

## A Corpus-Based Study on the Use of Direct Quotation in L2 Writing

Tuğba Çıtlak <sup>a\*</sup> & Hasan Sağlamel <sup>b</sup>

a Instructor, Turkish Aeronautical Association University, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5152-3069>, \*tubactlk@gmail.com

b Asst. Prof. Dr., Karadeniz Technical University, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0707-4577>

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### Abstract

Novice writers can use direct quotations excessively, ineffectively, or unconsciously for several reasons, including inadequate knowledge of how and when to use them in academic writing. Since the use of direct quotations in academic writing has not received due attention in previous studies, this corpus-based study sought to fill this gap in the literature by investigating the use of direct quotations and the frequency of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations. To this end, a corpus-based study was employed to observe the total number of directly quoted words and the frequency of reporting verbs used in direct quotations. The corpora consisted of 60 MA and PhD theses completed in Türkiye retrieved from Ulusal Tez Merkezi and 60 in the USA retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global between 2015 and 2020 in English major departments for the analysis of recent theses. The quotations and reporting verbs introducing those quotations were manually identified for each thesis. The number of directly quoted words was normalized per 1000 words, and a log-likelihood test was applied to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the two corpora in terms of direct quotation use. The results showed that there is not a statistically significant difference between the two corpora regarding the frequency of direct quotations. For the reporting verbs, in the USA corpus, it was revealed that there are more frequent and various reporting verbs introducing direct quotations than in the Turkish corpus, although the most frequent reporting verbs were found to be similar. Pedagogical implications are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Academic writing, direct quotation, corpus-based analysis, English for Academic Purposes

## İkinci Dilde Yazmada Doğrudan Alıntı Kullanımına İlişkin Derlem Temelli Bir Çalışma

### Öz

Deneyimsiz yazarlar, akademik yazılarda doğrudan alıntılarını nasıl ve ne zaman kullanılacağına dair yetersiz bilgi dahil olmak üzere çeşitli nedenlerle doğrudan alıntıları aşırı, etkisiz veya bilinçsizce kullanabilirler. Akademik yazımda doğrudan alıntılarının kullanılması önceki çalışmalarda gereken ilgiyi görmediğinden, bu derlem temelli çalışma, doğrudan alıntılarının kullanımını ve doğrudan alıntıları başlatan bildirme fiillerinin sıklığını araştırarak literatürdeki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, doğrudan alıntılanan kelimelerin toplam sayısını ve doğrudan alıntılarda kullanılan bildirme fiillerinin sıklığını gözlemlemek için derlem temelli bir çalışma yapılmıştır. Derlem, 2015-2020 yılları arasında İngilizce ana dallarında yazılmış ve Türkiye'den Ulusal Tez Merkezi'nden alınan 60 ve ABD'den ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global' dan alınan 60 tezden oluşmaktadır. Her tez için alıntılar ve bu alıntıları başlatan bildirme fiilleri manuel olarak belirlenmiştir. Doğrudan alıntılanan kelime sayısı 1000 kelime başına normalize edilmiş ve doğrudan alıntı kullanımı açısından iki derlem arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığını belirlemek için log-olabilirlik testi uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar, doğrudan alıntılarının frekansları açısından iki derlem arasında istatistiksel bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir. Bildirme fiilleri için ise en sık kullanılan bildirme fiillerinin benzer bulunmasına rağmen, ABD derleminde, Türkiye derlemine göre daha sık ve çeşitli doğrudan alıntıları başlatan bildirme fiillerinin kullanıldığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Pedagojik öneriler ayrıca tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Akademik yazı, doğrudan alıntı, derlem tabanlı analiz, akademik amaçlı İngilizce

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## INTRODUCTION

The significance of academic writing assignments and the need for advanced teaching that emphasizes writing from sources have received increased attention (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). Investigating how academic writers strive to incorporate sources into their individual writing has drawn increased interest from researchers. Particularly, students' improper use of these sources has been the subject of many controversies and disputes (Amiri & Razmjoo, 2016; Cumming et al., 2018; Li, 2021; Mu, 2010; Rezeki, 2018). In this regard, several ways to use the works, texts, and ideas of others in one's own academic writing have been maintained. First, Fairclough (1992) explained that the use of others' texts in one's own writing means 'manifest intertextuality. To manifest intertextuality in academic writing, academic writers can use others' texts or ideas in their own texts through paraphrasing, summarizing, and direct quotation (Kirsznner & Mandell, 2011). However, using effective and appropriate direct quotations can be a challenge for novice writers, including both native and non-native English languages (Petrić, 2012).

