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8. PLAGIARISM AND SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING IN AN ELECTRONIC AGE

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It has been observed that plagiarism is a problem across specialities and professions, and it is probably becoming more rampant than ever in this electronic age. Based on a body of literature primarily in applied linguistics, this review focuses on textual plagiarism and antiplagiarism in second language academic writing. Following a conceptualization of plagiarism and an examination of some terminology employed in the literature to address the complexity of the issue, a number of perspectives taken upon plagiarism in the literature are examined. These include a cultural interpretation, a developmental perspective, a disciplinary perspective, student beliefs and practices, faculty perceptions, and a focus upon antiplagiarism pedagogy. The challenge and opportunity involved in dealing with plagiarism is then highlighted by reviewing work that has analyzed the problem in connection with the Internet, by exemplifying some antiplagiarism detection devices, and by relating these to John Sinclair's "idiom principle" of linguistic structure. The article ends by suggesting a few lines of future research on plagiarism.

Voices are being raised across the disciplines concerning the increasing prevalence of plagiarism and how to deal with it. Apart from the numerous books, articles, reports, and institutional handbooks concerned with plagiarism, an extremely large number of Web sites, often hosted by institutions of higher learning, provide guidance about plagiarism and how to avoid it. Plagiarism functions at different levels. On one level there are the so-called paper mills, online services that provide academic term papers for a fee. On another level there is what this article is more concerned with, namely, textual plagiarism, or the copying of sections of one text in the composition of another. To combat these practices, at both levels, an increasing number of plagiarism detection software applications are being developed and put into use. Ironically, however, in some cases, the same companies are both operating paper mills and offering antiplagiarism services. Together with the antiplagiarism movement there has developed what might be called a widespread antiplagiarism discourse. At the same time, alternative voices are also to be heard, especially among applied linguistics and language teachers, arguing for a more sympathetic approach to the issue.

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Literature reviews on the topic of plagiarism are rife, found not only in the early sections of an increasing number of research articles and reports focusing on the issue of plagiarism (e.g., Chandrasoma, Thompson, & Pennycook, 2004; Currie, 1998; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Pecorari, 2003, 2006; Rinnert & Kobayashi, 2005; Shi 2004, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005a, 2005b; Yamada, 2003) but also in books either devoted to the issue (e.g., Angélil-Carter, 2000; Buranen & Roy, 1999; Carroll & Appleton, 2001; Harris, 2001; Howard, 1999) or containing chapters on it (e.g., Belcher & Hirvela, 2001; Canagarajah, 2002; Casanave, 2004). In addition, there are full-length review articles either devoted to the issue of plagiarism (e.g., Ercegovac & Richardson, 2004) or containing sections on it (e.g., Silva & Brice, 2004).

Why has there been so much emphasis on plagiarism in recent years? It is probably true to say that a lot of this concern has been brought about by the electronic revolution in text production. With modern-day word processors and access to the Internet, writers are now able to "copy and paste" large or small sections of text written by others and import them into their own writing. The temptation to plagiarize is thus much greater, and consequently its occurrence is now probably more widespread than ever before. Where novice or second language writers are concerned, the temptation to copy and paste is even greater. Such writers may lack confidence in their phraseology and may place more trust in something that has been written by others than by themselves. Why not "borrow" language that has been used and probably been attested by someone else?

Considering the large quantity of larger and smaller studies that have already been conducted, it is beyond the scope of this article to present a comprehensive literature review. Relying on a body of literature primarily in applied linguistics, the focus in this review will be on textual plagiarism and antiplagiarism in second language academic writing.

Conceptualizing Plagiarism

As one of many forms of academic misconduct, it has been suggested that plagiarism is fostered by an overall "cheating culture" that has developed as a result of the marketization of the academy and the increasing economic value attaching to academic qualifications, particularly in "Anglo" communities (Callahan, 2004, cited in Selwyn, 2007). Indeed, plagiarism has been conceived of as a particularly Anglo-Saxon concept, as indicated, for example, by a number of recent region-based surveys on university policies and on students' perceptions and practices with regard to this activity (Ercegovac & Richardson, 2004; McCabe, 2005; Pecorari, 2001; Scanlon & Neumann; 2002; Underwood & Szabo, 2003). This Anglo-Saxon concentration has its historical roots. An overwhelming concern with authorial rights (which has come to be termed a "Romantic concept of authorship") in the Anglo-Saxon culture can be traced back to the rise of the printing press during the 15th–16th centuries and the subsequent birth of copyright law in England and the United States during the 17th–18th centuries. More broadly, a privileged concern with textual ownership has its roots in the Utilitarian ideology that developed out of the Enlightenment (Howard, 2003; Pennycook, 1996; Scollon, 1995; Sutherland-Smith,

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2005b). As Swales and Feak (1994, p. 125) have pointed out, with this historical genealogy, "the concept of plagiarism has become an integral part of North American and Western European academic cultures." Definitions of plagiarism in the (Western) literature are thus most often framed within "North American and Western European academic cultures," as especially showcased by countries with an Anglo-Saxon heritage.

Definitions of plagiarism are numerous. Fairly typical is one cited by Howard (1993, p. 233) from Hacker's (1991, p. 507) *Bedford Handbook for Writers:*

> Two different acts are considered plagiarism: (1) borrowing someone's ideas, information, or language without documenting the source and (2) documenting the source but paraphrasing the source's language too closely, without using quotation marks to indicate that words and phrases have been borrowed.

