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Title
Plagiarism or intertextuality?:
Approaches to Teaching EFL Academic Writing

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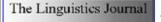
Abstract

EFL students' problems in using textual sources in academic writing have been considered negatively as plagiarism and more positively as a manifestation of intertextuality. This paper argues that treating plagiarism from the perspective of intertextuality is a productive approach to teaching writing skills, as it can help to foster student writers' self confidence. After examining the theoretical status of both concepts, practical suggestions for teaching academic writing are made with reference to the relation of writing to reading, the writer's assumptions about the reader, the writer's development of an individual identity, formulating a topic and the need for careful planning. Academic writing is best taught as a process through which teachers monitor development from a reproduction to an incorporation of textual sources.

Keywords: academic writing, intertextuality, plagiarism, tertiary education

Introduction

How university students deal with textual sources in academic writing poses particular problems for EFL pedagogy. These have been considered from a number of perspectives. At one extreme is the notion of plagiarism, usually defined as the unattributed reproduction of the language, information and/or ideas of other writers. The term is pejorative, and the practice is viewed by scholars as intellectual dishonesty and by teachers as a barrier to academic development. This point of view can be contrasted with the postmodern theory of intertextuality, which postulates that since all texts are necessarily related to prior texts through a network

of links, writers (often unwittingly) make use of what has previously been written and thus some degree of borrowing is inevitable. Indeed, it is seen to be a necessary requirement for successful communication since a text is always in a "dialogue" with other texts. A comparison between these two perspectives and their implications can offer some helpful insights to the teacher of academic writing.

Plagiarism

Teachers respond to plagiarism in different ways (Angelil-Carter, 2000). At one extreme, they are censorious and sententious; at another they are tolerant or indifferent. The typical stages of reaction are succinctly summarized by Wolff (2006): "outrage, frenetic activity, resignation". Plagiarism has been considered a "crime," and various methods have been used to "police" it (Chandrasoma *et al.*, 2004) - most recently, by using internet searches through websites and software packages specifically designed to uncover the practice. Official university statements and guidelines to students are intended to help them avoid plagiarism (for example, DePauw University, 2003; Georgetown University Honor Council, n.d.; Indiana University, 2004a and b; Moravian College, 2004). Often though, official warnings are issued, in formal legal language, concentrating on the dire consequences that can result from this practice. Such policies may work for some students, but they can be intimidating to the novice EFL writer who may lack a clear understanding of what plagiarism involves. Many of these exhortations assume that avoiding plagiarism is the responsibility of the student; little attention is given to the complementary role of the writing teacher. But at least the problem is acknowledged. Sometimes academics ignore plagiarism in students' work, preferring not to spend the time and effort involved in finding sources, making accusations and following institutional disciplinary procedures to deal with infringements.

   Several writers who have confronted this phenomenon in the classroom take a different approach to plagiarism. Most radically, the validity of traditional assumptions has been questioned altogether, and responsibility for plagiarism is placed on educational and social structures. Hunt (2002), for example, views plagiarism in students' writing as symptomatic of what he considers to be such ineffective educational practices as essay assignments, grades and the view of knowledge as "stored information". Adopting a wider perspective, Scollon (1994, 1997) tries to deconstruct the concept by probing the underlying social, political, cultural and intellectual power relationships that underpin it. He doubts that ideas can be considered as individual "property" at all.

   More practically perhaps, Howard (2004 a and b) uses the notion of plagiarism to develop a teaching strategy. For her, plagiarism is less a crime than a "learning issue to be addressed". She concludes that academic writing is "not a reflex of morality or property but a complex intellectual skill" (2004a, p. 9). In this sense the tendency of students to plagiarize is a necessary stage in learning how to write and can become incorporated into a practical teaching methodology. Howard (2004b, p. 2) coins the term patchwritingfor what is involved: putting the ideas of another writer into one's own language, through deletions and substitutions of vocabulary and changes in grammatical construction. Patchwriting is taken to be a transitional form, in which the writer is reproducing the ideas but not the language of her sources.

   Plagiarism, as usually applied to students' writing, raises several unresolved issues. When confronted, for instance, with the problem of referencing, students are often advised that what is "common knowledge" need not be attributed to a source. Yet, if common knowledge is taken to be basic information members of a group (e.g., academics) can be assumed to know in order to discuss an issue of mutual interest, then it is clear that the knowledge of one group may be different from that of another (Chandrasoma *et al.*, 2004, p.181). If the student writer is not fully integrated into an academic discourse community (which, by definition, she is not), then she will be confused about when to reference and when not to. The problem is exacerbated for EFL students, since "what constitutes 'common knowledge' for diverse student populations [in different cultures and with varying degrees of language proficiency] is ... difficult to establish" (Thompson, n.d., p. 6).

   Plagiarism can be intentional or careless, and intentional plagiarism may involve copying from either published works or from assignments of other

students. But intentionality is relative. Whether or not sources have been plagiarized can have more to do with the interpretation of a reader than with the conscious intention of a writer. What is accepted, and even expected, by readers with respect to unattributed information varies among genres. Some genres-- and readers' schemata-- show a greater tolerance for unattributed information than do others. For example, newspapers commonly do not reference sources, and their readers accept this as normal journalistic practice. Yet ambiguities can arise. The following paragraphs appeared consecutively in a report on the front page of the Doha *Peninsula* (3 April 2006):

> "Qatargas 3 and Qatargas 4 will be shipping most of their volumes to the US markets. Our partners in these projects have put strong emphasis on the development of infrastructure…," the Minister said.

> Qatargas 3 is an integrated project, jointly owned by QP (68.5 per cent), ConocoPhillips (30 per cent) and Mitsui (1.5 per cent)….

Is the second paragraph here a continuation of what the minister said, the words of a press release, or the comments of the journalist? It can be read in any of these ways. Such failures to show attribution clearly go unremarked in journalism. But in an academic article, they might be considered plagiarism.

Plagiarism, then, seems inadequate as a way to deal with infelicities in students' academic writing. A number of ironies arise when students and teachers consider writing from this perspective. Plagiarism detection websites-- in contrast to their ostensible purpose-- have not only made it easier for students to plagiarize, but they have also exposed academics and universities as doing the same. Disgruntled students have turned the tables on their teachers and submitted lecture notes and handouts to internet search engines with "interesting results" (Share, 2004, p. 6). Some universities have been found to have plagiarized their rules and guidelines for plagiarism by copying those of other institutions (Howard, 2004a, p. 9). Teachers can be forced into a position of double-think and students into a Catch 22 situation. Angelil-Carter's (2000, p. 122) research has shown that an overmonitoring of students' work to detect plagiarism discourages them from using their own original ideas for fear that they will be accused of copying, since they have been told that every idea must be clearly referenced. And other investigations suggest that teachers search for language errors in an essay as evidence that it has *not* been copied (Chandrasoma *et al.*, 2004, p. 179).