In academic writing, there have been several issues regarding how to use, when to use, and to what extent writers should use direct quotations. The answers to these questions can serve as guidelines for effective use of direct quotations. In that sense, there is a guideline prepared by Kirsznner and Mandell (2011) for academic writers on how and when to use direct quotations. When a direct quotation is used, it should be enclosed with quotation marks (Kirsznner & Mandell, 2011). Furthermore, with a direct quotation, the writer should omit or add words or phrases into his/her own text, use transitions, and adjust the word order of his/her own text to establish a frame for direct quotation (Petrić, 2012). Thus, in addition to copying and pasting a direct quotation, several changes in the written text, such as lexical/grammatical changes, should be made to fit the original text into the written text.

When it comes to the use of direct quotation, writers can use direct quotation when there is a danger of losing the distinctiveness of the original work. Thus, if the meaning of the original text changes during paraphrasing, the writer can use a direct quotation. Moreover, if the original text writer is an expert, a direct quotation can be used to give one's paper authority. Finally, if the writer presents a disagreement with the original work in his/her text, a direct quotation can be used to make the argument clear and fair (Macagno & Walton, 2017). Consequently, an academic writer should consider when and how to use direct quotations in academic writing.

In a similar vein, determining the extent to which an academic writer should use direct quotations to do so effectively is an important point to consider. Accordingly, using direct quotations excessively can intervene in the writer's discussion and voice due to the use of others' voices excessively (Kirsznner & Mandell, 2011). In addition, it may be undemanding to use excessive direct quotations in academic writing, since it does not include the interpretation and voice of the writer (Petrić, 2012). Thus, direct quotations should not be excessively used in academic writing. In this sense, academic writers should be aware of when to use, how to use, and to what extent direct quotations should be used.

Furthermore, being aware of when and how to use direct quotations and the extent to which direct quotations should be used is not the only way to effectively use direct quotations in academic writing. Reporting verbs can be the other factor that has an impact on the effective use of direct quotations in academic writing. The use of reporting verbs can make direct quotation use more effective since reporting verbs "allows a stance to be adopted, demonstrating exactly how strongly the writer wishes to be aligned with the cited work" (Hyland, 1998, p. 75). For example, reporting verbs, as one of the discourse features, can be used to convey direct and indirect voices and suggest an effective way of writing papers for non-native speakers' rhetorical stances in their research papers. Therefore, if reporting verbs are used appropriately, it may enable the writer to gain readers' confidence by making them more convinced (Jafarigohar & Mohammadkhani, 2015). As categorized by Thompson and Ye (1991), reporting verbs can highlight both the author, such as the reporting verb *point out*, and the mental processes, such as the reporting verb *think*. Consequently, the appropriate use of direct quotations can lead to their effective use in academic writing.

Nevertheless, novice writers can use direct quotations excessively, unconsciously, and ineffectively in academic writing. Conforming to ethical and academic standards does not guarantee the effective use of direct quotations effectively (Petrić, 2012). At linguistic and contextual levels, novice writers may use direct quotations inappropriately along with the underuse or overuse of direct quotations (Petrić, 2012). In this sense, using several reporting verbs repeatedly and ineffective under/overuse of direct quotations can yield ineffective and unconvincing academic writing. Moreover, these difficulties may lead to unconscious plagiarism (Verheijen, 2015). Thus, effective ways of using direct quotations and reporting verbs that introduce direct quotations should be noticed by academic writers and teachers.

To that end, acknowledging the academic writers about when and how to use direct quotation, and to what extent it should be used, can be efficient for their development in academic writing by enabling them to be aware of the effective direct quotation use. Since academic writers' use of direct quotation and reporting verbs introducing direct quotation in academic writing has received less attention in previous studies (Docherty, 2019; Jarkovská & Kučirková, 2020; Petrić, 2012; Verheijen, 2015), this study aims to fill this gap in the literature by examining the frequencies of direct quotation use and reporting verbs that are used to introduce direct quotations in two corpora: theses written by master and doctoral students in Türkiye and the USA to determine whether there is a cultural difference in terms of citation practices. The USA corpus was selected as the reference corpus for comparison with the Turkish corpus. Accordingly, this study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference between the master's theses and doctoral dissertations written in Türkiye and the USA in terms of citation practices?

