



The Use of Hedges in Persian Learners' Writing

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Abstract

Hedges play an integral role in academic writing. The main function of hedging devices is to moderate the impact of an utterance or the certainty of its content. Therefore, the uses of hedges generally help individuals to produce less biased and more scientific pieces of writing. As an indispensable skill in the pursuit of academic achievement, writing is considered to be a vital instrument. However, language learners generally have difficulty with writing and consider it to be a daunting task. Errors in the use of hedging devices can bring about misunderstandings that might contribute to a low score on writing. In order to avoid such predicaments, it is recommended that second language learners be familiarized with hedging devices and their use in second language writing. Hence, in perusing academic achievement, Persian as Second Language (PSL) learners need to focus on the correct use of hedges in academic writing. Therefore the goals of this study were; 1. to find out the order of occurrence and type of different hedging devices used; 2. to check the correlation between gender and use of hedging devices, and 3. to check the correlation between speakers' native language and use of hedges. By shedding light on this matter, the authors hope to create awareness raising regarding the correct usage of hedging devices and promote the overall quality of writing among Persian learners in Iran. To achieve these goals, Estaji and Salimi's taxonomy (2018), which was adapted from Hyland (1998) and fitted for Persian, was used to analyze the Persian writing samples of 100 (50 male and 50 female) adult learners from different nationalities consisting of Chinese, Iraqi, Lebanese, Palestinian, Saudi Arabian, and Syrian. The data derived from the writing samples were analyzed and categorized on the basis of

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Hyland's (1998) scale. According to Hyland (1998) hedging devices are means to describe doubt and uncertainty and the writer can use them to show that they are not fully adhered to the truth condition of proposition. One important to consider is that the criterion for detecting hedges was just the definition of words and not the translations from English to Persian, identically. The writings were used to analyze the order of occurrence and the type of hedges used. The participants were asked to write a writing sample of approximately 200 words during class time and were assigned 45 minutes. The classroom setting was selected; and the teacher of the class was asked to introduce the writing topic and gather the writing samples so as not to create anxiety in learners. After the samples were written, the papers were gathered and categorized on the basis of gender, and students' native language. Overall, a total of 25 male and 25 female Chinese and 25 male and 25 female Arab speakers took part in the writing activity. After the writings were analyzed and the type and order of occurrence of hedges were determined, the data were coded and entered into the SPSS software (Version 25). The classification of hedging items was based on syntactic categories. The categories were 1. Modal verbs; 2. Lexical verbs; 3. Adverbials; 4. nouns; and 5. Adjectives, which show concepts like: hesitation, estimation, probability, and author's attitude towards the proposition. The categorized output was analyzed through MANOVA to check the impact of gender and first language on hedge type and order of occurrence. The results revealed that there was a significant relationship between the male and female use of hedges. It was concluded that females made use of modal verbs, adverbials, nouns and adjectives more than their male counterparts. Also, the results indicated that the average usage of hedges in PSL learners with Arabic as a native language was more than the PSL learners with Chinese as their native language. According to findings, it can be said that there was a significant difference between PSL learners with Chinese as a native language and PSL learners with Arabic as a native language regarding the use of hedges. According to the results, PSL learners with Arabic as a native language used hedges at a higher rate as compared to PSL learners with Chinese as a native language. Some of the probable reasons behind the Arab learners' tendency to use more hedges as compared to their Chinese counterparts could be their native language characteristics or their writing culture which are very similar to Persian; however, further studies need to be conducted. The results of this study can aid instructors and learners of Persian as a second language regarding academic writing. It can be employed to design tasks and materials for teaching writing that focus not only on grammar, but also on rhetorical structures for Chinese and Arab PSL learners.