Intertextuality
Approaching writing from the perspective of plagiarism, then, has led to confusions about common knowledge, intentionality, genre conventions and originality. For such reasons, intertextuality seems to be a more productive way to consider how student writers deal with textual information. Chandrasoma *et al.* (2004) replace the notion of plagiarism with that of transgressiveintertextuality, which they contrast with nontransgressiveintertextuality. By including these two concepts under one superordinate term, they acknowledge that textual borrowings are endemic to all writing. This dichotomy also helps overcome ambiguities about intentionality. It makes the subtle distinction that what matters is the way texts are constructed rather than whether they infringe against institutional regulations against plagiarism. The writers point out (p. 174) that, "… textual borrowing is more of an issue of academic literacy [i.e., engagement with the conventions of a scholarly community] than academic dishonesty." Thus, intertextuality can provide a lens through which plagiarism may be observed from a pedagogical perspective. The potential for plagiarism is a presence in all writing, especially academic writing. So, from the student's perspective, the phenomenon can be interpreted as less an aberration than an extreme manifestation of a natural tendency.

Since the reuse and borrowing of images, ideas and language has become "routinised within both popular culture and a range of institutional practices," Share (2004) proposes that avoiding plagiarism is a matter of "managing" intertextuality. This idea decenters the contrast between originality and copying and foregrounds the manner in which ideas are

organized, arranged and used. What should be original in a students' essay, according to Share, is the realignment of previously existing knowledge in new combinations. Scollon (1994, p. 33) sees a recent change in the nature of writing, away from an "emphasis on the presentation of a unique, individual author who is the 'owner' of a text" to the concept of a text as composed by a community, a formulation that resembles authorship in oral traditions. What is original in traditional story telling is not the events themselves but the ways they are combined by a particular teller and used to achieve specific ends. Thus, information is less important than the writer's stance in relation to the information. In a similar way, Penrose and Geisler (1994) consider the question of how university students write academic essays by exploring the connections between the terms author and authority. They conclude that authority in writing is an aspect of manipulating and controlling intertextuality. Student writers are engaged not so much in creating ideas, as in offering new perspectives on the links between them and their relationship to a reader.

The way students write is related to the way they read. If readers assume that texts present definitive and unassailable knowledge, then they may develop an unhealthy respect for the absolute authority of texts, which can in turn result in the reproduction of these texts in their own writing. An alternative way of reading involves considering texts as "authored and negotiable" (Penrose and, Geisler, 1994, p. 507). This means that knowledge is presented not as facts but as claims offered to be questioned, tested, and evaluatedby a reader. Thus, the model for reading centers less on the transfer of information than on the reader's constructing a dialogic position in relation to the text: reader and writer are engaged in an imaginary conversation with one another. The implication of this for the student academic writer (who is also of course a reader) is that in asserting her own authority, she should understand that academic knowledge involves a continuous process of interactive engagement with a reader, and that meaning must be negotiated, not simply reproduced.

Fairclough (1995), in considering how texts are incorporated into other texts, proposes two types of intertextuality, both of which are relevant to students' writing skills. Manifestintertextuality (pp. 117ff) occurs when previous texts are explicitly present, either by the use of direct quotation (as in the first paragraph of the excerpt from the newspaper article quoted above), or, more complexly, in presuppositions of previous-- and perhaps imagined-- "texts". Examples of the latter would be the use of the otherwise unexplained word *terrorist* in a speech by George Bush and (perhaps) the second paragraph quoted from the Qatargas report. They would also include various markers by which writers distance themselves from the texts they allude to-- for example, expressions such as "metaphorically speaking...," "in scientific terms...," or "as X might have put it".

Fairclough's idea of constitutiveintertertextuality (pp. 124ff) is more global. It refers to the way old genres are used and combined to constitute new ones. A genre is taken to be a stable set of communicative conventions determined by social practice, implying not merely a type of text but also the processes involved in its production, distribution and consumption. New genres are formed through intertextualchains, by means of which they are linked to other previously existing genres. When we apply this theoretical framework to the genre of student academic writing, several questions arise. What are the other genres to which the academic essay is related? It seems to have features of a scholarly essay (as published in a journal) as well as those of a class exercise. If we learn to write mainly through reading, then what genres should students read in order to acquire the skills to produce an academic essay? EFL students cannot be expected to observe all the conventions of scholarly academic writing (even if they have read widely in a field). Which conventions, then, should they observe? Academic articles are written for a community of scholars; the student's essay is written for a teacher who may be a scholar too. In which role does the student writer address her reader? A failure to resolve such issues underlies much of the uncertainty about not only the nature of academic writing but also how it should be taught.

Scholarly writing, like newspapers and advertisements, can be a prime source for investigating intertextuality. The way academic writers use, recycle and reorganize other writers' ideas is pervasive, even a defining feature of this genre. Student writers need to acknowledge the intertextual dimensions of their enterprise. This, of course, is not to suggest that they can plagiarize with impunity. However, when seen in the

context of intertextuality, plagiarism in the traditional sense becomes retrogressive not because it is criminal or immoral but because it impedes students' intellectual development. The plagiarist misunderstands the nature of academic writing and prevents herself from revealing her own intellectual abilities in an essay. She fails to perceive that scholarship largely involves applying other people's ideas to a new problem or situation. What is original is the relationships asserted between ideas and the results of their application.

Recommendations

Considering plagiarism in terms of intertextuality can contribute to the teaching of academic writing skills. Dealing with the mechanics of plagiarism is fairly straightforward: the teacher checks whether students are copying directly from sources and metes out punishments and rewards accordingly. But this approach is unlikely to provide students with insights into the nature of academic work. In the remainder of the discussion, practical ways are suggested for implementing the theoretical observations outlined above. They emphasize how teachers, through taking into account the intertextual nature of academic writing, can help make students aware and self confident to *use* what other writers say without being *used by* them, surely a *sine qua non* in the training of effective scholars. These recommendations are not made in order of importance, and there is overlap among them. Some are teacher-centered; others are student-centered. But all are all proactive, since they involve students and teachers working together in an effort to avoidplagiarism, in contrast to teachers taking unilateral punitive action after it occurs.

1. Students learn to write from reading not just by becoming familiar with the content and generic features of relevant texts. They should also acquire a critical attitude towards them. To refer to a text as discourse implies that what is being read presents not undisputed facts but one side of an imagined conversation in which a reader is interactively engaged: questioning, doubting, elaborating, developing what a writer says. Angelil-Carter (2000) points out how EFL students' previous experience can militate against the assertion of their own identity when reading: "The study and respect for religious texts, such as the Bible or the Koran, reinforced by the notion of the school textbook …, may lead to a particularly entrenched notion of the text as fact" (p. 103). Students also need to determine whether they are the intended reader. This is especially important when EFL students read from the internet, where most texts are clearly meant for a western (and specifically American) readership. In an essay on the European Renaissance an Arab student wrote that it has changed "our" culture significantly. By staying too close to her source and failing to understand that she was not the intended reader, the writer made a contentious assertion. Teachers need to develop strategies to overcome such barriers to effective reading. A course in academic writing, then, presupposes a course in academic reading. Curriculum planners do not always take this into consideration.

