

Use of Citation Forms in Academic Writing of Thai Undergraduates

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Abstract:

This study investigated the use of citation forms in 15 academic essays written by 15 third year English majors studying in a public university in the northeast of Thailand. Adopting Swales' (1986) categorization, the employed citation forms were analyzed and categorized into two types: integral and non-integral. The results revealed that non-integral citations were more often used than integral citations and the dominant pattern of integral citations is verb controlling. The difficulties experienced by the students in integrating sources into their essays included 1) lack of familiarity with the language of citations and 2) unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic writing. The results indicated that Thai EFL students lack awareness of citation forms and their rhetorical functions. Consequently, they could not utilize them appropriately in their essays. The results highlight the need for explicit teaching about citation forms and their functions in the classroom to enhance their academic writing skills in producing quality academic essays.

Key words: citation forms, integral citations, verb controlling, non-integral citations, dialogic nature

Introduction

Academic writing skills are essential for university students because they are expected to be able to accomplish different tasks such as assignments, research reports and research articles. Implicitly, they need various skills; one of which is believed to be citation (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012; Pecorari, 2006; Teufel, Siddhartan & Tidhar, 2006). In the academic discourse community, it is necessary for writers to cite external sources formally acknowledging the source writers' words and thinking. At the same time, they need to display their own knowledge of the field, and to establish the credibility of their own claims. Pecorari (2006, p. 5) argued that unless the source reference works that informed an academic text were properly cited then it lacked academic worth or credibility. Manan and Noor (2015, p. 244) maintained that "citations are one of the crucial parts in academic writing where having the linguistic proficiency alone is inadequate and it has to be substantiated with the knowledge of citation as well." Emphasizing this, Borg (2000) warned that failure to appropriately cite sources can result in serious academic consequences and in some cases the writers may be accused of intellectual dishonesty. For these reasons, it is vitally important for the writers to recognize "what" to cite and know "how" to cite the others' works (Swales, 1986, 1990, 2004).

Based on previous studies (e.g. Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012; Nguyen & Pramoolsook, 2016; Sirijanchuen & Gampper, 2018), non-English speaking writers, particularly those considered novice-writers, tended to have greater difficulties employing citation forms to construct persuasive arguments than English speaking writers at least in part due to their language background and limited vocabulary. Further, they are not well-informed of the functions of citations in academic writing probably because of certain social and cultural traditions (Shoostari & Jaliligar, 2010). Owing to their cultural background, non-native English speaking students (NNS) had different thought patterns than those of native English speakers (NS) and this had impact on their academic writing performance (Kaplan, 1966).

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For example, Fox (1994, p. 37) recalled the attitude of a student from a “collectivist” society at a U.S. university that “In a world where your thoughts, feelings and experiences are inextricably connected to those of others, why would it be so important to sort out whose idea is whose?”. In line with this, Braine (1988) reflected upon comments of some unnamed teachers in an English speaking context on the writing of non-native students that they are “mostly cut-and-paste jobs”. Teufel, Siddhartan and Tidhar (2006) asserted that citation is an important part of the process of writing a paper. Thus, it is essential for writers to keep a balance between integrating their sources into a new intellectual conception that appropriately acknowledged others’ works and thoughts while establishing an individual standpoint (Borg, 2000, p. 26; Harwood, 2010, p. 302). When writers have sound knowledge of citation forms and their functions and are able to cite authorities appropriately to inform their own discourse, they will routinely incorporate these into their writing to produce quality academic texts.

