

EMPLOYMENT OF STANCE ADVERBIALS AS HEDGES  
AND BOOSTERS IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS OF  
NATIVE AMERICAN AND NONNATIVE  
TURKISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)  
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EMPLOYMENT OF STANCE ADVERBIALS AS HEDGES  
AND BOOSTERS IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS OF NATIVE  
AMERICAN AND NONNATIVE TURKISH UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS

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MA THESIS

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To my precious family

## JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI

Sibel SÖĞÜT'ün "EMPLOYMENT OF STANCE ADVERBIALS AS HEDGES AND BOOSTERS IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS OF NATIVE AMERICAN AND NON-NATIVE TURKISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS" başlıklı tezi 13.06.2014 tarihinde, aşağıda belirtilen jüri üyeleri tarafından Anadolu Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliğinin ilgili maddeleri uyarınca Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İngilizce Öğretmenliği programı yüksek lisans tezi olarak değerlendirilerek kabul edilmiştir.

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**ABSTRACT****EMPLOYMENT OF STANCE ADVERBIALS AS HEDGES  
AND BOOSTERS IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS OF NATIVE  
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The growth of discourse analysis as a key tool in understanding language use, has led to the idea of the importance of interaction in writing. Thus, the concept of metadiscourse has emerged as a way of representing the writer's awareness of the unfolding text as discourse. Metadiscourse is based on a view of writing as social engagement and especially considered to be essential element of persuasive and argumentative writing (Crismore & Farnsworth 1990; Hyland, 2004). Among the metadiscourse markers, hedges and boosters are two crucial devices helping writers to express their authorial stance in their products. Writing argumentative texts is a challenge for the students not only in their mother tongue but also in their foreign language(s). They seem to experience difficulties in producing texts, which clearly interact with the reader(s), guide the reader in the process of reception and interpretation of the text and convince the potential reader of the text. Research on students' argumentative writing is relatively little compared to descriptive, narrative, and expository writing (e.g. Stephens, 2003). For example, two of the related studies

have focused on comparison of native speakers with advanced Spanish university writers (ICLE corpus) (Neff, Ballesteros, Dafouz, Martínez & Rica, 2004) and the Greek advanced learners of English (Hatzitheodorou & Mattheoudakis, 2007). More texts need to be analyzed to gain a deeper understanding about how and effective authorial stance is presented. In the Turkish context, the students are not offered an explicit instruction in authorial stance taking and employing stance devices, instead, they are provided with very general writing guidelines and there is a scarcity of study examining comparatively native American and Turkish non-native EFL learners' employment of stance devices as hedges and boosters in their English argumentative writings. Therefore, a detailed and comparative analysis needs to be conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding about how stance-taking is presented by non-native and native students. So this study aims to identify the stance adverbials used as hedges and boosters employed by native American and Turkish non-native students. This study specifically based on the stance adverbials as they expose the author's comment or attitude much clearer. The data of this study consist of the argumentative essays of the native American students (from the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays - LOCNESS corpus) and of the Turkish non-native students from the corpus of argumentative essays written by Turkish students, majoring in the first year of English Language Teaching Department at Anadolu University. Simple random sampling is used in order to choose 200 argumentative essays (100 from each student group) and native corpus consists of 84,851 words whereas non-native corpus consists of 86,554 words.

The data are analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, percentages, mean frequencies per 10,000 words and Log-likelihood results for each item are calculated and interpreted. The stance adverbials as hedges and boosters are identified with the help of a concordance program, Ant. Conc. 3.3.4. and analyzed in their own contexts manually using Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse, checked twice and the results are inter-rated by another researcher by using peer debriefing system. The functional use of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters are analyzed in their own contexts and explained in detail. The results of the study show that argumentative essays of students are characterized by extensive use of boosters, and less limited use of hedges and it is found out that Turkish non-native students use more diverse hedges and boosters than native American students use in their argumentative essays. Functional uses of each adverbial are explained, examples from

the essays are also presented. The results of this study are believed to create an awareness among both the teachers and the students both in theoretical and linguistic aspects.

**Keywords:** argumentative writing, corpus, hedges and boosters, stance adverbials,

## ÖZET

### ANADİLİ İNGİLİZCE OLAN VE ANADİLİ İNGİLİZCE OLMAYAN ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN SAVLAMA TEMELLİ METİNLERİNDE KAÇINMA VE VURGULAMA İŞLEVİ TAŞIYAN BELİRTEÇLER

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Söylem çözümlemesinin dil kullanımını anlamadaki anahtar araç olması yönündeki gelişmeler, yazmadaki etkileşimin önemi fikrini ön plana çıkarmaktadır. Dolayısıyla üstsöylem, yazarın metni oluştururken yaşadığı farkındalık düzlemini temsil eder. Üstsöylem, yazmanın sosyal bir yükümlülük olması görüşüne dayanır ve özellikle savlama temelli metin türünün zorunlu bir parçası olarak değerlendirilir (Crismore, Farnsworth 1990; Hyland, 2004). Üstsöylem belirleyicileri arasında yer alan kaçınma ve vurgulama ifadeleri yazarın yazdığı metinde duruşunu ifade etmesini sağlayan iki önemli araçtır. Savlama temelli metin yazma öğrenciler için yalnızca kendi dillerinde değil öğrendikleri yabancı bir dilde de sorundur. Öğrencilerin, okuyucuyla belirgin bir etkileşim içinde oldukları, metni anlama ve anlamlandırma sürecinde potansiyel okuyucuyu yönlendirdikleri metinler ortaya koyma konusunda zorluklar yaşadıkları görülmektedir. Öğrencilerin, yazdıkları savlama temelli metinler üzerine yapılan araştırmalar betimsel, öyküsel ve bilgilendirici metin türüne göre daha azdır (Stephans, 2003). Bunlara örnek olarak anadili İngilizce olan öğrencilerin (ICLE derlemi) İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen İspanyol yazarların (Neff, Ballesteros, Dafouz, Martínez & Rica, 2004) ve Yunanlı öğrencilerin (Hatzitheodorou & Mattheoudakis, 2007) yazdıkları metinlerde yazar duruşu belirteçlerini inceleyen çalışmaları verebiliriz. Etkili bir yazar duruşunun ifade edilmesinin daha iyi anlaşılabilmesi amacıyla daha fazla metnin incelenmesi gerekmektedir. Türk bağlamında ise, öğrencilere etkili bir yazar duruşu ifade etme ve yazar duruşu araçlarını kullanmaları konusunda belirgin bir yönerge sunulmadığı,



aksine çok genel yazma kılavuzları verildiği görülmektedir ve anadili İngilizce olan Amerikalı öğrencilerle İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin savlama temelli metinlerinde kaçınma ve vurgulama işlevi taşıyan belirteçlerin belirlenmesine yönelik çalışma eksikliği vardır. Bu nedenle, anadili İngilizce olan ve anadili İngilizce olmayan öğrencilerin yazar duruşunu nasıl ifade ettikleri konusunda ayrıntılı ve karşılaştırmalı bir incelemeye ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Bu bakımdan da, yapılan çalışmada anadili İngilizce olan Amerikalı ve İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin savlama temelli metinlerindeki kaçınma ve vurgulama işlevi taşıyan belirteçleri belirlemeyi amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışma, özellikle yazar duruşu belirteçlerine odaklanmıştır, çünkü bunlar yazarın yorumunu ve tutumunu çok daha açık biçimde ortaya koymaktadır.

Çalışmanın verisi, Eğitim Fakültesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği 1.sınıf öğrencilerinin yazdığı savlama temelli metinlerinden ve anadili İngilizce olan Amerikalı öğrencilerin yazdığı savlama temelli metinlerden (Louvain Amerikalı ve İngiliz Öğrencilerin İngilizce Derlemi - LOCNESS derleminden) oluşmaktadır. Rastgele örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak anadili İngilizce olan ve anadili İngilizce olmayan öğrencilerin yazmış oldukları savlama temelli metinlerden 100'er metin seçilerek 200 metinden oluşan bir derlem elde edilmiştir. Amerikalı öğrencilerin metinlerinden oluşan derlem 84,851 kelimededen, Türk öğrencilerin metinlerinden oluşan derlem 86,554 kelimededen oluşmaktadır. Veriler hem nicel hem de nitel olarak incelenmiş olup bulunan her bir belirteç için kullanım sıklıkları, yüzdeleri, 10,000 kelimedeki ortalama frekansları ve Log-likelihood değerleri hesaplanarak yorumlanmıştır.

Her iki derlemde de öğrencilerin kullanmış oldukları kaçınma ve vurgulama işlevi taşıyan belirteçler hem manuel olarak hem de metin analizi araçlarından olan Ant.Conc. 3.3.4. aracılığıyla belirlenmiş, Hyland (2005)'in Kişilerarası Üstsöylem Modeli kullanılarak incelenmiş, iki defa kontrol edilmiş ve akran denkliği (peer debriefing) yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Kaçınma ve vurgulama işlevi taşıyan her bir belirtecin işlevi kendi bağlamında incelenmiş ve ayrıntılı bir şekilde açıklanmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, savlama temelli metinlerde vurgulama işlevi taşıyan belirteçlerin yaygın bir şekilde, kaçınma ifadelerinin ise daha az kullanıldığını göstermektedir ve Türk öğrencilerin hem kaçınma hem de vurgulama işlevi taşıyan belirteçleri Amerikalı öğrencilere göre daha çeşitli kullandıkları saptanmıştır. Saptanan her bir belirtecin işlevsel kullanımları öğrenci metinlerinden

alınan örneklerle beraber açıklanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının, hem öğrencilerde hem de öğretmenlerde teorik ve dilbilimsel açılardan bir farkındalık yaratacağına inanılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** akademik yazma, derlem, kaçınma ve vurgulama işlevi taşıyan belirteçler, savlama temelli metin, yazar duruşu belirteçleri

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**ABBREVIATION LIST**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| EFL     | English as a Foreign Language            |
| ELT     | English Language Teaching                |
| ESL     | English as a Second Language             |
| L1      | First Language                           |
| L2      | Second Language                          |
| LL      | Log-likelihood                           |
| LOCNESS | Louvain Corpus of Native Learner English |
| NS      | Native Students                          |
| NNS     | Non-native Students                      |

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background to the Study

The growth of discourse analysis as a key tool in understanding language use, has led to the idea of the crucial importance of interaction in writing. Thus, the concept of metadiscourse has emerged as a way of representing the writer's awareness of the unfolding text as discourse. In this regard, it is possible to say that language is the product of our interactions with people expressed verbally or in written forms, and as Hyland(2005) states ‘metadiscourse options are the ways we articulate and construct these interactions’(p.3). As it is seen, it is a broad term and thus, different scholars in the literature have defined metadiscourse in various ways. Crismore (1983) defined the term as, ‘an author’s discoursing about the discourse, it is the author’s intrusion into the discourse either explicitly or non- explicitly to direct rather than inform, showing readers how to understand what is said and meant in the primary discourse and how to ‘take’ the author ‘(p.2). Kopple (1985) defines metadiscourse as ‘discourse that people use not to expand referential material but to help their readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate and develop attitudes towards that material’ (p.1). In addition to these definitions and viewpoints, Hyland and Tse (2004) point out that ‘based on a view of writing as a social and communicative engagement between writer and reader, metadiscourse focuses our attention on the ways writers project themselves into their discourse to signal their attitude towards both the content and the audience of the text’ (p. 156).

Hyland (2005) indicates out that some writers have restricted the term to ‘features of rhetorical organization by including only those text elements which refer to the text itself’ (p.17). For example, Crismore et al. (1993) refers to it as ‘linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given (p. 40).

And Hyland(2005) later defines metadiscourse as ‘the cover term for self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community’ (p. 37) the definition adopted in this study relates to some of

his earlier work on metadiscourse and ‘it overlaps with other views of language use which emphasize the interpersonal, such as evaluation, stance and engagement’ (p.35).

Another key issue in the metadiscourse concerns the classifications of the term by various researchers in different ways. Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore (1993) divided metadiscourse markers into textual and interpersonal types. On the other hand, Hyland (2005) built his interpersonal model of metadiscourse based on his earlier models of metadiscourse (Hyland, 1998 & 2000) and Thompson and Thetela’s (1995) distinction between interactive and interactional resources. In Hyland’s (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse, there are two dimensions as interactive and interactional. Interactive dimension concerns with ‘writer’s awareness of participating audience the ways he or she seeks to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations and processing abilities’ whereas interactional dimension is concerned with ‘the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message’ (p.49). These dimensions have subcategories and they differ in terms of their functions. The interactive resources include transitions expressing relations between main clauses, frame markers referring to discourse acts, sequences or stages, endophoric markers referring to information in other parts of the text, evidentials referring to information from other texts, code glosses elaborating propositional meanings. On the other hand, interactional dimension includes hedges withholding commitment and open dialogue, boosters emphasizing certainty or close dialogue, expressing writer’s attitude to proposition, self mention referring to explicit reference to author(s), engagement markers explicitly building relationship with reader (Hyland, 2005).

Employment of these devices enable the writer to interact with the audience, such as the use of hedges enables the writer to acknowledge the existence of alternative voices and viewpoints and to withdraw his/her commitment from the proposition, while the use of boosters helps him/her to close down alternatives and to show a high degree of certainty (Hyland 2005: 52). In other words, while hedges help the writers to mitigate his/her claim or evaluation, boosters help them to emphasize the certainty and confidence about a proposition. These expressions help the writer balance the points they try to convince the reader with an appropriate modesty and confidence (Hyland, 1996). For this reason, by employing hedges and boosters, the writers

express both interactional and ideational content by setting an appropriate communication (Halliday, 1994). They also help the writer convey the major content of his utterance with his judgements (Hyland, 2000).

As it is clearly seen, these features of the devices make their role more essential in taking a stance in argumentative writing, which is one of the requirements in academia that the students have to produce. According to Hyland (2009) the essay is considered as ‘a key acculturation practice, encouraging a critical thinking and questioning attitude and approach to writing which involves making connections between theory and practice drawing links between theories, evaluating research, and arguing and reasoning’ (p.132). Considering the central role of essay writing in academic discourse, argumentation - a key requirement of an essay - becomes prominent.

However, how argumentation is embodied and how it is supported by writers in academia is problematic for writers especially for the novice writers because writing argumentative essays is a challenging task for the learners, too. As stated before, argumentative writing genre is considered to be problematic for the learners because they do not have the necessary knowledge or experience about argumentative genre since argumentative writing requires learners to develop their abilities to argue, support their ideas and refute the opposing ideas (Özhan, 2012). The other point of view about the difficulty of the argumentative texts is that language learners lack sufficient practice in this type of writing and they are not familiar with the Western discourse community (Lee, 2006).

In parallel to the aforementioned difficulties and problems, Kuteeva (2011) reported that argumentative essay is primarily a social practice that requires the writer to grasp the reader’s expectations of how ideas are communicated, as well as a mastery of the linguistic features that are used to convey meaning (Morgan, 2011). This shows the crucial importance of interaction between the writer and readers in an argumentative essay. In order to achieve this interaction, writers need to have the skills in using metadiscourse markers because it is considered as one of the interaction tools used in writing. The writers need to have the ability to use the metadiscourse markers, because metadiscourse functionally ‘guides the audience in the process of reception and interpretation of the text rather than by informing the audience about the thematic content of the text’. From this point of view, metadiscourse is an important aspect in terms of facilitating communication, supporting a writer’s position

and building a relationship with an audience (Fidan, 2002). Schleppegrel (2004) indicates that when students are writing argumentative discourse, they are engaging in an activity which inherently requires logical interrelationships among propositions and thus, the complex skill in using metadiscourse markers is badly needed (pp. 88-89). In this regard, it is clear that in order to produce a qualified argumentative writing, metadiscourse markers are devices that students need to master in (Rustipa, 2014). In this respect, Crismore and Abdollehzadeh (2010) indicate that ‘overuse or misuse of such markers can make the text long-winded and clumsy, which may be a sign of poor writing’ (p.202). They also argue that ‘in addition to the genre, learner level and task familiarity, the contribution of these metadiscourse markers is also a function of the language skill we practice, the text type we produce (e.g. argumentative, narrative, etc.), and the constraints of the communicative situation’ (p.215). Additionally, Rahman (2004) points out that as limited or no use of metacommunicative devices, excessive use of these devices may also be disadvantageous by making the text ‘look outright imposing and condescending’ (p. 47).

Previous comparative studies investigating stance devices indicate that writers employed hedges most frequently in the field of English language teaching and they preferred to distance themselves from the claims by using impersonal strategies (Ekoç, 2008); natives and non-natives use approximately the same linguistic means of expressing epistemic modality (Hamamcı, 2007); there were similarities and differences across sections and the writer stance is governed by global discourse community, its conventions, local discourse community of the writer and its conventions (Kafes, 2009).

Because of the reason that subject specific content is often a priority for both students and faculty in university contexts, there is a considerable danger that learners will fail to process these interpersonal features adequately, and therefore ignore their crucial contribution to the meaning of the text (Hyland, 2000). In contrast to school writing which tends to invite the statement of the author’s personal opinion, academic writing requires the presentation of a considered opinion, based on the careful analysis of various and conflicting sources (Andrews, 1995). Furthermore, writing at university requires making and supporting claims, and therefore requires structures

that can support more complex ideas (Wingate, 2012). Therefore, students have to employ a number of metadiscourse operators which help the writer to guide the reader. Adel (2006) states that

The acts associated with stance indicate intellectual activities of various kinds, which are particularly important to argumentative writing. In such writing, writers are supposed to adopt a stance, that is, to report their positions on issues. Arguments in favour and against should be presented, supported or refuted. This is a significant part of the argumentative writer's task (p.39).

Considering the aforementioned views on the importance of argumentative writing and stance adverbials as hedges and boosters, this study is an attempt to shed a light on the employment stance adverbials ad hedges and boosters in the argumentative essays of native American and Turkish non-native students.

The instructions in Turkish non-native students' course packs makes the students aware of the potential audience/readers of the text. The instructions include the points that academic writers must analyze the readers' attitude toward the topic, possible attitude toward the writer, possible objections to the writer's opinion and reaction to the intended purpose of the arguing paper. Audience awareness is also emphasized in their course packs and the students are instructed to analyze the audience for their arguing essay, using the following categories:

- readers' knowledge and interest in the topic
- educational background and socio-economic status of the audience.
- your relationship to the audience: expert to novice? classmate to classmate ? more experienced to less experienced? student to instructor ?
- audience's attitude toward your topic: passionately interested ? hostile ? ignorant but willing to learn ? mildly interested ? professionally interested ? bored ?
- audience's possible objections to your opinion
- readers' reaction(s) to the intended purpose of your arguing paper.

