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## **A Cross-Disciplinary Study of Citation Types in the Literature Review Section of MPhil Theses**

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### **Abstract**

Citation practices are inevitable in academic writing, but different disciplinary communities have different preferences. This study is a cross-disciplinary study of citation types in the literature review section of MPhil theses. Employing a qualitative approach, textual analysis of thirty theses selected from the disciplines of English and Curriculum Studies was carried out in addition to an analysis of interview data from lecturers and MPhil students of the selected disciplines. A key finding of the study was that while students of the Department of English used more integral citations, students of Curriculum Studies preferred non-integral citations. Integral citation was found with active sentences, S-genitive forms, and multiple forms of citations. Non-integral citation, however, was realised in numerical, single sources, sources with and without pages. While integral citation was used when the information was central to the discussion, non-integral citation was used when the information was peripheral and assumes the status of a general knowledge. The study adds to existing literature on disciplinary variation. **Keywords:** Academic writing, citations practices, disciplines, summary, literature review

## Introduction

In academic writing, through a network of links, writers use what has previously been written; thus, some degree of borrowing is inevitable (Moody, 2007). This phenomenon is referred to as intertextuality, a process whereby a text plays upon other texts (Fox, 1995). It is needed in effective academic communication as a text is always in a dialogue with other texts. For Moody (2007), engagement with prior writings is endemic to academic writing as citation is more of an issue of academic literacy than academic dishonesty. Hyland (2006) maintains that little that is said is original; every utterance transforms, addresses and accommodates earlier utterances in some way.

Making reference to other sources constitutes citation practices. Citation can be seen as a persuasive device that writers use to present their work and to give credit to other authors that have been consulted (Hyland, 1999; Petric, 2005; Thompson & Tribble, 2001). Citation is used as a rhetorical and argumentative device in addition to being a device for acknowledging previous authors' work. According to Hyland (1999), citation helps to define a specific context of knowledge or problem to which a current work is a combination. New work is embedded in a community-generated literature to demonstrate its relevance and importance and to accommodate readers' scanning patterns as readers rapidly search for relevance and newness (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995).

The different citation practices in the disciplines are meaningful because citation mediates the relationship between a writer's argument and the discourse community (Hyland, 1999; Pecorari, 2002; 2006). This means that different disciplinary

communities may have different practices specifically in relation to different citation practices. The present study adopts a cross-disciplinary approach to examine citation types in MPhil theses of the disciplines of English (ENG) and Curriculum Studies (CRS), which have been under-studied in the area of citation practices. Specifically, this study investigates how graduate students, who use English as a second language, of the two selected disciplines, engage in citation practices, focusing on integral and non-integral in-text citation practices, and what reasons underpin the choice of each citation type.

## Studies on Citation Practices

Studies on citation practices include linguistic choices (e.g., Hawes & Thomas, 1997), disciplinary variations (e.g., Hyland, 1999), and citation and quality of work (e.g., Petric, 2005) as well as novice and expert writings (e.g., O'Sullivan, 2009).

First, linguistic resources have been studied in relation to citation. Such studies include Hawes and Thomas (1997); Khodabandeh and Kasir (2019); Manan and Noor (2014); Parry (1998), Santos (2018), and Williams (2006). For instance, Hawes and Thomas (1997) investigated the choice of reporting verbs in a corpus of Research Articles (RAs). Their studies revealed that the main choices for the verb in reporting sentences in the data are the past tense, mainly in the active form, the present tense, and the present perfect. Agbaglo (2017) also investigated the use of reporting verbs in RAs written by lecturers in the Department of English, University of Cape Coast (UCC), using Hyland's (2002) classification of reporting verbs as the theoretical framework. The study found that discourse acts type of

reporting verbs (e.g., states) was preferred by lecturers, as compared to the research acts category of reporting verbs (e.g., examine), and the cognitive acts category of reporting verbs (e.g., consider).

Another area of investigation that has received considerable attention in the literature is the relationship between citation practices and disciplinary variation (Charles, 2006; Hyland, 1999; Mason & Pennington, 2009; Samraj, 2008). For instance, Hyland's (1999) comparison of RAs in hard disciplines (Biology, Electronic Engineering, Physics, Mechanical Engineering) and soft disciplines (Marketing, Applied Linguistics, Sociology, Philosophy) reveals that compared to scholars in hard disciplines, writers in soft disciplines tended to use more citations. Samraj (2008) investigated master's theses of three disciplines: Biology, Philosophy and Linguistics. An analysis of the use of citations and the first-person pronoun in the introductions of these three disciplines showed that Philosophy students create a much stronger authorial presence but establish weaker intertextual links to previous research than the Biology students do in these texts. The Linguistics students occupied a more central position in terms of these dimensions.