Research on the writers’ use of citation forms had been continuously carried out in both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. A great number of these focused on two academic genres: Master or PhD theses (e.g. Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2013; Manan & Noor, 2015; Nguyen & Pramoolsook, 2016; Thompson, 2005) and research articles (e.g. Goodarzi & Gholamin, 2017; Luzon, 2015; Sirijanchuen & Gampper, 2018; Okamura, 2008). The results conclusively showed that EFL writers struggled when attempting to incorporate sources into their written texts. However, research focusing on the use of citation forms in academic essays, particularly those written by undergraduates is still scarce. This present study attempts to explore the use of citation forms in academic essays written by the third-year English majors in one public university in the northeast of Thailand. The essays are based on the discussion genre, a kind of persuasive essay which aims to present two or more different viewpoints or perspectives on an issue. The analysis will reveal the students’ use of citation forms and their difficulties in integrating sources into their essays. These would enable writing teachers to find ways to improve their students’ understanding of this subject matter and enhance their students’ academic writing skills. Student writers will be better able to incorporate citations in their texts and succeed in producing standard and persuasive texts.

Review of Literature

One of the distinguishing differences between academic and general writing is that the former must include citations (Hyland, 1999). Accordingly, it is important for students to learn the citation conventions and practice using them in their texts to avoid being accused of plagiarism (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012). Citation refers to “a reference to a source” which plays various significantly important roles in academic writing (Szypszak, 2011, p.315). One of which is the supportive function, that is, justifying the research topic, strengthening the methodology employed, and/or validating the authors’ claims (Harwood, 2009). Another function is signposting, enabling the reader to make a link between the current study and the cited sources (Goodarzi & Gholami, 2017; Harwood, 2009; Statsky, 2009). Rabab’ah and Al-Marshadi (2013, p.78) concluded that citation refers to “a practice of referring to a source to credit an author and/or to support an argument, signpost information to retrieve a document or develop further research”.

Citations, according to Swales (1986), are divided into two main types: integral and non-integral. In integral citations, the author’s name is clearly evident in the sentence or within the paragraph, drawing attention to the author. They can be further classified into three-sub-types according to their syntactic position and the role in a sentence. These include verb-controlling, naming, and non-citation (Manan & Noor, 2015, p. 234; Thompson & Tribble, 2001).

(i) *Verb controlling*: This citation acts as the agent to control the verb, whether in active or passive voice, for example:

(a) Bland (2003) explained that men are aggressive in physical and verbal situations, competitive and are born as challengers.

(b) Noom-ura (2013) reported that Thai secondary school teachers of English found teaching writing the most challenging for them.

(ii) *Naming*: This usually appears in a noun phrase or a part of a noun phrase, for example:

(c) A study on language use by female Malaysian bloggers was carried out by Akhmaliah (2009).

(d) A study conducted by Hoepfner (2006) discusses the various intentions and techniques of consumer product companies in reaching more customers and selling more products.

(iii) *Non-citation*: In this sub-category, there is a reference to another writer but the name is given without a year reference. For example:

Messaries states that there are basically three functions of visual images.

Some academic communities are hesitant to use non-citation because they consider it as 'not academic enough'. Unlike other forms of citation, no year reference is given although it has been provided earlier in the text (Manan & Noor, 2015).

Non-integral citations place the author's name outside the sentence, within brackets (Rabab'ah & Al-Marshadi, 2013). Manan and Noor (2015) ascertained that this form of citation puts greater emphasis on the product than the author. Luzon (2015, p.55, p. 59) suggested that they encompass two patterns: single citation pattern and multiple citation patterns. For example:

(e) They are better able to communicate meeting times or share information quickly (Dunn, 2011).

(f) Students also perceive an improvement in their grammar, vocabulary and cultural content (Ducate, Anderson, & Moreno, 2011).

(g) Expert writing: Recent research (Lyster & Ranta 1997; Lyster, 1998; Ellis et al. 2001 a, b) has documented the fact that incidental focus on form occurs frequently in CLT.

While examples (e) and (f) exemplify a single source citation, example (g) illustrates a multiple source citation. The latter is usually employed when the writers are synthesizing information from various sources.

The writers' use of citation forms also varied in relation to other factors like their discipline conventions, cultural background and linguistic resources. For example, in social science disciplines integral citations are more commonly used than in natural sciences because social sciences writers favor the references to authoritative researchers. In contrast, non-integral citations are more commonly employed in natural sciences because the writers value a more impersonal stance (Charles, 2006; Hyland, 1999).

