

Maneerat Sukhanindr 2008: Hedging in Research Articles about English Language Teaching Written by Thai and Native Speakers of English. Master of Arts (English for Specific Purposes), Major Field: English for Specific Purposes, Department of Foreign Languages. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Bussba Tonthong, Ph.D. 151 pages.

This research aims to explore hedging expressions used by Thai and native English authors in a corpora of research articles. These hedging expressions appear in the forms of modal verbs, lexical verbs, adjectives, adverbials, nouns, and It/There introductory phrases. Their frequencies in each research article section, and the characteristics of hedging proposed by Crompton (1997) are also investigated.

Twenty research articles were selected from English language teaching and learning journals which were published from 1997 to 2006. Each research article section was distinguished by its communicative purpose following Swales (1990). The search of target items in the corpora was conducted by a computer program named 'Concapp Concordance and Word Profiler Version 4.' Then two native English readers were asked to determine whether the sentences of the target items indicated hedging or not.

The findings reveal that Thai authors tend to use less and limited items and means for expressing hedging in English academic writing than native authors do. Hedging expressions were most frequently employed in discussion sections of research articles, and were employed the least in method sections. Epistemic modal verbs, lexical verbs, and adverbials were the three most common forms of hedging found.

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