

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusion, pedagogical implications, and recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Conclusions

It was suggested from the findings that Indonesian ELT learners students prefer tentative expression rather than performing confidence, as how it is reflected in the more predominant use of hedges in the Indonesian ELT learners' thesis.

Across the whole corpus, interestingly, modal verbs were the most frequently used grammatical category of hedging devices. As the principal means of expressing hedging in English academic discourse, modal auxiliaries express tentativeness and possibility. They are therefore central to academic writing in which it is essential to present unproven proposition with caution and precision. They play a central role negotiation of claims for new knowledge and i gaining ratification for claims for powerful peer group by allowing writers to present statements with appropriate accuracy, caution, and humility, expressing possibility rather than certainty and prudence rather than overconfidence (Salagar-Meyer, 2011).

On the other way around, the occurrences of boosters in ELT learners academic written discourse were predominantly occur within the category of emphatics, a boosting device that serves to emphasize the force of certain utterances. in text, the purpose of emphatics is similar to that of amplifiers and has the effect of reinforcing the truth value of a proposition or claim of the writers' conviction. In spoken or written discourse, emphatics mark an informal register and are more characteristic of speech and conversational genre than of formal written discourse (Chafe, 1994).

In general terms, an examination of the occurrences of hedges and boosters points to the fact that ELT learners employ a severely limited range of

boosting devices. These findings are further supported by prevalence of conversational intensifiers and exaggerated statements that are ubiquitous in informal speech but are rare and actually inappropriate to be excessively used in academic writing.

Meanwhile, in terms of the impacts of the use of hedges and boosters towards the quality and the rhetorical validity of the arguments, hedges play significant role in minimizing the claim in the contrastive view proposed in the *rebuttal* element. As rebuttal stands for the counter claim put by the end of the idea, the possible contradictive idea related to the main claim needs to be proposed, therefore, the use of hedges are highly important. On the other way around, the use of boosters are also significant as it serves to strengthen claims in certain elements where it is necessary to put maximum conviction, such as in the element of *claim* and *data*. In the element of *claim* that serves to present the main idea of the whole paragraph, a strong thesis statement is necessary. Meanwhile, in the element of *data*, a scientific statistical data to underlie the preceding claim. Expression that presents factuality is what makes the *data* convincing enough to the readers.

Despite the fact that various studies regarding hedges and boosters have appeared to the surface, several inappropriate uses of hedges and boosters still occurred in students' academic works. These might be caused by the teachers' tendency to merely teach English focusing on the forms only, without considering the pragmatic functions of expression being taught.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

As suggested by Hyland that more attention should be paid to the use of hedges and boosters especially for the non-native English speakers who often find them hard and are unfamiliar with these important interpersonal devices, (Hyland & Milton, 1997) some pedagogical implications should be noted by teachers, materials developers and especially Indonesian ELT learners who want to excel in producing academic writings. There are a number of useful pedagogical implications that can be made from the findings of this study.

First and foremost, Indonesian ELT learners should be made aware that academic writings are similar to argumentative essays in the way that they both need writers' evaluation and judgment toward their propositions, or specifically, in the case of thesis, involve the reflection of their own experiences. The students should be taught the differences between observed facts and interpretation or opinions. Therefore, it is important for materials developers to create specific lessons with authentic examples from the actual thesis to help the students develop strategies to distinguish facts from opinions. Second, based on the results which showed that Indonesian ELT learners employed boosters less frequently than they employed hedges. To enable the teachers to effectively teach how to use hedges and boosters, the materials developers should include in the lessons a complete list of hedges and boosters in various grammatical forms, with the interchangeability of the meanings of epistemic adverb and adjective boosters being highlighted. The purpose of this lesson is to enable the students to use the variations of hedges and boosters at their disposal. However, most importantly, L2 learners as academic writers should focus on key differences between the types of lexical and syntactic features that differentiate formal writing and informal conversational registers. This also leads to the third suggested method of teaching hedges and boosters. To enable the students to reach a full mastery of grammatical forms and patterns, it is essential that the materials developers incorporate the variety of expressions and the comprehensive range of meanings, regarding both the pragmatic forms and functions from the actual contexts thesis, into the lesson. Rather than encouraging beginner academic writers to master semantic complexities, teachers could consider the way of focusing on high frequency items or concentrating the early EFL stages on studying the frequently appeared expression from any grammatical classes. are used with dummy subjects and abstract rhetors (i.e., it was shown that, there seemed to be, the project showed that, the project seemed) to avoid the authorial presence and to emphasize on the propositional contents.

Lastly, materials developers should consider producing authentic and practical practices for hedges and boosters that enable students to easily apply these hedging and boosting strategies into their own writing. For example,

rewriting or paraphrasing exercises that ask students to replace boosting expressions with hedges proved to be helpful for L2 students to use tentative expressions more appropriately (Salager-Meyer, 1994). Moreover, tasks that ask students to discuss the removal and replacement of hedges and boosters could be a good starting point for them to see the importance of the epistemic meanings and the varied degrees of certainty in a text (Hyland & Milton, 1997).

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research:

5.3.1 The limited range of ELT learners' thesis analyzed in this study may restrict the ability to generalize the findings to a wider population. To add knowledge about generalizability of the findings, further research into the use of hedges and boosters in the Indonesian ELT learners' thesis should compare the native speaker works with those of Indonesian ELT learners' learners who have low level and those who have high level of English language proficiency.

5.3.2 The limited number of the ELT learners' thesis may not solidify the quantitative results, especially in regard to the frequencies and the grammatical categories of hedges and boosters. A significantly larger sample of the thesis would be advised for future research to make the discrepancy of the use of hedges and boosters.