

D.E. Shaikenova¹, S.B. Tulepova^{2*}, A.T. Chaklikova³, M.B. Bekturova⁴

^{1,3}Kazakh Ablai khan UIR and WL, Almaty, Kazakhstan;

^{2,4}SDU University, Kaskelen, Kazakhstan

(*Corresponding author. E-mail: saule.tulepova@sdu.edu.kz)

¹ORCID 0009-0008-1342-153X

²ORCID 0000-0003-0809-469X

³ORCID 0000-0002-7734-4667

⁴ORCID 0000-0001-6748-9355

The use of hedging in EFL students' academic writing

Academic writing in English is a special genre which requires maintaining a certain tone and adhering to conventions accepted in the scholarly community. Writers should strive to express their stance appropriately by avoiding overly categorical statements and overgeneralizations. One of the ways to achieve this is using hedging strategies. Therefore, teaching hedging should be an obligatory aspect in an academic writing course to develop EFL (English as a foreign language) students' academic writing competence. This study aimed to explore the EFL students' usage of various hedging types and academic writing teachers' perceptions of hedging instruction. To this end, corpus analysis of undergraduate EFL students' forty academic essays was conducted to identify hedging types according to the framework of Salager-Meyer, and six academic writing teachers have been interviewed to elicit their perceptions. It was revealed that of all seven types of hedges found in the essays, students could appropriately utilize mainly two types. This demonstrates that EFL learners struggle when expressing tentative statements in academic writing. The interview findings also imply that more attention should be given to teaching hedging explicitly and considering integrating more practice in the syllabus for the academic writing course. This study might be helpful in raising awareness of the problems associated with hedging instruction in academic writing classes as well as contributing to the literature in academic writing research.

Keywords: academic writing conventions, hedging, teachers' perceptions, EFL students, hedging instruction, claims, devices, hedging types, strategies.

Introduction

The relevance of developing academic writing skills in students at higher education institutions is undeniable, given the growing need for the development of research and the increasing visibility of universities in the international academic arena [1]. Academic success among students of Kazakhstani higher educational institutions depends on efficient academic writing skills [2; 53]. However, few EFL (English as a foreign language) learners are able to write academic papers at the required level, although they might have high proficiency in using the grammar rules and academic vocabulary. The previous research consistently indicates that major challenges students encounter in academic writing are related to insufficient knowledge of conventions and inability to use language tools to ensure logical expression [3], [4; 150]. There are nine characteristics that define academic writing: complexity, formality, precision, objectivity, accuracy, hedging, responsibility, organization, planning. As such, this paper is focused on one of the significant features of academic writing — hedging and highlights the importance of developing hedging strategies of undergraduate EFL students.

Gillet et al. [5] contend that academic writing frequently requires a cautious approach, and there are numerous ways to express caution. A technique known as hedging is a method of softening claims without undermining one's stance in a manner that is acceptable in academic writing. Numerous studies [6-10] have looked into the types and functions of hedges. A communication device known as hedging is used to either increase or decrease the impact of assertions [8]. The hedges such as *probably*, *likely*, *perhaps*, *could*, *might*, etc. help to create a proper rhetorical and interactive tone by covering affective and epistemic meanings in academic discourse. Moreover, hedging displays the authors' attitude towards the reader as well as how certain they are that the assertion is true. Therefore, writers should be careful to communicate their message according to the expectations of the academic community. The following example by Salager-Meyer [11; 2] presents a clear explanation of what hedges are:

One could state a proposition as a fact (e.g., “This medicine will help you recover quickly”), or one could use a hedge to distance oneself from that statement, e.g. “I believe that this medicine could help you recover quickly”.

Thus, hedging is a metadiscourse device that authors employ when they want to weaken the impact of a claim as well as to express respect towards someone's views or results. In fact, various scholars have defined hedging in different ways; for example, as “items of language which a speaker uses to explicitly qualify his/her lack of commitment to the truth of a proposal he/she utters” [7; 281]; or as linguistic devices to show the degree of commitment to a claim [8]. Therefore, hedging devices take a significant part in academic writing, signaling the writers' position in accordance with their attitude towards the claim.

From the perspective of stance, hedging reflects the writer's epistemic positioning and degree of commitment to propositions, contributing to the construction of an academic voice. This aligns with the notion of epistemic modality by Palmer [12], where hedging signals probability and possibility. Nevertheless, in the context of second language writing, studies have shown that learners often struggle with the appropriate use of hedging due to limited linguistic resources and insufficient awareness of disciplinary conventions, which highlights the importance of explicit instruction in academic writing [5-7].