1.1. What is the frequency of direct quotations in two corpora?

1.2. What are the most frequently used reporting verbs introducing direct quotations in two corpora?

1.3. What is the frequency of each reporting verb introducing direct quotations in each corpus?

To answer these research questions, this study aimed to provide pedagogical implications for relevant stakeholders, including English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL) teachers, English for Academic Purposes teachers, academic writing teachers, and academic writing students. In this way, both teachers and students can benefit from the implications of promoting academic writers to use their voices effectively in their own writings regarding the effective use of direct quotations, intensity of reporting verbs, and variation of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations (Verheijen, 2015). Consequently, teachers can benefit from the frequency of direct quotation use and the reporting verbs chosen by learners by considering cultural differences to make their students aware of these differences and use their voices and direct quotation effectively. They can critically reflect on their own writings in terms of the intensity of direct quotations and variations in reporting verbs introducing direct quotations.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous studies have mostly focused on citation practices, although few have examined L2 learners' use of direct quotations in academic writing regarding the intensity of direct quotation use and the variation or choice of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations. In this sense, Petrić (2012) conducted a study on the use of direct quotations that deserve specific attention. This study examined the use of direct quotations in high- and low-rated L2 students' master's theses. The motivations of L2 students for the use of direct quotations were investigated by referring to the high-rated and low-rated master's theses, which consisted of eight gender studies. The data were analyzed via textual analysis of the master's theses (MA) and interviews with L2 students. Direct quotations were identified by searching for quotation marks, author names, and page numbers. The total number of direct quotations was found 730. The text was analyzed quantitatively, and examples taken from the papers were analyzed qualitatively. To determine the difference in the frequencies related to the use of direct quotations, a Mann-Whitney test was applied. The findings showed that three times more direct quotations were used by high-rated theses than low-rated ones. High-rated theses mostly used quotation fragments, whereas low-rated theses preferred clause quotations. It was found that since clause quotations do not require much modification in the text, low-rated theses preferred not to modify the text according to their own texts. The interviews also revealed that the motivations to use direct quotations can stem from the source itself, the goal of the writer, external factors, and the fear and beliefs of the students. As a result, the researcher gave pedagogical implications to make students aware of the use of direct quotations effectively (Petrić, 2012).

Unlike the study conducted by Petrić (2012), other studies have focused on the use of reporting verbs in terms of citation practices (Kibler & Hardigree, 2017; Lee et al., 2018; Lombardi, 2021; Sun & Soden, 2022; Yasmin et al., 2020). When focused on MA theses, a study conducted by Jarkovská and Kučirková (2020) examined MA theses regarding the use of reporting verbs used in the literature review chapter written in English by Czech students studying economics and management. To this end, data were collected from the literature review chapter of 82 MA theses. For analysis, the frequencies, types, and functions of reporting verbs were taken into consideration. It was found that reporting verbs had a neutral attitude. In addition, simple tense with an active voice was found to be preferred. Finally, the name of the author was found to be used as the subject in the sentences. The most frequently used reporting verb was *state*. Similarly, Petrić (2007) investigated the rhetorical functions of high- and low-graded master's students to create a link between the source and the text of the writer related to

gender. However, these studies mostly focused on citation practices regarding both direct quotation and paraphrasing, along with an investigation of reporting structures by not emphasizing direct quotation and reporting verb use together.

Monreal and Salom (2011) conducted a study of PhD students to investigate citation practices regarding reporting verbs in doctoral dissertations. Data were collected from dissertations from two universities in the UK and Spain. According to the results, the dissertations written in the UK were found to have more integral citations that emphasized the original text and author, while those written in Spain were found to have more non-integral citations, including using one's own voice instead of emphasizing the original text and author by using passive and impersonal sentences. In addition, in the UK corpus, it was found that there was more variance and frequency in the use of reporting verbs. In this sense, it was revealed that while the most preferred reporting verb was *state* in the UK corpus, it was *proponer* in the Spanish corpus.

Most previous studies are based on a contrastive analysis between the native and non-native use of direct quotations and reporting verbs. One of the studies conducted by Verheijen (2015) investigated the direct quotation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' academic writing to examine and compare the linguistic differences in the direct quotation use between Dutch EFL learners, who were upper-intermediate and advanced, and native speakers of English. The direct quotations were reached by searching manually for quotation marks. In addition, block quotations were reached by scanning the papers manually. There were 1201 direct quotations, and these instances were examined statistically according to their lexicogrammatical features. Data were analyzed using Pearson's chi-square test and Fisher's exact test. The study revealed a significant difference in the use of direct quotations between EFL learners and native English speakers. For example, EFL learners were found to use fewer reporting nouns and adverbs to modify their own texts to make direct quotations fit their own texts, fewer combined and embedded quotations, and longer quotation errors. Therefore, the researcher made EFL learners aware of the differences in the use of direct quotations between themselves and native English speakers to develop their academic writing skills (Verheijen, 2015).

In a similar study conducted by Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015), the use of direct quotations and reporting verbs introducing direct quotations written by native and non-native English writers were investigated. Data were collected from scholarly journals on language teaching and applied linguistics. The total number of articles published in these journals was 63. The results showed a significant difference between native and non-native English writers in terms of direct quotation use. According to the results, native English speakers were found to use more direct quotations than non-native speakers. Moreover, the use and frequency of the reporting verbs were found to be almost equal. Additionally, Hyland (2009) conducted a study of the citation practices of native speakers of English and English as second language learners. Furthermore, a study conducted by Borg (2000) examined the citation practices of native and L2 students studying in the TESOL program.

