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Abstract

This chapter comprises a review of the higher education literature on plagiarism, with a specific focus on studies that consider students’ perspectives. The literature on plagiarism in higher education reveals three dominant understandings of plagiarism: plagiarism as a moral issue, plagiarism as a regulatory issue, and plagiarism as an issue of learning to write in academia. In this chapter, each of these three perspectives is explained alongside a consideration of students’ understandings of plagiarism with specific regard to each perspective. From a moral or regulatory perspective, many students express anxiety about being caught plagiarizing, either deliberately or unintentionally. Furthermore, many

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students link plagiarism with the mechanical act of referencing, rather than with the idea of utilizing and building on previous research. Consequently, although they are able to define plagiarism, many students are unable to identify plagiarism in their own or others' written work. Some students also express confusion over the varying referencing expectations provided by different teachers. Others report that plagiarism is not a concept of importance to them, despite their recognition that it is important to their teachers. From a learning to write perspective, students express a desire for more information on how to avoid plagiarism and for the opportunity to practice and become competent academic writers. This chapter reveals a disjuncture between what students understand about plagiarism and good academic practice, and what institutional expectations of them are, as indicated by plagiarism policies and assessment practices. The chapter concludes by outlining where more research is needed in order to facilitate effective support for students as developing academic writers.

Introduction

The last two decades have seen an increase in the amount of research into plagiarism. However, within the academic literature only a handful of studies have considered students' perspectives (e.g., Blum 2009; Dawson and Overfield 2006; Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Devlin and Gray 2007; Power 2009; Wilkinson 2009). Much of the research on students' perspectives collects data via surveys and questionnaires, while other studies report on staff views of students' understandings. Consequently, there is very little research gathering students' in-depth understandings of plagiarism. The literature that does exist reveals a disjuncture between what institutions require of their students regarding academic integrity and what students actually understand about plagiarism and how they think the plagiarism issue might best be addressed (e.g., Blum 2009; Gullifer and Tyson 2010).

Analysis of the academic literature reveals three dominant framings of plagiarism: plagiarism as a moral issue, plagiarism as a policy issue, and plagiarism as an issue of learning to write in academia (also see Kaposi and Dell 2012). How studies of students' perspectives on plagiarism are framed is dependent on the understanding of plagiarism held by the researcher(s). The most prevalent understanding of plagiarism seems to be that it is an issue of morality. The literature presenting plagiarism as a moral issue focuses on plagiarism as a deliberate and dishonest behavior and predominantly explores prevalence, who plagiarizes, surveillance, and punishment. The second understanding of plagiarism is that it is an issue of policy. Studies with a policy framing focus on plagiarism policies and regulations and position plagiarism as something to be regulated. Literature presenting plagiarism as a policy issue suggests that plagiarism can be either intentional or unintentional and the student's intent should determine the response. The policy literature continues to focus on prevalence, the question of who plagiarizes, and surveillance, but an educative response to unintentional plagiarism is considered alongside punishment for intentional plagiarism. A third understanding focuses on

plagiarism as a textual feature that indicates students' struggles to become competent academic writers. From this perspective, plagiarism is understood as "plagiaries" or multiple and complex practices, usually the result of students' honest attempts to draw on the work of other authors in their own writing and enter the discourse of their discipline. The plagiaries literature continues to explore who plagiarizes and why; however, the focus is on recognizing and responding to unintentional plagiarism as a normal part of students' learning to become competent academic writers. Intentional plagiarism is most often cast as "cheating" and is seldom addressed in the plagiaries literature.

While there is no clear-cut progression of ideas in the literature on plagiarism, generally speaking, over the last few decades, research on plagiarism has moved from a pre-1990s view of plagiarism as "dishonesty" or "cheating," and therefore a moral issue (e.g., Park 2003), toward a view of plagiarism as "plagiaries" where plagiarism is framed as multiple factors linked to notions of authorship and students as developing academic writers (e.g., Ivanič 1998; Robillard 2008; Valentine 2006).

Perspectives on plagiarism are mediated by cultural context (Leask 2006), and what may be considered plagiarism in one setting may not be in another. Because research on students' understandings of plagiarism is invariably conducted by academics, analysis and reports of students' perspectives are mediated by the academic researcher's perspective(s). Reports of students' understandings of plagiarism, as well as being scarce, are therefore also a reflection of researchers' framing(s) of plagiarism. This chapter explores each of the three framings outlined above, with consideration to reports of students' perspectives on plagiarism.