However, academic writing textbooks contain little information and tasks for practicing hedging. As Salager-Meyer noted, this aspect is “largely ignored in pedagogical materials...” [11; 11]. This view is supported by Hyland, who also emphasized that hedging exercises are under-represented in academic writing coursebooks [8]. On this basis, we hypothesize that students have insufficient awareness of hedging strategies, which can hinder their success in academic writing. In addition, despite the significance of using hedging in academic writing, there is a scarcity of empirical studies that focus on the EFL students' use of hedging in academic essays through the analysis of hedging types and frequency of use, triangulated by the teachers' practices and perceptions from pedagogical perspectives. The research on hedging is mainly cross-disciplinary since it is conducted at the intersection of pragmatics, linguistics, semantics and applied linguistics [13]. The current research also has some features of these areas as it contains the analysis of corpora as well as the perceptions of writing instructors towards hedging and teaching it in academic writing classes. This study is expected to address a gap in the literature on hedges because their proper usage is essential in the process of differentiating fact and evaluation.

Students majoring in “Foreign Language: Two foreign languages” (TFL) in a Kazakhstani University under investigation are required to write academic essays as part of the requirements for Academic Writing course. To this end, we aim to explore the use of hedging in academic essays of TFL students as well as to determine the teachers' perceptions in hedging instruction. For this purpose, we analyse students' essays and conduct interviews with academic writing instructors.

Hedging classifications:

According to Banks [6], Hyland [8], and Skelton [10], hedges can be broadly categorized as those that focus on the content (epistemic) and those that focus on the reader (interpersonal). For example, Skelton [10] divided hedges into three types such as copulas other than *to be*, lexical commenting verbs and modal verbs. Further, Salager-Meyer's [14] earlier taxonomy divided hedges into five types: shields (can, may), approximators (about, approximately), authors' personal uncertainty and direct engagement (I believe), emotionally charged intensifiers (really, surprisingly), and complex hedges (would seem somewhat).

Since hedging is a subjective phenomenon that is applicable in a specific context, many scholars have been arguing on which words and phrases should be classified as hedges and which temporarily serve their function in a particular context only. Clemen [15] suggests a list of the common hedging devices such as epistemic qualifiers, personal pronouns, indirect constructions, parenthetical constructions, subjective conditionals and other grammatical structures. Some scholars have also reported the use of passives, agentless and impersonal constructions as a way to hedge [13; 15].

Some known hedge words classifications made by scholars are briefly summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Taxonomies of hedge words

Prince (1982)	Skelton (1988)	Myer (1989)	Salager — Meyer (1994)	Hyland (1996)	Salager — Meyer (1997)
Approximators, Shields	Copulas, modal verbs, lexical commenting verbs	Subject complements other than be, Lexical verbs, Modal verbs of condition, Probability adverbs	Shields, Approximators, Personal doubts and direct involvement, Emotionally charged intensifiers	Reader and Content oriented, among them writer and accuracy-oriented	Modal auxiliary verbs, Adjectival, nominal, adverbial, and modal phrases, Approximators of degree, time, frequency, and modal lexical verbs, compound hedges, If- clauses, Introduction phrases

Most taxonomies, in general, share similar ideas and they have a balance between each other. However, Salager — Meyer's [11] pragmatic framework of hedging types presents an integration of most of the earlier identified hedges. Taxonomy of Salager — Meyer includes the types that have not been previously attributed to the hedging category, such as some of the modal lexical verbs (Table 2).

Table 2

Classification of Salager— Meyer (1997)

Modal auxiliary verbs (MAVs)	may, might, can, could, should, would
Modal lexical verbs (MLV)	Seem, indicate, suggest, estimate, appear, tend, think, argue, propose, assume
Adjectival, Adverbial, Nominal modal phrases (AANM)	Adjective: probable, likely, possible Nouns: possibility, assumption, suggestion Adverbs: probable, perhaps, practically, apparently
Approximators of frequency, degree, quantity, and time (AFDQT)	approximately, about, usually, often, generally, a lot of
Introduction phrases (IP)	we feel that, believe, in our view
If clauses (IfC)	if anything, if correctly
Compound hedge words (CH)	seems likely, it would appear, would seem somewhat

As it was mentioned before, the literature review showed the limited research on hedging from pedagogical perspectives. Previous studies explored how often advanced learners use hedges and boosters in their essays and whether there was a difference between men and women in using these devices, examined the prevalence of hedging devices, as well as their various forms and functions in the discussion sections of research articles, and looked into the effect of direct and indirect approaches to data-driven learning on EFL undergraduate students' mastery of hedges [16].

In the first study, the findings showed that hedges and boosters were used more often in the academic essays' introductions and discussions than in the rest of the essays. Also, both men and women used hedges more than they used boosters. The next research indicated that the frequency and forms of the hedging words were statistically significantly different between qualitative and quantitative research publications. As for the last-mentioned, experimental study, both approaches had strengths and limitations; however, students' perceptions of teaching hedges through the analysis of corpora were positive.