In an international survey among some universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia on their regulations concerning plagiarism, Pecorari (2001) found that the 53 definitions she gathered mention some or all of six elements. Plagiarism is thus, according to these definitions, "(1) material that has been (2) taken from (3) some source by (4) someone, (5) without acknowledgment and (6) with/without intention to deceive." (p. 235). Pecorari cited a definition from a British University as typical: "Plagiarism is defined as the use of other people's work and the submission of it as though it were one's own work." Although the focus of this definition is on the piece of work as a whole, a wide range of practices may be labeled as plagiaristic: "From simple errors in citation to patchwriting and to downloading or purchasing whole essays" (Shi, 2006, p. 264), or including "a range of actions from failure to use proper citation to wholesale cheating . . . unintentionally or with planful deliberation" (Hinchliffe, 1998, cited in Logue, 2004, p. 40).

Running counter to conceptions of plagiarism as a clear-cut violation of acceptable practice, attention has been focused among some scholars on the relativistic nature of the practice. Currie (1998) listed a number of tensions in any consideration of what might constitute plagiarism: the need to appreciate the (postmodernist) belief in the intertextual nature of discourse, the belief that no writer can be the sole originator of his or her words or ideas; the need to acknowledge the cultural and ideological implications of the traditional Western (especially Anglo-Saxon) definition of plagiarism (a definition that fails to acknowledge alternative cultural conceptions of acceptable practice and that may lead to problems in dealing with students' [especially ESL students'] plagiaristic behaviors); and the potential usefulness of distinguishing between the borrowing of words vs. the borrowing of ideas when analyzing specific cases of textual borrowing. These notions, together with a few others that also imply a context sensitivity in approach to the issue of plagiarism, will be covered in the following sections before we move to considerations of aspects of plagiarism specifically related to the electronic media.

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Questions of Terminology: Patchwriting, Textual Borrowing, Textual Plagiarism, Language Re-use, and Transgressive/Nontransgressive Intertextuality

There is an increasing consensus among scholars that rather than viewing plagiarism simplistically as dishonest behavior, it is necessary to distinguish between intentional and nonintentional plagiarism, characterized respectively by an intention to cheat, on the one hand, and ignorance of the expected conventions on the part of novices learning the target discourse conventions, on the other. Accordingly, there have been various attempts at adopting new labels to avoid the stigmatizing effect of the term *plagiarism* itself. Howard (1993) proposed the notion of *patchwriting,* a practice that, as she pointed out, amounts to "paraphrasing the source's language too closely." Specifically, in patchwriting students are engaged in "copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym substitutes" (Howard, 1993, p. 233). Howard emphasized that patchwriting is "not always a form of academic dishonesty" (1995, p. 799), but is "a healthy effort to gain membership in a new culture" (1993, p. 236), that it "may be a preliminary way of participating in unfamiliar discourse" (p. 239), and that it "can actually help the learner begin to understand the unfamiliar material" (1995, p. 799).

Increasingly, practitioners and researchers are expressing views in line with Howard's (1993, 1995, 1999) with regard to student writers' problematic textual practices (e.g., Angélil-Carter, 2000; Barks & Watts, 2001; Casanave, 2004; Currie, 1998; Ivanic, 1998; Krishnan & Kathpalia, 2002; Pecorari, 2003, 2006; Price, 2002; Shi, 2004; Spack, 1997). These authors challenge the traditionalist view of students' plagiaristic behavior as being the intentional violation of academic ethics, acknowledging that textual borrowing is a strategy that student writers naturally tend to use and is a normal part of learning in a student's acquisition of academic/disciplinary literacy. As Ivanic (1998, p. 86) has put it, "it is becoming increasingly recognized that learner writers (like all writers) are not so much learning to be creative as learning to use discourses which already exist—creatively."

Among these more sensitive scholars, some use the term *textual borrowing* (Casanave, 2004; Currie, 1998; Shi, 2004), which is "a less negative term than *plagiarism,*" according to Casanave (2004, p. 174), and perhaps a more generic term than patchwriting. In addition, Pecorari (2003) used the term *textual plagiarism* to contrast with *prototypical plagiarism*—the latter being reserved for when there is an intention to deceive.

In a recent paper on Chinese novice scientists' textual copying strategies, even more explicitly for the purpose of removing the stigmatizing effect of labeling, Flowerdew and Li (2007) used the term *language re-use.* Their study shows that students writing scientific research articles re-use language taken from other sources in all of the sections of the prototypical research paper, with this usage varying from short phrases to stretches of sentences in a row. The novice scientists' justification of their language re-use practices indicates a lack of intention to deceive on their part, and the view that they, like other student writers engaged in textual plagiarism

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focused on in the literature, tend to have their own conception of what is and what is not plagiarism.

Transgressive versus *nontransgressive intertextuality* is yet another pair of terms, proposed by some researchers (e.g., Chandrasoma et al., 2004) to counter simplistic absolutism in dealing with plagiarism. Calling for a complete rejection of the notion of plagiarism, and advocating a reframing of it in terms of transgressive and nontransgressive intertextuality, Chandrasoma et al. have argued that "Once textual borrowings are seen in this light, we are more able to focus on the crucial issues of writing, identity, power, knowledge, disciplinary dynamics, and discourse that underlie intertextuality." (p. 171).

A Cultural Interpretation of Plagiarism

One approach to research on plagiarism is the cultural one, the hypothesis being that different cultures view plagiarism in different ways. In particular, a considerable number of studies have focused on Chinese students, studying either in their home country (Deckert, 1993; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Li, 2006, 2007; Matalene, 1985; Pennycook, 1996; Sapp, 2002; Scollon, 1995), in North America (Bloch, 2001; Currie, 1998; Gregg, 1986; Shi, 2004, 2006) or in Great Britain (Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006; Sowden, 2005).