Moralizing Plagiarism

Students often position plagiarism as a dishonest and reprehensible act (e.g., Ashworth et al. 1997, 2003), reflecting an underlying moral judgment. Some students' perspectives on plagiarism also reveal their awareness of a moral framing of plagiarism within their education institution (e.g., Gullifer and Tyson 2010). Up until the end of the twentieth century, a moral view of plagiarism dominated the academic literature, with plagiarism often being intertwined with legal notions such as copyright and intellectual property (Kaposi and Dell 2012). A moral perspective is identifiable through language that links plagiarism to the law (theft, transgression, copyright) or to a lack of morals (dishonest, unethical behavior). A moral framing reveals an understanding of plagiarism as a purely intentional act that is "dishonest," "bad," or "wrong" and suggests that plagiarism is a result of the poor morals of the plagiarizer. A moral view reflects an assumption that a clear and shared definition of plagiarism exists; therefore, from a moral perspective, identifying plagiarism is unproblematic (Kaposi and Dell 2012). Research framing plagiarism primarily as a moral issue focuses on reporting the prevalence of plagiarism and who plagiarizes, and exploring detection methods and disciplinary measures for plagiarism (e.g., Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005;

Devlin and Gray 2007; Wilkinson 2009). Because a moral framing situates plagiarism as purely intentional, responses to plagiarism are limited to punishment. A moral view positions the student as solely responsible for making the ethical decision to not plagiarize.

Prevalence and Predictors of Plagiarism

Within the literature drawing on a moral view of plagiarism, there is an emphasis on determining how many students are plagiarizing, who these students are, and why they are plagiarizing (e.g., Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Devlin and Gray 2007). Plagiarism is reported as increasing in prevalence in higher education institutions (Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Macdonald and Carroll 2006). However, there is disagreement about the actual prevalence of plagiarism in higher education. Johnson and Clerehan (2005) reported on research identifying widely varying rates of plagiarism, from 2 % of students in one study to 20 % in another; however, it is not clear whether these figures were based on reported incidences of plagiarism or students' self-reporting of their own plagiarism. Badge and Scott (2009) reported frequencies of plagiarism from 3 % to 55 %, and Park (2003) claimed that between 63 % and 78 % of students admit to having cheated or plagiarized. The prevalence of cheating behaviors at institutions with traditional honor codes has been found to be consistently lower than at those without (McCabe et al. 2002). Students are reported to have a relatively accurate view of prevalence, whereas staff reportedly underestimate the incidence of plagiarism (Ashworth et al. 1997; Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005).

At surface value, collecting data on reported cases of plagiarism may seem a reasonably conclusive method of measuring prevalence; however, there are a number of factors that limit the accuracy of any such data. Firstly, whether or not behavior is considered plagiarism is reliant on the individual's definition of plagiarism and understanding of what behaviors this definition covers. Because definitions and understandings of plagiarism differ between researchers, and between respondents in the research, each research project may be reporting on a slightly different set of behaviors or differing understandings of what these behaviors entail. For example, some studies report on the prevalence of plagiarism only, whereas others report on students' "cheating" (Park 2003). Furthermore, data for these projects are dependent on human reporting – either staff reports of plagiarism they have detected or students' reports of their own plagiarism (or both) (Clegg and Flint 2006; Kaposi and Dell 2012; Park 2003). However, staff and students can only report on plagiarism they are aware of. It is likely that some incidences of plagiarism go unnoticed by staff and are therefore not reported. In addition, students reporting on their own behavior are only likely to report deliberate plagiarism, as unintentional plagiarism is presumably also unknowing plagiarism. A final difficulty with collecting self-reporting data from students is that they are being asked to be honest about their own dishonest practices, and some students may be reluctant to respond (McCabe et al. 2002) or may not give an honest response in these

circumstances (Löfström and Kupila 2012). Despite these limitations, gathering students' self-report data regarding plagiarism is commonly viewed as a valid method of determining the prevalence of plagiarism (Selwyn 2008).