Other researchers compared empirical and non-empirical academic publications to investigate the variations in their usage of hedging and boosting in English and Chinese-Medium journals. The authors of empirical and non-empirical academic articles were also compared. The findings demonstrated that abstracts published in English-medium journals had noticeably more hedges than those published in journals in the Chi-

nese language. Later work by Firoozjahantigh et al. [17] examined the effect of explicit instruction of hedging and boosting devices through a process-based approach and found that it has a positive effect on the development of EFL learners' academic writing skills. Hollman et al. [18] focused on Japanese EFL students' use of hedges *may*, *might* and *could* in academic writing and found the frequent but inappropriate use of the modal verb *could*. They attributed this to the influence of L1 and to the given topics. Overall, previous research presents the integration of corpus analysis to identify the hedging patterns and pedagogical decisions for more effective corpus-informed hedging instruction.

Materials and Methods

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Which types of hedging do TFL students use most in their academic essays?
2. Which types of hedging do TFL students use least in their academic essays?
3. What are academic writing teachers' perceptions of teaching hedges in academic writing?

Study design

This study utilized explanatory sequential mixed methods to maintain objectivity and rigour of findings. The quantitative part included a frequency count of the hedges used on the basis of corpus analysis, followed by the qualitative method to interview the academic writing teachers and identify their perceptions of teaching hedges in their courses.

Participants and Data Collection

The consent forms were sent to academic writing teachers and undergraduate TFL students who have taken the course on academic writing. Consequently, 70 academic essays written by TFL students were collected for the data; 40 of them were randomly selected for analysis by using a random number generator program. In this investigation, two 2nd year bachelor's TFL groups shared their academic essays. The English proficiency level of these students according to CEFR is B1-B2. As for academic writing instructors, the consent form was sent to all academic writing instructors of the University; 6 of them agreed to be interviewed. The sampling strategy of teachers involves convenience sampling. The research tool was a semi-structured interview consisting of 5 questions that were designed in order to determine the teachers' perceptions of teaching hedging. The academic writing teachers' demographics information is presented below. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the participants were coded as AWT1 (Academic writing teacher 1), etc. As seen from Table 3, all participants have been teaching academic writing for many years, and the distribution of the holders of Master's and PhD degrees is equal. Two of them are males, and four informants are females. Each interview lasted about 20-25 minutes and was delivered in English, at a place and time convenient for each participant.

Table 3

Academic writing teachers' demographics

Codes	Age	Gender	Working experience as an AWT (years)	Featured qualifications and position
AWT1		Male	3	MSc in "Educational Leadership" (2022), Nazarbayev University
AWT2		Female	6	PhD student, Scientific internship at the University of Cambridge, UK (2018)
AWT3		Female	10	PhD, assistant professor (2010)
AWT4		Male	7	PhD, assistant professor (2014)
AWT5		Female	4	MSc in Applied Linguistics and SLA, University of Oxford
AWT6		Female	5	MA in TEFL (Two foreign languages) (2019)

Procedure and data analysis

1) Academic essays written by TFL students

A quantitative examination of 40 essays submitted by undergraduate TFL students for the Academic writing class in 2023 served as the basis for the study. We used a quantitative method (frequency counts) in order to identify students' awareness about hedging by calculating and analyzing the frequency of hedge words in academic essays. The corpus analysis method was applied to the data to be analyzed. The researcher reviewed each student's entire essay, looked for hedges, and then categorized them using Salager-Meyer's [11] taxonomy since it shows the most frequently utilized hedging categories. Two steps were taken during the coding process. When a hedge item was identified, it was manually recorded in the collection table. By doing this, the context in which a hedge appears is preserved. The next phase involved coding hedges. By doing so, the author was able to identify the hedge words that are used more frequently, in addition to capturing the frequency distributions of types of hedges in general. The steps in the inquiry process included identifying the hedges, calculating the types and frequencies, and interpreting the findings.

2) Academic writing instructors

Thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke [19] was used for semi-structured interviews held with academic writing teachers. In thematic analysis, we generated initial codes, then labelled them and generated categories, and next defined and named themes. This procedure was conducted manually since the current research is small-scale and writing on paper ensures the control of the data.

Results and discussion

In Table 4, we present the distribution of all types of hedging in academic essays written by TFL students.

Table 4

Students' use of hedging types in academic essays

Types of Hedgings	Modal auxiliary verbs	Modal lexical verbs	Adverbial, Adjectival, Nominal modal phrase	Approximators of frequency, degree, and time	Introductory phrase	If clauses	Compound hedges
Number of students using hedging by type (n) (out of 40)	37	19	15	34	8	5	7

Research question 1. Which types of hedging do TFL students use most in their academic essays?

