



## **Shift of “Certainty” in Pre- and Post-Citation Arguments: The Case of Textbooks in Applied Linguistics**

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### **Abstract**

Writing academic texts by novice researchers requires a framework and support by learning how to cite the works of others. However, compared to the studies on other academic writings, studying citations by considering certainty markers has received little attention. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the shifts of certainty markers (hedges and boosters) in pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments in Applied Linguistic Textbooks. To this end, representative samples of about 50 Applied Linguistic Textbooks in 18 different topic areas were selected randomly from among 100 Textbooks and were analyzed on the basis of Hyland's (2005) model. The researchers studied both direct/indirect and integral/non-integral citations and examined their pre- and post-citation parts in order to identify shifts of certainty that occurs in pre- and post-citation arguments. The analysis of the citations resulted in identification of nine different patterns. The study concludes with some implications for post-graduate students, novice researchers, academic writers and readers to equip themselves with discursal properties required for writing academic textbooks.

**Keywords:** Applied Linguistics, Booster, Certainty, Citation, and Hedges

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## Introduction

From mid-1960s, the issues of academic discourse have caught researchers' and scholars' eyes and grown massively. The first reason why academic discourse has become popular is because the number of students in higher education has been dramatically increased. Academic discourse is treated as language used in schools and universities, as is applied in English for Academic Purposes. The common ways to present academic discourse are through textbooks, conference presentations, dissertations, and research articles. This is the study of genre analysis and how language used within a particular setting. In *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, John Swales (1990) offers an approach to the understanding of academic discourse and provides a theoretical framework which can be applied to a variety of practical situations such as the teaching of advanced writing and English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

## Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse is extremely important in academic writing, as it shows the awareness of the scholars regarding their position within academic community. At the advanced levels of academic writing, metadiscourse has a significant role because it illuminates how the writer tries to "present and negotiate propositional information in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to a particular disciplinary community" (Hyland, 2004, p. 136). One of the most crucial aspects of every piece of academic writing is the use of metadiscourse markers as they help writers to show themselves, talk to their audiences, persuade them, and in sum have negotiation with the readers of their texts; therefore, the knowledge of metadiscourse is essential for graduate and postgraduate students. Hyland (2005) propose a theoretically robust and analytically reliable model of metadiscourse. Hyland's (2005) model comprises two general types of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional metadiscourse. According to Hyland (2005), interactive resources are those features that are used to organize propositional content in ways that "a projected target audience" is to perceive as coherent and convincing. On the other hand, interactional resources are those features that involve readers and create opportunities for them to contribute the discourse by informing them about writer's perspective towards both propositional information and readers themselves.

## Certainty Markers (Hedges and Boosters)

The concept of certainty in the context of this article differs from traditional dictionary understanding. It rather incorporates a full spectrum of confidence states ranging from doubt to complete conviction in the truth of a statement, from caution to assertion, and even reassurance. Its closest synonym to certainty is EPISTEMIC MODALITY, often defined as an evaluation of chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs occurs, will occur, or has occurred (Nuyts, 2001). The expression of doubt and certainty is central to the rhetorical and interactive character of academic writings. Certainty can also be seen as a variety of epistemic modality expressed through epistemic comments. One type of epistemic comment is certainty expressions such as *probably*, *perhaps*, *undoubtedly* that provides clues to the writer's certainty or assessment of the truth of a statement and qualify a writer's attitude towards expressed knowledge. Text can transfer the writer's certainty, or lack of

certainty, in the validity of the truth of the statements, e.g., *X must be true*, *Y thinks that X is true*, or *perhaps X is true*.

In this study, we have focused on hedges and boosters, which are the two major categories of interpersonal metadiscourse. Hedges and boosters are communicative strategies for increasing or reducing the force of statements. They convey both epistemic and affective meaning in discourse. In other words, they carry not only the writer's degree of confidence in the truth of a statement, but also an attitude toward the audience. Lexical devices used to signal the speaker's lack of confidence or to assert something tentatively are described as hedges such as *possible*, *might*, and *perhaps*. They function to show doubt and indicate that information is presented an opinion rather than fact, or it may be to convey difference, humility and respect for colleague's views (Hyland 1998). Lexical devices used to express strong conviction are described as boosters such as *clearly*, *obviously*, and *of course*.

