



Reporting Verbs Used in In-Text Citations of EFL Undergraduate Students' Theses: Focus on Surface Forms, Tenses, and Writer Stances

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Received 15/02/2024	ABSTRACT
Received in revised form 19/05/2024	As an important practice for researchers, citing sources is a challenging task for undergraduate students as they deal with the types of citation forms, the variety of reporting verbs and their tenses, and the writer stances through reporting verbs. Therefore, the current research is aimed at investigating the surface forms, reporting verb tenses, and writer stances from the uses of reporting verbs. In total, the data sources included 30 theses written by undergraduate students of the English and Literature Program in one of the Indonesian state universities. The theses were taken randomly from the year of 2020 till 2022 by considering the data availability and accessibility. All sections of the thesis were analyzed by utilizing AntConc. The results indicated that an integral citation was preferable and most reporting verbs were shown in the present tense. In accordance with the reporting verbs, the students tended to endorse a source by using the words “state,” “mention,” and “explain” in the present tense. These results are different from those commonly shown by experts in their in-text citations. This implies that it is necessary to teach or advise undergraduate students to use various reporting verbs, tenses, and writer stances in in-text citation practices.
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Introduction

Citation is described as a key social practice for researchers (Friedman, 2019) and is used to indicate that a text is academic (Swales, 2014). In academic writing, writers establish a research context, attribute credit to previous studies, interpret the findings, and gather peer recognition of the research by citations (Swales, 2014). Citation practices assist the writers with expressing justification, showing the research niche, and supporting the writer stances with related references (Soler-Monreal & Gil-Salom, 2011). Citations have been frequently explored from the academic writing produced by graduate students in the form of PhD theses (e.g., Friedman, 2019; Peng, 2019; Soler-Monreal & Gil-Salom, 2011). However, little attention has been given to the application of in-text citations in undergraduate students’ theses.

Olmos-Lopez (2021) examined undergraduate theses in English language teaching in the Mexican context and mentioned that non-native speakers of English have common problems with citations, namely the lack of knowledge of conventions in citations, lack of evaluation for excessive quotations, and failure of text engagement, both rhetorically and persuasively. Indeed, the functions of citations vary from the basic level to the advanced level particularly when they are used to express the writer's attitudes and commitments (Nesi, 2021). One way of knowing the writer's attitude is from how the writers present the citations in the surface form either integral or non-integral. To be more specific, to engage and express the writer stances, the writer has to deal with reporting verbs (Olmos-Lopez, 2021).

Reporting verbs have significance to express the writer's evaluation of the cited work by emphasizing the voice of the authors (Peng, 2019). Pertaining to the reporting verbs, Liardét and Black (2019) examined the uses of reporting verbs by comparing experts with novice writers. They found that the experts used the words *show*, *find*, and *demonstrate* and novice writers used *states* and *according to*. Yet, the various tenses used in the reporting verbs were not discussed in depth in the prior studies (e.g., Liardét & Black, 2019; Nesi, 2021; Olmos-Lopez, 2021). The tenses used (i.e., past tense, present perfect tense, and present tense) may express different writer positions toward the cited sources (Swales & Feak, 2012). Liardét and Black (2019) pointed out that the three tenses can be used to indicate that previous research is close to the writer's stances, as well as to the present state of knowledge. By referring to this statement, the uses of tenses in some reporting verbs, indeed, are subtle. Therefore, undergraduate students might have difficulty identifying the difference in using tenses for the reporting verbs to show writer stances in in-text citations.

Literature Review

Citation Form

In academic writing, Swales (1990) asserted that writers use citations to reflect the prior research and to cite the thoughts and opinions of other researchers to establish a research area. He also defines citation as one of the main linguistic resources used in academic writing to establish a research space for the writer himself and to form interactions with other members of the academic community. Bailey (2011) stated that the purpose of citation practice is to show the reader that the writers have read some of the authorities on the subject, to allow the reader to obtain other resources for

deeper knowledge, and to avoid plagiarism which is a crime in an academic context.