Cultural background affects communicative styles (Fakhri, 2004). While Western cultures prefer direct and explicit communication styles, the Japanese, Iranian and Arab cultures value indirectness. Western writers are more likely to express their attitude toward the cited information explicitly and critically evaluate the sources than those from Japan, Iran and Arab countries.

Research into writers' linguistic resources of knowledge and skill in citing has been consistently carried out. Sun (2008) analyzed 100 MA thesis introductions written by Chinese students. The results showed that the students do not have sufficient skills in employing citations appropriately: encompassing (i) their inability to use citations to express their stance on the issue, (ii) their limited use of a citation pattern, and (iii) their lack of critical evaluation of previous works. The study emphasized the need to teach the students' citation skills explicitly. Luzon (2015) also investigated the student writers' citation difficulties and the factors contributing to these. The data were 35 literature reviews written by the third-year Spanish students who enrolled in an EAP subject for a Bachelor's Degree in English Studies. The results showed that the students' problematic use of sources were attributed to three factors: (i) an unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic texts and of the functions of citation in these texts; (ii) low linguistic level and low level of academic literacy regarding the procedures involved in paraphrasing and synthesizing; (iii) lack of familiarity with the language of citations (Luzon, 2015, p.1).

Manan and Noor (2015) focused specifically on the use of integral citations. The data were six Master's degree theses of Malaysian students. Drawing on Thompson and Tribble's (2001) framework for integral citations, it was found that verb controlling was the most frequently used pattern since it is the most basic and convenient way to acknowledge the work of previous researchers. The other patterns used were naming and non-citation respectively. The results suggested that the Malaysian students' integral citation skills need to be improved for better thesis writing.

Focusing on both integral and non-integral citations, Okamura (2008) analyzed 30 scientific research articles in biology, chemistry and physics. Integral citations were further categorized into three sub-types: subject-position, non-subject position and noun phrase (e.g. “according to ...”). The results revealed that integral citation was sparsely used in papers across the disciplines. Of the total citation forms, L1 writers employed only 6.4% and L2 writers only 5.5%. Nevertheless, it was evident that the L1 writers’ integral citation had more stylistic variation than that of the L2 writers. While L1 writers utilized all sub-types of integral citations in their writing, L2 writers relied mainly on a subject position.

Comparative studies of citation practices between writers from L1 and L2 contexts were also carried out by Rabab’ah and Al-Marshadi (2013). The data were five Master EFL theses written by Arab EFL students and another five by native English writers. Based on Swales’ (1990) categorization, the citation patterns were analyzed and categorized into integral and non-integral types. The results revealed that the Arab EFL students used integral-verb and non-integral citations more frequently than integral noun-phrase (or naming) citation pattern. On the other hand, the more frequently used type among native English writers was integral noun-phrase (or naming) citation pattern. It is essential, therefore, to enhance Arab EFL students’ writing and research skills so that they can effectively employ all citation types in their writing.

Goodarzi and Gholami (2017) compared types and functions of citations in 48 discussion sections in medical research articles written by Iranian and English-speaking researchers. It was found that non-integral citations were the most frequently used type by both groups. In terms of citation functions, English speaking researchers used the attribution, support, reference, establishing links, and identification types in their research articles more frequently than their Iranian counterparts. The results revealed that Iranian writers need to be exposed to the broader range of types of citations and their specific rhetorical functions to produce quality medical papers.

In the Thai EFL context, Sirijanchuen and Gampper (2018) compared the citation practices in 60 research article introductions (RAIs) written by Thai and international English Language Teaching (ELT) scholars. The analysis drew on Thompson and Tribble’s (2001) framework. The results indicated that the international scholars preferred non-integral citations to integral citations, particularly the sub-types called source and identification. In contrast, Thai scholars commonly employed integral citation, especially the verb-controlling sub-type. The results indicate that the writers’ sociocultural backgrounds and their existing knowledge of writing conventions contribute considerably to limit the range of their citation practices.