2. Students learn best to engage in academic discourse through observing others doing it. Teachers cannot assume that students internalize schema knowledge without having read widely and analyzed a number of examples of a genre. But where are suitable models of academic writing to be found? Although students obviously need to be familiar with professional scholarship in their fields, it is not advisable for them to base their writing exclusively on published work. What they ought to read too are successful essays written by their peers. Over time, writing teachers can build up a collection of student essays from previous years and provide them as texts for class discussion. Rocklin (1996, pp. 5-6) suggests how internet websites that offer students ready-made papers to download, plagiarize and submit can be co-opted for more respectable academic purposes. A teacher might identify from these sources several relevant papers of good quality and analyze them with a class. Alternatively, students could be asked to download a paper of their choice and critique it. In such ways students are reading and engaging with examples of academic writing that are within their own competence to produce.

3. Often in academic writing done as a class assignment, the identity of the assumed reader is obscured. But effective writing depends upon a clear

notion of the reader for whom the text is intended. As Hunt (2002, p. 1) observes, "Having something to say is… absolutely indistinguishable from having someone to say it to, and an authentic reason for saying it." The model of reading as a dialogue means that a writer (no less than a reader) needs to imagine an interlocutor. There are two possible assumed readers of academic writing. First, and most immediately obvious, is the actual reader-- the teacher to whom the essay is presented and who will assess it and give it a grade. But this reader can be problematic; some teachers try to efface themselves by pretending that the essay is for a nebulous general reader. The more general the assumed reader, however, the less effective the writing is likely to be. A more productive concept of the student writer's assumed readers are the writers whose texts are being used and referenced. In other words, the student writing an academic essay can be thought of as extending the conversation in which she has been engaged when reading the source material: she is continuing to react to, disagree with and/or develop what these writers have said. As in a conversation, both participants in the discourse exchange roles and interact. This formulation resolves the problem of common knowledge, which can now be defined as what the parties to the interaction are assumed mutually to know.

4. Focusing on the reader can help student writers develop a unique writing voice, so that what they are saying is distinguished from what their sources are saying. If the writer sees herself as engaged in a discourse with her sources, she is more likely to find an individual way of expressing herself when putting forward her own views. This involves what Penrose and Geisler (1994, p. 517) refer to as rhetorical knowledge and Leki (1991) terms textualorientation: the writer's awareness of the discourse expectations of the readers, particularly an understanding of how "structures promote meanings in texts" (Leki, p. 135). A reader who is also a nascent writer examines the organization, methods of argumentation and tone of a text, not just its content or domain (Penrose and Geisler, p. 516). Liki points out that the development of this ability, difficult enough for L1 writers, is contingent upon EFL students' understanding that rhetorical traditions they are used to may be different from those of an essay in English (p. 138). It may even involve them in temporarily adopting a parallel "English self," to fulfill the expectations of an assumed reader.

5. A consideration of the reader-writer relationship presents referencing skills in a new light. Angelil-Carter (2000, p. 43) points out that attributing sources is one way to control the voices of others so that the student writer's own voice can speak through them. Competent citing of information will not only identify clearly who the student writer is conversing with, but it can also help the writer to clarify her own position in relation to her sources (Penrose and Geisler, 1994). Thus, accurate referencing is not just an optional extra in an academic essay-- something to be added on at the end of the process, when the main text is complete-- but it is, rather, an integral and constitutive component, since knowing who said what and when and where it was said is essential to understanding the nature of knowledge as something constructed, debated and contested (Angelil-Carter, 2000, p. 114).

6. Students need to learn how to patchwrite, as both a transitional phase in the development of writing skills (Howard, 2004) and as an end in itself. Many Qatar University students, in spite of the work they have done in reading, vocabulary and grammar courses, lack resources to put the language of a text into their own words. For example, a student wanted to use the following text (part of a newspaper article) as a source for her essay on causes and effects of the increased numbers of unmarried women in the Gulf.

The number of spinsters in the UAE is increasing at an alarming rate, calling for the involvement of all segments of society, as well as the authorities, to find a practical solution, according to a study conducted by the Police Research Centre of the Ministry of Interior. (Ibrahim, 2004)

Three interrelated skills are involved here: finding simpler synonyms for some of the words, using alternative grammatical constructions and summarizing the information. A considerable amount of class time was

taken to produce the following sentence:

> The UAE is trying to find a solution to the serious problem of growing numbers of unmarried women.

And yet in the final essay, reference to the information may need to be even shorter than this; perhaps it will be synthesized into a single point including several other countries. Patchwriting is not a general skill but is related to how the information fits into the overall structure of an essay.

7. If the topic of the academic essay is carefully chosen (by the student or the teacher or by both working together), then the possibilities for plagiarism are reduced. The wording of a topic is crucial, as it will determine how information is selected and organized. Precise language in a topic is essential for constructing a logical argument. "Should Qatari women have plastic surgery?" (all of them? forced to?) is a different proposition from the more considered "Should Qatari women choose to have plastic surgery in order to improve their appearance?" Standard, perennial topics, which are assigned regularly, invite plagiarism, since essays on them are likely to be available on the internet and/or from students who have previously taken a course. So teachers need to be imaginative enough to ensure that topics are sufficiently different from year to year. Topics ought to be new in two senses: they should not have been written on before, and they should reflect the student's unique approach to an issue. The ideal topic relates existing literature to a student's own experience and opinion. A student in Qatar once chose to write on the history of women's fashion. The essay she presented was almost entirely copied from the internet, and it was exclusively about changing styles in nineteenth and twentieth century American and European dress. Never once was Qatar or the Arab world mentioned. What prevented the student from exploring this obvious aspect of the topic? Did she find it inappropriate to write about Arab fashions in English? Was there a lack of available written information? (But it had been explained that one source of information is what one already knows.) Was there a barrier in her mind separating old (what she knew) from new (what she read) information? Was this reinforced by a language gap between what she knew in Arabic and what she was writing about in English? What was missing in this rather futile exercise was an assertion of the writer's own identity in relation to her topic, which in turn led to an undefined purpose and an uncritical use of sources. What could have been supporting information (one side of a contrast between Arab and European fashion, perhaps) became the main point of the essay.