In general, citation forms can be divided into two main types: integral and non-integral. According to Swales (1990), integral citations maintain an active syntactic role for the authors or literature cited, followed by a summary of research results and findings (e.g., “*Authors claim that...*” or “*Author argues that...*”). Integral citations, then, are those that include the author's name in the cited sentence, with the name serving a grammatical function in the sentence. While, non-integral citations are distinguished by author names surrounded by parentheses or footnotes and do not require the author's name to play a grammatical role at the end of a sentence (e.g., “*surveys show that ... (Author)*”). The sentences aim to highlight research findings and frequently focus on synthesis rather than individual research papers (Swales, 1990; Thompson, 2005). Integral citations, according to Hyland (1999), place a greater emphasis on the authors, while non-integral citations tend to reflect more reported messages. Furthermore, Swales (2014) claims that when the author's name is explicitly included in the sentence, integral citations emphasize the role of the researcher and are thus person-based. Non-integral citations, on the other hand, are concept-oriented citations that highlight the cited content rather than the agent of the previous research.

Tenses in Citation

Analyses of tenses used in citations can be seen in a number of studies. Hyland (1999) investigated the features of citation practice from citation density in text, surface form, the number, tenses, process category of reporting verbs, and quotations from other texts. As one of the features of citation practices, tense is one of the significant linguistic elements in academic writing (Arsyad et al., 2018). Swales and Feak (2012) categorized the tenses used in citations into three patterns. As the first pattern, the past tense is used for single studies referring to “the researcher activity as agent”. For the second pattern, the present perfect tense is used to deal with areas of inquiry expressing the researcher's activity not as an agent. As the third pattern, the present tense is employed for describing current knowledge and there is no reference to the researcher's activity. The first and second patterns focus on what the previous researcher did, while the third pattern focuses on what has been found in the findings. Swales and Feak (2012) categorized these patterns based on different areas of scholarship. Patterns 1 and 2 are found in humanities and social sciences, while Pattern 3 is commonly used in science, engineering, and medical research. Changes from the past to present perfect tense and then to the present tense indicate that the cited research

ideas or conclusions are closer to the writer stances in different ways, such as the writer's perspective, the topic or author's property, or generally accepted theory or knowledge.

Hinkel (2004) identified that the present tense of citation presents general facts, opinions, or research findings. The past tense is commonly used in specific contexts of historical and biographical descriptions such as people, events, and places in a case study. Moreover, a study related to these patterns was investigated by Arsyad and Adila (2017) investigated these patterns, analyzing tenses dominantly used in English research articles, in the introduction sections of four different journals. The result showed that the present is the most dominant tense in citations, and the past is almost as frequent as the present perfect. This case occurred in four different journals. As reported by Chen (2009), new findings are cited in past tenses, but when they become "a tenet of science," a present tense is employed. A present tense is used more when referring to sources since academic authors prefer to quote well-accepted materials or theories rather than new research findings. Swales and Feak (2012) propose that a verb choice affects the citation tense. Present-tense verbs include *argue*, *suggest*, *claim*, and *maintain*, while past-tense verbs include *find*, *identify*, and *reveal* (Swales & Feak, 2012).

Reporting Verbs and the Writer Stances

Reporting verbs are a significant rhetorical option (Hyland, 2004) to indicate the writer's acceptance or rejection of a source opinion (Hyland, 1999), and can also be defined as the linguistic items used in reporting sources and expressing a writer's stance toward them (Olmos-Lopez, 2021). For instance, the word *reveal* suggests a strong acceptance of a particular result in a study. Research has found that certain reporting verbs are popular across disciplines. Charles (2006) investigated phraseological patterns, which resulted in a complete list of reporting verbs in the categories of *argue*, *show*, *find*, and *think*. Each group has a list of the words found in a corpus that share similar meanings as the reporting verbs. Lee et al. (2018) investigated the citation practices of L2 university students. They identified the 10 most frequent reporting verbs used across two disciplines namely politics and materials (i.e., *say*, *state*, *report*, *show*, *find*, *describe*, *use*, *claim*, *indicate*, and *talk*). Nesi (2021) examined the citation practices in argumentative writing and she listed the top reporting verbs (e.g., *suggest*, *argue*, *find*, *state*, and *believe*).

From the prior studies, it can be interpreted that the frequency of reporting verbs in different contexts and disciplines is various. Olmos-Lopez (2021) believes that the different uses of reporting verbs are the writers' efforts to show their stances toward the source being cited. 'Writer stances'

means the writer's positions towards his or her propositions and the readers (Hyland & Zou, 2021) and the position of the writer in relation to the referenced sources (Coffin, 2009). In some cases, the writer is not neutral, but has a positive or negative opinion of the sources. In showing stance, the writers may utilize some techniques for instance attitude markers, hedges, boosters, evaluative adjectives, modals, and reporting verbs (Olmos-Lopez, 2021). Thus, writers have various verb choices to show their stances regarding their sources (Coffin, 2009; Thompson & Ye, 1991).