Keywords: : Hedges, Persian as a second language, Academic writing, PSL learners

1. Introduction

Hedges are among the communicative strategies used to either increase or decrease the force of a statement. Their importance in academic discourse “lies in their contribution to an appropriate rhetorical and interactive tenor, conveying both epistemic and affective meanings” (Hyland, 1998, p.349). As one of the four corners of language proficiency, writing enables the learners of a second language to write and express their ideas in that language and most PSL learners find this writing to be a daunting skill to acquire (Alizadeh & Kamyabi Gol, 2021). Consequently, it is a must for PSL learners to know how to write an academic paper in Persian. Studies focused on the writing skill of PSL learners have reported numerous types of structural and lexical errors (Pahlevannezhad & Alinezhad, 2012; Motavallian Nayini & Abarghouyi, 2013; Mirzaei Hesarian & Pooladsotoone, 2020; Alizadeh & Kamyabi Gol, 2021). One of the issues in academic writing which is considered difficult for non-natives who want to write for the academic purposes is hedging devices. Hedges are used to present ideas cautiously along with leaving room for readers to have their own interpretations. Errors in the use of hedging devices can cause ambiguity and misunderstanding. This may be more serious for those who want to write texts efficiently. On the other hand, the study of hedges can have some pedagogical implications for those involved in teaching writing skills. Writing skills have been a major focus of research in educational settings. Therefore the goals of this study were: 1. to find out the order of occurrence and type of different hedging devices used; 2. to check the correlation between gender and use of hedging devices, and 3. to check the correlation between speakers' native language and use of hedges. This present paper aimed at providing appropriate answers for the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between gender and the order of occurrence and type of hedging devices used in writing?
2. Is there a significant difference between the native language and the order of occurrence and type of hedging devices being used?

2. Literature Review

Hedging has been a subject of interest for many years. The term hedging was introduced as a linguistic term for the first time in the early 1970s. The main idea of hedges comes from fuzzy set theory as developed by Zadeh (1965) and the central idea in this theory is that instead of just being in the set or not, an individual is in the set to a certain degree (Lakoff, 1973, p. 461). The use of the term “hedge” or “hedging” dates back to Lakoff's (1973) paper entitled "Hedges: A study in meaning criteria and the logic of fuzzy concepts". Some of the most interesting questions are raised by “the study of words whose meaning implicitly involves

fuzziness, words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy. I will refer to such words as hedges” (Lakoff, 1973, p. 471). Since then, hedges have been a significant topic for linguists to study and have been investigated from a variety of perspectives. Therefore, the concept has been expanded to be used in other disciplines such as speech acts theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), and oral discourse (Holmes, 1986, Horman, 1989), language pragmatics and academic discourse analysis (Markkanen & Schroder, 1996; 1997), also Hyland has conducted extensive studies on the use of hedges (1994; 1996; 1998; 2000; 2006). Research studies on the use of hedges among learners of English as a foreign or second language are partly limited compared to the number of studies on hedges in the writings and speech of native speakers of English.

Among the studies on hedging in English as a second or foreign language, Ventola and Mauranen’s (1990) study on Finnish learners of English indicates a limited range of hedging expressions in academic writing. These findings are confirmed by Hyland and Milton (1997) who affirmed that the use of hedging in L2 writing is limited compared to that of native speakers. Another relevant study is Nikula (1997), who analyzed hedging in the conversational speech of Finnish learners of English in comparison to that of native speakers of English. Her findings indicated that learners used hedges at a significantly lower rate than native speakers and with much less varieties. Sunquist (2013) examined the use of hedges by learners and native speakers of English performing various monologic testing tasks. The results of this study showed that learners generally underused hedges in comparison with native speakers, although learners at the highest proficiency level used hedges at a level comparable to that of native speakers. Martin (2003) found that English writers use hedges while reporting the conclusion on academic researches, whereas Spanish writers use this less than the native speakers. Gulru and Kavanos (2015) present a quantitative corpus based on comparative study of hedges used in academic essays written in English by novice university students. The results showed a similarity in hedge categories in both corpora, but hedges used in each category were considered to be different. Livytska (2019) has examined the types and frequency of hedges employed in academic research articles in the field of applied linguistics according to Hyland’s taxonomy of hedges and hedging devices (Hyland, 1996). Results of the study indicate that reader-oriented hedges constitute the main pragmatic type of hedges in research articles in the field of applied linguistics, recognizing the importance of reader’s ratification regarding claims made by the author. She also found that hedges in applied linguistics research articles are topic dependent, showing differences in typology, frequency and distribution even within one discipline.

