

Citation Behavior and Intertextuality in EFL Writing: The Case of EFL Writers' Undergraduate Projects and Their MA Theses Compared

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Abstract

The present study probed into the citation behavior and intertextuality use of EFL writers. The literature sections of 12 BA projects and those of 12 MA theses in applied linguistics written by the same writers were compared in terms of intertextuality and citation types. The results showed that the most frequent intertextuality type in both BA projects and MA theses was the unconventional intertextuality. The second frequent type was conventional intertextuality which was more frequent in MA projects due to the educational conditions and the readership. The third frequent type was 'deceptive' used equally in both undergraduate and MA projects. As for the citation behavior, the most frequent one in both MA and BA projects was the integral citation whose sub-type 'verb controlling' was more frequent in MA and its non-citation subtype was more frequent in BA projects probably due to cultural reasons or because of the students' ignorance of the functions and applications of citation types. This type was followed by improper citations and non-integral citations in both BA and MA projects. As for the relationship between intertextuality and citation, the results showed a strong relationship between unconventional intertextuality and improper citations in B.A projects, a weak correlation between conventional intertextuality and both non-integral and integral citations in B.A projects, a strong correlation between conventional intertextuality and both integral and non-integral citations in M.A theses and also a weak correlation between unconventional intertextuality and improper citations in M.A theses. Moreover, in both MA theses and BA projects, conventional intertextuality included all subcategories of non-integral citations and two subcategories of integral citations including verb-controlling and naming.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Citation, BA Projects, MA Theses, EFL Writing

Received 15 May 2019

Accepted 17 June 2019

Available online 20 June 2019

DOI: 10.30479/jmrels.2019.10684.1336

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1. Introduction

The concept of isolated discourse is impossible as every discourse is part of a discourse flow which consists of a series of interconnected discourses. Simply put, no discourse is created in a vacuum. Every discourse in a discourse flow refers to its preceding discourses and also normally predicts or refers to its prospective discourses, the discourses which the speaker or writer of the present discourse is expected to produce. As Bakhtin (1986) also says, any discourse is a creation of a new stratum of meaning in light of multiple or heteroglossic voices around. In this manner, as lots of scholars (e.g. Bhatia, 2004; Kristeva, 1969) state, all discourses are, technically speaking, intertextual because they let the writer link back with the past and also connect with the future, giving shape to a well-fabricated texture of meanings. Intertextuality has been described as one of the most important aspects of academic writing since through intertextual links, the writers can display the impact of the ideas of other people upon their own writing and vice versa (Kuhi & Mollanaghizadeh, 2013). As such, intertextuality is indispensable to the existence and creation of any text since it is through textualization that communication is made possible and comprehensible. Defining intertextuality at times might be challenging. Pecorari and Shaw (2012) in a detailed discussion of intertextuality see it as direct, indirect, conventional, unconventional and also deceptive. This perspective makes intertextuality quite challenging since some writers may take advantage of this feature to create meanings of their own choice, the worst being the improper way they may or may not give credit to the main source. So, good academic writing is impossible without proper citations, whose lack may lead either to miscommunication or to plagiarism. As literature reveals proper citation is a complicated job for both native and non-native writers (Connors, 1995).

2. Literature Review

Proper citation behavior is indispensable since writers need to clarify the position of their own research, and if they acquire the skills necessary for appropriate and successful citations, they can hope to integrate their work within the discourse community to which it belongs. White (2004) asserts that appropriate citation provides a means for the writers to integrate the notions and words of other people within their own works so as to display their own notions and ideas more effectively and persuasively. For Cheng, Greaves, Sinclair and Warren (2009), mastering intertextuality and the ability to signal it are important ingredients of communicative competence and O'Connor (2002) finds competence in citation and intertextuality as components of professional literacy. It goes without saying that without professional literacy and communicative competence or in the absence of proper citations the construction of knowledge is impeded (Hyland, 2000).

Therefore, intertexts can be likened to the blocks of a text, and citations can be considered as binding cement which joins and sticks the blocks together to make the building of a text possible. As citations and intertextuality complement each other, the more the nature of intertextuality is revealed, the better its relations with the citation practice of EFL writers can be explored.

Studies on citations have covered a wide array of issues such as cultural differences, membership in academic disciplines, and the citation practices within various sections of research genres such as articles, theses, etc. Kafes (2017) classifies citations from the viewpoint of various traditions such as discourse analysis and genre analysis which categorized citations on the basis of their syntactic placement, their importance and their functions. Soler-Monreal and Gil-Salom (2012) conducted a study on the citations used in the literature sections of PhD dissertations written by Spanish native speakers and English native speakers. They attributed the differences in citation behaviors among these two groups to cultural differences. The Spanish students mostly eschewed personal confrontation and tended to employ non-integral citations in a passive mode. Chen and Kuo (2012) stated that MA thesis writers used rhetorical functions differently in different chapters of their theses. In a study comparing the genre of research articles and MA theses, Samraj (2013) investigated the citation practices in 8 research articles (RAs) and MA theses in biology. She considered only the discussion sections of these two genres. Her study showed a similarity in using citations between MA theses and Research Articles as far as the rhetorical functions were concerned. A host of studies have mostly investigated the use of citations particularly in research articles and to a lesser degree in other genres of academic writing (e.g., Bazerman, 1988; Crocker & Shaw, 2002; Hyland, 2000; Swales, 1986, 2014; Thomson, 2005; Vieyra, Strickland & Timmerman, 2013). Swales (2014) examined the variations in citation behavior among undergraduates and graduate students of biology. His study revealed little difference between the undergraduate and graduate papers, only a somewhat richer intertextuality was observed in the evolutionary biology papers.