Based on Thompson and Ye (1991), a writer has some typical words to show his stances using various choices of reporting verbs. Thompson and Ye (1991, p. 372) classified the uses of reporting verbs into three categories: factive, counter-factive, and non-factive. Factive stance deals with how the writer depicts the source as showing true information or an accurate opinion by having verbs such as *demonstrate*, *identify*, *improve*, *prove*, and *recognize*. Counter-factive stance covers how the writer depicts the source as showing false information or an inaccurate opinion by having verbs such as *betray*, *confuse*, *disregard*, *ignore*, and *misuse*. As the last stance, non-factive describes how the writer shows no indication of his or her attitude towards the sources by having verbs such as *advance*, *believe*, *claim*, *examine*, and *generalize*. Additionally, Coffin (2009) shows the writer stance in different terms and a different number of types. She writes four types of writer stance: acknowledge, distance, endorse, and contest. As the first type, acknowledge is used to indicate that a proposition belongs to another researcher and is not evaluated (e.g., *perceive*, *analyse*, and *examine*). Distance indicates how the writer shows his or her position for not taking any responsibility towards a particular study's reliability (e.g., *claim*, *anticipate*, and *realise*). Endorse refers to the writer's position to support a referenced source (e.g., *demonstrate*, *show*, and *convincingly argues*). The effect of *endorse* is persuasive and makes a proposition hard to deny. On the contrary, contest states critics explicitly reject the source's assertion (e.g., *betray*, *ignore*, and *misuse*). In some cases, the phrase "*too simplistic*" indicates a contest. The types of writer stance used in Coffin's study show the more complete categorization that can be easily followed to deal with the writer stance in citations and connected with the analysis of reporting verbs.

In light of the background and literature review, it is evident that most investigations of citations were commonly focused on the citations produced by professional writers (Lee et al., 2018). However, in the last five years, few investigations on citations have been found in the theses written by students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) enrolled in English Language and Literature programs. Gao et al. (2021) explored the form and rhetorical function of citations in undergraduate students' theses, and how they are

connected with pedagogical materials. Yet, the study did not address the use of reporting verbs to build the writer stances and the tenses of the verbs related to building writer stances. Reflecting on the important aspect of academic writing (Hyland, 2004) for novice writers (Gao et al., 2021), an analysis of the way undergraduate students write in-text citations may enrich the knowledge in this area. To contribute more towards the studies on citations and to reveal the surface forms, tenses in the reporting verbs, and the writer stances, we have aimed this study to address the following research questions:

- 1) What are the surface forms of in-text citations in EFL undergraduate students' theses?
- 2) What tenses are found for reporting verbs used as in-text citations in EFL undergraduate students' theses?
- 3) Based on the reporting verbs used, what stances do EFL undergraduate students take in the in-text citations?

Methodology

Data Collection

Using a corpus-based study to elicit the surface forms, the tenses, and the writer stance and reporting verbs used in in-text citations, we collected 30 theses from the English and Literature Study Program in one of the prominent state universities in Indonesia. The theses were chosen from the academic years of 2020, 2021, and 2022 for considering the variety of time in writing the theses (See Table 1).

Table 1

Description of the Data Taken per Year

No	Year	Number of Theses Per Year
1	2020	9
2	2021	14
3	2022	7
Total number of theses		30

The students have various topics mainly in linguistics for completing their research (See Table 2). The topics include pragmatics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, semantics, English language teaching, grammar, and morphology. The research design used by all students was qualitative. All

of the theses analyzed have been accepted by the board of examiners. The theses were chosen randomly regardless of the final mark it has.

Table 2

Description of Topics of the Theses

No	Topics	Number of Topics
1	Pragmatics	19
2	Sociolinguistics	4
3	Second Language Acquisition	2
4	Semantics	2
5	English Language Teaching	1
6	Grammar	1
7	Morphology	1
Total number of theses		30

The data were collected from the advisors who received the final versions of the undergraduate students' theses after being signed by the board of examiners. The data were in the forms of Word files and PDF files. To analyze the theses by considering each section, each file was, then, separated into five sections namely introduction, literature review, research method, findings and discussion, and conclusion and suggestions. For building the corpus, the parts outside of the five sections were excluded. The description of the corpus analyzed in this research is depicted in Table 3.