However, several previous studies have examined the practices of only native speakers of English or only non-native speakers of English. One of the studies conducted by Docherty (2019) investigated L2 bachelor's students' direct quotations and reporting verbs written in their essays. To this end, 188 student essays were compiled. The direct quotations were found to be 2302 manually and were analyzed by focusing on the frequency, writing appropriate to form, source, accuracy, and modifying the text to fit the quotation. It was found that students without prior experience in English for Academic Purposes used excessive direct quotations. In addition, these students used less cohesive and coherent links and rhetorical changes in the text to link the quotation with the text.

Other previous studies did not solely focus on EFL students' use of direct quotations in academic writing, but also on the practices of native and non-native speakers of English based on their disciplines. In that sense, a study by Swales (2014) examined the citation practices of first-second-third-fourth-year biology students by focusing on parenthetical and integral citations, reporting verbs, citing systems, and the occurrences of selected features. In addition, citation practices in tourism-related articles have been investigated according to gender differences (Nunkoo et al., 2019). Another study that investigated citation practices according to different disciplines and different research methodologies was conducted by Arizavi and Choubasaz (2021). Davis (2013) conducted a longitudinal study by examining three Chinese business, technology, and public relations students' development in source use.

Regarding citation practices in social sciences, a study conducted by Zhang (2022) investigated citation practices in terms of function and form, including citation density, surface form, subtypes of cited authors, and reporting verbs. The corpus included 30 research-based articles in the social sciences. The articles were investigated part-by-part, that is, the introduction, method, results, and discussion. It was found that non-integral citations, which do not involve the author surname as part of the sentence structure, were preferred over integral

citations, which include the author's surname as a part of the sentence structure. The use of reporting verbs revealed that they were used to show both a neutral and positive stance. As for the function of citations, they were mostly used to create intertextuality through related works. In the part-by-part analysis, it was found that the introduction section had a large number of non-integral citations, and the method section had fewer citations, which were mostly non-integral to justify the decisions related to the study. Similarly, in the results and discussion sections, non-integral citations were mostly used to highlight the findings and compare the cited works with the findings as a part of the discussion.

Moreover, previous studies have investigated the citation practices of EFL students from the same discipline. In that sense, a study conducted by Kamimura (2014) examined the citation behaviors of Japanese undergraduate EFL students in their argumentative essays with a focus on sources, strategies that are used in citations, and references. Similarly, Lee et al. (2018) investigated freshmen L2 students' citation practices by focusing on the forms, rhetorical features, and stance of the writer. Similarly, Kafes (2017) investigated the citation practices of academic writers, who were novices and experts in Applied Linguistics. In contrast, a study conducted by Silva (2021) examined native speakers' anchor sources that students used to create a frame for their arguments, rhetorical features, and purposes. In addition, other studies have been conducted to investigate citation practices in academic writing (Barghamadi & Siyyari, 2021; Hyland, 1999; Pecorari, 2006; Pickard, 1995; Schembri, 2009; Thompson & Tribble, 2001).

Overall, although these studies investigated the citation practices of both native English speakers and L2 academic students, they did not pay much attention to the use of direct quotations and the reporting verbs introducing the direct quotations used in master's theses and doctoral dissertations of native and non-native speakers of English. To this end, this study aimed to investigate the use of direct quotations and reporting verbs introducing direct quotation in the master's theses and doctoral dissertations written by MA and PhD graduates from Türkiye and the USA, with the hope that the comparison between these two corpora would provide insight into the differences and similarities between native and non-native use of these citation practices for the relevant stakeholders.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This corpus-based study employed quantitative design. Corpus-based studies deal with collections of authentic language samples by counting frequencies and scrutinizing concordances and contexts via corpus software programs to discover and detect patterns that are difficult to identify (Hunston, 2022). Although corpus-based analysis involves both quantitative data for frequencies and qualitative data for concordance and discourse, this study employed a quantitative method because it dealt only with the frequencies of direct quotations and reporting verbs (Conrad, 2000). Frequencies can enable the researcher to make generalizations, instead of mere observations, because a large number of texts can be analyzed through corpus-based analysis (Hunston, 2022). Through corpus-based analysis, a comparison between the use of direct quotations and reporting verbs introducing direct quotations written by native and non-native speakers of English can be conducted. Although the comparison between native and non-native speakers of English has been discussed in previous studies, this comparison helps researchers detect the needs of non-native speakers of English and World Englishes (Davies, 2003).

