Original Article

Citation Practices in Applied Linguistics Research Articles: A Comparison of International and Iranian Journals

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Abstract

In academic writing, citation employs different phraseological patterns to serve a number of significant functions. The purpose of this study was to examine the citation practices in Iranian and international applied linguistics journals to determine how differently or similarly the two groups of journals use the citation in their writings. The data consisted of a corpus of 120 articles published by Iranian and international applied linguistic journals. WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2009) computer software was used to extract the citation patterns in different sections of the articles. Then, employing Petric's (2007) and Thompson and Trimble's (2001) frameworks, the phraseological patterns and rhetorical functions of citation practices were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results showed that Iranian researchers, unlike international researchers, tended to use integral citations by emphasizing the writers rather than information; yet, international researchers preferred non-integral citations. The results also revealed that there is a relationship between articles sections and the type of citations applied. Moreover, the analysis of citations based on Petric's (2007) framework demonstrated that Iranian and international writers prefer using attribution function. In conclusion, the study argued that the phraseological patterns used to report these functions should receive more attention to avoid plagiarism.

Keywords: Academic writing, Applied linguistics, Citation practices, International journals, Iranian journals

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1. Introduction

In all academic disciplines, irrespective of the genre writers use, borrowing from other people's texts is inevitable (Pecorari, 2008). Citation procedures create an opportunity for writers to display their professional identities (Hyland, 2000) which, in turn, poses challenges for novice writers (Patten & Newhart, 2018). They also help writers to demonstrate their competence within the field and to position themselves in regard to different disciplinary members (Jalilifar, 2012). In addition, to frame citation, writers need to make use of appropriate language phrases the choice of which reflects their awareness of different functions of citation (Charles, 2006). Therefore, writers' mastery of citation patterns and the associated phraseological resources affects the rhetorical impact of their claims (Bloch, 2010) and the way they position themselves in the desired discourse communities.

Despite its centrality in professional writing, the literature addressing effective citation practices and the key factors is limited (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012; Petrić, 2007; Schembri, 2009). This gap requires further attention as the disciplinary variation in citation practices and ethnolinguistic variation within the same disciplines is large (Hu & Wang, 2014). Citation practices vary across disciplines (Hu & Wang, 2014; Hyland, 2000; Mansourzadeh & Ahmad, 2011), genres (Thompson & Tribble, 2001) and languages (Farnia, Bagheri, & Saeedi, 2018; Kamyabi, Ghonsooly Hezareh, & Mahdavi Soghondikolaei, 2014; Karimi & Asadnia, 2014; Shooshtari Gooniband, Jalilifar & Shahri, 2017).

In the past two decades, there has been an increase in the number of Iranian scientific journals. Due to deviation from professional citation practices, actualized inappropriate use of citation, phraseological patterns, and their associated functions, Iranian journals fail to meet the international academic standards. This has caused the journals to have a low visibility rate compared to international ones (see Davarpana & Behrouzfar, 2009).

A number of comparative studies have investigated citation practices used in local and international journals. Jalilifar, et al. (2018) study of textual borrowing in the introduction section of Iranian English journal articles showed that the writers' inappropriate use of citation strategies is a reason for their challenge in borrowing texts. Another recent study by Farnia, et al. (2018) compared citation practices in introduction sections of 80 articles in international journals and 86 articles in Iranian journals. Their analysis based on Thompson and Tribble's (2001) taxonomy showed that the writers used

more citations in Iranian journals than their counterparts in international journals. Moreover, the use of non-integral citation patterns was more prevalent in international journals than in Iranian ones. Their findings contradict those of Kamyabi, et al. (2014) in that they found that the writers of Scopus-indexed journals used a greater number of citations than the writers of local Iranian journals. Difficulty in citing and overreliance on integral citations was also found as characteristics of the introduction sections of theses written by Iranian Master of Art students of Applied Linguistics (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012). Similarly, Karimi and Asadnia (2014) compared 60 discussion sections of the articles published in three Iranian and three top international journals. Their findings revealed that writers of Iranian local journals had more inclination to use integral citations than non-integral patterns. Contradictory findings, however, have been reported from Shooshtari Gooniband, et al. (2017) study. Their cross-linguistic and cross–discipline study of citation practices in 240 Persian and English research articles published by researchers of hard and soft science showed no significant difference in citation practices employed across languages and disciplines.