The results demonstrate that the students use various hedging devices in academic writing. However, the most utilized ones are Modal Auxiliary Verbs (MAVs) and Approximators of frequency, degree, quantity, and time (AFDQT). According to the taxonomy of Salager-Meyer [10], MAVs include the following modal verbs: *may, might, can, could, should, would*. AFDQT consists of the following lexical items: *approximately, about, usually, often, generally, a lot of*. As shown in Table 4, various MAVs have been identified in 37 essays out of all 40 students' essays, whereas AFDQT were used by 34 students.

The total number of utilized MAVs is 143 items, which constitute 47 % among all seven types, and AFDQT is 83 units, that is 27,3 %, found in almost all students' essays.

Research question 2. Which types of hedging do TFL students use least in their academic essays?

In contrast, some other types were not used extensively. For instance, Introductory phrases (8 times, 2,6 %), If clauses (8 times, 2,6 %), and Compound hedges (10 times, 3,3 %) were the hedging types that appeared least in students' essays; only 5-7 students out of 40 could use them appropriately. However, as Figure 1 indicates, it should be noted that all types of hedging were found, despite the fact that they were used in various amounts.

The bar chart below (Fig. 1) presents a distribution of all hedging types in academic essays written by TFL students.

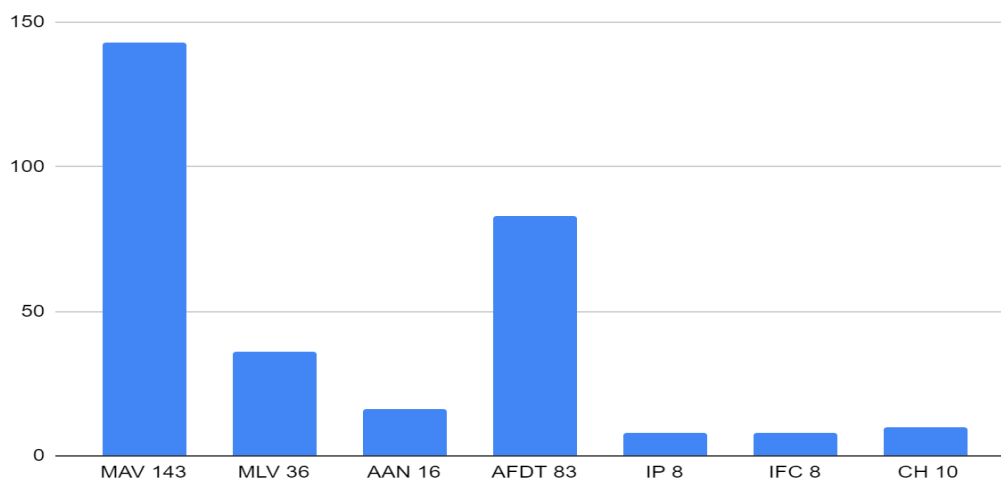


Figure 1. The distribution of all types of hedging in the students' essays

Research question 3. What are Academic writing teachers' perceptions of teaching hedges in academic writing?

Below is a table demonstrating the results of thematic analysis. Overall, four themes emerged from the data reflecting the academic writing teachers' perceptions of hedging instruction: Functions of hedging, Limitations of using hedges, Pedagogical constraints in hedging instruction, and Teachers' practices in hedging instruction.

Table 5

Thematic analysis of AWT responses

Samples of initial open codes	Categories	Themes
Indicate uncertainty, protect the claims, soften the claims, avoid criticism	Epistemic functions of hedges	Functions of hedging
Respecting other viewpoints, to be polite, relate to the reader	Interpersonal functions of hedges	
Moderate use, not overuse shows uncertainty, sounds unconfident, unconvincing claims, inappropriate context	Moderate use of hedges The danger of undermining one's claims	Limitations of hedging
Little information in the textbooks, not sufficiently covered, little attention in syllabus, underestimate the importance lack of practice, few exercises, 1-2 hours of teaching hedges	Insufficient coverage in the textbooks and syllabi Superficial instruction of hedging	Pedagogical constraints in hedging instruction
Include in final assessment, provide example, explain appropriate use, create exercises myself	Using explicit explanation	Teachers' practices in hedging instruction
Discuss the importance of hedges, justify limited use, and identify the hedges in the articles	Raising awareness	
Teach mainly modal verbs,	Limited focus	

Theme 1. Functions of hedging.

All participants showed awareness of hedging devices and described their functions in academic writing. They acknowledged the significant role of hedging in protecting and softening the claims, avoiding criticism and displaying respect to other scholars' views. Teachers consistently listed both epistemic and interpersonal functions of hedging. For example, AWT1 response reflects other participants' answers: "Yes, I teach hedging in my classes. I think that students should learn how to protect their claims, and there is a question of respecting other viewpoints."

Theme 2. Limitations of hedging.

