Citation Practices in Colombian Undergraduate English Teachers' Academic Writing

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Abstract

Citation is a crucial rhetorical aspect that plays a fundamental role within academic writing and it is a problematic area for novice writers, especially nonnative undergraduate English teachers. However, little is known about how these teachers cite in the theoretical framework chapters of their monograph. This articles aims at describing the citation practices in a corpus conformed by 22 theoretical framework chapters of monographs written by undergraduate English teachers (UETs) in Colombia. The analysis was constituted by the citation typology of Swales (1986,1990) and Petriç's (2007) functional taxonomy of citations. The results indicate that integral citation is the most used citation type in the corpus of UETs which depicts a simple for of citation. Related to functions, the attribution is highly dominant in this corpus which entails an undergraduate English teachers' limitation in the variety of function citation. This study can be used to raise awareness on nonnative undergraduate English teachers towards better citation practices in their disciplinary academic papers.

Keywords: citation type, citation function, theoretical framework, monograph

INTRODUCTION

Citation is a crucial component for the development of academic writing in nonnative undergraduate students. Through that type of specialized writing and different given tasks and beyond, they can strategically learn, construct and disseminate the disciplinary knowledge of the area of study during college and professional life. A factor that challenges this academic endeavor is the fact of integrating key authors' ideas and taking stance towards such ideas in their papers, especially in their final project or monographs. To some extent, citing becomes a subjective activity that leads to the creation of new meaning from existing sources (Shi, 2008). Besides, citation contributes not only to contextualize the purpose of the study, but also to support finding more persuasively (Mansourizadeh and Ahmad, 2011). Above all, mastering citation is a late-developing phenomenon that occurs in both native and non-native English speakers (Borg, 2000; Campbell, 2002; Penny, 1996).

Citation has been a source of concern for many scholars over the past decades. Their studies have covered a series of different aspects. For instance, various studies have analyzed the networks of influence, collaboration, and dependence (Swales, 1986) that citation can create among writers. Some researchers found out that one of the mean difficulties is the fact that students cite external

source inappropriately (Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, & Payne, 2010; Keck, 2014; Fazilatfar, Elhambakhsh and Allami, 2018, among others). On the other hand, huge interest has been put onto the use of citation verbs and citation patterns in academic writing (Bathia, 1993; Hawes and Thomas, 1997; Hyland, 1999; Pecorari, 2006; Thompson, 2005). Furthermore, studies on citation have also analyzed published academic papers such as research articles (Harwood, 2009, Hyland, 2000; Alramadan, 2023) and postgrade papers (Samraj, 2013). Also, citation typologies (Swales, 1990; Massi, 2005) has been a researched too.

In recent years, there has been an emphasis on citation practice in nonnative English speakers, especially in undergraduate and postgraduate students. This is an important aspect since nonnative speakers are impelled to learn how to communicate the disciplinary knowledge in other language than English (academic English). For instance, Sun (2008) explored the citation difficulties of Chinese MA students, whereas Ramoroka (2014) analyzed the types of reporting verbs and the evaluation of the external source used by students from Botswana. On the other hand, Lee, Hitchcock and Casal (2018) analyzed the citation practices of L2 undergraduate students. Fazilatfar et al. (2018) saw the implications of teaching citation formally to avoid plagiarism in Iranian undergraduate and postgraduate students. Besides, Sabaj and Muñoz (2015) analyzed citation among disciplines. Conversely, Mansourizadeh and Ahmad (2011) analyzed nonnative novice and expert writes from Malaysia. Also, Zafrunnisha (2012) studied citation practices in PhD thesis from India. Jomaa and Bidin (2017) explored the difficulties in citing and integrating information from academic sources into the literature review chapter of PhD proposals written by Malaysian students. Additionally, Kongpetch (2021) studied the use of forms of citation in undergraduates´academic writing.

