



Structural and Functional Characterization of Citation Practices in Academic Research Writing: A Concordance-Informed Analysis

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Abstract

In the last two decades, citation behaviour in academic research writing has been highlighted in English for academic purposes. This concordance-informed, corpus-based study has focused on cross-disciplinary analysis of citations by English and Iranian academic writers in English Economics and Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering research articles published in international and Iranian national English-medium journals. To that end, research articles in Economics and Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering were developed and divided into four sub-corpora: English corpus and Iranian corpus. Thompson and Tribble's (2001) classification and Thompson and Ye's (1991) framework were used to analyse citations. The computer program AntConc (version 3.5.7) was used to identify 1,032 citations. The results of data analysis showed more frequent uses of citations by Economics than Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering writers. In terms of citation structures, more integral citations were utilised by Economics writers, and more non-integral citations were used by Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering writers. In addition, the citation analyses of native and non-native writers revealed that English writers employed more citations than Iranian writers. The findings imply that the cultural context of publication, in addition to the linguistic background and knowledge structures of their disciplines, seems to shape the writers' citation choices when writing their research articles.

Keywords: citation practices, research article, part-genre, economics, industrial and manufacturing engineering

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Introduction

Citations play a central role in the construction and co-construction of knowledge in academic research writing. When crafting a research article (RA), researchers need to cite the works of other researchers to provide evidence for the claims they make (Lee et al., 2018; Zhang, 2022). In Swales' words (2014), "citation is the most overt and most immediately obvious indication that a text is indeed academic" (p. 119). Expert published authors also employ citations to help them to present research findings more convincingly (Mansourizadeh & Ahmad, 2011). Writers use citations in academic papers to introduce and discuss the research works of other researchers and, in so doing, they can identify themselves with particular disciplinary communities (Donner, 2021; Hu, 2023). As White (2004) noted, citations are effective measures universities, governments, and other institutes tend to use to evaluate the productivity and reputation of individual researchers and employees in the workplace.

Prior research has revealed that citations vary across disciplines. Citations play a vital role in humanities in comparison to sciences, and researchers use more citations in soft sciences than in hard sciences (Petric, 2007). Research has shown the higher proportion of integral citations in soft disciplines than in hard disciplines, and in soft disciplines writers tend to adopt a critical writer stance to cited sources, in contrast to a more neutral stance manifested in hard disciplines (Thompson, 2005). In addition, "writers in the hard sciences generally employ slightly more verbs indicating their belief in the truth of a report while those in the soft fields withhold judgement" (Hyland & Jiang, 2018, p. 17). Disciplines also use citations functionally differently. Notably, computer scientists use signposting citations more frequently, while sociologists much more often employ engaging citations (Harwood, 2009).

Several reasons motivated the present researchers to develop a corpus-driven study to examine citation practices across disciplines between two writer groups. The first reason has to do with the importance of citations in the academia. Comparison of data from expert writers of research articles can illustrate experts' use of citations and can guide novice writers how to write in a similar way as experts do (Mansourizadeh & Ahmad, 2011; Petric, 2007). The second reason has to do with the understanding of acceptable citation patterns which are used by academics, which is concerned with the generalizability of citations in, for example, natural sciences to all academic discourse (Hyland, 2013). Citations are persuasively effective tools of scientific discourse (Kwan & Chan, 2014), which play a leading role in academic writing, showing how a new piece of research develops and is grounded in the recurring pattern of disciplinary knowledge. As a result, they provide the transparent disclosure about the nature of research (Lee, et al., 2018). Furthermore, Charles (2006) indicates that citations enable "the writer to acknowledge or take issue with the contributions of other researchers and, in displaying knowledge of the field, to establish his / her own academic authority and credibility" (p. 311).

In the present study, we, therefore, examined the structural and functional features of citation practices of results and discussion section of RAs in two writer groups (non-native Persian writers publishing in English and Native-English writers) in two disciplines (Economics and Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering). We have focused on the “results and discussion” part-genre in RAs because of two major reasons. This section, as Samraj (2013) argues, tends to be challenging because, intertextually, researchers need to establish relations between previous literature and the findings of their own study, and this implies citing prior research to interpret the results of the study. Secondly, as Thompson (2005) shows, this part-genre includes the highest citation after introductions. This high density of citation is because the researcher “places the findings of his analyses within the research literature” (p. 316). Following this line of argumentation, we have drawn on the following two research questions in the present study to examine structural and functional features of citation practices in academic research writing.

1. What are the most frequent structures and functions of citations in results and discussion section of IME and economics RA between native and non-native English speakers?
2. Are there any differences between native and non-native English writers in the structures and functions of citations in results and discussion section of IME and economics RAs?

Literature Review

This section includes prior research on citations. First, a distinction is made between integral and non-integral citations, followed by a brief discussion on the structure and functions of the citations. Next, the taxonomies used in this study to analyse citations in terms of forms and functions are explained, with numerous examples added from the data of the present study. Finally, we review the previous research focused on citations and summarise the findings of some of the research studies.

Typological Analyses of Citation Practices

One classification relates to textual and formal citations (Swales, 2014), and a combination of formal linguistic and functional criteria (Thompson, 2005; Thompson & Tribble, 2001). Some other researchers have investigated citations solely based on rhetorical functions (Harwood, 2009; Petric, 2007; Samraj, 2013) and others have analysed the forms of citations (Hyland, 1999) or the writer’s stance (Coffin, 2009). Also, citations can be analysed based on the categorisation of reporting verbs (Thompson & Ye, 1991). For a more recent update on these typologies, readers are referred to Arizavi and Choubsaz (2021). Because in the present study, Thompson and Tribble’s (2001) and Thompson and Ye’s (1991) frameworks have been used, the primary focus is on these two models in the following paragraphs.