Table 3

Description of the Total Number of Words in Each Section of the Undergraduate Students' Theses

No	Section of the Thesis	Number of Words Per Section
1	Introduction	38543
2	Literature Review	64386
3	Method	19842
4	Findings and Discussion	147183
5	Conclusion and Suggestions	12896
Total number of words in all theses		282850

Data Analysis

We used AntConc Version 4.1.4 (2022) to analyze the in-text citations from each section. As the instrument of the corpus-based analysis, the list of reporting verbs was created by synthesizing several sources including *LEARN Journal: Vol. 18, No. 1 (2025)*

Thompson and Ye (1991), Charles (2006), Brezina (2012), and Swales (2014). The list of reporting verbs is shown in Appendix A. The use of several sources was aimed at listing more complete reporting verbs commonly found in academic writing in in-text citations. In accordance with the reporting verbs, we categorized the verbs into some types of writer stances as suggested by Coffin (2009) namely acknowledge, distance, endorse, and contest (See Appendix A). The list of reporting verbs was adjusted with the three patterns of tenses used in citations stated by Swales and Feak (2012) by considering the regular and irregular forms of the verb tenses.

To analyze the corpus, we followed three main steps. First, the analysis of the reporting verbs was started from the stance to acknowledge using AntConc. We searched the main verbs for three different forms namely present tense forms for plural nouns and for singular nouns, past tense forms, and past participle forms. If a verb (e.g., *do*) had different forms in the past form and past participle form, we used the participle form of the verb to analyze the present perfect tense in the corpus. Afterwards, we typed the numbers into the table of surface forms, the table of tenses, and the table of reporting verbs respectively for further analyses. Since there was a probability that a word was used either as a verb or a noun in a particular sentence (e.g., *state*, *hope*, *use*, *misuse*, and *study*), we checked the concordance lines and excluded the words used as a noun. As the final step, we double-checked the frequency found in all sections to ensure the coherent number of the frequencies among the tables.

Findings and Discussion

The current study examined the in-text citations in 30 undergraduate students' theses. The analysis dealt with the surface form, the tenses, and the stances reported from the uses of reporting verbs.

Surface Forms of the Undergraduate Students' In-Text Citations

The citations in the 30 undergraduate students' theses were checked manually. In this study, citations refer to in-text citations, which are operationalized as sentences in the text body of a research article or book that include the name(s) of the cited author(s) and the year(s) of publication (e.g., *A study shows that (Author, Year).*). Using Hyland's (1999) typology, we classified citations in undergraduate students' theses as integral or non-integral. We counted a single citation as integral with one resource cited. We counted the number of works cited in the parentheses as the number of non-integral citations.

When we analyze the surface forms of citations in undergraduate students' theses, we see that the frequency of integral and non-integral citations per 1000 words varies. Table 4 contains a detailed description of the frequency.

Table 4

Frequency of Surface Forms of In-Text Citations on the Theses

No	Type of Citation	f	Per 1000 Words
1	Integral	528	1.87
2	Non-Integral	126	0.45

As shown in Table 4, the frequency of integral citations was higher than the frequency of non-integral citations based on the surface form. Undergraduate students tended to use integral forms as the type of citations in their theses. The results show that the integral citation occurs four times more frequently than the non-integral citation.

From the analysis of the introduction, literature review, method, findings and discussion, and conclusion and suggestions sections, the results are also diverse. Table 5 summarizes the complete frequency for each section.

Table 5

Frequency of Surface Forms of In-Text Citations on Each Section of the Theses

No	Section	Integral		Non-Integral		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Introduction	94	14.37	28	4.28	122	18.65
2	Literature Review	306	46.79	55	8.41	361	55.20
3	Method	5	0.76	1	0.15	6	0.92
4	Findings and Discussion	122	18.65	42	6.42	164	25.08
5	Conclusion and suggestions	1	0.15	0	0.00	1	0.15

As seen in Table 5, undergraduate students cite sources in each of the five sections of their theses. In general, the highest percentage of citations is in the literature review, followed by findings and discussion, and introduction sections. The method and conclusion and suggestions are unusual sections for citing works. All integral citations were higher than non-integral citations in all sections. In the conclusion and suggestions, we discovered that the only citation used was integral.

In-text citations in undergraduate students' theses are concentrated primarily in the sections entitled literature review and findings and discussion.

