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Use of hedges and boosters by undergraduate Turkish ELT students

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Abstract

Hedges and boosters are important indicators of writer's proficiency. Hedges are typically defined as acting uncertainly, politely, and indirectly, while boosters are typically used to show a degree of certainty in statements. The study aims to examine the use of hedges and boosters by analyzing a sample of first-year Turkish ELT students' paragraphs. A mixed method was employed in this research. For quantitative analysis, the frequency and percentage of hedges and boosters in paragraphs were calculated, and Hyland's (1998a) classification of hedges and boosters was used, while for qualitative analysis, form-based categorization of hedges and boosters was analyzed, and the same table that was categorized according to their part of speech was used. Findings indicated that the number of boosters was nearly three times greater than the number of hedges. May is the most frequently used hedge, while "should" is the most commonly used booster in the paragraphs. Noun categories were not used in both hedges and boosters.

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INTRODUCTION

Language has different roles in life. One of them is communicating ideas in academia. This kind of communication can be done in either an oral or written context (Mazidah, Cahyani & Masrurroh, 2022). Written communication allows one to express oneself through the written word and to share one's knowledge effectively. Hence, developing writing skills helps students learn how to formulate, organize, and express their ideas, thoughts, and arguments (Jabbar, 2019).

Writing is an important skill for university students (Hyland, 2016; Fareed et al., 2016; Javed et al., 2013). For instance, writing a thesis is a requirement for graduation in fields such as engineering, economics, or graphic design (Luyun, 2024; Mazidah, Cahyani, & Masrurroh, 2022). Undergraduate programs include courses to help students write their theses such as writing and academic writing, especially in the first or second year of their program. Writing is also important to education programs such as English Language Teaching (ELT) (Fareed et al., 2016; Rao, 2017). However, ELT students do not require a thesis for graduation in Türkiye; however, writing skills are still crucial for ELT students because they are future teachers who could teach how to write; they could write textbooks for writing skills, or maybe they could write research articles about writing (Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990). They mostly start to take writing lessons in their first year (Yaman, 2018). One such course is titled Writing Skills. In this lesson, students learn how to write a paragraph and an essay, as well as analyze articles (Yaman, 2018).

Metadiscourse is one of the essential rhetorical features in any written production (Chambliss & Garner, 1996; Hyland, 1996). Initially introduced by linguist Zelig Harris in 1959 to understand the use of language and to guide a receiver's perception of a text. According to Hyland (2017), metadiscourse refers to the use of language to manage our interactions with readers, based on how we help them understand what we are saying. Hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions are the categories of metadiscourse markers. Hedges and boosters are communication techniques that indicate the writer's level of certainty in a proposition's accuracy and their attitude towards it. (Hyland 2004). In other words, they make the statements more or less persuasive (Akman & Karahan, 2023).

In brief, hedges can often be defined as acting hesitantly, uncertainly, politely, and indirectly. In contrast, the communication technique known as "boosters" involves using phrases like "obviously" and "of course" to convey a strong commitment to statements. (Jabbar 2019). In this study, the focus is on how first-year ELT students use hedging and boosters in paragraphs they wrote for the Writing I class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is a well-known fact that when any piece of discourse is written, the purpose is to convey the thoughts of the writer to the reader. In this way, the author's feelings, thoughts, desires, and hesitations are understood by the reader. With the help of hedges and boosters, it is possible to see where the writer is confidently asserting certainty or hesitating about certainty. Hedges and boosters comprise two essential components of writer-reader and author-researcher engagement (Jabbar, 2019).