Although hedges play a central role in academic writing, several teachers admitted that they should be used carefully due to some limitations. Given that extensive use of hedges might lead to undermining one's own stance and reducing confidence in assertions, it was noted that students should use them cautiously. A participant's response is reflective of this point: "I can say that I partially agree. It is required where it is appropriate. That means we should use it moderately" (AWT 6). Another respondent supported this concern: "The reason is that we know the use of hedging is required for academic essays, but we should do it moderately. Overuse can lead to unconvincing claims". (AWT 3).

Theme 3. Pedagogical constraints in hedging instruction.

Despite the significance of hedges and the multiple functions they perform, all participants unanimously stated that hedging receives very limited attention in academic writing textbooks. As a result, teachers do not include this topic in the syllabus, and students do not have enough opportunities to practice it. For example, according to the participants' answer: "Perhaps, there is little information in the textbooks, therefore students pay little attention to that. That means the importance of hedging is not sufficiently conveyed in the textbooks" (AWT3). Another response confirms that insufficient pedagogical materials lead to inappropriate use of hedges.

"It seems that students are short of practicing because of a lack of information on hedging types, so they sometimes do not know how to use it appropriately" (AWT6). Another teacher explicitly stated that underrepresentation of hedging in academic writing textbooks results in superficial instruction and underestimation of some important hedging types, needed to show sophistication in producing academic texts. The following quote represents this conclusion: "I teach hedging, but only 1-2 hours of the whole course duration" (AWT2).

Theme 4. Teachers' practices in hedging instruction.

All participants share a belief that consistent practice can enhance the awareness of students in using hedges and their overall positive outcomes in academic writing. Regardless of insufficient information in the textbooks, they try to create exercises themselves and discuss the importance of proper use of hedges. As they report, they consider: "It comes only with constant practice, so it would be better to include hedging into assessment criteria, so students will have to pay more attention to it" (AWT 4). However, teachers admitted that they teach mostly modal auxiliary verbs and some other types: "I teach mostly modal auxiliary verbs" (AWT6);

"I teach all of them, but it seems to me that modal auxiliary verbs and adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases are used more frequently than others" (AWT5).

Overall, the results revealed awareness of academic writing teachers of the functions of hedges and their significant role in academic texts. However, due to some pedagogical constraints, such as limited coverage of this feature in the academic writing textbooks and syllabi, small amount of time allocated for hedging instruction and a deficiency of practical tasks, EFL students have insufficient knowledge and skills in using various hedging strategies. The findings suggest an urge for material development, particularly for teaching all hedging types. Also, contrary to the teachers' beliefs, the essay analysis revealed very few occurrences of adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases, although modal auxiliary verbs have been used extensively.

Conclusions

According to the results of essay analysis, it can be concluded that TFL students are aware of hedging strategies since all hedging types have been identified in their writings. However, the students' hedging usage in academic essays should be improved because there were sentences where hedging was required but students missed that.

Also, we can summarize that mostly only two types of hedging — *Modal auxiliary verbs and Approximators of frequency, degree, quantity, and time* out of seven by Salager-Meyer's taxonomy were ap-

plied by students. The reasons behind such findings might be that teachers pay more attention to teaching these types. Also, modal verbs and adverbials are widely used not only in academic writing but in all other genres, and possibly, they have been mastered earlier. This finding corroborates the results of Salager-Meyer [11] and Hollman [17], who found the most frequent use of the modal verb *could* in students' writings. Other types were also found, but their distribution was rare. The least used types were introductory phrases, *if*-clauses and compound hedges. It aligns with the findings of Hyland [8] that L2 students often have difficulties in applying compound hedges in their academic writing. These results also imply that students and teachers should pay more attention to other types of hedge words and practice them in order to be able to use hedging strategies efficiently.

As for the teachers' perceptions regarding hedging instruction in academic writing classes, it should be noted that some teachers admitted they gave little attention to teaching hedges. They attributed this neglect to the deficiency of practical tasks on hedging in the academic writing textbooks and insufficient time allocated for teaching this aspect. Nevertheless, all academic writing instructors confirmed that hedging strategies are vital in preserving academic tone and thus should be paid more attention to. They recommended practicing this strategy in order to improve the performance of academic writing students. Based on their answers, we generated some suggestions on how to improve hedging instruction in academic writing classes, which are: including various types of hedging in assessment criteria; applying hedging in making claims and propositions; giving the tasks to identify hedges in scientific articles; providing examples, templates and models; explaining the importance of using hedging moderately and appropriately.

The pedagogical goal of this study was to highlight and evaluate the situation regarding the use of hedging strategies in academic essays of TFL students, as well as to dive into the academic writing teachers' beliefs and perceptions of hedging and its instruction in academic writing classes. It is believed that the current research can help students, teachers, and material developers to understand the crucial importance of hedging strategies in maintaining academic style and tone. In addition, it contributes to the scientific literature on hedges by presenting insights from an EFL context, where the limited use of hedging can lead to unqualified claims. Therefore, more research is needed to explore the hedging instruction and factors underlying the underestimation of such an essential feature of academic writing to address the challenges and inform academic writing pedagogy.