In order to increase the knowledge of how the texts of the articles are organized and how authors use particular rhetorical functions and phraseological patterns in their writings, computer technology is used to analyze the texts. Corpus linguistics combined with discourse analysis (see Baker, 2006) and other approaches are used for understanding the language and practices used in professional contexts. These corpus studies bring us quantitative data on how speakers experience language use in a particular domain. Corpus-based studies (Biber, 2006; Oakey, 2002) have been paying attention to a specific phraseological pattern in English for academic purposes that is diagnostic by the combination of words which are semantically and syntactically constructed. Howarth's (1998) research has shown that knowledge of phraseological patterns in non-native speakers is limited in the academic discourse. As the noteworthiness of phraseology referred over, the significance of the functions utilized in articles various sections through various phraseological patterns should not be forgotten.

Academic writing became a difficult process for writers due to the existence of a variety of functions. For many students, teachers, and researchers how to cite appropriately is a challenge. Moreover, there are some studies centered on the function of citations. For instance, Petric's (2007) functional typology (attribution, exemplification, further

reference, statement of use, application, evaluation, establishing links between sources, comparison of one's own findings or interpretation with other sources, and others) focused more on the "intentions writers realize by using citations" (p. 241). According to the mentioned previous studies, further research is needed to probe the functions and phraseological patterns of citation practices in all sections of the research articles in applied linguistics in a comparative way to indicate differences and similarities.

Understanding the possible differences between writers' citation practices in local and international journals helps identify the challenging areas for Iranian graduate students and novice academic writers. Then, remedial and instructional programs can be utilized to raise their consciousness about the expected problems and equip them with discourse and language resources as well as the agreed-upon conventions to avoid those problems. This way they are more likely to identify themselves as professional members of the desired academic communities. Despite the contribution made by the studies reviewed above, our knowledge of the Iranian writers' citation practices is still scant. To fill this gap, the present study investigated citation practices employed by the writers of Iranian and international applied linguistics journals. Unlike other studies, this study investigated citation patterns in the full texts of the articles. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to explore forms, functions, and phraseological patterns characterizing citation practices in Iranian and international applied linguistics journals. Therefore, the present corpus-based study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What functions and phraseological patterns characterize citation practices in Iranian and international applied linguistic journals?
2. To what extent are the functions of citations in two groups of journals similar or different?
3. To what extent are the phraseological patterns used in the two groups of journals similar or different?

2. Methodology

2.1 Corpus

In this study, the corpora developed from applied linguistics research articles (RA) and then compared these articles in terms of their citation practices. The papers published in the international and Iranian applied linguistic journals to form the corpus which includes 120 applied linguistic RAs that have been randomly selected from the highly- rated articles

published in Iranian and international journals (see Table. 1). Sixty articles written by foreign language writers and sixty articles written by Iranian writers were selected through purposeful sampling. As Jalilifar and Dabbi (2012) asserted, the rhetorical structure of articles varies across time. Since the data collection process happened in 2018, the present study selected the most recently published issues in 2015-2018 as a corpus.

Table 1.

The Selected Iranian and International Journals

	International Journals	Iranian Journals
1	Annual Review of Applied Linguistics	Applied Research on English Language
2	Applied Linguistics	Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies
3	Journal of English for Academic Purposes	Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics
4	Journal of Second Language Writing	Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes
5	Language Learning	Iranian journals of Language Teaching Research
6	Language Teaching	Issues in Language Teaching Journal
7	Language Teaching Research	Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics
8	Studies in Second Language Acquisition	Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning
9	TESOL Quarterly	Journal of Teaching Language Skills
10	The Modern Language Journal	Language Horizons

2.2 Instruments

In order to discover the differences and similarities of citation practices in Iranian and international journals, some software and frameworks were adopted. The WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2009) is free computer software used to extract citation patterns. As an integrated suite of programs for looking at how words behave in the text, WordSmith Tools has useful features including concordance, file view, word list, etc. ABBYY FineReader is another software used to convert any format to a plain text. Additionally, two frameworks were also adopted to analyze and compare the citation functions. First, Thompson and Tribble (2001) sub-classification of integral and non-integral citations was used to identify citations in Iranian and international articles. Second, Petric's (2007) nine functional typologies were the other framework used to identify the rhetorical functions.