The students are provided with this kind of instructions in order to raise their awareness in terms of the possible audience of the text, however, not a straightforward instruction and guidance is provided on stance devices and especially on hedges and boosters which are the subjects of this study.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Stance devices have crucial importance as they allow the writers to ‘intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement’ (Hyland, 2005:176). Taking an effective authorial stance requires the awareness of the potential reader(s). However, as Lee (2006) points out, East-Asian ESL writers’ problems in academic writing are closely related to the issues of authorship and voice or positioning, in their writing. Moreover, the students mostly get confused with the instructions they are provided with and cannot decide on how to take a stance. In this respect, Soliday (2011) indicates that students are frequently advised to “take your own position” and offer judgments, but to avoid sounding “biased” (p. 39-40). Similarly, Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) point out that they are expected to show commitment to their arguments and even “passion” for the topics they are discussing but also to remain “objective” or critically distant. In addition to the aforementioned problems, Isaac (2012) states that there exist many other contradictory messages that students may hear such as:

use your own words, your own “voice,” but don’t be colloquial in your use of language; use “I” in your writing, but not too frequently; write assertively and with authority, but don’t forget you’re a student and lack expertise; engage with others’ views and voices, but don’t just summarize what others have said; display understanding of the target material, but don’t just reel off facts; try new things, experiment with new ways of thinking and arguing, but be sure to write clearly and concisely’ (p.5-6)

Another problem is that the students are often provided with very general writing guidelines (Chang, 2012) such as how to write the thesis statement and how to support their claim but not specific examples of how to write it. In this respect, Isaac (2012) points out that students do not receive instruction or feedback on their writing related to stance when they have a look at the syllabus, assignments guidelines, class handouts, and comments on students’ essays.

The relevant literature also shows that novice writers’ academic writing have problems such as presenting an inappropriately and monotonously subjective persona in their academic argument, most likely due to their less effective deployment of concessive and tentative claims (Hyland 2004a, 2006; Schleppegrell, 2004; Wu, 2007); not carrying a consistent evaluation to strengthen their argument (Hood, 2006); and tending to present descriptive narrative more than the critical evaluation academic

argumentative writing requires (Hyland, 2004a; Woodward-Kron, 2002).

This study focuses particularly on hedges and boosters, because, in the relevant literature it is indicated that ‘presenting a persuasive authorial stance is a major challenge for second language (L2) writers in writing academic research’ (Chang, 2012, p.209). An effective stance also enables an author to claim solidarity with readers, evaluate and critique the work of others, acknowledge alternative views, and argue for a position (Hyland, 2004). In this sense, this study is believed to contribute to raising awareness among the teachers and students in terms of the use of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in their argumentative essays.

Considering the aforementioned issues and needs, this study is an attempt to shed a light on the types, frequencies and functions of hedges and boosters employed by Turkish non-native students in comparison to native American students. Following Hyland's (2005) model of interaction, the present study has focused on a detailed and comparative analysis of linguistic features occurring in a corpus consisting of the American university students’ and Turkish EFL learners’ argumentative essays to find out the types, frequencies and functions of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters by examining the similarities and differences between two learner corpora in terms of the use of these adverbials.

### **1.3. Statement of the Research Questions**

In parallel to the aforementioned needs and purposes, the following research questions are addressed in this thesis.

1. What types of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters do the students use in their argumentative essays?

a) What are the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by native American students?

b) What are the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by Turkish non-native students?

2. What are the frequencies of stance adverbials hedges and boosters in both of the learner corpus?

3. What are the similarities and differences between two learner corpora in terms of the use of stance adverbials?



#### 1.4. Significance of the Study

When students write in both L1 and L2, they employ certain metadiscourse strategies so that their stance is made clear and they convince the reader as well (Bayyurt, 2010). When explaining their points of views, they use a number of devices such as hedges and boosters in their writings. According to Chandrasegaran and Kong (2007), the key to academic success in higher education is the mastery of stance-taking and stance-support, which happen to be the two discourse behaviors defining the expository/ argumentative essay genre.

In parallel to this point, it is found out that effective authorial stance-taking plays a critical role in effective academic argument (Chang, 2012). Especially East-Asian ESL writers' problems in academic writing are closely related to the issues of authorship and voice or positioning, in their writing (Lee, 2006).

In order to examine their employment in the academic discourse, a number of comparative studies were conducted to investigate the hedges and boosters in terms of the gender differences (Serholt, 2012), in L1 and L2 argumentative paragraphs (Algi, 2012), native and non-native academic speaker writers' use of stance devices in academic English (Kafes, 2009), in the Yemeni EFL undergraduates' persuasive essays (Alward et.al., 2012), in psychology students' writings and published research articles (Henderson & Barr, 2010) exploring the variations in the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific discourse (Yang, 2013), in college research papers (Nivales, 2011), in English and Persian research articles (Taki & Jafarpour, 2012), argumentative texts written by advanced EFL students (Belgian-French speaking, Dutch, Italian and Peninsular-Spanish EFL writers, from the ICLE corpus), with those used by native speakers (Neff et.al., 2004) and comparison of the Greek advanced learners of English with native speakers (Hatzitheodorou & Mattheoudakis, 2007). etc. It is also seen that previous comparative studies focus on identifying hedges and boosters from set lists, some focused various types of hedging and boosting devices such as nouns, adjectives, clauses, etc. and less attention has been paid to the adverbials. In the area of academic writing for students, a variety of text types are used to examine various aspects to reach a better picture on this issue, however, it is seen that there is a scarcity of research in this research area and there doesn't exist a study conducted in order to compare native American students' and Turkish EFL learners' employment of stance devices as hedges and boosters in their English argumentative writings.

In the light of the aforementioned needs, the current study aims to find out the types, frequencies and functions of hedges and boosters in the academic writings of native (American university students) and non-native (in this study Turkish EFL learners in ELT department). It is thought that by following such a path, comparison of native and non-native students will contribute to the significance of the study in understanding their linguistic performance and in getting attention to the pragmatic differences resulting from native languages of the students (in this study, English and Turkish). The case has also crucial importance in that stance concept requires ‘making decisions about such matters as when and how to acknowledge alternative perspectives in the discourse; whether to endorse, or back away from, others’ views and voices (and how); whether and how to construct a text that engages with the imagined reader; when to tune up or down one’s level of commitment to assertions; whether and how to comment on the significance of evidence used to support an argument; and many other interpersonal considerations’ (Isaac, 2012, p. 4).

Considering the difficulty in writing the argumentative essay type and in presenting an effective authorial stance, and bearing the fact that the participants of this study are expected to teach/transfer to their students in the future or become the prospective researchers who are expected to write research papers, articles or theses, So putting an emphasis on this topic is of significant importance both in linguistic and pedagogical aspects. In this study, identifying the stance devices as hedges and boosters in the Turkish EFL students writings and comparing these results with the native American student essays will make contributions to linguistic and pedagogical aspects by serving to developing arguments in academic writing and argumentative writing. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the literature regarding the study of stance devices as hedges and boosters because these devices enables an author to claim solidarity with readers, evaluate and critique the work of others, acknowledge alternative views, and argue for a position (Hyland 2004a). It is thought that following such a path will contribute to the significance of the study as comparing the native American students and Turkish non-native students will allow us to gain a better understanding over their linguistic performance and to draw attention to the differences between two group of students. Taking the results of this study into consideration, a number of suggestions will be made over academic writing courses, taking an authorial stance in academic writing, and teaching the stance devices in English.

### 1.5. Definitions of the Terms

The study of stance devices has been carried out under different terminology such as ‘evaluation’, ‘evidentiality’, ‘attitude’, ‘affect’, ‘hedge and booster’, ‘engagement’, ‘epistemological stance’, ‘knowledge claims’ and ‘authoritativeness’ (Hunston, 1994; Hunston and Thompson, 2000; Chafe, 1986; Ochs, 1989; Barton, 1993; Hood, 2004, 2006; Hyland, 1998, 2004a, 2004b; Schleppegrell, 2004;, 2007). Hedging has characteristically been linked to epistemic modality, because ‘the meaning of both epistemically modal devices and hedges is closely related to the sender’s degree of confidence regarding what is being said’ (Hamamcı, 2007, p.4). As is seen, there exists various definitions of these terms in the literature, therefore key terms used in the study should be clarified enough. In this part, only the definitions used in the current study are explained and other details will be elaborated in the literature review part. In the current study, Hyland’s (2005) definition of stance is adopted:

‘They express a textual ‘voice’ or community recognized personality which, following others, I shall call stance. This can be seen as an attitudinal dimension and includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions, and commitments. It is the ways that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement’(p. 176)

Hyland (2005) classifies metadiscourse as interactive and interactional dimensions. In the current study, the categorization of stance devices as hedges and boosters in Hyland’s (2005) model of interaction is used. According to Hyland (2005):

Hedges are devices like possible, might and perhaps, that indicate the writer’s decision to withhold complete commitment to a proposition, allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than accredited fact. Because all statements are evaluated and interpreted through a prism of disciplinary assumptions, writers must calculate what weight to give to an assertion, attesting to the degree of precision or reliability that they want it to carry and perhaps claiming protection in the event of its eventual overthrow (Hyland, 1998). (p.178)

Boosters, on the other hand, are words like clearly, obviously and demonstrate, which allow writers to express their certainty in what they say and to mark involvement with the topic and solidarity with their audience. They function to stress shared information, group membership, and engagement with readers (Hyland, 1999). Like hedges, they often occur in clusters, underlining the writer's conviction in his or her argument. (the whole list of hedges and boosters in his model is provided in the Appendix B)

## CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, models, taxonomies and classifications of metadiscourse are presented and some sample studies conducted based on these classifications are explained. Interactional resources of metadiscourse, which is the subject of this thesis, are elaborated and definitions, classifications on stance devices as hedges and boosters are explained in detail. The difficulties students face while writing argumentative essays and the importance of audience awareness in this genre are presented. In addition, the previous studies examining hedges and boosters on different genres such as research articles, student essays, etc. are explained.

### 2.2. Metadiscourse

Discourse analysis and its key role in understanding the language use has lead to the idea of importance of interaction in writing. In discourse literature, definitions of metadiscourse have varied from broad ones, such as “writing about writing” (Williams 1981, 211) or “discourse about discourse or communication about communication” (Vande Kopple 1985, 83), to more specific ones, such as “writing about the evolving text rather than referring to the subject matter” (Swales 2004, 121).

Taking place at a broader end, Crismore(1983) defined metadiscourse as ‘simply, an author's discoursing &out the discourse; it is the author's, intrusion into the discourse / either explicitly or non-explicitly, to direct the reader rather than inform’ (p. 6). He later defined metadiscourse as ‘linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the prepositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given. (Crismore et al, 1993, 40)

Similarly, Kopple (1985) indicates that ‘with one kind of metadiscourse we can help readers recognize how our texts are organized and see exactly how different parts of them are connected to each other. We can use these text connectives to guide readers as smoothly as possible through our texts and to help them construct appropriate representations of them in memory’ (p. 83).

Metadiscourse plays a crucial role in organizing discourse and also in engaging the audience and as Hyland(1998) states, metadiscourse refers to ‘aspects of a text which explicitly organise the discourse, engage the audience and signal the

writer's attitude' (p. 437). Hyland (2005) later explained metadiscourse as 'an important means of facilitating communication, supporting a position, increasing readability and building a relationship with an audience' (p.5).

Although the term is defined by various scholars in different ways, it is seen as an umbrella term including an array of features that help relate a text to its context by assisting readers to connect, organise, and interpret material in a way preferred by the writer with regard to the understandings and values of a particular discourse community (Halliday, 1998). Hyland suggests three key principles of metadiscourse as follows:

- that metadiscourse is distinct from propositional aspects of discourse;
- that metadiscourse refers to aspects of the text that embody writer—reader interactions;
- that metadiscourse refers only to relations which are internal to the discourse (p.38).

Following Hyland (2005), in this study metadiscourse is defined as 'the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assist the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community' (p.37).

In addition to the aforementioned definitions, the models and taxonomies of metadiscourse have also varied. Crismore (1983) classified metadiscourse into two types as *informational metadiscourse* 'directing readers to an understanding of the primary message by referring to its content and structure or to the author's purposes or goals' and *attitudinal metadiscourse* 'directing readers to an understanding of the author's perspective toward the content or structure of the primary discourse' (p. 1). Kopple (1985) explains the basic functions of metadiscourse in seven categories as *text connectives* 'guiding readers as smoothly as possible through our texts and to help them construct appropriate representations of them in memory'; *code glosses* 'helping readers grasp the appropriate meanings of elements in texts'; *illocution markers* 'making explicit to our readers what speech or discourse act we are performing at certain points in our texts'; *validity markers* 'indicating how we assess the probability or truth of the propositional content we express and to show how committed we are to that assessment'; *narrators* 'functioning primarily to let readers know who said or wrote something; and *commentary* 'addressing readers directly, often appearing to draw them into an implicit dialogue with us' (p. 85-86). Later on, Kopple (1997)

revised this taxonomy and classified kinds of metadiscourse as text connectives, code glosses, illocution markers, epistemology markers, modality markers, evidentials, attitude markers, and commentary. Based on Kopple's (1985) categorization, Crismore et al (1993) further modified categories of metadiscourse as textual markers and interpretative markers; under 'textual markers', they added 'logical connectives', 'sequencers', 'reminders' and 'topicalizers'. They then removed temporal connectives and narrators and created the code glosses, illocution markers and announcement as interpretative markers.

Other than these categorizations, Hyland (2005) suggested the interpersonal model of metadiscourse. Hyland (2005), in the same manner of Kopple (1985) and Crismore et al (1993), classified metadiscourse into two main sources as interactive and interactional metadiscourse. On the other hand, he built his interpersonal model of metadiscourse based on his earlier models of metadiscourse (Hyland, 1998 & 2000) and Thompson and Thetela's (1995) distinction between interactive and interactional resources.

In the present study, Hyland's(2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse has been adopted because previous definitions and categories of metadiscourse overlap each other and his model is not only an update on the taxonomies used by Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore et al (1993), it gives 'greater comprehensibility and distinction to the varieties of metadiscourse features' (Heng & Tand, 2010, p.125).

Hyland(2005) explains that the function of the interactive dimension is 'to shape and constrain a text to meet the needs of particular readers, setting out arguments so that they will recover the writer's preferred interpretations and goals' whereas the function of interactional dimension is to 'make his or her views explicit and to involve readers by allowing them to respond to the unfolding text' (p. 49). In his classification the sub-categories of the interactive metadiscourse transitions, frame markers, evidentials, endophoric markers and code glosses and for the interactional metadiscourse categories, they are classified as hedges, boosters, engagement marker, attitude markers and self-mention.

In the literature, metadiscourse, has also received significant attention as an important rhetorical aspect of academic genre. Hyland (2004) examined the purposes and distributions of metadiscourse markers in a corpus of 240 doctoral dissertations and master's theses of six academic disciplines and showed that writers used slightly

more interactive than interactional forms. Hyland and Tse (2004) investigated metadiscourse markers in Ph.D. dissertations and Master's theses. The research results revealed that one discourse marker is used in every 21 words. The metadiscourse markers used in Master's theses were balanced overall between the textual and interpersonal types, while in the doctoral texts the number of textual metadiscourse markers were ten per cent more than that of interpersonal metadiscourse markers. In a quite recent study conducted in Turkish context, Çapar (2014) examined the use of interactional metadiscourse markers in research articles written by American and Turkish academic writers based on the taxonomy Hyland and Tse (2004) suggested. She found out that while American writers used more interpersonal metadiscourse markers in their English research articles compared to Turkish writers, while Turkish writers used significantly more markers in their English research articles compared to their Turkish research articles. Her study shows that Turkish academic writers use interactional metadiscourse markers differently when writing in Turkish and English.

### 2.3. Stance Adverbials

Over the past years, researchers have referred to the issue of stance using different names such as 'evaluation' (Hunston, 1994; Hunston & Thompson, 2000), 'intensity' (Labov, 1984), 'affect' (Ochs, 1989), 'evidentiality' (Chafe, 1986; Chafe & Nichols, 1986), 'hedging' (Holmes, 1988; Hyland, 1996a,b), and 'stance' (Barton, 1993; Beach & Anson, 1992; Biber & Finegan 1988, 1989; Biber, Johansson, Leech, & Conrad, 1999; Conrad & Biber, 2000).

Barton (1993) used the term stance and he analyzed the use of evidentials in 100 essays written by experienced academic writers and 100 essays written by student writers and found out that student writers use generalizations to frame their problematization, to construct their persona as the we or I of contemporary Western or American life, to cite their source material, and to develop their arguments.

According to Hunston and Thompson (2000), evaluation is a broad term including 'expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about' (p.5) and they suggested three functions of evaluation such as:

- to express the speaker's or writer's opinion, and in doing so to reflect the value system of that person and their commitment;



- to construct and maintain relations between the speaker or writer and hearer or reader;
- to organize the discourse (p. 6).

Conrad and Biber (2000) focus on stance adverbials, which they define as ‘grammatical devices used to frame a proposition’ (Conrad and Biber 2000:58). They divide these adverbials into a number of categories:

- Meaning. Conrad and Biber distinguish epistemic stance (e.g., evidently), attitudinal stance (e.g., most surprisingly), and style stance (e.g., simply put).
- Form. They distinguish between single adverbs (evidently), adverb phrases (most surprisingly of all), noun phrases (no doubt), prepositional phrases (for a fact), finite clauses (I think), and non-finite clauses (more simply put).
- Position. They identify four positions for stance adverbials: initial, pre-verbal, post-verbal, and final.

According to the definition provided, ‘epistemic stance adverbials and attitude stance adverbials both comment on the content of a proposition. Epistemic markers express the speaker’s judgment about the certainty, reliability, and limitations of the proposition; they can also comment on the source of the information. Attitude stance adverbials convey the speaker’s attitude or value judgment about the proposition’s content. Style adverbials, in contrast, describe the manner of speaking’ (Biber et al. 1999:854)

The term ‘stance’ is a quite fuzzy concept defined in various ways by different researchers. In order to clarify this term, a summary of the definitions will be presented in the following table and the one taken as a basis in this study will be explained in detail.

Table 1. *An Overview of Stance Definitions*

| Researcher   | Stance definition   |
|--------------|---|
| Hyland, 2008 | stance refers to the writer’s textual ‘voice’ or community recognized personality, an attitudinal, writer-oriented function which concerns the ways writers present themselves and convey their |

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judgements, opinions, and commitments.

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Hyland, 1999            | the ways which writers project themselves into their texts to communicate their integrity, credibility, involvement, and a relationship to their subject matter and their readers  |
| Biber and Finegan, 1989 | the lexical and grammatical expression of attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment concerning the propositional content of a message, to include adverbs, verbs, and adjectives which mark affect, certainty, doubt, hedges, emphasis, possibility, necessity, and prediction |
| Biber et.al., 1999      | The expression of personal feelings, attitudes and value judgments, or assessments   |
| Precht, 2003            | a linguistics construct which refers to the complex relations that can be established between literal, the figurative and the functional meanings of discourse   |
| Du Bois, 2007           | a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and alignment with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field.        |

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In addition to these different definitions, there are different categorizations of stance devices employed in academic discourse. According to Biber et.al. (1999), stance devices are used to communicate propositional content, to express feelings, attitudes, values judgments, or assessments. Biber et.al. (2006) also expresses the

lexico-grammatical features used for stance analyses in three categories: modal and semi-modal verbs, stance adverbs, complement clauses controlled by stance verbs, adjectives, or nouns.

Hinkel's (1997) hedging classification includes six parts such as the epistemic hedges (e.g., clearly, mostly, relatively), lexical hedges (e.g., kind of, maybe), and possibility hedges (e.g., perhaps, possibly); downtoners (e.g., a bit, nearly, partly); assertive pronouns (any- and some- words); and adverbs of frequency (e.g., often, frequently, usually, occasionally). In his categorization, another dimension is the intensifiers, which are divided into three types such as universal pronouns (every- and no- words), amplifiers (e.g., extremely, completely, totally), and emphatics (e.g., sure/for sure, no way). And Salager-Meyer's (1994) taxonomy of hedges has four main categories such as shields, approximators, expressions of the authors' personal doubt and direct involvement, and emotionally charged intensifiers.