The results are different from the results of the research reported by Hu et al. (2013) and Kuo et al. (2011). Their study revealed that the introduction section was the section with the most in-text citations, followed by discussion. Furthermore, in relation to the field of study, linguistics, the current study yielded different results for the highest and lowest citation density. We found the highest citation density in the literature review section and the lowest in the conclusion and suggestions, whereas Kuo et al. (2011) found the highest citation density in the introduction section and the lowest in the findings and discussion section. The present study agrees with the findings of Gao et al. (2021) and Lee et al. (2018) in the most commonly used integral citations in terms of surface form results. This is consistent with Swales' (2014) assertion that students used integral form more frequently because it is a common method for integrating sources in academic writing. However, this result differs from Nesi's (2021) result. The study discovered that non-integral citations were more commonly used than integral citations.

Tenses Used in In-Text Citations Found in All Sections

To examine the reporting verbs in the past, present perfect, and present tense, we carefully analyzed every reporting verb under each stance. The results, then, reveal the number of tenses used by EFL undergraduate students for in-text citations as depicted in Table 6.

Table 6

Occurrences of Three Tenses Used in All Sections of the Undergraduate Students' Theses

No	Tense	Introduction		Literature Review		Method		Findings & Discussions		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Past	38	7.55	123	24.45	1	0.20	44	8.75	206	40.95
2	Present perfect	7	1.39	14	2.78	0	0.00	5	0.99	26	5.17
3	Present	44	8.75	174	34.59	4	0.80	49	9.74	271	53.88

As presented in Table 6, the most frequently-used tense in EFL undergraduate students' theses across all sections is the present tense, followed by the past and present perfect tense. The students used the present tense regularly in the findings and discussion section. The tense also occurred in other sections. First, the introduction section shows the highest percentage for the present tense used in citation practice. Second, the undergraduate students also tended to use the present tense in the literature review section. The present tense is followed by past and present perfect tenses. Third, the

present tense is the highest frequency tense in the method section. The past tense occurs with the lowest frequency. In this section, the undergraduate students did not use the present perfect tense at all. Fourth, the present simple tense is dominant in the findings and discussion section. It is followed by the past and present perfect tenses. Fifth, the “conclusion and suggestions” section has no citations. Thus, the undergraduate students tended to use the present tense in the citation practice for all sections.

The current study reveals that the present and past are the preferred tenses, followed by the present perfect. The results are reasonable because the main topic area of the students’ undergraduate theses is linguistics. As stated by Swales and Feak (2012), the present tense and past tense are commonly used in humanities and social sciences. These results were in an agreement with Öztürk (2019) who investigated the use of the same tense in research. The present tense is used for statements that are still true or factual. The results of the current study are in line with those of Arsyad and Adila (2017) and Arsyad et al. (2018). They found the present tense the most frequently used tense; however, the tense was followed by the present perfect and past tenses. The less frequently used tense was the simple past. The results of Wei and Liu’s (2019) study, nevertheless, showed the past tense as the dominant tense. It was followed by the present tense and present perfect tense. They found that students had little knowledge of distinguishing the tenses. Few students have the courage to develop alternative viewpoints because some students still did not use the present perfect tense, and they inconsistently employed the present and past tenses. They did not seem to distinguish between the use of each tense based on the goal of citing the author’s work. The difference between the present study and Wei and Liu’s study was in terms of the writer’s attitude in choosing tenses. The number of types of tenses may also indicate the writer’s reliability and depth of knowledge on the subject. Swales and Feak (2012) note that the number and the type of tenses in citations in a text may make writing sound academic.

Writer Stances and Reporting Verbs Used by EFL Undergraduate Students in the In-Text Citations

To further analyze the learner corpus, we examined the four occurrences of our stances (i.e., to acknowledge, distance, endorse, or contest) by focusing on the frequency of the three patterns related to tenses. The results show the occurrences of three stances. The undergraduate students were familiar with how to show their stance in acknowledging, distancing, and endorsing. However, no word indicated that they expressed a

stance for contesting the citations. The frequency of each stance in three different tenses is provided in Table 7.

Table 7

Frequency of the Use of Reporting Verbs to Reflect the Writer's Stances in the Past, Present Perfect, and Present Tenses

No	Stance	Past		Present Perfect		Present		Total (%)
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Endorse	137	27.24	11	2.19	165	32.80	62.23
2	Distance	29	5.77	3	0.60	70	13.92	20.28
3	Acknowledge	40	7.95	12	2.39	36	7.16	17.5
Total		206	40.95	26	5.17	271	53.88	100

In Table 7, students communicated their stances in different numbers in connection with the reporting verbs used in the past, present perfect, and present tenses. The endorsing stance has the highest percentage use of all tenses, and present tense is used the most for endorsing. The distance stance was found in the second rank in all tenses. In this stance, similar to the endorsed stance, the highest percentage was reported for the present form. The lowest percentage was reported for a stance to acknowledge. The data revealed that the past tense has the highest percentage to acknowledge the author's work. As a general description, the present tense was reported to be used in the highest number and the past tense was in the second rank with a slightly different frequency. The students rarely used the present perfect tense to express their stances.