### **Citation**

Moreover, appropriate reference to other sources is an important feature of academic writing. In writing scholarly papers, researcher writers do not want only to show their own credibility, but they make references to the works of others in order to frame and support their own work and also to establish niche for themselves within their special discourse community. According to Pecorari (2006), it is very crucial for undergraduate and postgraduate students to master academic writing skills. Form and structure are considered to be essential components in writing. Citations, then, should be one of the essential components in the process of writing a paper (Teufel, Siddhantan, & Tidhar, 2006) in order for it to be constituted as "an appropriate text" (Pecorari, 2006, p. 5). The use of citations is seen as an "important skill" (Harwood, 2010, p. 302) that is compulsory for university students to acquire in order to write their academic papers.

One of the most important aspects of good writing is making use of the ideas of other people. Readers can identify citations at least through the family name of the author, year of publication, and page number. Citation is an essential strategic weapon and it is not arbitrary convention (Bazerman, 1993). Some researchers examined different types of citations that vary in different languages and some other researchers examined the use of certainty markers in textbooks. Swales (1981, 1986, 1990) has analyzed different citation types from an applied linguistic perspective and he distinguished the differences between *non-integral* and *integral* citation forms: The former are citations that are outside the sentence, usually placed within bracket and it does not play grammatical role in the sentence, while the latter are those that play an explicit grammatical role within a sentence.

### **Related Studies**

In the following studies, the researchers tried to study the surrounding context of citation in discourse analysis.

In *The Frequency of Hedging Cues in Citation Contexts in Scientific Writing*, Mercer, DiMarco, and Kroon (2004) stressed that hedging cues tend to occur in citation contexts by doing a frequency analysis of hedging cues in citation contexts in a corpus of 985 peer-reviewed recent biology journal articles from BioMed Central corpus. They obtained

statistically significant results indicating that hedging is indeed used more frequently in citation contexts than the text as a whole. In the 1970s, researchers on citation analysis tried to examine the surrounding context of citation. Interestingly, a similar tendency was found in discourse analysis; Shaw (1992, for example, pointed out that the choice of passive vs. active was influenced by the organization of information in a text rather than any decision at the sentence level.

In some other studies, the researchers tried to categorize different kinds of citations in different academic articles, and most of the studies were based on articles, not textbooks.

Jalilifar (2012), for instance, compared the role of integral and non-integral citations in the introduction section of Iranian Master's theses and international RAs. Findings of this investigation demonstrated the higher frequency of citations in Master's theses than RAs, where integral citation distribution outnumbered the non-integral citation. Vassileva (2001) studied certainty markers in two different disciplines and tried to compare them. He concentrated on the expressions of commitment (i.e. boosters) and detachment (i.e. hedges) in Bulgarian and English academic texts and found out that Bulgarians used more boosters and less hedges than native English writers while writing in English. A rather similar study was carried out in the use of hedging and boosting in the abstracts of applied linguistics between Chinese and English academic articles by Guangwei & Cao (2011).

Reviewing the related literature revealed an evident gap in the previous studies. As stated so far, there are various studies on certainty markers and citations, but they are studied separately and the researchers did not study certainty markers (hedges and boosters) by considering pre- and post-citation parts. Studying citation has been the subject of many research articles, not textbooks; however, no studies have been conducted on to investigate certainty markers in citation part in Applied Linguistic Textbooks. Because of the scarcity of research on studying shifts of certainty in pre- and post-citation arguments in Applied Linguistic Textbooks, this study limited itself to this area of study. To fill this gap, in this study, the researchers have tried their best to focus on MDMs, particularly certainty markers in pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments in one discourse discipline in Academic field. Textbooks, as main parts of the whole curriculum in EAP courses, play an important role in thriving the objectives of such program.

### **Research focus**

The present study aims to achieve the following research objectives:

1. To examine the overall degree of certainty by the study of corpora in pre- and post-citation parts and also considers how certainty changes in pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments.
2. To reveal the distribution of various forms of hedges and boosters in pre- and post-citation arguments that are used in the study of corpora.

The significance of certainty markers becomes more evident as far as academic writing is concerned. In order to be efficient readers or writers of academic texts, it is important to be able to make differences between facts and opinions. Without the presence of Certainty markers, the academic writers would be unable to formulate statements

describing new information or creating different viewpoints through persuasion and negotiation of information.

The study attempts to answer the following central research question:

Q: How does the degree of certainty change in pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments?

Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H: The degree of certainty changes in pre- and post-citation pieces of argument.

### **Method**

The present study aimed at exploring metadiscourse markers particularly certainty markers (hedges and boosters) in Applied Linguistic Textbooks through Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of metadiscourse markers, in an effort to find out the degree of the shifts in pre- and post-citation arguments. The following is a brief account of the methodology which includes the corpus, the model of analysis, the identification of citations and the procedure.

