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# Using local style when writing in English: the citing behaviour of Indonesian authors in English research article introductions

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## ABSTRACT

When writing journal articles in English, authors are expected to comply with the conventionally appropriate rhetorical style. This may be problematic for non-native speakers of English, such as Indonesian authors who write in English. The purpose of this study is to investigate the rhetorical style of reviewing prior knowledge in English research articles (RAs) written by Indonesian academics published in English journals. Forty English RA introductions by Indonesian authors were analysed on the authors' communicative functions and type and tense of citations when citing other authors' work in their English RA introductions. The results show that when writing RAs in English, Indonesian authors use citation mostly to support the importance of their research topic and prefer presenting positive justification rather than critiquing or negatively evaluating other authors' work in order to identify a research gap. They also prefer using a non-integral type of citation and present tense in citing the relevant literature. These are different from those found in RA introductions in international journals published in English. This implies that although writing RAs in English, the Indonesian authors still use the rhetorical style acceptable in Indonesian academic practices and this might be problematic for English readers.

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literature review; citation  
style; communicative  
functions

## 1. Introduction

University lecturers and postgraduate students around the world, including Indonesia, are facing increasing pressure either from the government or academic community to publish in a reputable international journal for various reasons, such as to show their contribution in developing readers' knowledge on a particular topic, to complete an academic programme or to introduce and promote the authors and the authors' institution to a wider scope of readership (Coleman, 2014; Day, 2007); however, it seems that Indonesian authors find it very difficult to publish their articles in reputable international journals organized by international publishing organizations such as Routledge, Taylor & Francis, Elsevier or

Springer because they are very competitive and publish only high-quality articles in terms of their content and language.

Indonesian authors can publish their articles in research journals written in English and published in Indonesia such as *ITB Journal of Science*, *ITB Journal of Engineering Science*, *Indonesian Quarterly*, *Indonesian Journal of Geography* or *Acta Medica Indonesiana*; these journals are classified as international journals and indexed by an international indexing organization such as Scopus (Kopertis XII, 2012). Although the articles included in these journals are written in English, we suspect that they are still written rhetorically using the citation style acceptable in Indonesian academic practices and cultural style, especially in the ways authors cite relevant literature which is different from those by authors of other international journals. If this is really the case, international readers could find it difficult to read such articles. Also, when submitting articles to more reputable international journals, the Indonesian authors may be unsuccessful.

### **1.1. Functions of literature review in research article introductions**

One important aspect of academic texts such as essays, theses, research reports, dissertations and research articles (RAs) is the review of relevant literature (Hyland, 1999, 2000; Kwan, 2009; Kwan, Chan, & Lam, 2012; Nunn, Guefrachi, & Mansour, 2012; Oliver, 2012; Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Colleen, 2012; Soler-Monreal & Gil-Salmon, 2011). According to Onwuegbuzie et al. (2012), literature review is ‘... an interpretation of a selection of published and/or unpublished documents available from various sources on a specific topic that optimally involves summarization, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of the documents’ (p. 2). A similar definition is suggested by Machi and McEvoy as ‘... a written document that presents a logically argued case founded on a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge about a topic of study. This case establishes a convincing thesis to answer the study’s question’ (as cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012, p. 4). In addition, in a piece of academic writing the writers always attempt to refer to any relevant literature to show that their writing is connected in some ways with other references or available knowledge in the literature, because the main purpose of academic writing is to extend readers’ knowledge on a particular topic (Belcher, 2009). Thus, it is impossible for an author to extend a reader’s knowledge on a particular topic without evaluating and discussing the available knowledge in the literature beforehand.

There are several practical objectives of citing literature or references in an academic text, such as respecting other authors’ work, avoiding plagiarism, supporting an argument, helping to promote colleagues writing on the same or a related topic, convincing readers that we have read plenty of readings on the topic and showing readers that we are a member of a particular discourse or discipline community (Swales & Feak, 2012) and to support the argument for why further study is necessary (Denney & Tewksbury, 2013). Therefore, according to Swales and Feak (2012), citation on related references can be found in many places in an RA particularly where an argument and persuasion are necessary, such as in the introduction and discussion sections.