Researchers have speculated that the reported increase in plagiarism can be attributed to a number of different factors. One suggested explanation is the perceived decline in students' academic abilities, as open entry policies over the last two decades have led to a more diverse range of students entering universities (Dawson and Overfield 2006). The development of the Internet and its use as a resource for learning and research is believed to be another factor contributing to increased plagiarism (Park 2003; Selwyn 2008). The development of the Internet enables students to readily access a vast amount of information (Dawson and Overfield 2006; Sutherland-Smith 2008) which they can easily cut and paste into an assignment or, alternatively, students can download existing assignments (Chandrasoma et al. 2004) or pay an online "paper mill" to provide a custom written assignment. It has also been suggested that because students are accustomed to downloading music and information free of charge from the Internet, it is possible they have come to believe that Internet-sourced resources that do not require payment also do not require attribution (Blum 2009; Sutherland-Smith 2008). The widespread use of social media is also blamed for the increase in plagiarism, as attribution of sources is not common practice on such sites (Blum 2009). Another commonly posited explanation for the increase in plagiarism is the perception that many students view universities as credentialing institutions rather than educational institutions (Blum 2009; Zebroski 1999). Zebroski (1999) suggests that many students do not see themselves as "scholars," but instead see themselves as training for a particular occupation. Consequently, some students may feel justified in doing "whatever it takes" to pass their courses or achieve distinction. Cheating and plagiarism may therefore become a strategy toward success (Badge and Scott 2009; Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005). Briggs (2003) suggests that students might plagiarize due to their perception that they need to present original ideas in their assignments but feel unable to do so. From a moral perspective, although reasons for students' plagiarism are explored in the literature, reducing the prevalence of plagiarism relies on a punitive response regardless of the reason for the plagiarism (Kaposi and Dell 2012).

Students themselves report more pragmatic reasons for why they or their peers might plagiarize. Their expressed opinions commonly reflect a view that often plagiarism is unintentional and is the consequence of not being practiced academic writers (Ashworth et al. 2003; Breen and Maassen 2005; Gullifer and Tyson 2010). Students attribute plagiarism to their lack of ability to effectively paraphrase, summarize, or draw on sources in their assignments (Ashworth et al. 1997; Breen and Maassen 2005; Devlin and Gray 2007). In addition, students state that their confusion regarding what behaviors constitute plagiarism can lead to unintentional plagiarism (Devlin and Gray 2007; Gullifer and Tyson 2010). High workloads and perceived lack of time are further reasons students give for plagiarism (Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Devlin and Gray 2007). Some students report that they or their peers might plagiarize from a desire to attain high grades

(Badge and Scott 2009; Zwagerman 2008) and instead of studying hard they cheat. Others comment that they fail to see why their teachers consider plagiarism to be so important (Ashworth et al. 1997; Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Gullifer and Tyson 2010). It is possible, therefore, that students may deliberately plagiarize because they do not see the importance of adhering to scholarly conventions, including conventions around academic writing (Blum 2009). Students also report that the belief that students who plagiarize will not get caught is a factor in their decisions to plagiarize (Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005).

The reasons given by staff for students' plagiarism and the reasons for plagiarizing that students give researchers often differ (Foltynek et al. 2014). A possible explanation for this is that students may be attempting to "mislead" staff about the reasons why they plagiarize, indicating a reluctance to reveal their reasons for plagiarizing (Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005). What researchers do not explore, however, is that students simply may not recognize their actions as plagiarism or dishonesty and therefore they might struggle to explain "why" they plagiarized (e.g., Valentine 2006). Furthermore, some students report that the concept of plagiarism is not important to them (Power 2009) and that they focus on values such as friendship and learning, which may override their adherence to academic values (Ashworth et al. 1997).

Plagiarism as Cheating

Viewing plagiarism from a moral perspective categorizes it as dishonesty, thereby grouping plagiarism with a broad range of academic cheating behaviors that includes taking illicit material into an exam, copying from another student in an exam, listing false references or references that have not been accessed for an assignment, and requesting special consideration on the basis of fabricated personal circumstances (Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Devlin and Gray 2007; Park 2003). Often the words "cheating" and "plagiarism" are used interchangeably in the literature, both in reports of students' explanations of plagiarism and in researchers' discussions of their findings. The word "cheating" is used to include behaviors that are commonly perceived as plagiarism, but could happen either intentionally or unintentionally (e.g., Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005). Using the word "cheating" in relation to plagiarism implies that plagiarism is necessarily deliberate and dishonest. Situating plagiarism as purely dishonest removes responsibility for pedagogical intervention (Howard 1995; Kaposi and Dell 2012; Zwagerman 2008), places the responsibility for avoiding plagiarism on students, and reflects a belief that all students have the skills, knowledge, and morality to avoid plagiarizing (Briggs 2003). From a moral perspective, instructors can only see the outcome (the plagiarism) as wrong (Briggs 2003; Valentine 2006) and the response as punishment (Valentine 2006). This seems to be a cause of confusion and anxiety for students (e.g., Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Power 2009), and some express uncertainty as to why unintentional transgressions are treated as "plagiarism" and therefore "cheating" (Gullifer and Tyson 2010).