Hence, there were two corpora in the present study: theses written by master's and doctoral students studying in Türkiye and the USA. These two corpora were built to investigate the frequencies of direct quotation use written in Türkiye and the USA and to examine the frequency of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations in the two corpora in order to identify the variations and choices of reporting verbs in the two corpora.

### Data Collection

The data consisted of MA theses and PhD dissertations of postgraduate academic writers studying in English major departments in Türkiye and the USA. Postgraduates were selected to make the study more comprehensive and reach a more relevant corpus. From 2015 to 2020, ten master's theses and doctoral dissertations were gathered. There were 60 MA theses and doctoral dissertations in Türkiye and the USA, and the total number of writings was 120. These theses and dissertations were chosen according to the relevant keywords and in the order in which the site presented them.

The data were collected from MA theses and doctoral dissertations written in Türkiye and the USA to reach more qualified conclusions. The theses and dissertations of students who studied in Türkiye were obtained from



Ulusal Tez Merkezi. In addition, the theses and dissertations of students studying in the USA were taken from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

In the search bar of these two sites, the words *second language acquisition (SLA)* and *English language teaching (ELT)* were written to increase the chance of reaching related theses and dissertations. After searching for these words, English was selected as the language from the language criteria on the site to reach only English theses and dissertations. The researchers selected the publication date of 2015-2020. The same procedure was applied to both sites. For sample selection, simple random sampling was applied to give all theses and dissertations equal chances (Cohen et al., 2018). Among the theses and dissertations after all the selection criteria, a total of 60 theses and dissertations written in Türkiye and a total of 60 theses and dissertations written in the USA were chosen randomly. Ultimately, there were 120 theses and dissertations in total.

### Data Analysis

After creating the corpora, the first step was to manually identify the use of direct quotations for each dissertation and thesis from the two corpora by searching for quotation marks and scanning pages to detect block quotations. However, references, titles, emphasized words, interview quotations, tables, and figures were excluded because these can lead to the interference of unrelated data. After identifying the main texts, the researcher identified the total number of words in each thesis and dissertation in two corpora (i.e., 2000 total number of words in a thesis). Second, the number of directly quoted words used in each thesis and dissertation was found in two corpora (i.e., 240 total number of directly quoted words). The identification was conducted by the two researchers in this present study to ensure the consistency of the results because inter-rater reliability is required to determine the agreement levels between two raters for the classification level (Cohen, 1960). For inter-rater reliability, the Miles and Huberman (1994) formula was used. According to this formula, the number of agreements on the reporting verbs was divided into the total number of agreements on the reporting verbs and number of disagreements on the reporting verbs. The percentage of agreements was above 90%, as Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest. The disagreements were then checked together, and the classification was revised in line with the disagreements on coding (Campbell et al., 2013).

For each corpus, the total number of words and words directly quoted in the entire thesis and dissertation were added and calculated. Finally, the total number of words was divided by the total number of directly quoted words in the two corpora. This enabled the researcher to identify the percentages of direct quotation use in the two corpora (i.e., 6% use of direct quotation used in theses and dissertations written in the USA and %5 direct quotation written in Türkiye). In addition, the total number of each thesis' directly quoted words was normalized per 1000 words by dividing the number of directly quoted words in each thesis by the total number of words written in each thesis and multiplying it by 1000. This hindered the interference of various word counts in the analysis. After normalizing the directly quoted words, a log-likelihood test was applied to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the two corpora in terms of the frequency of direct quotation use.

The next step was to identify the reporting verbs that were used to introduce direct quotations. The reporting verbs introducing direct quotations were identified manually without a reference list, because they were detected through these two corpora while identifying direct quotations. Thus, while direct quotations were identified, the sentences were checked simultaneously to see whether there were any reporting verbs. After identification, the frequency of each reporting verb was identified in each corpus to determine the choice of reporting verbs and their variations used in the two corpora.

### Research Ethics

This study complied with the ethical considerations of the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive." Data were presented as they were gathered and were not changed. The data were gathered through open-access theses, and this study did not deal with the participants, but their thesis. In this regard, all sources were carefully indicated with due care.

## FINDINGS

The findings show that there is no statistically significant difference between MA and PhD students' use of direct quotations written in Türkiye and the USA according to the log-likelihood test. In this sense, it can be maintained that there is no statistically significant difference between MA and PhD students studying in Türkiye and the USA regarding the extent of direct quotation use. However, the most striking finding was the use of reporting verbs that introduced direct quotation. Regarding the reporting verbs introducing direct quotations used

by MA and PhD students in Türkiye and the USA, the most frequently employed reporting verbs were found to be nearly the same; however, the frequencies of these reporting verbs used in the MA thesis and PhD dissertations written in Türkiye and the USA were found to be different. In addition, it was found that the number of reporting words introducing direct quotations written in the USA exceeded the Turkish corpus because there were 123 reporting verbs in the corpus, while there were 207 reporting verbs in the USA corpus. As a result, MA and PhD students studying in the USA were found to use various reporting verbs without depending on fixed ones as opposed to those studying in Türkiye. For example, while the reporting verb *posit* was frequently used to introduce direct quotations in the USA corpus ( $n = 21$ ), it was used only once in the Turkish corpus; instead, the reporting verb *state* was used most frequently.