#### **2.4.Hedges and Boosters**

One of the crucial requirements of academic writing is to take an effective authorial stance in order to express a point of view, present an argument and to convince the potential reader(s) and writers use a number of stance devices in order to support their stance. In parallel to this view, it is suggested that one of the most important features of academic discourse is that the writers mitigate their claims and ambiguous or potentially risky points, emphasize the points they think that are correct and present a balanced commitment to their claims to the reader (Hyland, 2000). These expressions are all together known as hedges and boosters, they express doubt and certainty and they are important in terms of the reliability of the assertions and the social interactions they appeal to. These expressions help the writer balance the points they try convince the reader about, with an appropriate modesty and confidence (Hyland, 1996).

Stance devices, according to Biber et al. (1999), are used to communicate propositional content, to express feelings, attitudes, values judgments, or assessments. According to Biber (2004), stance adverbials are 'primarily single adverbs (e.g., frankly, obviously), although they can also include prepositional phrases and noun phrases functioning as adverbials (e.g., in general, no doubt)' (p. 111). Hyland (2005) offers another definition for stance, which will be used as a key term in the present study:

They express a textual ‘voice’ or community recognized personality which, following others, I shall call stance. This can be seen as an attitudinal dimension and includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions, and commitments. It is the ways that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement (p.176).

In addition to these various definitions, scholars suggest a number of classifications and categories. For example, Biber et al. (1999), and Hunston and Thompson (2000) classify linguistic/ grammatical stance devices as stance adverbials, stance complement clauses, modals, and semi-modals, stance noun + prepositional phrase, and pre-modifying stance adverbs from a structural angle. Besides grouping stance devices from a structural perspective, they also divide stance adverbials into four groups: namely, epistemic stance adverbials, attitude adverbials, style adverbials, ambiguity with other adverbial classes, from a semantic perspective.

On the other hand, Hyland (2005) presents an interpersonal model of metadiscourse as shown in the table below:

Table 2. Hyland(2005)'s *Interpersonal Model of Metadiscourse*

| Category             | Function   | Examples                              |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Interactive</b>   | <b>Help to guide the reader through the text</b> | <b>Resources</b>                      |
| Transitions          | express relations between main clauses           | in addition; but; thus; and           |
| Frame markers        | refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages     | finally; to conclude; my purpose is   |
| Endophoric markers   | refer to information in other parts of the text  | noted above; see Fig; in section 2    |
| Evidentials          | refer to information from other texts            | according to X; Z states              |
| Code glosses         | elaborate prepositional meanings                 | namely; e.g.; such as; in other words |
| <b>Interactional</b> | <b>Involve the reader in the text</b>            | <b>Resources</b>                      |
| Hedges               | withhold commitment and open dialogue            | might; perhaps; possible; about       |
| Boosters             | emphasize certainty or close dialogue            | in fact; definitely; it is clear that |
| Attitude markers     | express writer's attitude to proposition         | unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly  |
| Self mentions        | explicit reference to author(s)                  | I; we; my; me; our                    |
| Engagement markers   | explicitly build relationship with reader        | consider; note; you can see that      |

This model is taken as a basis in the current study as it has a more comprehensive content; it consists of two dimensions such as interactive and interactional resources. The main function of interactive dimension is to help to guide the reader through the text while the interactional dimension involves the reader in the text. While the interactive category involves transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and code glosses, interactional category includes hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self mentions and engagement markers. According to Hyland (2005):

Hedges are devices like possible, might and perhaps, that indicate the writer's decision to withhold complete commitment to a proposition, allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than accredited fact. Because all statements are evaluated and interpreted through a prism of disciplinary assumptions, writers must calculate what weight to give to an assertion, attesting to the degree of precision or reliability that they want it to carry and perhaps claiming protection in the event of its eventual overthrow (Hyland, 1998). (p.178)

Boosters, on the other hand, are words like clearly, obviously and demonstrate, which allow writers to express their certainty in what they say and to mark involvement with the topic and solidarity with their audience. They function to stress shared information, group membership, and engagement with readers (Hyland, 1999). Like hedges, they often occur in clusters, underlining the writer's conviction in his or her argument. (p.179)

In this study, Hyland's (2005) interactional metadiscourse items functioning as stance adverbials as hedges and boosters were searched in both learner corpora, however, there found to be additional adverbials which did not exist in his list (Hyland's (2005) list is provided in Appendix B). And all the occurrences of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters identified in our analyses in the non-native and native corpora are provided in Appendix A.

Relevant literature shows that studies examining hedges and boosters in academic discourse reveal that their employment shows variation among native and non-native speakers of English and they pose difficulty for especially non-native speakers. The stance concept has been identified as quite challenging for novice and L2 writers at college and postgraduate level. In parallel to this idea, one of the

characteristics of both L1 and L2 student writers is that they have a tendency to present an inappropriately subjective persona (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011). According to Myers (1989), the uses of hedging are highly conventionalized in academic writing and appear to be particularly necessary in texts that include claim-making and/or expressing personal positions or points of view. In general, novice L2 writers even at post-graduate pursuits have difficulties in projecting and authorial stance (Hyland & Milton, 1997). Especially L2 writers at graduate level experience difficulties such as word usage and delivering effective meanings in their academic writings (Chang, 2010). It has also been observed that Turkish English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students have weaknesses in expressing their original ideas while writing in a foreign language (Alagözlü, 2007).

Stance devices have been investigated within a number of perspectives by various researchers in this field. The discussion of these certain features of academic writing fall into two general categories. The relevant literature shows that some studies examined the authorial stance by focusing on the employment of stance devices in research articles and theses (Chang, 2012; Yang, 2013; Mirzapour & Mahand, 2012; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Getkham, 2011; Kafes, 2009; Ekoç, 2008; Hamamcı, 2007; Ahmad & Mehrjooseresht, 2012; Adams & Quintana-Toledo, 2013; Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2009; Henderson & Barr, 2010; Abdi, 2012; Adams, 2013; Degaetano & Teich, 2011; Gillaerts & Velde, 2010; Henderson & Barr, 2010; Hu & Cao, 2011; Peacock, 1999; Pho, 2008; Taki & Jafarpour, 2012; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; ).

For example, Peacock (1999) conducted a research examining both qualitatively and quantitatively the form, and function of boosters in research articles (RAs) across six academic disciplines which happen to be Business, Language and Linguistics, Public and Social Administration, Law, Physics, and Environmental Science. S/he found out that research article authors frequently employ boosters and there are a number of interdisciplinary differences. S/he further concluded that the persuasive force of boosters is increased when they are used in pairs or clusters and boosters play a significant role in the efforts of authors to persuade readers of the validity of their claims. In her study, Pho(2008) investigated the rhetorical moves of abstracts in the fields of applied linguistics and educational technology, and the linguistic realizations of moves and authorial stance in different abstract moves. S/he

indicated that a combination of certain linguistic features such as grammatical subjects, verb tense and voice can help distinguish moves in the abstract.

Another study conducted by Getkham (2011) investigated hedging devices used in applied linguistic research articles across research sections and across journal titles. The result of his/her study showed that the most frequently used hedges are modal verb hedges and the highest incidence was in the Introduction section and the second highest was in the Discussion section of research articles. S/he further suggests that this result may be due to the author's avoidance of face threatening acts and their wish to gain acceptance from the scholars in their field.

In their comparative study, Hyland and Milton (1997) indicate that Cantonese writers employed a more limited range of hedges, emphatics, and other metadiscourse features and had difficulty in conveying certainty than British writers.

A more recent study conducted by Hinkel (2005) also supports Hyland and Milton's (1997) results. Hinkel (2005) examined types and frequencies of hedges and intensifiers used in native and non-native academic essays. She investigated hedging devices such as epistemic hedges, lexical hedges, and possibility hedges, downtoners, assertive pronouns and adverbs of frequency in L2 academic essays of English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, Vietnamese, and Arabic speakers of English. The results of her study indicate that L2 writers employ a very limited variety of hedges, most of which signal conversational and casual spoken communication. In her one of earlier studies, Hinkel (1997) also studied metadiscourse devices that characterize L1 and L2 writing and she compared employment of such devices in native and non-native speaker student essays, and focused on rhetorical, lexical, referential and syntactic indirectness devices. She found that writings of Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Indonesian students were marked with greater frequencies of rhetorical questions and tags, disclaimers and denials, vagueness and ambiguity, repetition, several types of hedges, ambiguous pronouns and passive voice devices than native speakers did.

Among the related previous studies conducted in this field of enquiry, native and non-native writers' use of stance devices as hedges and boosters have been investigated. A great deal of these studies focused on the employment of hedges and boosters in the research articles from various disciplines. For example, Lee (2009) investigated the expressions of stance and engagement in Japanese and American newspaper editorials and he found out that American editorials used more

engagement expressions than Japanese editorials and Japanese editorials hardly used boosters, they used more questions than American editorials.

In their study with English native and non-native writers, Mirzapour and Mahand (2012) investigated the frequencies and types of hedges and boosters in Abstract, Introduction, and Conclusion sections of Library and Information (LI) and Computer Science (CS) research articles. They found out that the conclusion section included more hedges and boosters than the introduction and abstract section and especially the modal verbs, lexical verbs and adverbs were mostly employed. In addition, it was found out that there was a high percent of hedges in the conclusion section of computer science research articles, while there was a high percent of boosters in the introduction section. In their study investigating the adverbial stance marking in the introduction and conclusion sections of legal research articles, Adams and Quintana-Toledo (2013) found out that adverbial stance markers are particularly frequent in the concluding sections of legal RAs and epistemic stance markers are frequently employed in the introduction and conclusion sections of the legal research articles. In a more recent study, Yang (2013) examined the linguistic and cultural variation in the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific discourse and he found out that hedges are employed most frequently in English scientific articles, almost twice as frequently as in Chinese-authored English scientific articles.

In one of the studies examining the stance adverbials in thesis abstracts research students in engineering field, Ahmad and Mehrjooseresht (2012) found out that he epistemic stance markers of adverbial are more frequent than style and attitudinal adverbials and attitudinal stance markers are the least frequent employed adverbials. In another study, Chang, Luo, and Hsu (2012) explored the attribution hedges in 90 Chinese academic discourse articles and their disciplinary variation in the pure humanities, the social sciences and the hard sciences. They found that writers in the pure humanities and social sciences use more attribution hedges in their writing while hard sciences writers demonstrated their objective authorial stance, detachment and avoidance of individuality in their writing.

In their study examining the authorial stance in master's theses written by non-native speakers of English, Dontcheva-Navratilova (2009) found out that despite some problematic cases, the writers generally manage to construct a coherent authorial stance. Taki and Jafarpour (2012) examined engagement and stance in English and Persian research articles and they found out that stance markers occurred



five times more frequently than engagement markers and hedges were the most frequently employed stance devices. Gillaerts and Velde (2010) examined the interactional metadiscourse in research article abstracts and they found out that hedges are more frequently employed in comparison to boosters and attitude markers. Nivales (2011) investigated hedging and boosting devices in the introduction and conclusion sections of the undergraduate theses written in two disciplines such as psychology and mass communication. She found out that hedges and boosters were almost equally used in the introduction and conclusion sections.

In addition to the aforementioned studies, some others focus on their use in the academic writings of the students (Chandrasegaran & Kong, 2006; Nivales, 2011; Serholt, 2012; Wharton, 2012; Algi, 2012; Alward & Mooi & Bidin, 2012; McCulloch, 2012; Nelson & Castello, 2012; Neff, Ballesteros, Dafouz, Martínez & Rica, 2003; Alward, Mooi & Bidin, 2012; Zhao, 2013). For example, in their study, Chandrasegaran and Kong (2006) investigated stance-taking and stance-support in students' online forum discussions. Some other studies focused on the employment of hedges and boosters in the student essays. In his study with Swedish advanced learners of English, Serholt (2012) investigated the use of epistemic modality as hedges and boosters and examined whether there were gender related differences or not. The results of the study revealed that the male group used hedges more frequently than the female group, while the female group used boosters more frequently than the male group. Additionally, Swedish L2 learners employed hedges more frequently than boosters.

There are recent comparative studies investigating the hedges and boosters in terms of the gender differences (Serholt, 2012), in the Yemeni EFL undergraduates' persuasive essays (Alward et.al., 2012), in psychology students' writings and published research articles (Henderson & Barr, 2010) exploring the variations in the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific discourse (Yang, 2013), in college research papers (Nivales, 2011), in English and Persian research articles (Taki & Jafarpour, 2012), etc.

For example, Hyland and Milton (1997) found out that Cantonese writers employed more limited range of hedges British writers, emphatics, and other metadiscoursal features and had difficulty in conveying certainty. In parallel to their study, in her comparison of the native and non-native academic essays, Hinkel (2005) examined hedges and intensifiers employed in NS and NNS academic essays in a

corpus of L1 and L2 student academic texts and she found out that L2 writers employ a very limited variety of hedges.

There were a number of empirical studies in the literature. For example, Alward, Mooi and Bidin (2012) sought to examine the role of explicit instruction on the use of hedges and boosters in the Yemeni EFL undergraduates' persuasive essays and they revealed that instruction had a positive impact on the learners' use of hedges and boosters. In addition, Guerin and Picard (2012) examined two cases where the research students used Turnitin in conjunction with concordancers to develop an appropriate voice in academic writing. Researchers also conducted studies on advanced second language writers and how they employed metadiscourse devices as interpersonal resources to represent themselves and their work. Wishnoff (2000) investigated the effects of instruction on academic writings produced by graduate students in an academic writing class for non-native speakers of English. She also studied whether this instruction would transfer to computer-mediated type of writing. Some students received treatment for proper use of hedging devices and their results were compared to the control group. Her results showed that treatment group showed statistically significant increase in their employment of hedging devices in their research papers.

There are relatively few studies investigating the hedges and boosters in academic writing in the Turkish context. In Turkish context, Fidan (2002) studied Turkish scientific articles from different fields in Turkish academic journals and books. She used Hyland's (1998) taxonomy and concluded that more textual metadiscourse markers rather than interpersonal markers characterized these papers. Hedges and emphatics were more prevalent than other interpersonal metadiscourse devices. Likewise, Doyuran (2009) examined academic writings from engineering and linguistics fields. She focused on interpersonal metadiscourse devices. She found out several hedging devices in the form of epistemic verbs, copulas, epistemic modals inferential model, adverbials, clauses relating to the probability of the subsequent proposition being true, passive forms of epistemic verbs and rhetorical devices are the most frequently employed ones.

In the Turkish context, a recent study conducted by Algi, (2012) focused on hedges and boosters in Turkish and English argumentative paragraphs written by Turkish L2 learners. She found out that because of the rhetorical and cultural differences, the types and functions of these devices showed variation in terms of the

percentages and frequencies. Kafes (2009) examined the authorial stance devices as modal verbs in research articles written by native and non-native English speaking academic writers and he found out that there were similarities and differences across sections and the writer stance is governed by global discourse community, its conventions, local discourse community of the writer and its conventions. Ekoç (2008) examined Turkish MA students' use of lexical hedging strategies in theses abstracts and she found out that writers employed hedges most frequently in the field of English language teaching and they preferred to distance themselves from the claims by using impersonal strategies. Hamamcı (2007) investigated the use of hedges in research articles by Turkish interlanguage speakers of English and native English speakers in the field of social sciences and he found out that while both the NS and NNS use approximately the same linguistic means of expressing epistemic modality, there were some differences in terms of both quantity and quality. Can (2006) analyzed argumentative essays written in English compared these essays with respect to their organizational patterns and meta-discoursal properties and Bayyurt (2010) compared the employment of hedges and intensifiers in argumentative essays written in English and Turkish. However, there is a scarcity of study comparing native and non-native English speaking academic writers' employment of stance devices as hedges and boosters in their argumentative essays.

### **2.5. Argumentative Writing**

Essay writing, as a genre, is an essential part of EFL education at universities and students are required to master in various essay types such as narrative, expository, argumentative, etc. In essay writing, they are required to think critically, present their ideas in a convincing way and to link the connections. According to Hyland (2009) 'the essay is therefore regarded as a key acculturation practice, encouraging a critical and questioning attitude and approach to writing which involves making connections between theory and practice, drawing links between theories, evaluating research, and arguing and reasoning' (p. 132).

Argumentative writing is one of the essay types which the students are expected to produce. Basically, the argument consists of expressing an opinion or point of view and providing the justification for it (Sanczyk, 2010). Therefore, while presenting the argument, a writer needs to inform the reader of the instrumental arguments for and against the issue under discussion. Then, the writer needs to take

his position on the topic and present his view in order to persuade or influence the reader; thus, the writer may express a personal viewpoint to maintain the interaction with the reader (Seely 1998:133-136). The related literature in this field show that academic prose is not completely impersonal, but that writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and commitment to their ideas (Hyland, 2002). Argumentative essay writing is a challenging task for the students to produce as it requires them to convince the potential reader(s) to agree or disagree with their point of view. Metadiscourse markers are widely used by writers to interact with the readers, especially in argumentative writing. Hence, it is important for the writers to have the knowledge to use metadiscourse markers accurately in order to produce a written product, which will interact with readers effectively. Intaraprawat (2002) defines argumentative essay writing ‘as a kind of writing which attempts to persuade someone of something’. Writers can effectively build an argumentative essay through supporting an argument, justifying a claim, interacting with their readers, persuading the readers.

Interaction with the readers, justification of the claims are mostly achieved by the employment of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters. In this respect, Hyland (2004) stated that hedges and boosters can be recognized as two important features which play a vital role in producing persuasive writing. For this reason, writers need to construct their claims with appropriate degree of hedges and boosters to make their readers accept what they believe in (Alward et.al. 2012). The opinion presented in the genre of persuasiveness is often associated with an indication of the writer’s degree of probability and certainty to his/her claims presented. To attain readers’ persuasion and acceptance, writers should make a balance between hedges and boosters (Hyland, 1998a). To achieve this purpose and to write a good argumentative essay, if they are appropriately employed, hedges and boosters are essential features, which support the writer’s opinion and build writer-reader relationship (Alward et.al. 2012).

L2 writers' difficulties with English argumentative writing have been investigated from various perspectives. The scholars have examined both L2 argumentative texts and the processes and strategies used in producing argumentative writing in a second language. Zhu (2009) examined the difficulties and writing processes and strategies of a group of Mexican graduate students working on an argumentative writing

assignment in English. According to him, from the participants' perspective, rhetorical concerns (e.g. organization and development of arguments) are a major challenge, although without a doubt the linguistic aspects (e.g. vocabulary) also pose problems. It was found out that lack of rhetorical knowledge and skill as a major cause of difficulty for writers with limited writing experience when they perform an argumentative writing task. In another respect, Chen (2002), indicating that writing has been a difficult skill to learn and develop for especially EFL(English as a foreign language) students, points out that ‘students are confused with word usage, sentence structure, and are constrained by a shortage of vocabulary, alternative expressions and cultural knowledge’ (p. 59). He conducted a research in order to find out the problems creating obstacles for university students in Taiwan and he found out that word usage/choice, shortage in vocabulary, grammatical errors, organization, Chinese/English translation, and limited ideas about the topic, no constructive learning attitude, spelling, lack in phrases and slang, poor expressive skills, writing long and complicated sentences are the most frequently perceived problems.