References

- 1 Бектурова М. Основные проблемы формирования компетенции академического письма у будущих учителей иностранного языка / М. Бектурова // Вестник КазУМОиМЯ имени Абылай хана. Серия «Педагогические науки». — 2023. — № 1(68). — С. 221–235. DOI: 10.48371/PEDS.2023.68.1.015
- 2 Таджик М. Представления магистрантов об обучении на английском языке (EMI) в вузах Казахстана / М. Таджик, Д. Шаматов, Ю. Шамильоглу, Л. Филиппова, Т. Жусипбек // Вестник Карагандинского университета. Серия Педагогика. — 2021. — № 104(4). — С. 51–59. DOI: 10.31489/2021ped4/51-59
- 3 Tulepova S. Challenges in Academic English Writing: Evidence from Kazakhstani EMI University / S. Tulepova, M. Bekturova, G. Kassymova, D. Gairov // Journal of Qualitative Research in Education. — 2025. — Issue 45. — P. 179–193. DOI: 10.54963/jqre.i45.1947
- 4 Mukhtarkhanova A. Challenges Kazakhstani Master's Students Face in Using English Language Sources / A. Mukhtarkhanova, G. Tazhitova, D. Kurmanayeva, J. Sagimbayeva, N. Belessova, S Akhtanova, Z. Abisheva // International Journal of Society, Culture & Language. — 2024. — Vol. 12, No. 1. — P. 144–153. DOI: 10.22034/ijsc.2023.2008188.3184
- 5 Gillett A. Successful Academic Writing / A. Gillett, A. Hammond, M. Martala-Lockett. — Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2009. — 256 p.
- 6 Banks D. Vague quantification in the scientific journal article [Electronic resource] / D. Banks. — Access mode: <http://journals.openedition.org/asp/2666>.
- 7 Crompton P. Hedging in academic writing: some theoretical problems [Electronic resource] / P. Crompton // English for Specific Purposes. — 1997. — Vol. 16, No. 4. — P. 271–287. — Access mode: https://www.academia.edu/Hedging_in_academic_writing_Some_theoretical_problems.
- 8 Hyland K. Hedging in Scientific Research Articles / K. Hyland. — Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1998. — 366 p. DOI: 10.1075/pbns.54
- 9 Myers G. The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles / G. Myers // Applied Linguistics. — 1998. — Vol. 10. — P. 1–35.
- 10 Skelton J. The care and maintenance of hedges / J. Skelton // ELT Journal. — 1988. — Vol. 41. — P. 37–43. DOI: 10.1093/elt/42.1.37

- 11 Salager-Meyer F. I think that perhaps you should: A study of hedges in written scientific discourse. Functional approaches to written texts: Classroom applications [Electronic resource] / F. Salager-Meyer. — Washington DC: United States Information Agency, 1997. — Access mode: https://www.tesol-france.org/uploaded_files/files/TESOL%20V2N2%20C8%20I%20think%20that%20Perhaps.pdf
- 12 Palmer F.R. Mood and Modality (2nd ed.) / F.R. Palmer. — Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. — 236 p.
- 13 Schroder H. Hedging research in pragmatics; A bibliographical research guide to hedging / H. Schroder, D. Zimmer // Hedging and discourse. Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts / ed. R. Markkanen, H. Schroder. — 1997. — P. 249–271.
- 14 Salager-Meyer F. Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse / F. Salager-Meyer // English for Specific Purposes. — 1994. — Vol. 13, No. 2. — P. 149–170.
- 15 Clemen G. The concept of hedging: origins, approaches and definitions / G. Clemen // Hedging and Discourse. Approaches to the Analysis of a Pragmatic Phenomenon in Academic Text / ed. R. Markkanen, H. Schroder. — Walter de Gruyter, 1997. — P. 235–248.
- 16 Sun X. Direct and indirect data-driven learning: An experimental study of hedging in an EFL writing class / X. Sun, G. Hu // Language Teaching Research. — 2023. — Vol. 27, No. 3. — P. 660–688. DOI: 10.1177/1362168820954459
- 17 Firoozjahantigh M. Investigating the Effect of Process-based Instruction of Writing on the IELTS Writing Task Two Performance of Iranian EFL Learners: Focusing on Hedging & Boosting / M. Firoozjahantigh, E. Fakhri Alamdari, A. Marzban // Cogent Education. — 2021. — Vol. 8, No. 1. DOI: 10.1080/2331186X.2021.1881202
- 18 Hollmann Willem B. Japanese EFL undergraduate students' use of the epistemic modal verbs may, might, and could in academic writing / B. Hollmann Willem, K. Fujimoto, M. Kuroda // Language Learning in Higher Education. — 2024. — Vol. 14, No. 1. — P. 21–40. DOI: 10.1515/cercles-2023-0014
- 19 Braun V. Thematic analysis: A practical guide / V. Braun, V. Clarke. — Sage, 2022. — 376 p.

