

**HEDGING**

I. Underline the hedging expressions:

1. Generally speaking, computers and information technology provide many benefits for everyone, but they are sometimes used to annoy or harm people.
2. While most of us typically associate computer crime with the theft of sensitive data, other less dramatic activities such as copying music are also computer crimes.
3. It is widely accepted that computer crime is a serious problem, but it is not clear to everyone how serious.
4. In principle, the criminal justice system tries to deal with computer criminals.
5. Moreover, prosecutors may not be well prepared from a technical perspective to prosecute such cases.
6. Seemingly, business has suffered less than individuals as a result of IT and criminal activity.
7. In general, however, automatic processing provided by computer technology has improved controls and checks on employees.
8. It is believed that those in the criminal justice system need to develop more expertise and undergo more training in order to deal with kind of illegal activity.
9. Issues highlighted in this study may be applicable to many higher education institutions across the country.
10. Agreement between the measured and predicted results is reasonably close.
11. In general, it is difficult to accurately detect the frequencies that have insignificant magnitudes.
12. As claimed by many, this new technique is very effective.
13. It appears that the differences between these two approaches are not great.
14. Support from the government and involvement of the private sector might help spread knowledge and skill to use the Internet to thousands of new users in developing countries.

II. Put the hedges from ex. I into 4 or more categories

CATEGORY	EXAMPLE

III. Find hedging words and expressions in the following text:

*This study has a few limitations. Firstly, we excluded 25% of the households from analysis because of missing information on either income or BMI. It is unlikely that such missing information is related to price elasticity or purchase behaviour [...] however, it may have resulted in some bias for the pooled values across groups. [...] Secondly, the baseline daily energy purchase estimates are sample average estimates that do not consider age or sex of the household members who could have different energy requirements. [...] Thirdly, we used a static model for weight loss based on changes in energy consumption, which might not fully reflect actual mechanisms of weight change. [...] Fourthly, the study does not reflect on the substitution of nutrients alongside changes in energy. For example, reduction in energy from high sugar snacks could lead to substitution of other foods that are lower in energy content but perhaps higher in other nutrients of concern, such as saturated fats or salt. The health impacts of such substitutes should be further analysed and considered in the decision making process around food price policies. Furthermore, the satiety index of sugary snacks can vary greatly: some high sugar snacks could reduce overeating at meals, hence the overall impact of reduced consumption of high sugar snacks would be partly cancelled out by consumption of larger portions during mealtimes. Studies of sugary drinks only would be prone to this phenomenon, as the satiety effect of sugar sweetened beverages is generally low.<sup>50</sup> Fifthly, we assumed that all food purchased was consumed, which is unlikely, and some food will inevitably be waste. However, although the link between purchasing and consumption is far from perfect, it is strong (eg,<sup>51</sup>), and our estimates on the effect of price rises on change in energy purchased is likely to be similar to that on consumption even if absolute values differ.*

(Source: <https://www.bmj.com/content/366/bmj.l4786> )

IV. Order the sentences from the most categorical statement to the most hedged.

- a) The Earth is probably round. ....
- b) The Earth is possibly round. ....
- c) The Earth is round. ....
- d) The Earth is apparently round. ....
- e) The Earth is said to be round. ....

V. Reformulate the following text, using the hedges below. The hedges have been ordered in the same order as they should appear in the text.

**estimate, probably, if not; likely, experts, claim, presumably, may, most probably, apparently**

In Germany, the number of job openings for engineers will continue to grow rapidly in the next few years. The gap between the number of such positions and the number of engineers available will widen. This problem must be addressed soon; otherwise, the German economy will stagnate. There are several reasons for this shortage. One of them is the declining population due to the lowest birth rate in Europe. Another is the rising demand for transportation and energy technology. The demand for engineers will increase as we move towards an all-electric society. More companies will simply need more engines.

(Based on information from *IEEE Spectrum*, September 2011, p. 15)

VI. Use hedging to make the following statements less categorical. Choose hedges from the list below. In some cases, there are several options.

**suggest      would      indicate      seem      probable      may      could      tend to**

1. The initial results prove that our hypothesis was right.
2. This type of sensor is suitable for humidity detection.
3. People behave in accord with their personal interests.
4. It is useful to increase the sampling, both in terms of number and more diverse sample profile.
5. Certain groups of consumers react to the delays in delivery more negatively than others.
6. Another reason is that the error was due to inaccuracy of the experimental setup.
7. Table IV shows a good match between the measured and calculated high-frequency losses.
8. The error is caused by the fabrication error of the sensor device.

VII. Change the text below so that the sentences are hedged. Use expressions:

**few do doubt that, apparently, to the best of my knowledge, one might expect that**

Nobody blamed the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico on research scientists. It was poor engineering decisions that allowed gas to escape from a well in deep water, which in turn caused a fatal explosion. Poor engineering got us into this mess; only good engineering could get us out of it. However, by vetoing the proposed engineering tactics, the government and research scientists only prolonged the crisis.

VIII. Hedge the following sentences in an appropriate way:

1. People who take no exercise and eat a lot of junk food become obese.
2. The amount of cybercrime in the US and Europe will decrease as security software improves.
3. Football should be regarded as a business rather than a sport, at least as far as the major clubs are concerned.
4. The transition from prison life to ordinary life is a difficult one.
5. In pollution control, it is impossible to establish a firm link between a specific event, such a leak of chemicals, and harm to the local population.
6. Mature students do not manage their deadlines better than younger colleagues.
7. The reunification of the two Koreas would eventually be of benefit to both.
8. Some nutritionists argue that food labelling still hides as much from the consumer as it reveals.
9. Smaller shops suffer a decline in trade when a supermarket opens nearby.
10. There are 100 billion neurons in the human brain.
11. Sparks from electric power lines caused some of the forest fires in the region.
12. The latest fall in unemployment will improve consumer confidence in the economy.
13. Physical exercise reduces the symptoms of mild depression.
14. An agreement between the two sides will be reached at the summit in June.