Hedge

Many authors have made many definitions of hedges. The term hedge was coined by Lakoff (1972). In his study, "A Study in Meaning Criteria and the Logic of Fuzzy Concepts" (as cited in Atmaca, 2016, p. 310), he defined the term as words or expressions that make meaning fuzzy or fuzzier. Lakoff (1975) asserted that hedges could be separated into two essential groups, which were to show the absence of certainty and to decrease the strength of a sentence to make it more acceptable. Beyer (2015) defines hedges as all the linguistic elements that show a kind of mitigation

or indecision. Likewise, Hyland (1998b) defines hedges as linguistic elements that a writer uses to suggest they are not fully committed to the accuracy of a claim or that they are unwilling to express that commitment clearly. Another definition is provided by Markkanen and Schröder (1997). They indicated that hedges had a textual manipulation feature, which kept the readers in the dark about the accuracy of the statement (Markkanen & Schröder, 1997). The reason why authors frequently employ hedges is to differentiate between assertions and facts. It creates interaction between the writer and the reader while reducing the degree of verbal power (Jabbar, 2019).

According to Prince et al. (1982), Leech (1983), and Markkanen and Schroder (1997), as cited in Jabbar (2019), hedges can be categorized into 10 functions based on their forms and the roles that they play.

Figure 1: Function of Hedges



Boosters

Like hedges, there are many definitions of a booster by many authors. Holmes (1982) and Meyer (1997) defined it as a high level of confidence demonstrated by the author in their claim. Hyland (1998b) supports this definition, and he also noted that these tools strengthen the assertion and demonstrate the writer's commitment, thereby supporting these definitions. They enable authors to express confidence in their statements and demonstrate a deep understanding of the subject (Hyland, 2005). According to Hyland (as cited in Jabbar, 2019), there are six reasons that authors employ boosters in their writing: to earn respectability and recognition for their accomplishments, to convince readers that their assertions are sound, to turn assertions into information, to galvanize support, to express collegiality, to stay away from disagreement, and to demonstrate that their findings are accurate.

Previous studies

Numerous research articles have been conducted on the use of hedges and boosters in various contexts, disciplines, and cultures, as well as across different languages. Because hedges and

boosters influence the interaction between writers and readers in academic texts, they have become an essential topic to investigate in the academic world (Akman & Karahan, 2023). In Türkiye, numerous studies have been conducted on the use of hedges and boosters in academic writing, including research articles, master's theses, and PhD dissertations (Atmaca, 2016; Akman & Karahan, 2023; Güçlü, 2024; Taymaz, 2021). However, these studies focus on experienced and advanced writers and do not include the performance of novice writers, such as undergraduate students. Undergraduate ELT students are at the early stage of their academic writing development; therefore, their use of hedges and boosters may differ. Thus, it is essential to examine the writing of first-year ELT students to understand how academic writing skills develop in the Turkish context.

In other L2 contexts, there are examples of undergraduate students using hedges and boosters. Alward, Mooi, and Bidin (2012) and Huh, Myung-Hye, and Lee, Inhwan (2016) used persuasive essays as the genre for their research. A persuasive essay for their research. The first study focused on Yemeni EFL students, while the latter focused on Korean EFL students. However, Kang (2017) used argumentative essays from Korean EFL undergraduate students, which were part of a comparative study that compared essays from L1 and L2 students. This study also focused on undergraduate students, but the analysis was made from classification essays written by first-year ELT students.

This study aims to reveal the tendency and preference of first-year Turkish ELT students in the use of hedging and boosters in classification. The study focused on three essential questions.

1. Do all of the hedges and boosters exist in exam papers?
2. Among the hedges and boosters, which is the most frequently used one?
3. Under the category of hedges and boosters, which words are the most common ones?

METHODOLOGY

The study employs a corpus-based approach to analyze the frequency of hedges and boosters and to categorize them by form in paragraphs written by first-year ELT students. The study was conducted at Pamukkale University, a state university in Türkiye, during the fall semester of the 2024–2025 academic year. A corpus-based approach was selected because it allows for analyzing both quantitative elements, such as frequency analysis, and qualitative aspects, including form-based categorization. This also provides a systematic and comprehensive way of examining how first-year ELT students use hedges and boosters in their academic writing.