In the Turkish context, Yalçın (2010) explored the syntactic error types made by ELT students in their English argumentative essays, to find out whether the errors show any difference according to the year level and the error type. She found out that Turkish speaking ELT students’ argumentative essays commonly included error types of article use, verb use, noun use and pronoun use as well as less frequently occurring error types of determiner use, adjective use, adverb use, word class, and word order. She further indicated that these errors seem to be partly influenced by the students’ native language (Turkish); learners’ internal processes in the forms of overgeneralization, espoused theories and avoidance are also influential in their target language productions.

Some scholars also indicate that a writer’s sense of audience and purpose is particularly important to the effectiveness of argumentative writing (Johns, 1993, Thompson, 2001). Lee (2006) suggests that when students write essays, they need to meet audience expectations in terms of presenting or exchanging information, need to interact with the audience through careful choices of language, to help the reader to negotiate the text more easily and to better express his/her message. In addition, Thompson (2001) pointed out that persuasive writing in English is particularly problematic for non-native speakers who are often both linguistically and rhetorically

inexperienced. Another problem within this concept is their failure to present an effective authorial stance, which results in poor evaluation. (Barton, 1993; Hyland, 1998a; Schleppegrell, 2004; Wu, 2007).

As mentioned in part 2.4. on hedges and boosters, there are studies looking at the employment of metadiscourse markers in general. However, little attention has been paid to the investigation of hedges and boosters specifically focusing on stance adverbials. Therefore, the current study aims at examining stance adverbials and hedges and boosters in the argumentative essays of non-native and native students in a detailed and comparative way.

## **CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, details about the research design, the participants, data collection and data analysis are presented. The characteristics of the research corpora, how they were compiled and selected, and their word frequencies are presented in the first section. Then, the corpus tools and the concordancing tool used in this study are explained and peer debriefing strategy in order to increase the credibility of the analyses is described. In the last part, the model of interactional metadiscourse, which is adopted in this study, is provided and qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques used in order to detect the frequencies, types, percentages, overuse/underuse of the stance adverbials, similarities and differences between two corpora are explained.

### **3.2. Research Design**

The present study is an attempt to examine the types and frequencies of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by native American and Turkish non-native students and the similarities and differences between two learner corpora in terms of the use of these adverbials. In this study, an ethnographic research design is applied: document analysis is carried out and the data of the study are analyzed both qualitatively by identifying the functions of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in their own contexts and quantitatively by finding out the frequency of these adverbials. The documents are the language productions of two discourse societies, which have common points as being university students, which will be explained in detail in the following parts.

### **3.3. Participants of the Study**

The participants of the study consist of two groups of students. One group is comprised of native American university students studying in a number of different universities in the United States. These students are English native speakers studying at different universities- Marquette University, Indiana University, Presbyterian College, South Carolina, University of South Carolina, University of Michigan. The other group consists of the Turkish university students majoring in their first year at Anadolu University – a state university in Turkey. These students get Academic

Writing and Report Writing course in ELT in the first year of their education and they are taught to write in different genres including argumentative essays. The course is 3 hours a week taken both terms and in this course, the students are given a pack as course material and they receive instruction on each genre and a number of linguistic cues specific to each genre.

### 3.4. Data Collection

The data are gathered from two different corpuses. Corpus as a term has been defined in various ways for different purposes in the literature, in this study the following definition is taken as basis: ‘a computer corpus is a principled collection of electronic texts usually stored on a computer’ (O’Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007). Having presented the description of a corpus, different scholars also emphasized the characteristics of corpus-based linguistic analysis. According to Hunston (2006) corpus linguistics means looking at naturally occurring language; looking at relatively large amounts of such language; observing relative frequencies, either in raw form or mediated through statistical operations; observing patterns of association, either between a feature and a text type or between groups of words (p. 244).

In terms of the corpus based analysis, Biber et al. (1998, p. 4) argues that a corpus-based analysis:

- is empirical, analyzing the actual patterns of use in natural texts;
- utilizes a large and principled collection of natural texts, known as a “corpus”, as the basis for analysis;
- makes extensive use of computers for analysis, using both automatic and interactive techniques;
- depends on both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques.

Based on the aforementioned definitions used in the study, the data of this study is gathered from two groups of corpus that consists of the argumentative essays of the native American students and Turkish non-native students. In order to compare both groups of student essays, the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays – LOCNESS corpus is used. LOCNESS was compiled at the Université Catholique de Louvain. It is a corpus of essays comprising 288,177 words produced by native speakers of English. It is worth stating that LOCNESS corpus has been used in various studies, which examine linguistic expressions, LOCNESS provides control data in comparing



writings of native and non-native learners. As a reference corpus, it's both a commonly used and reliable corpus (Granger & Tyson, 1996, Hatzitheodorou & Mattheoudakis, 2007). Therefore, in this study the native American student essays from LOCNESS corpus are used to compare with Turkish non-native student essays. LOCNESS corpus involves

149,574 words of argumentative essays written by American university students

18,826 literary mixed essays written by American university students

59,568 by argumentative and literary essays by British university students

60,209 British A level argumentative essays.

149,574 words of argumentative essays written by native American students are extracted from LOCNESS corpus and saved as a file on the computer. In this study, the literary essays in the LOCNESS corpus are not involved.

The essays written by Turkish non-native students consist of the ones written in Academic Writing and Report Writing Course between the terms 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 and these essays are extracted from Turnitin and saved as another file on the computer. The citations used by the students are extracted from the essays. The essays of both groups of students are selected by simple random sampling and each corpus consists of 100 argumentative essays. Each essay was numbered and 100 of the numbered ones put in a box were selected randomly, which is the most commonly used probability sampling method enabling the researchers to select the representatives of a population (Creswell, 2005). After the random sampling procedure the number of words for each corpus are as follows:

84,851 words of native American student essays

86,554 words of Turkish student essays

The argumentative essays drawn from the LOCNESS corpus are the essays written by American university students and are based on the following topics:

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| - euthanasia                   | - AIDS                 |
| - sex equality                 | - orphanages           |
| - controversy in the classroom | - profit: good or evil |
| - teenagers                    | - freedom of the press |
| - capital punishment           | - sex in schools       |
| - pride or segregation         | - abortion             |

- surrogate motherhood
- prozac: the wonder drug
- animal testing
- prayer in schools
- water pollution
- legalization of marijuana
- racism
- adoption/biological parents
- crime
- homelessness
- the welfare system
- divorce
- corporal punishment/paddle
- gender roles
- salary caps
- sex in the media
- feminism
- us government
- violence on television
- gun control
- portrayal of women in fashion magazines
- ethics
- would anyone care for a drink
- suicide
- the confederate flag
- rules and regulations
- death penalty
- teachers deserve recognition and reward
- football
- drinking age
- talk shows and homosexuality on television
- professors that don't speak shouldn't teach English speaking students
- great inventions and discoveries of 20<sup>th</sup> century and their impact on people's lives (one per interview-computer, television, nuclear power, etc.)
- recycling
- journalists should not reveal their sources

The argumentative essays of Turkish EFL students were drawn from Turnitin program and the topics include the following topics:

- the use of drama in lessons
- facebook is /not the beginning of the new era.
- facebook is/not the end of privacy.
- the necessity of art lessons in university education
- government should/not use surveillance mechanisms on society.
- law enforcement agencies should/not be allowed to tap telephone lines.
- introduction to art, music and drama should/not be a part of every university student's education
- selfishness is /not a new virtue for the new generation.
- involvement of music in ELT Department
- media should/not show respect for celebrities' desire for privacy.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

In order to conduct corpus based studies and analyze large amounts of data, corpus software tools are used and they enable complex search of a corpus including concordancing, key words, collocations, etc. Concordance tools are computer programmes designed to sift out and read specific language features, at the behest of the researcher, from the language contained in the corpus: data are presented in the form of concordance lines (Morgan, 2011). This enables the researcher to observe specific language functions as well as the framework of norms that are defined by the community in which the communication is taking place, and which shapes features of the discourse such as formality and vocabulary. There are tools that can be utilised regardless of the type of corpora and - tools which are specially designed for one specific type of corpus. AntConc - the corpus software tool used in this study- is in the first category. Corpus software tools enable the researchers to analyze big amounts of data easily and analyze various linguistics functions. According to Hunston (2006) corpus software ‘searches the corpus for a given target item, counts the number of instances of the target item in the corpus and calculates relative frequencies, displays instances of the target item so that the corpus user can carry out further investigation’ (p. 234).

In the present study, the data were analyzed using Ant. Conc 3.3.4. Ant.Conc is a text and concordancing tool (<http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html>) ) which enables the researchers various functions such as Concordance/KWIC lines, Concordance Plot, File View, Clusters, N-Grams (part of clusters) collocates, Word List, Keyword List).

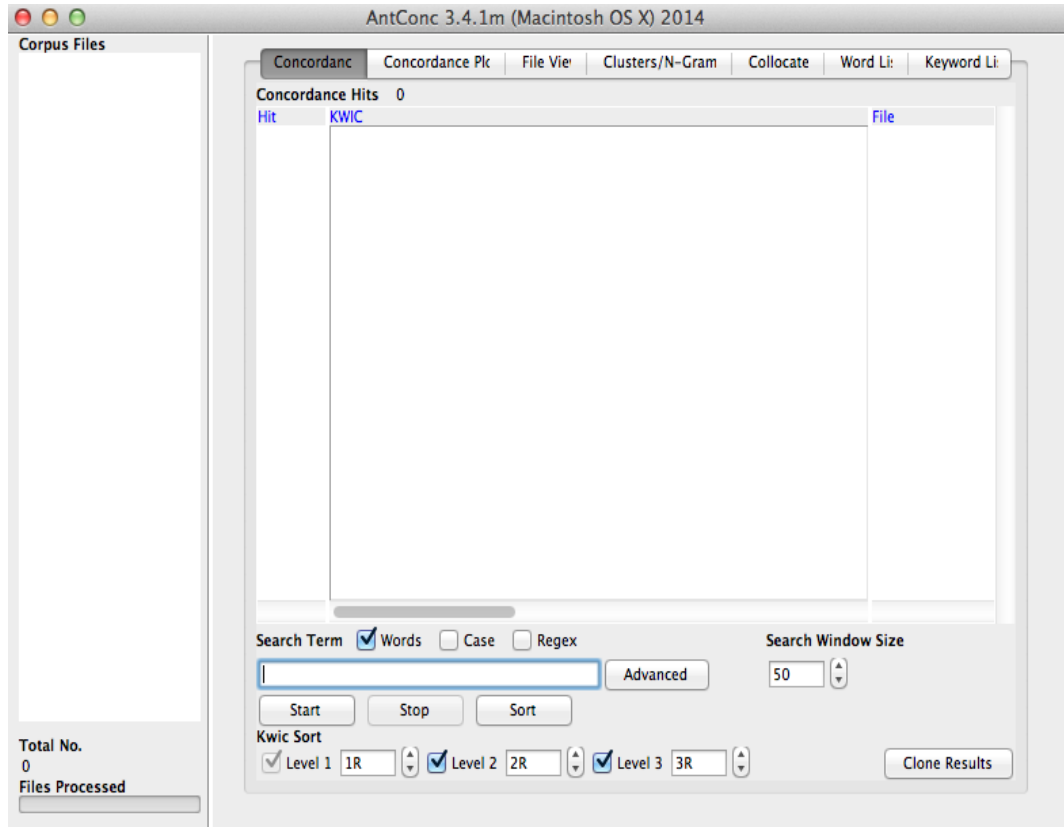


Figure 1. Screenshot of Ant.Conc 3.4.1 Home Screen

Firstly, Wordlist function of this concordancing tool is used in order to list all the words from the most frequent to the least frequent ones.

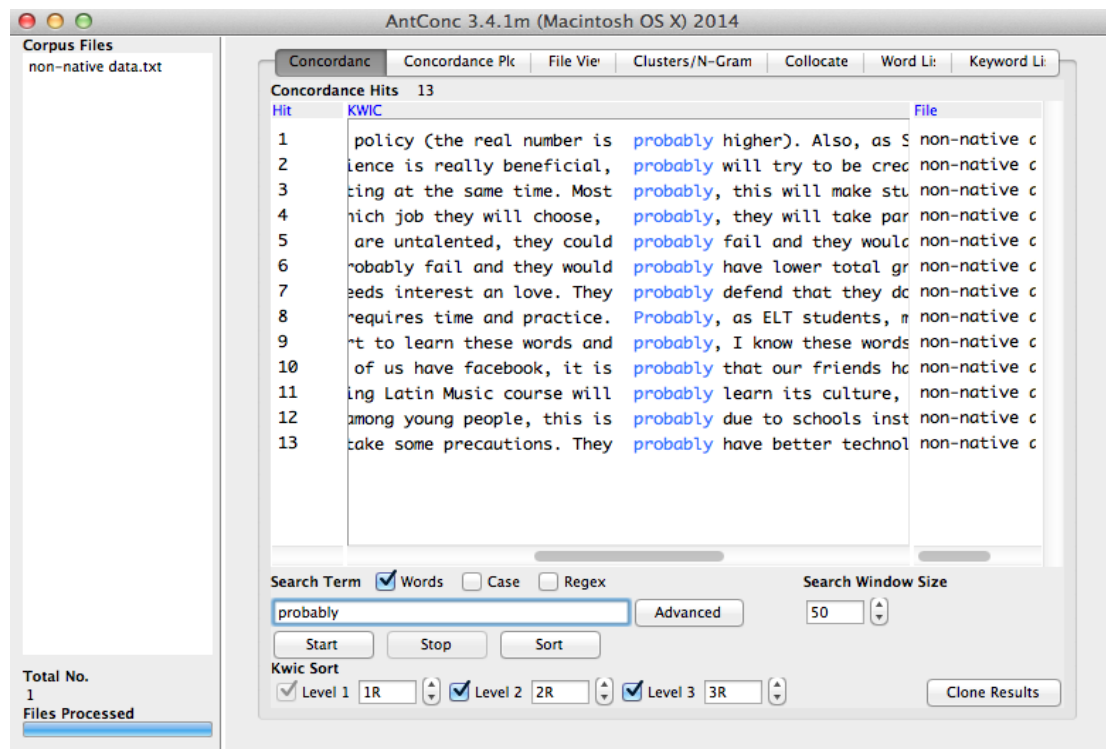


Figure 2. Screenshot of Sample Concordance lines for the word 'probably'

The words in the list were analyzed one by one according to Hyland (2005)'s model of interactional metadiscourse in the academic texts and the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters are identified in both corpora. In order not to miss any adverbial, the texts were checked twice. The functions of these adverbials are decided by the researcher and the functions are examined and checked another researcher in order to get much more reliable results. The misused adverbials are decided by the researcher, checked by a native speaker and they are not involved in the study. In the first example, 'probably' represents a stance adverbial as hedge, in the second example, 'undoubtedly' represents a stance adverbial as booster.

1. *Probably* the most interesting and significant category of lexical errors is 'word class' since it is the major type of error made by the subjects. (AL PhD)
2. *Undoubtedly*, there are limitations to the findings of this thesis. (Bio MSc) (These examples cited from Hyland and Tse (2004))

Peer debriefing is carried out in order to improve the credibility of the qualitative analyses conducted in the current study. In this research peer debriefing is recruited in order to aid with consistency, credibility, and reliability throughout the identification of the functions of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in their own contexts (Baber & Walczak, 2009). The peer debriefing system consist of the following phases as shown in the followings:

- The researcher read each argumentative text line-by-line, and highlighted the stance adverbial functioning as hedge and booster.
- The same texts were then provided to the peer debriefer, who also read the texts line-by-line and identified the hedges and boosters.
- The researchers findings were provided to the debriefer, but not until after reading and analyzing the text independently.
- The researcher and the debriefer met in person to discuss the analyses focusing on examples in which they disagreed on the functions of hedges and boosters, by this way the interpretations were discussed and the discrepancy is resolved.
- A total of 50 texts (25 texts from each student corpus) were analyzed in the manner described. (adapted from Baber & Walczak, 2009)

Once the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters are identified, the similarities and differences between both corpora are examined in terms of the frequencies. The frequencies of the items are calculated and interpreted through the analysis of occurrences per 10,000 words for standardization of two corpora to a common basis. In addition, Log-likelihood calculator (<http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>) is used in order to compare the relative frequencies between two corpora to detect the overuse and underuse of corpus 1 relative to corpus 2.

## Log-likelihood calculator

To use this wizard, type in frequencies for one word and the corpus sizes and press the calculate button.

|                   |                      |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                   | Corpus 1             | Corpus 2             |
| Frequency of word | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Corpus size       | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

**Notes:**

1. Please enter plain numbers without commas (or other non-numeric characters) as they will confuse the calculator!
2. The LL wizard shows a plus or minus symbol before the log-likelihood value to indicate overuse or underuse respectively in corpus 1 relative to corpus 2.
3. The log-likelihood value itself is always a positive number. However, my script compares relative frequencies between the two corpora in order to insert an indicator for '+' overuse and '-' underuse of corpus 1 relative to corpus 2.

Figure 3. Screenshot of Log-likelihood Calculator Home Screen

For the analysis of the log-likelihood, a contingency table is constructed as shown in the following example:

## Log-likelihood calculator results

**Key:**  
O1 is observed frequency in Corpus 1  
O2 is observed frequency in Corpus 2  
%1 and %2 values show relative frequencies in the texts.  
+ indicates overuse in O1 relative to O2,  
- indicates underuse in O1 relative to O2

| Item | O1 | %1   | O2 | %2   |   | LL   |
|------|----|------|----|------|---|------|
| Word | 25 | 0.03 | 13 | 0.02 | + | 3.62 |
| +    | 0  | 0.00 | 0  | 0.00 | + | 0.00 |

Figure 4. Example of Log-likelihood Calculator Results

Figure 4 shows the Log-likelihood calculator result for 'probably'. Corpus 1 represents the Turkish student corpus while corpus 2 represents native American student corpus. The higher LL value, the more significant is the difference between two frequency scores. According to this result for example, log-likelihood ratio of 'probably' is 3,63 which means Turkish students overuse this adverbial in their argumentative essays. The log-likelihood values for all the items found in both learner corpora are calculated in this way and they were interpreted comparatively.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Introduction

This study aims at examining the types and frequencies of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by native American and Turkish non-native students and the similarities and differences between two learner corpora in terms of the use of these adverbials. The data of this study consist of argumentative essays of Turkish non-native students (100 essays) and native American students (100 essays). An ethnographic research design is applied, document analysis is carried out and the data of the study are analyzed both qualitatively by identifying the functions of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in their own contexts and quantitatively by finding out the frequency of these adverbials.

During the analyses, Wordlist function of Ant. Conc. 3.3.4 is used in order to list all the words from the most frequent to the least frequent ones. Hyland (2005)'s model of interactional metadiscourse in the academic texts is used to identify the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in both corpora. After all the adverbials are identified in both learner corpora, all the occurrences are analyzed twice by the researcher in order to decide whether these adverbials are metadiscourse operators or whether they function as hedges and boosters or not. These occurrences are also inter-rated by another researcher in order to get more reliable results with the help of peer debriefing system, which was explained in detail in the previous section. The adverbials, which are not used as a metadiscourse operator and do not denote these functions, are excluded. All the occurrences of these adverbials are given in Appendix 1. The following examples extracted from the non-native student corpus are precedents. Occurrences, as it is the case in the first example, are not included in the analyses, as they do not function as a metadiscourse operator.