Other studies have also been carried out to establish the relationship between citation practices and quality of work. Petric (2005) provided a comparative analysis of citation use in high and low rated theses. Interviews with thirty students and six thesis supervisors were combined with a comparative citation analysis in sixteen high and low rated master's theses. It was found that there were differences in citation use between high and low rated theses in terms of: numbers, types and distribution of the sources used. Schembri (2009) provided

insights into the underlying factors governing citation practices in three higher - and three lower-graded undergraduate dissertations in Education at the University of Malta. On the basis of the analysis of interview data, the study found evidence to suggest a distinction across the parameters of citation density, source type, forms of integrating report and textual voice. Two factors that influenced preference across the above parameters were language competence and previous training in academic writing.

The next line of studies on citation practices is related to experts and novices. O'Sullivan's (2009) study concentrated on citation practices and plagiarism. 409 of the 594 respondents (68.8%) of the study indicated that they had difficulty with citation practices. O'Sullivan (2009) suggests that for novice writers to function optimally in an academic discourse community, they need to look at what experts do. Also, Thompson and Tribble's (2001) investigation of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) student writing showed that novice writers use a limited range of citation types. They suggest that teaching should focus on extending the range of choices on citation forms available to students.

The studies reviewed above have established that citation practices have been studied extensively in the area of linguistic resources, disciplinary variation, and expert and novice writings, but these studies have mainly been based outside of Ghana. Though, postgraduate education has become a matter of serious engagement with all countries, including Ghana, studies on citation practices have received minimal attention in Ghana where postgraduate programmes are offered and theses are written. However, the practices of citation in literature review section of the thesis have not been well established, which may offer

insights into students' writings, and assist supervisors and students to situate their coaching and writing skills respectively. Thus, the present study adopts a cross-disciplinary approach to investigate citation types in the literature review section of MPhil theses. Specifically, the present study adds to existing scholarship by investigating how the selected disciplines employ integral and non-integral citations and the reasons for these choices in the literature review section of MPhil theses.

## **Methods**

### ***Educational Setting***

This study was carried out in a Ghanaian public university, specifically University of Cape Coast, which is in the Central Region of Ghana, in the southern part of the country. It was selected because it runs many postgraduate programmes, especially those at the Master's level; thus, there was a greater chance of obtaining data for the study. The cross-disciplinary study of this research involved the Department of English and Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE), both of University of Cape Coast. English is selected because "it values language in general and writing in particular as powerful and fundamental tools of teaching and learning" (Afful, 2005, p.15). Besides, being a member of the Department of English and the author's interaction with faculty will greatly enhance the interpretation of data from this department. Curriculum Studies is selected in the present study as it has not been involved in current studies on citation practices as far as the author is aware of.

### ***Population and Sample***

The population for the study was students and lecturers of University of Cape Coast.

Postgraduate students of Department of English, and Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE) of the University of Cape Coast served as the population of the study. Besides, the sample was made up of lecturers who teach Research Methods and lecturers who examine theses, and are of the departments of English and DASSE and postgraduate students who had completed their studies. Three lecturers each from the Department of English and the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE) were selected. Lecturers were chosen because they were considered as experts who served as gatekeepers to ensure that the norms and practices of their disciplinary communities were adhered to. They, also, guide or initiate new members into the community to ensure continuity of the disciplinary community. They are, consequently, familiar with citation practices in the selected disciplines. Two graduate students who had completed their dissertations in each of the disciplines were interviewed on what they believed constituted the citation practices of their departments. As apprentices in the socialisation process, students were selected to ascertain how best they have internalised the norms and practices of their disciplines.

### ***Sources of Data***

The data for the study were obtained from two sources: MPhil theses and interviews. The MPhil theses served as the primary data in the present study. Fifteen (15) theses of each of the two disciplines were selected, amounting to thirty theses in all. The literature review (LR) is used to explain research and not just to show what other researchers have done. The review aims to evaluate and show relationships between the works already done, and the current work, and how the work adds to the research already carried out. It also involves why the research needs to be carried out, how the

researcher came to choose certain methodologies or theories to work with (Hart, 1998; Krishnan & Kathpalia, 2002; Kwan, 2006). Thus, the LR section of the theses was selected since it is in this section that citations are most likely to be extensively engaged in and the thesis LR offers an opportunity to see how texts are informed by other texts. Thus, the literature review of the selected theses written by MPhil students constituted the textual data.

