ABSTRACT

Hedging is regarded crucial in interaction and communication, especially critical as a trait of scientific discourse with genres such as research paper. Due to its lack of popularity in Vietnamese studies as well as the personal awareness of insufficient hedging use training at university, this research was carried out to (1) identify the lexico-grammatical forms of hedging devices in findings and discussion sections and (2) categorize them into the function-based framework. The results showed that the students deployed a variety of forms in their writing, including modal auxiliary verbs, full verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns, pronouns, phrases and clausal elements such as impersonalization, strategic hedges and if-clauses, among which the most counted ones were modal auxiliaries, verbs, adverbs and impersonalization clauses. Concerning hedging types, accuracy-oriented hedges (83%) were used most extensively with reliability hedges outnumbering attribute hedges. Writer-oriented hedges saw the second place (14%) whilst the least common hedges were reader-oriented hedges (3%). From these findings, the study offered some realization forms for students to apply hedging devices purposively and drew attention to the significance of hedging devices usage training in academic courses for students in pursuit of higher education.