2.3 Data Collection Procedures

First, the data were gathered by downloading the articles from the target journal websites. Purposeful sampling was used by selecting the most reputable international and Iranian journals. After grouping the selected articles, the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and the conclusion in each article were extracted and converted into a plain text format by ABBYY FineReader for analysis, then uploaded to the software WordSmith Tools to isolate the in-text citations. Then Petric (2007) and Thompson and Tribble (2001) were used to analyze the research articles selected from each journal. The number and percentage of the citations were counted after the analysis. Finally, the phraseological patterns of these citations were analyzed according to the grammatical subject by searching the word *that* in WordSmith Tools. These frameworks let us look at the contextual nature of citations by scrutinizing the selected articles and find if there are similarities or differences in the way citation is used among the selected Iranian and international applies linguistic journals.

2.4 Data Analysis Procedure

The analysis was approached from multiple perspectives in order to examine the rhetorical functions and phraseological patterns of citation practices. The analysis was carried out on each section of the articles (introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion) except front matter, abstracts, bibliographies, captions, and footnotes. Whole articles' texts were examined in order to add to our knowledge of how the citations were organized in the whole texts and how Iranian and international writers used citation patterns to achieve their purposes in the field of applied linguistics.

3. Results

Different sections of Iranian and international journals were filled with different citation types. Table 2 illustrates the variation in the way Iranian and international researchers alluded to the sources. As illustrated, international articles contain more citations than Iranian articles.

Table 2

Distribution of Citations in Different Sections of Iranian and International Journal

Article Sections	Iranian	International

	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Introduction	663	23%	391	13%
Literature Review	1224	43%	1616	53%
Methodology	316	11%	494	16%
Result	58	2%	44	1%
Discussion	511	18%	327	11%
Conclusion	80	3%	183	6%
Total	2852	100%	3055	100%

As shown in Table 2 information in the 'Literature Review' section with 53% (1616 out of 3055) in the international articles, and 43% (1224 out of 2850) in the Iranian articles, cited more than other sections, as the writers were firmly trying to situate their studies. Moreover, the section that contains the less citation is the result section with 2% (58 out of 2852) in Iranian articles and 1% (44 out of 3055) in the international articles. This indicates that there is variation in the numbers and types of citations in different sections of the articles.

3.1 Rhetorical Functional Analysis of Citation Practices

Functional analysis of the citation practices by the two groups of journals using Petric's (2007), Thompson and Tribble's (2001) Frameworks showed that *attribution* function was the most common applied function from Petric's typology in all sections of Iranian and international journals. Moreover, the *source* was the most applied function according to Thompson and Tribble's framework in our corpus. Other novel findings will be presented in detail below.

Table 3

The Number of Non-Integral Citations According to Thompson and Tribble's Framework (2001)

Citation form	Iranian				International			
Non-integral	Source	Identification	Reference	Origin	Source	Identification	Reference	Origin
Introduction	257	149	5	6	201	101	28	21
Literature review	372	169	3	17	655	336	74	46
methodology	102	23	2	9	191	73	38	9

Result	20	7	0	2	24	12	4	2
Discussion	110	66	1	6	183	88	28	8
Conclusion	26	18	2	0	47	19	5	1
Total	887	432	13	40	1254	629	177	87

In the introduction section, both groups of researchers tended to use *source* and *identification* functions (types of non-integral citations) over other functions. It is clear that international writers used the *reference* (28 times) function more than the *origin* (21 times) function. Yet, Iranian writers used the function of *origin* (6 times) more than the function of *reference* (5 times) in the introduction section (see Table 3).

In the literature review section, as the results show, all Thompson and Tribble's (2001) *non-integral* subcategories (*Source, Identification, Reference,* and *Origin*) were outnumbered in the international articles than Iranian articles. The *source* as one of the non-integral citations was the most popular function in both groups of journals. Moreover, the function of *identification* was the second most applied function in Iranian and international articles in the literature review section. An interesting finding was that the less common applied function in the literature review of Iranian articles was *reference* by 3 times frequency; while the function of *origin* by 46 times use, was the less applied function in international articles.

The results confirmed that in the methodology section, *source* function was the most popular function in the Iranian (102-times use) and international (191-times use) articles and it was more preferred by international writers. By comparison with Iranian journals, functions such as *identification* by 73 frequency and *reference* by 38-times use were more frequently used in the international journals. A further novel finding was that *origin* function in the methodology section was favored equally 9 times by both Iranian and international writers (see Table 3).