Deckert (1993) administered a questionnaire survey among students at a college in Hong Kong (the universities and colleges in Hong Kong adopt the British or American kind of definitions of plagiarism and write them into the codes of conduct for students). He reported that the Hong Kong Chinese students had "poor performance in detecting plagiarism in the questionnaire items," and pointed out that the students were unfamiliar with "the Western conception of plagiarism." Deckert argued accordingly that "the ethical ideals in the 'Standards of Conduct' in Hong Kong college catalogs bear little relationship to the students' past training and current understanding," and "students are supposedly held responsible for a standard they clearly do not grasp" (p. 142). Deckert recommended pedagogical measures "to help students make the transition to a different standard" (p. 142).

Although Deckert's study was valuable for exposing a disparity between a Western-styled standard of conduct stipulated by college authorities and students' educational background, it came in for criticism from Pennycook (1994) for assuming that there was actually a clear definition of plagiarism and that the Western standard of plagiarism should be universally applied. In a further article, Pennycook (1996) echoed Scollon (1994, 1995) in arguing that the Western concept of authorship represents a particular ideological positioning, has historical baggage, and is in a constant process of change. Pennycook consequently argued that a pragmatist view of plagiarism in cross-cultural literacy pedagogy such as that proposed by Deckert is both simplistic (in reducing a complex issue to a black-and-white dichotomy) and ethnocentric (by not considering possible alternative ideologies of textual borrowing in non-Western cultures). Pennycook's (1994, 1996) views encouraged a general

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awareness of potential cultural differences in notions of plagiarism. In this, it can be noted that he was echoing an argument made much earlier by Matalene (1985) in her study of Chinese student writing practices, arguing that because "ethnocentrism is a less and less appropriate response, we need to understand and appreciate rhetorical systems that are different from our own" (Matalene, 1985, p. 790).

However, while there is now generally a call among literacy educators to attend to potential cultural differences when dealing with student plagiarism (e.g., Canagarajah, 2002; Casanave, 2004; Price, 2002; Shei, 2006; Shi, 2006; Sowden, 2005), there is at the same time a need to guard against essentializing culturally conditioned views of plagiarism. The present literature does seem to betray a certain amount of stereotyping (see e.g., Liu, 2005, for critique). In an article by Russikoff, Fucaloro, and Salkauskiene (2003), for example, based on a cross-national survey of university students' views and practices in plagiarism, the following comment with reference to the Chinese participants in the survey appeared: "considering the cultural values and pedagogical practices of the People's Republic of China, it is entirely understandable that less than half (43%) of the Chinese students consider copying to be plagiarism" (p. 112).

A Developmental Perspective on Plagiarism

If cultural difference is to be acknowledged, but at the same time cultural stereotyping is to be avoided, an alternative perspective is the developmental one. Literacy practices and discourse conventions in a non-Western context or language are subject to change, not least because of the powerful influence of English discourse conventions, especially in this era of globalization. At the level of textual practice, it has been noted, for example, that Chinese scholars in the past decades have been increasingly adopting a Western style of citation and bibliography (Buranen, 1999) (although humanities and social sciences disciplines apparently have shown less development in this regard; see Bloch & Chi, 1995). At the pedagogical level, it can probably be argued that what was reported by Matalene (1985) two decades ago or even by Pennycook (1996) one decade ago may not represent an accurate picture of the current practice, as Chinese schools and universities continuously undergo reform in teaching and assessment. In addition, at the policy level, if in Anglo-Saxon contexts a nexus between "legal concepts of authorship and university plagiarism regulations" has long been established (Sutherland-Smith, 2005b, p. 17), in a non-Anglophone context such as China, a similar nexus will probably develop in the future, given the growing emphasis on the rule of law and legalistic approaches to dealings within the society at large, this in spite of the fact that the conception of plagiarism does not possess the same sort of ideological baggage as the term does in the Anglo-Saxon heritage.

A Disciplinary Perspective on Plagiarism

There has been a call for more awareness of potential disciplinary differences in terms of textual borrowing practices (e.g., Chandrasegaran, 2000; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Shi, 2004). Rinnert and Kobayashi's (2005) survey among Japanese university students revealed that humanities and social science (HSS) students had more

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awareness than science students of the need to credit sources, a not-surprising finding, given the broad epistemological differences between HSS and science. Not many studies have focused on students writing in their own specialist disciplines, however. The meagerness of such research is perhaps partly because the teacher-researchers who are concerned with the issue of plagiarism in L1 and L2 writing are mostly teachers of English or EAP (English for academic purposes). As a result, the texts examined in the bulk of research on plagiarism/textual borrowing have been mostly the texts that students write for an English or EAP class. However, there has been some noticeable research on copying language in the writing of science.

Evidence of expert scientists' textual borrowing while writing research articles for publication was found in several early studies conducted two decades ago: St. John (1987), Rymer (1988), and Dubois (1988). With regard to ESL scientists, in his optimistic argument that this group is not substantively disadvantaged in the English-based international academia of science publication, Wood (2001, p. 77) observed:

> Experienced NNS writers are familiar with the discourse requirements of their discipline. The reasons are not hard to determine. Before NNS scientists write their first papers in English they will have spent several years reading such papers in English and will be familiar with the conventions of the field.