Another type of research includes those which examine the possible role of culture in the use of hedging devices by authors with different native languages. Samaie, et al. (2014) examined the types and order of occurrence of hedges employed by Persian and English native speakers of academic research articles in

the field of literature. The results indicated that English writers are more tentative in putting forward claims and in rejecting or confirming the ideas of others. Rezaie and Taki (2014) also studied the use of hedges in the concluding chapter (chapter 5) of 48 MA and PhD theses. All writers were Iranian graduates. They found that adjectives and modal auxiliaries were used more in both MA and PhD theses. The results also revealed that the use of hedges occurred more in the English theses as compared to the Persian ones. Jalilifar (2011) investigated the use of hedging devices in the discussion section of various English and Iranian ELT and psychiatry journals. He found that English writers used hedges more often than their Persian counterparts; which could mean that the English writers use greater caution when making claims in the discussion section. Alimorad and Sahragard (2012) also explored the use of hedges by English and Persian writers in research articles. They found that lexical hedges were the most frequent and adverbs of frequency were the least used hedges in both the Persian and English writers' articles. Alimorad and Sahragard (2012) also assert that Arab speakers' use of hedges resembles that of the Persian writers as the Arab speakers do not place high value for the use of hedges in their prose. Another study by Loi and Lim (2019) showed that, hedging devices were found more in English discussions than Malay. Loi and Lim (2019) believe that this is the result of English being a remarkably hedging culture. Another finding was that English writers tend to subtly highlight the value of the writer's contribution, tone down the force of the arguments.

In addition to these areas of investigation regarding the use of hedges, the impact of gender differences on the utilization of hedges has also been studied. One pioneer study is the influential work of Lakoff (1973) which introduces gender differences in language use. He argues one of the ten linguistic features characterizing female speech is the various kinds of hedges which claimed to stand out in females' conversation. A more recent study in this field has been conducted by Dusti and Eslami Rasehk (2016) who examined the possible differences in the linguistic behavior of male and female ELT major students with respect to the utilization of hedging devices in their interpersonal interactions. The findings of the study showed that females had more tendency to employ hedging devices.

A few studies have undertaken the study of hedging in legal discourse. Vass (2017) presented a corpus based study of the use of epistemic lexical verbs as hedging devices in three written legal genres. This study compared realization, frequency and function of speculative, quotative, sensorial and deductive lexical verb hedges. The results indicate that for each genre, patterns of use of epistemic lexical verb hedges could be identified based on the communicative purposes.

Hyland (1996) declared that non-native writers mostly cannot effectively use hedges in their writings, so it is a must to teach non-natives how to use hedges. Hyland (1998) explored some of the contextual factors which shape the ways we express our knowledge. He tried to show that the expression of certainty and doubt

is primal to the negotiation of claims, and that what counts as effective persuasion is influenced by different epistemological assumptions and permissible criteria of justification (Hyland, 1998). Hyland (2000) conducted a survey on Lows' (1996) "Lexical Invisibility Hypothesis" in relation to hedges. In this paper he examined hedges which may actually go unnoticed by non-native readers. He concluded through an academic retrospective think aloud test, that while the participants generally attended to the boosters, hedges did seem to be more invisible.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

To accomplish the objectives of this study, 100 (50 male and 50 female) adult students majoring in PSL (Persian as a second language) at three Persian Language Centers at the fall semester of 2019 were selected. They were from different nationalities consisting of Chinese, Iraqi, Lebanese, Palestinian, Saudi Arabian, Turkish, and Syrian. Because of the limitation of resources, the selection of these participants was based on a non-probability convenience sampling procedure.

3.2. Materials and Instruments

The data used in this study came from a classroom writing test. The topic of the writing sample was "learning Persian language: pros and cons". The language learners were asked to write 15 lines (approximately 200 words) about the topic.

3.3. Procedure

The participants were asked to write a writing sample of approximately 200 words during class time and were assigned 45 minutes which was in accordance with their usual classroom writing samples. The classroom setting was selected; and the teacher of the class was asked to introduce the topic and gather the writing samples so as not to create anxiety in learners. After the samples were written, the papers were gathered and categorized on the basis of gender, and students' native language. Since the aim of the present study was to uncover the types of hedges that were employed by the participants, these devices and their conceptualizations were limited to the taxonomy used by Estaji and Salimi (2018), which was adapted from Hyland (1998) and fitted for Persian. According to Hyland (1998) hedging devices are means to describe doubt and uncertainty and the writers can use them to show that they do not fully adhere to the truth condition of proposition. One important point to consider is that the criterion for detecting hedges was just the definition of words and not the translations from English to Persian, identically.