Probably the most important feature of the rhetorical work of reviewing literature in academic texts is its communicative function or objective. Swales (1990, 2004) suggests that there are at least five possible communicative functions of citation in an RA introduction: to disagree in some respects with the previous research results; to consider the results of

previous studies are invalid and unreliable; to answer certain questions left from previous studies; to find the need to look further in the development of a particular case; and to retell what is mentioned in the cited literature without any attempt of the authors showing their stance towards the information contained in the cited literature. These five functions of literature review mainly involve some kind of critical analysis of the cited literature and this is important in academic text such as RAs because readers in many disciplines expect authors to show their own view or position towards the cited literature. According to Feak and Swales (2009) this requires authors to state what they think about (and not just to know) the work related to their study. Similarly, Saunders and Rojon (2011) claim that all authors ‘need to show they understand the context of their research: its key theories, concepts and ideas, and the major issues and debates about the research topic’ (p. 156). Corbin and Strauss (as cited in Saunders & Rojon 2011), claim that if a literature review is effective, clear gaps in what is known and what has not been researched previously are identified. However, according to Samraj (2002) some citations can be used for a different purpose than indicating a gap, such as ‘to provide support for the topic generalization or centrality claim being made or to justify the gap created’ (p. 7).

## **1.2. Tense and aspect of citation in academic texts**

The use of a different verb tense and aspect of citation is one of most important linguistic features of the literature review in academic writing (Chen, 2009). According to Feak and Swales (2009), tense is the preferred form of verb based on the timing of an event or action and aspect is the choice of sentence patterns indicating whether or not an activity or event has been completed. Chen suggests that there are three commonly used tenses in citation: past tense (a reference to a single study), present perfect tense (a reference to an area of inquiry) and present tense (a reference to generally accepted knowledge of the field). Feak and Swales (2009) add that the tense of citation is also related to the choice of verb used; the verbs of ‘argue, suggest, claim, or maintain’ tend to be used for present tense; the verbs of ‘find, identify, reveal’ tend to indicate a past tense. However, according to Feak and Swales (2009), the difference among these three different tenses is not too obvious; authors may change from using one form to another for a particular purpose. The change from past tense to present perfect tense and then to present tense by RA authors suggests that the cited ideas or research findings are closer to the authors’ own research in various forms, such as closer to the author’s opinion itself, closer to the topic or the author’s own research findings or closer to the theory or knowledge that has been generally acceptable (in the acceptable current state of knowledge).

Chen (2009) analysed the use of verb tense in the literature review sections of 100 PhD dissertations written in English in multiple disciplines (i.e. linguistics, sociology, economics, marketing, philosophy, physics, chemistry, computer, biology and engineering) from several different universities in the United States. Chen categorized the disciplines of the dissertation into two groups (humanities, sciences) and the verb tenses into four (present tense, past tense, perfect tense and other tenses). The results of this study show that the use of present tense is the most dominant in all disciplines, with an average frequency of 70.6%, while past tense is the second most dominant with an average frequency of only 15.8%. According to Chen (2009), authors usually use past tense when referring to the new research result cited in their literature review, but when that particular research result or finding has become ‘a

tenet of science' then the authors use present tense (p. 144). Thus, the use of present tense is usually dominant in an academic text because authors prefer citing already widely accepted information or knowledge rather than a particular new research result.

Malcom (as cited in Swales, 1990) suggests that the concept of generality and specificity may also affect an author's choice of tenses in citation text – when referring to general information or the information already widely accepted by the discourse community of a particular field, authors tend to use present tense; but when referring to specific information in the literature, authors tend to use past tense. Thus, past tense in citation text is often used when the writer refers to a particular piece of research that was conducted in the past, the present perfect tense is used when the author refers to the conclusion of the findings of some previous research topics, while the present tense is used to refer to opinions or theories that are commonly acceptable or known in a particular field.

### **1.3. Citation types in academic texts**

In terms of sentence or clause structure, two types of citation have been suggested by Feak and Swales (2009): integral and non-integral. A study by Hyland (1999) on the type of citation used in journal articles in several disciplines, such as biology, physics, electronic engineering and philosophy, for example, found that the use of non-integral citation was much more frequent than the use of integral citation in the majority of his samples, except in philosophy in which the integral type of citation was more frequently used. A similar result was found by Yeh (2010) when she analysed RAs in English in the discipline of teaching English as a second language. This is because 'content counts for more than connections' (Cronin as cited in Swales & Feak, 2012, p. 340) because the main objective of citing other's work is to present all information from studies or literature relevant to the present work in order to justify the importance of the present topic and research activity. Nunn et al. (2012) also found that all 36 citations in their research data of applied chemistry papers are in the form of non-integral citation. According to Nunn et al., by using this type of citation authors positioned themselves as 'neutral' towards the information contained in the reference and if the authors want to position themselves as distant from such information, they tend use the integral type of citation (p. 47).