Д.Е. Шайкенова, С.Б. Тулепова, А.Т. Чакликова, М.Б. Бектурова

Ағылшын тілін шетел тілі ретінде оқитын студенттердің академиялық жазуда хеджингті қолдануы

Ағылшын тіліндегі академиялық жазу — белгілі бір екпінді сақтауды және академиялық қауымдастықта жалпы қабылданған конвенцияларға сәйкес келуді талап ететін ерекше жанр. Авторлар өз ұстанымдарын жеткілікті түрде білдіруге тырысуы керек, шамадан тыс категориялық тұжырымдар мен жалпылаулардан аулақ болуы керек. Бұл мақсатқа жетудің бір жолы — хеджинг қолдану, сондықтан хеджингті оқыту ағылшын тілін шет тілі (EFL) ретінде үйренетін студенттердің құзыреттілігін дамыту үшін академиялық жазу курсының міндетті аспектісі болуы керек. Зерттеудің мақсаты — EFL студенттерінің хеджингтің әртүрлі түрлерін қолдануын және академиялық жазу мұғалімдерінің хеджингке оқыту әдістері туралы түсініктерін зерттеу. Осы мақсатта Салагер-Мейер тұжырымдамасына сәйкес хеджинг түрлерін анықтау үшін EFL студенттерінің 40 академиялық эссесінің корпустық талдауы жүргізілді, сондай-ақ олардың түсініктерін нақтылау үшін алты академиялық жазу мұғалімімен сұхбаттар жүргізілді. Эсселерде кездесетін жеті түрдің ішінде студенттер негізінен екі түрін жеткілікті түрде қолдана алғаны анықталды. Бұл студенттердің академиялық жазуда тұжырымдарды білдіруде қиындықтарға тап болатынын көрсетеді. Сұхбат нәтижелері хеджинг бойынша оқытуға көбірек көңіл бөлу және академиялық жазу курстарына практикалық жаттығуларды көбірек қосу қажеттілігін көрсетеді. Осы зерттеу академиялық жазу сабақтарында хеджинг түрлерін оқытумен байланысты қиындықтар туралы хабардарлықты арттыруға және академиялық жазу бойынша зерттеу әдебиетіне үлес қосуы мүмкін.

Кілт сөздер: академиялық жазу ережелері, хеджинг, оқытушының көзқарастары, ағылшын тілі студенттері, тұжырымдар, құралдар, хеджинг түрлері, стратегиялар.

Д.Е. Шайкенова, С.Б. Тулепова, А.Т. Чакликова, М.Б. Бектурова

Использование хеджирования в академическом письме студентами, изучающими английский язык как иностранный

Академическое письмо на английском языке — это особый жанр, требующий соблюдения определенного тона и соответствия общепринятым в научном сообществе конвенциям. Авторы должны стремиться адекватно выражать свою позицию, избегая чрезмерно категоричных утверждений и обобщений. Один из способов достижения этой цели — использование хеджирования, поэтому обучение хеджированию должно быть обязательным аспектом курса академического письма для развития компетенции студентов, изучающих английский язык как иностранный (EFL). Целью данного исследова-

ния является изучение использования студентами EFL различных типов хеджирования и восприятия преподавателями академического письма методов обучения хеджированию. Для этого был проведен корпусный анализ сорока академических эссе студентов EFL для выявления типов хеджирования в соответствии с концепцией Салагер-Мейер, а также проведены интервью с шестью преподавателями академического письма для выяснения их восприятия. Было выявлено, что из всех семи типов, встречающихся в эссе, студенты могли адекватно использовать в основном два типа. Это демонстрирует, что студенты испытывают трудности при выражении предварительных утверждений в академическом письме. Результаты интервью также указывают на необходимость уделять больше внимания обучению хеджированию и рассмотрению возможности включения большего количества практических упражнений в программу курса академического письма. Данное исследование может способствовать повышению осведомленности о проблемах, связанных с обучением смягчающим выражениям на занятиях по академическому письму, а также вносит вклад в литературу по исследованиям в области академического письма.

Ключевые слова: правила академического письма, хеджирование, восприятие преподавателей, студенты, изучающие английский как иностранный, обучение использованию смягчающих выражений, утверждения, средства, типы хеджирования, стратегии.