But for ESL novice scientists, when they write their first papers in English, they may well not have yet "spent several years reading such papers in English." At the same time, being "familiar with the conventions of the field" does not necessarily translate into proficiency in writing. Thus the problem of not being able to write proficiently in English becomes an issue of immediate concern. A lack of adequate proficiency in writing scientific English leads many novice scholars to adopt the composing strategy of modeling on other journal articles to write their own (Yakhontova, 2001).

Krishnan and Kathpalia (2002) investigated the textual strategies that the engineering students at a Singaporean university employed in writing the literature review sections of their final year project reports. It was found that one major strategy used by the students was *plagiphrasing* (Whitaker, 1993) (similar to Howard's [1993] patchwriting). Jones and Freeman (2003) studied the report writing of some first-year physics students in an Australian university, focusing on their behavior of "imitation, copying, and the use of models." The authors proposed three types of copying as potentially representing a benign learning process: *copying format* (the modeling of the five sections of a report: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion), *copying segments* (replication of the functional structure in the individual sections, e.g., the Introduction, of a report), and *copying fragments* (i.e., formulaic expressions and syntactic structures).

These three types of copying account for the inherent features of the genre of research articles in science disciplines. It has been claimed by some that "copying" of these types, along with the copying of technical terms, does not constitute plagiarism

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but should rather be regarded as a necessary part of learning, especially given the rather formulaic patterning of much scientific writing (Barks & Watts, 2001; Flowerdew, 1993; Hyland, 2001; Swales, 1990; Swales & Feak, 1994). In their workshops given to scientists in Australia and China, Cargill and her scientist colleague (Cargill, 2005; Cargill & O'Connor, 2006a, 2006b) recommended that workshop participants learn "sentence templates" such as the following (Cargill, 2005):

> The aim of the work described in this paper was to elucidate further (NP). Our particular objectives were: (i) to examine (NP) over a (number) year period; (ii) to characterise (NP), in terms of (NP); (iii) to test the hypothesis that (clause); and (iv) to investigate (NP).

> (Author) suggests that (NP) may reflect differences in (NP). (Another author), however, found that (NP) did not influence (NP) and suggested that (NP) reflects (NP).

"Sentence templates" such as the above help to lead students to learning to employ the discourse of their target discipline through "copying fragments," in the term of Jones and Freeman (2003).

Nevertheless, in practice, science students' copying obviously goes beyond these noncontent, formulaic "templates" or "fragments," as shown by the student texts richly sampled in Pecorari (2006), Li (2006, 2007), and Flowerdew and Li (2007). Studying Chinese novice scientists' English-language manuscripts of research articles written for international publication, Flowerdew and Li 2007, for example, documented ample evidence of textual plagiarism in all sections of the students' manuscripts. To what extent is this acceptable? There is evidence that science students' supervisors have a stricter criterion over the acceptability or nonacceptability of textual borrowing than do some of their students (Dong, 1996; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Pecorari, 2006) (although what they claim, of course, may or may not correspond to the reality of the situation). However, Flowerdew and Li (2007) concluded that when dealing with "copying" in science, a distinction needs to be made between the borrowing of form (language) and of content (ideas). In science, when a text contains borrowed fragments that do not affect the originality of the work reported (e.g., a fragment on some background information, borrowed with some editing), it may not become a focus of criticism in the science community.

Student Beliefs and Practices Concerning Plagiarism

The literature contains abundant reports on student beliefs, attitudes, and practices regarding plagiarism. Above all, students can be seen as engaged in textual plagiarism as a survival strategy. The literature reveals that although student writers might hope for an "ideal" performance of writing "in their own words," sometimes they eventually settle for a "realistic" performance that is within their capacity and that involves textual plagiarism. This latter strategy may be due to a combination of

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factors: (1) believing that a degree of copying of language from other texts is acceptable; (2) linguistic and cognitive overload in fulfilling certain writing tasks—and for ESL students the inadequacy of linguistic flexibility being especially salient; (3) pressure of passing assessment (and related fear of punishment); and (4) unfamiliarity with the discourse of the target disciplinary community (hence lack of confidence) (e.g., Buranen, 1999; Currie, 1998; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Howard, 1993; Ivanic, 1998; Jones & Freeman, 2003; Krishnan & Kathpalia, 2002; Leki, 1997; Li, 2006; Pecorari, 2003; Shi, 2006; Spack, 1997).

By way of illustration, an ESL student in a study by Pecorari (2003), although feeling his unattributed repetition from source texts in his dissertation to be "less than ideal," did not regard his behavior as plagiarism, reasoning that "this is not copy of whole paragraph or sentence or one description. It is just copied, taking a note or something" (p. 341). The student felt it to be a normal practice to reproduce language from source texts in one's notes and then reproduce the same language in papers written for the purposes of assessment. When questioned by the researcher whether his text contained too much copying, the student became uncertain (saying "Probably" in response) and yet indicated that given the pressure of work, he would just leave it as it was.

Another set of contextual variables has also been reported as encouraging student plagiarism. To quote McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2002), these factors include "perception of peers' behaviour, student perceptions of the understanding and acceptance of academic integrity policies, perceived certainty of being reported for cheating, and the perceived severity of campus penalties for cheating, as well as the presence or absence of an academic honor code" (p. 359). Of these, it is claimed that perception of peer behavior is the most powerful influential factor (McCabe & Trevino, 1997) in encouraging plagiaristic practices. Because their peers are doing it, students may believe that their copying practices are both acceptable and necessary for their learning. Students holding this belief tend to reject the term *plagiarism* when characterizing their textual practice.