### **1.4. Citation style of Indonesian authors in RA introductions**

In the Indonesian context, at least two rhetorical studies on the way authors cite literature in their RA introductions have so far been conducted. Arsyad (2003) found that citations in Indonesian RAs are present throughout the introduction section of the RAs, even from the very beginning of the section. In addition, according to Yeh (2010), although citations are often used in all sections of a journal paper, they tend be used more frequently in the introduction of the text. Arsyad (2003) also suggests that citations are used for several different communicative purposes. First, they are used to prepare readers' background information or knowledge, such as definition of key terms, a description of the history of research topics and government policy. This introduces the field of research in order to put it into the context of the specific research topic. The second purpose of citation is to support the importance of the research topic by demonstrating that the problem raised in the study actually exists; this is done by using facts and statistics quoted from literature

sources. The last purpose of citation in the Indonesian RAs was to implicitly show readers that the authors are already familiar with the research topic; this is done by referring to the work of others relevant to the topic of the study. By so doing, the authors tell readers that they follow the latest developments on the topic of their research.

The study by Adnan (2009) on RA introductions written in Indonesian by Indonesian speakers revealed that negative evaluation or critique of relevant literature, in order to create a research space as commonly found in RA introductions written in English and published in international journals, is not found in Indonesian RA introductions. According to Adnan, a possible reason for this is that the Indonesian RA writers may find it unnecessary to do so in order to convince readers that their research activity is important because there is a culturally more acceptable way to do so. They only need to prove that there was a serious practical problem on an important topic which needs to be investigated or solved. Another possible reason was because the Indonesian writers do not need to compete keenly in order to publish an article in an Indonesian research journal. In other words, the style of literature review found in the Indonesian RA introduction is not affected by the language of the article but by the context of the research and the journal article writing in Indonesia.

### **1.5. Rationale for this study and research questions**

The studies by Arsyad (2003) and Adnan (2009) are important in order to identify how Indonesian authors rhetorically address the communicative functions in their Indonesian or English RA introductions; however, as far as we are concerned there is no study on how Indonesian authors rhetorically review literature when writing RAs in English in multi-discipline journals. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to identify how Indonesian authors rhetorically review relevant literature in their English RA introductions in several different international journals. Another reason for this study is that, as also observed by Kwan (2006), studies on how authors review literature in English texts written by non-native speakers are still lacking while the results can be very useful especially for non-native speakers when writing in English. The main reason for including RAs from several different disciplines in this study is to know whether or not there are similarities and/or differences on the rhetorical style of reviewing the literature in English RA introductions by Indonesian authors among articles in different disciplines. With these in mind, this study aimed at answering the following questions:

- (1) For what communicative functions do Indonesian authors cite literature in their RA introductions written in English in multiple disciplines?
- (2) What tenses are used by the Indonesian authors when citing others' work in their RA introductions written in English in multiple discipline?
- (3) What type of citation is more dominantly used by the Indonesian authors in their RA introductions written in English in multiple disciplines?

It is expected that the answers to these questions will shed light on how Indonesian authors cite literature when writing RA introductions in English published in English-medium journals.

**Table 1.** Research articles in the corpus of this study.

Number	Journal	Code	Number of RAs	%
1.	Indonesian Journal of Chemistry	IJC	10	25
2.	Journal of Engineering and Technology Science	IJES	10	25
3.	Journal of Biotropia: The Southeast Asian Journal of Tropical Biology	BIO	10	25
4.	Journal of ICT Research and Applications	JICT	10	25
Total			40	100

## 2. Design of the study

### 2.1. The corpus

This study aimed at investigating the rhetorical style (the communicative functions, types and tenses) of citations found in English RA introductions by Indonesian academics published in international journals (i.e. *Indonesian Journal of Chemistry*, *Journal of Engineering Technology and Science*, *Journal of Biotropia: The Southeast Asian Journal Tropical Biology* and *Journal of ICT Research and Applications*). The distribution of the RAs in the corpus in this study is presented in Table 1.