From these findings, it is clear that, in the result section, as illustrated in Table 15 international writers applied the function of *source*, *identification*, and *reference* more than Iranian writers. Yet, the *origin* function was used to the same extent (2 times) by Iranian and international articles. Moreover, in the discussion and conclusion sections, all Thompson and Tribble's (2001) typology has been favored by the international articles more than the Iranian articles.

Table 4

The Percentage of Integral Citations in the Introduction Section According to Thompson and Tribble's Framework (2001)

	Integral	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Introduction	Verb controlling	140	55%	36	47%
	Naming	98	39%	34	45%
	Non-citation	16	6%	6	8%
	Total	254	100%	76	100%

As it appears in Table 4 *verb controlling* is the most commonly used *integral* citation among other Thompson and Tribble's (2001) *integral* citation in the introduction section of both Iranian and international articles. *Naming* with 39% (98 out of 254) in Iranian articles and 45% (34 out of 76) in the international articles were ranked the second applied function among the other functions and was more popular by Iranian writers than international ones. From the results, it is obvious that, in this section, the number of citations in the Iranian journals outnumbered those in the international journals.

Table 5

The Number and Percentage of Integral Citations in the Literature Review Section According to Thompson and Tribble's Framework (2001)

	Integral	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Literature Review	Verb controlling	428	61%	376	58%
	Naming	229	32%	216	33%
	Non-citation	48	7%	60	9%

	Total	705	100%	652	100%

Table 5 shows that *verb controlling* is the most applied function and *naming* is the second one in the Iranian and international articles. While the *non-citation* is somehow ignored in comparison to other functions by 7% use in Iranian articles and 9% in international articles. Yet, international writers tend to use it more than Iranian writers. Again, Iranian journals outranked international ones in their use of *integral* citations subcategories in the literature review section.

Table 6

The Number and Percentage of Integral Citations in the methodology section According to Thompson and Tribble's Framework (2001)

	Integral	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Methodology	Verb controlling	56	28%	48	24%
	Naming	134	67%	125	64%
	Non-citation	9	5%	23	12%
	Total	199	100%	196	100%

Concerning the methodology section, the results show that *verb controlling* and *naming* citations were used more in the Iranian articles. The *naming* citation was the most commonly used citation among *integral* citations in both international and Iranian journals (for more detail see Table 6). Moreover, *non-citation* is the less applied citation and writers in the international journals utilized it with 12% (23 out of 196) which indicates that it was applied more in the international articles than the Iranian articles.

Table 7

The Number of Integral Citations in the Result Section (Thompson and Tribble's Framework, 2001)

R e s		Integral	Iranian	International

	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Verb controlling	9	26%	7	87.5%
Naming	22	63%	1	12.5%
Non-citation	4	11%	0	0%
Total	35	100%	8	100%

As noted in the results section of the Iranian articles according to Table 7, the *naming* function was the most popular form of *integral* citations. Moreover, the *naming* function was applied 63%, *verb controlling* 26%, and *non-citation* 11% (see Table 7) in the Iranian journals. Yet, in the international articles the *verb controlling* function was used 87.5% (7 out of 8 times), the *naming* function 12.5% (1 out of 8 times), and the *non-citation* was missing in this section of international articles.

Table 8

The Percentage of Integral Citations in the discussion section (Thompson and Tribble's Framework, 2001)

	Integral	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Discussion	Verb controlling	186	53%	82	40%
	Naming	155	44%	100	49%
	Non-citation	9	3%	23	11%
	Total	350	100%	205	100%

According to the discussion section, Iranian writers preferred *verb controlling* and *naming* functions more than international writers. However, the *non-citation* function was 14 times (23 citations as compared to 9 ones) more applied by international writers than Iranian writers.

Table 9

The Percentage of Integral Citations in the Conclusion Section (Thompson and Tribble's Framework, 2001)

	Integral	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Conclusion	Verb controlling	14	45%	36	35%
	Naming	16	52%	50	48%
	Non-citation	1	3%	18	17%
	Total	31	100%	104	100%

It is clear that in the conclusion section, international articles applied all of the *integral* citations of Thompson and Tribble's (2001) typology more than Iranian articles.