However, there is little attention to citation practice in undergraduate English teachers' academic writing which can be considered academically. Related to undergraduate English teachers in Colombia, they must evaluate the information they access through, most of the time, specialized guided reading in order to support their ideas in the different textual production- a monograph is one of them- they are required to write. Thus, they need to cite disciplinary authors in different chapters of the monograph such as theoretical framework, methodological framework, among other chapters, to build solid arguments. Consequently, types and rhetorical functions of citations must be analyzed, when employed by these undergraduate students since they are required to learn their disciplinary knowledge from key readings to incorporate important information in their papers to create epistemological connections which validate their informed viewpoints. Furthermore, the form they treat the external information requires attention to uncover particular or similar issues as those reported in previous studies of nonnative English speakers. Besides, the academic English used in their monographs implies that they need to cite correctly in order to demonstrate they know both the target language and the disciplinary knowledge as well.

On the other hand, the theoretical framework chapter embodies a great challenge for undergraduate English teachers (from now on UETs) in Colombia since the monograph depicts the first attempt to communicate their own research in the disciplinary knowledge. In this particular chapter, they must subtly establish relations between existing theories and previous studies in order to contextualize their study. Consequently, since an important body of citations is expected to be found out in this chapter that references key authors within the disciplinary knowledge of Language Teaching (LT), especially, English, studies on this topic are crucial because they can facilitate a better understanding of the main features of academic writing produced by UETs in Colombia. Additionally, citation studies can bring fruitful advances in the improvement of undergraduate English teachers´ academic writing and the integration of sources into an effective

disciplinary knowledge network. Thus, this study focus on exploring how UETs in Colombia use citations in the theoretical framework chapters of their monographs. It is intended to answer these two questions: 1. How do Colombian undergraduate English teachers use citations in the theoretical framework chapters? 2. What are the types and functions of citations employed by these undergraduate writers?

Citation

Citation is a very important rhetorical device in academic writing. It refers to the textual creation carried out by effectively inserting another´s text into one´s own (Buckinghan and Nevice, 1997). The appropriate   manipulation of this external source to build a well-organized discourse allows the writer to capture the reader´s attention. In institutional contexts, such as universities, citation permits undergraduate students to create new meaning from external sources which turns to be a subjective process (Shi, 2008). In other words, novice writer's ideas joined to experts' ideas create a single meaningful textual unit that helps achieve the communicative function of the paragraphs. According to Fazilafar et al. (2018), citation contributes to the recognition of other's works and the promotion and validation of authors´ epistemological conceptions which support their claims.

Types of citation

Citation are classified into integral and non-integral citation (swales, 1986, 1990). In integral citation, the writer uses the author as the point of departure of the statement and a reporting verb is employed to introduce his/her idea: *smith (2015) states that…* in nonintegral citations, the writer moves the author to the end of the statement and a reporting verb is not used: *the implications are fully supported and clear (smith, 2015).* As it is seen, the position of the author's name and the use of a reporting verb marks the main distinguishable features to establish boundaries between both types of citation.

Citation Functions

Regarding the function of citations, there are several proposals (see Swales, 1990, for example). However, for the purpose of the present study, the functional taxonomy made by Petrić (2007)   was followed. Such taxonomy is fruitful to analyze the function of citations in undergraduate projects since they cover a variety of key enunciative aspects. Nine rhetorical functions embody Petrić ´s (2007) framework for function citation (see table 1).

Table 1. Petric´s (2007) framework for function citation

Type of function	Function
Attribution	It is employed to assign authorship to external information
Exemplification	The words "for example, or "such as," or "e.g." always precede or follow the reference.
Further reference	It is accompanied by the word "see" and appears in brackets or a footnote.
Statement of use	It is used to describe the works that are used in the study and why.

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Application	In order to use the reasoning, ideas, terms, or methods from the cited work for the writer's own goals, it establishes links between the cited and the writer's work.
Evaluation	It rates the output of other writers.
Establishing links between sources	It points to link between or among different sources used.
Comparison of one"s own findings or interpretation with other sources	It highlights the parallels and discrepancies between the author's own work and that of other writers.
Other	When the connection between the citation and referenced documents is obscure, it is used.

METHOD

Data for the current study came from twenty-two theoretical framework chapters of monographs, written by Colombian UETs from the Foreign Languages Program at Universidad del Atlántico. The data was   collected in order to explore and achieve a better understanding of the way citations are used by these nonnative English writers.