8. Teachers need to articulate their expectations to students, including their views on what counts as plagiarism and what does not. There is a good deal of variation among teachers and how they mark essays in this regard, as Angelil-Carter (2000, pp. 61ff) shows. It may be advisable to adopt a general departmental and/or institutional policy on plagiarism (including agreed-upon punitive measures for various types of infringements), which teachers enforce and students follow. But whatever the individual teacher's or institution's attitude to plagiarism is and however it is defined, both need to be communicated clearly to students beforethey submit assignments, preferably through specific examples discussed in class.

9. One result of the pervasiveness of information technology is that for some students searching for and finding information on the internet takes priority over what they do with it after it is found. Thus, the use and referencing of sources may seem to be of secondary importance. But processing "raw" into "cooked" information is a major writing task. A writer needs to understand how to make other writers' ideas serve her own purposes. In this respect, judging what to leave out of an essay is at least as important as deciding what to put in. The text in the Appendix is an extract from what was found on the internet (Keel, 2000) by a student whose topic was harassment of women in Qatar. It is from a Canadian magazine for use in schools (although the student did not record this information). References to the "Criminal Code" are obviously to the laws of another country, not Qatar. Much of the text is not directly relevant to the student's topic. This does not mean, though, that the source is inappropriate or useless. The categories and subdivisions given in the first paragraph are apt, as well as the ways of resolving harassment cases

outlined in the third paragraph. The student needed to read the whole text carefully and to decide about the relevance of each part. All academic writing involves "recontextualization" (Angelil-Carter, 2000, p. 27), the selection and transformation of information as focused on topic, purpose and theme. Most published scholars are aware of how various writers may use the same information in different ways. (This is one reason why the personal ownership of ideas is a complex issue.) But what for the experienced scholar entails recontextualizing ideas may seem to the novice writer to be falsifyingor distortingthem. From the reader's perspective, Fairclough (1995) views this process of recontextualization as central to all interpretation. He claims that coherence resides not in the text itself but, rather, is imposed by readers when they decode the text for their own purposes, with "different interpreters...generating different coherent readings of the same text" (p. 134). This, of course, is as much a concern for writers as it is for readers, and, once again, it can be helpful for students to realize that in selecting information they are extending to another level the strategies they use in reading.

10. The production of the final essay is a painstaking process for both students and teachers. There are challenges at every stage. Students must be prepared to make mistakes, revise and try again. Teachers need to be patient and able to engage in one-to-one discussions, to critique and advise. (And administrators are responsible for ensuring that teachers of writing have sufficient time to carry out these tasks effectively.) Teachers and students should agree on a timetable for producing the essay, consisting of the following stages. Ideally, teachers could monitor students' progress by requiring assignments at each stage, except perhaps for (c). These assignments can provide a record of the process of writing, which has been recommended as a means of monitoring and avoiding both intentional and careless plagiarism (Hunt, 2002; Rocklin, 1996; Wolff, 2006).

(a) formulate the topic, in consultation with and approved by the teacher;
(b) locate the possible sources of information related to the topic and prepare a working bibliography;
(c) undertake an initial and general reading of the sources in order to gain an impression of their contents and the way discourse is conducted in a particular field;
(d) make a general format for the essay (the main headings for what will become the plan);
(e) prepare a detailed plan for the essay by considering the format in conjunction with the information found;
(f)   take detailed notes on the sources, using summary and patchwriting skills and selecting from the sources only that information which fits into the plan made in stage (e);
(g) integrate the notes into the plan to produce the completed essay, following appropriate referencing conventions.

Conclusions

The use of information sources is a central, vital aspect of academic writing, not a burdensome convention to which teachers and students must pay lip service before moving on to more important concerns. Showing and explaining the reasons why this is so is an important function of the writing teacher. The pursuit of academic work, in whatever guise (as student, teacher or researcher), is a matter of engaging in a discourse with others in the field. The academic essay is a record of that discourse. Hence, information sources are not merely reproduced; they must be incorporated into the argument that is being made. One can agree, disagree, elaborate, support, accept, or reject; but without reference to the views of others, there can be no discussion.
   Sometimes students in Qatar have not understood, for instance, why, in presenting a case, one would want to refer to a source with which one disagrees. An explanation for this attitude may lie in the discourse structures of Arabic. There has been much discussion of the hypotheses of contrastiverhetoric. (See Brown 1998, Connor 2002 and Spack, 1997 for contributions to and summaries of this debate.) Do Arabic speakers really argue through repeating, reinforcing and paraphrasing a thesis they

support, in contrast to the "western" method, which is supposed to involve giving equal attention to counter arguments? To the extent that this view is valid, students may need to acquire English discourse structures just as they do grammatical and lexical structures. It is not remarkable in academic life to pay tribute to a scholar with whose views one is engaged in disputing. Without the initial ideas, there can be no reaction against them. On the other hand, students have justified plagiarizing sources by claiming that they say "exactly what I think," so there is no need to say anything else. This attitude also involves a misconception about academic writing. If scholarship is to develop, then each writer must add something unique to the on-going project—however humble it might appear. What has Qatar contributed to the history of women's fashion? What particular forms does sexual harassment take in Doha? (See Recommendations 6 and 7 above and the Appendix.)

   Perhaps this is the best self image to impart to the student academic writer: as a contributor to a developing body of knowledge. And, as with most developmental processes, we can never be sure of what the end results might be: it is a foolhardy writer indeed who predicts with certainty how her ideas will be used by others. In the end, the mechanics of referencing, attribution and appropriate use of sources matter less than understanding the reasons for writing an academic essay. Acquiring the ability to engage in academic discourse is not merely a matter of mastering its defining characteristics (Price, 1999, p. 593). Particular conventions may change (as any writer knows who is expected to conform to the different house styles of various journals), but what remains constant is the process through which writers engage with their material and their readers to produce a unique contribution to scholarship.

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Abstract

EFL students' problems in using textual sources in academic writing have been considered negatively as plagiarism and more positively as a manifestation of intertextuality. This paper argues that treating plagiarism from the perspective of intertextuality is a productive approach to teaching writing skills, as it can help to foster student writers' self confidence. After examining the theoretical status of both concepts, practical suggestions for teaching academic writing are made with reference to the relation of writing to reading, the writer's assumptions about the reader, the writer's development of an individual identity, formulating a topic and the need for careful planning. Academic writing is best taught as a process through which teachers monitor development from a reproduction to an incorporation of textual sources.

Introduction

How university students deal with textual sources in academic writing poses particular problems for EFL pedagogy. These have been considered from a number of perspectives. At one extreme is the notion of plagiarism, usually defined as the unattributed reproduction of the language, information and/or ideas of other writers. The term is pejorative, and the practice is viewed by scholars as intellectual dishonesty and by teachers as a barrier to academic development. This point of view can be contrasted with the postmodern theory of intertextuality, which postulates that since all texts are necessarily related to prior texts through a network of links, writers (often unwittingly) make use of what has previously been written and thus some degree of borrowing is inevitable. Indeed, it is seen to be a necessary requirement for successful communication since a text is always in a "dialogue" with other texts. A comparison between these two perspectives and their implications can offer some helpful insights to the teacher of academic writing.