The articles from the four different journals as corpus in this study were taken from the latest issues in order to represent the most recent features of the RAs published in the four different journals. The reasons for choosing these four journals are as follows: these journals publish RAs in English by mostly Indonesian authors; these journals are reputable journals indexed by an international indexing organization (SJR – SCImago, 2004–2012), p. 3); these journals publish high-quality RAs in English representing the ways Indonesian authors write academic texts in English; and for practical reasons, these journals are open-access online journals providing free downloaded copy of their articles.

### 2.2. Procedures for identifying the communicative functions, type and tenses of citation

We followed several steps in this study in order to identify and code the communicative functions, types and tenses of citations in the English RA introductions by Indonesian authors. First, the possible citations in the texts were identified by looking at every clause or sentence in the texts with cited author name(s) and date with or without page number, a footnote or an endnote sign. Second, the types of citation (integral or non-integral) were identified by looking at the position and function of the cited author(s) in the related clause or sentence; in this study, a clause or sentence with citation in the form of a footnote or endnote without the cited author's name(s) was considered non-integral. Third, every citation was analysed on its tense (present tense, past tense or present perfect tense) by looking at the type of verb used. Fourth, the communicative function of every citation was coded by identifying the communicative purpose of the citation following Swales (1990, 2004), Arsyad (2003), Kwan (2006, 2009) and Kwan et al. (2012).

Referring to Swales (1990) and Arsyad (2003), the possible rhetorical objectives or functions of citation in this study were the following: Function 1 (F-1), helping defining a key term; Function 2 (F-2), justifying the research problem; Function 3 (F-3), supporting the research topic; Function 4 (F-4), suggesting a solution to the research problem; Function 5 (F-5), negatively evaluating previous studies; Function 6 (F-6), indicating a gap



in knowledge; and Function 7 (F-7), positive justification on previous knowledge. Thus, in this study there are seven possible functions of reviewing literature in the RA introductions.

### 2.3. Validating the analysis results

Because identifying and coding the communicative functions, types and tenses of citation involved subjective judgement, an independent rater was included in the process of text analysis in order to validate the analysis results. The independent rater participating in this study was a postgraduate student at the English department of the teacher training and education faculty. First, the independent rater was told how to identify the possible communicative functions, type and tenses of citation found in the texts with examples following the analysis procedures already described. Then, the rater was given two weeks to perform the processes of function identification analyses for eight out of 40 RA introductions (20%) from the corpus of this study. When there was a disagreement between us in coding the possible citation communicative function, type and tenses found in the RA introductions, we then discussed this to determine the reason for the difference and to produce a better analysis result.

## 3. Results and discussion

### 3.1. Citation functions in the English research articles by Indonesian authors

The first objective of this study is to identify the citation functions found in the English RA introductions by the Indonesian authors. The data analysis results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that the most dominant citation function in this study in all four different journals is F-7 (presenting positive justification); 135 out of 356 citations (37.92%) are classified as having this function. The following are examples of such citation function:

#### *Example 1*

Santosa et al. [10] have tried to develop a complex equation by considering sorption, desorption, concentration of adsorbate in solution, and fraction of unoccupied and occupied active sites on adsorbent. (IJC-9)

Some authors regard oil shales not only as shales but as marls and carbonate with varying proportions of clay minerals, quartz and feldspars [2]. (IJES-7)

Several studies have reported that species growing naturally in the inundated area are more tolerant to waterlogged condition, such as *Nyssa sylvatica* (Keeley, 1980), female *Populus angostifolia* (Nielsen et al., 2009) and *Himatanthus sucuba* (Ferreira et al., 2009). (BIO-10)

In this example, the RA authors only restate the information obtained from the cited reference without commenting on it or showing their stance towards the information. This study confirms those of previous studies, such as from Samraj and Swales. Samraj (2002) suggests that some citations can be used for a different purpose than indicating a gap and are found throughout the introduction section of the RA and this is called 'presenting positive justification' (Swales, 2004, p. 230). Swales considers this function as an optional one because readers in many disciplines expect that RA authors should show their own view or 'stance' towards the cited literature and this requires authors to state what they think about and not just to know the work related to their study (Feak & Swales, 2009, p. 71). For the



Indonesian authors, the use of F-7 (presenting positive justification) is for the purpose of showing that they are familiar with the most recent research development and published literature on the related topic.