In studies focusing on ESL students (studying either in their home countries or in Anglophone contexts), it has been shown that when confronted with Anglo-Saxon conceptions of plagiarism, students are often confused and frustrated (Angélil-Carter, 2000; Bloch, 2001; Currie, 1998; Deckert, 1993; Leki, 1997; Pecorari, 2003, 2006; Shi, 2006; Sowden, 2005; Spack, 1997; Youmans & Evans, 2000). Studies that included both English-L1 students and ESL students, indeed, have highlighted differences between the two groups in their conceptions and practices over plagiarism (e.g., Rinnert & Kobayashi, 2005; Shi, 2004, 2006). At the same time, studies conducted in non-Anglophone (English as a foreign language, EFL) contexts reported practices that diverge from the Anglo-Saxon orthodoxy of authorship and textual ownership. Sherman (1992) described students at an Italian university as being proud to be able to repeat word-for-word memorized passages in textbooks with a view to using them in answering examination questions. A similar practice of knowledge recall was noted by Sapp (2002) on the part of Chinese students preparing for examinations. Similarly Deckert (1993) focused on

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Cantonese-L1 Hong Kong students' inclination for knowledge "recycling," while Pennycook (1996) related a (thereafter well-cited) case of a Chinese student reproducing from memory a text on Lincoln in writing his "own" essay. A decade earlier, in another well-cited paper, Matalene (1985) described an amazing fervor for memorization of classic and model texts in China. In Japan, Dryden (1999) reported a prevalence of unattributed translations in the writing of university academics and students. In Vietnamese universities "it is acceptable for students to give a full list bibliography at the end of their essays without having to give full in-text references to the readings they use" (Phan Le Ha, 2006, p. 78). In Singapore, in contrast, according to Chandrasegaran (2000), more emphasis was put on "using one's own words" in knowledge recitation practice.

Faculty Perceptions of Plagiarism

The typical image of many expatriate EAP teachers is perhaps that of the police officer. It is the EAP teacher's role to make sure that strict Western standards of appropriate writing are followed. Studies by Deckert (1993) for Hong Kong and Sapp (2002) for mainland China contribute to this view. In addition to this perspective, however, more nuanced attitudes to plagiarism on the part of EAP teachers are found in the literature (e.g., Hyland, 2001; Johnston, 1991; Sutherland-Smith, 2005a). Most of these studies concern native English-speaking (NES) teachers.

In Sutherland-Smith's (2005a) report concerning EAP teachers' (11 teachers at an Australian university) perceptions of student plagiarism in writing, a more complicated picture is presented, not a stereotypical picture of culturally insensitive teachers. The dilemma teachers face here in dealing with student plagiarism was shown to result from their awareness of the complexity of the issue—in terms of the difficulty of defining plagiarism and tensions between the investment needed on the part of the teachers to enforce an antiplagiarism discipline on the one hand and the restriction of administrative resources as well as personal energy on the other. In another study, Hyland (2001) considered the case of six ESL undergraduates in a New Zealand university and found that the EAP teachers' reluctance to give direct feedback on student plagiarism led to miscommunication with their ESL students. In pointing out that the teachers' indirect, face-saving manner of signaling plagiarism to the students stemmed from their belief in plagiarism being largely a Western concept and hence alien to their non-Western students, Hyland called for a balance between staff sensitivity to potential cultural differences in conceptions of plagiarism on the one hand, and being helpful to the students in learning the conventions expected in their target English community on the other.

Less researched than EAP teachers' attitudes toward students' practices of textual plagiarism are those of disciplinary faculty. From the limited literature that has touched on the issue the general impression is that disciplinary professors are often not aware of their students' textual plagiarism, but that they tend to have stringent criteria over textual borrowing when they do discover it or when it is brought to their attention. In Dong (1996), an NES professor commenting on a dissertation chapter of

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his Chinese-L1 doctoral student of biochemistry in a North American university, while acknowledging that one's own text is necessarily influenced by other texts, expressed a concern that the student's chapter might contain unacceptable copying from source texts:

> We all are influenced by our reading. When we write, we think what we have read. And you sometimes put that in your words or you rearrange it. I did not check back to the literature to see. I just worried sometimes about the way something was written. It didn't sound like [the name of his student] would write that way. (Dong, 1996, p. 449)

In Pecorari (2006, p. 24), a biology professor in a North American university commented on his ESL student's review of literature as having "made a reasonable job of trying to understand what people are doing and why they're trying to do it" with a "broad coverage." However, when alerted by the researcher to the similarities between the student text and source texts, the professor's response changed sharply: "That is not what they're expected to do, and *if I'd spotted it* [italics added by Pecorari] I would have been very concerned about it, yes" (p. 24). In a study by Petric (2004), a professor refers a case of what she judges to be plagiarism to an ESL teacher. The professor refers to "the horrible doubt" she does not want to carry around, indicating that she understands plagiarism as "a transgression of principles of academic honesty," in Petric's words, "something shameful and difficult to talk about" (p. 5). Further, Petric added, "her need for prompt corrective action reflects her view of the role and duty of teachers as guardians of academic values and standards" (p. 5). In her unpublished doctoral dissertation Petric (2005) reported that some dissertation supervisors (in the field of gender studies) were intent on ensuring that students did not plagiarize. However, in other cases plagiarism went unnoticed. In our own study of Chinese novice scientists' language re-use practices in writing for publication (Flowerdew & Li, 2007), we also found that although Chinese supervisors emphasize the need for the students to "imitate" the language of source texts to learn to write, when copying is brought to their attention, they express disapproval, even though language is not usually a matter of great concern, more emphasis (understandably) being placed on the content of the work. More systematic studies of faculty attitudes to plagiarism are needed.