### **Corpus**

The selection of corpus was limited due to the fact that detailed analysis of textbooks was time consuming and needed a lot of effort. Taking these points into account, the researchers randomly selected and analyzed a corpus of about 50 available Applied Linguistic Textbooks in 18 different topic areas from among 100 Applied Linguistic Textbooks. To do so, the frequencies were calculated per 160 samples by considering different patterns. In other words, our results highlighted some interesting findings in the evolution of certainty markers (hedges and boosters) in pre- and post-citation parts. Applied Linguistics is using what we know about a language, how it is learned, and how it is used in order to achieve some purpose or solve some problem in the real world. Those purposes are many and varied, as is evident in definition given by Wilkins (1999, p.7). According to Wilkins (1999, p.7), Applied Linguistics is concerned with increasing understanding of the role of language in human affairs.

### **American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) 2002 Conference, which list 18 topic areas:**

Language and its acquisition	language and assessment
Language and brain	language and cognition
Language and culture	language and ideology
Language and instruction	language and interaction
Language and listening	language and media
Language and policy	language and reading
Language and research methodology	language and society
Language and speaking	language and technology
Language and interpretation	Language and writing

### **Model of Analysis**

A recent taxonomy of metadiscourse formulated by Hyland (2005) which appears in Table 1 below was chosen as the model for this study. All the items listed in the model under

hedges and boosters used during analysis. There are two main reasons for using this taxonomy over the proposed ones:

The first reason is that Hyland’s emphasis is on the function of hedge and booster words, rather than their parts of speech. The second reason is that this taxonomy is more organized and easy to detect, which makes it more practical than other taxonomies.

**Table 1.** Hyland Taxonomy of Metadiscourse (2005)

Category	Function	Examples
<b>Textual metadiscourse</b>		
Logical connectives	Express the connection among ideas and proposition	However; but
Frame markers	Refer to speech act and sequence	To consider; finally
Endophoric markers	Refer to information in different parts of the text	In section 2; above
Evidential	Show the source of information	As X states
Code glosses	Help reader to get the meaning clearly	For example
<b>Interpersonal metadiscourse</b>		
Hedges	Express writers’ uncertainty of the truth-value of proposition	Maybe; perhaps
Emphatic/Boosters	Express writers’ certainty of the truth-value of the proposition	Definitely; clearly
Attitude marker	Show writers’ attitudes and feelings	Amazingly
Relation marker	Show writer-reader interactions	Reader; note that
Person marker	Express the writers’ presence	We; my; our

### Identification of Citations

In this study, the researchers studied integral, non-integral, direct, and indirect citations and tried to find out the shifts of certainty markers in pre- and post-citation part of these citations. Therefore, being familiar with various kinds of citations was needed in this study. Based on Swale (1981, 1986, 1990), the researchers have pioneered the study of citations analysis in Applied Linguistic Textbooks and created clear formal distinctions between non-integral and integral citation forms: the former deals with citations that are outside the sentence, usually placed within brackets, and which play no explicit grammatical role in the sentence, while the latter incorporates those citations that play an explicit grammatical role within a sentence. The citation at the beginning of this paragraph is an integral citation.

Direct and Indirect citations are also studied in this research. When directly quoting from a source, the author’s last name, the year of publication, and the page number where the quote was found need to be present in the citation. When the writer is quoting or paraphrasing a passage written by one scholar or writer that is referred to within the work

of another scholar or writer (an indirect source), include the original author's name in the text and cite the author of the indirect source within the parenthetical reference using "as cited in". By crediting both the original author and the author of the indirect source, the reader can easily locate the quoted passage.

### **Procedure**

In order to examine the shifts of certainty markers (Hedges and Boosters) in pre- and post-citation arguments, Hyland's (2005) categories of metadiscourse markers were used. About 50 available Applied Linguistic Textbooks were selected randomly among 100 Applied Linguistic Textbooks in different topic field. They were also analyzed according to the occurrence of certainty markers (hedges and boosters) and their shifts in pre- and post-citation parts. The pre- and post-citation parts in arguments were analyzed manually and the occurrences of each hedges and boosters were considered so that the researchers would be able to explore nine new patterns based on analyzing the samples. Then the section in which hedges and boosters occurred was documented and analyzed by reading the surrounding part of the citations. The researchers detected how words and phrases were used in the corpus. On the whole, the analyses in our study were qualitative rather than quantitative. That is why we didn't perform statistical computations. In addition, the researchers tried to pinpoint the function of hedges and boosters played in the context of use.