One possible reason for the dominant use of F-7 (presenting positive justification) by the Indonesian authors in reviewing literature is the transfer of rhetorical style from the literature review in a thesis or dissertation to the one in article journals. Indonesian authors do not seem to distinguish the rhetorical style of literature review for a thesis and dissertation and the one for journal articles and use the same style for both purposes. According to Rifai (1995), referencing or literature review in scientific writing conventions in the Indonesian language, such as in writing a thesis, dissertation or essay, is used for two main communicative purposes: to elaborate the research topic already introduced and to review the current knowledge and practice related to the research topic, which can be used to substantiate the points in the results and discussion section. However, according to Coleman (2014), unlike in journal articles the author's aim of reviewing literature in a thesis and dissertation is to convince readers that they know and are familiar with the related references and not to examine and contextualize them.

Presenting a positive justification function of citation, however, does not only belong to the rhetorical style of literature review in Indonesian language; it is also found in academic writing practices in several European languages such as Polish, Russian and German (Golebiowski, 1998). According to Golebiowski, the main purpose of writers to use this citation function is to show readers that the writers have enough knowledge or experience on the topic and therefore can be regarded as eligible to do research on the particular topic. Thus, as far as the use of positive justification is concerned, English RA introductions by Indonesian authors are similar to those in English RA introductions by international authors.

The most important function of citation in English RA introductions is to indicate the knowledge gap found in the cited literature (Saunders & Rojon, 2011, 2004; Swales, 1990). In this study, this is coded as F-5 (negatively evaluating the cited literature) or F-6 (indicating a gap in previous studies); however, in the English RAs by Indonesian authors, as seen in Table 2, these citation functions are rarely found in the four different journals in the data of this study. The citations with these two functions occurred only 60 times (16.74%) in the entire data of this study. The following are examples of these citations:

#### *Example 2*

Basic partitioned clustering algorithms have a linear running time and some are able to handle large amounts of data, such as k-means clustering, *but they still have shortcomings in terms of dependence on initial conditions and the results of initiation tending towards a local minimum* [3]. (IJCT-6; emphasis added)

In the chemical refining process, deacidification is carried out by the addition of alkali (alkaline neutralization) after degumming and prior to bleaching and deodorization. The main drawback of chemical deacidification is excessive loss of triglycerides due to saponification of triglycerides and emulsification of oil to the soaps formed. The neutral oil loss is about 20 to 30% [2]. In the physical refining process, degummed and bleached oil is deacidified during the deodorizing step using steam stripping under high temperature and vacuum condition. Oil loss, amount of water used and effluent to be treated are minimized in this method. *However, the high temperature leads to formation of side products such as polymers and trans-isomers, and destruction of all carotenes in the oil* [3]. (IJES-1; emphasis added)

**Table 2.** Function of citations in English RA introductions by Indonesian authors.

Number	Function of citation	Journal							Total (N = 40)	%
		IJC (n = 10)	IJES (n = 10)	BIO (n = 10)	JICT (n = 10)					
1	F-1 (defining a key term)	1	3	10	5	19			5.34	
2	F-2 (justifying the research problem)	6	5	15	4	30			8.43	
3	F-3 (supporting the research topic)	21	17	30	25	93			26.12	
4	F-4 (suggesting a solution to the research problem)	7	3	4	5	19			5.34	
5	F-5 (negatively evaluating or critiquing the cited literature)	2	1	2	6	11			3.09	
6	F-6 (indicating a gap in previous studies)	10	11	19	9	49			13.65	
7	F-7 (presenting positive justification)	28	37	44	26	135			37.92	
Total		75	77	124	80	356			100	

In Example 2, the authors clearly state that there is a gap of knowledge left by previous studies in the field using a coordinating conjunction of 'but' and the word 'shortcoming' and the purpose of their study is to fill in the gap of knowledge. However, as Table 2 indicates, the frequency occurrence of these citation functions is very low. This implies that the Indonesian authors tend to avoid negatively evaluating other author's idea or research results. This, according to Oliver (2012, p. 8), does not help develop an argument, a much-needed style in academic writing, and therefore may not satisfy international readers.