Plagiarism

Teachers respond to plagiarism in different ways (Angelil-Carter, 2000). At one extreme, they are censorious and sententious; at another they are tolerant or indifferent. The typical stages of reaction are succinctly summarized by Wolff (2006): "outrage, frenetic activity, resignation". Plagiarism has been considered a "crime," and various methods have been used to "police" it (Chandrasoma *et al.*, 2004) - most recently, by using internet searches through websites and software packages specifically designed to uncover the practice. Official university statements and guidelines to students are intended to help them avoid plagiarism (for example, DePauw University, 2003; Georgetown University Honor Council, n.d.; Indiana University, 2004a and b; Moravian College, 2004). Often though, official warnings are issued, in formal legal language, concentrating on the dire consequences that can result from this practice. Such policies may work for some students, but they can be intimidating to the novice EFL writer who may lack a clear understanding of what plagiarism involves. Many of these exhortations assume that avoiding plagiarism is the responsibility of the student; little attention is given to the complementary role of the writing teacher. But at least the problem is acknowledged. Sometimes academics ignore plagiarism in students' work, preferring not to spend the time and effort involved in finding sources, making accusations and following institutional disciplinary procedures to deal with infringements.

   Several writers who have confronted this phenomenon in the classroom take a different approach to plagiarism. Most radically, the validity of traditional assumptions has been questioned altogether, and responsibility for plagiarism is placed on educational and social structures. Hunt (2002), for example, views plagiarism in students' writing as symptomatic of what he considers to be such ineffective educational practices as essay assignments, grades and the view of knowledge as "stored information". Adopting a wider perspective, Scollon (1994, 1997) tries to deconstruct the concept by probing the underlying social, political, cultural and intellectual power relationships that underpin it. He doubts that ideas can

be considered as individual "property" at all.

More practically perhaps, Howard (2004 a and b) uses the notion of plagiarism to develop a teaching strategy. For her, plagiarism is less a crime than a "learning issue to be addressed". She concludes that academic writing is "not a reflex of morality or property but a complex intellectual skill" (2004a, p. 9). In this sense the tendency of students to plagiarize is a necessary stage in learning how to write and can become incorporated into a practical teaching methodology. Howard (2004b, p. 2) coins the term patchwritingfor what is involved: putting the ideas of another writer into one's own language, through deletions and substitutions of vocabulary and changes in grammatical construction. Patchwriting is taken to be a transitional form, in which the writer is reproducing the ideas but not the language of her sources.

Plagiarism, as usually applied to students' writing, raises several unresolved issues. When confronted, for instance, with the problem of referencing, students are often advised that what is "common knowledge" need not be attributed to a source. Yet, if common knowledge is taken to be basic information members of a group (e.g., academics) can be assumed to know in order to discuss an issue of mutual interest, then it is clear that the knowledge of one group may be different from that of another (Chandrasoma *et al.*, 2004, p.181). If the student writer is not fully integrated into an academic discourse community (which, by definition, she is not), then she will be confused about when to reference and when not to. The problem is exacerbated for EFL students, since "what constitutes 'common knowledge' for diverse student populations [in different cultures and with varying degrees of language proficiency] is ... difficult to establish" (Thompson, n.d., p. 6).

Plagiarism can be intentional or careless, and intentional plagiarism may involve copying from either published works or from assignments of other students. But intentionality is relative. Whether or not sources have been plagiarized can have more to do with the interpretation of a reader than with the conscious intention of a writer. What is accepted, and even expected, by readers with respect to unattributed information varies among genres. Some genres-- and readers' schemata-- show a greater tolerance for unattributed information than do others. For example, newspapers commonly do not reference sources, and their readers accept this as normal journalistic practice. Yet ambiguities can arise. The following paragraphs appeared consecutively in a report on the front page of the Doha *Peninsula* (3 April 2006):

> "Qatargas 3 and Qatargas 4 will be shipping most of their volumes to the US markets. Our partners in these projects have put strong emphasis on the development of infrastructure...," the Minister said.

> Qatargas 3 is an integrated project, jointly owned by QP (68.5 per cent), ConocoPhillips (30 per cent) and Mitsui (1.5 per cent)....

Is the second paragraph here a continuation of what the minister said, the words of a press release, or the comments of the journalist? It can be read in any of these ways. Such failures to show attribution clearly go unremarked in journalism. But in an academic article, they might be considered plagiarism.

Plagiarism, then, seems inadequate as a way to deal with infelicities in students' academic writing. A number of ironies arise when students and teachers consider writing from this perspective. Plagiarism detection websites-- in contrast to their ostensible purpose-- have not only made it easier for students to plagiarize, but they have also exposed academics and universities as doing the same. Disgruntled students have turned the tables on their teachers and submitted lecture notes and handouts to internet search engines with "interesting results" (Share, 2004, p. 6). Some universities have been found to have plagiarized their rules and guidelines for plagiarism by copying those of other institutions (Howard, 2004a, p. 9). Teachers can be forced into a position of double-think and students into a Catch 22 situation. Angelil-Carter's (2000, p. 122) research has shown that an overmonitoring of students' work to detect plagiarism discourages them from using their own original ideas for fear that they will be accused of copying, since they have been told that every idea must be clearly referenced. And other investigations suggest that teachers search

for language errors in an essay as evidence that it has *not* been copied (Chandrasoma *et al.*, 2004, p. 179).

Intertextuality

Approaching writing from the perspective of plagiarism, then, has led to confusions about common knowledge, intentionality, genre conventions and originality. For such reasons, intertextuality seems to be a more productive way to consider how student writers deal with textual information. Chandrasoma *et al.* (2004) replace the notion of plagiarism with that of transgressiveintertextuality, which they contrast with nontransgressiveintertextuality. By including these two concepts under one superordinate term, they acknowledge that textual borrowings are endemic to all writing. This dichotomy also helps overcome ambiguities about intentionality. It makes the subtle distinction that what matters is the way texts are constructed rather than whether they infringe against institutional regulations against plagiarism. The writers point out (p. 174) that, "... textual borrowing is more of an issue of academic literacy [i.e., engagement with the conventions of a scholarly community] than academic dishonesty." Thus, intertextuality can provide a lens through which plagiarism may be observed from a pedagogical perspective. The potential for plagiarism is a presence in all writing, especially academic writing. So, from the student's perspective, the phenomenon can be interpreted as less an aberration than an extreme manifestation of a natural tendency.

