

# **UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN UNDERSTANDING WRITING FROM SOURCES, ORIGINALITY AND PLAGIARISM IN ACADEMIC WRITING OF ESL GRADUATE STUDENTS IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PROGRAMS

HOSSEIN SAADABADIMOTLAGH



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HOSSEIN SAADABADIMOTLAGH

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia, in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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By

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December 2017

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The actual practice of writing from sources is rarely as straightforward for ESL students as it is usually described and taught. Many factors govern how ESL graduate students appropriate source texts in their writings for academic purposes. Low language proficiency, limited vocabulary, and unfamiliarity with the discourse of the discipline lead ESL graduate students to borrow language from writings of experts in their field to gain authorial identity and discipline membership. However, inadequate knowledge and skill in source citation, coupled with low level of understanding plagiarism makes ESL students vulnerable to the accusation of plagiarism despite their sincere attempt not to do so.

Reviewing the research on plagiarism studies turned out that most cases of accusation of plagiarism in academic writings of ESL students stem in a few reasons including borrowing text from other sources and inadequate citation of the texts they borrow. The literature also indicated that the problem is more challenging among graduate students in science and engineering programs. Therefore, in the present thesis two goals were formulated, and two procedures were followed.

First, a qualitative study was designed to develop a questionnaire that can quantify how Iranian ESL graduate students in science and engineering programs in Malaysian universities think of, and decide on textual borrowing and citation practices. Then, through a quantitative analysis of the results, an attempt was made to develop a quantitative model for predicting originality of language in the academic writings of the participants of the study. The model was then contextualized by comparing with the findings of the qualitative phase and the literature.

Results indicated three groups of respondents with regard to their understanding and view of textual borrowing and source citation. The first group was labeled Basic Academic Practitioners (BAP), who had no idea of or a wrong view of source use. Another group included Informant Academic Practitioners (IAP), who were familiar with the locally accepted norms of source use, and finally, the third group was labeled Advanced Academic Practitioners (AAP) whose members were familiar with the international conventions of writing from sources.

The examination of the relationship between students' understanding of source citation decision and textual borrowing, with the originality of language in their actual academic writing performance through multiple regression analysis indicated no significant relationship between the variables. Results also indicated that neither students' view of textual borrowing nor their view of source citation were significant predictors of originality of language among participants of this study.

The results obtained from this research revealed a distinction between what is actually practiced as academic writing in the Iranian academic contexts and the real nature of academic writing. This study also indicated a need for especial attention to teaching academic writing in terms of materials and methods in the Iranian academia, especially in science and engineering fields.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

## HUBUNGAN ANTARA KEFAHAMAN PENULISAN DARIPADA SUMBER DAN KEASLIAN SERTA PLAGIARISME DALAM PENULISAN AKADEMIK PELAJAR PASCASISWAZAH ESL DALAM PROGRAM SAINS DAN KEJURUTERAAN

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Amalan menulis menggunakan rujukan kerap tidak begitu mudah bagi pelajar Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua sebagaimana ia diterangkan dan diajar. Pelbagai faktor mempengaruhi bagaimana pelajar pasca siswazh Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua menggunakan teks rujukan yang bersesuaian dalam penulisan mereka untuk tujuan akademik. Kemahiran bahasa yang rendah, perbendaharaan kata yang terhad, serta kurang fasih dengan wacana disiplin mengakibatkan pelajar pasca siswazah ini meminjam bahasa dari penulisan pakar dalam bidang untuk mendapatkan kepercayaan sebagai penulis (authorial identity) dan keahlian dalam disiplin (discipline membership). Namun, kurang pengetahuan dan kemahiran dalam merujuk dari sumber berserta kefahaman yang rendah tentang isu plagiat membuat pelajar yang menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua mudah terpengaruh dan dituduh berplagiat walaupun berusaha dengan ikhlas untuk tidak berbuat demikian.