1. A shorter reformulation of Ellis's definition is provided by Samuda and Bygate (2008) who posit that "...". (The USA Corpus, 2019, doctoral dissertation)
2. Balemir (2009, p.13) **states**, "...". (The Turkish Corpus, 2015, master thesis)

#### The Use of Direct Quotations: The Percentages and Log-likelihood Test

As shown in Table 1, the total number of words in MA theses and PhD dissertations in the Turkish corpus was 1,920,175. The number of words directly quoted in Türkiye was 41,681. Thus, the percentage of the direct quotations used in MA theses and PhD dissertations written in Türkiye was 2,17%. In addition, the normalized frequency of direct quotation use in Türkiye was 21,70. On the other hand, in the USA corpus, the total number of words was 2,530,634. The number of words directly quoted in the USA corpus was 68,547. In that sense, the percentage of direct quotations written in the USA corpus was found as 2,7%. Moreover, the normalized frequency of directly quoted words was 27,08.

**Table 1.** Log-likelihood Test: The Use of Direct Quotation in Both Corpora

	Turkish Corpus	American Corpus
Total number of words	1,920,175	2,530,634
Number of directly quoted words	41,681	68,547
Normalized number of directly quoted words	21,70	27,08
Percentage of the direct quotations	2,17%	2,7%

Consequently, it was revealed that the percentages of direct quotations written in the two corpora were statistically close, even though the percentage of the USA corpus was more than that of the Turkish corpus. Therefore, to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between directly quoted words in the two corpora, a log-likelihood test was employed.

According to the results obtained from the log-likelihood, a statistically significant difference was not found between the two corpora regarding the use of direct quotations. As shown in Table 2, the log-likelihood score was .59, indicating that the difference was not statistically significant. In this regard, it was revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the theses written in Türkiye and the USA concerning the length of the direct quotations used in these theses.

**Table 2.** Log-likelihood Test: The Use of Direct Quotation in Both Corpora

LL	%DIFF	RRisk	P-value
.59	-19.87	-	.80

On the other hand, Table 3 demonstrates that the mean number of direct quotations used in both corpora was 20,4846 in Türkiye and 28,1554 in the USA. It can be concluded that the USA corpus has a more direct quotation use than the Turkish corpus. In addition, the USA corpus was found to have more directly quoted words than the Turkish corpus, although the difference was not significant.

**Table 3.** Group Statistics: The Use of Direct Quotation in Both Corpora

Country	Number of Theses	Mean	St. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Türkiye	60	20.4846	17.528223	2.26288
The USA	60	28.1554	22.09367	2.85228

#### Reporting Verbs

The reporting verbs that introduced direct quotations in both corpora were identified and analyzed according to their normalized frequencies. In the two corpora, there were reporting verbs that introduced direct quotations. As shown in Table 4, the most preferred reporting verbs to introduce direct quotations were *state* and *define* with higher frequencies in both corpora. Moreover, the most frequently used reporting verbs were similar at different frequencies. In that sense, it was found that while MA and PhD students in Türkiye use various

reporting verbs in their theses and dissertations, they were generally found to stick with the reporting verbs *state* and *define* and use other reporting verbs less frequently than the verb *state* and *define*. Although they used *claim*, *describe*, *suggest*, *explain*, *argue*, *point out*, *refer*, and *assert* in their theses and dissertations, these reporting verbs were found to be used less frequently.

**Table 4.** The Frequencies of Reporting Verbs

Türkiye		The USA	
Reporting Verbs	Normalized Frequencies	Reporting Verbs	Normalized Frequencies
Define	.087	State	.087
State	.085	Define	.052
Suggest	.03	Note	.039
Claim	.024	Argue	.032
Describe	.02	Suggest	.031
Explain	.02	Describe	.030
Argue	.015	Say	.027
Refer	.015	Refer	.024
Say	.013	Claim	.019
Point out	.012	Point out	.018

On the other hand, in the USA corpus, different reporting verbs were used in MA theses and PhD dissertations. Therefore, reporting verbs, such as *note*, *argue*, *describe*, *say*, *refer*, and *point out*, were found to be preferred by MA and PhD students in the USA. Although these reporting verbs were also used in the Turkish corpus, they were preferred in the USA corpus over the Turkish corpus (Table 4).