Although manifestly significant, the citation practices of EFL MA writers have not been extensively explored (Nguyen & Pramoolsook 2016). Fazilatfar, Elhambakhsh, and Allami (2018) admit the paucity of research on the citation practices in student writing. Jalilifar and Dabbi (2012) investigated master theses written by Iranian EFL students for their citation practice. Their study included 65 MA theses and they found that these students had a pronounced tendency towards using integral citations in which the author's name appears in the subject position followed by a controlling verb. Their findings indicated that these Iranian writers catered more to reporting previous researches than evaluating them and they mostly summarized and inserted previous studies into their theses. Jalilifar and

Dabbi (2012) attributed the Iranian EFL writers' failure in critical evaluation, a consequence of being reared in a culture which values indirectness. Petric (2007) probed into the rhetorical function of citations through a study of 16 MA theses. She searched for eight rhetorical functions which were: attribution, evaluation, exemplification, establishing links between sources, further reference, statement of use, application, and comparing one's own work with that of other writers. Her study showed that high-rated thesis writers employed citations for a greater number of intentions than low-rated writers. Helali-Oskueia and Kuhl (2014) conducted a contrastive study of citations in MA theses written by Iranian students and their English native speaker counterparts. Their study revealed that the Iranian writers use a greater number of citations than the Native writers and that Iranians tended to use more integral than non-integral citations. Nguyen and Pramoolsook (2016) dealt with 24 MA theses written by Vietnamese writers. Their study investigated the distribution of citations in terms of number and type among different chapters of the theses written by Vietnamese writers. Their study showed a greater percentage of citations in the literature section of EFL theses. The Vietnamese writers also showed preferences for integral rather than non-integral form of citations.

Though all those above studies have expanded our understanding of citation behaviors, one can evidently observe that citations have not been studied in light of the purpose which they are intended to achieve, that is intertextuality. Citation behaviors are closely linked to the textual texture the writers are going to develop and thus find a prominent place in the creation of coherent texts. Given the paucity of research in establishing the link between these two important issues notably in the foreign language context, we have attempted to see how intertextuality and citation behaviors play themselves out when academic concerns over communicativity and textual coherence are to be attended to.

To study intertextuality and citation behaviors, the study tried to track down the EFL learners from undergraduate to graduate programs. A distinguishing feature of the present study is its consideration of undergraduate projects of EFL learners. Undergraduate projects have been studied for diagnosing the citation development of EFL learners during one semester (Liou, 2016) but the present study attempted to consider citation behavior and intertextuality from undergraduate projects to MA theses. MA theses as asserted by Hyland (2004) are a high stakes genre displaying academic achievement of students. Therefore, comparing undergraduate projects with the MA theses of EFL students might illuminate the changes (if any) likely to occur in the writing of EFL writers especially as far as the types of employed intertextuality and the types of citations are concerned. Citation in undergraduate theses has been investigated (Schembri, 2009);

however, to our knowledge, no study has dealt with a comparison of the citation behavior of EFL undergraduate and postgraduate writers exploring how the citation behavior of the same writers has undergone changes from their undergraduate to their post graduate main project. More clearly, this study intended to find possible relationships between the types of intertextuality and the manners of citations among Iranian learners in both their undergraduate and MA theses. Based on the above intentions, the following questions were addressed.

1. How do Iranian English learners at undergraduate and graduate levels provide academic citations in their writing projects?
2. How do Iranian English learners at undergraduate and graduate levels achieve intertextuality in their writing projects?
3. Is there any relationship between Iranian English learners' citation behaviors and intertextuality in their writing?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of the present study were 12 MA holders (five males and seven females, with the age range of 24 to 27) in applied linguistics from eight state universities in Iran. All of these students had received their BA in English literature from Qom University and their BA projects were available in the library of Qom University and thus accessible to one of the authors of the present study who lives in Qom. These participants were chosen because they were the former students of one of the researchers and were ready to cooperate (availability sampling). To have access to their MA projects, we contacted them through email and asked them to send the word files of their MA theses to us through email. They all consented and readily sent their MA theses to us. In their BA programs, these students were English literature majors; however, they were included in the present study because they had written their undergraduate projects in applied linguistics and their projects were high-rated. By undergraduate projects, we mean the final project which the English literature students in Iran are required to write in their 6th semester though the delivery of this project is usually postponed until the 7th semester. In fact, English literature students pass research methodology I in their 5th semester in which they are introduced to the basic concepts of research such as choosing a topic, looking for relevant information, and writing a research proposal draft. In research methodology II, the course for which the BA projects are prepared, students are taught the strategies for transforming their proposal draft to a relatively well-developed research project while learning how to paraphrase, summarize, and use in-text citations of APA style. For their BA. projects, most literature students write their projects on English literature subjects but there are some, such as the

participants of this study, who show interest in different areas of TEFL or applied linguistics. This occurs simply because prior to their research courses, these students have to take some linguistically oriented courses such as phonetics and phonology, teaching methodology, testing and evaluation, and general linguistics. As such, the students interested in applied linguistics tend to pursue their graduate studies in the same field, like the participants of this study. In their MA programs, the participants of this study had passed a variety of courses in TEFL (applied linguistics) especially a course in research methodology targeting research in applied linguistics in their second semester. Further, in the third semester they had written a proposal for their thesis, finally, in the fourth semester, developed it into their MA thesis as the partial requirement for their degree. These course requirements with very minor changes are observed in almost all state universities in Iran because the syllabuses and content materials are prepared by the ministry of Science, Research and Technology at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