Realizing the communicative function of indicating a gap in the literature requires authors to negatively evaluate what other authors have claimed or argued previously and this does not seem to be preferred by Indonesian authors. Keraf (1992) observed that Indonesian people perceive group harmony and values to be more important than winning over a debate which can cause disharmony. The result of this study confirms the finding of Adnan (2014) who also found that Indonesian writers are reluctant to criticize other writers for fear of offending them or being considered unsound and unethical. In fact, according to Adnan, criticizing the works of others can undermine social relations and may even invite harsher criticism against the author of criticism itself. By contrast, in the practice of writing scientific papers in international journals, the literature review is mainly aimed at finding the gaps or weaknesses of the existing information to be fitted or repaired, so that the reader's knowledge about a particular subject can be improved. Kwan et al. (2012) says that:

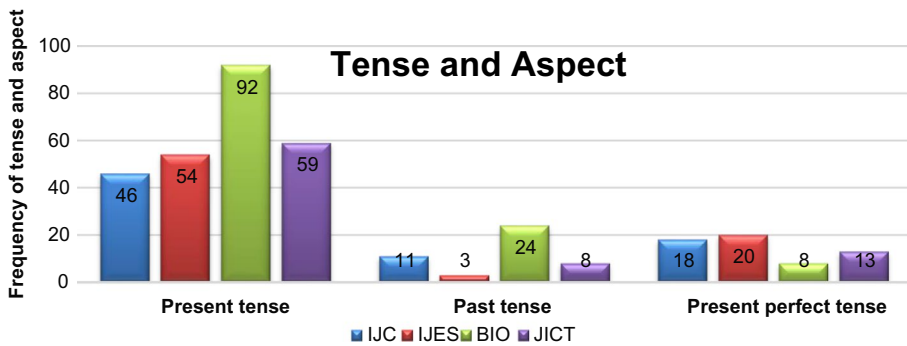
A major aim of academic research is to search for innovation in the existing understanding of the world or in making it a better place to live in; epistemic innovations are seldom born out of the blue nor are they purely traits of individuals. (p. 188)

This goal can only be achieved by first evaluating the existing literature in order to know what and how to develop or improve it. As Adnan further suggests, unlike Indonesian RA authors, international authors seem to sacrifice social harmony among authors and researchers in order to achieve the goal of writing a scientific text in order to further develop or improve the existing knowledge on a particular topic.

The reluctance to criticize other people's work in academic texts such as RAs is not only found in the Indonesian academic context. Zhang and Hu (2010), for example, found that RA authors in China in the discipline of medicine also tend to avoid showing weaknesses or errors contained in the scientific work of others in order to avoid conflict and at the same time creating social disharmony between writers or researchers. According to Zhang and Hu, avoiding stating the weaknesses or errors or negatively evaluating other people's work by Chinese writers indicates that Chinese writers have an academic logic and style of their own in their academic texts which is different from English or international academic culture. In other words, Zhang and Hu state that the citation style in Chinese academic texts is influenced by Chinese culture, especially in the way they judge other people's work in academic written communication. A similar claim is put forward by Mauranen (1996), who states that '... texts are shaped by their cultural origins even if they participate in international discourses like those of the different disciplines' (p. 196).

### **3.2. Tenses in the English research article introductions by Indonesian authors**

The second objective of this study is to identify the tenses used by the Indonesian authors in citing literature in their English RA introductions. The data analysis results show that the three different tenses (i.e. present tense, present perfect tense and past tense) are used



**Figure 1.** Tenses used in the English RA introductions by Indonesian authors.

by the Indonesian authors with different frequencies. Figure 1 shows the frequency of each tense found in the data of this study.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the most dominant tense of citation in the English RA introductions by Indonesian authors is present tense; this dominance occurs in all four different journals while the use of past tense is almost as frequent as present perfect tense in the citations and the same case happens for all four journals. The following are the examples of past tense and present perfect tense in the data of this study:

*Example 3*

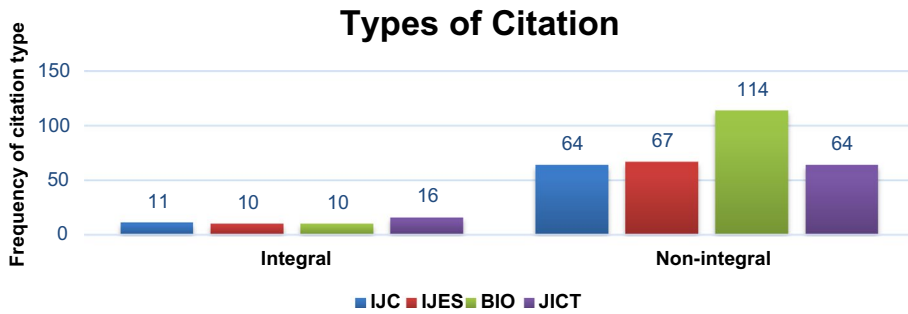
Lonkida (*Nauclea orientalis* L.) is a tropical multipurpose tree species that *grows* naturally in a variety of habitat types including wetlands (Petty & Douglas, 2010; Kartikasari et al., 2012) and *has* natural distribution in Indonesia (Whitmore et al., 1997; Keßler et al., 2002). (Present tense – BIO-10; emphases added)