- They say that every child should have the opportunity to learn something about enjoying and participating directly in the arts. Therefore, we can *clearly* say various reasons why students should interested in the fine arts. (excluded)
- Then, this event occurred a bad image on her. So, the media harasses them, celebrities even do not want to it. *Clearly*, the media invade their privacy. (included)



In this chapter, the results revealed from quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data will be presented. In the first section, the first research question seeking to answer the type of stance adverbials as hedges found in both learner corpora are presented, then the hedges identified either in NS or NNS corpus are presented. Then, in the following part, the stance adverbials as boosters detected in both learner corpora are analyzed, then the ones found either in NS or NNS corpus are explained in detail. The frequencies of hedges and boosters in each learner corpus are presented and the overall mean frequency (per 10.000) and log-likelihood results of hedges and boosters are depicted (for the research questions 2 and 3). In the last section, the normalized frequencies (per 10 000 words) of hedges and boosters in native and non-native student corpora are explained, the results of Log-likelihood calculations conducted in order to detect overuse/underuse of hedges and boosters in non-native student argumentative essays in relation to the natives are clarified. In addition, each item analyzed in its own context is explained in terms of its functional use and examples from both native and non-native corpora are provided and interpreted. In these examples, the items extracted from the Turkish non-native students' argumentative essays are shown as (abbreviated as) NNS, while the occurrences in the native American student essays are shown as NS.

#### **4.2. Stance Adverbials as Hedges and Boosters Employed by Native American and Turkish Non-native Students**

In this part, the research question is explained under the following sub-headings. In part one, the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by native American students are presented and in the other part, hedges and boosters identified in Turkish non-native student essays are clarified.

The results of the current study revealed that the native American students used *maybe, perhaps, apparently, hypothetically* and *in a way* as the stance adverbials functioning as hedges and they used *of course, unfortunately, in fact, importantly, obviously, naturally, especially, hopefully, clearly, truly, indeed, basically, specifically,* and *without doubt* as boosters. On the other hand, Turkish non-native students used *maybe, likely, probably, perhaps, mostly, apparently, almost, nearly* as hedges whereas they used *of course, actually, unfortunately, especially, in fact, without doubt, importantly, indeed, surely, really, definitely, clearly, broadly*

(*speaking*), *totally*, *naturally*, *absolutely* and *as you know* as boosters. The stance adverbials as hedges detected in both learner corpora are *maybe*, *perhaps* and *apparently*, while the stance adverbials as boosters commonly employed in both learner corpora are *of course*, *unfortunately*, *especially*, *in fact*, *without doubt*, *importantly*, *indeed*, *clearly* and *naturally*. On the other hand, the stance adverbials as hedges only found in non-native corpus are *likely*, *probably*, *mostly* and *almost* while the ones only found in native learner corpus are *hypothetically* and *in a way*. In terms of the boosters it was revealed that the boosters only employed by non-native students are *actually*, *surely*, *really*, *definitely*, *broadly(speaking)*, *totally*, *absolutely* and *as you know*, whereas the ones only employed by native students are *obviously*, *truly*, *basically*, *specifically* and *according to*. (see Table 3)

Table 3: Hedges and Boosters in Non-native and Native Corpora

|          | Non-native Corpus   | Native Corpus  |
|----------|---|--|
| Hedges   | <i>maybe, likely, probably, perhaps, mostly, apparently, almost, nearly</i>   | <i>maybe, perhaps, apparently, hypothetically and in a way</i>   |
| Boosters | <i>of course, actually, unfortunately, especially, in fact, without doubt, importantly, indeed, surely, really, definitely, clearly, broadly (speaking), totally, naturally, absolutely and as you know</i> | <i>of course, unfortunately, in fact, importantly, obviously, naturally, especially, hopefully, clearly, truly, indeed, basically, specifically, and without doubt</i> |

#### 4.3. The Frequencies of Hedges and Boosters in Both Learner Corpora

When the frequencies of stance adverbials as hedges employed by native and non-native students are analyzed, it is seen that argumentative essays of students are characterized by extensive use of boosters, and less limited use of hedges. It was revealed that total employment of hedges by non-native students is 43, while the occurrence is 19 in native student essays. In terms of boosters, it was found out that

they have 82 occurrences in non-native corpus whereas there are 42 occurrences in the native corpus. The results also show that in total hedges have 62 occurrences while boosters have 124 occurrences in both learner corpora as shown in Table 4. It is clearly seen that non-native students employ hedges and boosters more frequently than the native students do. It is also seen that in the non-native student corpus, the total frequency of hedges is 4.96 per 10,000 words while it is 2.23 in native corpus. The log-likelihood results for overuse/underuse of hedges in non-native corpus relative to native corpus show that hedges are overused (+9.07) by non-native students. Similarly, the results of the study show that the mean frequency of boosters in non-native corpus is 9.47 per 10,000 words while it is 4.94 in native corpus. In terms of boosters, the log-likelihood results show that they are overused by (+ 12.35) non-native students.

Table 4: *Overall Mean Frequency (per 10.000) and Log-likelihood Results of Hedges and Boosters in Both Learner Corpora*

| Category | Non-native corpus |                            | Native corpus |                            | LL Ratio       |
|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------|
|          | Total             | Occurrence<br>(per 10.000) | Total         | Occurrence<br>(per 10.000) |                |
| Hedges   | 43                | 4.96                       | 19            | 2.23                       | + <b>9.07</b>  |
| Boosters | 82                | 9.47                       | 42            | 4.94                       | + <b>12.35</b> |

O1 is observed frequency in Corpus 1

O2 is observed frequency in Corpus 2

+ indicates overuse in O1 relative to O2,

- indicates underuse in O1 relative to O2

The difference between the two groups in terms of employment of hedges is also presented in Figure 5 below. According to the figure below, there is a great discrepancy between non-native and native corpora in the distribution of hedges. It is clearly seen that hedges are more frequently employed by non-native students when compared with the native students.

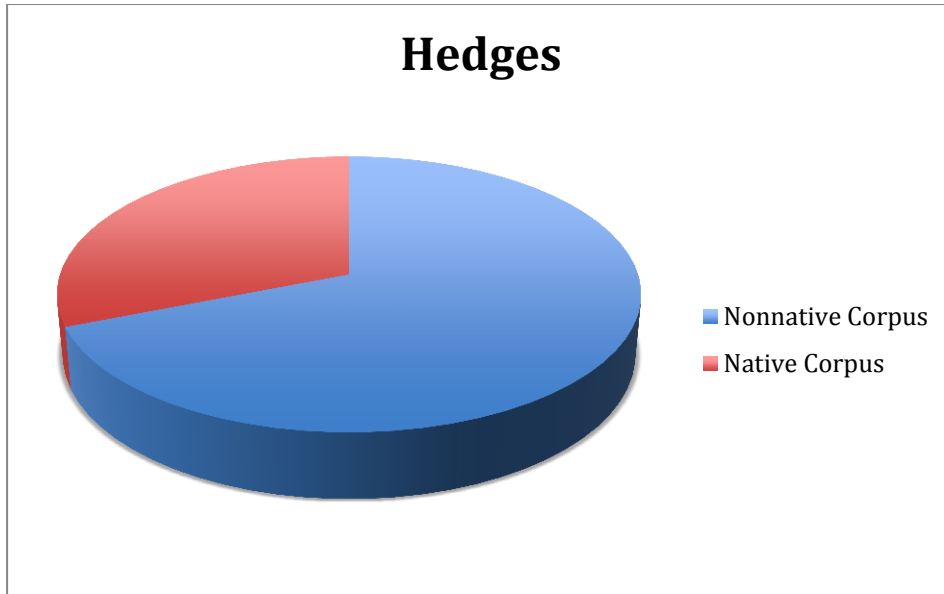


Figure 5: The Pie Chart of the Distribution of Hedges in Non-native and Native Corpora

Considering the overall occurrences of boosters in non-native and native corpora, as it is clearly seen in Figure 6, boosters are more frequently employed in non-native corpus compared to the native corpus.

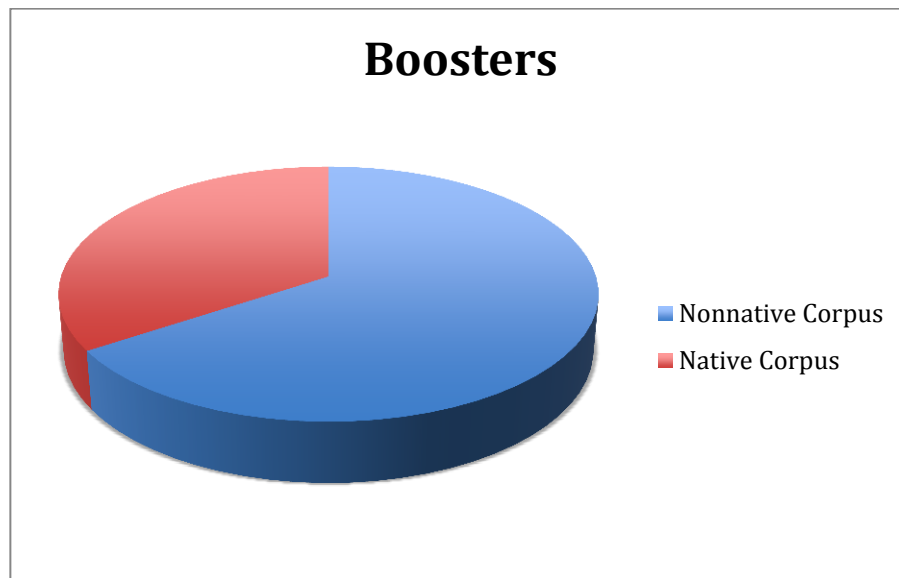


Figure 6: The Pie Chart of the Distribution of Boosters in Non-native and Native Corpora

In terms of the total occurrences of hedges and boosters in native and non-native corpora, Figure 7 is a visual representation of the differences between these two adverbial categories and it shows that boosters are more frequently employed compared to hedges by both native students and non-native students.

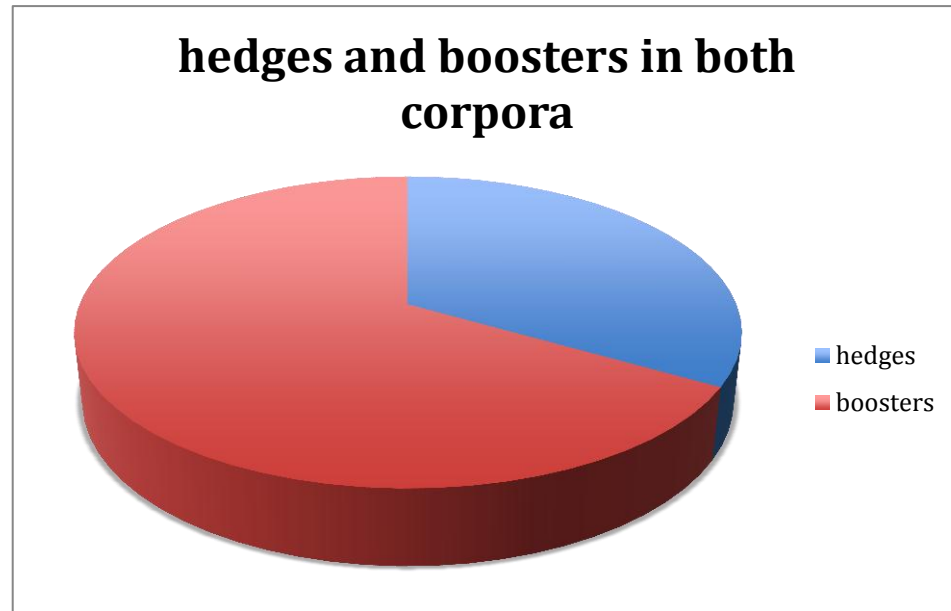


Figure 7: The Pie Chart of the Total Distribution of Hedges and Boosters in Non-native and Native Corpora

When we analyze the results, in addition to the aforementioned differences, there is more variety in the Turkish non-native students' argumentative essays in both hedges and boosters. For example, *maybe* has 13 occurrences in the non-native corpus while there are 7 occurrences in the native corpus as shown in Table 4. *Maybe* comprises 30,2 percent of all occurrences of hedges in non-native corpus whereas it comprises 36,8 percent of the occurrences in the native corpus. The reason behind non-native students' use of this adverbial and their preference on modality may be because of the instructions they are provided with. The instruction in their course book guides them to use modal verbs to give their opinion on the topic and to support their view with several reasons such as *can/can't*, *must/mustn't*, *have to*, *should/shouldn't*. The other frequently employed hedges in non-native corpus are *likely* with 11 occurrences and 25,5 percentage; *probably* with 5 occurrences and 11,6 percentage; *perhaps* with 5 occurrences and 11,6 percentage; *mostly* with 4 occurrences and 9,3 percentage; *apparently* and *almost* with 2 occurrences and 4,6

percentage; *nearly* with 1 occurrence and 2,3 percentage. In terms of the native corpus, hedges identified in this corpus are *perhaps* with 7 occurrences and 36,8 percentage; *apparently* and *hypothetically* with 2 occurrences and 10,5 percentage; in a way with 1 occurrence and 5,2 percentage.

Table 5: *Stance adverbials as hedges in the native and non-native corpora*

| Item           | Non-native Corpus |             | Native Corpus |             |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                | Raw no            | %           | Raw no        | %           |
| maybe          | 13                | <b>30,2</b> | 7             | <b>36,8</b> |
| perhaps        | 5                 | <b>11,6</b> | 7             | <b>36,8</b> |
| apparently     | 2                 | 4,6         | 2             | <b>10,5</b> |
| likely         | 11                | <b>25,5</b> | -             | -           |
| mostly         | 4                 | 9,3         | -             | -           |
| probably       | 5                 | <b>11,6</b> | -             | -           |
| almost         | 2                 | 4,6         | -             | -           |
| nearly         | 1                 | 2,3         | -             | -           |
| hypothetically | -                 | -           | 2             | <b>10,5</b> |
| in a way       | -                 | -           | 1             | 5,2         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>43</b>         |             | <b>19</b>     |             |

The differences between non-native and native corpus in terms of the commonly employed hedges, which happen to be *maybe*, *perhaps* and *apparently*, are also shown in Figure 8. When we analyze the Figure 8, *maybe* is more frequently employed by non-native students whereas *perhaps* is more frequently employed by native students. Additionally, it was revealed that *apparently* has equal number of occurrences in both learner corpora.

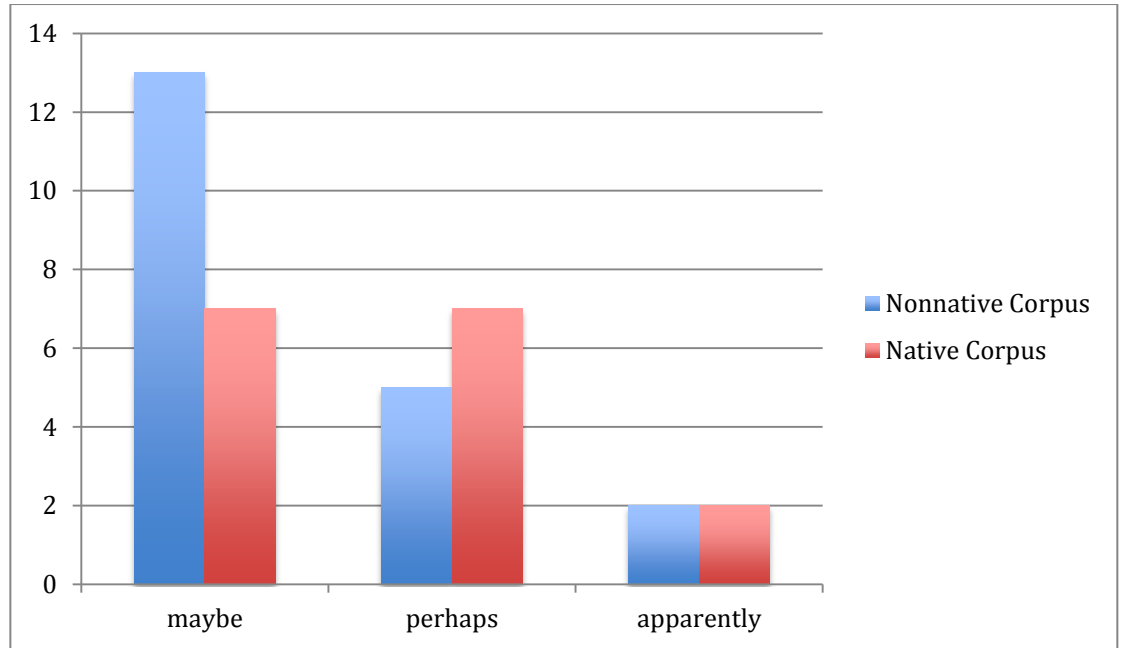


Figure 8: Distribution of commonly employed hedges in non-native and native corpus

When we analyze Figure 9, representing hedges only found in non-native corpus, it is seen that *likely* is the most frequently employed hedge in Turkish EFL students' argumentative essays. This is followed by *mostly*, *probably*, *almost* and *nearly* respectively.

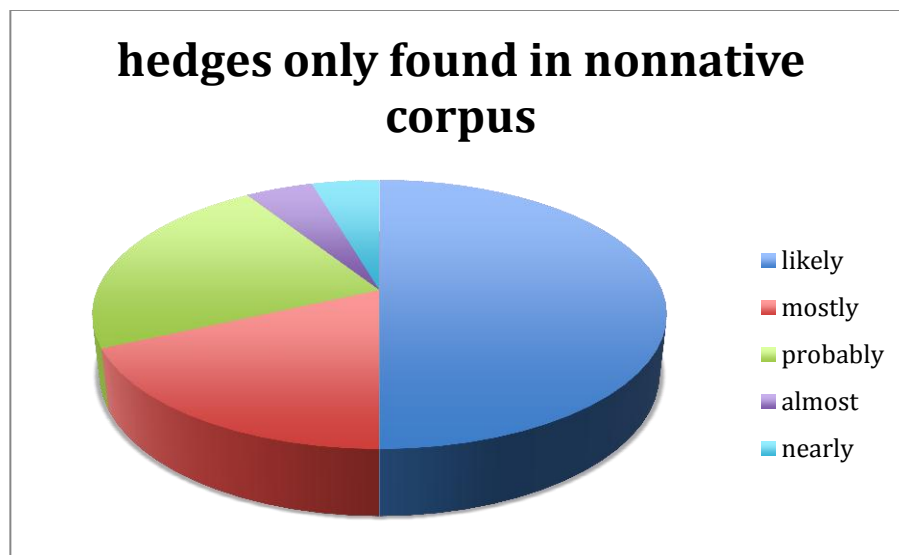


Figure 9: Distribution of hedges only found in non-native corpus

Having explained the distribution of hedges only found in non-native corpus, it is seen that *hypothetically* and *in a way* are two hedges only found in native corpus. Their distribution is not shown in a figure because their occurrences were quite low namely *hypothetically* with 2 occurrences and *in a way* with 1 occurrence.