Mengimbas penyelidikan tentang isu plagiat, kebanyakan tuduhan memplagiat dalam penulisan akademik pelajar yang menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua adalah kerana meminjam teks dari sumber rujukan dan sitatisi yang tidak mencukupi. Literatur juga memberi gambaran bahawa masalah ini lebih ketara di kalangan pelajar pasca siswazah dalam program sains dan kejuruteraan. Oleh itu, tesis ini mempunyai dua matlamat utama.

Pertama, suatu soal selidik yang dapat memberi maklumat tentang pandangan pelajar pasca siswazah Iran dari program Sains dan Kejuruteraan di univeristi Malayia yang menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua terhadap amalan meminjam teks (textual borrowing) dan sitasi. Seterusnya, suatu model untuk menjangkakan keaslian

bahasa dalam penulisan akademik pelajar pasca siswazah dalam program sains dan kejuruteraan di universiti di Malaysia yang menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua.

Dapatan memberi indikasi tiga kumpulan responden berkaitan pandangan terhadap peminjaman teks dan sitasi sumber. Kumpulan pertama dieri label Basic Academic Practitioners (BAP) yang tidak mempunyai kesedaran tentang penggunaan sumber rujukan yang salah. Kumpulan lain termasuk Informant Academic Practitioner (IAP) yang mempunyai kebiasaan dengan norma tempatan berkaitan penggunaan sumber rujukan, dan seterusnya kumpulan ketiga Advanced Academic Practitioners (AAP) yang mempunyai kebiasaan dengan konvensi antarabangsa dalam menulis dari sumber.

Perhubungan antara persepsi pelajar dan kefahaman tentang sitasi sumber dan peminjaman teks serta keaslian bahasa dalam penulisan akademik dikaji melalui regresi menunjukkan tiada kaitan signifikan antara pemboleh ubah. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa pandangan pelajar terhadap peminjaman teks dan sitasi sumber bukan peramal keaslian bahasa dalam kalangan peserta dalam kajian ini.

Dapatan dari kajian ini dibincang dari segi matlamat dan hipotesis kajian dan cadangan diberi untuk pelajar pasca siswazah serta penulis bahan dalam bidang sains dan kejuruteraan.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The present dissertation is the result of cooperation, support, and assistance that I received from a number of people to whom I would like to express my deepest appreciation.

First, I would like to express a special note of appreciation to associate professor Dr. Arshad for encouraging me consistently, supporting me patiently all along the way, reading the manuscript and giving me helpful advice. He carefully read different drafts of this manuscript and provided me with useful advice and constructive comments about the content, form, and the organization of the work. I owe a great deal to him for all his valuable advice, suggestions, and stimulating discussions.

My heartfelt gratitude goes also to Dr. Zoharah Omar and Dr. Roselan Baki who helped me in different phases of the research. Dr. Zoharah provided guidance in research design, statistics and the analysis of the data. She was a real source of encouragement during the entire program. I also owe a lot to Dr. Roselan for teaching me qualitative research and helping me with the first phase of the research. I am thankful especially for his sharp insights concerning data collection and data analysis.

I would also like to express special thanks to all Iranian students at Malaysian universities who, regardless of the level and the field of study, helped me in conducting and completing this work. I would like to acknowledge the cooperation of those students who participated in the process of data collection: those who participated in the pilot study; those who attended the interview sessions; those who completed the questionnaire and provided me with text samples and finally who those who helped me find and gather these nice people.

Last, but not least, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my family. They were always helpful and supportive whenever a problem arose during the course of this program. Their constant encouragement always kept me going. And finally, my wife. Language fails to express appreciation and gratitude for her company. Words are incapable of expressing my heartfelt gratitude to all the sacrifices she made through the years of my study and the process of conducting this research. For her, I can just express my love.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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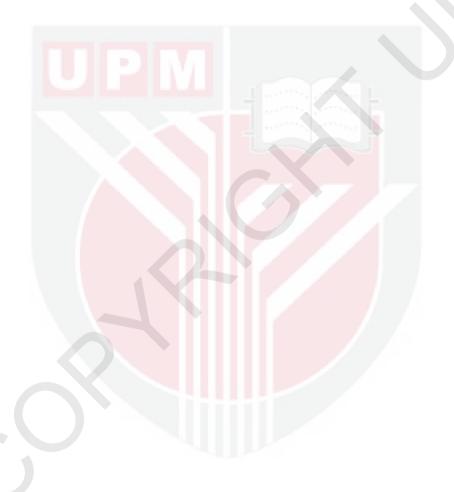
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#### **CHAPTER 1**

### INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Recent surveys provide evidence for the increasing raise of the rate of plagiarism in academic writings of university students. (Appiah, 2016; Eret & Ok, 2014; George, 2016; Ghajarzadeh, Mohammadifar, & Safari, 2013; Hosseini et al., 2009; Maurer, Kappe, & Zaka, 2006). There is no doubt in the importance of academic ethics, especially originality of language and idea. However, the contradictory and controversial issue here is the prevalence and the growing rate of such academic misconducts as plagiarism, despite the wide attention given to and the rich body of research on the topic. As designated by Löfström and Kupila (2013), there are three factors resulting in plagiarism among university students. He labeled these factors "intentional"—deliberative behaviors to gain unattempted academic benefits—, "contextual"—factors like time pressure and load of tasks and commitments that make students plagiarize—, and finally, "unintentional" which includes items that reflect inadequate knowledge and competence in writing from sources (Löfström & Kupila, 2013; Stearns, 1992).

Regardless of intentional and contextual cases where personal motivations to gain unattempted academic benefits, and tendency to use shortcuts to academic progress are involved, experience and literature provide evidence to certify that most of the cases that are considered plagiarism are in fact unconscious and unintentional (Amiri & Razmjoo, 2016; George, 2016; Yasami & Yarmohammadi, 2014) rather than utilizing and building on existing literature. Unintentional plagiarism is rooted in a number of grounds such as diversity in the definition of plagiarism (Amiri & Razmjoo, 2016; Gullifer & Tyson, 2010), deficiencies in educational system (Yasami & Yarmohammadi, 2014), inadequate proficiency in English as a second language (Hinkel, 2004; Pecorari & Petrić, 2014; Petrić, 2004; Petrić, 2012; Shi, 2012, 2012a; Stearns, 1992), and lack of awareness and proper understanding of the nature academic writing (Adam, 2015b; Howard, Serviss, & Rodrigue, 2010; Li & Casanave, 2012; Löfström & Kupila, 2013; Pecorari & Petrić, 2014).

Many cases of unintentional plagiarism are the results of diversity in, and uncertainty about what constitute plagiarism, and therefore different understanding of the nature of plagiarism (Amiri & Razmjoo, 2016; Bahadori, Izadi, & Hoseinpourfard, 2012; Gullifer & Tyson, 2010; Li & Casanave, 2012; Roig, 1997). Literature behind plagiarism studies is filled with convincing arguments that support students' unawareness of the different types of plagiarism (Marshall & Garry, 2006; Okoro, 2011). According to Marshall and Garry (2006), it is not easy for students to know plagiarism, nor is there any agreement on possible types of plagiarism. While plagiarism is typically defined as the failure to acknowledge the author of the source

text, there are many cases of plagiarism with the original text being acknowledged (Marshall & Garry, 2005; Roig, 1997).

Deficiencies in the educational system is another area of controversy concerning the roots of unintentional plagiarism (Yasami & Yarmohammadi, 2014). This point, although generally ignored in the literature, has sometimes been the focus of some scholars. According to Gilmore (2010), lecturers are unsure of their definitions of plagiarism, and hence have different attitudes towards treating it. Stearns (1992), also, accuses the educational system regarding the occurrence of unintentional plagiarism. She believes that failure of the educational system to teach correct habits of referencing coupled with lecturers' reliance on plagiarism push students, especially ESL students who face the western conventions of plagiarism, to establish their own perception of plagiarism. This is especially true with students outside of the western academia who mostly experience writing project reports rather than writing longer, more interpretive writing in academic style. When coupled with deficiency in English as a second language, contribute to the establishment of a different academic culture towards plagiarism (Lyon, 2009).