3.2. Instrument

To identify the types of citations employed by the students in their B.A projects and M.A. theses, the citation types defined by Swales (1996, 1990) were employed (see appendix) and to identify the types of intertextuality, we followed the classification by Pecorari and Shaw (2012).

3.3. Data Collection Method

The data for the present study was collected from the literature sections of 12 undergraduate projects for research course in TEFL and those of 12 MA theses in TEFL written by the same students. The corpus of the present study was subject to the limitations of a diachronic comparison but it was motivated by the findings of Salager-Meyer, Alcaraz Ariza, and Zambrano (2003) concerning the diachronic differences in frequency of reference patterns and their use in the creation of academic texts. Since the corpus was limited only to 12 BA projects and 12 MA theses, the findings must be handled with care. The literature section was chosen because in this section a greater number of citations are generally employed (Nguyen & Pramoolsook, 2016). The MA theses considered for this study had been finished within less than five years after the completion of their corresponding BA projects. The MA theses samples were between 35-45 pages containing an average of 15545 words, not exceeding 17000 words and the BA projects' samples contained 15 to 25 pages with an average of 8282 words and not exceeding 9000 words as counted by Microsoft Word Count.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

Both the BA projects and MA theses were analyzed, firstly, for the types of citations as defined by Swales (1986/1990) and elaborated further by Thompson and Tribble (2001, pp.95-6) (see Appendix), and secondly, for the

types of intertextuality as classified by Pecorari and Shaw (2012). Accordingly, citation forms were primarily viewed as being either 'integral' or 'non-integral'. These two types of citations were differentiated and extracted using the following procedure. In identifying the integral citations, the cited author(s)' name(s) must appear as a grammatical part of the reporting sentence while in the non-integral citations the author(s)' name(s) have no grammatical function, referred to in parentheses or signaled by numbers. In addition to the two categories of Integral and non-integral citations adopted from Thompson and Tribble (2001, pp.95-6), a third category was added; namely, 'improper' citation which referred to cases where the students had failed to paraphrase but had included the quotation without quotation mark. Also as a subcategory of integral citation, non-citations defined by Thompson and Tribble (2001, pp.95-96) as standing for situations when the reference to another text is accompanied with the name of the author(s) but without a year reference were also identified. In case of non-citation, the full reference to the cited writer(s) could be found earlier in the same text.

Citations as explained above are expected to textually connect the current status of the issues in question to what has already been created and achieved. Thus citations are closely related to the notion of intertextuality which basically means mingling present with the past to achieve historical, social, psychological, and also scientific communication. In this study, we intended to bring the two apparently separate, yet interdependent notions, to find out more on the relationship. Generally, it is expected to have citations lead to intertextuality or cross-textual understanding.

To analyze intertextuality, the study relied on the categorization initially provided by Pecorari and Shaw (2012). They defined intertextuality as establishing conceptual ties between what is presented and the world knowledge already existing. In this direction, they developed four types of intertextuality, which include indirect intertextuality, conventional intertextuality, unconventional intertextuality and deceptive intertextuality. From another perspective, these four types of intertextuality fall within a legitimate and illegitimate dichotomy. In this respect, they define indirect intertextuality, a sub-category of legitimate intertextuality, as the relationship that arises between texts with commonalities in areas such as purpose, topic, or readership, which create phraseological and structural similarities across them. Conventional intertextuality, another type of legitimate intertextuality, stands for a relationship with the original text which is a direct one and is generally obviously signaled in the form of quotation or paraphrase. The third type is called unconventional intertextuality which entails a direct relationship with the original source text, but is not properly signaled by the writer and as such it is not legitimate. The last type of intertextuality is deceptive intertextuality which also entails a direct relationship with a given source text. Textually, this type of intertextuality is not always easily

recognizable from the unconventional intertextuality; the major distinguishing factor here is the writer's intention to deceive the reader on the real relationship between the text and its specific source (Pecorari & Shaw, 2012). Hence, we keep the term deceptive for situations where both researchers become convinced that the student has intended to hide the real relationship between the intertext and the original source.