When the frequencies of stance adverbials as boosters employed by native and non-native students are analyzed, it is revealed that boosters are more frequently employed by non-native students, 82 occurrences in total, whereas there are 42 occurrences in native student corpus. In table 3, each item is presented with its occurrences and percentages. The results of the analyses show that the most frequently employed boosters in both learner corpora are *of course*, *unfortunately*, *especially* and *in fact*. In non-native corpus, *of course* has 22 occurrences with 26,8 percentage; *unfortunately* has 10 occurrences with 12,1 percentage; *especially* and *in fact* has 6 occurrences with 7,3 percentage. On the other hand, in native corpus, *of course* has 8 occurrences with 19 percentage; *unfortunately* and *in fact* have 7 occurrences with 16,6 percentage; and *especially* has 2 occurrences with 4,7 percentage. The boosters only found in non-native corpus are *actually* with 20 occurrences and 24,3 percentage; *without doubt* with 4 occurrences and 4,8 percentage; *importantly*, *indeed* and *surely* with 2 occurrences and 2,4 percentage; *clearly*, *naturally*, *really*, *definitely*, *broadly*, *totally*, *absolutely* and *as you know* with 1 occurrence and 1,2 percentage. Additionally, boosters identified in native corpus are *obviously* with 4 occurrences and 9,5 percentage; *importantly* with 5 occurrence and 11,9 percentage; *clearly*, *naturally*, *hopefully* with 2 occurrences and 4,7 percentage; *without doubt*, *indeed*, *truly*, *basically* and *specifically* with 1 occurrence and 2,3 percentages. Some of these adverbials such as *certainly*, *surely*, *absolutely*, *totally* and *completely* are listed in student course packs in order to guide them to give their opinion on the topic and support their views with several reasons with facts and examples.

Table 6: *Stance adverbials as boosters in the native and non-native corpora*

| Item          | Non-native Corpus |             | Native Corpus |             |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|               | Raw no.           | %           | Raw no.       | %           |
| of course     | 22                | <b>26,8</b> | 8             | <b>19</b>   |
| unfortunately | 10                | <b>12,1</b> | 7             | <b>16,6</b> |
| especially    | 6                 | <b>7,3</b>  | 2             | 4,7         |



|               |           |             |           |             |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| in fact       | 6         | <b>7,3</b>  | 7         | <b>16,6</b> |
| without doubt | 4         | <b>4,8</b>  | 1         | 2,3         |
| importantly   | 2         | 2,4         | 5         | <b>11,9</b> |
| indeed        | 2         | 2,4         | 1         | 2,3         |
| clearly       | 1         | 1,2         | 2         | 4,7         |
| naturally     | 1         | 1,2         | 2         | 4,7         |
| actually      | 20        | <b>24,3</b> | -         | -           |
| surely        | 2         | 2,4         | -         | -           |
| really        | 1         | 1,2         | -         | -           |
| definitely    | 1         | 1,2         | -         | -           |
| broadly       | 1         | 1,2         | -         | -           |
| (speaking)    |           |             |           |             |
| totally       | 1         | 1,2         | -         | -           |
| absolutely    | 1         | 1,2         | -         | -           |
| as you know   | 1         | 1,2         | -         | -           |
| obviously     | -         | -           | 4         | <b>9,5</b>  |
| truly         | -         | -           | 1         | 2,3         |
| basically     | -         | -           | 1         | 2,3         |
| specifically  | -         | -           | 1         | 2,3         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>82</b> |             | <b>42</b> |             |

When we have a look at Figure 10, representing the distribution of commonly employed boosters in both learner corpora, it is clearly seen that the stance adverbials as such as *of course*, *unfortunately*, *especially*, *without doubt* and *indeed* are more frequently employed in non-native corpus whereas *in fact*, *importantly*, *clearly* and *naturally* are more frequently employed in native corpus. Among these adverbials, *in fact* has the most frequent occurrence in both learner corpora and the other most frequent occurrences are *unfortunately*, *especially*, *in fact*, *without doubt*, *importantly*, *indeed*, *clearly* and *naturally* respectively.

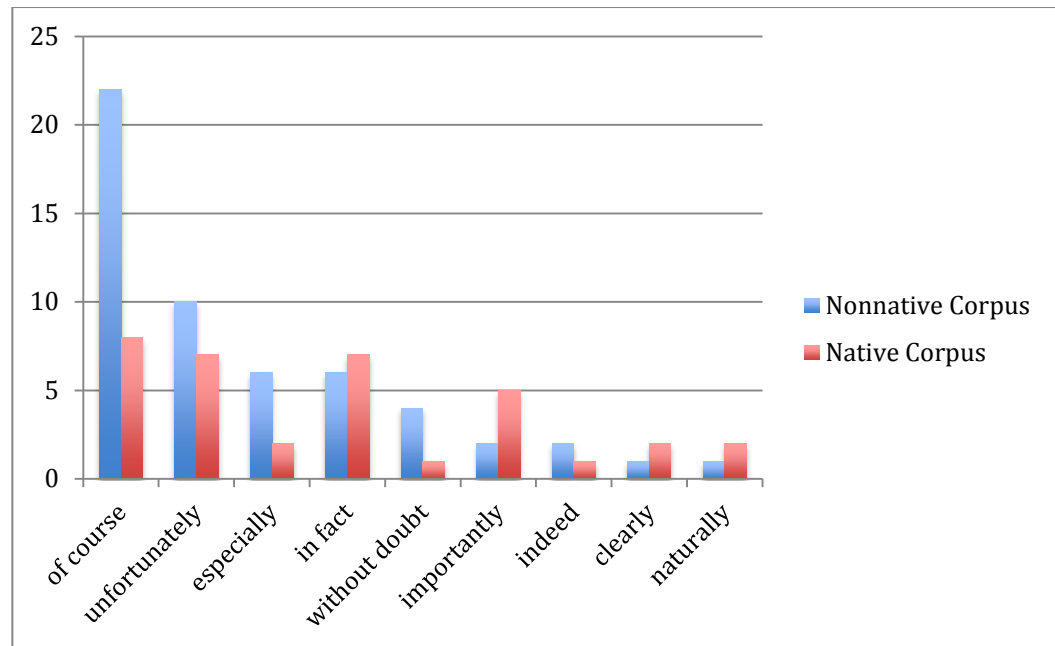


Figure 10: Distribution of commonly employed boosters in non-native and native corpus

Having explained the distribution of commonly employed boosters in non-native and native corpus, Figure 11 displays boosters only found in non-native corpus. According to the figure, *actually* has the most frequent occurrence and this is followed by *surely*, *really*, *definitely*, *broadly (speaking)* and *totally* respectively.

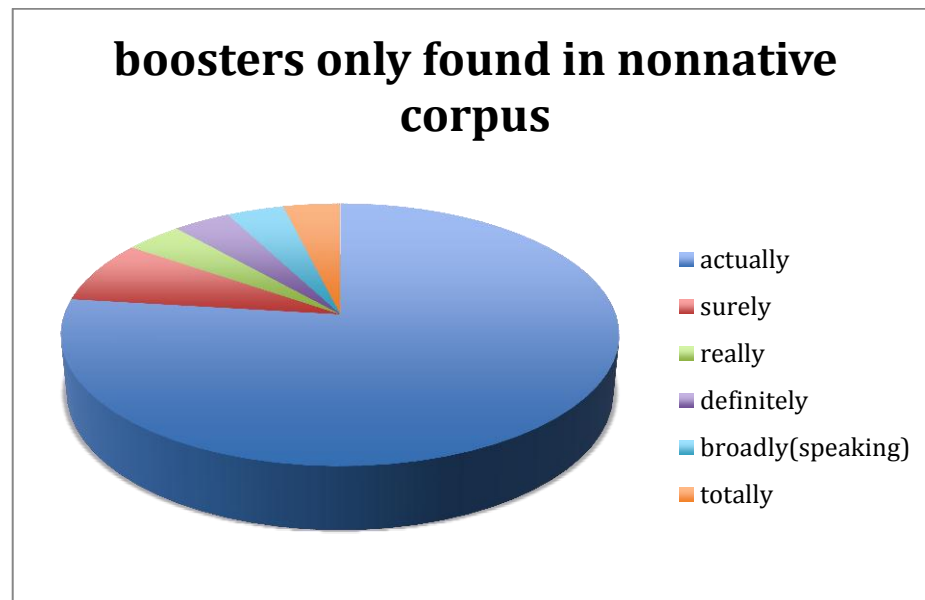


Figure 11: Distribution of boosters only found in non-native corpus

According to Figure 12, boosters employed only in native student essays are *obviously*, *truly*, *basically* and *specifically* respectively. Among these adverbials, *obviously* is the most frequently employed and this is followed by *truly*, *basically*, *specifically* respectively.

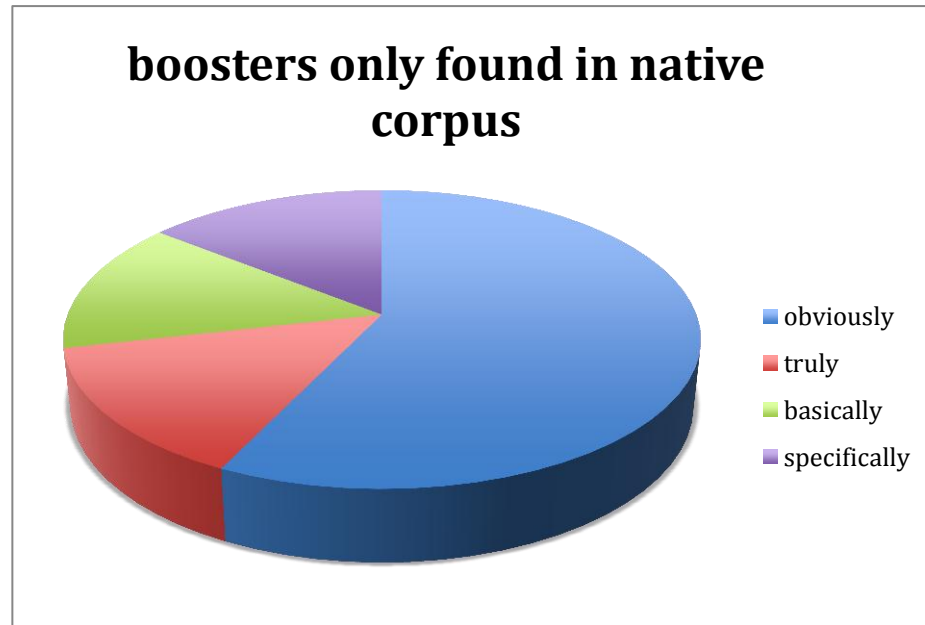


Figure 12: Distribution of booster only found in native corpus

One of the reasons behind the overuse of hedges by non-native students compared to native students may be the tips for argumentative essays provided in Turkish EFL students' course packs. This finding is presumably the result of these instructions students are provided with. These instructions include the followings:

- Avoid strong feelings (don't say nobody does this, or it is impossible to disagree with them)
- Use generalizations (e.g. people say/believe/consider)
- Do not use generalizations (e.g. everybody believes that...)
- Do not use strong personal expressions (e.g. I think)
- Use linking words (e.g. therefore, although, however, etc.)
- Use sequencing (e.g. firstly, secondly, however etc.)
- Make reference to other sources (e.g. The government claims that...)
- Give examples – not personal thoughts (e.g. products such as sprayer can destroy the environment)

On the other hand, Hinkel (2005) points out that despite the prominent role of hedges in research and materials for teachers of L2 academic learners, most student textbooks for composition and writing mention hedges very briefly or not at all. This may be another reason behind why non-native and native students employ hedges less frequently than boosters.

Comparing the overall occurrences of hedges and boosters in both learner corpora, in the current study boosters are found to be more frequently applied stance adverbials than hedges, this may be because of the nature of argumentative writing genre where the writers are expected to convince the readers by supporting or refuting their claims. The comparative over-use of these devices in L2 student writing is attributed to cross-cultural differences in the functions of hyperboles in written argumentation, as well as what it is called ‘over-zealousness attributes’ (Lorenz, 1998). According to the author, many L2 writers ‘anxious to make an impression and conscious of the limitations of their linguistic repertoire ... might feel a greater need than native speakers to stress the importance’ of what they have to say (p. 59)‘.

Furthermore, one of the reasons of the frequent occurrence of boosters in non-native corpus may be that expressing a moderate position may be an especially difficult problem for the L2 writer. And similar to the findings of our study, showing that boosters are more frequently employed than hedges, in their study of modal verbs and adverbs, Hyland and Milton (1997) found that non-native students had a more limited ability to manipulate degrees of certainty, often making stronger claims than are made by native speakers (NS) writing.

This study has also similar findings with a study focusing on university students learning English in Greece in which Hatzitheodorou and Mattheoudakis (2007) discovered that one of the biggest differences between native speakers and their learners was in the use of boosters. They suggest that the usage of boosters was different in a rhetorical sense as they often performed functions such as stating commonly accepted ideas and introducing a topic that diverge from conventional writing and they further attribute this to the transfer from the L1.

Our study has also similar results with Yang (2013) who points out that Chinese authors tend to be more assertive in scientific writing than native English speakers and employ fewer hedges and the use of hedges involves a complicated process of thinking and selecting. The students are generally confused with the employment of

these devices appropriately, and in our analyses, majority of items did not function as a metadiscourse operator. This means that even though the students are aware of some of these devices, they can not employ them as a metadiscourse operator to take a stance in their arguments.

The results in the current study are similar to a relatively recent study examining the types and frequencies of hedges and intensifiers used by NS and NNS (Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, Vietnamese and Arabic) in academic essays conducted (Hinkel, 2005). She found out that NNS or 'L2 writers employed a severely limited range of hedging devices, largely associated with conversational discourse and casual spoken interactions' (Hinkel 2005: 47). The Turkish non-native students who participated in this study, employed hedges and boosters in small numbers as metadiscourse operators.

In terms of the studies conducted in the Turkish setting, contrary to the findings of this study, Bayyurt(2010), Fidan (2002), Can (2006) and Doyuran (2009) suggests that the most commonly employed stance devices by Turkish writers are hedges. These results are different from those of Bayyurt's study (2010), in which she compared the employment of metadiscourse markers by Turkish NNS writing both in Turkish (L1) and English (L2). She found out that most commonly used devices in both studies were hedges in their English essays and she indicated that 'the students preferred to hedge their statements to obscure their authorial identity while advancing their opinions (p. 179).

As Bayyurt(2010) indicates, claiming any generalization is hasty and more research needs to be conducted in order to shed a light on the reasons behind the students' use of boosters rather than hedges in their argumentative essays. In her study, Algi (2012) found out evidence of rhetorical and pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2 was observed in the manipulation of certain hedges. Overall, the participants in this study softened their arguments by attaching an appropriate degree of certainty and pragmatic vagueness both in L1 and L2. This means that the participants were a little more certain in their mother tongue, Turkish, than they were in L2 as they had been trained to soften their claims while writing in L2(Algi, 2012). This may explain the reason why non-native students employ hedges more frequently than native

students.

This study has different findings with Can (2006) who examined the organizational patterns and metadiscoursal markers in the argumentative essays of bilingual Turkish students who wrote in English and Turkish, and monolingual American students. Different from the findings of the current study he revealed that monolingual American students participants are more assertive and show their presence in their essays by taking a stance and by using boosters such as “I believe,” “obviously,” and “of course” than the participants of monolingual Turkish, bilingual Turkish writing in English, and bilingual Turkish writing in Turkish. In contrast to our study, monolingual Turkish students used the highest number of hedges, they were hesitant to take a firm stance. He further suggested that the influence of L2 on L1 is seen in argumentative essays.

Another study conducted in the Turkish setting by Ekoç (2008) analyzed Turkish MA students’ use of lexical hedging strategies in thesis abstracts and it was found out that different from the participants of the study, thesis authors did not use personal attribution to persuade the readers but they preferred to distance themselves from the claims by using impersonal strategies inanimate nouns and passives. She further indicates that hedges have essential roles in academic discourse and ‘with hedges, readers feel that they have room to judge the statement for themselves. With all these possible functions of hedges, the observations suggest that the use of hedging is an important aspect of academic discourses’ (p.122).

#### **4.4. Similarities and Differences Between Two Learner Corpora in Terms of The Use of Stance Adverbials**

In addition to the frequencies and percentages of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in both learner corpora, mean frequencies and Log-likelihood results are also calculated in non-native corpus in relation to native corpus and these results are presented in Table 4 below. When we compare the results of hedges used by native and non-native students, it was revealed that the mean frequency of *maybe* in non-native corpus is 6,5 per 10,000 words while it is 4,3 in native corpus. Log-likelihood results show that the ratio is + 1.71, which means that the non-native students overuse this item in their essays. Other hedges identified in both learner corpora are *perhaps*

and *apparently*, there is not a significant difference in terms of overuse/underuse. The mean frequency of *perhaps* is 2,5 per 10,000 and the log-likelihood result is -0.38, which means non-native students underuse this item, but this value is not significant. In terms of *apparently*, the mean frequency is 1 in non-native corpus, whereas it is 1,2 per 10,000 in native corpus and there does not exist an overuse/underuse, as the log-likelihood ratio is -0.00.

In terms of boosters, the results of the study show that the most significant value is +6,52 and it means that *of course* is overused by non-native students. The mean frequency for *of course* in non-native corpus is 38,5 per 10,000 while it is 20,5 in native corpus. As for the other boosters, which are significantly overused by non-native students, *especially* has the mean frequency of 10,5 per 10,000 with +2.01 log-likelihood ratio; *without doubt* has 7,01 mean frequency per 10,000 with + 1,87 log-likelihood ratio. Among these items, only *importantly* is underused by non-native students with 3,5 mean frequency in non-native corpus; 12,8 mean frequency in native corpus and the log-likelihood ratio is -1,39. Apart from the aforementioned items, the other boosters are *unfortunately* with 17,5 mean frequency per 10,000 in non-native corpus and 17,9 mean frequency in native corpus; *in fact* with 10,5 mean frequency in non-native corpus and 17,9 mean frequency in native corpus; *indeed* with 3,5 mean frequency in non-native corpus, 2,56 mean frequency in native corpus; *clearly* and *naturally* with 1,75 mean frequency in non-native corpus, 5,12 mean frequency in native corpus. In terms of their Log-likelihood ratio, it was found out that *unfortunately* has + 0,47, *in fact* - 0.01, *indeed* + 0.32; *clearly* and *naturally* -0.36 Log-likelihood ratio values, which means that there does not exist a significant overuse and underuse between two corpora.

Table 7. Mean frequency (per 10,000) and Log-likelihood Results for Stance Adverbials as Hedges and Boosters in Non-native Corpus in Relation to Native Corpus

| Category | Item  | Non-native corpus (O1) | Occurrence per 10,000 words) | Native corpus (O2) | Occurrence per 10,000 words) | LL Ratio |
|----------|-------|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------|
|          | maybe | 13                     | 6,5                          | 7                  | 4,3                          | + 1.71   |

|          |               |           |      |           |      |               |
|----------|---------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|---------------|
| Hedges   | perhaps       | 5         | 2,5  | 7         | 4,3  | - 0.38        |
|          | apparently    | 2         | 1    | 2         | 1,2  | - 0.00        |
|          | <b>Total</b>  | <b>20</b> | 2,31 | <b>16</b> | 1,88 | + <b>0.37</b> |
|          | of course     | 22        | 40,7 | 8         | 22,8 | + <b>6.52</b> |
|          | unfortunately | 10        | 18,5 | 7         | 20   | + 0.47        |
|          | especially    | 6         | 11,1 | 2         | 5,71 | + <b>2.01</b> |
|          | in fact       | 6         | 11,1 | 7         | 20   | - 0.01        |
| Boosters | without       | 4         | 7,4  | 1         | 2,85 | + <b>1.87</b> |
|          | doubt         |           |      |           |      |               |
|          | importantly   | 2         | 3,7  | 5         | 14,2 | - <b>1.39</b> |
|          | indeed        | 2         | 3,7  | 1         | 2,85 | + 0.32        |
|          | clearly       | 1         | 1,8  | 2         | 5,71 | - 0.36        |
|          | naturally     | 1         | 1,8  | 2         | 5,71 | - 0.36        |
|          | <b>Total</b>  | <b>54</b> |      | <b>35</b> |      | + <b>3.05</b> |

O1 is observed frequency in Corpus 1

O2 is observed frequency in Corpus 2

+ indicates overuse in O1 relative to O2,

- indicates underuse in O1 relative to O2

In this part, the functional use of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in native and non-native student's argumentative essays, the differences and similarities in terms of the functions of these adverbials between the two corpora are explained comparatively.