Following formal linguistic and functional criteria, researchers usually divide citations into two categories: integral and non-integral. Integral citations place heavy emphasis on the authors cited in the sentence or sentences, but non-integral citations primarily focus on the research reported and the cited authors tend

to be of secondary significance and are added in the footnote or enclosed within parentheses (Samraj, 2013). Thompson and Tribble (2001) (Table 1) divided integral and non-integral citations into several subcategories. They examined 16 PhD theses in agricultural botany and agricultural and food economics to present their model and used formal linguistic and functional criteria to account for the citations. Both integral and non-integral citations are formal, but they serve a number of functions as shown in Table 1, with some examples provided¹. Integral citations, as shown in Table 1, include three subcategories according to the function they serve in the text, although, as Thompson and Tribble report, fine distinctions between these categories are somewhat difficult and considerable overlap is seen.

As presented in Table 1, non-integral citations include five subcategories. According to Thompson (2000), the function of source is “to attribute a proposition to another author”, with the proposition being a statement of “what is known to be true, such as the factive report of findings in other research, or the attribution of an idea to another” (p. 95). Identification is related to the author, and a writer focuses his / her attention on the information he / she wants to express (Jallilfar, 2012). Origin shows “the originator of a concept, technique or product” (Thompson, 2000, p. 105); and reference points to the work which includes additional information (Thompson & Tribble, 2001). A writer uses directive verbs such as *see* in order to provide support for the propositions made; it is somewhat similar to source, but the difference is that in reference the writer refers the reader to another text as well as the present text while in source the writer just refers the reader to the present text (Petric, 2007).

Table 1

Thompson and Tribble’s Classification of Integral and Non-Integral Citations

Category	Function	Example
Integral		
Verb Controlling	The verb is controlled by the citation given by the author(s).	As <i>Orlikowski (2010)</i> suggests, incorporating technology into theoretical accounts provides additional explanatory power.
Naming	The citation is a noun phrase or a part of a noun phrase	<i>In Toussaert (2016)</i> , I used menu choice to study the commitment demand of participants in a weight-loss challenge.
Non-Citation	A reference is made to another writer, but the name is given without a year reference	Golovko and Valentini (2011) find that growth rates are higher for firms that couple innovation with exports. <i>They</i> attribute this ...
Non-Integral		
Source	It shows the origin of the idea.	The 0–2 km radius is chosen based on previous findings in the literature (<i>Zabel & Guignet, 2012</i>).
Identification	Where the information within the parentheses identifies the author of the study referred to.	The extraction costs are also added to these, because unlike buy-back contracts, in production sharing contracts the production phase is connected to the development phase (<i>Iranpour, 2014</i>).
Reference	Usually signalled by the inclusion of the directive “see”	To understand why the rules are long and complex, consider the ban on proprietary trading (<i>see, e.g., Davis Polk, 2013</i>).
Origin	Indicates the originator of a concept or a product	In order to answer the question of whether the Fixed Effect Model (FEM) or Random Effect Model (REM) is better, the Hausman test (<i>Gujarati, 2004</i>) is used.

Citations can also be analysed based on the categorisation of reporting verbs. We followed Thompson and Ye’s (1991) framework (Table 2) to identify author stance in reporting verbs of integral citations. According to Table 2, reporting verbs can be divided into factive, non-factive, and counter-active. Factive verbs (e.g., recognise) characterise the author as stating true information, correct opinions, or right ideas. By contrast, counter-factive verbs (e.g., misuse) are used to portray the author as adding false information, or incorrect ideas. Non-factive verbs (e.g., examine) are neutral because they do not give us any clear signals as for the author’s attitude towards an idea, opinion, or piece of information. Thompson and Ye’s classification of reporting verbs is based on the context and frequency of occurrence

Table 2

Thompson and Ye’s (1991) Classification of Reporting Verbs

Type	Definition	Example ⁱ
Factive	Show the information is true.	demonstrate, notice, identify
Non-Factive	No specific position is adopted by the author.	note, propose, discuss
Counter-Factive	The opinions expressed or the ideas presented are not correct.	ignore, confuse, disregard

of the verbs. For instance, *report* in their study was classified as a factive verb because it occurred mostly in the context that the writer wanted to convey his / her positive attitude toward cited sentences or ideas. In the present study, this tripartite classification of factive, non-factive, and counter-active was used to identify reporting verbs, although as Thompson and Ye commented, this method of identification is subjective and may change from one study to another.

Citation Practices across Research Articles (RAs)

Although many researchers have examined citations across multiple text types, only those studies which have analysed RAs are reported here because this is the primary focus of the present study. Several researchers have examined the genre-specific patterns of citations across subsections of research articles (in comparison with those of other academic genres). Jalilifar (2012), for example, compared citation behaviour in the introduction sections of RAs and MA theses. Following Thompson and Tribble’s (2001) framework, he found that in integral citation, verb controlling was the first, and naming citation was the second most frequent type employed by both RA and MA writers. The difference between RA introductions and MA theses was the patterns of citations. MA writers mostly used “according to....” while RAs writers used “X (year)”. In verb controlling, they mostly used non-factive verbs, and factive verbs were used more diversely by the RA writers than the MA thesis writers. In non-integral citation, sources were used markedly in both genres, but sources were more frequently used in MA theses. Reference was the least frequent non-integral citation in both genres, especially in the MA theses. One of the marked differences was the preference of MA writers in using integral

citation, while there were no differences in using integral and non-integral citation in RA writers.