Overall, a total of 25 male and 25 female Chinese and 25 male and 25 female Arab speakers took part in the writing activity. After the writings were analyzed and the type and order of occurrence of hedges were determined, the data were coded and entered into the SPSS software (Version 25).

3.4. Data Analysis

The classification of hedging items was based on syntactic categories. The categories were 1. modal verbs; 2. lexical verbs; 3. adverbials; 4. nouns; and 5. adjectives, which show concepts like: hesitation, estimation, probability, and author's attitude towards the proposition. The taxonomy of hedges in Persian (Estaji & Salimi, 2018) is as follows with examples from the PSL learners writing samples in this study:

Modal verbs

The most important modal verb in academic papers showing hesitation and probability was /tavānestan/ (could), or its equivalent /momken budan/ (to be possible) ... (Estaji & Salimi, 2018, p. 24). For example:

/Mitavān goft ke har čand ensān kučektar bāšad .../

It could be said the more a person is smaller ... (Arab male PSL learner)

Lexical verbs

Includes verbs such as /be nazar residan/ (to sound), /pendāštan/ (to think), /tasavvor kardan/ (to imagine), /hads zadan (to guess) ... (Estaji & Salimi, 2018, p. 24). For example:

/fekr mikonam barāye man āsān ast/

I think it is easy to me. (Arab female PSL learner)

Adverbials

Adverbials were divided into two groups;

A: probability adverbs such as /šāyad/ (maybe), /ehtemālan/ (probably), /engār/ (as if), /guyi/ (as if) ... (Estaji & Salimi, 2018, p. 25). For example:

/agar betavānam dar kelās tamarkoz konam .../

If I could concentrate at class ... (Chinese female PSL learner)

B: frequency, quality, and degree adverbs such as /tā haddi/ (to some extent),

/gāhan/ (sometimes), /taqriban/ (almost) ... (Estaji & Salimi, 2018, p. 25).

For example:

/... zabāne farsi kami saxt tar ast./ (Chinese male PSL learner) Persian language is a little more difficult.

Nouns

Nouns such as /ehtemāl/ (possibility), /emkan/ (feasibility), /farz/ (assumption) ... (Estaji & Salimi, 2018, p. 25). For example:
/be nazare man .../ (Arab male PSL learner) On my view ...

Adjectives

Adjectives such as /nazdik/ (near), /taqribi/ (approximate), /morede tardid/ (doubtful), /nesbi/ (relative) ... (Estaji & Salimi, 2018, p.25). For example:
/Bazi ostādha .../ (Arab female PSL learner)
Some of the teachers ...

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

The results from this study are reported based on the order of research questions. Discussion of the statistical analysis is provided thereafter.

The first research question was:

Is there a significant difference between gender and the order of occurrence and the type of hedging devices being used?

In this section, at first a descriptive analysis on the basis of the gathered data was performed. The descriptive analysis composed of mean, and standard deviation, for the two gender groups in relation to the order of occurrence and type of hedges.

Table 1

Order of occurrence of hedges based on gender

Hedge Type	Male (N=50)		Female (N=50)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Modal Verb	0.500	0.571	0.650	0.600
Lexical Verb	0.265	0.434	0.240	0.331
Adverbials	0.500	0.861	0.714	0.842
Nouns	0.333	0.711	0.633	1.365
Adjectives	0.275	0.484	0.345	0.947

To find out whether there is a significant difference between the use of hedges by males and females multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was applied.

The equality of covariance matrices and the uniformity of variances in hedges are the presuppositions of this statistical test, which are shown in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2*Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices*

Box's M	F	df1	df2	Sig.
6.933	1.515	15	15117.787	0.331

Table 3*Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances*

Hedge Type	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Modal V	0.023	1	77	0.879
Lexical V	0.134	1	77	0.716
Adverbials	0.042	1	77	0.839
nouns	3.932	1	77	0.051
adjectives	0.531	1	77	0.468

According to the results from Tables 2 and 3, the presuppositions were approved. The data in Table 4 are the result of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) in the case of the difference between male and female's usage of hedges.