Antiplagiarism Pedagogy

A context-sensitive approach to plagiarism is now much in evidence in antiplagiarism pedagogy (e.g., Abasi, Akbari, & Graves, 2006; Chandrasoma et al., 2004; Howard, 1995; Ivanic, 1998; Kraus, 2002; Price, 2002; Starfield, 2002). For many EAP researchers and practitioners, a primary challenge for novice writers, whether English-L1 or ESL students, is to develop an authorial voice in their academic discourse (Angélil-Carter, S., 2000; Ivanic, 1998; Swales, 1990). Working from this perspective, Abasi et al. (2006) interpreted the plagiaristic practices of the participants in their study as being the result of a failure to engage with source texts and to make

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them their own, but merely copying from them without imbuing them with their own individual voices: "This retelling approach coupled with their erratic documentation skills ultimately constructed [them] as plagiarists" (p. 112). The important aspect of any antiplagiarism pedagogy, these writers thus emphasize, is that texts need to be absorbed by learners rather than just regurgitated in an unthinking way.

Such "retelling" approaches, according to Price (2002), are inevitable if institutional policies regarding plagiarism are inflexible. For Price (2002), plagiarism is "not stable," but "shifts across historical time periods, across cultures, across workplaces, even across academic disciplines" (p. 90). However, institutional policies fail to reflect this reality. Price (2002) argued that when plagiarism is presented through institutional policies and pedagogies as "something fixed and absolute" (p. 89), without a full acknowledgment of its complications, as is usually the case, students and novice scholars find themselves in a dilemma of either writing at their own level and failing to come up to the required standard or, if they want to come closer to the required standard, plagiarizing. Price recommended a dialogic approach to plagiarism policies, with students negotiating with teachers what is acceptable or not within the context of plagiarism as a contextually defined concept.

It has also been argued that antiplagiarism pedagogy commonly does not sufficiently articulate what it claims to teach. Based on an analysis of 10 North American college e-learning antiplagiarism Web sites, Yamada (2003) observed that these Web sites resemble print teaching materials and seriously fall short of demonstrating how to write acceptable paraphrases for producing unplagiarized text. Not articulated at these Web sites are skills of synthesizing different sources while mixing in students' own interpretation, and importantly, inferential thought processes which are often crucial in writing from sources. Yamada thus reinforced the points made earlier about the need for learners to truly make texts their own.

Chandrasegaran's (2000) study with a group of Singaporean students highlighted the wash-back effect of examinations on teaching practice that in turn shaped students' belief and practices concerning plagiarism. For example, the pedagogic practices observed by Chandrasegaran encouraged "knowledge recitation" or recall of knowledge from textbooks, but the examinations expected the students to compose answers to questions in their "own words." The credit attached to using one's own words hence translated into the students' belief that as long as one paraphrases when writing from sources, plagiarism is avoided, no matter whether source attribution is given or not.

In Chandrasegaran's (2000) study, paraphrase is equivalent to "using one's own words"; while in effect, as another study, by Yamada (2003), of North American college Web sites indicated, paraphrasing can be a highly challenging task that may necessitate sophisticated inferential thought processes which tend to be bypassed in antiplagiarism pedagogy. To redress her students' misconceptions over plagiarism, Chandrasegaran suggested that opportunities of citing others for real rhetorical purposes (which the Singaporean students lacked), such as writing an argumentative

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essay, would help. On a similar note, Harwood (2004) proposed that the current focus on mechanics (such as discussion of the format of different reference systems) in EAP writing textbooks and classes should give way to the pragmatics of citations, that is, rhetorical functions of individual citations.

Plagiarism and the Internet

The coming of the electronic age has been compared to the development of the printing press in the 15th–16th centuries in Europe; but if the latter led to the introduction of copyright law in the Anglo-Saxon context, the former is now posing challenges to the current copyright law (Howard, 2003). Yet, while confronting conventional notions of textual ownership and intellectual property (e.g., Bloch, 2001; Lunsford & West, 1996), it has been pointed out, hypertexts seem to strengthen the postmodernist notion of "the death of author" and "the decentering of the authority of a single, unitary self over a text" (Belcher, 2001, p. 142).

The ease of obtaining hypertext through the Internet makes e-cheating easy, cheap, and quick, and therefore tempting. Quite a number of surveys on student perceptions of and attitudes toward Internet plagiarism, conducted in the United Kingdom (e.g., Selwyn, 2007), the United States (e.g., Scanlon & Neumann, 2002), and Australia (e.g., Sutherland-Smith, 2005b), generally confirm through student self-report that Internet plagiarism merits serious concern (see also e.g., Groark, Oblinger, & Choa, 2001).

Some student perceptions reported include copying electronic sources as less dishonest than copying printed sources, the Internet being a "free zone" where copying is justified, and e-cheating more difficult to be caught doing (e.g., Selwyn, 2007; Sutherland-Smith, 2005b). In a recent questionnaire-based survey of over a thousand undergraduates studying at British universities, Selwyn found male students more likely than female students, and lower achievers more likely than higher achievers to report online plagiarism of various degrees, from copying a few sentences or paragraphs to buying an assignment through the Internet. The survey also uncovered significant disciplinary variation. According to Selwyn, the modes of assessment within different disciplines may help to account for the variation: A relatively high level of reporting of unattributed copying of sentences and paragraphs in the computer and mathematical sciences may have to do with software coding and structured report style; whereas the open-ended nature of the assignments in the humanities and social sciences may discourage large-scale unattributed copying. Finally, Selwyn pointed out that rather than seeing online plagiarism as a new form of the phenomenon engendered by the technology, it is "entwined with" and indeed may "replicate and reinforce" students' more traditional forms of plagiarism.