Research Design

A mixed method was employed to address these study questions. Mixed-method research employs the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of an issue (Creswell, 2005). Johnson et al. (2007) define mixed-methods research as a study where a researcher integrates components of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to achieve both depth and breadth of insight and validation.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches are used in the study. Quantitative methods were used for frequency analyses of hedges and boosters found in the exam papers. Hyland's (1998a) classification of hedges and boosters was employed (Appendix A). On the other hand, qualitative methods were used to identify hedges and boosters in context and identify their form-based categorization. Hedges and boosters in Hyland's (1998a) classification were categorized into their form-based categorization (Appendix B).

Participants

The study involved 40 first-year ELT students whose proficiency level ranged from intermediate to upper-intermediate (B1–B2 levels based on the CEFR scale). They took the Writing 1 class during the fall semester of the 2024–2025 academic year. Students were randomly selected for this research. Students were asked to write an explanatory paragraph between 50 and 300 words. For the topic, students were given two options. They would either write about how to lose weight or the qualities of good language learners. As students selected the topic, it is acknowledged that topic choice was a possible factor that could have influenced their rhetorical choices.

Identifying boosters and hedges

The paragraphs were collected from participants and analysed manually, rather than depending on a specific set of lexical items. The reason for this is that a lexical item's one form may serve distinct purposes depending on the situation. The following sample sentences from paragraphs are proof of this to this point:

- (1a) If you've less calories than you need at the end of day, you will start to lose weight.
- (1b) Losing weight is a process that needs patience, consistency and will.
- (1c) By helping them, you are practicing your speaking skills, and maybe you will have a friend.

The word will in (1a) will be used as a booster expression that strengthens the statement. Despite the identical form, the word 'will' in (1b) will be used as a noun, which means that losing weight requires dedication. In (1c), it indicates a possibility rather than a strong assertion. To avoid certainty, the word maybe, which is a hedge, was used.

Another reason is the word however. It is used under both hedges and boosters. To classify it in the sentence, a manual check is required.

- (2) How to create caloric deficit, however, depends on personal preference.

It signals that the method of creating a calorie deficit is not universally fixed but varies based on individual preferences. It softens the assertion by emphasizing variability.

Procedure of data collection

Students were instructed to compose a 50–300-word explanatory paragraph. Students were provided with options for a theme. They would either discuss how to lose weight or the characteristics of good language learners. Afterward, the paragraphs were collected, then hedges and boosters were identified, categorized, and analysed manually in terms of frequency and percentage per 100 words. For qualitative research, the form-based categorization of hedges and boosters was analysed. Hyland's (1998a) classification was categorized into seven subcategories: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, modals, conjunctions, and phrases. This part was also analysed manually. Although manual coding was chosen because it enabled a more context-sensitive analysis, it could bring some subjectivity and potential inconsistency. To prevent this, the data were checked multiple times with two different raters. Both raters read the data and reached consensus on the categorization of hedges and boosters according to Hyland's (1998a) framework. The collaborative coding procedure was intended to minimize subjectivity and increase consistency, although statistical inter-rater reliability was not calculated.

FINDINGS

Quantitative Analysis

The results were presented and explained in tables. First, an overall viewpoint of the distribution of hedges and boosters in the paragraphs was shown, presenting the word counts of

paragraphs, the number of hedges and boosters found in paragraphs, and the frequency and percentage of hedges and boosters.

The use of hedges and boosters was analyzed in 40 paragraphs written by first-year ELT students. The analysis identified 55 hedges and 140 boosters across 5,978 words. Hedges were identified in 28 out of 40, whilst boosters were found in 38 out of 40 paragraphs. No hedge or booster was identified in one paragraph (no. 27). The full table of hedge and booster frequency and percentages per paragraph was put in Appendix C.