Since the reuse and borrowing of images, ideas and language has become "routinised within both popular culture and a range of institutional practices," Share (2004) proposes that avoiding plagiarism is a matter of "managing" intertextuality. This idea decenters the contrast between originality and copying and foregrounds the manner in which ideas are organized, arranged and used. What should be original in a students' essay, according to Share, is the realignment of previously existing knowledge in new combinations. Scollon (1994, p. 33) sees a recent change in the nature of writing, away from an "emphasis on the presentation of a unique, individual author who is the 'owner' of a text" to the concept of a text as composed by a community, a formulation that resembles authorship in oral traditions. What is original in traditional story telling is not the events themselves but the ways they are combined by a particular teller and used to achieve specific ends. Thus, information is less important than the writer's stance in relation to the information. In a similar way, Penrose and Geisler (1994) consider the question of how university students write academic essays by exploring the connections between the terms author and authority. They conclude that authority in writing is an aspect of manipulating and controlling intertextuality. Student writers are engaged not so much in creating ideas, as in offering new perspectives on the links between them and their relationship to a reader.

The way students write is related to the way they read. If readers assume that texts present definitive and unassailable knowledge, then they may develop an unhealthy respect for the absolute authority of texts, which can in turn result in the reproduction of these texts in their own writing. An alternative way of reading involves considering texts as "authored and negotiable" (Penrose and, Geisler, 1994, p. 507). This means that knowledge is presented not as facts but as claims offered to be questioned, tested, and evaluatedby a reader. Thus, the model for reading centers less on the transfer of information than on the reader's constructing a dialogic position in relation to the text: reader and writer are engaged in an imaginary conversation with one another. The implication of this for the student academic writer (who is also of course a reader) is that in asserting her own authority, she should understand that academic knowledge involves a continuous process of interactive engagement with a reader, and that meaning must be negotiated, not simply reproduced.

Fairclough (1995), in considering how texts are incorporated into other texts, proposes two types of intertextuality, both of which are relevant to students' writing skills. Manifestintertextuality (pp. 117ff) occurs when previous texts are explicitly present, either by the use of direct quotation (as in the first paragraph of the excerpt from the newspaper article quoted above), or, more complexly, in presuppositions of previous-- and perhaps imagined-- "texts". Examples of the latter would be the use of the otherwise unexplained word *terrorist* in a speech by George Bush and (perhaps) the second paragraph quoted from the Qatargas report. They would also include various markers by which writers distance themselves

from the texts they allude to-- for example, expressions such as "metaphorically speaking...," "in scientific terms...," or "as X might have put it".

Fairclough's idea of constitutiveintertertextuality (pp. 124ff) is more global. It refers to the way old genres are used and combined to constitute new ones. A genre is taken to be a stable set of communicative conventions determined by social practice, implying not merely a type of text but also the processes involved in its production, distribution and consumption. New genres are formed through intertextualchains, by means of which they are linked to other previously existing genres. When we apply this theoretical framework to the genre of student academic writing, several questions arise. What are the other genres to which the academic essay is related? It seems to have features of a scholarly essay (as published in a journal) as well as those of a class exercise. If we learn to write mainly through reading, then what genres should students read in order to acquire the skills to produce an academic essay? EFL students cannot be expected to observe all the conventions of scholarly academic writing (even if they have read widely in a field). Which conventions, then, should they observe? Academic articles are written for a community of scholars; the student's essay is written for a teacher who may be a scholar too. In which role does the student writer address her reader? A failure to resolve such issues underlies much of the uncertainty about not only the nature of academic writing but also how it should be taught.

Scholarly writing, like newspapers and advertisements, can be a prime source for investigating intertextuality. The way academic writers use, recycle and reorganize other writers' ideas is pervasive, even a defining feature of this genre. Student writers need to acknowledge the intertextual dimensions of their enterprise. This, of course, is not to suggest that they can plagiarize with impunity. However, when seen in the context of intertextuality, plagiarism in the traditional sense becomes retrogressive not because it is criminal or immoral but because it impedes students' intellectual development. The plagiarist misunderstands the nature of academic writing and prevents herself from revealing her own intellectual abilities in an essay. She fails to perceive that scholarship largely involves applying other people's ideas to a new problem or situation. What is original is the relationships asserted between ideas and the results of their application.

Recommendations

Considering plagiarism in terms of intertextuality can contribute to the teaching of academic writing skills. Dealing with the mechanics of plagiarism is fairly straightforward: the teacher checks whether students are copying directly from sources and metes out punishments and rewards accordingly. But this approach is unlikely to provide students with insights into the nature of academic work. In the remainder of the discussion, practical ways are suggested for implementing the theoretical observations outlined above. They emphasize how teachers, through taking into account the intertextual nature of academic writing, can help make students aware and self confident to *use* what other writers say without being *used by* them, surely a *sine qua non* in the training of effective scholars. These recommendations are not made in order of importance, and there is overlap among them. Some are teacher-centered; others are student-centered. But all are all proactive, since they involve students and teachers working together in an effort to avoidplagiarism, in contrast to teachers taking unilateral punitive action after it occurs.

1. Students learn to write from reading not just by becoming familiar with the content and generic features of relevant texts. They should also acquire a critical attitude towards them. To refer to a text as discourse implies that what is being read presents not undisputed facts but one side of an imagined conversation in which a reader is interactively engaged: questioning, doubting, elaborating, developing what a writer says. Angelil-Carter (2000) points out how EFL students' previous experience can militate against the assertion of their own identity when reading: "The study and respect for religious texts, such as the Bible or the Koran, reinforced by the notion of the school textbook ..., may lead to a particularly entrenched notion of the text as fact" (p. 103). Students also need to determine whether they are the intended reader. This is especially important when EFL students read from the internet, where most texts are

clearly meant for a western (and specifically American) readership. In an essay on the European Renaissance an Arab student wrote that it has changed "our" culture significantly. By staying too close to her source and failing to understand that she was not the intended reader, the writer made a contentious assertion. Teachers need to develop strategies to overcome such barriers to effective reading. A course in academic writing, then, presupposes a course in academic reading. Curriculum planners do not always take this into consideration.

2. Students learn best to engage in academic discourse through observing others doing it. Teachers cannot assume that students internalize schema knowledge without having read widely and analyzed a number of examples of a genre. But where are suitable models of academic writing to be found? Although students obviously need to be familiar with professional scholarship in their fields, it is not advisable for them to base their writing exclusively on published work. What they ought to read too are successful essays written by their peers. Over time, writing teachers can build up a collection of student essays from previous years and provide them as texts for class discussion. Rocklin (1996, pp. 5-6) suggests how internet websites that offer students ready-made papers to download, plagiarize and submit can be co-opted for more respectable academic purposes. A teacher might identify from these sources several relevant papers of good quality and analyze them with a class. Alternatively, students could be asked to download a paper of their choice and critique it. In such ways students are reading and engaging with examples of academic writing that are within their own competence to produce.

