

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

It is now largely accepted that academic writing is a social activity in which academic writers negotiate with their audience to gain community acceptance for their findings. Texts are never created in isolation (Bazerman, 2004). This is particularly evident in academic texts. Referring to other texts, mainly through citations, which is regarded as a social process of knowledge construction, as a matter of course, is unavoidable in academic writing. This distinctive attribute is known as intertextuality, a term invented by Kristeva (1980) that originally came from literary studies. Intertextuality refers to how a text is constructed from previously written texts. Accordingly, Hyland (2004) claims that “explicit reference to prior literature is a substantial indication of a text’s dependence on contextual knowledge and thus a vital piece in the collaborative construction of new knowledge between writers and readers” (p. 21). For this reason, overt references are significant and considered as imminent traits of research articles (Hyland, 1999).

Citation can be considered a central issue in writing an acceptable research from various angles. Swales (2004) describes citation as a way for an author to introduce and discuss the contributions of other researchers and scholars by discussing previous literature in order for the author to establish relationship in any particular discipline; it customarily refers to the act of giving credit to the author of any document which has been cited in any written work. Writing academic texts such as journal papers or theses

requires an author to acknowledge other researchers' work through proper use of citations. Hence, citation is regarded as the most definite and obvious indication that a text is academic (Swales, 2014). Swales (2014) further asserts that through citing, an author can discuss the contributions of other researchers as such knowledge displays previous literatures which, in return, allow the researchers to establish membership of any disciplinary community.

The importance of citations as a rhetorical device in academic discourse comes from their potential not only to acknowledge selected previous research, but also to evaluate the work of others, to support the writers' arguments and promote their own work and knowledge claims, i.e. citation is central to academic persuasion (Hyland, 1999; Petrić, 2007). No matter what reasons there are for using citations, White (2004) claims that citation is a very complex communicative process. That is why the practice of citing should be given more attention in research.

As a central feature in research writing, citation has received increasing attention in the academic community. Apart from contributions from disciplines like information of science and sociology of science (see White, 2004), applied linguists have also delved into various aspects of citation, such as integral vs. non-integral citations (Swales, 1990; Hyland, 1999; Charles, 2006), use of reporting verbs (Thompson & Ye, 1991; Shaw, 1992; Hawes & Thomas, 1997), self-citation (Hyland, 2001; Harwood, 2005), use of citation in various disciplines (Hyland, 1999), cross-cultural use of citation (Taylor & Chen, 1991; Bloch & Chi, 1995), and functions of citations (Harwood, 2009; Mansourizadeh & Ahmad, 2011; Samraj, 2013; Hu & Wang,

2014; Fazel & Shi, 2015), thus foregrounding the significance of citation practices in the international academic community (Bennett, 2013).

In recent years, the patterns of citation use have been explored in written academic discourse (e.g. Hyland 1999, 2000; Harwood 2009, Hewings et al. 2010; Shooshtari & Jalilifar 2010). Hyland (1999)'s study comprised of one article from each of ten prominent journals from eight disciplines. It was discovered that citations were used more in softer disciplines and that integral citations were more dominant in these type of texts. In contrast, non-integral citations were employed more in hard disciplines. Petrić (2007) examined the rhetorical function of citations in low-grade and high-grade master theses. Building on Thompson and Tribble's (2001) mixed classification, she classified both integral and non-integral citations with some modifications in her framework. Harwood (2009) carried out an interview-based study on citation functions employed by computer scientists and sociologists, resulting in a total of eleven functions based on the participants' words. While the sociologists used citations more to engage the reader, the computer scientists employed them more to signpost. Following Harwood (2009), Mansourizadeh and Ahmad (2011) conducted a case study on citation practices in research articles written by non-native experts and papers written by novice writers from the same discipline and with the same language background. The analysis revealed that non-integral citations were the most dominant type used by the writers and that citations were employed less by novice writers compared to the expert writers.

In a more precise genre-based study, different aspects on the rhetorical functions of citations have been steadily researched in the field of applied linguistics, for instance, the comparison of citation functions in various disciplines (Harwood 2009), different groups of writers, such as non-native speaker student writers vs. non-native speaker student writers in Borg (2000); non-native speaker high-rated thesis writers vs. non-native speaker low-rated thesis writers in Petrić (2007); non-native speaker expert writers vs. non-native speaker novice writers in Mansourizadeh and Ahmad (2011) and between the corresponding sections in research articles and in degree theses (Samraj, 2013).

Additionally, as the use of citations is an essential feature of academic writing for academic writers to achieve different purposes, how each citation is shaped to convey the writer's meaning is equally important. This is where the transitivity analysis comes in. There are three types of meaning within the scope of grammatical structures: ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning (Halliday, 1981). When the focus is on what a message contains rather than the objective of the speaker, it is called the ideational function of language. Ideational function falls into two categories: experiential function and logical function. Transitivity focuses on the transmission of ideas, hence it has everything to do with the experiential function of language. The way in which transitivity carries out this experiential function is expressed by process.

Among various framework related to citation practices, however, transitivity analysis of citations has not been looked into. In addition to the fact that understanding

how the writer presents their reality in the form of citations, transitivity analysis is necessary with regard to how the function is shaped by the form, and the opposite also applies. Thus, to bridge this gap, transitivity analysis of the rhetorical functions of citations is researched in this study. The analysis uses Petrić's (2007) functional typology of rhetorical functions of citations and Halliday's (1994) transitivity system in an attempt to inform the processes used in each function, and how they are represented in the English lexicogrammatical system. By analyzing the transitivity system within the rhetorical functions, the researcher tries to shed light on how the processes of the citations are represented in the English lexicogrammatical system, particularly in the Discussion section of the articles.

### **1.2 Research Question**

As the function and the form are closely interlinked with each other, in that the function is dependent on the form and vice versa, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the transitivity of rhetorical functions in the Discussion section of two articles in *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*?
  - a. What type of processes are used in the rhetorical functions?
  - b. How is each type of process represented in the English lexicogrammatical system?

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the rhetorical functions of citations and the transitivity system of rhetorical functions of citations in the Discussion section

of two articles on citation practices taken from *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

The study will be limited to only the rhetorical functions and the experiential functions of citations present in the article taken from the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*: ‘Citation behaviors of graduate students in grant proposal writing’ written by Ismaeil Fazel and Ling Shi and ‘Citation practices among non-native expert and novice scientific writers’ written by Kobra Mansourizadeh and Ummul K. Ahmad. These articles are chosen as they are relevant to the present study in that they also delve into the rhetorical functions of citations.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to offer important insights on the transitivity system of the rhetorical functions of citations. The result of this study can serve as a reference for future researchers delving into the transitivity system and the rhetorical functions of citations. Additionally, the insights gained from this study will hopefully be of assistance to both lecturers and students of the English Language Education Program Study at Universitas Negeri Jakarta in understanding the rhetorical functions and transitivity system of citations.