Descriptive statistics, used to compare the overall usage of hedges and boosters across participants, are presented in Table 1. It shows the mean percentages, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum values.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Hedge and Booster Usage

Variable	Mean %	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Hedge	1,02	1,15	0,00	5,52
Booster	2,35	1,30	0,00	5,45

The result demonstrated that students employed boosters more frequently than hedges in their written paragraphs.

A Shapiro–Wilk normality test was used to determine whether parametric or non-parametric analysis should be conducted. The result indicated that hedges were not normally distributed ($p < .001$), while boosters followed a normal distribution ($p = .874$). Hence, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, which is a non-parametric test, was selected to compare the use of hedges and boosters.

The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a statistically significant difference between hedge and booster usage percentages ($Z = -4.097$, $p < .001$). This indicates that boosters were used significantly more frequently than hedges.

Table 2: Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Results

Comparison	Z	p-value	Interpretation
Hedge and Booster	-4,097	<.001	Significant difference

Qualitative Analysis

For a more detailed examination of the pragmatic use of hedges and boosters, manual analysis was conducted again. Figures 2 and 3 present the distribution of hedges and boosters into seven categories, used to determine form-based categorization.

Figure 2: Pie Charts Illustrating Form-based Categorization of Hedges

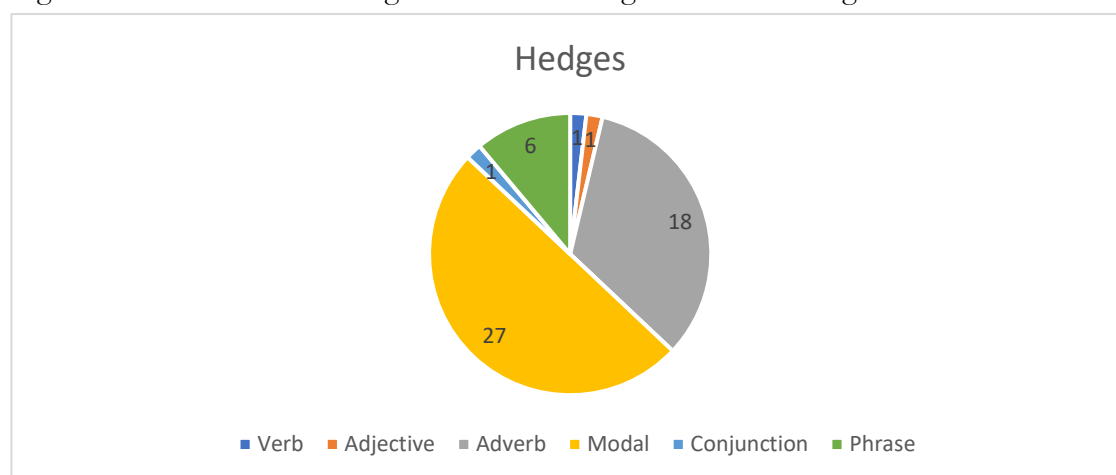
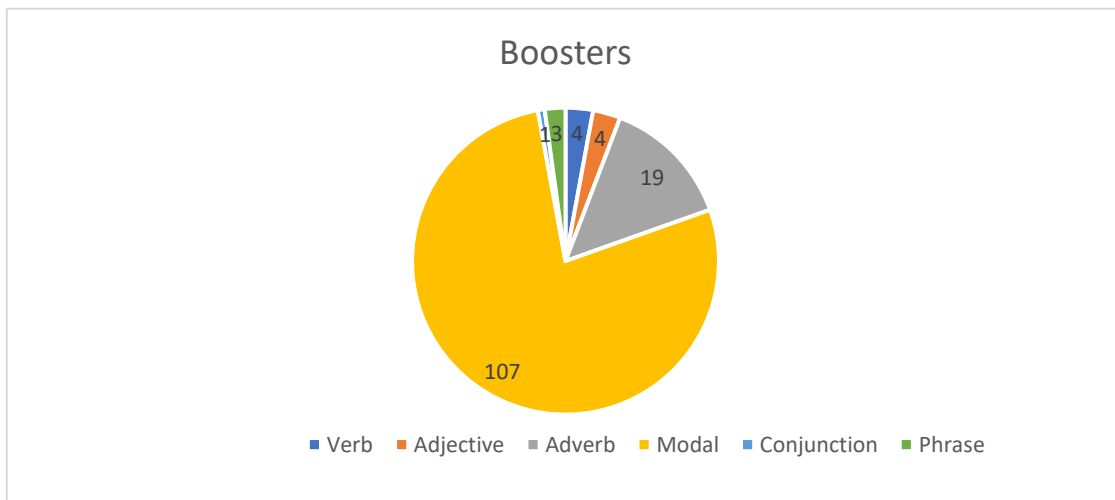