Table 10

Distribution of Citations Functions in the Introduction Section According to Petric's (2007) Framework

Introduction		
Type of Citation	Iranian	International
	Number	Number
Attribution	248	74
Exemplification	36	47
Further Reference	5	28
Statement of Use	2	6
Application	0	8
Evaluation	2	4
Establishing Links Between Sources	231	154
Comparison of One's own Findings or Interpretation with Other Sources	9	5
Other	9	0
Total	542	326

Table 10 indicates variation in the purposes for which the two groups of writers used citations in their papers. Quantitatively, writers of the Iranian journals used more citations in comparison to the writers in the international journals. According to the results, *attribution* and *establishing links between sources* are the most popular functions among other functions. The incidence of *attribution* was more in the Iranian writer's citations. While

international writers preferred to use functions such as *establishing links between sources* in the introduction section more than other functions of Petric (2007). The *application* function was used eight times in the introduction section of international articles, while it did not occur among Iranian ones (see Table 10). Likewise, a function such as *other* was ignored by international writers, while Iranian writers used it nine times.

Table 11

Distribution of Citations Functions in the Literature Review Section (Petric's, 2007 Framework)

Literature review		
Type of Citation	Iranian	International
	Number	Number
Attribution	864	1055
Exemplification	63	201
Further Reference	3	74
Statement of Use	9	26
Application	8	44
Evaluation	8	25
Establishing Links Between Sources	305	601
Comparison of One's own Findings or Interpretation with Other Sources	33	86
Other	18	7
Total	1311	2119

An interesting finding in the literature review section is that both Iranian and international writers applied all Petric's (2007) functions with some differences in frequencies. Frequencies of different citation functions show that the *attribution* function was the most frequent citation in both the Iranian and international articles (see Table 11). The second used function in the literature review section was *establishing links between sources*. In this section, *exemplification* function was used 201 times in the international articles. Moreover, the less applied function by Iranian writers was the *further reference* and the less used one by international writers was the function of *Other*. Based on Table 11, there are not many differences in the use of *further reference* and *comparison of one's own findings or interpretation with other sources* in international articles. Yet, there were 30 times (three

citations compare to 33 citations) differences in the frequency of using these two functions in the Iranian articles. It's important to mention that, citations in the international journals outnumbered the citations in the Iranian journals.

Table 12

Distribution of Citations Functions in the Methodology Section (Petric's, 2007, Framework)

Methodology		
Type of Citation	Iranian	International
	Number	Number
Attribution	274	351
Exemplification	9	40
Further Reference	2	38
Statement of Use	55	45
Application	129	106
Evaluation	11	7
Establishing Links Between Sources	52	150
Comparison of One's own Findings or Interpretation with Other Sources	9	39
Other	3	1
Total	544	777

Concerning the methodology section, as revealed in Table 12, more instances of citations were found in the international journals. Therefore, this result was consistent with the literature review section (see Table 11). In the methodology section, the times, writers in the international journals used citations for the purposes of *attribution, exemplification, further reference, establishing links between sources* and *comparison of one's own findings or interpretation with other sources* exceeded those used by writers in the Iranian journals. Writers of Iranian journals in this section tended to use *statement of use, application, evaluation, and, other* more than the international writers.

Table 13

Distribution of Citations Functions in the Result Section According to Petric's (2007) Framework

Result		
Type of Citation	Iranian	International
	Number	Number
Attribution	35	32
Exemplification	0	3
Further Reference	0	4

Statement of Use	1	2
Application	7	2
Evaluation	13	0
Establishing Links Between Sources	16	10
Comparison of One's own Findings or Interpretation with Other Sources	15	4
Other	2	0
Total	89	57

According to the findings of the results section, it is clear that there is not much difference among the number of occurrences of the *attribution* function in Iranian (35) and international (32) articles. As illustrated in Table 13 in the results section, Iranian articles outnumbered the international ones in the use of *attribution*, *application*, *evaluation*, *establishing links between sources,* and *comparison of ones finding,* and function *Other*. While the *exemplification*, *further reference*, and *statement of use* functions in the international articles outnumbered those in the Iranian articles.

