or phrases are *absolutely, a lot* (+ comparative adjective), *altogether, always, amazingly, awfully, badly, by all means, completely, definitely, deeply, downright, forever,*

enormously, entirely, even (+adjective/noun), *ever, extremely, far* (+ comparative adjective), *far from it, fully, greatly, highly, hugely, in all/every respect(s)/way(s), much* (+adjective), *never, not half bad, positively, perfectly, severely, so* (+adjective/verb), *sharply, strongly, too* (+ adjective), *terribly, totally, unbelievably, very, very much, well.*

3. Emphatics

In text, the purpose of emphatics is similar to that of amplifiers and has the effect of reinforcing the truth-value of a proposition or claim or the strength of the writer's conviction. The words or phrases are *a lot* (+ noun/adjective), *certain(-ly), clear(-ly), complete, definite, exact(-ly), extreme, for sure, great, indeed, no way, outright, pure(-ly), real(-ly), such a* (+ noun), *strong, sure(-ly), total.*

D. The Function of Hedges and Boosters

The function of hedges and boosters are as several theories below; the first theory is stated by Salager-Meyer (1994).

1. Shields

It consists of all modal verbs that express about possibility, semi auxiliaries, and verbs that show about probabilities in the future. The forms of the functions are *may, might, to appear to seem, to suggest, to speculate, probably, likely.*

2. Approximators

It consists of adjectives and rounders of quantity, degree, frequency and time that express something is not really strong. The forms of the functions are *approximately, roughly, somewhat, quite, often*.

3. Personal doubt and direct involvement

It is about the writers' personal doubt. The forms of the functions are *I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that...*

4. Emotionally-charged intensifiers

It is about the comment words used to project the writers' reactions. The forms of the functions can be *extremely difficult/interesting, of particular importance, unexpectedly, surprisingly*.

5. Compound Hedges

It is the doubt that the writers have in the writing the statement that the writers do not know yet for the real result in the next. It can be *it could be suggested that, it would be seem likely that, it would seem somewhat unlikely that*.

On the other hand, Hyland (1996) stated that hedges have two functions. They are content-oriented hedges, and reader-oriented hedges. In this case, content-oriented hedges has some parts; accuracy-oriented hedges (attribute hedges and reliability hedges), writer-oriented hedges.

1. Content- oriented hedges

This one is about one of the function of hedges, it means that the claims has characteristic that they are still in uncertain things of the claims, but

it is only based on the writers' reasoning. Here, there are two kinds of functions:

a. Accuracy-oriented hedges

It is focused on the precision of the writers' statements that the writers want to state in the complete explanation. It is usually used for making inference or evaluation of the factual statements.

a) Attribute hedges

This function of hedge is for making sure that the sentence is really accurate of the propositions. The examples of this function are *about, approximately, partially, generally, quite*.

b) Reliability hedges

This function is to make the subjective judgment of the possibility statements from the writers.

b. Writer-oriented hedges

This function is only focus on the proposition of the statement, it means that the writers will give the precision of the statement that the writers have in the explanation. The example: *These data indicate*.

2. Reader-oriented hedges

This process to deal the hedges in the condition of the writers' awareness of their readers of the explanation that the writers wrote in research reports. It is also one of the devices that can be used as the persuasion and invitation to the readers to participate about what the writers already wrote in the research reports.