

The Use of Hedging Devices in Students' Oral Presentation

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Abstract : Hedging as a kind of pragmatic competence is an essential part in achieving the goal in communication, especially in academic discourse where the process of sharing knowledge among academic community takes place. Academic discourse demands an appropriateness and modesty of an author or speaker in stating arguments, to name but few, by considering the politeness, being cautious and tentative, and differentiating personal opinions and facts in which these aspects can be achieved through hedging. This study was conducted to find the hedging devices used by students as well as to analyze how they use them in their oral presentation. Some oral presentations from English Department students of the State University of Jakarta on their Academic Presentation course final test were recorded and explored formally and functionally. It was found that the most frequent hedging devices used by students were shields from all hedging devices that students commonly used when they showed suggestion, stated claims, showed opinion to provide possible but still valid answer, and offered the appropriate solution. The researcher suggests that hedging can be familiarized in learning, since potential conflicts that is likely to occur while delivering ideas in academic contexts such as disagreement, criticism, and personal judgment can be reduced with the use of hedging. It will also benefit students in achieving the academic competence with an ability to demonstrate their ideas appropriately and more acceptable in academic discourse.

Keywords : academic discourse, hedging, hedging devices, lexical hedges, Meyer classification

Conference Title : ICELL 2015 : International Conference on English Language and Linguistics

Conference Location : Bali, Indonesia

Conference Dates : October 11-12, 2015