Table 4*Multivariate Tests regarding difference between male and female's usage of hedges*

Test	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Wilks' Lambda	.964	.552a	5.000	73.000	.007	.136

According to the results, the significance level of the test is 0.007 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we can say that there is a significant relationship between the male and female use of hedges.

The data in Table 5 is the result of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) in the case of the difference between male and female regarding use of various types of hedges, separately.

Table 5

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects regarding difference between male and female's use of various types of hedges

Hedge Type	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Modal V	0.002	1	0.002	0.006	0.000	0.673
Lexical V	0.002	1	0.002	0.016	0.38	0.015
Adverbials	0.854	1	0.854	1.185	0.010	0.543
Nouns	1.667	1	1.667	1.234	0.017	0.148
Adjectives	0.038	1	0.038	0.058	0.000	0.811

Based on the results the significance level of test in all types of hedges is less than 0.05 except for lexical verbs, so we can conclude that there is a significant relationship between male and females' use of various types of hedges except for the use of lexical verbs. Based on the results we can conclude that females made use of modal verbs, adverbials, nouns and adjectives more than their male counterparts.

Second research question was:

Is there a significant difference between learners' native language and the order of occurrence and the type of hedging devices used?

In this section, a descriptive analysis of the mean and the standard deviation related to the PSL learners' native languages (Chinese and Arabic) with regards to the order of occurrence and the type of hedges used is provided.

Table 6

Order of occurrence of hedges based on the native language

Hedge Type	Arabic (N=50)		Chinese (N=50)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Modal Verb	0.414	0.782	0.227	0.164

Lexical Verb	0.243	0.417	0.208	0.315
Adverbials	0.667	0.902	0.595	0.798
Nouns	0.810	1.452	0.189	0.569
Adjectives	0.329	1.063	0.318	0.000

Based on the results, the average usage of hedges in PSL learners with Arabic as a native language is more than the PSL learners with Chinese as their native language. In order to find out whether a significant difference exists between the use of hedges by PSL learners with Arabic as a native language and PSL learners with Chinese as a native language, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was applied.

Table 7
Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

Box's M	F	df1	df2	Sig.
5.754	1.414	15	23034.606	0.026

Table 8
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Hedge Type	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Modal V	0.669	1	77	0.379
Lexical V	0.786	1	77	0.216
Adverbials	0.229	1	77	0.639
Nouns	3.273	1	77	0.111
Adjectives	2.223	1	77	0.089

The equality of covariance matrix and the uniformity of variances in hedges according to Tables 7 and 8 show that the presuppositions were approved.

Table 9*Multivariate Tests regarding difference between native language and use of hedges*

Test	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Wilks' Lambda	0.799	3.668a	5.000	73.000	0.005	0.201

According to findings, the significance level of the test is 0.005 which is less than 0.05, so it can be said that there is a significant difference between PSL learners with Chinese as a native language and PSL learners with Arabic as a native language regarding the use of hedges.

In Table 10, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is presented which showcases the difference regarding use of hedges in PSL learners with two different first languages, namely Chinese and Arabic.

Table 10*Tests of Between-Subjects Effects*

Hedge Type	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Modal Verb	0.690	1	.690	2.039	0.057	0.326
Lexical Verb	0.024	1	.024	.171	0.012	0.502
Adverbials	0.102	1	.102	.140	0.789	0.412
Nouns	7.570	1	7.570	5.938	0.000	0.072
Adjectives	3.613	1	3.613	6.011	0.361	0.056

According to Table 10 in modal verbs, lexical verbs, and nouns, the significance level is less than 0.05; therefore, the order of occurrence of usage for these three types of hedges between PSL learners with Arabic as a native language is more than the PSL learners with Chinese as a native language. The significance level for the other two remaining types including adverbials and adjectives shows no significant difference between two groups.

4.2. Discussion

Based on the results from Table 1, the average use of adverbials, modal verbs, nouns, and adjectives for females is more than males, but the average use of lexical verbs for males is more than females. The results obtained from this research question is in contrast with studies which declared that males made more use of hedges than females (Hassani & Dastjani Farahani, 2014), and in line with other studies which claimed females have more tendency to employ hedging devices as compared to men (Lakoff, 1973; Dusti & Eslami Rasehk, 2016). Therefore, apparently further study needs to be conducted regarding gender differences and hedge use.