It is found out that *maybe* is more frequently employed by non-native students (13) than the native students (7). In both native and non-native student's essays, this adverbial is used to lower the authorial commitment and writers make the statements open to dispute by indicating the possibility as shown in the example 1 and 2. In example 1, *maybe* is used to indicate the possible alternative ways for the government to choose another way / to take some precautions in order to pursue the groups. In example 2, *maybe* is used to argue and sort two opinions on the possibility of any reasons for our differences and the writer avoids to take the responsibility if the proposition is false.



1. (NNS) Although they are dangerous, they have private lives and they can speak with their wives or friends some classified things like everyone. Government can use more effective ways to pursue these groups. *Maybe*, a police can change himself/herself and enter these groups to pursue them. More effective information can be known by this way.

2. (NS) Our society and the feminists that support this equality is so intent on creating this type of environment, that perhaps we have become obsessed with just that and ultimately losing a part of what should be a unique creation. We were created different and we are different. *Maybe* we are different for a reason and those differences should not necessarily be viewed as negative. *Maybe* we were made different to stay different and perhaps in trying to create this equality we may lose something very unique and special that can never be regained.

According to the results of the analyses, it was revealed that *perhaps* has 5 occurrences in non-native corpus whereas it has 7 occurrences in the native corpus. The results show that in example 3, *perhaps* helps the writer mitigate her evaluation of the possibility of the existence of a relationship. It is evident that the writer has a doubt about the existence of celebrities' relationship. In example 4, '*perhaps*' decodes a doubt in the writer's evaluation of having the same qualifications for checking the backgrounds of all the media people. In this example, the writer also presents a possible way that will also allow him to check for the lives of these people.

3. (NNS) They have a normal life like the others. They get up, have breakfast and go out with their friends. *Perhaps*, they have a relationship. Even if the media want to use them in its job, it should esteem to celebrities who don't want to inform the others about their personal lives; otherwise, celebrities have a right to report criminal complaint about interference to their private lives.

4. (NS) Who would want every little thing in their background brought up for public scrutiny? Just because a person has made a mistake in their past lives does not mean that they will make that mistake in the future. The past is past. Let it be. Nobody is perfect. *Perhaps*, we should have the same qualifications for background checks into the lives of all these media people who are so quick to point their fingers and ridicule others.

The results show that *apparently* has 2 occurrences in both non-native and native corpora. In the following examples, *apparently* is used as a hedging device in order to express the evidence they acquire through the sense, they explain the people's general belief towards the events/opinions asserted. In other words, *apparently* denotes the type of evidence that the writer has acquired through the senses based on the writer's knowledge as to the relationship between some events. In example 5, *apparently* denotes the writer's evaluation based on his/her observation about the facebook privacy problems that people are suffering. In example 6, *apparently* come to mean that seemingly most people believe that they are underpaid and others are overpaid. In his/her following statement, the writer provides evidence and an example to support his/her aforementioned idea. It is meant that as far as one knows/it seems that most people believe that they are underpaid and that others are overpaid.

5. (NNS) As one of the most famous and unique social networking website, Facebook, is growing bigger and bigger every day, the concerns about the privacy of Facebook users have begun to increase according to Consumer Reports, an expert, independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to work for a fair, just, and safe marketplace for all consumers and to empower consumers to protect themselves. *Apparently*, many people having facebook accounts are suffering from privacy issues which may lead to undesirable incidents ranging from a simple discussion with parents to very serious occasions like credit card theft.

6. (NS) These opinions are based on a rather faulty American premise that all people are given an equal chance in life and what they make of it is their own responsibly. *Apparently*, most people believe that they are underpaid and that others are overpaid. For instance, everyone seems to think that doctors make much too money for the work they do, yet none of the doctors are lowering their fees (they must think that it's a fair price).

Considering the stance adverbials as hedges employed only by Turkish non-native students, it was revealed that *mostly* is one of these adverbials employed as a metadiscourse operator and it has 4 occurrences. It is used to describe a certain situation/condition that is usual at most times or for the most part. In example 7, it expresses limitation of the proposition and it denotes the writer's evaluation that the

legislations are abused illegally and people's rights are ignored at most times, not all the times or not in all the cases.

7. (NNS) He means that when it is essential and they don't have any possibility, it can be used. However, people don't care about these legislations. *Mostly*, they are abused illegal ways and rights of people are ignored. Actually, telephones of everyone shouldn't be tapped only needed people such as criminals, politicians, authorities, members of parliament for it violates our private lives.

The results of the study show that *almost* is another adverbial identified only in non-native corpus and it has 2 occurrences. In example 8, the writer expresses lack of certainty about the impossibility of banning facebook completely. *Almost* denotes limitation of the proposition and it is used to soften the statement by indicating that banning this social networking site is not exactly or entirely possible.

8. (NNS) It helps maintain their privacy to be secret and saves people's productive time and lastly, makes people closer to each other and make strong relationships with real individuals not with virtual and fake ones. Although it is *almost* impossible to ban this social networking site completely, people should be aware of what kinds of threats can be directed to themselves and in order not to reveal their privacy, waste much time on things, and be apart from social life.

It was revealed that *nearly* is employed only by non-native students with 1 frequency and it collocates with *impossible* the following example. *Nearly* is used to soften the statement and it is used to mark hesitations in this statement. In example 9, the writer leaves the door open for discussion on the possibility of finding a job without necessary university education and knowing a foreign language and means that this case is not completely impossible.

9. (NNS) Without necessary university education and knowing foreign language, it's *nearly* impossible to find a job. If it were easy, there wouldn't be such competition and people wouldn't struggle so much to enter the universities.

The analyses show that *probably* is one of the hedges employed only by non-native students with 5 occurrences and it is used to signal some level of doubt as shown in the following example. In these examples, *probably* encodes some level of probability and in nearly all occurrences of *probably*, it is used with the modals/modal

expressions such as ‘*will, would and could*’. *Probably*, helps the writer mitigate his/her evaluation of the possibility of a specific event as shown in the following example. It denotes a probability or likelihood that one of the possible experiences we have learning vocabulary as shown in example 10.

10. (NNS) So, to communicate effectively, we should learn by heart enough vocabulary which also requires time and practice. *Probably*, as ELT students, most of us had this experience that when we practice to memorize vocabulary, after some time we do not remember them but we can remember the vocabularies which we learn from the songs and usually we never forget them.

*As you know* is only employed by non-native students with 1 occurrence and it is used to present a viewpoint and perspective and acknowledges a widely regarded fact in example 11. It is used to indicate that what is being referred to is known or understood by the listener. It assures the listener that he already knows the fact about the abundance of information in the internet and facebook helps them to reach this information, enables them to share to inform other. In other words, *as you know* is used to indicate that internet serves too much information and the writer supports the interaction with the reader(s)

11. (NNS) Furthermore, via Facebook one can gain lots of new information about the world. *As you know* there are too many information on the internet and with the help of facebook you can practically reach these information and moreover you can share them to inform others. For example, while you find some new information on the net if you share them on Facebook, with the help of you more people can reach these information.

When we consider hedges employed only in native student corpora, it was found out that *hypothetically* is employed by only native students with 2 occurrences and as it is shown in example 12, it is used in multiword units like *let's hypothetically say* and it denotes a situation that just might exist; the writer come to mean that the crazy gunman's shooting one of the neighboring children is an hypothesis which has not occurred but could. It is revealed that *let's hypothetically say* is used to refer to a statement that the writer is not sure, the writer is not fully committed to the validity of the proposition he is conveying and the statement is a hypothesis; it can or cannot be

verified. The writer protects himself by saying that it is only a hypothesis and that he is not liable of anything if it is not true.

12. (NS) Now, maybe I should mention that this is a neighborhood where cars are driving down the street, children are playing and making constant trips back and forth to the convenient store and generally, this in not a good place to start shooting with all these people standing around or in the vicinity. *Let's hypothetically* say that this crazy gunman accidentally shoots one of the children coming out of a building only seconds after the gunman has just run past the door that he just exited. Now the little boy just walked out between the gunman and the store owner.

*In a way* is another adverbial employed by only native students with 1 occurrence and it is used to reduce the effect of the statement in example 13. This hedging device is used to indicate that from one point of view the general perception that the popular players should be given more money is wrong and the writer presents an alternative view by stating that it would be unfair to give him more money just because he is popular.

13. (NS) Some people would think that this was unfair because the most popular players should make more than the players that sit the bench. But *in a way* this is wrong, giving more money to a player because he is popular would be unfair. Why should Deion Sanders make more money than Andre Risen just because he is more popular?

As for the boosters detected in this study, it is found out that boosters are quite commonly employed in both corpora, however, non-native students employ these adverbials more frequently and variedly. In terms of the functions of stance adverbials as boosters, it is deduced that boosters increase the writer's commitment to their propositional material, they encode high values of certainty and point an image of assurance and confidence. They also present the significance of opinions and indicates writer's emphasis on the proposition.

It was found out that *of course* has 22 occurrences in non-native corpus whereas it has 8 occurrences in native corpus and it denotes a very high degree of certainty towards the propositional content of the utterance as shown in example 14 and 15. It is used to emphasize the writer's opinion as regards the statement being

referred to. In example 14, *of course* is used to denote without doubt minorities must be considered by the government or authority. In this example, the writer indicates the necessity of considering the minorities and explains his/her degree of certainty towards this statement by using this boosting device. On the other hand, in native corpus as shown in example 15, it is used to emphasize that there is the obstacle of patient privilege in order to find out the circumstances of the victims and to find out their reason in choosing suicide as a solution as shown in example 15. It is used to highlight the obstacle of privilege that hinders them to know the related reasons mentioned in the previous sentence.

14. (NNS) Last of all, we all should know that surveillance devices are in our world in order to protect us. Although most of us know it, some people are against this technological protection because of some personal view. But it must be known the government or the authority should consider the most of the people, not the minority. *Of course* it must consider the minority too, but most of the steps must be taken by considering the majority because if the majority is unhappy, huge problems can appear.

15. (NS) I am sure that we can still all learn of the circumstances of the victims through psychologists and psychiatrists. *Of course*, there is the obstacle of patient privilege, but we do not need to analyze the people's names. All we need to know is why people choose suicide as a solution to problems.

In non-native corpus, *unfortunately* has 10 occurrences while it has 7 occurrences in native corpus. It is deduced from the occurrences of *unfortunately* that, this boosting device is used to encode writer's attitude towards the subject matter. In example 16, for example, it is used to offer readership with a personal evaluation of the issue being discussed. After the writer indicates that the writer abuses its power and competency, and then he puts forward evidence and examples, it is clearly understood that this misuse is a disappointing and undesirable case. In example 17, the writer point out a regrettable case in the damage of nuclear energy. It is used to discuss the evaluation of the writer and it encodes a state of affairs were not the case.

16. (NNS) Are you satisfied with laws? Are they really for benefits of citizens? I don't think so. *Unfortunately*, government, sometimes, abuses its power and competency. Recently, one of the most controversial laws is that tapping telephone lines .It has been being questioned whether government does it really to

fight against terrorism ,gather evidence in a easier way and get information safely. *Unfortunately*, the right of tapping telephone lines is misused by authorities, it is being out of purpose.

17. (NS) The current situation of the world's environment is a sad one. It is also however, a problem of which nuclear energy is only a small piece. *Unfortunately*, the day will soon come when the damage caused by this apathy will be irreversible. This is why it is imperative to act today. It starts with you. Write your local congressman.

In addition, *especially* has 6 occurrences in non-native corpus and 2 occurrences in native corpus, it is used to single out one person or thing over all others. In example 18, *especially* is used to highlight the case for a particular group of teachers and emphasizes the case in which teachers in the ESL/EFL classes use drama to develop their students' communication skills. In example 19, it is used to highlight that the baby girls are dressed in pink and in other soft colors particularly when they are few weeks old.

18. (NNS) If so, as teacher candidates of English, we should use drama in our classes. *Especially*, the ESL/EFL classes' teachers whose students are needed to communicate well with others should use drama in their classes to develop their student's communication skills.

19. (NS) Pink is almost always worn by baby girls. When mothers bring their baby girls from the hospital, the baby girls are usually dressed in pink. *Especially*, when the babies are a few weeks old, baby girls are usually dressed in pink or other soft colors such as mint green or yellow. Once a baby has developed its looks, there is no problem with the baby girl wearing blue.

*In fact* has 6 occurrences in non-native corpus and 7 occurrences in native corpus, it is used to emphasize the truth of an assertion, especially one opposite to what might be expected or what has been asserted. In example 20, the writer' commitment to the proposition is achieved by saying that in reality role models are very important for children and adults. In example 21, *in fact* is used to indicate the writer's certainty and to draw attention to the profound effect of the improvement in communication on people's lives.



20. (NNS) Also, people assume that celebrities as role models should be spirit with their good behaviours to imitate them. I see some points in there, but it doesn't mean that they don't have private lives or they must share all things about them. *In fact*, role models are very important to children and adults. For them, finding a role model helps them gain a sense of behaviour, morals and character.

21. (NS) One of the most significant inventions of the 20th century has to do with the speed at which information is now communicated throughout the globe. *In fact*, all improvements in communication have had a profound effect upon the way in which people live their lives. If I were to choose the most frequently used and influential invention of the field, it would have to be the television.

It is also found out that *importantly* has 2 occurrences in non-native corpus and 5 occurrences in native corpus, it collocates with *most* in both corpora and it denotes the writer's strong claim and it is used to assert the proposition with confidence. In example 22, the writer lists the advantages of surveillance mechanisms and *most importantly* is used to indicate above and beyond all other advantages, they provide security and comfort people. The writer justifies his/her utterance by using this boosting device, then, he provides his/her opinion and advice on the issue. In example 23, on the other hand, *most important* is used to denote the increase in the information American people get with advent of television is of greatest importance among the other effects such as making them lough, cry or buy a product.

22. (NNS) They not only give information about the ways people are behaving but they also inform people or some authorities about the places, other people, and the things they want to learn. *Most importantly*, they provide security and comfort for people. Therefore, governments should make the use of surveillance mechanisms become prevalent and more people should start to use them in order to lead a comfortable life.

23. (NS) 15 second blocks of our time are sold for millions of dollars and as a result the American population is made to laugh, or to cry, & often times to buy a product. Finally, & perhaps *most importantly*, the citizens of America have experienced w/ the advent of the television a great increase in the amount of information they receive, as well as in the time it takes to reach them.



One of the commonly employed boosters in both corpora is *indeed* with 2 occurrences in non-native corpus and 1 occurrence in native corpus and it is used to emphasize the writer's opinion and highlight his/her viewpoint. In example 24, the writer highlights the effect of fine arts on the students' intellectual capacity and education. In example 25, the writer highlights the unpopularity of Vietnam or with or without television

24. (NNS) Besides students learn different cultures, different people and different styles in the fine art lessons. For instance, a student taking Latin Music course will probably learn its culture, people and Latin dance as well as basic information about Latin Music. *Indeed*, with the help of the fine arts, students intellectual capacity are developed, then, their education becomes better.

25. (NS) This abundance of information has lead to a drastic alteration in peoples ability to react to major events. Our view of the world is different, it's closer, it's in our livingrooms. A good example of this is the reaction to the vietnam war. The war was, *indeed*, unpopular with or w/o television. But the reality of what we saw, the casualty counts, the bloody children under the American flag, did much to enhance the negative aspects of war.

It is concluded from the analyses that *clearly* has 1 occurrence in non-native corpus and 2 occurrences in native corpus and it is used to marks author's absolute judgments of certainty towards the propositions expressed. In example 26, *clearly* denotes invasion of celebrities' privacy is obvious or goes without saying and it marks writer's absolute judgments of certainty towards the propositions expressed. In example 27, *clearly* is used to frame the writer's absolute certainty about the existence of evidence of good and bad results. *Clearly* also denotes the writer's confidence about his/her utterance.

26. (NNS) But the reporters continued to take Picture so that she assaulted them with her umbrella by damning. (Hürriyet, 2009). Then, this event occured a bad image on her. So, the media harasses them, celebrities even do not want to it. *Clearly*, the media invade their privacy.

27. (NS) The effects of this are unpredictable. Anger, frustration, fear, and many other negative feelings have sprung up simultaneously with the rise of computer usage. *Clearly*, there is evidence of good and bad results from the advent of the

modern computer. It would be practically impossible to throw the computer away or never use it again. Yet there are practical solutions.

It was also found out that *naturally* has 1 occurrence in non-native corpus and 2 occurrences in native corpus. In example 28, *naturally* is used to indicate that government's control of their own citizens by using surveillance systems is usual and it means 'as may be expected'. Similarly, in example 29, it is used to mean needless to say /as most people would expect or understand man invented the washing machine and millions of lives were made simpler.

28. (NNS) There many factors lying behind the usage of surveillance systems by governments. *Naturally*, governments want to control their own citizens by the way of these systems such as gps, cameras etc. The most striking reasons that governments put forward are nonobedience to traffic laws, murder, robbery, seizure.

29. (NS) For as long as man has been alive, he has invented things. Important early discoveries included the wheel and fire. In the long line of such discoveries, modern man has continuously found new ways to make his life easier. So, *naturally*, when man invented the washing machine, millions and millions of lives were made simpler. The washing machine, in those houses that own them, has almost become a necessity. Should there be a fire in the house, many people might be seen furiously running about in the streets, clutching the machine tightly to their chests.

Another adverbial identified in both learner corpora is *without doubt* with 4 occurrences in non-native corpus and 1 occurrence in native corpus; it is used to indicate the writer's absolute judgments and certainty towards the proposition s/he expresses. In example 30, it is used to emphasize the writer's certainty about the statement that facebook is the most commonly used social networking site. In example 31, on the other hand, *without doubt* is used to denote the writer's highest degree of confidence about the proposition that one of the most important inventions of 20<sup>th</sup> century is contact lenses.

30. (NNS) A popular problem that is facing society is Facebook, another word for the end of privacy. People who want to communicate with other people, such as their family members and friends, generally use social networking sites. *Without doubt*, the most common is Facebook. Facebook allows its members to keep in touch with others. In addition, members can share pictures, videos, or blogs.

31. (NS) *Without a doubt*, one of the most important inventions of the 20th century has been contact lenses. If glasses were my only form of seeing better, I'd be blind most of the time! How would I be able to see while swimming, waterskiing, or participating in other sports? Contact lenses are a part of my everyday life; something that I take for granted, yet on the other hand, something that I'd be lost without. In the early stages of contact lenses, a style called "hard lenses" were the only kind made.

In this part, the stance adverbials as boosters identified only in one learner corpus are presented. Firstly, the boosters identified only in non-native student corpus are analyzed and the ones detected in native student corpus are explained.

It was revealed that *surely* is only employed by non-native students and it has 2 occurrences. In example 32, *surely* is used to emphasize the speaker's firm belief that what he is saying is true, it denotes the writer's assurance certainty and confidence that the answer of the aforementioned questions are changeable.