Table 14

Distribution of Citations Functions in the Discussion Section According to Petric's (2007) Framework

Discussion		
Type of Citation	Iranian	International
	Number	Number
Attribution	352	292
Exemplification	34	70
Further Reference	1	28
Statement of Use	5	1
Application	3	21
Evaluation	20	18
Establishing Links Between Sources	126	151
Comparison of One's own Findings or Interpretation with Other Sources	215	97
Other	4	2
Total	768	680

According to Table 14, it is important to mention that, the number of citations in the Iranian articles outnumbered the citations in the international articles. In the discussion section, the *Attribution* function was the most frequent in both Iranian and international articles; and Iranian writers tended to use it more than international writers. The second and third most used functions in the discussion section were the *comparison of one's own Findings* and *establishing links between sources*. *Establishing links between sources* was more popular among international writers, while the *comparison of one's own findings or*

interpretation with other sources was more popular with Iranian writers. Additionally, the less applied function by Iranian writers was *further reference* and the less used one by international writers was the *statement of use.*

Table 15

Distribution of Citations Functions in the Conclusion Section According to Petric's (2007) Framework

Conclusion		
Type of Citation	Iranian	International
	Number	Number
Attribution	48	111
Exemplification	6	14
Further Reference	2	5
Statement of Use	0	2
Application	3	4
Evaluation	6	6
Establishing Links Between Sources	25	47
Comparison of One's own Findings or Interpretation with Other Sources	17	32
Other	0	0
Total	107	221

Our results demonstrated that, in the conclusion section, the number of citations in the international articles exceeded the citation number in the Iranian articles (see Table 15). A novel finding in our corpus was that in the conclusion section of the international articles all Petric's (2007) functions were applied more than Iranian articles except the *evaluation* function that was applied equally by the Iranian and international articles. Moreover, the function *other* was ignored completely in this section by both the Iranian and international writers.

3.2 Analysis of Phraseological Patterns

Based on the grammatical subject, there are three types of phraseology as reporting clauses used for citing other's work.

Table 16

Distribution of the Three Clause Types in the Introduction Section

	Clause type	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Introduction	Human subject	74	60%	21	38%
	Non-human subject	34	28%	23	42%
	It subjects with passive voice	15	12%	11	20%
	Total	123	100%	55	100%

As Table 16 shows, in the introduction section, writers of Iranian journals and international journals applied 123 and 55 reporting clauses respectively. As indicated, Iranian writers preferred to utilize reporting clauses to start with *Human subjects*; while international ones liked reporting clauses with the *Non-human subject*. There were not many differences among the use of *It subjects with passive voice* clauses in both Iranian and international journals.

Table 17

Distribution of the Three Clause Types in the Literature Review Section

	Clause type	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Literature Review	Human subject	250	83%	184	68%
	Non-human subject	38	12%	57	21%
	It subjects with passive voice	14	5%	31	11%
	Total	302	100%	272	100%

Concerning the literature review section, Table 17 indicates that Iranian writers in the review of the literature section prefer using reporting clauses with *Human subjects by* 83% (250 out of 302). Yet, in the international journals, the *Non-human subjects with* 21% and *It subject with passive voice with* 11% outnumbered these clauses in the Iranian articles (see Table 17).

Table 18

Distribution of the Three Clause Types in the Methodology Section

	Clause type	Iranian	International
M			

	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Human subject	25	60%	15	37.5%
Non-human subject	11	26%	15	37.5%
It subjects with passive voice	6	14%	10	25%
Total	42	100%	40	100%

The analysis of the methodology section in Table 18 illustrates that the writers of the two groups of journals use different groups of clauses. The present study confirmed the findings that the number of reporting clauses in Iranian articles by 2 frequencies more (42 compared to 40) exceeded the clauses in the international articles. An interesting finding was that writers of international journals use *Human subject* and *non-human subject* to the same extent (37.5%); yet, those in the Iranian journals used clauses with *Human subjects* more than *non-human subject*. The utilization of *It subject with passive voice* by international writers exceeded the utilization by the Iranian writers.

Table 19

Distribution of the Three Clause Types in the Result Section

	Clause type	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
	Human subject	4	22%	6	55%
	Non-human subject	8	45%	5	45%
Result	It subjects with passive voice	6	33%	0	0%
	Total	18	100%	11	100%

According to Table 19 in the results section, 55% of reporting clauses in the international articles were presented as *Human subjects* (6 out of 11); yet, 45% (8 out of 18) of the reporting clauses were the *Non-human subject* in both Iranian (8 out of 18) and international (5 out of 11) articles. Moreover, *it subjects with passive voice* were used in the Iranian articles with 33%, while the international articles ignored this pattern completely.

Table 20

Distribution of the Three Clause Types in the Discussion Section

	Clause type	Iranian		International	
Discu		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage

	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Human subject	105	64%	62	52%
Non-human subject	50	30%	36	30%
It subjects with passive voice	10	6%	22	18%
Total	165	100%	120	100%

The present study confirms the findings that in the discussion section, the number of reporting clauses in the Iranian articles by 45 times (165 in comparison to 120) exceeded the citation number in the international articles. Table 20 illustrates those Iranian articles favors clauses with *Human subject* and *Non-human subject* more than international articles. Yet, the international articles liked to apply clauses with *It subjects with a passive voice* more than the Iranian articles.