The Effects of Plagiarism

Viewing plagiarism from a moral perspective emphasizes that plagiarism is a dishonest act, usually intentional, and it is the responsibility of the student to avoid. It is notable that the literature framing plagiarism as a moral issue ignores the effect of plagiarism on the student who is accused (Kaposi and Dell 2012). Although much of the literature focusing on the effects of students' plagiarism emphasizes the negative consequences to the institution or to staff, rather than the consequence to individual students, students seem to view the "effect" of plagiarism in terms of the consequence to their peers. For example, Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke (2005) reported that students said they would consider being party to plagiarism in order to assist a friend, and Ashworth et al. (1997) reported that students view plagiarizing their friends' work as a "betrayal" of friendship (p. 198), whereas plagiarizing from another unknown student seemed more acceptable. Similarly, staff often report a view that students' plagiarism is a personal betrayal (Zwagerman 2008), perhaps resulting in a desire to detect and punish plagiarizers.

As discussed above, the concept of "unintentional plagiarism" is not conceivable when plagiarism is framed as a moral issue. Because it does not allow consideration of "honest" plagiarism (plagiarism that occurs despite the student's attempt to cite or paraphrase correctly), a moral perspective inhibits responding to plagiarism in an educative manner (Briggs 2003; Valentine 2006; Zwagerman 2008). However, students often report that they fear plagiarizing unintentionally and being subject to the same sanctions as deliberate plagiarizers (Ashworth et al. 1997; Gullifer and Tyson 2010). A second theme in the literature, plagiarism as a problem to be regulated, does recognize "honest" or unintentional plagiarism alongside "dishonest" intentional plagiarism.

Regulating Plagiarism

A move away from a predominantly moral response to plagiarism in the academic literature is signaled by the emergence of a body of research investigating the idea that plagiarism can happen without intent to deceive (Zwagerman 2008). This literature focuses on plagiarism policies (Kaposi and Dell 2012) alongside an emphasis on ensuring that students learn how to correctly reference source material (Hutchings 2014). From a regulatory perspective, emphasis is placed on providing a definition of plagiarism that can be adhered to (Howard 1995), developing policy to regulate plagiarism (Grigg 2010), and ensuring that students have access to information on the rules of citation and referencing. These rules and regulations are perceived to be the panacea for the plagiarism problem. The literature focusing on regulating plagiarism is characterized by the language of rules, policies, and academic traditions. Plagiarism is positioned as a clear breach of institutional rules. The "rules" are assumed to be both homogenous and universal, and students are assumed to be able to easily learn and apply them (Kaposi and Dell 2012). A regulatory framing of plagiarism allows for the possibility of unintentional transgressions of rules and

regulations, particularly with regard to referencing. However, from a regulatory perspective, the rules have still been broken, indicating traces of a moral framing of plagiarism. Consequently, the response to plagiarism, whether punitive or educative, is still positioned as punishment (Kaposi and Dell 2012). The perceived seriousness, and therefore the severity of the response to an incident of plagiarism, is dependent on determining whether or not the student intended to plagiarize.

Students' expressed perceptions of plagiarism often reflect a regulatory view. Research shows that many students state that they are unsure about the "rules" of referencing, paraphrasing, and summarizing (e.g., Breen and Maassen 2005; Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Devlin and Gray 2007) and that they require more information about these, along with clarification of what behaviors are considered plagiarism and how they can avoid it (Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Power 2009). However, research also indicates that about half of students admit that they have not read their institution's plagiarism policy (e.g., Power 2009; Gullifer and Tyson 2013) and that they have not accessed information provided to them regarding referencing or avoiding plagiarism (e.g., Gullifer and Tyson 2010).

Defining Plagiarism

Literature from a moral perspective presents "plagiarism" as a definable term, assuming that all those who use it do so within a common understanding of what plagiarism is. From a regulatory perspective, however, there is an increased emphasis on defining plagiarism (Howard 1995), revealing that a multitude of definitions and interpretations of plagiarism exist (Grigg 2010). Most higher education institutions provide a definition of plagiarism on which policies within the particular institution are based, and definitions differ widely between institutions (Grigg 2010).