The interview data which were obtained from six lecturers and four graduate students served as supplementary data. The interview data gave an in-depth understanding of the citation practices of graduate students in each of the disciplines of the study. The semi-structured interview type was used in the collection of the interview data. This type of interview enabled the researcher to pose questions in a way that allowed respondents to provide the necessary information on the norms regarding citation practice in each of the selected disciplines or communities. Harwood (2008) asserts that the use of the semi-structured interview ensures that richer and more substantive data are collected.

### ***Data Analysis Procedure***

The data analysis procedure is informed by Swales (1990). The study adopts Swales' (1990) analysis of integral and non-integral citation. In examining how graduate students acknowledge information borrowed from other writers in their theses: consideration is given to non-integral and integral forms of citation. With integral citation, the name of the cited author occurs within the sentence, whereas non-integral citation places the author's name outside of the text; either in parentheses, in footnotes/endnotes or by superscript numbers (Hyland, 1999). In the former, the meaning of the sentence does not

depend on the citation. The citation can be taken out of the sentence, and it will not affect the meaning or the grammatical structure of the sentence. The latter is the citation that plays an explicit grammatical role within a sentence. Hyland (1999) and Petric (2005) notice that integral citations foreground the researcher, while non-integral citations emphasise the reported research or information. Swales (1990) suggests that citation convention (numerical or author/date) may affect the choice between integral and non-integral forms and the work argues that numerical conventions predispose the writer to use non-integral citation. In other words, the use of page numbers, the inclusion of the surname within the sourced text or otherwise and date of publication of the material may all affect the use of integral or non-integral citations.

### ***Coding of data***

For easy identification of the individual theses, the theses were coded as ENG for English and CRS for Curriculum Studies. Numbers 1 to 15 were given to specify and identify each thesis. For instance, the third thesis of English is given the code ENG 3. The interview data was also coded as ENI for English interview extract and CSI for Curriculum Studies interview extract. Citations in the selected rhetorical section were identified and recorded. They were further categorized as either integral or non-integral. Each citation was recorded, according to its presentation, as direct quote, block quote, summary/paraphrase or generalisation (Hyland, 2000). Frequency analysis was performed and comparison was made between the two corpora in order to determine the similarities and differences between the two disciplines in citation behaviour. This approach of counting the frequency was adopted from Yeh (2010).

## Findings and Discussion

This section explores the integral and non-integral forms of citation. The analysis is presented in four parts: distribution of types of citation, integral citation, non-integral citations, and reasons for the choice of citation type. Frequencies of occurrence of the above-mentioned features are used in the analysis. The findings are supported with evidence from the textual and interview data. The reasons that underpin the choice of these features are also given in the analysis.

### *Distribution of Types of Citation in the Disciplines*

First, the analysis of the data showed that both disciplines employ integral and non-integral forms of citation, but they do so in varying degrees. The findings of the use of integral and non-integral forms in the two disciplines are presented in Table I.

Table 1: Distribution of Types of Citation in the Disciplines

Types	ENG		CRS	
	N	%	N	%
Integral	2324	86.9	2133	78.4
Non integral	349	13.1	586	21.6
Total	2673	100	2719	100

According to Table 1, ENG students prefer the integral forms. The integral form is 2324 (86.9%) for English while CRS is 2133 (78.4%). This difference in the use of the integral form in the disciplines means that ENG prefers the use of integral forms to non-integral forms. This finding is similar to what Schembri (2009) found with Applied Linguistics students, where the students preferred integral citations with author in subject position. Adel and Garretson (2006) also found that attribution is more common in the soft disciplines. In the humanities and social sciences, writers not only frequently attribute statements and acts to other researchers (attribution), but also spend considerable time discussing fellow

researchers and their ideas as well as classic theories.

### *Integral Citation in the Disciplines*

This section of the analysis considers the use of integral citation in the data, supplemented with the interview data. As explained earlier, integral citation has the name of the cited author within the sentence (Hyland, 1999). The citation plays an explicit grammatical role within a sentence. Hyland (1999) and Petric (2005) notice that integral citations foreground the researcher. Instances of the use of the integral forms in both data include the following:

Extract 1: *According to Brown and Gilman*, Latin had “tu” (T) as the singular pronoun (ENG 3).

Extract 2: *Aristotle* defines rhetoric as the faculty of finding the means of persuasion (ENG 14).

Extract 3: The Gunning Fog index was created by *Robert Gunning* in 1952 (ENG 15).

Extract 4: On the African scene, *ASSP (1968)*, formulated the general objectives (CRS 3).

Extract 5: To *Dewey*, morality can be identified with either the inner state of mind (CRS 4).