Overall, the above definitions of citations and intertextuality served as the guidelines for the analysis of 'literature sections' of the MA theses and the BA projects. The job was done manually and in fact, we repeatedly and carefully read both the undergraduate projects and the MA theses samples, checked them for citations and also for inappropriate citations and instances of source use without acknowledgment. Moreover, after the extraction of the references and citations, we compared them with their original sources to locate the intertextuality types and the citations employed. While reading the projects and theses, we coded the intertextuality types and the citation types, and in matters of controversy we consulted each other to attain 100% agreement. The original sources we consulted were 11 for the BA projects and 18 for the MA theses; however, there were two sources not available for BA projects and 5 for MA theses, which we had to dispense with. In other words, those instances of citations for which the original sources were not available were not included in our analysis. Finally, the two categories of citations and intertextuality were compared and contrasted in terms of their frequency of use across MA theses and BA projects.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

The present study intended to deal with the types of citations and intertextuality in the undergraduate projects of 12 students who had presented these projects for their research II at Qom University and MA theses written by the same students in applied linguistics who had graduated from 8 state universities in Iran. It also attempted to find relationships between intertextuality and citation types in their BA projects and MA theses.

Concerning the citation behavior of Iranian EFL learners in their undergraduate projects and MA theses, the findings in the following tables might be revealing. Table 1 shows the frequency of the citation types among the undergraduate projects and MA theses of these EFL writers. As the data indicate, the integral citations outnumber the other citation types; that is, the non-integral and the improper citations in both undergraduate and graduate projects. Following the integral citations, the most frequent number belonged to improper citations in both undergraduate and graduate projects. The considerable number of cases where the students had failed to paraphrase and had not included the quotation marks properly led us to add a third type of

classification that is the improper citations in our consideration of citation behavior of these EFL writers. In case of improper citations, whether the students had used integral citation or non-integral citation did not concern us because the whole cited material was defective and improper. In improper citations, the students' manner of presenting the cases whether in the form of integral or non-integral citations was not the focus of this study. It might be helpful to explore the manner of citing improper cases and the preferences of the students in adopting the aforementioned citation types (integral or non-integral) in another study.

Table 1

Analysis of Citations across BA Projects and MA Theses

Level	Type of Citations	Total Freq.	Rank
BA	1. Integral citations	184	1
	2. Non-integral citations	54	3
	3. Improper citations	130	2
MA	1. Integral citations	478	1
	2. Non-Integral citations	115	3
	3. Improper citations	170	2

As Table 2 and 3 reveal, among the sub-classifications of the integral citations in undergraduate projects, non-citations are more frequent than verb controlling citations whereas, in MA theses, verb-controlling citations are more frequent than non-citations.

Table 2

Citation Types in Undergraduate Projects

BA Projects	Non-Integral				Integral			Improper citation
	Source	Iden.	Ref.	Orig.	V.Cont	Nam	Non-citation	
St.1	2	0	1	1	8	0	10	11
St.2	3	1	1	1	8	2	9	13
St.3	2	1	1	0	7	1	8	15
St.4	2	0	1	0	6	1	11	10
St.5	2	1	1	1	7	1	13	8
St.6	2	1	1	1	6	1	8	10
St.7	2	1	1	1	8	1	7	8
St.8	2	2	1	2	6	1	11	9
St.9	1	1	1	1	6	1	8	4
St.10	1	0	0	0	3	1	8	15
St.11	2	1	1	1	7	1	2	15
St.12	1	1	2	1	8	1	10	12
Total	22	10	12	10	80	12	92	130
Mean	1.83	0.83	1	0.83	6.67	1	7.67	10.83

Note. St.=Student, Iden=identity, Ref.=Reference, Orig.= Origin, Verb cont.=Verb Controlling, Nam= Naming

Table 3
Citation Types in MA Theses

MA Theses	Non-Integral				Integral			Improper citation
	Source	Iden.	Ref.	Orig.	V.Cont	Nam	Non-citation	
St.1	5	1	2	2	20	0	20	18
St.2	6	0	2	2	18	4	22	13
St.3	10	2	3	3	18	4	26	11
St.4	8	2	1	2	28	2	22	16
St.5	3	0	0	0	15	2	15	10
St.6	6	1	3	3	20	3	21	14
St.7	3	0	0	3	21	3	14	16
St.8	5	1	2	1	30	4	10	22
St.9	9	1	1	1	20	2	10	15
St.10	8	2	2	3	16	0	8	17
St.11	4	0	0	1	25	3	13	10
St.12	8	0	1	1	20	2	17	8
Total	66	10	17	22	251	29	198	170
Mean	5.50	.83	1.41	1.83	20.91	2.41	16.50	14.17

Note. St.=Student, Iden=identity, Ref.=Reference, Orig.= Origin, Verb cont.=Verb Controlling, Nam=Naming

Table 4 and 5 display the intertextuality types in BA projects and MA theses classified based on Pecorari and Shaw (2012). As the Table 4 and 5 reveal, the number of unconventional intertextuality in BA projects is higher than conventional intertextuality; whereas, in MA theses, the conventional intertexts outnumber the unconventional ones.

