

HEDGING AND BOOSTING



Writing Process

ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC SUPPORT

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HEDGING DEFINITION

Linguistic devices to respectively display uncertainty, doubt for author's claims, and reduce commitment with 'softened' words thus respecting author's ideas.

Reduce chance that your claims will be questioned or disputed

Separate between fact and claim

Allow a writer to show their opinion/interpretation of a topic, or how strong a writer feels for the stated claim.

Can show an audience that a writer questions the research and has some reservations, thus contributing to the field and encouraging conversations in the research.

HEDGING LANGUAGE (EXAMPLES)

Certain Lexical Verbs	<i>to appear, appear as if/though + clause, appear/ seem +that + clause, to seem, seem to + verb, seems as if/though + clause, to argue, to assume, to believe, to doubt, to estimate, to indicate, to propose, to speculate, to suggest, to tend</i>
Certain Modal Verbs	<i>may, might, could, can, would, should</i>
Adverbs of Frequency	<i>often, usually, sometimes, occasionally</i>
Modal Adverbs	<i>apparently, approximately, conceivably, generally, maybe, necessarily, perhaps, possibly</i>
Modal Adjectives (expressing probability)	<i>likely, unlikely, probable, possible, doubtful, uncertain, potentially, practically, presumably, probably, roughly, seemingly, un/likely</i>
Modal Nouns	<i>assumption, claim, estimate, evidence, indication, likelihood, possibility, probability, suggestion, tendency, trend</i>
Adjective + to clause	<i>It may be possible to obtain... , It is important to develop..., It is useful to study...</i>
That clauses	<i>It is apparent that ..., It may be perceived that ..., It has been suggested/argued/claimed that ..., It seems evident that ..., It could be the case that..., It might be suggested that... , There is every hope that...</i>
Introductory Phrases	<i>I believe that..., We believe that..., We feel that..., To our knowledge..., In our opinion..., It is our view that..., In our view..., It is generally agreed upon..., It is generally agreed that..., One would expect that...</i>
Other Expressions	<i>- Based on the limited data..., According to this preliminary study..., In the view of many scholars..., According to some earlier studies..., In general ..., As a rule..., quite, somewhat, seems reasonable, looks probable, reasonably, somehow, some, many, much, one of, if true, if anything</i>

Example Sentences

- **Some** teenagers who are not involved in extracurricular activities within the school and/or outside of the school have challenges.
- **It is often thought that** many teenagers who are not involved in extracurricular activities within the school and/or outside of the school **possibly** have challenges.



BOOSTING DEFINITION

Linguistic devices to display confidence, emphasis, and strength in author’s claims, and to increase commitment.

Reinforce commitment to author’s ideas.

BOOSTING LANGUAGE (EXAMPLES)

Words	absolutely, actually, always, certainly, clearly, conclude, conclusively, confirm, definitely, demonstrate, determine, establish, evidence, evidently, find, indeed, know, obviously, prove, show undoubtedly, will, in fact
Expressions	striking effect, the importance of, the fact that, of most importance, of particular interest, firmly believe, It is clear that...

Example Sentences

- **It is clear that** teenagers who are not involved in extracurricular activities within the school and/or outside of the school have challenges.
- Teenagers who are **always** absent from extracurricular activities within the school and/or outside of the school have challenges.

HEDGING CAUTIONS

- × Extensive hedging will have an audience question a writer's position.
- × An audience will not be convinced that you are confident with the statements.
- × Note the use of hedging in your discipline.

BOOSTING CAUTIONS

- × Not as common as hedges in academic writing.
- × Careful usage of booster language shows an audience the writer's confidence and agreement with the author information.
- × Use sparingly because it can present a writer as too self-confident.

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