Accepting the evidence that non-English speaking writers have difficulties utilizing citations in their written texts, two of the major problems were their language background and limited vocabulary. Neither are they well-informed of the functions of citations in academic writing which is probably because of certain social and cultural traditions (Shoostari & Jaliligar, 2010). This case study attempts to explore the writers’ use of citation forms and their difficulties in incorporating sources into their essays. The study results are expected provide insight into Thai student writers’ deficiencies and provide pedagogical implications for future teaching to help improve Thai students’ citation skills.

Method

The corpus of this study is 15 discussion essays written by 15 third-year English majors in one public university in the northeast of Thailand. The students were required to write a discussion essay as a part of the requirements of the compulsory course Academic Writing. The social purpose of a discussion genre, according to the Australian genre-based theory, is to present two or more different viewpoints or perspectives on an issue (Derewianka & Jones, 2016). The length of the essay was 300-350 words. The in-text citation format adopts the American Psychological Association (APA) style.

The data analysis involved two major steps. Firstly, all citations in the essays, except those in direct quotes were identified, and then analyzed according to Swales’ (1990) categorization of citation types: integral and non-integral citations. For the integral citations, they were further analyzed to find out which of the sub-types they belong to, namely verb-controlling, naming, and non-citation. The non-integral citations were separated into single or multiple citation patterns and the frequency of occurrence of each type and/or sub-type was then counted.

Secondly, the students' major problems in employing citations in their essays were investigated. Analysis revealed two major problems: (i) lack of familiarity with the language of citations; and (ii) unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic writing. The table below summarizes these two steps.

Citation Analysis		
Step 1	Types of Citation	
	Integral citations	Non-integral citations
	verb-controlling	single citation pattern
	naming	multiple citation patterns
	non-citation	
Step 2	The students' citation problems	
	lack of familiarity with the language of citations	
	unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic writing	

The citation analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively to investigate the frequency of integral and non-integral citations and explored the contextual nature of citations to establish the difficulties encountered by the students.

Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis revealed that the students could not appropriately and skillfully integrate sources into their texts. Their major problems were caused by the following two factors: (i) lack of familiarity with the language of citations; and (ii) unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic writing. These are further discussed below.

I. Lack of Familiarity with the Language of Citations

The students' lack of familiarity with the language of citations contributed to two related problems: limited range of citation patterns and missing information or wrong information.

A. Limited Range of Citation Patterns

The analysis of all 15 essays revealed that the students used both integral and non-integral citations in their writing. The frequencies were 57 and 40 respectively. The average number of citations, both integral and non-integral, was 6.46 per essay. Table 1 illustrates these citation patterns.

Table 1: Types and sub-types of citations

Sub-type	Integral Citations			Non-Integral Citations
	Verb Controlling	Naming	No-Citation	
Number	35	24	0	48
Total	59			48

i) Integral Citations

Regarding the integral citations, it was found that the sub-category called verb controlling was more frequently used (35) than the naming (24). No students used the "no-citation" sub-category.

For the verb controlling sub-category, all of the students employed a single format, that is, "*the reported author + reporting verb*". In other words, the reported author is put at the subject position and is followed by a reporting verb. The results of this study coincide with the previous studies (e.g. Charles, 2006; Hyland, 1999) which found that writers from the social science discipline use more integral citation forms than those from natural sciences. Okamura (2008) analyzed scientific research articles written by L1 and L2 writers and found that the former employed less integral citation in a subject position than the latter. This indicated that L1 writers used the integral citation in a subject position purposefully. On the one hand, the citation can attract the readers' attention with the authority of the cited authors; on the other hand, it punctuates the writer's argument with the reference to the author's name and publication year (Okamura, 2008). It is recommended that a subject position citation should be knowingly employed to show the writer's acknowledgement of the cited author's significance in the field (Okamura, 2008).