Despite differences in institutional definitions of plagiarism, researchers agree that institutions need to provide a definition in order to support policy in both making a stand against deliberate cheating behaviors and outlining the consequences of, or responses to, plagiarizing (e.g., Grigg 2010; Gullifer and Tyson 2010). However, although institutions provide "official" definitions, not everyone affiliated with a particular institution shares the same understanding of plagiarism. Definitions of plagiarism also vary between departments or disciplines in institutions and between staff working within the same discipline (Wilkinson 2009). Research also highlights that students' understandings of plagiarism are usually different to those of staff (Foltynek et al. 2014; Park 2003; Sutherland-Smith 2008). Students are often able to articulate a definition of plagiarism; however, many have difficulty applying their definition or identifying plagiarism in written work (Dawson and Overfield 2006; Power 2009). In particular, many students express their difficulty determining the boundaries between group work and individual work (e.g., Ashworth et al. 1997).

When researching and writing about plagiarism, researchers often fail to make explicit their own interpretation of plagiarism, thus leading to confusion about what

is actually being researched (e.g., Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005). Without explanation it is often unclear if the word “plagiarism” is being used to refer to behaviors with deliberate intent to deceive regarding authorship, or to unintentional behaviors such as insufficient referencing, or both (e.g., Ashworth et al. 1997, 2003; Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005). It is likely that student participants in research on plagiarism are responding according to either their own understanding of plagiarism as deliberate, unintentional, or both. Alternatively, they may be responding to researchers’ tacit messages regarding what behaviors plagiarism includes. As a consequence of the lack of clarity surrounding definitions of plagiarism (Wilkinson 2009), it is probable that within their academic studies students are being exposed to several different, perhaps conflicting, ideas of what plagiarism is, and students themselves report that this is indeed the case (Ashworth et al. 1997; Breen and Maassen 2005; Power 2009).

Plagiarism Policies and the Role of “Intent”

There is a distinct volume of literature exploring higher education institutions’ plagiarism policies. This literature explores issues such as who should be held responsible for avoiding plagiarism and how policies can be framed to ensure they are both clear and fair (Grigg 2010). It suggests a view that clear policy is the panacea to the plagiarism problem. Policy is framed as “a central avenue for defining acceptable behaviour” (Grigg 2010, p. i), and most higher education institutions have distinct policies on plagiarism. These usually outline the behaviors that are considered to be plagiarism at that particular institution, as well as the consequences of such behaviors (Grigg 2010). Most institutional policies base their range of responses on the “seriousness” of the plagiarism, and often the seriousness is determined by whether or not the student intended to cheat or deceive (Grigg 2010). Intent, however, is difficult to determine (Sutherland-Smith 2008) and is often judged on textual features rather than on students’ explanations. For example, purchasing or downloading an essay would most likely be deemed intentional plagiarism, and poor paraphrasing is more likely to be perceived as unintentional plagiarism (Howard 1999). Many plagiarism policies fail to provide explicit criteria to fully determine what the institution deems “intent to deceive.” Consequently, there is often little distinction between responses to, and the treatment of, intentional and unintentional plagiarism (Grigg 2010).

Traditionally, plagiarism policies position plagiarism as dishonest practice or academic misconduct (Grigg 2010), and consequently, avoiding plagiarism is situated as an ethical choice that students make. Where a policy with a clear definition of plagiarism is in place, any incidences of plagiarism must be deliberate, as there is an assumption that all students will read these policy documents and conform to them (Sutherland-Smith 2008). The responses in Gullifer and Tyson’s (2013) survey of 3,405 university students regarding their understandings of institutional plagiarism policy challenge this logic. Only 50 % of respondents reported that they had read the policy; however, students who had not read the policy exhibited a greater

understanding of plagiarism than those who had. In contrast, McCabe et al. (2002) report that students who exhibited an understanding of policy were also more likely to report adherence to regulations. Similarly, Gullifer and Tyson (2010) found that students who admitted to unfamiliarity with institutional plagiarism policy were also less certain about how to avoid unintentional plagiarism. It would seem, then, that from the students' perspectives, simply providing a clear policy is not necessarily the panacea to the plagiarism problem.

Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Referencing

Research focusing on regulating plagiarism also explores plagiarism in relation to effective paraphrasing, summarizing (e.g., Howard 1995; Roig 2001), and referencing. Hutchings (2014, p. 313) points out that most students “know that there is a mechanism in place for attributing ideas to their originators and that attached to this is the ‘offence’ of plagiarism.” The “mechanism” Hutchings is referring to is referencing. Students often conflate “plagiarism” and “referencing” (Angélic-Carter 2000; Hutchings 2014). When asked about plagiarism, many associate avoiding plagiarism with the conventions of referencing (e.g., Breen and Maassen 2005; Gullifer and Tyson 2010), but they fail to indicate an understanding of citation as a means to present an evidence-based argument (Gullifer and Tyson 2010).

Students reportedly express a lack of knowledge about referencing and citation conventions or display insufficient referencing skills in their written work (Hutchings 2014; Park 2003). They also express concern about their lack of knowledge and skill in referencing (Breen and Maassen 2005; Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Hutchings 2014) and report that the rules and conventions of referencing are confusing and difficult to learn (Hutchings 2014). Furthermore, students highlight that different lecturers require different referencing styles or have different expectations regarding what should be referenced and how (Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke 2005; Power 2009) and that they are not given enough information on how to reference correctly to avoid plagiarizing (Hutchings 2014; Power 2009).

Framing plagiarism either as deliberate cheating or as the lack of knowledge of or skill in applying citation conventions is reflective of a deficit view of students (Howard 1995). The responsibility for avoiding plagiarism is placed directly on students, and students who plagiarize, even unintentionally, are positioned as either lacking in morals or lacking in knowledge. Students' expressed understandings of plagiarism indicate that this is indeed their experience (e.g., Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Power 2009). A deficit view, which emphasizes adhering to conventions and punishing transgressions, ignores investigating the reasons why students have plagiarized (Haviland and Mullin 2009), therefore ignoring the opportunities for pedagogical interventions in instances where students are struggling with academic conventions or competencies.

Institutional plagiarism policies tend not to include information on how to draw on existing texts or knowledge in the creation of new texts or knowledge (Haviland and Mullin 2009), not least because such practices vary between disciplines

(Howard 1995) or because teachers have difficulty in articulating how this might be done (Haviland and Mullin 2009). Students' lack of understanding of scholarship is reflected in their explanations of plagiarism. Researchers have noted that students do not talk about knowledge building or scholarship; rather, they focus on mechanical aspects of writing such as referencing (e.g., Ashworth et al. 1997). Arguably, rather than teaching how to cite, teachers need to teach why citation is important. Policies and practices regarding plagiarism might be reviewed to consider that, rather than entering higher education as accomplished academic writers, students develop academic writing competency within their specific disciplines over the course of their degree (Haviland and Mullin 2009; Howard 1995). Such a view illustrates a move away from a regulatory view of plagiarism toward framing plagiarism as part of the multiple and complex practices of learning to write at university.

Problematizing Plagiarism

Echoing students' views that plagiarism is a confusing and complicated concept (e.g., Breen and Maassen 2005; Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Power 2009), the focus of recent plagiarism literature has moved away from simple distinctions between intentional and unintentional plagiarism and begun to explore plagiarism as a more complex issue situated within students' development as academic writers. Much of this literature originates from practice and is based on research in learning or writing centers, composition studies in the USA, writing for academic purposes, and research on teaching students from a non-English-speaking background (NESB).

The literature positioning plagiarism as part of learning to write in higher education continues to be characterized by discussions about the oblique nature of the term "plagiarism" and the behaviors and textual features it encompasses (Clegg and Flint 2006; Kaposi and Dell 2012). However, what distinguishes this literature is that it calls for a reframing of plagiarism either through reconceptualizing or renaming it. Student writing is framed as a social practice rather than a technical skill (Angélil-Carter 2000; Ivanič 1998; Haviland and Mullin 2009; Kaposi and Dell 2012). Most often, this literature ignores deliberate plagiarism, as "cheating" is no longer a central concern. This literature focuses almost exclusively on the concept of unintentional plagiarism, moves away from a focus on what the student is "being," and focuses instead on what the student is "doing" (Ivanič 1998).