Samraj (2013) revealed different citation behaviours in the discussion section of RA and MA theses of biology writers. Both groups preferred to use verb controlling to naming in integral citation in discussion section, but MA thesis writers used verb controlling much more frequently than RA writers. Both groups rarely used non-integral citations, but RA writers used them more than MA thesis writers. Frequency of functions of citations in MA theses and RA discussion section showed *comparison of results* was used by both groups, but this frequency was much higher in RAs than in MA theses. *Interpretation of results* was used by both groups, but it was more frequent in MA theses than in RAs, because using intertextual links in RAs is not only for interpreting the author's own findings, but also for interpreting the results of other studies. In *explanation of results*, Samraj did not find any discernible patterns in both MA theses and RAs.

Similarly, Kwan and Chan (2014) examined citation behaviours in the results and discussion sections of empirical RAs in two different journals of information system. They also considered the results and discussion sections of each article to investigate different citations in these two sections. They found the high density of citations in results sections was used to show methodological rigor and in discussion section to show that researchers tend to extend the territory of their work and compare their findings with those of previous researchers. These differences were due to the different journals' policies. In Information and Management (IM) journals, the number of citations decreased. The other reason was due to the limitation on the length in IM journals, so in this way the first thing that is omitted is citations. The other reason was the practitioner readership that the journal aims to serve. For example, Kwan and Chan argued that "saying that 'practitioners [referring to readers of IM] are basically interested in the results but not so much interested in the origins of ideas', thus reducing the need to cite in great numbers" (p. 36).

Dobakhti and Zohrabi (2018) analysed citation behaviours of applied linguists in the discussion sections of 45 RAs. They used Swales' (2014) and Samraj's (2013) typologies to concentrate on the textual and rhetorical aspects of citations. The results showed that writers tended to use non-integral citations more frequently than integral citations. They also found that the density of using citations in the discussion section was lower than that in the introduction section investigated by Jalilifar (2012). The findings suggest that citations are closely related to various rhetorical functions because authors use them to compare their findings with those of previous ones, to confirm possible explanations, and to support interpretations.

As the foregoing review of literature reveals, researchers have examined citations in as diverse genres as possible across a wide range of disciplines in writer diverse groups in different cultural contexts of publication to help us to understand how they behave structurally and functionally and how often they recur in distinct text types. Although such research studies have contributed considerably to the variations of disciplinary knowledge and furthered our understanding of these

linguistic features, citation practices appear to have been under-researched in distinct part-genres of research articles, one of which is results and discussion section, which as Thompson (2005) found, includes the highest density of citations after introductions. This lacuna prompted us to explore frequency counts, structures, and functions of citation practices in the results and discussion sections of two disciplines: Economics as a soft science and Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering as a hard science.

Methodology

Corpus Development

In this study, a written corpus of research articles in Economics and Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering (IME) was developed. The cross-disciplinary focus on economics and industrial and manufacturing engineering was due to the very fact that they are traditionally members of soft and hard sciences (Moed, 2005) and they tend to represent soft and hard disciplines (e.g., Fløttum et al., 2006).

With the aim of analysing citation behavior of the merged results and discussion section of Economics and IME RAs, the present researchers developed two corpora: Economics Corpus (EC) and IME Corpus (IMEC), each with 59 English RAs. Each corpus contained two sub-corpora. In other words, EC contained 25 English Economics RAs by Persian-native writers (referred as Economics Iranian Corpus (EIC)), and the other sub-corpus was composed of 34 English RAs in Economics written by native English writers (referred as Economics English Corpus (EEC)). The other corpus, IMEC, contained 59 IME RAs, out of which 25 RAs were written by Persian writers (referred as Iranian IME Corpus (IIMEC)) and 34 RAs written by English native writers (referred as English IME Corpus (EIMEC)). Overall, the two corpora included 118 RAs amounting to 258,974 running words, and 1,030 citations were identified.

In order to select the texts that would make up EC, the researchers surfed online websites for main fields of study and research in economics, selected three classifications introduced by Stanford School of Economics (SSE) (<https://economics.stanford.edu/>), Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRBNY) (<https://www.newyorkfed.org/>), and Journal of Economic Literature (JEL) (<https://www.aeaweb.org/journals/jel>), made a list out of the three classifications, and ordered them alphabetically. Finally, an economist in the Department of Economics at Shahid Beheshti University (SBU) in Iran was requested to mark the mainstream fields on the list. As a result, ten sub-disciplines were determined (Table 3). Considering SImago Journal Rank (SJR) and the reputation of the publisher, only the journals with the highest SJR and the most widely known, internationally recognized publishers were used in the development of English corpus. As a result, we selected the top 10 journals (Table 3).

Table 3*The Top 10 Journals of Economics in EEC*

Journals	Sub-disciplines
1. Quarterly Journal of Economics	Business Economics Macroeconomics
2. World Development	Development Economics
3. Econometrica	Econometrics
4. Energy Journal	Energy Economics
5. Journal of Environmental Economics and Management	Environmental Economics
6. Annual Review of Financial Economics	Financial Economics
7. Journal of Finance	Finance
8. Journal of International Business Studies	International Economics
9. Journal of Money, Credit and Banking	Monetary Economics
10. Journal of Public Economic Theory	Public Economics

To develop the EIC, the present researchers used the experts' opinions and availability of journals, too. Lamentably, we could not find a clear classification of research journals, so we identified all available Iranian English-medium journals. We, therefore, finalised seven Iranian journals publishing economics RAs in Iran (Table 4).

