

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

In the learning process as academics, students are required to produce academic writing about the knowledge gained in college. Academic writing is distinguished by the objective appearance of knowledge, in which authors attempt to integrate new scientific work into the current body of study while drawing on interpersonal and conceptual resources Livytska (2019). In the realm of academic writing, research articles play an important role in the dissemination of knowledge and the advancement of scientific discourse. There are several characteristics of academic writing, namely, objectivity, clarity of language, intertextuality, metadiscourse, precision, and perhaps hedging Musa (2014). As novice authors begin their academic publishing journey, they face a variety of challenges, one of which revolves around the proper use of hedging.

In facing writing problems related to hedging, writers are expected to be able to use hedging in their writing. Hedging is undoubtedly a key consideration for all levels of academic writing, according to Swales (1990). Hedging, defined as the strategic application of linguistic devices to express uncertainty or caution, serves as a means for authors to modulate their claims, acknowledge limitations, and overcome potential challenges to their research findings Argina & Ijabah (2022). Understanding how novice

writers employ hedging in their research articles is critical, as it highlights the development of their language proficiency and rhetorical awareness within the academic community.

Since Lakoff popularized hedging as a linguistic term, some experts have had various opinions regarding its meaning. Lakoff's basic concept is that hedges modify words or phrases within a proposition, making the boundaries less clear. However, another definition proposed by Al-Quraishy (2010), She claims that hedging is an expression to express uncertainty, doubt, and openness about one's proposition. And then Hyland (1998) suggests that in academic writing, hedges suggest that a statement is based on plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge, and they allow readers the freedom to challenge it.

Knowledge creation is formed by four elements of communication: writer, audience (reader), language, and reality (context). Therefore, Hedging is typically used by writers in their academic writing because it allows them to appropriately modulate their claims and engage the reader in a dynamic dialogue related to their ideas Kim & Lim (2015). However, not every writer can express their main arguments as clearly as readers might expect. To mitigate the risk of face-threatening acts, hedging is necessary. Some writers may choose not to present their arguments or claims as explicitly as anticipated because they need to consider the potential consequences of being too direct Ningtyas (2016). The strategic use of hedging in academic writing serves as a crucial tool, enabling writers to

modulate their claims appropriately, engage readers in dynamic dialogues, and navigate the intricate balance between precision and consideration for diverse audience expectations.

Understanding the importance of hedging in research articles, this study aims to investigate its use through various hedging devices in academic writing. The focus is on the proceedings from the Seminar on English Education, Literature, and Linguistics (ELITIC) 2023. These proceedings were written by novice writers from the 2019 class. They were chosen as the data source because they contain numerous student claims and arguments. This study will analyze how these novice writers employ hedging to present their research article and what are the purpose of hedging in their research article.

Numerous research studies are being conducted on the complicated topic of hedging in academic writing, demonstrating a wide range of writers' perspectives and preferences. Argina & Ijabah (2022) focus on Indonesian English students, examining their tendencies and preferences in applying hedging strategies. The study, employing a combined framework proposed by scholars such as Holmes (1988) and Hyland (1998), scrutinizes the frequencies of hedge use, exploring potential differences between genders in the utilization of hedges within research articles. Another significant contribution comes from Ifga & Pratiwi (2021) , who analyze hedging in the Indonesian academic context, particularly in the Introduction and Discussion sections, using Hyland (1996) theory. The extensive research on

hedging in academic writing reveals diverse perspectives and preferences among writers. Studies like those by Argina & Ijabah (2022) and Ifga & Pratiwi (2021) offer valuable insights into specific contexts, such as Indonesian English students and the Indonesian academic setting, respectively. Employing frameworks proposed by scholars like Holmes and Hyland, these studies contribute to our understanding of hedge use frequencies and potential gender differences, highlighting the nuanced strategies writers employ in academic discourse.

Furthering the exploration of hedging in academic writing, Livytska (2019) investigates the types and frequency of hedges employed by authors in applied linguistics research articles. The study, grounded in Hyland (1996) theoretical framework, provides valuable insights into the landscape of hedges within this specific academic domain. Demir (2018) conducts research comparing native and non-native English writers, aiming to reveal differences in hedging strategies. Utilizing the theoretical lens of Hyland (1998), Demir examines lexical hedges, creating a comprehensive list and offering suggestions for their effective use in academic writing. Lastly, Salichah et al. (2015) focus on identifying the use of hedges and boosters as communicative strategies in academic writing, drawing on the taxonomies of Hyland (1998) and Hinkel (2005). Collectively, these studies by Argina & Ijabah (2022), Ifga & Pratiwi (2021), Livytska (2019), Demir (2018), and Salichah et al. (2015) provide a holistic understanding of hedging in academic writing, elucidating its multifaceted applications and implications

across various linguistic and cultural contexts. In summary, the studies by Livytska (2019), Demir (2018), and Salichah et al. (2015) offer valuable perspectives on hedging in academic writing. Livytska's research delves into hedges in applied linguistics articles, Demir's work highlights differences between native and non-native English writers in hedging strategies, and Salichah et al. explore hedges and boosters as communicative strategies. Together with other mentioned studies, they collectively enrich our understanding of hedging, showcasing its diverse applications across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