### **Results and Discussion**

In order to investigate the aforementioned hypothesis, a number of inferential statistical were used. All in-depth analyses of the samples and analyzing certainty markers (hedges and boosters) in pre- and post-citation arguments were ascertained in terms of frequency of certainty markers and, as a result, nine patterns were found.

**Table 2.** Quantitative Analysis of Certainty Markers (Hedges and Boosters) in pre- and post-citation parts

No	Pattern	Frequency	Percentage (100%)	Total Number of Samples (160)
1.	Hedges-Citation-Hedges	54	33.75%	.....
2.	Boosters-Citation-Boosters	6	3.75%	.....
3.	Hedges-Citations-Boosters	13	8.125%	.....
4.	Boosters-Citation-Hedges	15	9.375%	.....
5.	Hedges/Boosters-Citation-Hedges/Boosters	8	5%	.....
6.	Hedges-Citation	10	6.25%	.....
7.	Citation-Hedges	9	5.625%	.....
8.	Boosters-Citation	5	3.125%	.....
9.	Citation-Boosters	3	1.875%	.....
10.	Other Patterns	37	23.125%	.....

Looking at Table 2, one can clearly see that the frequency of the first pattern is more than the other patterns and it can be clearly illustrated that the author is open for discussion or even open to being proven wrong. Furthermore, it reduces the personal responsibility involved in making a statement, since it is impossible to be one hundred percent sure of something. As shown in the Table, the first pattern was the most frequent one. For instance, a total of 54 were identified in 160 samples. Based on the research question that was raised, the researchers provide the findings and discussion. The researchers presented nine different patterns, explained the function of certainty markers based on patterns and then gave comment for each pattern. Analysis of the corpora in terms of pre- and post-citation and analyzing certainty markers (hedges and boosters) in pre- and post-citation part resulted in the identification of a number of patterns as summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Nine Patterns for Certainty Markers

Pre-citation	Citation	Post-citation	Function
1. Hedges	-----	Hedges	Show uncertainty to truth of claim
2. Booster	-----	Booster	Express commitment to claim , presenting a strong claim
3. Hedges	-----	Booster	Begin with tentative statements and moving to accepted claim.
4. Booster	-----	Hedges	Begin with accepted argument and moving to tentative conclusion
5. Hedges-Booster-Hedges-Booster	-----	Hedges-Booster-Hedges-Booster	Balance between hedges and boosters, modally harmonic
6. Hedges	-----	No certainty marker	Down-toners in pre-citation part
7. No certainty marker	-----	Hedges	Down-toners in post-citation part
8. Booster	-----	No certainty marker	Emphatics in pre-citation part
9. No certainty marker	-----	Booster	Emphatics in post-citation part

### **Hedges. Citation. Hedges**

➤ Teacher silence is, *perhaps*, the unique and, for many traditionally trained language teachers, the most demanding aspect of Silent Way. Teachers are exhorted to resist their long-standing commitment to model, remodel, assist, and direct desired student responses. Stevick defines the Silent Way teacher's task as (a) to teach, (b) to test, and (c) to get out of the way (Stevick, 1980, p.56). Although this *may not seem* to constitute a radical alternative to standard teaching practice, the details of the steps the teacher is expected to follow are unique to the Silent Way (p. 85).

The use of hedges elements is apparently meant to avoid an assertion. The writer used hedges in pre- and post-citation argument and the reason for applying hedges in a text is because it reveals writer's uncertainty and cautious in a text. Some of the subcategories of hedges like probability adverbs (*perhaps*), epistemic verbs (*seem*), and modal verbs (*may*) used in the example. *May* is used as a modal verb to convey vagueness and politeness in



order to avoid confrontation between author and audience. In this manner, there is still room for negotiation. In this example, we found three tokens of hedging elements. In all these hedging elements, the author seems to modulate his statement with the noticeable intention of not wishing to sound too sharp.

### **Boosters. Citation. Boosters**

The degree of certainty does not change in the following example. Boosters seem to be used in order to express a high degree of confidence in the indication provided. In other cases, boosters function as rhetorical devices used as a generally accepted idea or fact. The writers use boosters to show full commitment to his/her statements. By employing boosters, the writers leave little room for the readers' own interpretation and close down alternatives or conflicting views. In the following typical case, the writer employs a series of boosters in pre- and post-citation part to underline the conviction he/she wishes to attach to his argument. Hence, the writers state their claims with assurance and this certainty extended in post-citation part in which there is no room for negotiation.