In 2010, Janakiraman et al. [11] *reported* that incorporating information on syllable boundaries into English ASR reduced both computational complexity and word error rate (WER) significantly compared to flat start ASR. (Past tense – JICT-2; emphasis added)

Recently, phosphate removal through adsorption *has received* increasing attention as one of the more promising alternative techniques due to its high efficiency, easy handling, the availability of different adsorbents, cost-effectiveness and the capacity to regenerate and reuse solids [3,4]. (Present perfect tense – IJES-10; emphases added)

As can be seen in this example, the main verbs of the citation sentences are in present tense, past tense or present perfect tense as indicated.

The finding of this study confirms that of Chen (2009) who found that present tense is used when authors refer to a piece of information in the literature which has become widely acceptable knowledge by the relevant academic discourse community. This is also in line with Gledhill (2009), who claims that the introduction and discussion sections of scientific writings such as thesis, dissertation and journal articles are usually characterized as using present tense while the method and results sections feature the use of past tense. The use of present tense in the two journal article sections (i.e. introduction and discussion) is because they are often written in an argumentative manner using reporting verbs such as verbs dealing with arguments, suggestions, claims or statements (Swales & Feak, 2009). Thus, Indonesian authors tend to use present tense when citing other author's work in their English RA introductions because they often cite more general information in the



**Figure 2.** Types of citation in English RA introduction by Indonesian authors.

literature such as found in books and review articles rather than specific information such as found in newly published RAs.

Another possible interpretation of our data is that the Indonesian authors want to convince readers that they are familiar with the information cited in the literature because they always follow the development of research and knowledge on the particular topic. Similarly, Swales (1990) suggests that, if the cited information reflects current knowledge, belief or general information, present tense is more likely to be used. Swales further suggests that the choice of tenses depends on the meaning which authors wish to convey; if the cited information refers to the results of a single study, then the past simple is probably used; however, when the author refers to what a cited author did, then past tense is more commonly used because the action represented by the verb refers to an activity which took place at a specific moment in the past and the present perfect is common when the author refers to an area of enquiry within which a number of researchers are working.

### 3.3. Citation type used by Indonesian authors

The final objective of this research is to identify the types of citation used in the English RA introductions by Indonesian authors. The results show that the two types of citation (integral and non-integral) are used by Indonesian authors in citing the literature. The distribution of the two different types of citation is given in Figure 2.

As can be seen in Figure 2, the use of non-integral citation is far more frequent than use of integral citation (86.80% compared with 13.20%). It can also be noticed that the non-integral citation type is used more dominantly in all four different journals. Examples of non-integral citation are given in the following:

#### Example 4

*Pyricularia grisea* (teleomorph *Magnaporthe grisea*), synonymous with *Pyricularia oryzae* Cav, is a rice plant pathogen in many countries and is known as the agent causing blast disease (Rho *et al.*, 2001). The disease is estimated to be responsible for 30% of annual yield loss, the equivalent in food volume to meet the needs of 60 million people (Dagdas *et al.*, 2012). In Indonesia, blast infestation reached 36,727 ha of the total 13,153,080 ha area of rice cultivation in 2012 (Ministry of Agriculture, 2013). Blast disease has been known as a serious problem for upland rice, however, recent results showed that the blast pathogen also attacks rice planted in lowlands or irrigated land (Sobir *et al.*, 2003). To date, the mechanism of blast disease transmission from upland rice to lowland land has not been examined. (BIO-3; emphases added)

Oil shales are defined as organic-rich shales containing significant amounts of oil-prone kerogen and liberating crude oil upon heating [1]. Some authors regard oil shales not only as shales but also as marls and carbonates with varying proportions of clay mineral, quartz and feldspars [2]. Oil shales consist of a diverse composition of organic matter, reflecting a wide range of sedimentary environments. The rock contains more than 5% of organic content and can be benefited as alternative source for fossil fuels by retorting [2]. (IJES-7)

Polyelectrolyte membranes (PEMs), as the key part of such systems, have crucial role as the transport medium for generated protons from oxidation of fuel [2-3]. (IJC-2)

In these examples, the source of citation is placed at the end of the cited sentence and is not included in or part of the structure of the sentence. Also, unlike the integral type of citation, the RA authors just write the name of the cited author and the date of the source publication in a bracket at the end of the citation sentence.