Extract 6: *Tyler (1949)* mentions three important elements in the selection of learning (CRS 14).

From the above extracts (1-6), it is noticed that, in the integral forms, the name of the cited author occurs within the sentence. The meaning of the sentence depends on the citation. If the citation is taken out of the sentence, the meaning or the structure of the sentence will be adversely affected. For example, in Extract 2, if *Aristotle*, the name of the cited source, is deleted from the sentence, the rest of the construction will be ungrammatical because the remaining construction ... *defines rhetoric as the faculty of finding all the means of persuasion on the subject* lacks a subject. Similarly, in Extract 6, *Tyler (1949)*, the name of the cited source forms an integral part of the whole construction. If the source is, thus, taken out of the rest of the sentence, the remaining part of the sentence will be ungrammatical. This is why it is said that in

integral citation, the source forms part of the sentence. For a construction to be called a sentence, it must have a subject which is explicitly or implicitly expressed and a predicate, and it should make a complete thought (Nesfield, 2008; Sekyi-Baidoo, 2003; Wiredu, 1999).

It can also be observed from the above extracts (1-6) that the position of the source in integral citations is not fixed; its position in a sentence varies. In Extracts 1 and 2, the source begins the sentence and they may be considered as examples of active sentences with human subjects. According to Greenbaum (1996), the active voice is the norm and will generally take the order, subject-verb-object. Besides, these sentences are simple sentences with one clause. There is one finite verb in each of the extracts.

However, in Extract 3, the source is introduced by a *by-phrase*. This kind of structure is what is commonly referred to as a passive construction. Greenbaum (1996) posits that a passive construction has the active object as subject, the active subject will optionally appear after the verb in a *by* or *fey-phrase* and the active verb phrase will be turned into a passive phrase introduced by the introduction of the auxiliary *be* followed by the -ed participle of the main

verb. Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) postulate that the importance of the passive form lies in reversing the normal order of agentive and affected elements, and adjusting the clause structure to end-focus and end-weight. They explain end-focus as the tendency to place new information towards the end of the clause and end-weight as the tendency to reserve the final position for the more complex parts of a clause or sentence.

The integral form of citation was also realised in the form of the S-genitive which is also known as possessive genitives (Quirk

and Greenbaum, 1973). This is illustrated below:

Extract 7: There are four categories noted in *Farb's work* on name-calling  
.... (ENG 1)

Extract 8: From *Amoah's assertion*, the right to freedom of expression ...  
(CRS 6)

The use of the possessive form of the cited source is seen in Extracts 7 and 8. In Extract 7, for instance, we have “Farb’s work”, where the writer of the thesis attributes the information (work) to the sources (Farb) to establish credibility, wanting the author to be identified with the work.

Also, single sources with dates and page numbers but without quotation marks were found in the data:

Extract 9: *Bruce (1989: 2)* suggests that this ability enables non-native learners ... (ENG 15)

Extract 10: *Kopple (1997:14)* observes that specific instruction on meta-discourse... (ENG 7)

In Extract 9, Bruce is quoted on non-native learners; however, the presentation of the information is not enclosed in quotation though the source has surname, “Bruce”; date, “1989”, and page number, “2”, instantiating the use of expected quotation. This finding was interesting but not surprising because these writers of these theses were still novices who were learning

the norms and practices of the academic community, they find themselves.

With reference to single sources with dates and page numbers but without quotation marks, the supervisors of these theses and examiners actually responded, in the interview, that the convention of the disciplines are with reference to the use of author, date, and page:

*For direct quotation, the page number and the year must be provided.* (CSI 1)

*If you took the information in its original form; then, you have to include the author, date and the page number.* (ENI 2)

Thus, both disciplines agree on the use of author and page number when a researcher

quotes from an original source as evinced in the interview extracts, CSI 1 and ENI 2 above. Thus, in CSI 2, we are informed that



direct quotation needs a page number and year.

Apart from these features, multiple sources also occurred in the integral form in the ENG and CRS data; CRS had only five instances of the use of this feature. The

multiple sources are provided to indicate that these sources, which have been provided, express a similar view. It can also be observed that the multiple sources are used for the purpose of exemplification, to cite instances of authors to give credence to what is about to be said or has been said. Instances from the data are these:

Extract 11: *Dulay and Burt (1974) and Ervin (1974), among other researchers, argued...*  
(ENG 8)

Extract 12: *Many programme designers like Maucher (1962), Kerr (1968), Hirst (1969) as well as Lawton (1973) cherish the objective-oriented modal.*  
(CRS 1)