Examples of integral citations (verb-controlling sub-category) are shown below.

(1). Schizophrenia is one of the problems. *Brazier (2018) reveals* that people who are upset or disappointed in their life tend to use cannabis.

(2). Some people think that taking marijuana might reduce their brain ability. ... For example, **Gowin (2014)** believes that people who start smoking when they are young and always smoke show the greatest drop in cognitive performance.

(3). **The Denver Post (2016)** reported that the marijuana industry in Pueblo, Colorado, has contributed more than \$58 million dollars to its economy.

As for the naming sub-category, the majority of students (20) used the pattern “*According to + cited author (human or organization) + year*”. Only two occurrences of the different patterns were found. One of these used the noun phrase “*The study by + cited author...*” and another used the prepositional phrase “*In the study of + cited author*”. The excerpts below exemplify these.

(4). **According to Kabir (2018)**, cannabidiol found in marijuana or cannabis has the ability to stop cancer

(5). **According to a research published by Faculty of Pharmacy, Rangsit University (2018)**, spray extracted from marijuana can reduce pain from cancer.

(6). Another disadvantage is the effect on the heart. **A study by Fogoros (2018)** found that the heart of people who smoke cannabis beats faster than normally, between 20-50 times per minute.

ii). Non-integral citations:

For these citations, the name of the cited author is put in brackets or parentheses, at the end of the sentence. Normally, the pattern consists of “*reported author (s) + year*”. Rhetorically, this kind of citation foregrounds the cited information rather than the author and presents it in a non-evaluative way (Hyland, 2002). The excerpts below exemplify these.

(7) Marijuana products generate a lot of income. ... The specialties and things that make people drink is Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) substance that is the main ingredient (**Rassarín, 2018**).

(8) Marijuana is still illegal in Thailand because the Thai government is concerned that marijuana legalization might lead to negative effects (**Somjittranukit, 2017**). Although marijuana is officially illegal in Thailand, several nations have embraced the use of marijuana. For example, the United States and Canada have legalized marijuana for recreational and medical use (**Robinson & Berke, 2018**).

The results shed light on the students’ problematic citation practices. Although their essays contain a considerable number of integral citations, they rely heavily on the single pattern of each sub-category. As mentioned earlier, the common pattern for the verb controlling sub-category is “*the reported author + reporting verb*” (see examples 1-3), and for the naming sub-category is “*According to + cited author (animate or non-animate) + year*”. These repeated citation patterns indicate that the students had a relatively limited knowledge of citation language and systems. They may be quite unaware of other citation patterns of both verb-controlling and naming sub-categories. For example, for the verb-controlling sub-category, the other patterns that could have been used are citing the reported author in the passive voice like “*... was described by X (2019) as ...*” or using a reporting noun instead of a reporting verb like “*Y’s (2019) claim that...*”. In case of naming, some other patterns that could have been used are the noun phrase “*Based on X (2019)’s framework, ...*” or the prepositional phrase “*In Y (2019)’s view ...*”. The ability to utilize different citation forms is expected in professional academic writing because different forms serve different functions. The writers who can vary their citation styles will be able to make a more precise judgment and interesting presentation of their cited sources.

For the non-integral citations, the only pattern found was “*reported author(s) + year*”. Further, all citations (48) displayed the single source citation, that is, only one source of information (either with a single author or several authors) is cited. No writer used multiple citation patterns, comprising several sources, probably due to the fact that the assigned writing task did not explicitly require the students to employ multiple citation patterns. Besides, multiple citation patterns are cognitively challenging. They require students to read and comprehend information from various sources. Moreover, they need to develop the skills required to paraphrase, summarize and synthesize those sources and then establish the connections between them to construct their own ideas or voice supporting their position or statement. It is generally agreed that paraphrasing, summarizing and synthesizing skills are extremely difficult skills for L2 students. It is probable that all of the students relied mainly on a single reference source.