Table 4*The Journals of Economics Used in EIC*

Journals
1. Iranian Economic Review (IER)
2. International Journal of Management, Accounting, and Economics (IJMAE)
3. International Journal of Business and Development Studies (IJBDS)
4. International Journal of Finance, Accounting, and Economics (IJFAES)
5. Iranian Journal of Economic Studies (IJES)
6. Journal of Money and Economy (JME)
7. International Economic Studies (IES)

Table 5 shows the total number of journals, text types, words, and RAs as well as the publication date of RAs, raw frequency of citations, and normed frequency of citations.

Table 5*Characteristics of Developing EC for Both Writer Groups*

Corpus Features	Economics Corpus	
	EEC	IEC
Total Number of Journals	10	7
Text Type	Research Articles	Research Articles
Number of Research Articles	34	25
Research Article Publication Date (year)	2018	2018
Total Number of Words (corpus size)	111,704	36,202
Citation Frequency	432	103
Citation Frequency Per 1,000 Words	3.9	2.8

In order to select the texts which would make up IME Corpus, we followed similar procedures to develop EC. We first visited online websites for main fields of study and research in industrial and manufacturing engineering, randomly selected three classifications introduced by School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering at University of New South Wales (UNSW) (<https://www.engineering.unsw.edu.au/mechanical-engineering/>), Industrial and Manufacturing engineering at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee (UWM) (<https://www.uwplatt.edu/program/industrial-engineering>), the Engineers Ireland STEPS, and International Journal of Machine Tools and Manufacture (<https://www.journals.elsevier.com/international-journal-of-machine-tools-and-manufacture>), and ordered the list alphabetically. Finally, an industrial engineer at Sharif University in Iran was requested to mark the mainstream fields on the list. As a result, eight main sub-disciplines were determined (Table 6). We considered SImago Journal Rank (SJR) and reputation of the publisher, so we selected only the journals which had the highest Impact Factor (IF) and were from the most widely known, internationally recognized publishers. Finally, 11 journals were included the English corpus (Table 6).

Table 6

The Top Eleven Journals of IME Used in EIMEC

Journals	Sub-Disciplines
Robotics and Computer-Integration Manufacturing Computer and Industrial Engineering	Computer Aided Design
Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management	Finance and Decision-Making
Quality Engineering	Manufacturing, Automation and Quality Control
Material and Manufacturing Processes Additive Manufacturing	Material Handling & Distribution
European Journal of Industrial Engineering	Product / Process Design and Management
Journal of Operations Management	Supply Chain Management and Logistics
International Journal of Machine Tools and Manufacture	Tool Design and Systems Design Modelling
Human Factors and Ergonomics in Manufacturing & Service Industries	Work Design, Human Factors and Ergonomics

To develop IIMEC, the researchers followed the same procedures for the development of EIC and identified six prestigious Iranian journals in IME, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Journals of IME Used in IIMEC

Journals
1. Journal of Quality Engineering and Production Optimization (JQEPO)
2. Journal of Optimization in Industrial Engineering (JOIE)
3. International Journal of Research in Industrial Engineering (IJRIE)
4. Journal of industrial and system engineering (JISE)
5. Journal of Industrial Engineering and Management Studies (JIEMS)
6. International Journal of Industrial Engineering & Production Research (IJIE)

Table 8 summarises information on the two sub-corpora. The information includes the number of RAs, text type, publication date, corpus size, and citation frequency.

Table 8

Summary of Journals Used to Develop IMERA Corpus

Corpus Features	IME Corpus	
	EIMEC	IIMEC
Total Number of Journals	11	6
Text Type	Research Articles	Research Articles
Number of Research Articles	34	25
Research Articles Publication Date (year)	2018	2018
Total Number of Words (corpus size)	79,128	36,558
Citation Frequency	421	76
Citation Frequency Per 1,000 Words	5.3	2.1

Instrumentation

As explained in the literature review, we have built on Thompson and Tribble's (2001) and Thompson and Ye's (1991) frameworks to analyse citations practices. Both classifications have been frequently used by different researchers (e.g., Pecorari, 2006; Petric, 2007). These classifications have been used for academic purposes in different genres, including research proposals, MA and PhD dissertations, textbooks, and RAs. The present research has also analysed RAs, so they are best suited for the present study. The third reason has to do with their comprehensiveness, considering both structures and functions of citations in a single categorisation. These two classifications contain both integral and non-integral citations and a wide variety of functions (integral: naming, verb controlling; non-citation; non-integral: source, identification, reference, origin) for analysing citations.

Corpus Processing

Using the electronic versions of the RAs in both disciplines from each of selected journals, the researchers downloaded all the RAs from all the issues of their last year (2018) of publication. Then, all the RAs were examined one by one keeping those articles that met all of our criteria and excluding the others from our initial corpus and then saved them separately. Once the RAs were saved, following Flotton, et al. (2006), the front matter (title, authors, abstracts / summaries), figures, tables, captions, footnotes, and all back matters (i.e. acknowledgments, endnotes, references, and appendixes) were manually deleted in order to produce files being readable by computer program utilised in this research.

The results and discussion section of the selected RAs was converted into the plain text format for corpus analysis. The major reason why the merged results and discussion section was examined in this study is based on Peritz' (1994) study on RAs, showing the predominant role of results and discussion section. This section is challenging in nature, because authors compare and contrast the results of their

study with those of previous similar studies and citations serve several functional purposes in this subsection. As Thompson (2005) noted, citations are highly dense in this subsection, so we can find a wide range of citation types for further structural and functional analyses to better understand their behaviour.