Table 4

Types of Intertextuality in BA Projects

BA Projects	Types of Intertextuality				Total
	Indirect	Conventional	Unconventional	deceptive	
St.1	2	10	21	7	40
St.2	5	15	22	5	47
St.3	3	11	23	4	41
St.4	2	9	21	3	36
St.5	3	11	21	2	37
St.6	2	10	18	0	30
St.7	1	14	15	8	38
St.8	2	6	20	4	32
St.9	2	4	12	3	21
St.10	1	2	23	4	30

Table 4 Continued

Pourghasemian, Shahiditabar, & Baqerzadeh Hossein/An English teacher's ...					41
St.11	2	12	17	7	37
St.12	4	12	22	5	43
Total for Type	29	116	235	52	432
Mean	2.14	9.67	19.58	4.33	36

Note: St.=Student

Table 5

Types of Intertextuality in MA Theses

MA Theses	Types of Intertextuality				Total
	Indirect	Conventional	Unconventional	deceptive	
St.1	5	30	38	12	85
St.2	5	32	35	14	86
St.3	4	40	37	8	89
St.4	4	43	38	5	90
St.5	3	20	25	17	65
St.6	2	36	35	5	78
St.7	3	30	30	17	80
St.8	3	43	32	7	85
St.9	3	31	25	14	73
St.10	3	31	25	8	67
St.11	4	32	23	8	67
St.12	7	32	25	11	75
Total for Type	46	400	368	126	940
Mean	3.83	33.33	30.67	10.50	78.33

Note: St.=Student

Table 6 displays the frequency of citation and intertextuality use in BA projects and MA theses.

Table 6

Citation and Intertextuality Frequency in BA Projects and MA Theses

Samples	Citations (f)	Intertextuality (f)	Citations per 1000 words	Intertextuality Per 1000 words	Total word No.
Theses	777	962	4.16	5.15	186540
Projects	381	430	3.90	4.40	97687

To determine the degree of relationship between intertextuality and citation behavior, Pearson correlation analysis was run. As it is seen in Table 7, the correlation between unconventional intertextuality and improper citation in BA projects is statistically significant ($r=0.67$) suggesting that there was a relatively high relationship between undergraduate students' unconventional intertextuality and their citation behavior when improper

citations were at stake. However, there was a weak relationship between graduate students' unconventional intertextuality and improper citation (Table 8) as the correlation between unconventional intertextuality and improper citations was low ($r=0.37$).

Table 7

Relationship between Unconventional Intertextuality and Improper Citations in BA Projects

		Improper citation
Uncon. Intext.	Pearson Correlation	.677*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016
	N	12

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 8

Relationship between Unconventional Intertextuality and Improper Citations in MA Projects

		Improper citation
Uncon. Intext.	Pearson Correlation	.369
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.238
	N	12

The correlation analysis between conventional intertextuality and non-integral citations yielded mixed results. The relationship was non-significant in BA projects. As it is seen in Table 9, Pearson correlation coefficient between conventional intertextuality and non-integral and integral citations were $r=0.52$ and $r=0.32$ respectively suggesting a mild to low relationship. However, there found to be a significant relationship between conventional intertextuality and non-integral and integral citations in MA theses (Table 10), which suggests that there is a relatively high relationship between the given variables.

Table 9

Relationship between Conventional Intertextuality and Non-/Integral Citations in BA Projects

		Non-integral	Integral
Conventional	Pearson Correlation	.527	.327
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.079	.299
	N	12	12

Table 10

Relationship between Conventional Intertextuality and Non-/Integral Citations in MA Theses

		Non-integral	Integral
Conventional	Pearson Correlation	.588*	.628*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.044	.029
	N	12	12

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.2. Discussion

The first research question concerned the citation behavior of the Iranian EFL graduate and undergraduate students. It was found that there was a shift from non-citations in undergraduate projects to verb-controlling in MA theses which might be explained by the sources to which MA writers are exposed. As MA students in Iran do not have easy access to authentic academic data-bases, they rely on the works of their peers, and hence are probably affected by their citation behavior. Similar studies on Iranian MA theses attest to this phenomenon (e.g., Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012). Since BA projects are not available to all students, the students may not be affected by their peers in this respect. However, their preference for non-citations maybe explained further by their ignorance of the functions and applications of citation types (Luzón, 2015).

There was a considerable number of non-citations in both BA projects and MA theses. Non-citations are defined by Thompson and Tribble (2001, pp.95-96) as one of the components of integral citations and they refer to situations when the reference to another writer is accompanied with the name but without a year reference. This commonly occurs when the reference to the writer can be found earlier in the same text. This might be attributed to their unfamiliarity with or uncertainty of how to cite sources. It could also be that these students are influenced by the general talk structure within their society which demands the suppression of the repeated issues in favor of novelty. If so, it suggests that these students need to be taught explicitly both functions, types and applications of citations (Luzón, 2013). Below is an instance of a non-citation from MA theses (Student 4):

As Ellis also states planning is an inevitable part of both spoken and written language.

Given the fact that in her thesis three works of Ellis (2004, 2005, 2009) were previously cited, it was impossible for us to decide the date of this citation. So, for us it is a non-citation and an unconventional intertextuality type.

The students' use of integral citations in MA theses is in line with the previous findings (Helali-Oskueia & Kuhi, 2014; Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012; Nguyen & Pramoolsook, 2016). Luzón (2015) asserts that in the corpus he examined, integral citations were much more frequent (74.24% of citations). Pecorari (2010) states that non-integral citations emphasize the claim or the reported information while integral citation is mostly employed to underscore the authorship of the claim and to highlight the researcher who is quoted. The relative absence or underuse of non-integral citations in the present study is in line with previous studies (Penrose & Geisler 1994; Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006) where novice EFL writers mostly considered sources as facts,

as repositories of information and knowledge to be restated, and they generally did not consider them as claims which should be evaluated.