In the wake of the new challenges created by the Internet, various remedies have been put forward (e.g., Carroll & Appleton, 2001; Harris, 2001; Lathrop & Foss, 2000; McMurtry, 2001). Among many tips given to teachers, favored coping strategies include educating students about plagiarism, designing assignments that

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deter plagiarism, and using online search engines or detection software to track down student plagiarism.

Antiplagiarism Detection Devices

Search engines offer perhaps the best free plagiarism detection option for online content: Google, Yahoo, and Live search engines (to name some major search engines) are good at detecting textual plagiarism of easily accessible online materials. As the search results returned by these and other search engines do not always overlap, results can be improved by running searches for the same string on multiple search engines rather than limiting the search to only one favorite engine. The results differ because each company has a different index of the Web, and these indexes only partially overlap. Of course, although they are excellent resources for detecting plagiarism of content from the Web, they do not index paper mills like Cheathouse.com (http://www.cheathouse.com/), School Sucks (http://www.schoolsucks.com/), and so on. Fee-based plagiarism detection services do appear to include papers from some major paper mills. A list of paper mills can be found here: http://www.web-miner.com/plagiarism#sites.

Some major fee-based providers of plagiarism detection include:

- CopyCatch (http://www.copycatchgold.com/): CopyCatch is a UK-based plagiarism detection service. According to the CopyCatch Web site, the owner of the company, David Woolls, is the author of the "Plagiarism" entry in Brown's (2006) *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics.*
- EVE2 (http://www.canexus.com/eve/index.shtml): EVE (Essay Verification Engine) appears to be one of the more long-standing successes in the plagiarism detection industry, and it appears to be a major competitor of Turnitin in the US market.
- Turnitin (http://turnitin.com/static/home.html): Another major provider of plagiarism detection services. Like EVE2, Turnitin provides substantial ad copy relating its appearances in the mainstream press (both print and broadcast). It is connected to Plagiarism.org (http://www.plagiarism.org/), a site that combines summaries and information about plagiarism with advertising for the parent company iParadigms's software suites Turnitin and iThenticate (a "corporate" analog to Turnitin's academic plagiarism detection software: http://www.ithenticate.com/static/home.html). Wikipedia documents a developing court case involving Turnitin and McLean High School students in Washington, DC (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnitin#Controversy_.26_Litigation).
- SafeAssignment (http://www.mydropbox.com/services/safeassignment.php) appears to be a more recent competitor in the field. It is integrated into a comprehensive online classroom management tool called MyDropBox (http://www.mydropbox.com/), which is sold either as a stand-alone product or as a component for use with Blackboard.

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- CatchItFirst (http://www.catchitfirst.com/): Another more recent service, CatchItFirst is a pay-per-use plagiarism detection service developed from an earlier subscription-based service (Scriptum: http://www.scriptum.ca/). Its Web site has very little information, even ad copy.

Unfortunately, the technology used by these software suites is proprietary, making it difficult to determine what methods of comparison are actually being used. Comparisons of some of these services have been carried out, and The Center for Intellectual Property at the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) has a bibliography of articles that report the results of some of these comparisons. The bibliography can be found here: http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/cip/links_plagiarism.shtml#evaluation

This bibliography is located on one of several sites which provide links to online materials related to plagiarism. In addition to its bibliography of evaluations of plagiarism detection software, it includes links to a range of academic resources related to plagiarism (http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/cip/links_plagiarism.shtml).

Less academic in focus, "Plagiarism" (http://www.web-miner.com/plagiarism) and "Plagiarism Stoppers: A Teacher's Guide" (http://www.ncusd203.org/central/html/where/plagiarism_stoppers.html) include lists of links to plagiarism related content on the Web. Each includes a list of major plagiarism detection services as well as some major sources of plagiarized materials, including paper mills.

Plagiarism and the Idiom Principle

Antiplagiarism devices are based on a principle coined by Sinclair (1991): the *idiom* principle. Sinclair posited that a large percentage of the language we produce consists of prefabricated chunks, as opposed to unique word combinations: Thus, it is fundamentally idiomatic in nature. Antiplagiarism applications apply this principle in looking for identical strings of words in different texts (e.g., Coulthard, 2004). It is perhaps ironic to note that the same principle that is used in detecting plagiarism is also increasingly being applied in the teaching of second language writing. Pedagogies involving the use of specialized text corpora for writing tasks are actively being developed. For example, Bianchi & Pazzaglia (2007) created a corpus of psychology research articles for student writers in that discipline. Students had to make use of the corpus in writing their own articles, searching for appropriate phraseological patterns in the corpus to incorporate in their own papers. Similarly, Lee and Swales (2006) had a heterogeneous group of graduate students develop their own personalized corpora to use as the basis for a similar procedure to that of Bianchi and Pazzaglia this time applied to the various writing tasks required of them in their courses. This procedure is used also by Cargill and O'Connor (2006a, 2006b) in their workshops for nonnative speaking scientists, as reported earlier. This pedagogy offers both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to make sure that students do not exaggerate the procedure and turn it into plagiarism (by "borrowing" chunks that are too large). The opportunity is that it offers the instructor the opportunity to develop discussion and reflection on what does and does not constitute acceptable

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borrowing practice (i.e., that the borrowing of shorter chunks is more acceptable than that of larger ones).