Table 21

Distribution of the Three Clause Types in the Conclusion Section

	Clause type	Iranian		International	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
	Human subject	10	71%	16	59%
Conclusion	Non-human subject	4	29%	8	30%
	It subject with passive voice	0	0%	3	11%
	Total	14	100%	27	100%

According to the conclusion section (see Table 21), the international writers used the three clauses with the *human, non-human*, and *it* subjects more in comparison to the Iranian articles. Yet, Iranian writers used *human* and *non-human* clauses but disregarded *It subjects with passive voice* clauses in this section.

4. Discussion

Based on the results reported above, it can be concluded that international writers tended to use more citations than Iranian writers. The findings echoed the results of Kamyabi, et al.'s (2014) study contending that Scopus-indexed journals used a greater number of citations than Iranian journals. As such, it can be argued that international writers are well aware of the importance as well as the necessity of frequently citing sources in academic writing. Moreover, international writers use a variety of linguistic options that fit their findings (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012). In line with Jalilifar and Dabbi's (2012) findings, we

found that Iranian students have fewer resources at their disposal to refer to, in comparison to professional writers leading us to the assumption that they are less skilled writers of academic discourse.

The other important finding that non-integral citations were used less frequently in Iranian journals resonates with the previous literature (e.g. Kamyabi, et al., 2014; Karimi & Asadnia 2014; Shooshtari & Jalilifar, 2010; Shooshtari, et al., 2017). The inclination to use integral citations more than non-integral ones signifies those Iranian writers prefer to highlight the name of the writers (Kampyabi, et al., 2014). It is clear from the results that the easiest way of *integral* citations is to cite and integrate through *Verb controlling* and *naming* types. In this study preference for *integral* citation is not only due to citation patterns but also due to emphasizing authors by the use of *verb controlling* citations. *Naming* citation is an integral citation that is used within the sentence but it does not have control over the verb (Swales, 1990; Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012).

The *non-citation* function was the less used citation among the other citations in Iranian and international articles. However, international articles tend to use non-citation more than Iranian articles by referring to the author without the year to avoid repeating the reference made earl "ier. The overuse of *verb-controlling integral* citations in both articles was in line with the ideas that it may be due to a lack of skills in constructing complex noun phrases in a succinct way (ElMalik & Nesi, 2008). Most of the *non-integral* citations characteristically realized in the form of *sources* in both Iranian and international articles. After the *source*, *identification* was the most applied function. The function of *origin* was less popular in the international articles. Additionally, a study on theses, according to Thompson's (2005), showed that *origin* citation was used in the methodology section but it was ignored in the introduction section which indicates that *origin* is the typical features of method sections and used for describing the materials and method in the methodology section. Further differences related to the citations functions according to Petric (2007) were revealed when the citations compared in different articles sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion among the Iranian and international articles.

The number of citations in the introduction and literature review sections, where the selected studies were summarized without elaboration on the links between them or the writer's studies, implied those Iranian and international writers give much importance to the

function of *attribution*. Indeed, the introduction and literature review sections entail writers to use a variety of rhetorical functions. In line with our findings, Lee et al. (2018) state that writers display their knowledge of the topic through *attribution* function. Being the basic function for *attribution* is not a surprise, due to its use for describing the existing knowledge of the field (Lee et al., 2018). This shows the tendency of international writers towards descriptiveness since they use *attribution* function. In addition, the function of *exemplification* was one of the functions used in the international articles more than in Iranian articles. In Petric's (2007) study *exemplification* was applied in the methodology section of low-rated theses, while it was used in the introduction section of the high-rated theses. Yet, in our corpus, it was more applied in the literature review section of both Iranian and international articles. However, when the second dominant function (Establishing Links between Sources) was analyzed, an interesting discovery was that international writers use this function more than Iranian writers in all articles sections except in the introduction section). Mansourizadeh and Ahmad (2011) reached a similar conclusion that after the *attribution* function *establishing links between sources* is the second preferred function among the expert writers in comparison to novice writers. *Further reference* as one of Petric's (2007) rhetorical functions indicates that there are remarkable differences in the use of *further reference* function among the Iranian and international writers. International writers use this function more than Iranian writers. Likewise, Petric's (2007) study on high and low-rated master theses found that high-rated theses applied *further reference* function more than the low-rated theses. Another function of Petric's (2007) typology that was the most infrequent in our Iranian and international articles was the function *other*. According to Petric's finding the function, *other* was used by low-rated these in the introduction and the methodology sections. In the methodology section, the most appropriate functions are the *application* and *statement of use* functions to support the methodology applied by the writers. Therefore, the utilization of *application* function was more frequent than *statement of use* function in the methodology section.