Moreover, the student's use of integral citation was not probably meant to make the authorship prominent. According to Luzón (2013), students do not seem to be concerned about the functions of integral and non-integral citation, and they tend to employ integral citations for all purposes. Even while the students are synthesizing information and want to claim a statement and bring examples from other sources to make their own point, they still stick to integral citations rather than the non-integral citations which are more suitable for this purpose. The EFL writers' use of integral citations can be sought in their preference to distance themselves from their claims especially because they might not have been confident about their own claims. Pecorari (2008) asserts that non-integral citations create the impression of the writer's confidence in the reported information. However, the participants' less frequent use of non-integral citations cannot be readily attributed to their lack of confidence in the reported claims and there might be other factors at work. Although lack of confidence may be present, the inclination of EFL students for integral citations might be quite unconscious. In fact, the students themselves may be more comfortable with integral citation because it makes clear who the author is, compared with the non-integral citation in which the author's name appears in brackets at the end of sentences. However, Luzón (2015) attributes the students' overuse of integral citations to their desire to establish their own voice within their discourse community, and to facilitate their steps towards writing about their own discipline so as to be considered as accepted members of their disciplinary community.

Students generally begin their writing in the form of general claims and approved notions supported by previous research. This is perhaps the safest way to taste the waters and enter the pool although Swales (1990) does not dismiss it from expert writing calling it a frequent move in expert writing to have references act as providing support for the writer's central claim and for generalizing the topic. However, expert writers and novice writers cannot be equal. As Luzón (2015) also asserts, students' insertion of topic generalizations or the central claims is usually done without bringing references to support them. The novice writers do not include adequate references to the researchers, nor do they bring subsequent texts to provide more information concerning their own research. The examples below are both instances of conventional intertextuality.

Below is an integral citation containing an approved notion by an MA student in our sample (Student 6):

As Halliday and Hasan (1976) assert, coherence is achieved through the combination of semantic configurations of register and cohesion.

An example of a non-integral citation in the BA project of student 9 is given below.

Language is a form of social interaction and CDA attempts to probe into the relationship between social actors and discourse (Fairclough, 1989).

The considerable number of improper citations in the writings of both undergraduate and graduate writers might be attributed to their ignorance of providing references or their carelessness in supplying proper references and adequate acknowledgement. In several instances in this respect they brought exact statements by researchers without acknowledging them in quotations in a way that although the exact words of a researcher were included there was no signpost for the reader to discover whose words they were.

Here is an instance of improper citation from BA projects which is an unconventional intertextuality (Student 8):

Widdowson (1975) points out this does not mean that what teachers and critics say about literature may not reveal a good deal of meaning but only that the full impact of the work can only be recognized by the individual's direct experience of it.

The above sentences are exact words of Widdowson (1975) from page 75 of the book entitled '*Stylistics and the teaching of literature*' without quotation and page number.

Concerning the second research question concerned the achievement of intertextuality in undergraduate projects and MA theses. It was observed that unconventional intertextuality was a frequent intertextuality type in both BA projects and MA theses. However, in MA theses by a very negligible margin the conventional intertextuality type outnumbered the unconventional intertextuality type, the unconventional type being 368 and the conventional type being 400. The high frequency of unconventional type of intertextuality reveals the students' ignorance of the types of intertextuality and the proper application of intertexts in both BA projects and MA theses alike. This is partly due to the fact that intertextuality cannot be always intentional, but it might be inadvertently utilized (Melon-Galvez, 2017). However, comparing the unconventional intertextuality types across BA projects and MA theses showed that the difference between MA theses and BA projects was not very considerable. Moreover, the number of conventional intertexts was higher in MA theses than in BA projects. This might be explained by the more explicit teaching of research and citation in MA level compared with undergraduate level.

The third type was the deceptive intertextuality whose only difference with the unconventional intertextuality is the intention of the writer to hide the real relationship between the intertext and the text from which it is