In Extract 12, the writer claims that there are programme designers, and he gives examples to illustrate his point. This may be seen as a competent writing style of novices who are being apprenticed to become

experts as in academic writing, evidence must be given to support claims. The rarity of the use of this feature in CRS may be explained with what an interviewee (CSI) said

:

*I prefer the middle and the one that is brought at the end because hmm you are able to explain or after quoting or paraphrasing, you can bring a lot of different works from different authors and you put them together; works which are similar and at the end of it, you cite instead of bringing it at the beginning and citing a number of authors.*  
(CSI 3)

As indicated in the interview data, CSI 3, when multiple sources are brought at the beginning of the sentence, it does not allow the paragraph to flow in the sense that by the time a person finishes reading all these names, he or she might have forgotten what he or she started with. This may explain why the CRS data did record only five uses of this feature of multiple sources.

However, a different view of the use of multiple sources was presented during the interview. The view was that multiple sources could be used at the top of a work as a heading of section and not brought at the end of the work as a footnote to signify that the theme which is being discussed does not come from one person alone and that many scholars support that theme:

*The thing is not coming from them alone. We are talking about them as having shared in that knowledge, not much like people who have originated what we are talking about, but that they support and they give credence to.*  
(ENI 4)

In ENI 4, it is indicated that multiple sources are used when ideas authors share in a common knowledge, by supporting that idea. The difference here is that the use of

multiple sources, as illustrated in ENI 4 above, is not in the integral form but it does occur as a heading. The textual analysis gives evidence of that:

Extract 13: *Cummins (2000) Baker (2000) and Skuitnabb-Kangas (2000)* (ENG 8)

Extract 14: *Owusu-Ansah (1991, 1997, 1998, 2004)* (ENG 7)

In Extract 13, the writer uses these names as a heading when he intends to discuss current research report about the importance of Bilingual children's mother tongue. He One of those interviewed refers to the use of multiple sources as thematic presentation of a review:

discusses the major themes that run through the works of the authors of these theses, but he does not discuss the sources one after the other.

Now it might happen that there are some of the things that Biber have(sic) said that Owusu-Ansah have(sic) said that actually overlap. *But if you are doing something like thematic review you want to see how the themes run through different authors.* (ENI 5)

Sometimes some people present literature review as repetition. Sometimes, *something said by three people they will say them individually instead of presenting them as one idea.* (CSI 6)

In ENI 5 and CSI 6, it is seen that multiple sources are used to show how a theme runs through different authors; thus, it is not expected that such a common idea should be

presented author by author. Furthermore, pronouns were not left out in the names that were cited. Pronouns came in varied forms and positions, as shown below:

Extract 15: *Their* ideas led to what had become known as the Direct Method. (ENG 11)

Extract 16: According to *him, ....* (CRS9)

Examples of pronouns in integral citation are found in extracts 15 and 16 above. While extract 15 has the possessive pronoun, "theirs" attributed to "ideas", the objective case "him" is employed in Extract 16. Unfortunately, these pronouns made references to only the authors that had been

consulted. However, personal pronouns which made reference to these writers themselves were not found in the present

analysis. Hyland's (2001) study shows significant underuse of authorial reference by students and clear preferences for

avoiding these forms in contexts which involved making arguments or claims. He concludes that the individualistic identity implied in the use of *I* may be problematic

for many L2 writers, including Ghanaian graduates. However, it was evident in the interview data that writers need to sometimes use personal pronouns like *I*:

*And you need even to use the singular person pronoun so that the person will know that it is you. Some use the passive and all that. So, you see, to really carry the message home, use the first person or when you are in a group, use the first-person plural. (ENI 7)*

The interviewee in ENI 7 says that not only is a pronoun used in reviewing literature but the use of the singular person pronoun is key. Although Hyland (2001) postulates that writers cannot avoid projecting a particular impression of themselves and how they stand in relation to their argument, their disciplines and their readers, the writers in this study avoided projecting themselves. The absence of the pronouns can be attributed to the fact that the writers feel that they cannot add their voices. To borrow the words of Schembri (2009), the writer feels that s/he is a 'nobody' to add his or her voice to the ongoing discourse. Dontcheva-Navratilova (2008) further explains that these tendencies can be interpreted as a further signal of the reluctance of the writers to commit themselves to a distinctive position towards the views of others.

The absence of the pronouns may be due to the long-standing point that academic writing is objective. Arnaudet and Barrett (1984) and Lester (1993) argue that in academic writing, writers should aim at being 'objective' in their expression of ideas; thus, writers must not make specific reference to personal opinions. In contrast, Tang and John (1999) and Hyland (2001) maintain that though academic writing has traditionally been thought of as a convention-bound monolithic entity that involves distant, convoluted and impersonal prose, there is room for negotiation of identity within academic writing, and thus academic writing needs not be totally devoid of a writer's presence. Hyland (2001) says further that academic writing is not just about conveying an ideational content; it is also about the representation of self.