In Petric's (2007) study, *statement of use* was more applied in the methodology and conclusion sections in both high and low-rated theses; yet, in our corpus, it was more applied in the literature review and methodology sections. The function of *comparison of one's own findings or interpretation with other sources* was more common in the discussion section of

the Iranian and international articles. The results provide evidence that Iranian writers use these functions more due to the less complex rhetorical skills required in their utilization.

Overall, based on the finding related to the results section, our findings were in accordance with findings reported by Lee et al. (2018), that the result section is the section with fewer citation practices. It has been found in our corpus that international writers continued presenting their findings in extended paragraphs without providing citations to support them. In this study, we examined reporting clauses likewise, as Charles's (2006) research on three reporting clauses with verb *that-complementizer*. The reported texts were not evaluated by the researchers but only reported with appropriate grammatical patterns. There are differences in the use of grammatical subjects. By far, the *human subject* was the most applied in both articles; while the *non-human subject* was less applied and *It subjects with passive voice* was much lesser used. This finding stands in line with Charles' (2006) study. Reporting clauses with that-clause complement exist with considerable use in our corpora in citation practices. The use of different phraseological patterns depends on the purpose of the writer and the ideology in the related research field. In comparing our findings with Thompson and Tribble (2001) and Swales (1990), it is suggested from the findings that phraseological patterns that are applied as reporting clauses with a *human subject* in the integral forms tend to use *verb controlling* citations of Thompson and Tribble's typology.

The present study indicated a variety of rhetorical functions in different sections of the articles in both Iranian and international articles. The rise of international use of citations can be due to their great proficiency in writing which indicates better literature knowledge regarding their analytic ability and writing. Moreover, there is a possibility that Iranian researchers have fear of citing other writers' work which may show them incapable and in need of others. Yet, international researchers may not have this fear due to the belief that citing other work causes information distribution and helps connect one's work with other researchers. While there is a belief that "effective citation strategies can compensate for the lack of knowledge or analytic ability" and "effective use of citation may help highlight the knowledge and abilities highly valued by thesis graders and may thus contribute to students' academic success" (Petric,2007, p. 251). This comparison of citation practices among Iranian and international journals enhanced our understanding of citation practices and affects the way researchers, teachers, and undergraduates' students write their articles.

The writers' overreliance on integral citations may imply their "ignorance of the functional features of citation" (Jalilifar & Dabbi, 2012, p. 100) as well as their need for "explicit instructions" on how to cite efficiently (p. 101). A useful recommendation for teaching effective citation techniques is genre analysis (Chen & Su, 2012). Genre-oriented instructions can be particularly influential in teaching academic writing as they "pull together language, content, and contexts [and] offer teachers the means of presenting students with explicit and systematic explanations of the ways writing works to communicate" (Hyland, 2007, p.150). The instructors of academic writing and educators can encourage novice writers and graduate students to involve in joint and/or independent text analysis to boost their understanding of genre-related conventions. Being so, they are in a better position to provide their "students with targeted, relevant, and supportive instruction" (Hyland 2007, p.148).

Conclusion

This study is suitable for researchers, course writers, teachers, and student's awareness of citation practices in order to prevent plagiarism by appropriate use of citations. For students' better understanding of citation rhetorical functions and phraseological patterns, teachers can teach these citations functions and phraseological patterns to novice writers to prevent future plagiarism. However, applied linguistic is the only major regarded in this study. A cross-disciplinary comparison of citation practices among Iranian researchers and international researchers can be regarded as well; even cross-disciplinary comparison of citation practices among Iranian researchers themselves can be investigated. Moreover, gender and age were not considered in this study other researchers can consider those as variables. Finally, there are varieties of functions and phraseological patterns that can be considered for further research. This study only focused on Petric (2007) and Thompson and Tribble's (2001) frameworks; one can take into account other frameworks in future studies.

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