adopted. Comparing the number of deceptive intertexts across BA projects and MA theses shows a considerable change from 52 in BA projects to 116 in MA theses. That the number of conventional intertexts almost tripled from BA projects to MA theses shows that we must seek the reasons for the students' attempts at committing deceptive intertextuality, because in spite of improvement in conventional intertextuality condition in MA theses, the problem with deceptive intertextuality has not only persisted in MA theses, it has even worsened. The change in the number of conventional intertexts shows that the formal teaching has worked but not so effectively as to save students from plagiarism or deceptive intertextuality. This type of intertextuality which is generally referred to as plagiarism in both BA projects and MA theses can be accounted for by different factors such as environmental, cultural, and linguistic or developmental causes (Craig, 2004; Currie, 1998; Deckert, 1992; Evans & Youmans, 2000). Plagiarism has also been sought in the students' lack of confidence in their writing and their inability in maintaining their own authorial voice (Howard 1993, 1995, 2007). This type of intertextuality has even been considered as a kind of strategy to cope with the back breaking burdens placed on the students. Abasi, Akbari and Graves (2006) contend that deceptive intertextuality results from the students' failure to assert themselves as writers with original contributions and as such they turn to plagiarism as a coping strategy. When the student sees the difference between what he is expected to achieve and what in reality he can achieve, he finds the solution in plagiarism (Hyland, 2001). The least frequent type of intertextuality is that of indirect intertextuality, or as Fitzsimmons (2013) puts it, the accidental intertextuality. Accidental intertextuality happens when readers connect one text with one or more texts, or even their own personal experience, although there might not be any solid or tangible hint inside the text (Fitzsimmons, 2013). As the detection of this type of intertextuality depends upon the opinion of the reader compared with the deceptive intertextuality which might be detected through plagiarism software, or the other types such as unconventional intertextuality which might be judged on the basis of the formal aspects of intertexts such as quotations, etc., the data collected on this last type must be handled with care. We prefer the term indirect intertextuality and the definition proposed by Pecorari and Shaw (2012) that defines indirect intertextuality, as the relationship that is created among texts which possess common points in areas such as purpose, topic, or readership, and their commonalities lead to structural and phraseological similarities among them over the accidental intertextuality just mentioned. Comparing indirect intertextuality types across BA projects and MA theses revealed that there was no major change from BA projects to MA theses with regard to this type of intertextuality. Although there was a slight improvement in this type of legitimate intertextuality from BA projects to MA theses, the change was

negligible. The low frequency of this type demonstrates that the students have not yet mastered their voice because they have to either plagiarize or fall into unconventional intertextuality and they do not produce indirect intertextuality which is a legitimate type of intertextuality (Pecorari & Shaw, 2012). Further, the results here reached may have something to do with students' language proficiency as well. Not knowing enough about 'intertextuality' as well as their inability to properly transform others' views through the language of their own can somewhat account for the problems they face.

As for the third research question, there is a significant relationship between unconventional intertextuality and improper citations in BA projects (see Table 7). This relationship arises from the fact that improper citations are among the constituents of unconventional intertextuality by definition. The other component of unconventional intertextuality is the non-citations among the sub-classifications of non-integral citations. The significant relationship between these two variables might also be accounted for by the fact that in their B.A projects, the participants indulged in non-citations due to their ignorance of the rules of proper citations or out of carelessness. It must be noted that in situations where non-citations should not be normally used, but the students have used them they are considered as unconventional intertextuality. However, there is not any significant relationship between unconventional intertextuality and improper citations in MA theses (see Table 8). It should be noted that there was a significant relationship between conventional intertextuality and both integral and non-integral citations in MA theses (see Table 10), which suggests the relative improvement of citation behavior of the students in their MA theses since as Table 8 reveals these same students in their BA projects did not display any significant relationships in their conventional intertextuality and integral/non-integral citations (see Table 9). These findings suggest the improvement both in citations and conventional intertextuality in MA theses. In their MA theses probably due to exposure to more advanced instructions the students displayed a better performance. The existence of significant correlation between conventional intertextuality and both integral and non-integral citations might be attributed to the EFL writers' equal consideration and attention to these two citation types. The almost equal weight of improper citations and non-citations in BA projects indicates the students' ignorance of the functions and types of citations. Moreover, the causes underpinning improper citations such as the students' lack of knowledge regarding the discourse conventions of their corresponding disciplinary community might also hold true for non-citations (Angélil-Carter, 2000; Currie, 1998; Gu & Brooks, 2008; Pecorari, 2003; Thompson, 2005). The other reason might be the fact that these two components of unconventional intertextuality have almost similar origin. They mostly occur after lengthy chunks of language are

presented by the students. The reason might be sought in low linguistic level (Pennycook, 1996; Shi, 2004) or in low levels of academic literacy (Howard, 1995; Chanock, 2008). For deceptive intertextuality, we did not find any related citation type in either the MA theses or BA projects because the students probably had plagiarized and had included whole paragraphs or complete sentences. The indirect intertextuality does not have citation counterpart in either BA projects or MA theses because it was the result of an existing relationship among texts whose commonalities in areas such as purpose, topic, or readership, create phraseological and structural similarities across them. In both MA theses and BA projects, the categories of citation types which fall under conventional intertextuality are all subcategories of non-integral citations and two subcategories of integral citations including verb-controlling and naming.

5. Conclusion and Implications

This study attempted to deal with the citation behaviors of EFL students in light of the intertextuality types which they employ. It considered the students' MA theses and their BA projects for the analysis of the above features. The findings with regard to the citation types employed were in line with those already present in the literature (Helali-Oskueia & Kuhi, 2014; Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012; Nguyen & Pramoolsook, 2016) as the integral citations were the most frequent ones in both MA and BA projects. Next to integral citations stood the improper citations and the third place belonged to non-integral citations. The overuse of integral citations might be justified by the students' tendency to see sources as repositories of facts to be collected and collated rather than claims to be evaluated (Luzón, 2015). Cultural causes might also be responsible because reservedness and indirectness in Iranian culture contribute to the overuse of integral citations and lack of critical evaluations (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012). The relative abundance of improper citations is related to the students' level of academic literacy with regard to the procedures of paraphrasing and synthesizing and the language of citations and citation patterns (Luzón, 2015). As these EFL students have been taught the principles of paraphrasing in both their BA and MA research courses, this inability is accounted for by their lack of knowledge of the necessary skills for the reading-writing process and showing no tendency to be necessarily dishonest (Pecorari, 2010). As Hirvela and Du (2013) assert, the ability to use sources effectively and properly is a developmental process. The fact that this problem persists in the BA projects and MA theses of this study shows the need for closer attention to referencing as a rhetorical strategy which should be used effectively to achieve specific purposes (Luzón, 2015). As such, it is not enough to teach paraphrasing to the students out of context. Perhaps, it might be more beneficial if these procedures and steps are taught step by step in the writing process. The persistence of this problem in MA theses might

