

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the study, research questions, objectives of the research, significance of the research and outline of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Writing skripsi is compulsory for the students of English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Muria Kudus University, especially for those who are going to finish their study. For those students, it seems that writing skripsi is a difficult thing to do since it is different from writing ordinarily.

Skripsi belongs to academic writing, that is writing conducted in academic world which aims to inform rather than to entertain. In any kind of academic writing, especially skripsi writing, it is necessary to make decisions about our stance on a particular subject or the strength of the claims we are making. For doing so, we can use a technique which is known by linguists as a “hedge”. Hedges in academic discourse are very significant. They are used to encode the significant speaker’s opinion. This is because hedges relate the propositional information in the text and the writer’s factual interpretation (Salager-Meyer : 1997).

Salager- Meyer (1997) investigates hedges as threat minimizing strategies, strategies to deal with certainty of knowledge which include politeness strategies in the social interactions and negotiation between writers (speakers) and readers (listeners). It means that speakers or writers who present a claim to the

scientific community try to convince their readers or hearers of the relevance of their findings.

There are three reasons why hedges are used, they are: threat minimizing strategies to signal distance and to avoid absolute statements, strategies to accurately reflect the certainty of knowledge and politeness strategies in the social interaction and negotiation between writers and editors.

In academic writing, writers need to present their claims cautiously, accurately, and modestly to meet the expectation of corresponding discourse community, to gain acceptance for their statement, and to enter dialogue of corresponding discourse community. So, the connection between hedges and academic writing is hedges can serve as interactive elements which bridge between text information and author's interpretation.

Several studies dealing with the use of hedging had been conducted by researchers. One of the study was conducted by Hyland (1996). His study on hedging in academic writing revealed that generally non- native writers (NNWs) lacked their ability to hedge their claims. They often had difficulties in expressing their commitment to and detachment from their propositions in academic writing. Hyland further states that the inability to hedge statements appropriately is an obstacle to the NNWs to participate in academic world, which has always been dominated by English.

A study on the use of hedges by Indonesian undergraduate students as second language learners was conducted by Suryani (2008). Suryani who investigated the use of hedges in the undergraduate skripsi of the English Education Department students of Muria Kudus University just focused on the Introduction and

Discussion sections. The research then motivated us to conduct further study on the use of hedges which focuses on Review to Related Literature and Method of the Research sections.

Based on the description above, the problem that needs to be researched is *The Types of Hedges in the Skripsi Review of Related Literature and Method of the Research Section Written by the Students of English Education Department , Teacher Training and Education Faculty , Muria Kudus University.*

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Specifically the problems can be formulated as follows :

1. What types of hedges are used in the Skripsi Review of Related Literature Section of the Students of English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Muria Kudus University?
2. What types of hedges are used in the Skripsi Method of the Research Section of the Students of English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Muria Kudus University?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows :

1. To identify the types of hedges used in the English Skripsi Review of Related Literature Section of the Students of English Education Department , Teacher Training and Education Faculty , Muria Kudus University.
2. To identify the types of hedges used in the English Skripsi Method of the Research Section of the Students of English Education Department , Teacher Training and Education Faculty , Muria Kudus University.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of the study hopefully will be useful both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the study will give contribution to the studies on discourse field especially dealing with hedges study where such studies are still rarely done especially in Indonesia. The result of the study can also give description of the students of the English Education Department Program of Muria Kudus University in using hedges.

Practically, this study hopefully will be useful for both university students and lecturers. For university students, they can have more knowledge about hedges. For the lecturers, this study might inform them the importance of the use of hedges especially in academic writing.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

Research should be limited in its scope, so the problem which is investigated not too wide. In this research the writers focused on identifying hedges used in the Skripsi Review to Related Literature Section and Method of the Research Sections written by the English Education Department Students, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Muria Kudus University from 2007 until 2011.

1.6 Operational Definition

Definition of the terms are presented here to avoid misunderstanding and to explain what terms mean in this study:

1. The Types Hedges refer to the seven expression that represent the most widely use of hedges in scientific English called “strategic stereotypes” as stated by Salager-meyer (1997 :109), such as modal auxiliary verbs, modal lexical verbs, Adjectival, adverbial and nominal modal phrases, approximators of degree, quantity, frequency and time, introductory phrases, if clause, and compound hedges.
2. Review of Related Literature of the English Skripsi is the second chapter which has to be written in writing English skripsi which has purpose to contextualize the student’s research; to describe and synthesize the major studies related to the topic of the research and also to demonstrate the relation between the student’s project and what else has been done in the particular area.

3. Method of the research is the third section which should be written in writing English skripsi which has purpose to describe how the research will be conducted, and how the data will be obtained and analyzed