The minimal range of citation patterns makes the essays less appealing to readers as they lack discourse variation when the writers have limited expression of voice of the cited sources. In Luzon's study (2015), the participants, undergraduate Spanish students, overused the integral citation. When the non-integral citation is used, it repeated a single pattern that is "attributed information in text and single sources in brackets" (Luzon, 2015, p. 59). Luzon (2015) argued that in some cases, the integral citation was preferred because it gave the cited author prominence, increasing the text credibility. Nevertheless, the writers were expected to provide further explanation of the research and some evaluative statement revealing their position. However, that was missing from the participants' texts. In other places, non-integral citation should have been used, giving the cited information prominence. By doing so, the writers would need to be able to synthesize information from different sources so that they could use it to support their own statement, judgment or comments towards the statement. Yet, the participants seemed to be unaware of the functions of integral and non-integral citations and consequently, tended to use integral citation for all purposes (Luzon, 2015). Similar to Luzon's study results, the participants of this study cited sources mainly to acknowledge the external authors' works and validate their (as the authors) knowledge claims. They did not evaluate previous research and positioned themselves in relation to that research seemingly to use integral and non-integral citations randomly without thoroughly understanding their functions. Most of the students tend to use source texts to fulfill their given tasks rather than strengthening their argument.

B. Missing or Wrong Information

This problem concerns the conventions and mechanical aspects of citation (Luzon, 2015). This happens because some necessary information is missing from the citation, including the year of publication or the page number of a reference in the direct quotation. Other problems are the inclusion of the author's initials or the pages for the whole chapter or paper, not the page from which the quotation had been taken. The following excerpts exemplified these.

Example 1:

Marijuana provides treating treatment for the depression, but what will happen if users smoke or take an overdose of marijuana as a medicine? **American Cancer Society** states that "*Smoked marijuana delivers THC and other cannabinoids to the body, but it also delivers harmful substances to users and those close by, including many of the same substances found in tobacco smoke.*"

Example 2:

However, marijuana is playing an increasingly important role in medical fields. Marijuana has been known as pain healing and useful for other types of healing practice. The study by Sir William Brooke O' Shaughnessy (1830s), an Irish doctor studying in India, found that cannabis extracts could help lessen stomach pain and vomiting in people suffering from cholera.

The first example shows that the direct quotation was cited. However, the writer failed to include both the year of publication and a page number. In addition, the cited source "American Cancer Society" is an inanimate subject. Thus, it is awkward to use the reporting verb "state" after it. It would have been more appropriate for the writer to use a naming pattern like "*According to + cited author (year) + clause*" or "*The study by + cited author(year) + verb + clause...*". In the second example, the information was paraphrased, but the year of publication omitted. For an academic discourse community, these are not acceptable and can be viewed as edging on plagiarism. Although only a few of the students committed these mistakes, they highlight the fact that the students did not fully understand how to integrate sources into their essays appropriately.

II. Unawareness of the Dialogic Nature of Academic Writing

While the students cited sources mainly to acknowledge the external authors' works and validate their (as the authors) knowledge claims, they did not evaluate previous research and positioned themselves in relation to the attributed research (Luzon, 2015). Possibly, they were unaware that the dialogic nature of academic writing requires several views to inform the act of discussion. To gain insight into this, it is also essential to examine the writer's use of reporting verbs in the verb controlling sub-category. Their selected reporting verbs would indicate their attitude or stance toward previous studies (Okamura, 2008).

Generally, the verb controlling sub-category gives prominence to the author. The results showed that the reporting verbs found in the essays were mainly employed to report findings (e.g. reveals, found, and discovered), or to interpret results (e.g. suggest and explained), or to report factual information (e.g. acknowledges, notes, points out and establishes). Only a few were used to indicate the writers' weak belief (e.g. believe) and strong belief (e.g. claims, asserts and recommended). The use of these reporting verbs indicates that the writers position themselves towards the cited sources as "neutral". In other words, their position in relation to the cited sources is not explicitly expressed.