➤ And while it was *clearly* a precursor to what we now call communicative Language Teaching (see Chapter 3), as a syllabus it still presented language as an inventory of units-functional rather than grammatical units-but units nonetheless. Communicative competence implies a set of strategies for getting messages sent and received and for negotiating meaning as an interactive participant in discourse, whether spoken or written. Therefore, the danger that NFS could simply be “structural lamb served up as notional-functional mutton” (Campbell, 1978, p.18) was ever-present. However, the NFS did *indeed* set the stage for bigger and better things (p.33).

We find the adverbs *clearly* and *indeed* that are adverbial epistemic. *Clearly/indeed* are not hedge candidates because the degree expressed by them approaches the upper limit and allows little room for modification. These certainty markers are closer to the polar and they do not occur in the medium position. Two booster elements (*clearly, indeed*) convince the readers to the fact and it is used to assure his interlocutor (the readership).

### **Hedges. Citation. Boosters**

These findings contrasting to other models limit the writer's commitment to the more general claim. The researchers found hedges in pre-citation part and boosters in post-citation arguments that indicate that the writers move from tentativeness to accepted argument. Hence, the writers begin with tentative conclusions and then moves to a safely accepted claim. It is clear that in this case, the writers talk cautiously and then they talk with more certainty or assurance.

➤ In a total turnaround from the view that learner errors are to be prevented, some applied linguists have been *suggested* that students *should* be encouraged to make errors by being 'led down the garden path'. For example, students *might* be given a rule without being told that it has exceptions. It is assumed that when students do overgeneralize the rule and commit an error, the negative feedback they receive will be more successful in their acquiring the exceptions than if they were given a list of exceptions in advance (Tomasello and Herron, 1989). *Of course*, all of this is in vain, if learner noticing and uptake do not

occur after the feedback (p. 31). The use of auxiliaries like *should* and *might* that is placed in pre-citation part shows uncertainty in the view of alternative perspectives regarding the interpretation of the analysis. The author is making a recommendation to the readership; he is also being careful of not conveying a rigid description. As the author used another down toner (*suggested*) in pre-citation, he prefers to leave room for negotiation. Besides, the writer is trying to modulate his statement by not affirming that his research does actually raise key issues, he is conveying politeness by adopting a posture and willing to accept other points of view. Emphatic or strengthener such as *of course* was found in post-citation. It indicates assurance on the writer's part. Upgraders are mentioned as exerting a strong influence on their decision. It indicates that the impact of tokens in pre-citation was not so strong and the writer does not totally commit himself/herself to the truth of his/her statement but another token that is called intensifiers found in post-citation arguments which show that the arguments become stronger and the authors do not leave room for readers to negotiate.

### **Boosters. Citation. Hedges**

Certainly markers (boosters) found in pre-citation express commitment to claim. Boosters that are used by the writer serve to strengthen propositions and show the writer's commitment to his/her statements. Certainty markers offer writers a medium to engage with their readers and create interpersonal solidarity. Therefore, the writers begin with what can be safely accepted in pre-citation arguments and then moves on to highlight novelty and draw more tentative conclusion in post-citation argument.

➤ A number of other studies have *clearly demonstrated* that adolescents and even every young child are quite aware of language differences. Giles and Powesland (1975, p.102) report on one study in which an investigator who could speak in either a Birmingham accent or RP spoke to two groups of 17-year-olds about psychology, using one accent with one group and the other with the other. When the students were asked certain questions after the two talks, it was *apparent* that the investigator was rated higher in his RP guise so far as his intelligence was concerned. Moreover, students wrote more to him and about him in this guise than in his Birmingham guise. *Apparently*, even though many students themselves do not use an RP accent, and *may* say they do not like it (pp.350, 351).

In the following example, compound certainty marker (*It is clearly demonstrated that*) which is called double certainty marker was used by the writer in order to let writers close down the argument, and also head off conflicting views and express their certainty in what they say. By closing down possible alternatives, boosters emphasize certainty and construct rapport by marking involvement with the topic and solidarity with an audience, taking a joint position against other voices (Hyland, 1999). Softeners such as *apparent* and *apparently* are placed after citation so that they are used for diminishing the strength of the utterances. Expression of uncertainty and doubt are words that make the meaning fuzzy and fuzzier. Writers use hedges to convey vagueness and tentativeness to make sentences more acceptable to the reader.