The findings of this study confirm those of Hyland (1999), Yeh (2010), Okumura (2008) and Nunn et al. (2012) who found that non-integral citation was more dominantly used than the integral type in the corpus of their studies in the disciplines of biology, physics, electrical engineering and teaching English as a second language. According to Okumura (2008), RA authors prefer using non-integral citation to integral citation, because the authors want to keep their focus on the work that has been done in the field rather than only on the cited authors. This is because, as Swales and Feak (2012) suggest, the main function of citing other's work is to present the available knowledge in the literature in order to justify the importance of the research. Another possible reason for using the non-integral type of citation in the data of this study is the use of a footnote or endnote format of citation; in this format the authors only put a number for the cited authors rather than their names at the end of the cited sentence, the names of the cited authors can only be found at the foot of the page or at the end of the text.

The more common type of in-text citation that appeared in our data sets (the non-integral citation) indicates that Indonesian authors tend to remain neutral with the cited information. Nunn et al. (2012, p. 47) suggest that when authors want to distance themselves from the information cited in the literature they will use an integral citation type, but when they want to stay 'neutral' they will use a non-integral type citation. In a neutral type of citation, according to Swales and Feak (2009), the RA authors only restate the cited author's opinion or research results in the sentence and put the source in brackets at the end of the citation sentence. Swales and Feak also call this type of citation 'research prominent' citation because the authors consider that the cited idea or opinion is more important than the authors themselves, and this should be the main concern when citing someone's idea. In addition, the frequent use of 'footnote' or 'endnote' type of citation found in the RA introductions in all four journals except for *Journal of Biotropia: The Southeast Asian Journal of Tropical Biology* may also reduce the use of direct quotes because the authors must paraphrase the information from the source text rather than directly copy and paste it to their own text.

## 4. Conclusion and suggestions

### 4.1. Conclusion

It can be concluded that in terms of the dominant use of citation type (i.e. non-integral type) and tense choice (i.e. present tense), English RA introductions by Indonesian authors

are similar to those by RA authors published in international English-medium journals. However, in terms of citation communicative function the English RA introductions by Indonesian authors are very different from those by RA authors in international journals. Unlike for international authors, the most important function of citation for Indonesian authors is to justify the research topic and problem and to present positive justification. We believe that this is not necessarily because they cannot negatively evaluate or critique others' work but because they tend to avoid disharmony between academics. However, if an English article with this citation style is submitted to a reputable international English-medium journal, this could be one reason for rejection.

#### **4.2. Suggestion**

It is suggested that, when writing RAs in English to be published in English-medium international journals, Indonesian authors should modify their rhetorical style of literature citation to the one more acceptable for international journal readers. This is because the way Indonesian speakers cite literature when writing in English has been found different from that by RA authors of English-medium journals. For example, the main communicative function of citation is not to justify the research topic and problem and to present positive justification but to indicate a gap of knowledge in the literature or to criticize other's work. Similarly, the academic writing programme for non-native speakers of English, such as the one for Indonesian university students who are going to write their thesis or dissertations in English and university lecturers who are going to write RAs in English, must introduce the appropriate rhetorical style of reviewing literature as commonly found in English-medium journals. By so doing, their English theses, dissertations or articles can be more acceptable and readable by English readers. Indonesian speakers can successfully publish more RAs in reputable English-medium international journals because, as Kuteeva and Mauranen (2014, p. 1) argue, more English-medium journals are published by non-native speakers of English recently, and this provides evidence that English has become a 'lingua franca' in international academic communication including in the social sciences and humanities.

#### **4.3. Limitation of the study**

The data for this study were taken only from RA introductions in English written by Indonesian speakers published in English journals. Thus, the results may not represent the rhetorical style of Indonesian authors when reviewing literature in other types of academic text such as theses, dissertations and book chapters written in English. Further studies should therefore be done on how Indonesian authors rhetorically review literature in other sub-genres of academic text; this is important in order to know the rhetorical similarities and differences of literature review in English texts written by Indonesian authors and those by other English-medium authors. The results of these studies will be important for Indonesian students and/or authors to learn and practise how to write literature review in academic texts in more widely accepted academic English, correctly and appropriately.



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