In the paragraphs in which the students proposed their argument, they stated the issue in the topic sentence or indicated their position on the issue. Then they provided supporting details to validate their claims or support their position. Through their choices of either integral citations or non-integral citations, they presented the results of the cited studies, provided related examples, or referred to the experts' ideas. However, they did not attempt to evaluate or criticize the cited sources, which could reflect their actual stance. The excerpt below exemplifies this.

However, if marijuana is legal, it might have a positive impact on the economy. **The Denver Post (2016)** reported that the marijuana industry in Pueblo, Colorado, has contributed more than \$58 million dollars to its economy. Furthermore, the companies have to pay taxes to the government, which can bring money to improve the economy, the state, and the country as a whole.

As can be seen, the writer stated in the topic sentence that if marijuana is legalized, the economy will improve. To support this, he provided the example from The Denver Post (2016) asserting that by levying substantial taxes on the marijuana industry the authorities were able to use this income to the wider benefit of the community. While the provided information clearly supports his proposition, it does not show his evaluation of the cited source. Rather, it shows that he unreservedly agrees with the cited information as he considered it as fact and credible, without regard for the possible negative impacts on the marijuana's users.

The results of this present study agree with some previous studies; one of which was conducted by Amornrattanasirichok and Jaroongkhongdach (2017, p. 324) who found that when writing academic journals Thai novice writers tended to use affirmative reporting verbs such as *show*, *prove*, *demonstrate*, *find* and *point out* to ratify the cited information. The explanation maybe that they find the chosen cited sources accurate, logical and convincingly argued and agree with their own thoughts. Thus, it is understandable that they would not be seeking alternative views. Amornrattanasirichok and Jaroongkhongdach (2017, p. 322) claimed that if the writers hesitate to evaluate the cited information critically, they are inclined to conform to the most common citation method used in the academic discourse community. Luzon (2015) asserted that one of the reasons of the students' poor referencing was their unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic writing and that "the knowledge is socially constructed by developing and responding to others' ideas" (Chanock, 2008; McCulloch, 2012, as cited in Luzon, 2015, p. 55). This may lead to their over-respect of source material as beyond analysis or alternative viewpoint in academic discourse.

Conclusion and Implications

The purposes of this study were to investigate the participating students' use of citation forms and the difficulties they encountered when writing an academic essay. The results revealed that they used the most basic form, integral citations, disproportionately. Their citation difficulties were attributed to the following factors (i). their lack of familiarity with the language of citations and (ii). their unawareness of the dialogic nature of academic writing.

Academic writing is known to be persuasive (Hyland, 2011). It would be beneficial for the writing teachers to assist their students to learn and master necessary writing skills for producing an effective academic essay. Some scholars (e.g. Fazilatfar, Elhambakhs & Allami, 2018; Pecorari, 2003) claim that citations are complicated processes and the students' citation difficulties signify that they are developing their competence in source-based writing. Taken these into consideration, the teachers of the future writing courses, particularly in Thai educational contexts are recommended to teach the citation types and their functions explicitly and emphasize their value in academic writing. The writers should think of their works for the benefit of their readers who expect the discussion and conclusions in it to be appropriately informed by a variety of sources properly cited to allow the readers to find the quoted passages themselves.

Citation is not simply about reporting attributed information or presenting the study results or examples from the cited sources. Teachers should highlight how different citation forms and patterns contribute to different rhetorical functions and hence, argument credibility. Besides different citation types providing variety for readability, they are powerful aids to reinforce meanings. To assist students' understanding of these issues, teachers will demonstrate the significance and impact of the reporting verbs by practicing in context the different reporting verbs conveying different meanings and levels of attitude. Strategically used, the writers' own voice can be established and the others' ideas can be re-contextualized into their own arguments appropriate to their research objectives.

To conclude, citation is one of the writing difficulties faced by Thai students and this needs to be addressed in an academic writing course. If the students are going to produce authoritative academic texts persuasively and effectively, they need to be equipped with citation skills.

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