### Hedges and Boosters. Citation. Hedges and Boosters

The analysis of pre- and post-citation arguments shows that the writers use different certainty markers such as hedges and boosters in order to strengthen or weaken their speech. In the following examples both hedges and boosters are used in both pre- and post-citation arguments. These examples illustrate common distributional pattern where either hedges or boosters tend to cluster together. Apparently, there is a balance between hedges and boosters in this part. To present the findings, the writer didn't use boosters all the time to show his/her confidence. However, too many boosters will give an impression of imposing and no respect for the readers. The readers may feel too imposed to accept what the writer expresses. Thus, keeping a dynamic balance between boosters and hedges is quite important.

➤ Polite language *could, of course*, also be used by members of the upper ranks to distinguish themselves from their social inferiors, which Burke suggests may have been “a reaction to the decline of ‘external evidence of rank’” (2000, 47). The old dissenting social groups drew a sharp distinction between “candour”, which they valued, and “cant”, which they condemned. Such possession of civility and education *could* be *shown* by the mastery of, for example, code-switching practices between English and foreign languages, as ArjaNurmi and PaiviPahta show in their article for this book (p. 16).

Auxiliaries or modal verbs such as, *could* is generally used in pre- and post-citation in order to express degree of certainty. Besides, they are often used by writers to distance themselves from the readers to be indirect, unclear, and vague. Lexical verb like *show* and an adverb such as *of course* (boosters) are found in this example. Hedges and boosters are used in pre- and post-citation part so that the writer can balance his/her statement.

### Hedges. Citation

The notions of hedging or hedges devices, down-toners are used interchangeably for present purposes. They are communicative strategies that are used to reduce the power of expressions. Hedges also help writers to show personal kindness via willingness behind a shield or mitigation. The meaning of metadiscourse markers (hedges) involves a lower degree of certainty in the truth of the proposition. The following example includes pre-citation and citation part, and hedges are found in pre-citation arguments. There is no post-citation part because the theme or the topic is terminated in citation part.

➤ Learners are *typically* expected to take an MI inventory and to develop their own MI profiles based on the inventory. “The more awareness students have of their own intelligences and how they work, the more they will know how to use that intelligence [sic] to access the necessary information and knowledge from a lesson” (Christison, 1997, 9). All of this is to enable learners to benefit from instructional approaches by reflecting on their own learning (p. 120).

Holmes argues that epistemic modality is expressed in the form of different grammatical classes, modal verbs, lexical verbs, and adverbial constructions (sentential adverbs). In the above example, adverbial construction such as *typically* is used. Hedges let writers open a discursive space where readers can dispute their interpretation based on the text. It lets the readers interpret based on their own view. This current study reveals a similar finding that shields are probably the most preferred hedging devices that are used by the writers. The expressions of hedged utterances are indirect, vague, or unclear. The writers likely used different kinds of certainty markers in pre-citation part to show their sensitivity to other's feeling and to establish a collaborative floor.

### **Citation. Hedges**

In this section, the researchers have selected hedges in post-citation part. The example doesn't contain pre-citation part and it just contains citation and post-citation argument. Variety of certainty markers (hedges) are used in post-citation part that are illustrative and the researchers selected them based on a model proposed by Hyland (2005).

➤ Facebook users, for instance, are not only making identity statements to their visible audience ('friends'), but also to invisible parties who want to sell their products and services-hence for example the phenomenon of gender-specific advertising that those presenting their gender in their profile get (see also Jaspers, 2010).

Thus, while our first impression of virtual identity processes *may* be that of bewildering Diversity and freedom, a closer look yields a *somewhat* different picture: rules are designed and followed, people follow explicit and implicit norms and find themselves faced with non-negotiable platforms, *often* with unforeseen consequences. (pp. 270, 271)

As it is clear from the above examples, the writers use different certainty markers (hedges) and they mostly use hedging devices (Shield/especially modals) in their example. Among the modals, "*may*" is the most frequent used one. Shield includes three parts: modals, probability adverbs, and semi-auxiliary and as some of them are used in this example. Approximative adverbs such as *somewhat* and adverb of frequency like *often* are used in this example. Metadiscourse markers such as hedges indicate the writer's unwillingness to present propositional information categorically and include down-toners which reduce force of statement that decrease responsibility for truth.