In terms of the size of the corpus for this study, corpus sizes in different studies were identified. The maximum size of the corpus for analyzing citation behavior in RAs belonged to Hyland and Jiang (2018) study on 360 papers of 2.2 million words, and the smallest corpus was the corpus of Fazel and Shi (2015) on six papers of 1,221 words, and they identified 78 citations in these six papers. However, the majority of previous studies have used corpus sizes which range from 100,000 to one million words (Hewings, et. al., 2010; Lee, et. al., 2018; Petric & Harwood, 2013). In this study, 118 RAs were examined with 258,974 words, and 1,032 citations were identified. The size of this corpus, hence, conforms to and falls in the range of the corpus size of previous studies.

The researchers focused only on empirical research articles in 2018 in EC and IC in both disciplines for several reasons. The first reason was to take advantage of using the most recent articles, to make the analysis more credible, and exclude the variable of time. The second reason was due to journals' policies; journals may change their policies each year, so they may influence citation frequency. For example, Kwan and Chan (2014) found that journal's policies influenced directly citation frequencies. For RAs to be accepted, "the number of references should be kept to a minimum" or length restriction causes scarcity of citation because "When there is a limit on the length, the first thing that you would reduce would be the citations" (Kwan & Chan, 2014, p. 36). The third reason for using empirical RAs rests on White's (2004) study on both empirical and theoretical RAs, the findings of which showed empirical articles used more citations than theoretical articles, so we excluded from our study theoretical articles and articles in special issues, because research has shown that the general structure of an article type may vary with its type (Crookes, 1986).

Data Analysis

Anthony's (2018) AntConC was used to identify citations in the corpora. The concordance tool, as implemented in AntConC, showed the search results in a key-word-in-context (KWIC) format and allowed the researchers to identify the frequency of citations and to see how the citations were used in a corpus of texts. The search included all instances of integral and non-integral citations, the subcategories of these citations, and reporting verbs.

We normalised the data. First, the total number of words was calculated. Second, the total number of citations was identified. Third, the total number of citations was multiplied by 10n. Finally, the result was divided by the total number of words. All the above four procedures can be translated into the following simple formula: $F_n = F_o(10_n) / C$, where F_o stands for the number of citations, C refers for the total number of words, F_n is the normalised frequency per 10n words, and n in 10n stands for 3.

Results

In this section, the findings of the study are presented in tabular and textual forms. Statistical tests such as chi-square procedures are employed to show statistically significant differences in the frequency, form, and function of citations between the two writer groups. Textual extracts are utilised to show how the two writer groups have used the citations structurally and functionally.

Structure of Citations in EC and IMEC Between Persian and English Writers

Citations can be analysed in terms of the structure: integral and non-integral citations. As shown Table 9, English writers used about four times as many citations as Persian writers did as far as EC is concerned. Integral citations featured markedly in both writer groups' corpora. Like EC, English writers employed citations more frequently (about six times) than Persian writers did as far as IMEC is concerned. Unlike EC, both writer groups used non-integral citations more frequently in IMEC.

Table 9

Frequency of Citation Structure in EC and IMEC

Structure of Citations	EC		IMEC	
	EEC	IEC	EIMEC	IIMEC
Integral	235	60	133	21
Non-Integral	194	45	278	50
Total	429	105	411	71

Function of Citations in EC Between Persian and English Writers

Citations can also be analysed in terms of their functions. Integral citation is divided into three types: naming, verb controlling, and non-citation. Non-integral citation is broken down into four types: source, identification, reference, and origin. As presented in Table 10, both English and Persian writers used naming more frequently than other functions. However, English authors used verb controlling about two times more frequently than Persian authors. In terms of non-integral citations, source (attributing information to an author) was used frequently in both datasets. Source featured markedly in EEC. Reference as the second most frequent function of non-integral citation did not appear in IEC.

Table 10

Functions of Integral and Non-Integral Citations in EEC and IEC

EC		EEC		IEC	
		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Integral	Verb Controlling	93	39.6%	13	21.6%
	Naming	133	56.6%	45	75.1%
	Non-Citation	9	3.8%	2	3.3%
	Total	235	100%	60	100%
Non-Integral	Source	79	40.7%	28	62.2%
	Identification	31	16%	15	33.3%
	Reference	63	32.5%	0	0%
	Origin	15	7.8%	2	4.4%
	Total	194	100%	45	100%

As shown in Table 10, *source* was more frequent in both corpora. Writers use it to confirm the findings of their own and the methods they choose to carry out their study. Extract 1 and Extract 2 represent how English writers and Persian writers have employed *source* to let readers know their findings agree with those of previous studies.

1. Results suggest electoral deforestation cycles may be explained by rent-seeking behavior, which supports previous findings that election cycles are strongest in countries with weak institutions (Shi and Svensson, 2006). (English writers)

2. The 0–2 km radius is chosen based on previous findings in the literature (Zabel & Guignet, 2012). (Persian writers)

After *source*, *reference* was more frequent in EEC. Based on the results presented in Table 10, English writers used *reference* to point out that the current work contains further information and readers may refer to it for more information about the topic.

According to Table 10, *identification* is the second most frequent function in IEC. Extract 4 and Extract 5 show that writers use *identification* when they want to focus on the information or the idea rather than the person who has provided it. Most of the time, the verb that the writers used was passive voice to refer to action.