Figure 2 showed that modal was the most widely used among hedges. There were 27 modals used in the paragraphs, and 'may' was used 16 times, which was the most frequent modal in this category. With 18 instances, the second most frequently used category for hedges was adverbs. Perhaps it was used five times, which was the most in this category. The third one was phrase a total of 6 times. (we) think was the most frequently used hedge in this category, 3 times. Only one conjunction was used, which was. Similar to conjunctions, adjective and verb categories were only used once. In the adjective category, possible was used 1 time, while in the verb category, seem was used, and again it was used 1 time. No hedge from the noun category was used.

Figure 3: Pie Charts Illustrating Form-based categorization of Boosters



Like hedges, modal was the most frequently used category, but it was used 107 times, which was nearly four times as much as in hedges. The booster should was the most widely used in this category, 61 times. Again, like in hedges, the adverb was the second most used category, 19 times. Most was the top in this category with 9 times. Adverbs and verbs were used 4 times. Essential was used most often as an adjective, while as a verb, it was less well-known. There were three boosters used in the phrase category, and the one that was used the most was used twice. Only one booster was used from the conjunction/connector category, which was, of course. No booster from the noun category was used, like in hedges.

The order of the categories from most used to least used in hedges was as follows: modal, adverb, phrase, conjunction/connector, adjective, verb, and noun, while the order of the categories from most used to least used in boosters was as follows: modal, adverb, adjective, verb, conjunction/connector, and noun. For each, the modal and adverb categories were the two most frequently used. The number of adjectives and verbs used as hedges and boosters was the same for each category. No booster or hedge was used from the noun category.

Table 3 gives the frequency of use of hedges and boosters used at the same time and provides a more detailed look into which hedges and boosters were used and their numbers, because all of the hedges and boosters of Hyland's (1998a) classification were not found in paragraphs.

Table 3: List of hedges and boosters found in paragraphs

Hedges	Frequency	Boosters	Frequency
May	16	Should	61
About	1	Conclude	1
Maybe	5	Will	31
Might	5	Actually	2
Would	4	The fact that	2
Seem	1	Know	3
Be known	1	Must	15
Perhaps	1	Always	4
Probably	4	Rather	1
Sometimes	1	Essential	2
More or less	1	Most	9
Usually	2	Obvious	1
However	1	Sure	1
Possible	1	No doubt	1
Quite	2	Definitely	2
Almost	2	Generally	1
(we) think	3	Of course	1
I Believe	1		
Could	2		

Table 3 shows that, in total, 19 different hedges and 17 different boosters were identified. May was the most frequently used hedge, whereas should is the most frequently used booster in the paragraphs. The first was used 16 times while the latter was used 61 times. The booster ‘should’ was used more times than the hedge ‘may,’ which was the most frequently used hedge. It was used 31 times. Despite the topic differences, the frequency of boosters was higher than that of hedges in both essay groups.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate how first-year ELT students used hedges and boosters in their paragraphs. Forty paragraphs were gathered and examined for this goal, which was to compare the frequency of hedges and boosters, as well as form-based categorization.