The monographs were selected randomly from the open library of the university, raging years from 2017 to 2022. The analysis covered two moments: the identification of the citation types and the description of citation functions as well. The present table presents the features of the corpus used for the analysis.

Table 2. Corpus description

Corpus	Number of pages	Numbers of paragraphs	Lengs (words)	Number of citation
22 theoretical framework chapters	221	643	56.854	516

As it is seen, table 2 shows the way the corpus is constituted. The 22 theoretical frameworks have 221 pages which contain 643 paragraphs, with a number of words of 56854. Besides, 516 citations were found.

On the other hand, there is a marked variation in the number of pages among the theoretical frameworks. For instance, some theoretical frameworks have 15, but some others, just 4. To some extent, there is not a standardized number of pages at the moment of building this monograph chapter. Such variation might be due to factors such as the undergraduate teachers' beliefs underpinning the creation of the chapter, the limit on the number of pages a monograph that is suggested by the Faculty of Education, the scope and access to the search for references on databases, among others.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS
Types of citations in the theoretical framework chapters

The results of the analysis show that both integral and nonintegral citations are used in the corpus of UETs, as it can be seen from the table 2 below.

Table 3 Citation types found in the theoretical framework chapters

Type of citation	Quantity
Integral	396
Nonintegral	120
Total	516

Table 3 illustrates that in the corpus of UETs, a total of 516 citations were used. 396 were integral citations; 120 were nonintegral citations. The results of this study corresponds to previous studies by Hyland (1999, 2000; Samanhudi1 and O'Boyle, 2021) which found that integral citations are highly used in Social Sciences than in Natural Sciences. According to Hyland (2000), integral citations are preferred so as to highlight the role of writers from the cited text. Furthermore, this type of citation is considered a simpler form of citation (Jalilifar, 2012) within academic discourse. Thus, this indicates that the majority of the citations in the theoretical framework chapters in the selected corpus focuses on the cited author. To some extent, such authors (Krashen, Ur, Celce-Murcia & Olshtain and Oxford, among others presented in the corpus) represent academic authorities to support the aforementioned teachers´ ideas who are learning to create disciplinary knowledge without making their own contribution.

Examples of integral and nonintegral citation types from the mentioned corpus are shown below.

Integral citation

(Sample 12)

*Furthermore, **Krashen (2011)** affirms that there are some universal aspects of literacy in all languages since the reading process will be similar for all languages with variations to accommodate the specific characteristics of orthography used and the grammatical structures of the language.*

(Sample 122)

*Knowing the explanation before about the speaking skill and its components, **Ur (1996)** mentions that there are many factors that cause difficulty in the speaking skill and they are as follows: 1. Inhibition: students are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism, or simply shy.*

From these samples, it is notorious that UETs do not make proper comments which expand the idea that started with the cited author. This is not enough to build solid arguments since the affirmations are not further supported with relevant information provided by the writers.

Nonintegral citation

(Sample 9)

*Therefore, some authors have pointed out that writing could not be   as easy as it seems **(Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2006).***

(Sample 37)
The term strategy is from Greek stratigikí 'command of a general'. In ancient Greece, strategy involved a general's plan to win a war **(Oxford, 1990).**

A similar case is noticed in the above samples which cited ideas are not connected with writes' ideas to complement or add necessary information to build good arguments.

Functions of citations used by undergraduate writers

The results of this study also revealed that citations served several rhetorical purposes. In the corpus of UET*s* citation functions are identified: 'attribution', 'application', 'evaluation' and 'Establishing links between sources'. From these identified functions, attribution was the highest employed (399 times). The Application was the second function (12 times). Evaluation was used 4 times and Establishing links between sources, once. See table 3.

Table 4 Distribution of citation function   in the theoretical framework chapters

Function	Amount
Attribution	399
Exemplification	0
Further reference	0
Statement of use	0
Application	12
Evaluation	4
Establishing links between sources	1
Comparison of one's own findings or interpretation with other sources	0
Other	0

The results of citation functions, as shown in table 4, confirm previous studies (Petrić, 2007; Samanhudi and O'Boyle, 2021). According to them, attribution is highly used, basic and, in rhetorical terms, it is the simplest function. The monographs written by Colombian UETs represent their highest academic paper as one of the graduation requirements from the Faculty of Education. This paper shows their research, communicative, pedagogical and academic competences which were supposedly learned during their teacher education process. Within this paper, the theoretical framework chapter entails key theories and concepts in the disciplinary knowledge of LT.