Origin was less frequent in both corpora. English and Persian writers used *origin* to indicate the originator of a theory, a technique or a product.

In the present study, as shown in Table 11, *naming*, as a function of integral citation, occurred more frequently than the other functions in both corpora. We analysed concordance lines to better understand why this occurred in our study, and we identified several patterns as shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Naming Citation Patterns in EEC and IEC

Naming Citation Pattern	EEC		IEC	
	F	%	F	%
...In X (2018)...	29	21.8%	4	8.9%
...by X (2018)...	19	14.3%	9	20%
In accordance / line with X (2018)	18	13.5%	7	15.5%
...work / result of X (2018)...	16	12%	12	26.6%
...as X (2018)...	9	6.8%	2	4.4%
...on X (2018)...	9	6.8%	0	0%
Verb X (2018)	7	5.3%	0	0%
Following X (2018)...	6	4.5%	0	0%
...from X (2018)...	6	4.5%	4	8.6%
In contrast / similar / related to X (2018)	5	3.7%	0	0%
According to X (2018)	2	1.5%	3	6.6%
Other	7	5.3%	4	8.9%
Total	133	100%	45	100%

The pattern *In X (year)* is clearly preferred by the English writers, who used it to show that the works done or the results obtained by the author are important to them, but they do not mention the word “work” explicitly. For example, instead of

using in Ellis' (2008) work, research, study, etc., they tended to cite it as in Ellis (2008).

By X (year) was the second most frequent naming pattern, and it occurred more frequently in the EEC than in the IEC, indicating that EEC writers tended to use this function to mention the author of that action rather than his / her work. Although *work / result / method / ... of X* was the highest frequent pattern in the IEC, it received the third highest frequency in EEC. Writers used this function to refer to the work, results or the method which were used or done by the author. Furthermore, they cite these words explicitly in the sentence.

Other naming patterns which received lower attention in both corpora were *to + X* and *Following + X*, in that the overall attention of the writer is on the author of that action. In *to + X*, the writer intends to compare and contrast his or her findings with those of the other authors. In *Following + X*, the writer wants to show that in his / her work the same procedures or methods were used.

As mentioned in Table 10, verb controlling was the second most frequent function of integral citation in both corpora. We grouped verbs into three main categories: factive verbs (i.e., recognise, substantiate); (b) counter-factive verbs (such as ignore, criticize); and (c) non-factive verbs (examine, utilise). Non-factive verbs were the most frequent in EEC (60 out of 93) and IEC (9 out of 13), which authors use to show a neutral stance toward the text cited. Writers rarely used counter-factive verbs. Results show the following instances: factive verbs (31 out of 93 in EEC and 4 out of 13 in IEC) and counter-factive verbs (2 out of 93 in EEC).

The third type of non-integral citation functions, which had the lowest frequency, was non-citation. In this type of citation, the author does not refer to the year in parentheses because he / she may have mentioned it in the previous, or the following sentence, or paragraph. For example, in Extract 3, *they* refers back to Golovko and Valentini, and in Extract 4, *His* stands for Demski.

3. Golovko and Valentini (2011) find that growth rates are higher for firms that couple innovation with exports. They attribute this to a “virtuous, reinforcing circle” of learning and asset exploitation in which firms acquire new knowledge in foreign markets that is then utilised in product improvements, enhancing their sales performance. (English writers)

4. This result is accordance with results of Demski (2004). His results also revealed that the second group (numbers 3 to 6) as the reported earnings first digit show a rate of 362 / 3% lower frequency in comparison to expected frequency in companies with high conservatism. (Persian writers)

Function of Citations in IMEC Between Persian and English Writers

As Table 12 shows, a vast majority of citations in the Persian writers include naming, whereas English writers used both naming and verb controlling in a similar way. Persian authors used naming about twice more than English authors did. In non-integral citations, *source* was used overwhelmingly frequently in the two datasets. *Reference* and *origin* were used very infrequently by both writer groups.

Table 12

Functions of Integral and Non-Integral Citation in EIMEC and IIMEC

IMEC		EIMEC		IIMEC	
		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Integral	Naming	65	48.9%	20	95.3%
	Verb-Controlling	56	42.1%	1	4.7%
	Non-Citation	12	9%	0	0%
	Total	133	100%	21	100%
Non-Integral	Source	193	69.4%	39	78%
	Identification	60	21.5%	9	18%
	Reference	13	4.6%	0	0%
	Origin	12	4.3%	2	4%
	Total	278	100%	50	100%

Source was used frequently in both corpora. Extract 5 and Extract 6 show writers' agreement with the information. In this type of citation, writers confirm their findings by attributing information to another author and want to show their agreement with the cited information.

5. We assessed the significance of the indirect effects using Monte Carlo simulation with bias-corrected confidence intervals (Preacher and Selig, 2012). (English writers)

6. Since performance of the evolutionary algorithms strongly depends on their parameters (Bashiri & Geranmayeh, 2011). (Persian writers)

Identification was the second most frequently used citation function in both corpora. Writers used this citation type when they wanted to focus their attention on the cited idea rather than the person who proposed the idea. The focus of their attention is on the information. Most of the time, the verb that they have used is passive. *Origin* was rarely used in both corpora. Using this citation, writers introduced the originator of the concept.

Reference was used only by English writers, and it was not common among Persian writers. Writers employed reference to point out that the current work contains further information.