### **Boosters. Citation**

In this section, certainty markers (boosters) or emphatics are used in pre-citation argument. The example includes pre-citation and citation part. The researchers tried to study those examples in which the writer states his/her claim about the same theme and there was not topic shift in pre-citation and citation part; therefore, topic integrity was one of the important factors to consider. Boosters are used in pre-citation parts. These devices reinforce truth value through expressions of certainty and emphasis.

➤ The abstract generative system of grammar that Chomsky has proposed (which he has frequently updated) is *actually* a theory of linguistic competence. He makes "a fundamental

distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations)" (1965, p. 4) and he is concerned only with discovering the mental reality (i. e., competence) underlying the actual behavior (i. e., performance) of a speaker-hearer (p. 6).

Boosters, in contrast to hedges, are words such as *surely*, *actually*, *of course*, and *it is evident that*, which allow the writer to close down alternatives, head off conflicting views and express certainty of his/her claim. In this example, adverbs like *actually* is used. This emphatic doesn't show the writers' hesitation to present their findings and study. Instead, they show confidence and eagerness to present what they have found.

### **Citation. Boosters**

The boosters as a sub-category of interpersonal metadiscourse were used in post-citation arguments. They have been started with citation part and extended by post-citation argument. Thus, the writer started with a topic in citation part and its claim has been strengthened by using different kinds of certainty markers in order to show strong conviction of its claim. They strengthen the utterance's illocutionary force that is the opposite of the down-toners. Boosters in post-citation part allow the authors to assert a proposition with certainty, and represent a strong claim about a state of affairs. These metadiscourses are significant communicative resources to attain persuasion in different fields and particular genres of academic writing.

➤ But still, applied linguists are left with no option but to make use of the still developing knowledge for drawing useful and useable ideas for language teaching. According to Corder (1984), there are those who believe that second language acquisition research is still at such a preliminary stage that it is premature to base any proposals for language teaching upon it yet. There are others, among whom I count myself, who believe that it is the task of the applied linguist to make practical use of whatever knowledge is available at the time. We cannot constantly be waiting to see what is around the next corner (p. 58).

*Indeed*, without waiting to see what is around the next corner, applied linguists have, from time to time, readily conceived and constructed a succession of language-teaching methods based on insights from whatever research findings that were available to them (p. 80).

The argument is thereby strengthened by claiming solidarity with the community. The lexicon used as boosters in this example is *Indeed*. Boosters also known as emphatic or certainty markers according to Hyland (2005) and they are used by the writer to show their assurance and caution. In this example, the writer doesn't give space for negotiations and representations that is a sense of politeness in the discourse.

To summarize the results of the study, the researchers studied different kinds of citations such as direct/indirect and integral/non-integral. The analysis of pre- and post-citation arguments in the area of Applied Linguistic Textbooks revealed that the shifts of certainty may or may not occur. Our hypothesis formulated that the degree of certainty changes in pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments. But we found out that this is not the case because the researchers came across with the citations in which the shifts didn't occur. The researchers studied corpus and analyzed pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments and

explored nine patterns. Among nine patterns, the study revealed that the shifts do not always occur. In the first and second patterns, the shifts did not occur and it showed that the writer did not strengthen or weaken his/her claim. In addition, the degree of certainty did not change. By considering the third and fourth patterns, the degree of certainty changed in pre- and post-citation pieces of arguments. The writers either strengthened or reduced the force of their statements. Both hedges and boosters are used in the fifth pattern so that the writers balanced their claims in order to persuade their readers to continue reading. Other patterns showed that the certainty markers may occur either in pre- or post-citation arguments. To answer our research question, qualitative research was conducted. Due to importance of citations and their function, this study has been conducted. Paying considerable attention to citation in academic writing would encourage readers to examine the different types of citations (direct/indirect, integral/not-integral), and also it helps them to become aware of the functions of citation within the text. Citations are the most important strategy to effectively identify a gap and convince audience as to the necessity of a new study (Barton, 1993). This study that is based on citation was carried out to offer the readers an opportunity to determine whether the original source of a claim was justified or whether that claim is being accurately represented. Besides, it helps the readers to be aware of hedges and boosters in pre- and post-citation arguments so that they know where the writers use their claims directly or indirectly and also to know where they talk with certainty. Both the readers and the writers should be aware of these linguistic materials due to the importance of certainty markers and the readers' consciousness on how these certainty markers can be utilized is also important. Citations are the primary formal means by which findings are communicated. In this study the researchers tried to study citations because the citations have often been written by a noted author so it is important to recognize whether the writers talk with assurance or tentativeness. The present study helps the readers to be aware of not only different functions of the citations but also certainty markers (hedges and boosters) and their functions; therefore, by considering these factors, the readers can understand the writer's message clearly.