Beside showing the data of the stances and tenses, we sought to find the reporting verbs used in three different stances. We analyzed the verbs in their three different forms namely the present, past, and past participle forms. The variations of reporting verbs in each stance are provided in Table 8. As shown in the table, the stance to endorse has the highest number of verbal variations, 22. The top five words are *state*, *mention*, *explain*, *say*, and *define*. As an example of the appearance of reporting verbs to endorse a citation, the concordance lines of *state* in students' in-text citations are shown in Figure 1.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the word *state* is used in the past form. This tendency raises an issue of whether the word *state* can be used in some of the tense forms or only in the past form. The interesting case is the inconsistent forms of two verbs in one sentence in which the students used *stated* but right after that they used the present form *state/states*.

Table 8

Variations of Reporting Verbs for Expressing Writer Stance in In-Text Citations

No	Endorse			Distance			Acknowledge		
	Verb	f	%	Verb	f	%	Verb	f	%
1	state	103	20.48	use	27	5.37	analyze	28	5.57
2	mention	43	8.55	propose	16	3.18	conduct	26	5.17
3	explain	31	6.16	argue	15	2.98	examine	7	1.39
4	say	27	5.37	claim	14	2.78	add	6	1.19
5	define	18	3.58	suggest	8	1.59	consider	5	0.99
6	find	17	3.38	discuss	7	1.9	do	5	0.99
7	show	16	3.18	point out	6	1.19	study	5	0.99
8	describe	11	2.19	imply	5	0.99	assert	4	0.80
9	identify	8	1.59	assume	1	0.20	acknowledge	1	0.20
10	emphasize	7	1.39	predict	1	0.20	put	1	0.20
11	mean	6	1.19	remind	1	0.20			
12	note	6	1.19	utilize	1	0.20			
13	discover	3	0.60						
14	observe	3	0.60						
15	reveal	3	0.60						
16	believe	2	0.40						
17	conclude	2	0.40						
18	introduce	2	0.40						
19	write	2	0.40						
20	illustrate	1	0.20						
21	prove	1	0.20						
22	recognize	1	0.20						
Total		313	62.23		88	17.5		102	20.28

Figure 1

Concordance Lines for “state” in Students’ In-Text Citations

ecide to work. Sechiyama (2013) also has	stated	that in women took important roles in labor fo
nally indirect, Brown and Levinson (1987)	stated	that this attempt comes from the desire to go
ve Politeness Brown and Levinson (1987)	stated	that this strategy is approach-based and is adm
ose of doing any actions. Roberts (2008)	stated	that Aristotle divided persuasive strategies into
ji, and Pandaan. Cenoz and Gorter (2017)	stated	that flyers are typically positioned on major th

In the second position, the distance stance has 12 verbs and the top five words are *use*, *propose*, *argue*, *claim*, and *suggest*. As an example of the occurrence of verbs to distance from a citation, the concordance lines of *use* are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Concordance Lines for “use” in Students’ In-Text Citations

study, the writer also	uses	the theory of Associative Meaning by Leech (1983) and explaine
ite actions. This study	uses	the theory of politeness strategies recommended by Brown and
tching, the researcher	uses	the theory by Stockwell (2007) and possible factor of code switcl
e data, the researcher	uses	the text which contains gay terms in the film. The researcher als
study, the researcher	uses	qualitative and quantitative methods. The purpose of the study i
ferabithia". This study	uses	qualitative methods used by researchers to analyze the data. The

Referring to Figure 2, the verb *use* was employed in the present tense to report how an author in a particular source conducted a study. This verb was used in the present tense mostly in the literature review section. However, the past form is the more acceptable tense to be used in the context since it is not about stating a theory or expressing an author’s opinion.