3. Often in academic writing done as a class assignment, the identity of the assumed reader is obscured. But effective writing depends upon a clear notion of the reader for whom the text is intended. As Hunt (2002, p. 1) observes, "Having something to say is… absolutely indistinguishable from having someone to say it to, and an authentic reason for saying it." The model of reading as a dialogue means that a writer (no less than a reader) needs to imagine an interlocutor. There are two possible assumed readers of academic writing. First, and most immediately obvious, is the actual reader-- the teacher to whom the essay is presented and who will assess it and give it a grade. But this reader can be problematic; some teachers try to efface themselves by pretending that the essay is for a nebulous general reader. The more general the assumed reader, however, the less effective the writing is likely to be. A more productive concept of the student writer's assumed readers are the writers whose texts are being used and referenced. In other words, the student writing an academic essay can be thought of as extending the conversation in which she has been engaged when reading the source material: she is continuing to react to, disagree with and/or develop what these writers have said. As in a conversation, both participants in the discourse exchange roles and interact. This formulation resolves the problem of common knowledge, which can now be defined as what the parties to the interaction are assumed mutually to know.

4. Focusing on the reader can help student writers develop a unique writing voice, so that what they are saying is distinguished from what their sources are saying. If the writer sees herself as engaged in a discourse with her sources, she is more likely to find an individual way of expressing herself when putting forward her own views. This involves what Penrose and Geisler (1994, p. 517) refer to as rhetorical knowledge and Leki (1991) terms textualorientation:the writer's awareness of the discourse expectations of the readers, particularly an understanding of how "structures promote meanings in texts" (Leki, p. 135). A reader who is also a nascent writer examines the organization, methods of argumentation and tone of a text, not just its content or domain (Penrose and Geisler, p. 516). Liki points out that the development of this ability, difficult enough for L1 writers, is contingent upon EFL students' understanding that rhetorical traditions they are used to may be different from those of an essay in English (p. 138). It may even involve them in temporarily adopting a parallel "English self," to fulfill the expectations of an assumed reader.

5. A consideration of the reader-writer relationship presents referencing skills in a new light. Angelil-Carter (2000, p. 43) points out that attributing

sources is one way to control the voices of others so that the student writer's own voice can speak through them. Competent citing of information will not only identify clearly who the student writer is conversing with, but it can also help the writer to clarify her own position in relation to her sources (Penrose and Geisler, 1994). Thus, accurate referencing is not just an optional extra in an academic essay-- something to be added on at the end of the process, when the main text is complete-- but it is, rather, an integral and constitutive component, since knowing who said what and when and where it was said is essential to understanding the nature of knowledge as something constructed, debated and contested (Angelil-Carter, 2000, p. 114).

6. Students need to learn how to patchwrite, as both a transitional phase in the development of writing skills (Howard, 2004) and as an end in itself. Many Qatar University students, in spite of the work they have done in reading, vocabulary and grammar courses, lack resources to put the language of a text into their own words. For example, a student wanted to use the following text (part of a newspaper article) as a source for her essay on causes and effects of the increased numbers of unmarried women in the Gulf.

The number of spinsters in the UAE is increasing at an alarming rate, calling for the involvement of all segments of society, as well as the authorities, to find a practical solution, according to a study conducted by the Police Research Centre of the Ministry of Interior. (Ibrahim, 2004)

Three interrelated skills are involved here: finding simpler synonyms for some of the words, using alternative grammatical constructions and summarizing the information. A considerable amount of class time was taken to produce the following sentence:
    The UAE is trying to find a solution to the serious problem of growing numbers of unmarried women.

And yet in the final essay, reference to the information may need to be even shorter than this; perhaps it will be synthesized into a single point including several other countries. Patchwriting is not a general skill but is related to how the information fits into the overall structure of an essay.

7. If the topic of the academic essay is carefully chosen (by the student or the teacher or by both working together), then the possibilities for plagiarism are reduced. The wording of a topic is crucial, as it will determine how information is selected and organized. Precise language in a topic is essential for constructing a logical argument. "Should Qatari women have plastic surgery?" (all of them? forced to?) is a different proposition from the more considered "Should Qatari women choose to have plastic surgery in order to improve their appearance?" Standard, perennial topics, which are assigned regularly, invite plagiarism, since essays on them are likely to be available on the internet and/or from students who have previously taken a course. So teachers need to be imaginative enough to ensure that topics are sufficiently different from year to year. Topics ought to be new in two senses: they should not have been written on before, and they should reflect the student's unique approach to an issue. The ideal topic relates existing literature to a student's own experience and opinion. A student in Qatar once chose to write on the history of women's fashion. The essay she presented was almost entirely copied from the internet, and it was exclusively about changing styles in nineteenth and twentieth century American and European dress. Never once was Qatar or the Arab world mentioned. What prevented the student from exploring this obvious aspect of the topic? Did she find it inappropriate to write about Arab fashions in English? Was there a lack of available written information? (But it had been explained that one source of information is what one already knows.) Was there a barrier in her mind separating old (what she knew) from new (what she read) information? Was this reinforced by a language gap between what she knew in Arabic and what she was writing about in English? What was missing in this rather futile exercise was an assertion of the writer's own identity in relation to her topic, which in turn led to an undefined purpose and an uncritical use of sources. What could have been supporting information (one side of a contrast between Arab and European fashion, perhaps) became the main point of the essay.

8. Teachers need to articulate their expectations to students, including their views on what counts as plagiarism and what does not. There is a good deal of variation among teachers and how they mark essays in this regard, as Angelil-Carter (2000, pp. 61ff) shows. It may be advisable to adopt a general departmental and/or institutional policy on plagiarism (including agreed-upon punitive measures for various types of infringements), which teachers enforce and students follow. But whatever the individual teacher's or institution's attitude to plagiarism is and however it is defined, both need to be communicated clearly to students beforethey submit assignments, preferably through specific examples discussed in class.

9. One result of the pervasiveness of information technology is that for some students searching for and finding information on the internet takes priority over what they do with it after it is found. Thus, the use and referencing of sources may seem to be of secondary importance. But processing "raw" into "cooked" information is a major writing task. A writer needs to understand how to make other writers' ideas serve her own purposes. In this respect, judging what to leave out of an essay is at least as important as deciding what to put in. The text in the Appendix is an extract from what was found on the internet (Keel, 2000) by a student whose topic was harassment of women in Qatar. It is from a Canadian magazine for use in schools (although the student did not record this information). References to the "Criminal Code" are obviously to the laws of another country, not Qatar. Much of the text is not directly relevant to the student's topic. This does not mean, though, that the source is inappropriate or useless. The categories and subdivisions given in the first paragraph are apt, as well as the ways of resolving harassment cases outlined in the third paragraph. The student needed to read the whole text carefully and to decide about the relevance of each part. All academic writing involves "recontextualization" (Angelil-Carter, 2000, p. 27), the selection and transformation of information as focused on topic, purpose and theme. Most published scholars are aware of how various writers may use the same information in different ways. (This is one reason why the personal ownership of ideas is a complex issue.) But what for the experienced scholar entails recontextualizing ideas may seem to the novice writer to be falsifyingor distortingthem. From the reader's perspective, Fairclough (1995) views this process of recontextualization as central to all interpretation. He claims that coherence resides not in the text itself but, rather, is imposed by readers when they decode the text for their own purposes, with "different interpreters...generating different coherent readings of the same text" (p. 134). This, of course, is as much a concern for writers as it is for readers, and, once again, it can be helpful for students to realize that in selecting information they are extending to another level the strategies they use in reading.