The quantitative analysis revealed a total of 55 hedges and 140 boosters in the paragraphs. The paragraph that used the most hedges was paragraph 12 (n=5), while a total of 12 paragraphs (no. 8, 9, 10, 15, 17, 25, 26, and 27) used hedges. Paragraphs 1 and 7 contained the most boosters (n = 9), and only two paragraphs (24 and 27) did not include any boosters. Paragraph 27 contained neither a hedge nor a booster. The percentages of hedges changed between 0% and 2.3%, while the percentages of boosters changed between 0% and 5.45%. Eventually, the paragraphs contained 0.92% hedges and 2.34% boosters in total.

The qualitative analysis presented that modals were the most frequently used category in both hedges and boosters, followed by adverbs. The rest of the sequence of other categories, from third

most to least, went like phrase, conjunction/connector, adjective, verb, and noun for hedges: adjective, verb, conjunction/connector, and noun for boosters. For boosters, the sequence was adjectives, verbs, conjunctions/connectors, and nouns. No booster or hedge was used from the noun category.

This classification into parts of speech provided a general overview of the distribution of hedges and boosters. However, it should also be noted that the categorization was not only based on their forms. Since the same lexical item could function as either a hedge or a booster depending on the context, the final decision was made by considering its actual usage in the sentences.

Three questions were formed for this study. The first question was whether all kinds of hedges and boosters existed on exam papers or not. Noun categories were not used in both hedges and boosters, and some categories (like adjectives and conjunctions) were minimally represented. The second question was which hedges and boosters were used most frequently. *May* was the most commonly used hedge (n=16), while *should* was the most frequently used in this category (n=61), which is nearly four times more. Moreover, the last question was to identify the most common words. The five most frequent hedges were *may*, *maybe*, *might*, *would*, and *probably*, whereas *should*, *will*, *must*, *most*, and *always* were the top five boosters.

The results demonstrated that first-year ELT students used boosters more frequently than hedges in their exam writing. It was unanticipated because the expected outcome was more cautious or more balanced. A potential reason could be the paragraphs taken from their exam paper. Students desire to be more confident and assertive. First-year students could think that their arguments would be stronger when they used bold, powerful language. They used words like "should" or "will" to convey a sense of being informed and assured. Another reason could be a lack of knowledge about academic style. It was their first year, and they had not yet received any lessons in academic writing, discourse analysis, or pragmatics. In other words, their awareness of how to express tentativeness may have been underdeveloped.

The frequency analysis results showed that boosters outnumbered hedges. This result contradicts Jabbar's finding (2019), as he found that hedges exceed boosters in his study. In his research, Jabbar analyzed 36 academic research paper projects from randomly selected students from two English departments. This could indicate a preference for cautious expression. Similarly, the results also contradict those of Taymaz (2021), who examined changes in the frequencies of hedges and boosters among MA to PhD-level students. She chose an author who is both an MA and a PhD holder and indicated that the authors used fewer hedges and more boosters in their PhD dissertations than in their MA theses. This is because novice academicians were cautious of criticism, unlike PhD students.

There were two reasons for this discrepancy. The first one may be a participant. Both Jabbar (2019) and Taymaz (2021) utilized advanced and experienced participants who were familiar with writing academic research paper projects, MA theses, and PhD dissertations. In this study, however, the sample group consisted of first-year ELT students who had just begun learning how to write. Another reason may be the genre difference. In this study, paragraphs written in the writing exam were employed. These paragraphs were written within a limited time frame, and students were generally encouraged to write more directly and assertively. Hence, students might use them as additional boosters to appear more confident during exam time.

On the other hand, this study's results align with those of Ningrum, Puspita, and Mulyadi (2024), who analyzed the use of hedges and boosters in academic writing produced by ASEAN undergraduate EFL students. Their participants, who were engaged in Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA) programs, likewise preferred assertive language, as indicated by the increased

frequency of boosters compared to hedges. This similarity suggests that the preference for boosters may be a more widespread trend among EFL undergraduates, including those from ELT departments, such as the ones in the current study, regardless of institutional or disciplinary distinctions.