In the last position, the stance to acknowledge has 10 verbs. Only four verbs are reported used above five times. The verbs are *analyze/analyse*, *conduct*, *examine*, and *add*. As a sample of the occurrence of verbs to acknowledge a source, the concordance lines of *analyze/analyse* are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Concordance Lines for “analyze” in Students’ In-Text Citations

study by Hasta and Marlina (2018)	analyze	presupposition in online news from tv
previous study by Thoyyibah (2017)	analyze	presupposition in spoken and written
previous study by Al-Zubeiry (2020)	analyze	presupposition from Saudi and British

From the concordance lines shown in Figure 3, the verb *analyze* was used after the phrase “the previous study” in the present form. By looking at the context, it seems inappropriate for the reporting verb *analyze* written in the present form because it is the author’s action in the past. The problem also deals with the subject and verb agreement in which the correct form is “*analyzes*” referring to “the previous study”.

From the data related to the reporting verbs used in the undergraduate students’ theses, the results showed that the students have expressed their stances through the reporting verbs namely to endorse, distance, and acknowledge. The results indicate, overall, that the students in this particular context have a tendency to persuade the readers with the verb choice which belongs to the endorsing function. However, they seem reluctant to use the contesting function in citing a particular source. In contrast to the results shown by Lee et al. (2018) who found that high-rated research articles tend to acknowledge the citation sources, the undergraduate students considered novice writers used more verbs to convince the readers that they are able to find persuasive support from references. The results of verbs (e.g., *state*, *mention*, *explain*) to endorse the citations in the present form imply a meaning that the citation in the texts may be close to the state of current knowledge or closer to the students’ opinions (Swales & Feak, 2012). Our findings, that *state* is used in the highest percentage, concur with Liardét and Black’s (2019) findings, which showed that L1 learners tend to employ the verb *state* in citations. Meanwhile, the experts used the word *suggest* more frequently. To pursue a higher level of writing quality, especially in citations, the students, hence, are recommended to employ more variations of reporting verbs by considering the tenses to show a certain stance appropriately.

Conclusion

The current study found three main results dealing with the stances and tenses in undergraduate students’ theses. First, integral citations were used most in the literature review section. Second, pertaining to the reporting verbs used in the integral citations, the present tense was slightly preferred over the past tense. Lastly, with in-text citations, the students had a strong tendency to endorse the sources commonly in the present tense and past tense by using reporting verbs such as *state*, *mention*, *explain*, *say*, and *define*. The students also expressed the stances to distance from sources commonly in the present tense and past tense by employing the verbs *use*, *propose*, *argue*, *claim*, and *suggest*. To acknowledge the sources, the students showed a

tendency to use reporting verbs (i.e., *analyze/analyse, conduct, examine, and add*) in the past tense. Additionally, the students did not contest their sources.

Referring to the results, the integral citation confirms the previous studies that showed novice writers prefer to choose integral forms. However, this study proved that the section with the highest citation is the literature review. It points out the fact that the students' introduction sections still lack citations to strengthen their argumentation in the section. The reporting verbs in the in-text citations were also dominated by the present tense regardless of the writer stances shown in the theses. The students express their writer stance by using more reporting verbs in order to endorse a citation. It should be noted that this study has some limitations in that the data analysis was based only on 30 theses which prevented us to describe a wider scope of the findings. Therefore, future research should be based on a more extensive corpus of undergraduate theses not only from language and literature but also other related areas such as second and foreign language teaching. In addition, future research might also offer undergraduate students' theses from a wider area of applied linguistics.

The implication for pedagogical aspects is that it is important to build awareness of the various types of surface forms, reporting verbs to show the writer stance, and tenses for the verbs. Currently, undergraduate students might not be targeted to be professional authors, but in the near future with the increasing number of publications from young scholars, the knowledge and skills in citations can help undergraduate students to prepare the article versions of their theses for the purpose of publishing the findings of their research. Besides, the raising of awareness of the various types of surface forms, reporting verbs to show the writer stance, and tenses for the verbs can provide them with the basic knowledge of how to show their opinions by using their statements as authors and to avoid plagiarism. As the current study focuses on corpus-based data, further research should focus on exploring the students' knowledge in in-text citations pertinent to the variety of reporting verbs to show the students' stance towards sources. Further research might also investigate how young scholars show their stance and support their claims by using metalinguistic evidences.