In this chapter, they need to show, among other things, academic writing skills with its representative features, being citation function one of them. However, the prevalence of the function of attribution in the corpus indicates a low elaboration of disciplinary knowledge which related to what Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987) denominated 'knowledge telling mode of writing'. These undegraduate writers, most of the time, do not expand the cited author' idea with their own ideas which, to some extent, can triggers the point of departure for the creation of disciplinary knowledge. This also confirms a previous study carried out by Tamano and Guimba (2016) which

found that there is a lack of knowledge on the variety of citation styles and other citation patterns on the part of undergraduate teachers.

Here some samples of citation functions found in the corpus of UETs:

Attribution

Attribution was the most used citation function undergraduate English teachers employed. It appeared 399 times in the corpus.

> **(Sample 404)**
> *According to Ausubel (1962), subsumption theory states that meaningful learning occurs when new information is connected with one pre-existing relevant concept in the cognitive structure.*

Application

Application was the second citation function which was used undergraduate English teachers. It was identified 12 times in the corpus.

> **(Sample 402)**
> *Considering spelling as a central process to begin writing, we have to recognize first the spelling stages described by Ellis (1997), in which children develop the spelling acquisition progressively.*

Evaluation

Evaluation was the third citation function employed by undergraduate English teachers. In the corpus, it was used 4 times.

> **(Sample 312)**
> *Another author, who's stated as aim the oral fluency was Day and Bamford, (2004, pg. 1) he said that "good things happen to students who read a great deal". From this we can infer that the more the student read he will able to handle the English language as a path to reach to the oral fluency which is quite important in a communicative situation.*

Establishing links between sources

Establishing links between sources was the last citation function found in the corpus. The undergraduate English teachers used it once.

> **(Sample 383)**
> *The concepts provided by Chastain (1998) and Levelt (1994) regarding speaking skills are quite similar.*

On the other hand, the functions of Exemplification, Further reference, Statement of use, Comparison of one's own findings or interpretation with other sources and Other were not used by UETs. Related to this absence of important functions in the corpus, UETs had a limitation in

the scope citation function which negatively affects key features of their academic writing, expected to be used in the monographs. Since they have to argue in order to persuade the institutional discourse community, not using these functions contributes to write less clear arguments which leads to the constraint appearance of authorial stance (McCulloch, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This paper reported the findings on the citation practice used in each of 22 theoretical framework chapters of monographs, written by Colombian undergraduate English teachers, employing the citation typology of Swales (1986, 1990) along with Petrić's (2007) functional framework. In accordance with the results of the study, it can be concluded that the integral citation was the most employed citation type presented in the undergraduate English teachers' corpus which indicates a simple form of incorporating external sources to such corpus.

On the other hand, there was a marked limited use of citation functions on the part of Colombian UETs who highly used the attribution function in their theoretical framework chapters, 399 times, just to mention authors' ideas without making their knowledge contribution to the discipline of LT. Most of them only focused on piling up external ideas to show they read key authors, but they failed in completing their ideas to create epistemological connections with the cited authors.

The main limitation of the study is the size of the corpus. Thus, a larger corpus is required to gain a major scope on the understanding of the realization of citation in the academic writing of the Colombian undergraduate English teachers. However, despite this drawback, the findings of this research have instructional implications. First, UETs must be conscious about their citation practices during the writing of the theoretical framework chapter which correspond to a more elaborated academic writing in concordance with the disciplinary knowledge of LT. Second, explicit instruction on this important topic needs to be practiced by faculty professors in charge of writing courses along with monograph advisors in order to guide the way undergraduate English teachers must incorporate key external authors into term papers and monographs. And third, citation practices, as research topic, requires more systematic studies so as to understand the nature and practice of undergraduate English teachers' citation which can be used as didactic artifacts to enhance a better academic writing within LT in instructional contexts.

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