Moreover, the total number of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations was 185 in the USA corpus and 158 in the Turkish corpus. In that sense, it was revealed that MA and PhD students studying in the USA use more reporting verbs introducing direct quotations than those who study in Türkiye. The USA corpus used 27 different reporting verbs that the Turkish corpus did not involve. In addition, after the first 20 most frequently used reporting verbs, the Turkish corpus used reporting verbs less than 10 times. However, it is after the first 40 most frequently used reporting verbs in the USA corpus. Thus, the USA corpus employed more diverse reporting verbs than the Turkish corpus. For example, the reporting verb *report* was used in the USA corpus ( $n = 16$ ) more than in the Turkish corpus ( $n = 2$ ):

1. Considering her self-editing strategies, she **reported** : "...". (The USA Corpus, 2019, doctoral dissertation)

Also, the reporting verbs *define* and *claim* were used more in the Turkish corpus:

1. ... which Birdsong (2004) **defines** as "...". (The USA Corpus, 2019, doctoral dissertation)
2. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were **defined** as "...". (Turkish Corpus, 2019, master thesis)
3. Wood's findings **claim** that "...". (The USA Corpus, 2019, doctoral dissertation)
4. In this sense, Van **claims** that it is "...". (Turkish Corpus, 2020, master thesis)

On the other hand, the reporting verbs *describe*, *argue*, *say*, and *point out* are underrepresented in the USA corpus:

1. Jeanie **describes** this need, "...". (The USA Corpus, 2019, doctoral dissertation)
2. In the former, the language is **described** as "...". (Türkiye Corpus, 2020, master thesis)
3. ...Baurain (2007) **argues** that "...". (The USA Corpus, 2020, doctoral dissertation)
4. As Cortazzi and Jin (1999:198) **argue**; "...". (Türkiye Corpus, 2020, master thesis)
5. As Miller (2009) **says**, "...". (The USA Corpus, 2020, doctoral dissertation)
6. "... **said** Rubin and Thompson (1982, p. 3). (Türkiye Corpus, 2018, master thesis)
7. As Kroll et al. (2010) **pointed out**, "...". (The USA Corpus, 2020, doctoral dissertation)
8. Moreover, Redding (2013) **pointed out** that "...". (Türkiye Corpus, 2019, master thesis)

Consequently, it has been concluded that there is a cultural difference between MA and PhD students studying in Türkiye and the USA in terms of citation behavior regarding the diversity and frequency of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations. However, similarities exist between the two corpora in terms of choosing



reporting verbs that introduce direct quotations. According to the results, in both corpora, the reporting verbs *state* and *define* were preferred the most (see Table 4).

## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The main aim of the current study is to reveal whether there is a significant difference between Türkiye and the USA corpus in terms of citation practices related to the use of direct quotations and reporting verbs introducing direct quotations. Regarding the use of direct quotation, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference between Türkiye and the USA corpus in terms of the use of direct quotation. However, the USA corpus was found to have more directly quoted words than the Turkish corpus. Additionally, when looking at the percentages and means of direct quotation use in both corpora, it was found that the percentage and mean of direct quotation use in the USA corpus exceeded that of the Turkish corpus. The explanation for using more direct quotations can be the use of direct quotations as fragments rather than clause-based, which can be a sign of working more on the written text to fit the original work into the written text (Petrić, 2012). Similarly, it may be due to having a higher linguistic capability to fit direct quotations into written text (Jafarigohar & Mohammadkhani, 2015). Moreover, it may be associated with the authors refraining from paraphrasing to decrease the possibility of plagiarism, which can be a developmental stage in academic writing (Petrić, 2012). Consequently, the higher use of direct quotation can be explained by linguistic capability, using fragmented quotations that require adjustments in the written text, and a developmental stage to step into paraphrasing. Thus, there is a cultural difference between the two corpora in terms of the use of direct quotations.

On the other hand, regarding reporting verbs that introduce direct quotations, the two most frequently used reporting verbs were *state* and *define* in both corpora. However, in the USA corpus, it was found that there were more reporting verbs and more varied reporting verbs introducing direct quotations than in the Turkish corpus. In this sense, the frequency of other reporting verbs was higher in the USA corpus than in the Turkish corpus. Therefore, it can be an indicator of cultural differences in the use of reporting verbs to introduce direct quotations. Overall, according to the results, it may be proposed that there is a cultural difference between theses and dissertations written by postgraduate students studying in Türkiye and the USA regarding the variation and frequency of reporting verbs introducing direct quotations. On the other hand, direct quotation use was found to be similar between the two corpora in terms of frequency. This cross-cultural difference and similarity may be based on an endeavor of the writers of the theses and dissertations to be a part of both the local and global academic discourse community, as suggested by Dontcheva-Navratilova (2015). In the present study, it was found that while the most frequently used reporting verbs were the same in both corpora, the variation and frequency of other reporting verbs displayed differences. It may be an indicator of how theses and dissertations written in the Turkish corpus tried to be a part of the academic discourse community globally (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2015). Moreover, a study conducted by Deschacht and Maes (2017) investigated the cross-cultural aspects of self-citation and found that individualist and collectivist cultures differ in their tendencies toward self-citation. In this case, the frequencies of direct quotations may differ according to individualist and collectivist cultures, although this study did not find any significant differences in the frequency of direct quotations. However, the theses and dissertations written in the USA corpus involved more varied and frequent reporting verbs than those in the Turkish corpus, although the direct quotation use regarding frequency displayed similarity.