References

- 1 Bekturova, M. (2023). Osnovnye problemy formirovaniia kompetentsii akademicheskogo pisma u budushchikh uchitelei inostrannogo yazyka [Main problems of forming academic writing competence in future foreign language teachers]. *Isvestiia Kazakhskogo universiteta mezhdunarodnikh otnoshenii i Mirovykh yazykov imeni imeni Abylai khana. Seriiia «Pedagogicheskie nauki»* — Ablai Khan Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages Bulletin. *Pedagogical Sciences Series*, 68 (1), 221–235. DOI: 10.48371/PEDS.2023.68.1.015 [in Russian].
- 2 Tadzhiq, M., Shamatov, D., Shamiloglu, Yu., Filippova, L., & Zhusipbek, T. (2021). Predstavleniia magistrantov ob obuchenii na angliiskom yazyke (EMI) v vuzakh Kazakhstana [Master's students' perceptions of English-medium instruction (EMI) in Kazakhstan's universities]. *Vestnik Karagandinskogo universiteta. Seriiia Pedagogika — Bulletin of the Karaganda University. Pedagogy Series*, 104 (4), 51–59. DOI: 10.31489/2021ped4/51-59 [in Russian].
- 3 Tulepova, S., Bekturova, M., Kasymova, G., & Gaipov, D. (2025). Challenges in Academic English Writing: Evidence from Kazakhstan EMI University. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, Issue 45, 179–193. DOI: 10.54963/jqre.i45.1947.
- 4 Mukhtarkhanova, A., Tazhitova, G., Kurmanaeva, D., Sagimbaeva, Zh., Belesova, N., Aktanova, S., & Abisheva, Z. (2024). Challenges Kazakhstani Master's Students Face in Using English Language Sources. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 12 (1), 144–153. DOI: 10.22034/ijsc.2023.2008188.3184.
- 5 Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala-Lockett, M. (2009). *Successful Academic Writing*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.
- 6 Banks, D. (Year). Vague quantification in the scientific journal article. *journals.openedition.org*. Retrieved from <http://journals.openedition.org/asp/2666>.
- 7 Crompton, P. (1997). Hedging in academic writing: some theoretical problems. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16 (4), 271–287.
- 8 Hyland, K. (1998). *Hedging in Scientific Research Articles*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. DOI: 10.1075/pbns.54
- 9 Myers, G. (1998). The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied Linguistics*, 10, 1–35.
- 10 Skelton, J. (1988). The care and maintenance of hedges. *ELT Journal*, 41, 37–43. DOI: 10.1093/elt/42.1.37
- 11 Salager-Meyer, F. (1997). I think that perhaps you should: A study of hedges in written scientific discourse. Functional approaches to written texts: Classroom applications. *tesol-france.org*. Retrieved from https://www.tesol-france.org/uploaded_files/files/TESOL%20V2N2%20C8%20I%20think%20that%20Perhaps.pdf
- 12 Palmer, F.R. (2001). *Mood and Modality* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 13 Schroder, H., & Zimmer, D. (1997). Hedging research in pragmatics; A bibliographical research guide to hedging. In R. Markkanen, H. Schroder (Eds.). *Hedging and discourse. Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts* (pp. 249–271).
- 14 Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13 (2), 149–170.
- 15 Clemen, G. (1997). The concept of hedging: origins, approaches and definitions. R. Markkanen, H. Schroder (Eds.). *Hedging and Discourse. Approaches to the Analysis of a Pragmatic Phenomenon in Academic Text* (pp. 235–248). Walter de Gruyter.
- 16 Sun, X., & Hu, G. (2023). Direct and indirect data-driven learning: An experimental study of hedging in an EFL writing class. *Language Teaching Research*, 27 (3), 660–688. DOI: 10.1177/1362168820954459
- 17 Firoozjahantigh, M., Fakhri Alamdari, E., & Marzban, A. (2021). Investigating the Effect of Process-based Instruction of Writing on the IELTS Writing Task Two Performance of Iranian EFL Learners: Focusing on Hedging & Boosting. *Cogent Education*, 8 (1). DOI: 10.1080/2331186X.2021.1881202

18 Hollmann Willem, B., Fujimoto, K., & Kuroda, M. (2024). Japanese EFL undergraduate students' use of the epistemic modal verbs may, might, and could in academic writing. *Language Learning in Higher Education*, 14 (1), 21–40. DOI: 10.1515/cercles-2023-0014

19 Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage.

Information about the authors

Shaikenova D.E — Doctoral student, Kazakh Ablai khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan; e-mail: dana.shaikenova11@gmail.com; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1342-153X>

Tulepova S.B. (contact person) — PhD, Associate Professor, SDU University, Kaskelen, Kazakhstan; e-mail: saule.tulepova@sdu.edu.kz; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0809-469X>

Chaklikova A.T. — Doctor of pedagogical sciences, Associate Professor, Kazakh Ablai khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan; e-mail: chaklikova.a@ablaikhan.kz; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7734-4667>

Bekturova M.B. — PhD, SDU University, Kaskelen, Kazakhstan; e-mail: mb.bekturova@gmail.com; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6748-9355>