The findings of this study have several pedagogical implications for EFL writing instruction. The use of hedges and boosters appropriately is closely related to students' proficiency in writing. Although participants in this research were at the beginning of their higher education, they employed hedges and boosters unconsciously in their writing. This suggests that learners have an innate awareness of stance marking, but they lack metalinguistic knowledge; in other words, they do not have enough knowledge of how to use these devices strategically. Thus, explicit instruction on hedging and boosting should be integrated into academic writing courses starting from the first year. Students may develop a more nuanced and balanced tone in their writing with early exposure. While the current analysis sheds light on the use of the hedge and booster in first-year Turkish EFL students, further studies could investigate whether similar patterns can be found in different writing genres, such as essays written by higher proficiency-level learners, research articles, theses and dissertations, letters of intent, and other similar texts. Furthermore, future research could involve native speakers of languages other than Turkish.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the use of hedges and boosters in paragraphs written by first-year ELT students and found that boosters were used more frequently than hedges. Nearly all paragraphs contained at least one booster; in contrast, some paragraphs did not include any hedges at all. Modals were the most common category for both hedges and boosters, with "may" and "should" being the most frequently used words. The results indicate that novice writers are more likely to express confidence and assertiveness than caution, probably because they are unaware of the rules of academic language. However, they still employed hedges and boosters instinctively. Therefore, explicit instruction should be incorporated into first-year writing courses, as it can enhance students' ability to express their positions effectively. Like every research study, this one has some limitations. The explanatory paragraphs were used; therefore, they may not accurately reflect students' use of hedges and boosters. Future studies could compare different types of paragraphs. Additionally, a longitudinal study following the same group throughout their four-year education could reveal how much they have developed during university. Even if the data were coded in consensus with another rater, no statistical interrater reliability coefficient, such as Cohen's Kappa, was calculated. This may limit the ability to demonstrate the level of agreement quantitatively.

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APPENDIX

A: Hyland's (1998a) classification of hedges and boosters

List of hedges					
About	deduce	(it is) known	possibly	reportedly	tendency
almost	doubt	likely	prediction	seems	theoretically
approximately	estimate	may	predominantly	seemingly	(we) think
Argue	expect	maybe	presumably	(can be) seen	uncertain
around	formally	might	presume	seldom	unclear
assume	frequently	more or less	probability	(general) sense	unlikely
assumption	given that	(not) necessarily	probable	sometimes	unsure
my/our belief	guess	occasionally	probably	somewhat	usually
I believe	however	often	propose	speculate	virtually
certain extent	hypothesize	ostensibly	provided (that)	suggest	would
Claim	hypothetically	partially	(open to) question	superficially	wouldn't
(to be) clear	ideally	partly	questionable	suppose	
conceivably	implication	perhaps	quite	surmise	
conjecture	imply	plausible	rare	suspect	
contention	infer	possibility	rarely	technically	
could	interpret	possible	relatively	tend	

List of boosters					
Actually	conclusive	essentially	incontrovertible	normally	unambiguously
admittedly	confirm	establish	indeed	obvious	unarguably
Always	consistent with	evidence	indicate	obviously	undeniably
apparent	convincing(ly)	evident	inevitable	patently	undoubtedly
apparently	couldn't	evidently	(we) know	precisely	unequivocal
Appear	(of) course	the fact (that)	largely	prove	unmistakable
assuredly	decidedly	we find	mainly	rather	unquestionably
basically	definitely	generally	manifest(ly)	should	well-known
certain that	demonstrate	general	most	show	Will
certainly	determine	however	must	sure	won't
certainty	discern	impossible	(not) necessarily	surely	wrong(ly)
Clearly	doubtless	improbable	never	true	

conclude	(is) essential	inconceivable	no / beyond doubt	typically
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B: Classification hedges and booster from Hyland (1998a) according to part of speech