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Appendix A

List of Reporting Verbs Used for a Corpus-based Analysis Taken from Thompson and Ye (1991), Charles (2006), Brezina (2012), and Swales (2014) based on the Types of the Writer's Stance Suggested by Coffin (2009)

Acknowledge	Distance	Endorse	Contest
acknowledge	accept	advocate	betray
add	admit	believe	caution
analyze/analyse	advance	conclude	complain
assert	anticipate	define	confuse
attempt to	argue	demonstrate	contend
bring out	ask	describe	deny
conduct	assume	find	disregard
consider	claim	discover	ignore
do	comment	emphasize/emphasise	insist
document	discuss	explain	misuse
examine	feel	identify	
hold	generalize/ generalise	illustrate	
notice	highlight	improve	
put	hope	indicate	
posit	hypothesize/ hypothesise	introduce	
study	imply	maintain	
test	point out	mean	
throw light on	predict	mention	
	propose	note	
	realise	observe	
	remark	postulate	
	remind	prove	
	reply	recognize/ recognise	
	retain	recount	
	suggest	report	
	think	reveal	
	urge	say	
	use	show	
	utilize/utilise	state	
		substantiate	
		write	

Appendix B

Corpus Data Description

Code	Title	Theme
1	Semiotic Analysis of Korean Pop Music Video Entitled <i>Blood, Sweat, & Tears</i> by BTS	Semantics
2	Illocutionary Act of Dissociative Identity Disorder in The Main Character of Split Movie	Pragmatics
3	Illocutionary Acts and Politeness Strategies in sherlock Holmes and John Watson's Dialogues in BBC Sherlock Season 1 of "A Study in Pink" Episode	Pragmatics
4	A Pragmatic Study of Speech Acts as Persuasion Device in Greta Thunberg's Speech about Climate Change	Pragmatics
5	Error Analysis of The Students' Narrative Writing Text of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya	Grammar
6	The Analysis of Connotative Words in William Wordsworth's Romantic Poems	Morphology
7	Kinship Terms of Arabian Society in Malang	Sociolinguistics
8	Code Switching in Instagram Captions (A Study in Faculty of Cultural Studies Universitas Brawijaya)	Pragmatics
9	Maxim Violation in Line Chat Group: A Pragmatic Analysis	Pragmatics
10	Volunteers Motivation in Learning Sign Language: A Case Study at CDSS Universitas Brawijaya	Pragmatics
11	An Analysis of The Use of Artistic Code Switching in Song Lyrics By Denny Cak Nan and Guyon Waton	Pragmatics
12	Associative Meaning in The Lyrics of Alan Walker's Popular Song in 2019	Semantics
13	Face Threatening Acts and Politeness Strategies Performed by Will Schofield in 1917 Movie	Pragmatics
14	An Analysis of Slang Words Used in Music Album Entitled "Culture" by Rap Group Named Migos Undergraduate Thesis Proposal	Sociolinguistics
15	Politeness Strategies in The Reviews Given by Buyers in Online Shopping: Study of Language Use in Virtual Communication	Pragmatics
16	Gender Discrimination Portrayed in Film "Kim Ji Young: Born 1982": A Study of Critical Discourse Analysis	Sociolinguistics
17	Functional Delayed Echolalia: Insights from A Movie	Pragmatics
18	"Thank You, It Really Makes My Day": Compliment Responses Revisited	Pragmatics
19	"Slowly But Sure": A Language Deficit of a Child with Down Syndrome	Pragmatics
20	"If Not Us, who?": Preserving Javanese Language through Code Switching Practice in Yowis Ben Movie	Pragmatics
21	An Analysis of the Strategy in Acquiring Vocabulary using Video Games in English Literature Students of Universitas Brawijaya	Second language acquisition
22	A Study of Deixis in Relation to Rhetorical Devices in Donald Trump's Speech on Jerusalem: Pragmatic Approach	Pragmatics

23	The Ability of Elementary School Fourth Graders of Kampung Biru Arema to Acquire and Learn English Vocabulary	Second language acquisition
24	Presupposition Triggers Found in The Jakarta Post and The New York Post on The Ukraine War	Pragmatics
25	Politeness Strategies Used by the Main Characters of “ <i>Vowis Ben</i> ” Movie	Pragmatics
26	Language Learning Strategies and Online Learning Readiness: A Study of College Student Using Online Based Learning Platform Due to Covid-19 Pandemic	English language teaching
27	Maxim Violation Analysis in Teenagers’ Conversation on <i>Dua Garis Biru</i> Movie	Pragmatics
28	Discovering the Covid-19 Outbreak in Indonesia: The Discursive Strategies Used in CNN Indonesia and Kompas.com	Pragmatics
29	Are You Covidient or Covidiot?: A Linguistic Landscape Study on COVID-19 Flyer in Pasuruan	Sociolinguistics
30	Code-Switching Analysis on Radio Broadcasters at Surya Gemilang FM	Pragmatics