10. The production of the final essay is a painstaking process for both students and teachers. There are challenges at every stage. Students must be prepared to make mistakes, revise and try again. Teachers need to be patient and able to engage in one-to-one discussions, to critique and advise. (And administrators are responsible for ensuring that teachers of writing have sufficient time to carry out these tasks effectively.) Teachers and students should agree on a timetable for producing the essay, consisting of the following stages. Ideally, teachers could monitor students' progress by requiring assignments at each stage, except perhaps for (c). These assignments can provide a record of the process of writing, which has been recommended as a means of monitoring and avoiding both intentional and careless plagiarism (Hunt, 2002; Rocklin, 1996; Wolff, 2006).

> (a) formulate the topic, in consultation with and approved by the teacher;
> (b) locate the possible sources of information related to the topic and prepare a working bibliography;
> (c) undertake an initial and general reading of the sources in order to gain an impression of their contents and the way discourse is conducted in a particular field;
> (d) make a general format for the essay (the main headings for what will become the plan);

(e) prepare a detailed plan for the essay by considering the format in conjunction with the information found;
(f)   take detailed notes on the sources, using summary and patchwriting skills and selecting from the sources only that information which fits into the plan made in stage (e);
(g) integrate the notes into the plan to produce the completed essay, following appropriate referencing conventions.

Conclusions

The use of information sources is a central, vital aspect of academic writing, not a burdensome convention to which teachers and students must pay lip service before moving on to more important concerns. Showing and explaining the reasons why this is so is an important function of the writing teacher. The pursuit of academic work, in whatever guise (as student, teacher or researcher), is a matter of engaging in a discourse with others in the field. The academic essay is a record of that discourse. Hence, information sources are not merely reproduced; they must be incorporated into the argument that is being made. One can agree, disagree, elaborate, support, accept, or reject; but without reference to the views of others, there can be no discussion.

Sometimes students in Qatar have not understood, for instance, why, in presenting a case, one would want to refer to a source with which one disagrees. An explanation for this attitude may lie in the discourse structures of Arabic. There has been much discussion of the hypotheses of contrastiverhetoric. (See Brown 1998, Connor 2002 and Spack, 1997 for contributions to and summaries of this debate.) Do Arabic speakers really argue through repeating, reinforcing and paraphrasing a thesis they support, in contrast to the "western" method, which is supposed to involve giving equal attention to counter arguments? To the extent that this view is valid, students may need to acquire English discourse structures just as they do grammatical and lexical structures. It is not remarkable in academic life to pay tribute to a scholar with whose views one is engaged in disputing. Without the initial ideas, there can be no reaction against them. On the other hand, students have justified plagiarizing sources by claiming that they say "exactly what I think," so there is no need to say anything else. This attitude also involves a misconception about academic writing. If scholarship is to develop, then each writer must add something unique to the on-going project—however humble it might appear. What has Qatar contributed to the history of women's fashion? What particular forms does sexual harassment take in Doha? (See Recommendations 6 and 7 above and the Appendix.)

Perhaps this is the best self image to impart to the student academic writer: as a contributor to a developing body of knowledge. And, as with most developmental processes, we can never be sure of what the end results might be: it is a foolhardy writer indeed who predicts with certainty how her ideas will be used by others. In the end, the mechanics of referencing, attribution and appropriate use of sources matter less than understanding the reasons for writing an academic essay. Acquiring the ability to engage in academic discourse is not merely a matter of mastering its defining characteristics (Price, 1999, p. 593). Particular conventions may change (as any writer knows who is expected to conform to the different house styles of various journals), but what remains constant is the process through which writers engage with their material and their readers to produce a unique contribution to scholarship.

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Appendix

The Spectre of Parental and Intruder Harassment
By R.G. Keel

There are two categories of harassment recognized by law: criminal harassment and civil harassment. Within each of these categories, there are four types of harassment: oral, physical, telephone, and written. In some cases, an individual criminal or civil harassment depends on the facts of each case. As defined more fully below, there are sections in the Criminal Code dealing with nuisance and harassing telephone calls. In general, fear for one's safety is an essential element in a criminal harassment charge. On the other hand, the factual components for nuisance and harassing telephone calls are completely different. On the other side of the spectrum are the civil harassment cases which do not require fear for one's safety.

Whether the conduct constitutes criminal harassment, again, depends on the facts of the case and the impact on the "victim." This is reviewed in more detail under the Criminal Code below. All of the forms of civil harassment are recognized by the courts as constituting nuisance. The remedies fashioned in the courts include interim injunctions pending trial, permanent injunctions, as well as damages.

In the majority of cases involving disruption or harassment, the matter can be resolved without recourse to more serious forms of intervention such as the police or the courts. In some cases, a letter from the supervisory officer or director or even a trustee explaining the circumstances can resolve the issues. In other cases, referral to mediation can solve a real or perceived dispute. For example, in a number of special education situations, we have used mediation to resolve the conflict and avoid judicial review and possible human rights complaints. In many cases, the individual is looking for a way to vent their anger and, once this is done can participate in resolving the substantive issues.

One reality that cannot be overlooked is the necessity to teach teachers and administrators how to recognize and deal with disruptive parents or individual harassment. Recognition of the problem can sometimes lead to an effective resolution before the matter escalates. Many directors have commented that educators are not well trained to deal with such confrontations. With appropriate professional development, strategies can be developed to deal with both criminal and civil forms of harassment. In many cases of civil harassment, the strategies may effectively resolve the matter.

One complaint we have heard from administrators is that quite often the board considers these issues to be the responsibility of the principal alone, and does not provide sufficient back-up. Senior administrators should remember that the principal is acting on behalf of the board. As a result, the strategy that is utilized should be developed consensually between the principal and the appropriate supervisory officer. Otherwise, principals are left to fend for themselves. In such cases, the methods of dealing with the issues will differ from school to school, thereby creating inconsistency

within the board's jurisdiction. Moreover, principals might act inappropriately, causing greater friction or even placing a principal in some jeopardy of liability for inappropriate action. Working together as a "team" and developing appropriate strategies should eliminate this risk.