Future Research on Plagiarism

A retrospect of the literature on plagiarism reveals some areas that merit future research to better understand and handle plagiarism in this electronic age. Three areas, in particular, would seem to merit more attention.

The first of these is the need to study textual borrowing as part of the process of performing real composing tasks in various disciplinary and professional communities. As a number of researchers have called for, plagiarism needs to be examined in interaction with "knowledge, disciplinary dynamics, and discourse that underlie intertextuality" (Chandrasoma et al., 2004, p. 171) and then the reframed contextualized notion of plagiarism should be reflected in pedagogy (Price, 2002). It seems that more studies are needed such as those conducted by Pecorari (2003, 2006), Li (2006, 2007), and Flowerdew and Li (2007) that analyze rich amounts of ethnographic and textual data within particular disciplinary and professional communities with a view to deriving disciplinary- and profession-specific conceptions of plagiarism.

The second area for future research is the need to direct more attention to what is happening in non-Anglophone EFL contexts. Given that most research on plagiarism has been conducted in Anglophone contexts, questions such as the following need to be asked in non-Anglophone contexts: What are the criteria for defining plagiarism in these various contexts? What are people's attitudes toward plagiaristic practices in such contexts? What has been the evolution of such criteria and attitudes? What might be the various factors that influence the process of changing conventions and attitudes? Reports from non-Anglophone EFL contexts will not only help to counter cultural stereotyping on the issue of plagiarism but also deepen understanding of it in the general research and pedagogical communities.

The third area where attention needs to be directed is in developing corpus-based pedagogies that teach students to use corpora responsibly, to be able to examine a corpus of texts of the type that they want to write, and to draw upon its phraseological resources without resorting to plagiarism. Further research in these areas will facilitate finding ways to meet new challenges in this electronic age of academic globalization.

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Carroll, J., & Appleton, J. (2001). *Plagiarism: A good practice guide*. Oxford: Oxford Brookes University and Joint Information Systems Committee. Retrieved October 18, 2007, from http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk/documents/brookes.pdf

This comprehensive guide, in the form of a pamphlet, proposes suggestions for dealing with plagiarism based on explicit teaching and active student involvement, all preferably conducted as part of the learning process within discipline-specific contexts.

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Coulthard, M. (2004). Author identification, idiolect, and linguistic uniqueness. *Applied Linguistics, 25*(4), 431–447.

This report is based on a more linguistic methodology, as distinguished from many other research reports concerning the issue of plagiarism. It illustrates methods of measuring lexical similarities as a practical step of identifying plagiarism in student writing.

Flowerdew, J., & Li, Y.-Y. (2007). Language re-use among Chinese apprentice scientists writing for publication. *Applied Linguistics, 28*(3), 440–465.

For EAP instruction targeted at novice scientists, the authors called for a pedagogy that exploits the formulaicity of scientific writing and acknowledged a distinction between "form" (language) and "content" (the work reported) in natural sciences.

Lathrop, A., & Foss, K. (2000). *Student cheating and plagiarism in the Internet era: A wake-up call*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Although this book uses materials emanating from the American context, the practical guide it provides for educators and parents to work to counter plagiarism among the younger generation in academia has a wide implication in the contemporary Internet era.

Liu, D.-L. (2005). Plagiarism in ESOL students: Is cultural conditioning truly the major culprit? *ELT Journal, 59*(3), 234–241.

Chinese readers will probably nod while reading this article. Impressively, the author argued that the notion that copying others' writing is allowed in China is a false assumption derived from misrepresentation of informants who were found plagiarizing in a number of reported studies.

Sapp, D. A. (2002). Towards an international and intercultural understanding of plagiarism and academic dishonesty in composition: Reflections from the People's Republic of China. *Issues in Writing, 13*, 58–79.

Through a field report of his experience at a Chinese university of the students' perspectives and practices regarding plagiarism, the author showed how those represent an act of resistance on the students' part, as tactics for coping with unfair and unethical practices they saw as characterizing academia and the society at large.

Scanlon, P. M., & Neumann, D. R. (2002). Internet plagiarism among college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, *3*(3), 374–385.

Results from a machine-scored survey administered to nearly 700 undergraduate students at nine British colleges and universities show that online plagiarism should be a matter of concern in the contemporary time.

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Readers are provided with a diachronic perspective through the authors' references to some surveys in the past decades.

Rinnert, C., & Kobayashi, H. (2005). Borrowing words and ideas: Insights from Japanese L1 writers. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 15*(1), 31–55.

This is one of the few empirical studies conducted in an EFL academic context on the issue of plagiarism. The study provides a good reminder of the usefulness of a disciplinary perspective and warning against cultural stereotyping in our conception of the issue.

Pecorari, D. (2006). Visible and occluded citation features in postgraduate second-language writing. *English for Specific Purposes, 25*, 4–29.

With a rich sample of academic texts by some postgraduate students at a few British universities, the article demonstrates occluded citation features in the texts as aberrations that the students' disciplinary supervisors frowned upon. An apprentice approach in postgraduate writing instruction is called for to fill the hidden gap between what is expected and what is practiced.

Shi, L. (2006). Cultural backgrounds and textual appropriation. *Language Awareness, 15*, 264–282.

A rich account of student writers' own conceptions and frustrations regarding plagiarism is long-awaited. And this study is one of the few such reports. Based on interviews with a heterogeneous group of students of different L1-backgrounds, the author pointed to a postmodern pedagogy of imitation aimed for the development of student authorship.

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