### ***Non- Integral Citation in the Disciplines***

Non-integral citation places the author's name outside of the text; either in parentheses, in footnotes/endnotes or by superscript numbers (Hyland, 1999). Thus, the meaning of the sentence does not depend on the citation. The citation can be taken out of the sentence, and it will not affect the meaning or the grammatical structure of the

sentence. As can be seen in Table 1, the frequency of occurrence for non-integral citations is 349 (13.1%) for ENG and 586 (21.6%) for CRS. This means that CRS students used more non-integral citations in their theses than English students. The data below show the use of non-integral citation in the data:

Extract 17: These are semantic extension, semantic shift.... (*Bokamba, 1982*)  
(ENG 7)

Extract 18: The teacher is the final “filter .... (*Marsh & Wills, 2003, p. 194*).  
(CRS 9)

In Extract 17, the information has been separated from the source that it was taken from. The name of the cited material, “Bokamba, 1982” does not occur in the sentence. The name can be taken from the sentence and its absence will not affect the meaning of the whole sentence in anyway. This is why the name is put in parentheses as cited sources have to be acknowledged.

The non-integral forms in the data set were realised in different forms: the numerical forms, single sources, multiple sources, sources with pages, and sources without pages. First, the non-integral form was realised as the numerical form, that is, the superscript form in only ENG data but CRS data did not record any of this:

Extract 19: Kinship terms among the Yoruba raises serious questions...<sup>3</sup> (ENG 1)

Extract 19 has the superscript,<sup>3</sup> indicating that the full form of the source is attached as footnote. This use of numbers for non-integral forms confirms Swales’ (1990) view that numerical conventions predispose the

writer to use non-integral citation. During the interview, a lecturer of English drew attention to the fact that, at first, numbers in either superscript or footnotes were used, but, now, “things have changed” and these numbers are no longer in use:

*There was time when we were using numbers and indexing, footnotes, and then we have endnote and footnotes and things like that, but later on we realize that there is a change in citation practices. And now we have “According to Halliday”, ... so you don’t have anything like numbers for referencing.* (ENI 8)

In ENI 8 above, the interviewee explains that, previously, the practice was the use of numbers, indexing and footnotes, in attributing information to sources. Currently, the citation practice has changed from the

use of numbers. When other lecturers were asked what could have accounted for the change from the use of the superscript and footnotes, the responses were these:

*I don’t really know actually. I think I got to see that people were doing it differently and so you also do it that way.* (ENI 9)

*Because the use of these numbers was formerly the practice; now, it no longer existed.* (ENI 10)

Clearly, ENI 9 and 10 do not attribute any reason for the change in citation practice. Notwithstanding, it can say that different house styles of journals and even institutions require the use of specific citation styles. Currently, University of Cape Coast has adopted American Psychological Association (APA) house style for presentation of sources, which, definitely,

nullifies the use of superscript and footnotes in acknowledging sources.

Also, the non-integral form, as illustrated with Extracts 17 and 18 took the form of single source to signify the point that the cited information was taken from one source and if the source was the originator, as pointed out in the interview data below, the non-integral form would not have been used:

*A number of people use non-integral form because of the fact that the people are not the people who have originated the things and that they don't have it exclusively.* (ENI 11)

In addition, there were uses of multiple sources for cited information. This is illustrated below:

Extract 20: The study by Brown and Gilman serves as a reference point for further research on power and solidarity, (*Brown and Levinson 1987; Watts 1992; Held 1992; Wardhaugh 1992*) (ENG 3)

Extract 21: It is vital to state here that objective-oriented evaluation of the curriculum generally has the sympathy of curriculum development (e.g. Tyler 1949; Pophan 1970; Taba 1962; Wheeler 1983). (CRS 10)

In Extract 20, the writer of the thesis attributes the sources of information, (i.e., “Brown and Gilman serve as a reference point for further research on power and solidarity”), to many authors, “Brown and Levinson 1987; Watts 1992; Held 1992; Wardhaugh 1992”. The multiple sources have been used in the data because the writers have to synthesise information when they are writing, possibly, because there are many cases where an issue has been discussed by many scholars in the literature. To show evidence of wide reading and high socialisation into the academic community,

in writing, all these authors have to be referred to and acknowledged. The high socialisation of novices into the academic community, in writing, is evident when a writer is able to summarise the key concepts that are being addressed by the different authors.

