**Exercises on hedging**

**Task 1.** In the following exercise identify the actual words which suggest you are being cautious in your claims.

1. It is believed that alcohol related health problems are on the rise.

2. Drinking to excess, or I binge drinking' is often the cause of inappropriate behaviour amongst teenagers.

3. It seems as though the experiment conducted simply confirms suspicions held by the academic and medical professions.

4. However, attrition was greatest among the heaviest drinking segment of the sample, suggesting under-estimation in the findings, and although the study provided associational, prospective evidence on alcohol advertising effects on youth drinking, it addressed limitations of other research, particularly the unreliability of exposure measures based on self-reporting (Synder and Slater, 2006).

5. The crack tends to grow into the more brittle material and then stay in there, whether the initial crack tip lies in the graded material or in the more ductile material (and thereafter advances across the graded layer).

6. If a real physical system shows a variation of both material properties across the graded layer, the assumed linear variation may not give the best approximation.

**Task 2.** Read the paragraph and identify where tentative language is needed. Use the most suitable word or phrase from the list of hedging words. Each word/phrase can be used only once.

Twenty-four adults took part in the study on perceptions of 'face'. Eight were born and raised in Australia, and 16 were immigrants from cultures with a strong emphasis on 'face'. The four activities were based on giving and receiving feedback in increasingly challenging contexts.

In general, the results were as expected. The participants who had been born and raised in Australia were able to give and accept feedback from others in all four contexts. There was no difference between the responses of those who had arrived in Australia before puberty and those who had been born here. However, seven of the eight subjects who had immigrated after puberty experienced difficulty with Tasks 3 and 4. These results indicate that the perception of 'face' is established in childhood.

1: majority of

2: significant

3: some degree of

4: appear to

**Task 3**. Read the sentences from a student's writing and the tutor's feedback. Rewrite the sentences using hedging. More than one option may be possible. Some useful words and phrases you may need:

• appear (v) • indicate (v) • likely (adj) • more or less (phr) • normally (adv)

• on the whole (phr) • overall (adv) • perhaps (adv) • possible (adj) • potentially (adv)

• relatively (adv) • seem (v) • somewhat (adv) • tend to (v) • typically (adv)

*Example: People aged under 25 use the internet more frequently than older people.*

***Tutor’s comment: Is that true for all younger/older people?***

*Typically, people aged under 25 tend to use the internet more frequently than older people.*

1. Despite a number of minor problems, the scheme was very successful.

**If there were problems, was it completely successful?**

2. Coral reefs are seriously affected by rises in sea temperature.

**I don't think the research has 100% proven this link yet.**

3. Solar power offers a solution to producing clean, cheap energy in developing countries.

**Is it certain to work in all contexts? Isn't it quite expensive to set up?**

4. The study shows that bilingual children have better memory skills than children who only speak one language.

**This is only one study – can we say that it clearly proves the link? Is it true for all children?**

**Task 4.** Rewrite these sentences using hedging language.

1. Playing violent video games causes more aggression, bullying and fighting.
2. Mars is the focus of much scientific study and the foremost planet for human colonisation.
3. News reports can never be trusted because of media bias, journalist interpretation and agenda setting.
4. The main concerns for future generations are global food supplies, and population growth. Both of these have to be addressed by international leaders within the next five years.
5. Most people think that climate change is caused by human activities.
6. The key factor of divorce is gender hierarchy and gender inequality.
7. The impact of the UK’s ageing population will lead to increased welfare costs. Consequently, this will result in higher taxes and an increased retirement age for younger people.

1. Everybody agrees that the main cause of the financial crash was subprime mortgage lending.