Like the EC, naming was the most frequently used function of integral citation in IMEC. As in EC, the present researchers used concordance lines to identify the naming patterns in IMEC. The results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Naming Citation Patterns in EIMEC and IIMEC

Naming Citation Pattern	EIMEC		IIMEC	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
...in X (2018)...	12	16.4%	4	21%
...by X (2018)...	24	36.9%	11	57.9%
In accordance / line with X (2018)	6	9.2%	0	0%
...work / result of X (2018)...	7	10.7%	1	5.2%
...as X (2018)...	3	4.6%	0	0%
Verb X (2018)	3	4.6%	0	0%
Following X (2018)...	2	3%	0	0%
...from X (2018)...	4	6.1%	2	10.5%
In contrast / similar / related to X (2018)	1	1.5%	0	0%
According to X (2018)	2	3%	1	5.2%
Other	1	1.5%	0	0%
Total	65	100%	19	100%

The pattern *by X (year)* is clearly preferred by both Persian and English writers. Persian writers used this pattern one and a half times more than English writers. The second most frequent naming pattern was found to be *in X (year)*. The writers wanted to show that the results or works of the cited author were essential to them. *In accordance / similar / in contrast / relate to + X* was used less frequently in the two corpora. In this citation, the ultimate intention of the author is to show a relation between authors' study and their own study.

After *source, verb controlling* was used more frequently in EIMEC. *Verb controlling* can be classified in terms of the functions they assume: (a) true, using factive verbs (report, show, find, indicate, demonstrate, describe, notice, identify); (b) false, using counter-factive verbs; or (c) neutral, non-factive (note, point out, propose, state, utilize, use, examine). Non-factive verbs featured markedly in both corpora. Results show that both groups were inclined to use a neutral stance. For example, in Extract 7, writers used *note* to show their neutral stance, and in Extract 8 writers used *find* to show a positive stance toward the cited idea.

7. Vuppalapati et al. (1995) note that "all the major elements of JIT are embedded in a more comprehensive TQM campaign". (English writers)

8. Ghadimi et al. (2012, 2013) find that the first step to achieve this goal is to assess the sustainability level of any manufactured product inside the company with a great precision. (Persian writers)

Frequency Differences in Citations Between Writer Groups

To examine if there were significant differences in citations used by Persian and English writers, a 4 x 2 chi-square test was employed. As Table 13 shows, a statistically significant difference was found in the number of citations in the results and discussion section between writer groups [$\chi^2 = 56.114, p = .000$, Cramer's V = 0.235]. As illustrated in Table 14, further analysis of standardized residuals revealed that the significant difference was caused by non-integral citation for EEC ($z = -5.8$), for IEC ($z = -2.8$), for EIMEC ($z = 6.3$), and for IIMEC ($z = 2.6$) as well as integral citation for EEC ($z = 5.8$), for IEC ($z = 2.8$), for EIMEC ($z = -6.3$), and for IIMEC ($z = -2.6$). The z values were greater than 1.96, which implies that English writers and Iranian writers in both international journals and Iranian journals used different numbers of integral and non-integral citations in the results and discussion section of their RAs.

Table 13

Chi-Square Test for Results and Discussion Section

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	56.114	3	.000
Cramer's V	.235		.000
N of Valid Cases	1016		

Table 14

Frequency of Citation in Native and Non-Native Writers

			Citation		
Corpus			Integral	Non-Integral	Total
Corpus	EEC	Count	235	194	429
		Expected Count	186.6	239.4	429.0
		% within Corpus	54.8%	45.2%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	5.8	-5.8	
	IEC	Count	60	45	105
		Expected Count	46.4	58.6	105.0
		% within Corpus	57.1	42.9	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.8	-2.8	
	EIMEC	Count	133	278	411
		Expected Count	181.6	229.4	411.0
		% within Corpus	32.4%	67.6%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-6.3	6.3	
IIMEC	Count	21	50	71	
	Expected Count	31.4	39.6	71.0	
	% within Corpus	29.6%	70.4%	100.0%	
	Adjusted Residual	-2.6	2.6		
Total	Count	449	567	1016	
	Expected Count	449.0	567.0	1016.0	
	% within Corpus	44.2%	55.8%	100.0%	

Discussion

The present study intended to analyse citation practices between native and non-native RA writers in two disciplines of Economics and IME to find the structures (integral and non-integral) and the functions in the results and discussion section. We discuss the results below.

Citations in Economics and IME

The first finding of the study was that citations were used more frequently in Economics than in Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering. This finding confirms some of those from previous studies (e.g., Hyland & Jiang, 2018), which have also generally shown that citations feature markedly in soft sciences than in hard sciences. Unlike hard sciences, which follow the same path and are bound to clearly identifiable areas of study, soft disciplines need to “revisit previously explored features of broad landscape” to provide a credit for the work, which in turns necessitates utilizing more citations (Hyland, 1999, p. 353).

In terms of structure of citations, significant differences were observed between the two disciplines. Economics included more integral citations and fewer non-integral citations; by contrast, more non-integral citations and fewer integral citations were found in Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering. This finding supports those of Hu and Wang (2013) and Pecorari, (2006). In soft sciences, writers use more integral citations because, as Hyland (1999) commented, “typically [soft

sciences] consist of long narratives that engage the arguments of other writers, consistently included cited author in the reporting sentence; [however, in hard sciences], journal styles often require numerical-endnote, which reduces the prominence of cited author considerably” (p. 346). Similarly, as Thompson and Ye (1991) noted, de-emphasizing the role of researcher is conventional in science disciplines because they mainly concentrate on the concept, and they claim “the human factor is not consequential” (p. 99). Meanwhile, due to the significance attached to the use of integral citations in soft sciences, writers are able to attribute their stance toward cited authors. This establishes a professional persona which shows that the writer has been inspired by the author’s cited idea.