In the same vein, other studies have reached a similar result in that the reporting verb *state* was found to be the most frequently used reporting verb in academic writing (Jarkovská & Kučírková, 2020; Monreal & Salom, 2011; Verheijen, 2015). In addition, it verifies the results obtained by Docherty (2019) in that some of the reporting verbs were chosen more than others. However, as opposed to the results that presented *say* as the most preferred reporting verb found by Docherty (2019), it was found *state* and *define* were the most preferred reporting verbs in both corpora. Like the reporting verb *say*, these two reporting verbs *state* and *define* may be overused due to the preference for “reporting the action” (Docherty, 2019, p. 37). In other words, this may be because of the citation behavior of transferring what has been said without adding the voice of a second person. In this sense, using reporting verbs to introduce direct quotations can favor the rhetorical function of direct quotations (Docherty, 2019). Consequently, writers may tend to use the reporting verbs *state* and *define* even though they have extensive vocabulary knowledge. Similarly, the results of the study conducted by Verheijen (2015) are in line with the results of this study in that EFL learners were found to employ fewer and more limited reporting nouns and adverbs.

Regarding the frequency of direct quotations, the present study did not find any significant difference between the two corpora. However, Petrić (2012) found that high-rated theses used more direct quotations.

Similarly, Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015) revealed that articles from scholarly journals written by native English speakers used more direct quotations. By contrast, Docherty (2019) revealed that L2 learner bachelors used more direct quotations than native speakers of English. In this case, it can be maintained that the results of this study presented how theses and dissertations written in Türkiye tried to be a part of the academic discourse community, similar to the USA corpus, regarding the frequency of direct quotations and the most frequently used reporting verbs, but failed to use various reporting verbs to introduce direct quotations with more frequencies.

### Implications

Based on these results, several pedagogical implications can be made concerning teaching citations. First, English teachers and academic writing teachers should train and inform their students by presenting them with ways of using direct quotations effectively regarding the situations in which direct quotation should be used and how/to what extent it should be used. In this way, students can use direct quotations more consciously and effectively. Teachers can also encourage students to practice writing and paraphrasing to improve their writing skills, and use their own voices. Moreover, teaching when and how to use direct quotations is not the only solution to the effective use of direct quotations. Thus, the use of reporting verbs to introduce direct quotations may impact the effective and conscious use of direct quotations. In that sense, writing instructors at the university level should integrate reporting verbs into their academic writing courses, and they can use the corpus, such as the British National Corpus (BNC), by using a concordancer, such as Sketch Engine, to introduce the students most frequently used reporting verbs by the natives to encounter them with authentic data and provide a variety of options for reporting verbs (Yasmin et al., 2020). Teachers can use the concordancer not only to reach the data to share it with the students but also to teach the students how to reach authentic data from a concordancer to make them autonomous and aware of the various reporting verbs to introduce direct quotations (Bao, 2021). Moreover, teachers can provide feedback to academic writing students, and peer feedback can be employed within their zone of proximal development to decrease writing anxiety levels and increase their self-efficacy and achievement in academic writing (Sağlamlı, 2018). Not only for English teachers but also for general English purposes, these suggestions can boost the effectiveness of direct quotation use and reporting verb use by academic writers.

### Limitations

Since the scope of this study was limited to investigating the percentages of the use of direct quotations and the frequency and variation of reporting verbs used to introduce direct quotations, this study did not address the reasons behind the use of direct quotations by the students. In addition, this study did not investigate the classification of citations and direct quotations. Furthermore, this study presented writing convention differences from a limited perspective due to the focus of the research; therefore, further studies can include other countries and disciplines. A concordance analysis can be conducted to examine the lines written in theses and dissertations, which can also provide a qualitative aspect of the study. Other studies can also classify citations and direct quotations, along with the investigation of paraphrasing practices employed in these theses and dissertations.

### Statements of Publication Ethics

The authors of the present study declare that this study has not any ethical problems, and the authors conform to the ethical considerations.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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