	Hedges		Boosters	
Nouns	Tendency Prediction Assumption Belief (my/our belief) Contention	Implication Conjecture Possibility Probability Estimate Sense (general sense)	Evidence Fact (the fact that) Certainty	
Verbs	Deduce Report (reportedly) Seem/seems Estimate Argue Expect Assume Propose Speculate	Hypothesize Claim Imply Interpret Suspect Suggest Suppose Surmise Infer	Appear Confirm Establish Indicate Know, ((we) know) Prove	Demonstrate Show Determine Discern Conclude
Adjectives	Known Uncertain Unclear Unlikely Probable Possible	Plausible Questionable Rare Relative/relatively Virtual (virtually)	Conclusive Incontrovertible Obvious Unambiguous Unarguable Undeniable Evident Inevitable Apparent	Convincing Unequivocal Unmistakable Assured Definite Manifest Essential Improbable Inconceivable Sure
Adverbs	Almost About Approximately Around Seldom Rarely Frequently Occasionally Usually Theoretically Seemingly Formally Somewhat Perhaps	Quite Technically Conceivably Hypothetically Superficially Virtually Provided (that) Ideally Partially Partly Sometimes Probably Maybe Probably	Actually Essentially Normally Unambiguously Admittedly Indeed Obviously Unarguably Always Evidently Largely Patently Undoubtedly Apparently Precisely	Assuredly Decidedly Mainly Rather Unquestionably Basically Definitely Generally Manifestly Surely Typically Clearly Doubtless Beyond doubt Most
Modals	May Might Could Would Wouldn't		Must Should Will Won't Couldn't	
Conjunctions/ Connectors	However Given that Provided (that)		However (not) necessarily of course	

Phrases	(it is) known (can be) seen (we) think (not) necessarily I believe	(open to) question (to be) clear more or less general sense	(we) know (is) essential certain that the fact (that) no/beyond doubt
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C: Frequency and percentage of hedges and boosters in paragraphs C

Num	Word count	Hedge	Booster	Percentage of Hedges	Percentage of Boosters
1	217	4	9	1.84%	4.14%
2	186	1	4	0.53%	2.15%
3	226	3	5	1.32%	2.21%
4	152	1	1	0.65%	0.65%
5	232	3	1	1.29%	0.43%
6	174	1	5	0.57%	2.87%
7	243	1	9	0.41%	3.70%
8	188	0	5	0%	2.65%
9	133	0	2	0%	1.50%
10	197	0	5	0%	2.53%
11	177	1	6	0.56%	3.38%
12	187	5	4	2.67%	2.13%
13	169	1	5	0.59%	2.95%
14	108	1	2	0.92%	1.85%
15	170	0	4	0%	2.35%
16	238	1	3	0.42%	1.26%
17	121	0	4	0%	3.30%
18	166	3	1	1.80%	0.60%
19	115	1	4	0.86%	3.47%
20	262	4	6	1.52%	2.29%
21	132	3	1	2.27%	0.75%
22	117	1	3	0.85%	2.56%
23	138	2	1	1.44%	0.72%
24	121	1	0	0.82%	0%
25	143	0	3	0%	2.09%
26	55	0	3	0%	5.45%
27	108	0	0	0%	0%
28	77	0	1	0%	1.29%
29	130	1	3	0.76%	2.30%
30	73	2	1	2.73%	1.36%
31	132	0	6	0%	4.54%
32	55	2	1	3.63%	1.81%
33	136	2	2	1.47%	1.47%
34	113	1	4	0.88%	3.53%
35	105	0	2	0%	1.90%
36	146	1	6	0.68%	4.10%
37	93	2	4	2.15%	4.30%
38	69	0	2	0%	2.89%
39	153	3	6	1.96%	3.92%
40	221	3	6	1.35%	2.71%

Total	5978	55	140	0.92%	2.34%
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