Another source of unintentional plagiarism is students' low proficiency in English. Academic science is now international, and it is communicated through English as the lingua franca of international academic communication. Studies show that few of ESL students can read and communicate accurately and effectively in English, despite their adequate English proficiency score in international tests of English proficiency. In fact, different studies indicate IELTS' very low predictive power compared to students' vocabulary knowledge and writing skill (Liu, 1993; Yixin & Daller, 2014; Zare-ee & Khalili, 2016). Inadequate proficiency in English in general, and particularly in the disciplinary discourse, leads ESL students towards borrowing language from related sources to express their own ideas so that they can prove their professionalism and membership in the community of their discipline (Aşık-Dizdar & Bygrave, 2014; Heitman & Litewka, 2011). Although borrowing from sources is a common strategy in academic writing especially among ESL students, it is more likely to encounter students with the accusation of plagiarism (Currie, 1998; Doro, 2017; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Keck, 2006; Shi, 2012a; Suh, 2011).

On top of all reasons is students' lack of awareness and appropriate understanding of the nature academic writing. Writing for academic purposes is in fact an assemblage of materials from different sources (Bazerman, 2004; Hirvela & Du, 2013; Johnson-Eilola & Selber, 2007; Pecorari & Shaw, 2012); therefore, the way students view borrowing text from other sources, and the way they cite those sources, and finally, their skill in assembling an original text from borrowed fragments can include a series of errors that can be considered plagiarism (Howard et al., 2010; Li & Casanave, 2012; Pecorari, 2003; Pecorari & Petrić, 2014; Shi, 2004). Such errors can also result from incorporating new ideas that come to writer's mind into the text being written while these ideas are similar to or the same as the available thoughts and ideas (Amsberry, 2009; Chandrasoma, Thompson, & Pennycook, 2004; Currie, 1998; Moody, 2007; Pennycook, 1996; Shi, 2004, 2006; Thompson, 2009).

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

A survey of students' comments and a review of the literature related to plagiarism show that most textual plagiarism in academic writing among ESL students aims at improving the quality of writing (Howard, 1993; Leary, 2010; Yilmaz, 2007). These students borrow from other resources to improve the quality of their product, but quite unintentionally, they convey a disapproving image of themselves as plagiarizers. This point is even more prominent when students of science and engineering are concerned. For scientists, the most important part of any article is the findings that should be original, and that for those whose L1 is not English, using beautiful sentences from other sources to provide background information is not inappropriate (Yilmaz, 2007). He says:

Borrowing sentences in the part of a paper that simply helps to better introduce the problem should not be seen as plagiarism. Even if our introductions are not entirely original, our results are — and these are the most important part of any scientific paper (Yilmaz, 2007, p. 658).

In other words, for ESL students textual borrowing is a technique to improve failure to write well rather than refusal to engage legitimately in the writing process at all (Deckert, 1993; Pecorari, 2010; Rinnert & Kobayashi, 2005; Shi, 2006). In fact, textual borrowing among ESL students is either a learning or developmental issue resulted from limited L2 proficiency (Keck, 2006; Shi, 2012a), or lack of skill in properly assembling what they borrow from others' sources to form their own text (Johnson-Eilola & Selber, 2007). In addition, the accusation of plagiarism is based on the assumption that there are fixed rules or standards for textual borrowing (Shi, 2012a); however, qualitative study of beliefs of ESL students and their supervisors concerning textual borrowing, plagiarism, and originality of composition indicate variation and ambiguity in definitions and views about these concepts. Despite years of debate about plagiarism, originality and academic integrity, there is still no clear-cut definition for these concepts (Amiri & Razmjoo, 2016; Sharkey, 1992), and this has resulted in a plurality in understanding and using the related rules.