The interview data confirm the reasons that underlie the use of multiple sources. For the purposes of avoiding overlapping and showing how the material has been well absorbed, multiple sources are used in non-integral citation form, as pointed out in the interview extract below:

Now it might happen that there are some of the things that *Biber have(sic) said that Owusu-Ansah have(sic) said that actually they overlap, but if you are doing something like thematic review so you want to see how the themes run through different authors.*

(ENI 12)

We have what we call absorbing the material. Sometimes, some material is not credited to a particular person. Many people have said it. We are talking about them as having shared in that knowledge much like people who have originated what we are talking about, but that they support and they give credence to; not that they are the originators, no.

(ENI 13)

As seen in ENI 13, for the purpose of synthesis, information is gleaned from multiple sources, as in “absorbing the material”, rather than outlining each sources differently.

Moreover, the non-integral forms also had sources with pages to indicate that the message is a direct quotation from the source. Though it holds that the use of dates plus page numbers indicates the direct quote

of information from a source, it was not always the case in some of the theses that were examined. There were situations where page numbers were used but the information was without a quotation mark. A possible explanation could be that these writers are not yet experts and they are still under training, so they do not have a firm control of how handling citation practices. An illustration is provided below:

Extract 22: These seemingly divergent approaches to language teaching also led to changes in the language textbook (*Harding 1967:87*)

(ENG 11)

As seen in Extract 22 above, the source is an example of non-integral citation with year and page number, indicating that it is a quotation, but the information presented is without quotation marks which usually accompanies quoted sources. This can be explained as an error on the part of the candidate.

The interview data revealed some reasons that underlie the choice of integral and/ or non-integral forms, which are discussed in this last section of the findings and discussion. First, it was confirmed in the interview data that both forms of citation are used by writers when a thesis was being written, which is instantiated below:

### ***Reasons for the Choice of Citation Type in the Disciplines***

We use the two.

(CSI 14)

Both ways are used.

(ENI 15)

Extract CSI 14 and ENI 15 provide instances of the use of integral and non-integral citation by the disciplines, a similar finding to what the textual analysis revealed that the two disciplines employ both forms of citation type, though at different levels.

On the other hand, the reasons for the use of a type of variation differed among interviewees and across the disciplines. The most common explanation for the use of both types was for the purposes of variation to avoid monotony:

For variation because I think that you have read about ten works you can't go like according to Kofi, this is this; according to Ama, this is this. *It makes the work boring so, you may want to quote at a point. Integrate the names of the people just for variation to be there.*

(ENI 16)

*I vary how I use it because I want to make it nicer. I don't want monotony.*

(CSI 17)

*People vary these things because one, variation is attractive. If you do it all the time in one way, it may be boring so, people may decide I will vary it here.*

(ENI 18)

The idea of variation to avoid monotony is alluded to in Extracts ENI 16, CSI 17, and ENI 18. Thus, sometimes, a writer may want to integrate the sources into the sentence or quote. There was an explanation of what this variation meant as indicated by some interviewees in the earlier extracts (ENI 16,

CSI 17, & ENI 18). This explanation was given by one of the lecturers of Department of English. For him, this variation was not for the sake of the reader but variation because there is movement from one level of writing to another:

*I think that it is more of the solidness of the discourse than this thing. Why do I bring it to the first position when the thing is known to the people already? Not so much of variation as needed by the reader but variation needed on the fact that you are gliding on the plane and the presentation and that focus must change as you glide.*

(ENI 19)

For this particular interviewee in ENI 19, the variation must be about the discourse in that there should be variation based on how information has been presented, focusing on

a glide rather than throwing in any type of citation as and when a writer desires.

Another reason for the choices of the types of citation was that it was done unconsciously and out of ignorance:

*And even when I do it, I do it unconsciously.*  
(ENI 20)

*Some people do it because they don't know or if they know they don't care either.  
All they know is that you must acknowledge sources.*  
(ENI 21)

Other reasons were given apart from the unconsciousness and the variation. These

were that sometimes supervisor's suggestion may warrant a choice of a citation type:

*It depends on the suggestions that are made by a supervisor. Yes, in most, in most cases, the supervisor will tell you that your style of citation is monotonous or one way of citation so you have to vary it so that is why I have been using different styles of citation.*  
(CSI 22)

In CSI 22, it is seen that supervisors may suggest a change in citation so as to avoid monotony and call for the use of different styles, which appeals to variation as a need to employ a citation type.