According to the results in Table 10, PSL learners with Arabic as a native language use hedges at a higher rate as compared to PSL learners with Chinese as a native language. The PSL learners with Arabic as their native language used modal verbs, lexical verbs and nouns more than their Chinese counterparts and this is in line with Rezaie and Taki (2014), and Samaie et al. (2014) who reported the high frequency of modal verbs and nouns in writing. The results are also in consonance with Alimorad and Sahragard (2012) who found that lexical verbs were used most frequently by Iranian and English writers. Livytska (2019) also established that lexical verbs, nouns and modal verbs were used more often in academic writing. Since no studies were found on PSL learners' hedge use, or on the difference between Arab and Chinese learners' use of hedging devices, we could not conduct a contrastive analysis in this regard. Some of the probable reasons behind the Arab learners' tendency to use more hedges as compared to their Chinese counterparts could be their native language characteristics or their writing culture which are very similar to Persian. According to Alimorad and Sahragard (2012), Arab and Iranian EFL learners seem to use hedges in a similar manner with both native languages (Arabic and Persian) not emphasizing much on the use of hedging devices in writing; however, further studies need to be conducted.

5. Conclusion and Implications

The present study examined the effect of gender and native language of PSL learners on the type and order of occurrence of hedges used in writing samples. This was a pioneering study since despite the authors' attempts, no literature on hedge use and PSL learners was found. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between male and female's use of hedging devices. Females used modal verbs, adverbials, nouns and adjectives more than males; however, no significant difference was showcased with regards to lexical verbs. As for the second research question, the results show that Arab PSL learners use modal verbs, lexical verbs, and nouns more than their Chinese counterparts, but in utilization of adverbials and adjectives there was no significant difference between these two groups.

The results from this study can be employed to design material and tasks for teaching components of writing that focus not only on grammar, but also on rhetorical structures for Chinese and Arab PSL learners. Since writing is considered an essential skill for PSL learners, it is essential to emphasize the use and types of hedges in Persian writing.

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بررسی بکارگیری عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز در نوشتار فارسی آموزان

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چکیده

استفاده از عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز یکی از اصول مهم در نوشتار دانشگاهی است (هایلند، 1998:349). از عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز برای متعادل کردن بار سخن و یا کاستن از میزان اطمینان از محتوای سخن استفاده می‌شود، لذا نقش مهمی در نوشتار دانشگاهی دارند. این پژوهش بر آن است تا به بررسی میزان و نوع عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز به کار رفته در نوشتار فارسی آموزان غیر ایرانی بپردازد. به این منظور از فارسی‌آموزان غیر ایرانی که نمونه در دسترس این پژوهش بودند خواسته شد تا حداقل پانزده خط درباره یک موضوع مشخص بنویسند. سپس داده‌های استخراج شده از نوشته‌های زبان‌آموزان بر اساس معیارهای هایلند 1998 مورد تحلیل قرار گرفت. در مرحله بعد برای بررسی میزان تاثیر جنسیت و زبان اول بر نوع و بسامد عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز در نوشتار فارسی‌آموزان داده‌های دسته‌بندی شده به روش MANOVA مورد تحلیل قرار گرفت. نتیجه نشان داد که تفاوت فاحشی بین فارسی‌آموزان مونث و مذکر در استفاده از عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز وجود ندارد. اما فارسی‌آموزانی که زبان اولشان عربی است نسبت به فارسی‌آموزانی که زبان اولشان چینی است از برخی از عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز بیشتر استفاده می‌کنند. نتایج حاصل از این پژوهش می‌تواند برای آموزش نوشتار دانشگاهی و آموزش و یادگیری مهارت نوشتن برای مدرسان زبان فارسی به غیرفارسی‌زبانان و فارسی‌آموزان غیرایرانی راهگشا باشد.

کلیدواژه‌ها: عبارات احتیاط‌آمیز، فارسی به عنوان زبان دوم، نوشتار دانشگاهی

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