From "Plagiarism" to "Plagiaries"

Research that positions plagiarism as part of students' developing competencies as academic writers moves away from a discussion of plagiarism as a singular concept that can happen either intentionally or unintentionally and focuses instead on "plagiaries." The term "plagiaries" highlights the plurality of plagiarism and acknowledges the multitude of textual features that could be considered plagiarism (Pecorari 2008; Pennycook 1996). From this perspective, plagiarism is not a unitary

or dual phenomenon, as assumed by literature reflecting a moral or regulatory view. It is multiple phenomena; there are multiple reasons why it might happen and multiple possible responses (Clegg and Flint 2006). Acknowledging the multiplicity of plagiarism, researchers have attempted to relabel the categories of textual features that can be labeled as plagiarism. For example, Howard (1995) argues that plagiarism can be categorized as either cheating, non-attribution, or “patchwriting” where students quilt together sentences and phrases from source texts. Similarly, Löftström and Kupila (2012) argue that plagiarism can be categorized as intentional, unintentional, or contextual. Contextual plagiarism relates to factors such as students’ management of their time and workload. Löftström and Kupila’s inclusion of contextual plagiarism, which they argue can be either intentional or unintentional, illustrates the blurring of the boundaries between intentional and unintentional plagiarism and the move away from concern over intent.

Reports of students’ views on plagiarism highlight their confusion regarding why lack of competency in paraphrasing, summarizing, or referencing is treated as “plagiarism” (e.g., Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Power 2009). The plagiaries literature begins to address this confusion, and some researchers have claimed that the concept of unintentional plagiarism should be abandoned altogether (Chandrasoma et al. 2004), arguing that if it is not intentional, then it is not plagiarism. Other research has attempted to redefine unintentional plagiarism by renaming or reframing it. Alternative names include “repeated text” (Pecorari 2008), “transgressive intertextuality” (Abasi and Akbari 2008; Chandrasoma et al. 2004), “textual plagiarism” (Pecorari 2003), and “apparent plagiarism” (Currie 1998).

Some of the research on plagiaries argues that to reduce plagiarism, teachers should remove the emphasis on plagiarism as something to be avoided and instead focus on students’ development of academic competencies such as drawing on sources (Chandrasoma et al. 2004; Gullifer and Tyson 2010), paraphrasing (Gullifer and Tyson 2010), and critical thinking (Ivanič 1998). This is consistent with what students have said they require in order to avoid plagiarizing (e.g., Breen and Maassen 2005; Power 2009). Gullifer and Tyson (2010, p. 464) explain that “good academic writing is contingent on developing sound skills in both research and writing, critically reading and comprehending appropriate sources, careful note-taking, paraphrasing, judicious use of quotations and giving credit to authors for their ideas and writing.” Reconceptualizing plagiarism as a noun rather than as a verb may be a way to achieve this and to ultimately reduce unintentional plagiarism (Robillard 2008). This would involve viewing plagiarism as something that appears in text, rather than an action or a behavior exhibited by a student.

Changing Concepts of “Knowledge” and “Authorship”

The shift toward a view of plagiarism as plagiaries is informed by a shift in understanding of the nature of knowledge and concepts of authorship. Postmodern views of knowledge, in particular the concept that knowledge is socially constructed (Pennycook 1996), challenge the traditional view of knowledge as

attributable to a single source and consequently challenge the notion of a sole author (Currie 1998; Howard 1999). Students' reports of interactions with their peers, both in person and through social media, indicate that they actively and knowingly engage in the social construction of knowledge and consequently they have difficulty understanding citation and the attribution of knowledge to a single "original" author (Blum 2009).

The development of technology, in particular the Internet, has added weight to challenges to the notion of a sole author. Online wikis, where individual authors are not acknowledged, are an increasingly popular source of information. Wikis and the widespread use of hypertext, where unnamed authors collaborate to produce text, illustrate a shifting view of authorship (Sutherland-Smith 2008). Echoing these practices, students report that they see collaborative text production as legitimate, whereas universities view collaboration on individual assignments as unauthorized practice (Blum 2009). As the concept of plagiarism is reliant on the assumption that students are expected to be the sole author of their texts, a challenge to the notion of sole authorship is a challenge to the notion of plagiarism (Sutherland-Smith 2008).