Moreover, the nature of the information plays a role in the selection of a typology. Nature, here, is seen in terms of who owns that information, whether we are talking about an originator of a concept or many people who share in a theme or concept:

*I use the two and it depends on the nature of the paragraph and how the paragraph will flow. At times when it is brought at the beginning, the paragraph will not flow. There will be inconsistency or meaninglessness in the paragraph. In most cases, when you want a more meaningful understanding of the paragraph, you bring it at the beginning. And sometimes at the end, depending on how meaningful you want the sentence to be.* (CSI 23)

CSI 23 shows that placing reference at the beginning (integral citation) distorts the flow of discussion, but a more meaningful discussion requires placing references at the

end (non-integral). Similarly, the structure of the discourse influences the choice of the typology of citation:

*Any choice you make presumes something. First of all, discourse structure is part of it and studies have shown that if the reference occurs in bracket at the end of the sentence, perhaps it shows that it is not a very central piece of the conversation that is going on. If it is at the beginning of the sentence, in other words, you work it into the sentence itself rather than parenthesis, according to those studies, then it means that that reference or acknowledgement is very much central to what you are writing* (ENI 24).



Extract ENI 24 distinguishes between the use of integral and non-integral citation; that is, reference in brackets (non-integral) shows that the sourced information is not central to the on-going discussion. However, the key nature of an issue or a point calls for “work it into the sentence itself rather than parenthesis”, which is integral citation.

Though a reason is given for the preference of one form of citation over the other as in

*This is at any rate a theory. In other words, in practice, you may find that some people may include the authors name in the sentence even though it is not really very central. On the other hand, some people might put the reference in bracket at the end of the sentence even though it is very central to the understanding of what is going on (ENI 25).*

The attitudes of a writer towards the information will also influence the choice of a citation form. Thus, a writer’s view of the

*And sometimes, it is not a question of what the person actually said but the feeling you have for that thing. For instance, I’m talking about the Akan concept of the soul and I decide to use some particular person’s work as the basis of my analysis. Though he hasn’t said it alone but I use his idea and that will generally be the integral form because I have narrowed down on his work, his presentation (ENI 26).*

*Also, particularly when the idea is by a number of people then it is not that you are not interested in the people or theme, but it has become general knowledge, the knowledge assumes more importance than the sources. General knowledge means... that it is for many of us so, then the according to so and so 1994 does not have to be... (ENI 27)*

While ENI 26 touches on the perception towards a source in determining the choice of integral citation, ENI 27 appeals to the non-integral use of citation since general

the “centralness” of the idea to the information, the interviewee in ENI 24 counteracts what he says earlier by saying that this is only in theory but in practice people violate the principle whether deliberately or non-deliberately. That is, in practice, people may know of these principles but will not use them or they may not be aware of such principles at all. This explanation points back to the “Ignorance reason” which has been stated earlier:

information will account for a choice of integral or non-integral form of citation:

knowledge, evident in multiple authors, cannot be cited as “according to...”, making the knowledge assume more importance than the sources.

## Conclusion and Implications

In examining how graduate students in the disciplines of English and Curriculum

Studies acknowledge information borrowed from other writers in their theses, it is evident from the study that both disciplines used both the integral and non-integral citations in their theses. However, while English uses integral citation more, Curriculum Studies uses non-integral citations more. The interview data revealed that integral citation was used when the information was central to the discussion. Again, the perception of a particular source or author also attracted the use of the integral form. However, non-integral citation was used when the information was not central to the discussion and assumes the status of a general knowledge. Generally, a choice of a particular citation type was also motivated by variation to avoid monotony, ignorance, and suggestions from supervisors.

The findings of the study have some implications for theory and pedagogy. Theoretically, it can be inferred from the findings of the study that though there were no specific norms that guide members (both students and lecturers) in each of the disciplines in making reference to other studies, there are differences in how citations are made in these disciplines. For

instance, English students favoured the use of integral forms of citations more while Curriculum Studies students used non-integral forms of citations more. With this, the study has added to the existing scholarship on disciplinary variation. It has confirmed the existing view that there are variations that exist between disciplines in the practice of citation in master's thesis. This study emerging from a geographical setting of a country where English is still used as official language (e.g., Afful, 2005) adds to studies on disciplinary variation. Also, studies in citation practices have often been done in the USA, leaving Africa alone. Studies in citation practices have not received much attention in Ghana; thus, this study adds to existing studies on citation practices.

As indicated by Kroll (1990), becoming a writer is a complex and continual process in that scholarship originates from the ability to synthesise past insights and apply them in the pursuit of continued inquiry. It is hoped that all who engage in academic writing will take it that reference to other people's work is a necessary requirement for effective academic communication since a text is always in a dialogue with other texts.

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