As for the function, Economics writers tended to use verb controlling citations more frequently than other types of integral citation functions. On the other hand, IME writers tended to use naming citations more frequently. In hard sciences like IME, naming citation is used frequently because it can identify particular equations, methods, and formulations, which are the main features in engineering disciplines (Thompson & Tribble, 2001). As Lee, et al. (2018) noted, hard sciences use a certain amount of technical lexis, which force writers to use more naming citations to express their findings. However, in soft sciences such as Economics, writers tended to use more verb controlling citations because in these disciplines, human factors are consequential and writers need to attribute stance toward cited authors. Employing more discourse reporting verbs helps writers to utilise a wide range of citations to refer to diverse theoretical backgrounds in soft disciplines (White, 2004). As Charls (2006) claimed, writers in soft sciences mostly want to show their positive, or negative stance, toward the cited author which requires using more verb controlling citations.

Citation Differences Between Native and Non-Native Writers in EC

The other findings of the study show that Iranian writers used citations less frequently than English writers did. This is due to the fact that Native-English writers possess a more extensive range of linguistic strategies to draw on (Mansourzadeh & Ahmad, 2011). The other reason is that, as Nisbett (2003, p. 74) noted, in native speaker’s writings, interpersonal and rhetorical norms are “constructed bit by bit from nursery school through college” and become part of their authorial identity. When we consider the “culturally favored communicative and discursive practices” (Hu & Wang, 2014, p. 27), it is rarely surprising that the English RA writers contest other researchers’ propositions more frequently than the Iranian RA writers do.

A statistically significant difference was found between native and non-native writers in terms of citation structures and functions. Both groups used integral and non-integral citations in a way that was similar to some of the previous research (e.g., Lillis, et al., 2010). It was also found that native and non-native writers used both types of non-integral and integral citations to keep the flow of the argument uninterrupted and for comparison purposes in the discussion (Hewings, et al., 2010). In terms of functions, *naming* citation among integral citation functions and *source* among non-integral citation functions were utilised frequently by native and non-

native writers. Writers use *naming* integral citation frequently because it uses nominalized forms and compressed language and these two features help writers to add more information using fewer words and less space (Lee, et al., 2018). Also, source function, as the most frequent function, is known to be the default non-integral citation function which is used by native and non-native writers. Both native and non-native writers tended to use source more because it requires less complex structures and enables writers to compare and contrast their findings with previous research, which shows their familiarity with the history of the topic (Petric, 2007).

Citation Differences Between Native and Non-Native in IMEC

Findings related to IMEC revealed that some differences were found in terms of structures and functions of citations between native and non-native writers. Both native and non-native writers used non-integral citation frequently. As is documented in the literature in hard disciplines, non-integral citation is utilised frequently by both native and non-native writers because most of the engineering journals prompt them to use numbers in the brackets instead of presenting the names of the author in the sentences to save space and pay more attention to the content rather than the person who has presented the idea. Therefore, this style ultimately reduces the use of integral citations and increases the number of non-integral citations (Hu & Wang, 2014; Samraj, 2013).

Among functions of citations, naming citation was used remarkably in non-native writings, while native writers used both naming and verb controlling approximately equally. Using both types of naming and verb controlling in native writings reveals writers' awareness of the wide range of functions, and using naming function provides writers with the ability to express more information by using fewer words (Petric, 2007). Meanwhile, source was the most preferred non-integral function in both groups, and it is known as a default non-integral citation function (Petric, 2007). The results are in line with some previous studies (ElMalik & Nesi, 2008; Myers, 1990; Thompson, 2001).

Conclusion

The results of our study point to the disciplinary tendencies in the structural and functional uses of citations which writers may decide to choose for the confirmation of their findings. The different uses in citation practices imply that citation practices tend to be discipline-specific. Moreover, writers' choices of citation structures and functions seem to depend on knowledge structures of their disciplines (Charles, 2006; Hyland, 1999). Native writers' use of more citations and various citation functions suggest that citation is culture-specific. Meanwhile, this illustrates the familiarity of native writers with different and complex structures and reveals that citation use depends on their competence and linguistic background in English. Apparently, shared knowledge of the community of practice is crucial in enabling writers to use citations structurally and functionally more frequently. Iranian non-native English writers publishing in L2 have to gradually acquire the norms, culture, practices, and standards of the community of practice before they are able to contribute to the knowledge of their community of practice, and this requires

they first be well-versed in linguistic competence and demonstrate sufficient knowledge on the shared practices of that community (Wenger, 1998).

Results of the current study showed the different citation behaviours between native and non-native writers in international and national publications as well as the different structural and functional citations used by both groups. The results reported in this study may be useful for Iranian, or other international Economics and IME scholars, who wish to adjust their writing styles to meet the common citation conventions. Being familiarised with various structural and functional configurations and permutations of citations appears to be a useful way of establishing writers' credentials as members of the community of practice. Moreover, non-native or novice academics may benefit from the findings of this study in their RAs with different academic purposes. The skillful use of citations is an important method to avoid being accused of committing plagiarism. EAP teachers, therefore, may invest in the various forms citations may assume structurally and functionally to show how novice non-native writers can use them to acknowledge previous knowledge and sources, to increase their credibility in the particular discourse community, and to be identified with disciplinary communities.

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Notes

ⁱ These examples are from the corpus of our study.

ⁱ These include some of the verbs which we identified in our study.



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