## **Conclusion**

In this study, the researchers have explored some of the lexical devices (hedging and boosting) with regard to pre- and post-citation part in order to show that the expression of doubt and certainty is central to the negotiation of claims. The writers tended to use variety of certainty markers (hedges and boosters) in the area of Applied Linguistic and lexical and non-lexical devices such as modal verbs, adjectives, and adverbs were used. Considering the above, it can be concluded that familiarizing and involving students with the rule of academic writing may improve their writing and reading ability and can help them to know what kind of discourse they have to produce and understand in academic setting. The results of the study can be beneficial for postgraduate students of Applied Linguistics (English Teaching, English Literature, and English Translation). It is crucial for instructors to teach MDMs to master in their writings. Furthermore, the findings of this paper might help ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) instructors to raise students' awareness about using hedges and boosters and their role in

citation parts appropriately. The result of the present study is also helpful for M.A. students who need to write dissertations and research papers. The findings of this research would help to keep masters and professors aware of the rhetorical differences among these sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Though this study helped the novice researchers and post graduate students regarding the metadiscourse markers, it suffers from some limitations. First, the qualitative analysis of markers was done by one rater, so in order to get a more comprehensive picture the inter-rater reliability of the samples can be confirmed. Corpus of the study was limited to Applied Linguistic Textbooks and didn't study certainty markers in another field, so other fields of study such as literature, science or any other research studies can be considered as corpus study for further researches. Therefore, other researchers can address these issues in order to fill the gap. The analysis of data in this study was limited to exploration of certainty markers (Hedges and Boosters) used in Applied Linguistic Textbooks in pre- and post-citation arguments, and the texts were collected as corpus; some other metadiscourse markers such as code glosses, self-mention...can be studied by other researchers. This study is conducted on Applied Linguistic Textbooks written by male and female authors. Authors' age has been certainly ignored in this research. Thus, another researcher can study Applied Linguistic Textbooks by considering the authors' gender and age.

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## Appendices

### The List of Studied Applied Linguistic Textbooks

1. Alasdair, N. A. (2012) Multilingual theory and practice in applied linguistics, *Proceeding of the 45<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the British association for applied linguistics*. University of Southampton.
2. Atkinson, D. (2011). *Alternative approaches to second language acquisition*. New York, 10016.
3. Brown, D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*, (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson Education, NY 10606.
4. Brown, D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco State University.



5. Broughton, G., Brumfit, F., R., Hill, P., & Pincas, A. (2003). *Teaching English as a foreign language*. New York: University of London Institute of Education.
6. Chastain, K. (1988, 1976). *Developing second-language skills theory and practice* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). USA: University of Virginia.
7. Mouton, De Gruyter. (2011). *Applied Linguistic Review*, 2.
8. Block, D. D., & Cameron, D. (2001). *Globalization and language teaching*. London: Routledge.
9. Fulcher, G., & Davidson, F. (2007). *Language testing and assessment: An advanced resource book*. London and New York, Routledge.
10. George, H., & Polzenhagen, W. (2009). *World Englishes: A cognitive sociolinguistic approach*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
11. Kumaravadivelu, B. (2008). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod..* USA: San Jose State University.
12. Kelly, L.G. (1969). *25 centuries of language teaching: An inquiry into the science, art, and development of language teaching methodology, 500 B.C.-1969*
13. Pritchard, A. (2008). *Ways of learning: Learning theories and learning styles in the classroom*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
14. Pêcheux, M. (1982). *Language, semantics and ideology*. University of Pittsburgh.
15. Pahta, P., Nevala, M., Nurmi, A., & Palander-Collin., A. (2007). *Social roles and language practices in late modern English*. Universities of Tampere and Helsinki.
16. Risager, K. (2007). *Language and culture pedagogy: From a national to a transnational paradigm*. Multilingual matters LTD.
17. Richards, J. & Rodgers, S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
18. Sunderland, J. (2006). *Language and gender: An advanced resource book*. USA, Routledge.
19. Sarosdy, J., Bencze, F., Poor, Z., & Vadnay, M. (2006). *Applied linguistics 1 for BA students in English*.
20. Wardhaugh, R. (2006). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. *Blackwell Textbooks in Linguistics*; 4. Blackwell Publishing: [www.blackwellpublishing.com](http://www.blackwellpublishing.com).