Building on the previous research, this study shares similarities with earlier work by focusing on hedging in academic writing. However, it differs in a few key areas. Firstly, this research specifically examines the types of hedging devices used in students' academic papers. Secondly, the study targets academic writing produced by novice writers to gather data. Thirdly, the data from the Indonesian proceeding. Furthermore, to fill the gap of this study the researcher aimed to found out what types and what are the purpose of hedging that used by writer in introduction section of Seminar on English Education, Literature, and Linguistics (ELITIC) 2023 vol.2 by following Hyland (1998) theory.

The exploration of hedging in academic writing reveals a nuanced understanding of how writers navigate uncertainty and complexity in their discourse. Studies by various researchers shed light on different aspects of hedging, from its frequency and types to its cultural and linguistic contexts.

While each study offers unique insights, they collectively enrich our understanding of hedging and its multifaceted applications in academic discourse. From investigating the use of hedging devices by novice writers to comparing strategies among native and non-native English writers, these studies contribute to a comprehensive understanding of hedging's role in academic communication. Despite differences in focus and methodology, these studies collectively highlight the importance of hedging in academic writing and its implications for effective communication. As the present research delves into analyzing hedging in academic writing by novice writers, it adds another dimension to the existing body of literature, aiming to contribute further to our understanding of this essential aspect of academic discourse.

## **B. Research Questions**

The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. How do novice writers employ hedging strategies in their research articles?
2. What are the purposes of using hedging in research proposal written by novice writer?

## **C. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study are:

1. To describe how novice writers employ hedging strategies in their research articles.

2. To describe what the purpose of hedging in research articles written by novice writer.

#### **D. Delimitation of the Study**

This study focuses specifically on the research papers produced by the 2019 novice writer. The study assumes that the 2019 class students possess a certain level of language proficiency in academic writing and I only selected 15 research articles from the 25 research articles in ELITICS: Proceedings Seminar on English Education, Literature, and Linguistics (ELITIC) 2023 with the theme "Current Trends and Issues of English and Language Teaching on Global Mobility" vol 2 (2023). However, it does not specifically address variations in language proficiency or consider the impact of varying proficiency levels on the use of hedging strategies. The study employs a case study design, focusing on the analysis of a specific group of students' writing samples. Other research methods, such as experimental studies or comparative analyses, are not included in this study.

#### **E. Significance of the Study**

For a study on hedging in academic writing, both theoretical and practical significance play crucial roles in understanding its importance and impact. The theoretical contribution is anticipated to benefit students by increasing their awareness of using hedging in academic writing. This study aims to help students understand the importance of hedging for expressing claims or arguments effectively in their academic work.

However, for practical, this study is expected to be particularly beneficial for English teachers. It will provide insights into students' abilities to use hedging in their academic writing. Additionally, it will raise teachers' awareness of the need to provide material and explanations to help students effectively use hedging to express their claims and arguments.

Additionally, this study will be beneficial for readers. It will provide insights into the role of hedging in academic writing, helping them appreciate its significance and how it can enhance clarity and precision in presenting arguments and claims. This understanding can improve their writing skills and critical reading of academic texts.

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

### 1. Hedging

Define hedging as the strategic use of linguistic devices to express caution, uncertainty, and qualification in academic writing. Explain that hedging allows writers to mitigate the potential risks associated with making absolute claims and convey a nuanced and cautious approach to knowledge claims.

### 2. Novice writers

Refers to early-stage graduate students who are in the early stages of their academic writing journey and may still be developing their skills in academic discourse.



### 3. Research articles

Research articles that present original research findings, usually published in academic journals, contribute to the existing body of knowledge within a specific field.

### 4. Hedging Strategies

Define hedging strategies as the specific linguistic devices and rhetorical techniques employed by writers to convey caution, uncertainty, and qualification in their academic writing. Explain that these strategies include the use of modal verbs, adverbs, hedge phrases, and other devices to indicate a degree of uncertainty or qualification.