32. (NNS) Can we accuse only one thing when our life is not in order? Or people have so different lives in view of value? Actually answers of these questions are 'no'. The other question from our daily life is that 'What is the importance of media in our life?'. *Surely* answer of this can change from person to person. What we should know is what the criteria is this difference. Because media is not important for a common man on the contrary celebrities.

It was found out that *definitely* has 1 occurrence only in non-native corpus and it denotes without question and indicates the writer's strong affirmation. In example 33, it is seen that the writer is certain about his/her proposition and he underlines the conviction he wishes to attach to his/her argument by highlighting the powerful effect of art on the students' development both intellectually and socially.

33. (NNS) A May 2005 Harris Poll on the attitudes of Americans toward arts education, commissioned by Americans for the Arts, revealed strong public support that the 86% of population agree an arts education encourages and assists in the improvement of a student's attitudes toward school. *Definitely*, it can be said that art has a powerful effect on students' development not only intellectually but also socially.

In example 34, the writer uses the adverbial *broadly speaking* by pointing out that without regard to specific details or exceptions, some employers and

university officers in general think that students can go drama club individually. In his/her previous statements, the writer indicates related beliefs about drama and by using this adverbial puts these opinions together.

34. (NNS) Drama is found relaxing and interesting activity. Moreover, some employers and university officers still believe that drama is soft or frivolous subject. Hence, drama is not be included in curriculum. *Broadly speaking*, they think students can go drama club individually, and therefore students can be active and avoid from stress and vibrant life.

The results of the study show that *frankly* is only employed by non-native students with 1 occurrence and in example 35, *frankly* is used to emphasize the truth of a statement. It is used for emphasizing that what he is about to say is his/her honest opinion, even though the person reading this statement might not like it. The writer highlights that celebrities and paparazzi have no regularization about privacy of celebrities and in his/her following statement he points out that there should be regularities to protect their privacy.

35. (NNS) Everyone should be respectful to the other do their job in well. You don't need to know everything which is celebrities'' privacy. *Frankly*, celebrities and paparazzi have no responsibilities to regularization about this problem. But, the press should make any setting to regulate paparazzi's behaviour and the protection of celebrities' life.

*Actually* has 20 occurrences in non-native corpus and in example 36 it is used to provide a comment on the status of the proposition as a real-life fact. It is used to denote the writer's evaluation on the effectiveness of surveillance cameras in preventing crimes when they are used accordingly. In his/her previous statement, the writer indicates a misbelief about the unreliability of surveillance cameras and by using this boosting device, another point of view is highlighted with regard to the writer's evaluation.

36. (NNS) For this reason they regard this cameras as an unreliable devices. However, we have nothing to worry about this issue because they are wrong about the use of surveillance cameras. *Actually*, surveillance cameras are very effective in preventing crimes when they are implemented accordingly. Facial recognition can help a police officer identify a criminal caught on tape.

As it is also suggested by Dontcheva-Navratilova (2009), actuality stance adverbials function as boosters emphasizing the level of accuracy to which the statement is believed to reflect the reality as shown in the following examples:

- They are **actually** expected to practice the strategies that are indispensable in interpersonal communication.
- **In fact**, the narrator shares only a little about the house's or the garden's organisation or size as well as about the family relationship. (p. 37-38)

Considering the stance adverbials as boosters employed only by native American students, it was found out that *obviously* has 4 occurrences and as shown in example 37, *obviously* is used to denote the writer's highest degree of confidence with regard to the truth of his/her statement. It denotes the writer's certainty about the culture's educative on its population about AIDS.

37. (NS) People are afraid to come in contact w/ carriers of AIDS; however, they interact sexual w/ complete strangers. If they were a bit more educated then they would realize they have actually been selling their lives short. *Obviously*, our culture has begun to educate its population or I would be unable to write about this particular topic. The AIDS viruses was discovered during the 20th century & changed many peoples lives for the worst. However, hopefully w/ education & our advancing medical technology & medicine we can make even more discoveries as to how to prevent this killer.

Considering the findings of the present study, the results of the study conducted by Dontcheva-Navratilova (2009) has a number of similarities in terms of the function analysis of the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters. She points out that reliability-oriented hedges and boosters qualify the level of writer's confidence in his/her claims and may anticipate the level of acceptability of his/her views and opinions as shown in the following examples:

- It could **perhaps** be argued that such a high number of block language structures in price ads has to do with the fact that more models of cars are sometimes presented in them.
- In this case you know **definitely** functions as an emphasiser.

- *Maybe* that is why there appear neither young attractive women nor strong independent young men.
- *Undoubtedly*, developing the skill of speaking is a challenging task.

As it is also the case in our study, she also indicates the followings:

Doubt adverbials functioning as hedges express a lower level of certainty in the interpretation of data and explanations, a tentative interpretation or lower level of agreement with reported views, imprecise amounts, and a lower level of certainty in prediction. In the function of boosters, certainty adverbials project a personal opinion as an objective truth, indicate emphasis and certainty, a high level of certainty in prediction and agreement with commonly accepted ideas or reported views. (p. 37)

Another parallel example is that Taki and Jafarpour (2012) suggests that English and Persian writers, through boosters, create some opportunities to express both their certainty in what they say and their solidarity with the audience. It is also worth emphasizing that for the purpose of involving the readers in their writing, unlike English writers who confined themselves to the use of subject and object pronouns together with possessive adjectives, Persian academics were found to show their commitment with the readers through both reader pronouns and verb inflections.

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, the summary of the research, conclusions drawn from the findings of the study will be presented and the implications suggested to both teachers and students in terms of pedagogical concerns and to researchers for further research in the light of the results of the study.

### 5.1. Summary of the Research

In this chapter, the findings of the study are summarized focusing on quantitative and qualitative results separately. In the first part, results of quantitative analyses are presented while in the second part qualitative findings are explained. Functional uses of each item identified as hedge and booster in both corpora are also presented.

The study aimed at analyzing the use of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in the argumentative essays of native American and Turkish non-native student essays. The following research questions were addressed:

- What types of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters do the students use in their argumentative essays?
  - What are the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by native American students?
  - What are the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters employed by Turkish non-native students?
- What are the frequencies of stance adverbials hedges and boosters in both of the learner corpus?
- What are the similarities and differences between two learner corpora in terms of the use of stance adverbials?

The answers to the abovementioned research questions were investigated qualitatively and quantitatively in order to find out types, frequencies of hedges and boosters and to identify similarities and differences between two learner corpora in terms of the use of stance adverbials. The quantitative analyses show that the native American students used *maybe, perhaps, apparently, hypothetically* and *in a way* as the stance adverbials functioning as hedges and they used *of course, unfortunately, in fact, importantly, obviously, naturally, especially, hopefully, clearly, truly, indeed, basically, specifically, and without doubt* as boosters. On the other hand, Turkish non-native students used *maybe, likely, probably, perhaps, mostly, apparently,*

*almost, nearly as hedges whereas they used of course, actually, unfortunately, especially, in fact, without doubt, importantly, indeed, surely, really, definitely, clearly, broadly (speaking), totally, naturally, absolutely and as you know* as boosters. When the frequencies of stance adverbials as hedges employed by native and non-native students are analyzed, it is seen that argumentative essays of students are characterized by extensive use of boosters, and less limited use of hedges. It is found out that Turkish non-native students use more diverse hedges and boosters than native American students use in their argumentative essays. The results of the study show that there are 43 occurrences of hedges and 87 occurrences of boosters in the non-native corpus, whereas there are 19 occurrences of hedges and 48 occurrences of boosters in the native corpus in total. Mean frequencies and Log-likelihood results calculated for hedges and boosters in non-native corpus in relation to native corpus show that non-native students significantly overuse *maybe* as a hedge and *of course, especially, without doubt* as boosters while they underuse *importantly* as boosters in their essays. Moreover, any significant overuse/underuse does not exist in the employment of other stance adverbial as hedges and boosters.

The qualitative analyses show that stance adverbials as hedges such as *maybe* and *perhaps*, are used to lower the authorial commitment, indicate possibility, avoid to take the responsibility of the proposition, mitigate the writers' evaluation, *apparently* to express the evidence they acquire through the sense, they explain the people's general belief towards the events/opinions asserted, mostly to describe a certain situation/condition that is usual at most times or for the most part and to express limitation of the proposition, *almost* to denote limitation of the proposition and it is used to soften the statement, *nearly* to soften the statement and to mark hesitations, *probably* to signal some level of doubt and to mitigate writer's evaluation of the possibility of a specific event, *as you know* to present a viewpoint and perspective and acknowledges a widely regarded fact, *hypothetically* to express writer is not fully committed to the validity of the proposition he is conveying and the statement is a hypothesis; it can or cannot be verified, *in a way* to reduce the effect of the statement. As for the stance adverbials as boosters, it was revealed that the students use *of course* to denote a very high degree of certainty towards the propositional content of the utterance, *unfortunately* to encode writer's attitude towards the subject matter, *especially* to single out one person or thing over all others, *in fact* to emphasize the truth of an assertion, especially one opposite to what might be



expected or what has been asserted, *importantly* to denote the writer's strong claim and it is used to assert the proposition with confidence, *indeed* to emphasize the writer's opinion and highlight his/her viewpoint, *clearly* to mark author's absolute judgments of certainty towards the propositions expressed, *naturally* to mean needless to say /as most people would expect or understand, *without doubt* to denote the writer's highest degree of confidence about the proposition and to indicate the writer's absolute judgments and certainty towards the proposition, *surely* to emphasize the speaker's firm belief that what he is saying is true, it denotes the writer's assurance certainty and confidence, *definitely* to indicate the writer's strong affirmation, *broadly speaking* to highlight specific details or exceptions, *frankly* to emphasize the truth of a statement, *actually* to provide a comment on the status of the proposition as a real-life fact, *obviously* to denote the writer's highest degree of confidence with regard to the truth of his/her statement.

## 5.2. Conclusion

What can be concluded from the findings of the current study is that students writing argumentative essays need to be aware of the metadiscourse operators in order to mitigate their claim, to soften their utterance, to show their commitments towards the propositional content of their utterance or to present and emphasize their viewpoint, to express certainty. The types, frequencies and functions of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters were examined in the study and it was found out that Turkish students employ boosters much more frequently than native students. It was seen that argumentative essays of both group of students were characterized by extensive use of boosters, and less limited use of hedges.

It was also found out that Turkish non-native students use more diverse hedges and boosters than native American students use in their argumentative essays. This result may have various reasons such as the nature of argumentative essays, the lists and instructions they are given in their academic writing course, their personal preferences or a transfer from their mother tongue. Both group of students seem to employ these devices in their argumentative essays, however, these devices do not carry the metadiscourse function. This conclusion was evidenced by comparable examples provided in the results part and in our context analysis.

### 5.3. Implications for Teaching

The results of this study provides a number of pedagogical implications in terms of taking an effective stance by employing metadiscourse operators in academic writing and in argumentative writing, which is the main focus of the current study.

Argumentative essay writing is a big challenge for the students to write and they are mostly provided with instructions about not writing too assertive sentences but supporting their claim and convincing the reader at the same time. This contradiction poses another challenge for the students and as a result of the current study, it has been concluded that even both native and non-native students employ various types and numbers of adverbials, they are not able to use them as a metadiscourse operator. In order to achieve this, with this comparative and detailed analysis has crucial importance in raising awareness of the students who are prospective teachers and researchers of English Language Teaching.

Considering the teaching materials used in academic writing courses, the research on employment of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters can have a further suggestion on revising syllabuses and taking an authorial voice in argument is a kind of category that should be emphasized. In argumentative and persuasive writing, students should be encouraged to voice their opinions using stance devices.

Another problem about the syllabuses lies in the fact that particularly Turkish non-native students do not write argumentative essays during their whole educational period. Probably, the ones used in the current study were the first and last ones. Therefore, considering the crucial role of argumentative essays in academic discourse, the syllabus should be revised by providing these novice writers with more training in supporting claims, refuting their ideas, mitigating a claim or emphasizing a viewpoint in their argumentative essays. Last but not least, students' awareness should be increased about metadiscourse because as Hyland (2005) states 'metadiscourse reveals the writer's awareness of the reader and his or her need for elaboration, clarification, guidance and interaction' (p.17).

### 5.4. Implications for Further Research

Metadiscourse and stance have been subject to various studies in linguistics. The current study has examined the stance adverbials as hedges and boosters in the native American and Turkish non-native students' argumentative essays should be investigated in the student's written products as well. More research needs to be done

comparing Turkish students' L1 and L2 writing with a parallel corpora in order to find out whether there is a transfer because of the native language. More research should be done to see the effect of Turkish on EFL writing and the influence of English on Turkish since there can be bidirectional transfer.

Different essay types can be investigated. A bigger student corpus may be utilized to conclude more valid and generalizable results and to see the typical characteristics of stance adverbials. Further research may be conducted in order to see whether there is a variation or hierarchy across the proficiency levels such as beginner, intermediate and advanced proficiency, in terms of the employment of stance adverbials as hedges and boosters. Other stance devices such as adjectives, verbs and nouns employed in student essays could be examined. This study has focused on only two types of interactional metadiscourse strategies in argumentative essays, further investigations will need to broaden the scope to include the use of interactive as well as other interactional metadiscursive resources. Last but not the least, future research could be conducted to determine how the data-driven approach can best be facilitated in EAP or ESP instruction.

## 6. APPENDICES

### 6.1. APPENDIX A: ALL THE OCCURRENCES OF HEDGES AND BOOSTERS IN NON-NATIVE AND NATIVE CORPORA

| Category  | Non-native<br>Corpus |       | Native<br>Corpus |       |            |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|------------------|-------|------------|
|           | Item                 | Total | Raw<br>Number    | Total | Raw Number |
| Hedges    | maybe                | 15    | 13               | 25    | 7          |
|           | perhaps              | 7     | 5                | 17    | 7          |
|           | apparently           | 3     | 2                | 4     | 2          |
|           | almost               | 37    | 2                | 21    | -          |
|           | mostly               | 8     | 4                | 4     | -          |
|           | probably             | 13    | 5                | 25    | -          |
|           | nearly               | 13    | 1                | 8     | -          |
|           | likely               | 11    | 11               | 14    | -          |
|           | absolutely           | 10    | -                | 3     | -          |
|           | approximately        | 5     | -                | 2     | -          |
|           | mainly               | 2     | -                | 3     | -          |
|           | in a way             | 2     | -                | 4     | 1          |
|           | hypothetically       | -     | -                | 2     | 2          |
|           | possibly             | 1     | -                | 12    | -          |
| typically | 2                    | -     | 2                | -     |            |

|          |                       |    |    |    |    |
|----------|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|
|          | of course             | 28 | 22 | 15 | 8  |
|          | unfortunately         | 12 | 10 | 10 | 7  |
| Boosters | especially            | 55 | 6  | 20 | 2  |
|          | in fact               | 8  | 6  | 16 | 7  |
|          | without doubt         | 4  | 4  | 1  | 1  |
|          | importantly           | 2  | 2  | 6  | 5  |
|          | indeed                | 5  | 2  | 6  | 1  |
|          | clearly               | 18 | 1  | 13 | 2  |
|          | naturally             | 4  | 1  | 6  | 2  |
|          | actually              | 34 | 20 | 22 | 12 |
|          | surely                | 6  | -  | -  | -  |
|          | really                | 40 | -  | 43 | -  |
|          | definitely            | 9  | 1  | 11 | -  |
|          | broadly<br>(speaking) | 3  | 1  | -  | -  |
|          | frankly               | 1  | 1  | -  | -  |
|          | totally               | 7  | -  | 6  | -  |
|          | absolutely            | 10 | 1  | 3  | -  |
|          | as you know           | 1  | 1  | -  | -  |
|          | completely            | 10 | -  | 11 | -  |

|               |    |   |    |   |
|---------------|----|---|----|---|
| directly      | 10 | - | 7  | - |
| certainly     | 5  | - | 10 | - |
| exactly       | 5  | - | 9  | - |
| fully         | 5  | - | 8  | - |
| particularly  | 3  | - | 2  | - |
| specially     | 2  | - | -  | - |
| basically     | 2  | - | 4  | - |
| drastically   | 2  | - | 6  | - |
| inevitably    | 2  | - | 3  | - |
| significantly | 2  | - | 10 | - |
| specifically  | 2  | - | 3  | 1 |
| truly         | 2  | - | 12 | - |
| obviously     | 1  | - | 8  | - |
| merely        | 3  | - | 6  | - |
| dramatically  | 1  | - | 4  | - |
| hopefully     | -  | - | 4  | - |
| bluntly       | -  | - | 3  | - |
| unknowingly   | -  | - | 3  | - |
| necessarily   | 1  | - | 3  | - |

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## 6.2.APPENDIX B: HYLAND'S (2005) LIST OF HEDGES AND BOOSTERS

| Hedges         | Boosters      |
|----------------|---------------|
| about          | actually      |
| almost         | always        |
| apparent       | believe       |
| apparently     | believed      |
| appear         | believes      |
| appeared       | beyond doubt  |
| appears        | certain       |
| approximately  | certainly     |
| argue          | clear         |
| argued         | clearly       |
| argues         | conclusively  |
| around         | decidedly     |
| assume         | definite      |
| assumed        | definitely    |
| broadly        | demonstrate   |
| certain amount | demonstrates  |
| certain extent | demonstrated  |
| certain level  | doubtless     |
| claim          | establish     |
| claimed        | established   |
| claims         | evident       |
| could          | evidently     |
| couldn't       | find          |
| doubt          | finds         |
| doubtful       | found         |
| essentially    | in fact       |
| estimate       | incontestable |

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| estimated             | incontestably      |
| fairly                | incontrovertible   |
| feel                  | incontrovertibly   |
| feels                 | indeed             |
| felt                  | indisputable       |
| frequently            | indisputably       |
| from my perspective   | know               |
| from our perspective  | known              |
| from this perspective | must (possibility) |
| generally             | never              |
| guess                 | no doubt           |
| indicate              | obvious            |
| indicated             | obviously          |
| indicates             | of course          |
| in general            | prove              |
| in most cases         | proved             |
| in most instances     | proves             |
| in my opinion         | realize            |
| in my view            | realized           |
| in this view          | realizes           |
| in our opinion        | really             |
| in our view           | show               |
| largely               | showed             |
| likely                | shown              |
| mainly                | shows              |
| may                   | sure               |
| maybe                 | surely             |
| might                 | think              |
| mostly                | thinks             |
| often                 | thought            |
| on the whole          | truly              |
| ought                 | true               |
| perhaps               | undeniable         |



|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| plausible       | undeniably    |
| plausibly       | undisputedly  |
| possible        | undoubtedly   |
| possibly        | without doubt |
| postulate       |               |
| postulated      |               |
| postulates      |               |
| presumable      |               |
| presumably      |               |
| probable        |               |
| probably        |               |
| quite           |               |
| rather x        |               |
| relatively      |               |
| roughly         |               |
| seems           |               |
| should          |               |
| sometimes       |               |
| somewhat        |               |
| suggest         |               |
| suggested       |               |
| suggests        |               |
| suppose         |               |
| supposed        |               |
| supposes        |               |
| suspect         |               |
| suspects        |               |
| tend to         |               |
| tended to       |               |
| tends to        |               |
| to my knowledge |               |
| typical         |               |
| typically       |               |

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| uncertain   |  |
| uncertainly |  |
| unclear     |  |
| unclearly   |  |
| unlikely    |  |
| usually     |  |
| would       |  |
| wouldn't    |  |

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