suggest the ineffectiveness of teaching the techniques of summarizing, synthesizing and paraphrasing at graduate level. The conditions of the intertextuality types in these BA and MA projects underscore the dire need to make the students acquainted with the dialogic nature and condition of academic texts (McCulloch, 2013) and thereby increase the level of their academic literacy.

The study can have implications for instructors of research at both undergraduate and graduate levels. It might also serve MA thesis raters. This study may raise consciousness among material developers and syllabus designers to take citation instructions more seriously and prepare materials which make EFL learners more confident and competent researchers.

Despite the discussions made above, the reader needs to remember that the results of the study have to be cautiously interpreted or generalized as a number of factors ranging from cultural context, students' age and gender, size of the corpus, and in particular, the researchers' own inclinations might have affected the findings.

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Appendix

Citation Types classification adopted from Thompson and Tribble (2001, pp.95-6)

Thompson and Tribble (2001, pp.95-96) enumerate the main categories of the citations types as the following:

1. Integral citations, 2. Non-integral citations

The integral citations are divided into three sub-categories:

A clear distinction can be made between integral citations which control a lexical verb (Verb controlling) and those that do not (Naming). A

third type is the reference to a person that is not a full citation -- this has been called a Non-citation form.

Verb Controlling

The citation acts as the agent that controls a verb, in active or passive voice, as in 'Davis and Olson (1985) define a management information system more precisely as...'

Naming

In Naming citations, the citation is a noun phrase or a part of a noun phrase. The distinction here is primarily grammatical but the form also implies a reification, such as when the noun phrase signifies a text, rather than a human agent:

Typical price elasticities of demand for poultry products in Canada, Germany and the UK are shown in Harling and Thompson (1983)

Another example of reification is when the naming citation identifies a particular equation, method, formulation or similar construct with individual researchers, as in

In this paper, the management information system (MIS) definition of Davis and Olson (1985) has been used.

An alternative type of naming citation is that which refers generally to the work or findings of particular researchers:

Work by Samuel and East (1990) demonstrated that variety and seed rate had considerable effects on yield and quality aspects

In this case, the naming citation is similar to a verb-controlling citation in that it reports work done by particular researchers.

Non-citation

There is a reference to another writer but the name is given without a year reference. It is most commonly used when the reference has been supplied earlier in the text and the writer does not want to repeat it. For example

The "classical" form of the disease, described by Marek, causes significant mortality losses.

However, instances where a person was invoked through reference to the thinking associated with them in general, rather than with reference to a specific work or set of works (for example, "Marxist" or "Darwinian") are not included.

Non-integral Citation Source

Non-integral citations perform a range of functions. The first function is to attribute a proposition to another author. The proposition might be a statement of what is known to be true, such as in the factive report of findings in other research, or the attribution of an idea to another, as in this example:

Citation is central ... because it can provide justification for arguments (Gilbert, 1976)

The citation provides evidence for a proposition which can remain unchallenged if the writer is in agreement with it, or can be countered by the ensuing argument. Let us call this type of citation source because it indicates where the idea comes from.

Identification

The second type of non-integral citation identifies an agent within the sentence it refers to. An example of this is

A simulation model has therefore been developed to incorporate all the important features in the population dynamics (Potts, 1980)

where the information within the parentheses identifies the author of the study referred to. Instead of including the name of the author within the sentence ("Potts [1980] has developed..." or "A simulation model has been developed by Potts [1980]..."), the writer has chosen to focus attention on the information (Weissberg & Buker, 1990, differentiate between author- and information-prominent citations).

Reference

This type of citation is usually signaled by the inclusion of the directive "see" as in

'DFID has changed its policy recently with regard to ELT (see DFID, 1998)'.

This type of citation is often similar to a source citation in that it can provide support for the proposition made, but it also functions as a shorthand device: Rather than provide the information in the present text, the writer refers the reader to another text. This type is particularly common in reference to procedures or to detailed proofs of arguments which are considered too lengthy to be repeated.

Origin

An example of this type is:

The software package used was Wordsmith Tools (Scott, 1996).

Where Source citations attribute a proposition to a source, Origin citations indicate the originator of a concept or a product - in this case the creator of the Wordsmith Tools program.

Improper Citation: A category based on the current study

A situation where the student does not signal properly the sources which he has used. For example, he doesn't report a quotation and removes the quotation mark from the source without paraphrasing it.

Pourghasemian, H., Shahiditabar, M., & Hosseini, M., B. (2018). Citation behavior and intertextuality in EFL writing: The case of EFL writers' undergraduate projects and their MA theses compared. *Journal of Modern Research in English Language Studies*, x(x), x-x.