

IGA – Academic and Project Writing

Seminar 7 - Hedging and Persuasive Writing

Hedging

* *The language of caution / tentative language...*

Project and grant proposal writing is mostly factual, conveying precise and accurate information. However, it is also important to make decisions about your stance on a particular subject, or the strength of the claims you are making, to use "hedging", in other words.

* *Look at the language in the following 3 examples expressing the same point:*

This system prevents attacks on both the server and client sides.



According to simulation studies, under some circumstances this system may reduce certain types of attacks on both the server and client sides.



~~It could be concluded that some evidence seems to suggest that this system might, under some circumstances, have the tendency to reduce at least certain types of attacks on both server and client sides.~~

* *Examine the pairs of sentences below for hedging. In each pair, discuss the difference in meaning in the sentences with and without hedging:*

a1) This finding **proves** that the combination of sulforaphane, indole carbinol, and chlorophyll did not provide additional protection against mammary tumours.

a2) This finding **suggests** that the combination of sulforaphane, indole carbinol, and chlorophyll did not provide additional protection against mammary tumours.

b1) The fluorescence lifetime measurement of the diol/carbonate pair **will be complete** in two months.

b²) The fluorescence lifetime measurement of the diol/carbonate pair **is expected to be complete** in two months.

c¹) **It is estimated** that in the next fifty years the world's population **might** again grow 40-50% and if we continuously **used** the amount of water that we are currently using the water supply **may** significantly diminish.

c²) In the next fifty years the world's population **will** again grow 40-50% and if we continuously **use** the amount of water that we are currently using the water supply **will** significantly diminish.

Adapted from: Robinson, M., Stoller, F. (2008): pp.594-596

Persuasive writing

** Answer the questions below true or false, discuss the reasons for your answer:*

A research proposal is not typical academic writing, so the language and vocabulary used may be much more informal than other forms of academic writing. T / F

(a proposal is still academic writing, its language may vary slightly but formal, academic language should always be used).

In a persuasive text, the introduction can be used to pose different questions and ideas. There is no need for the reader to understand the authors perspective so early in the text. T / F

(no, its important to establish a clear viewpoint, argument from the outset. The rest of the text will expand and support this perspective).

Persuasive writing may often use a hook – an engaging quote, fact or statistic etc – which functions to capture the readers attention and draw them into the topic from the outset. T / F

(yes this can engage the reader, draw them effectively into the topic).

In a persuasive essay, the author encourages the reader to look at different points of view, and often focuses on the limitations and weak points of the author's argument and stance. T / F

(the main focus should be on presenting and supporting the argument. Alternative viewpoints may be presented in this context, but not focused on in detail).

Persuasive texts are simple, as they start with a clearly stated opinion by the writer, which is then supported systematically with evidence and arguments throughout the text. T / F

(yes this is true, a clear, logical, systematic argument with good evidence works best)

The structure and use of paragraphs in an academic text are far less important than the content – strong ideas, an effective argument and good evidence are enough. T / F

(no the ideas will be lost, each idea should be in a new paragraph for maximum clarity)

Writing an effective persuasive text means using a mixture of language to stimulate the emotions of the reader, as well as presenting supportive and logical arguments and evidence. T / F
(mixture of engaging, emotive language supported by logic and evidence)

The topic sentence of each paragraph is crucial in clearly outlining the focus of each paragraph. Each paragraph should then support the overall theme and focus of the essay. T / F
(yes this structure is important for the cohesion of the text, strengthens it).

The summary of an effective research proposal should focus largely on the limitations of the potential study and the direction of future research. T / F
(no the summary should reinforce strongly the authors opinion and arguments)

(Adapted from: <https://www.literacyideas.com/persuasive-essays>)