Literature on plagiarism has reflected these changing notions of authorship, framing plagiarism as an issue of students' struggles with authority or identity in their academic writing (Abasi and Akbari 2008; Angéilil-Carter 2000; Ivanič 1998). In academic writing, authorial identity is determined by the way in which students draw on and combine the discourses to which they are exposed (Ivanič 1998). Analysis of students' academic writing reveals that students draw on many different subject positions in their writing (Angéilil-Carter 2000; Ivanič 1998). These subject positions are the consequence of students' previous experiences, including their cultural, political, religious, work, and educational experiences. Consequently, students may present a range of authorial positions in their writing as they view their topic from a variety of different perspectives, thus presenting a number of different "identities." Many students struggle to balance their multiple subject positions with the role of a novice writer who is required to draw on the authority of source texts (Angéilil-Carter 2000; Ivanič 1998). In particular, students express that they struggle to write with "authority" as they view themselves "as people without knowledge, and hence without authority" (Ivanič 1998, p. 88). As the students in Ashworth et al. (1997) study indicated, they may have difficulty taking on the role of producers of knowledge, seeing themselves instead as reporters of existing knowledge. Similarly, Gullifer and Tyson (2010) reported that students struggle with understanding what is required of them in their written assignments, in particular how much "authority" they can exhibit in their assignments.

Abasi and Akbari (2008) argue that higher education students are positioned as reproducers of text, rather than as producers of knowledge. They argue that students are expected to be "academics in training" and to participate in a discourse community. However, through the framing and delivery of assignment requirements (e.g., referring to the paper as an assignment, stipulating the number of sources to be drawn on, etc.), they are treated as novices with no authority. Although students are expected to mimic the conventions of academic research articles in their writing, essay writing is in fact a different genre (Angéilil-Carter 2000). A traditional

academic essay has both a different audience and a different function to research articles. Consequently, students are often expected to learn the genre of academic writing from outside of the genre. In addition, some teachers reportedly use students' referencing as a "surveillance technique" to check if students have accessed the required sources (Abasi and Akbari 2008, p. 277), even though referencing is not used for this means in academic publications.

Students as Developing Academic Writers

Much of the literature focusing on plagiarism within students' writing practices comes from research into NESB students (e.g., Abasi and Akbari 2008; Currie 1998; Valentine 2006), possibly because it is easier to identify plagiarism and other textual features in texts produced by students writing in a language in which they are not a native speaker. This literature reveals that, in their academic writing, students struggle with the specific vocabulary of their discipline (Currie 1998), understanding what is required of them in their assignments (Abasi and Akbari 2008; Currie 1998), and managing their workload (Abasi and Akbari 2008; Currie 1998). These difficulties may lead students to mimic academic texts in their written assignments (Abasi and Akbari 2008; Currie 1998; Howard 1999). The term "patchwriting" (Howard 1995) describes the practice where students patch together sentences and phrases from a variety of sources to produce new texts in a style that mimics the discourse and conventions of their discipline. From a regulatory perspective, the practice of patchwriting is framed as plagiarism, but when considered from a writing perspective, it is recognized as a legitimate step in learning to become a competent academic writer (Currie 1998; Howard 1999).

Many teachers expect students to have an understanding of plagiarism and how to avoid it when they commence higher education (Sutherland-Smith 2008). However, research reveals that many students do not adequately understand what plagiarism is or why and how they should avoid it (e.g., Ashworth et al. 1997; Blum 2009; Gullifer and Tyson 2010; Löfström and Kupila 2012; Roig 1997; Sutherland-Smith 2008). Students themselves call for opportunities to practice their academic writing in order to develop competency without fear of being sanctioned for plagiarism (e.g., Breen and Maassen 2005; Power 2009). The only way that this can happen is if instructors view plagiarism from the perspective of learning to write and use incidences of plagiarism as an opportunity to understand what students are struggling with.

Summary

From the literature reviewed above, it is clear that much has been written about the "problem" of plagiarism and how it might be addressed. Three different perspectives are evident in the literature: plagiarism as a moral issue, plagiarism as a regulatory issue, and plagiarism as a natural part of learning to write from sources.

These three perspectives are aligned with three viewpoints on how the plagiarism problem can be solved: through punishing offenders, through tightening policies and regulations, or through educating students.

Despite a growing number of studies into students' perceptions of plagiarism, research in this area is still limited (Ashworth et al. 1997). The research that does exist suggests that, in general, students are confused about what plagiarism is and how they can avoid it. Students express a desire for more information and support in the area of developing good academic writing skills. Similarly, analysis of the plagiarism literature reveals that framing plagiarism within the context of learning to write at university is the most effective way of ensuring students are learning. However, in order to fully examine if and what students are learning, instructors need more research regarding what students think and understand about scholarship, citation, referencing, plagiarism, and becoming competent academic writers. Only then can pedagogy begin to fully address the disjuncture between what students understand and what they need to understand in order to avoid accusations of plagiarism.

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