Iranian graduate students who study abroad are not exceptions from what described in the literature regarding academic writing behavior among ESL students. They use textual borrowing, when they lack the necessary language and structure that they need to express an idea, or when their own words are not good enough. Naturally, therefore, they usually suffer from and complain of being accused of plagiarism despite their sincere attempt not to do so.

Informal interviews as well as anecdotal evidence report that the feeling of anxiety that these students experience is the result of lack of a clear or accurate picture of plagiarism. When they are asked about plagiarism in general, they know it as a misconduct and that it is forbidden. They say that they respect academic integrity, and seriously avoid all instances of plagiarism to keep originality. The same respondents

when faced the actual instances of plagiarism, they failed to distinguish between plagiarized and original instances. Sensitivity to avoid plagiarism that these students report is sometimes so high that prevents them from writing, and even results in writers block (Lyon, 2009). These students claimed that the stress caused by this uncertainty has led to writing anxiety and that it has made writing a stressful task that sometimes makes them think of giving up education. In fact these students do not mean to plagiarize; neither do they have any concept of what constitute plagiarism at the time they are doing it; rather, they consider it a simple borrowing of some text and use it as a technique and a composition skill that help them overcome writing problems. This is an epidemic procedure among these students, and thus, logically, there should be something other than the incentive to cheat that motivates the process (LoCastro & Masuko, 2002); one point that the present research aims to investigate.

In fact, an investigation in the Iranian socio-cultural and educational backgrounds can provide us with important evidence for the above-mentioned claim, and show that these students do not consider plagiarism as defined by western academia, plagiarism; rather, they know it as a habit behavior that, according to Spigelman (1998), shaped throughout their lifetimes in the Iranian undergraduate programs, to pass their courses, it is just enough for students to show adequate understanding of the content of the course. Therefore in their written assignments they are allowed to synthesize a coherent text to restate the experts' ideas. With such educational background, it is not surprising for Iranian graduate students to encounter serious conflicts with the western ideas of plagiarism.

This research focuses especially on Iranian graduate students in Masters' programs in science and engineering in Malaysian universities. These students are the product of a text book-centered educational system that emphasizes rote learning and tests rather than research and academic writing. Iranian students receive no training in academic writing in general and more specifically in academic writing in English before they enter graduate programs. These students, in addition, suffer from low English proficiency. They try to get help from other sources to compensate for their weakness in English, but they are neither skillful enough to write from other sources, nor familiar with strategies to avoid plagiarism (Jalalian, Bazargani, Latiff, Tajuddin, & Mohamed, 2009); hence, influenced by their past learning environments (Mirshekary & Lawrence, 2009; Nejati, Jamali, & Nejati, 2009), they identify what is considered in Malaysia plagiarism, a positive technique that helps them improve many writing problems. One very common example of this claim among students is what Pecorari (2002), following Howard (1995), labels *patchwriting*. That is to say, these students have either a mistaken or a different perception of plagiarism.

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

Lack of adequate published empirical literature makes it difficult to deal with problems arising from source use in academic writing among ESL students. This thesis is based on a premise that plagiarism among ESL graduate students is not intentional to obtain illegal benefit or to cheat supervisors; rather, it stems from a

number of factors chief among them students' cultural and educational background. This is more evident among ESL graduate students in science and engineering programs who usually focus on the content in their scholarly research, and use language only as a medium for presenting their findings to the international discourse community of their discipline (Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Li, 2012; Yilmaz, 2007). Iranian ESL students, especially in the areas of science and engineering receive no instruction in research skills and academic writing neither in their L1 nor L2; therefore, in writing from sources, they follow their own rules instead of following standards of international academic writing. This has raised problems for these students. There are some scattered studies on plagiarism among Iranian students within Iran and outside; however, those studies focus on students in applied linguistics and students in medical programs who have to write in English even inside the country.

The present research seeks two major goals. First, it is an attempt to design a questionnaire that can elicit how Iranian ESL graduate students in science and engineering programs in Malaysian universities think of and decide on textual borrowing and citation practices. Then, it tries to find out whether there is any relationship between students' views and the originality of language in their actual academic writing practices. Therefore, question 1 bellow will help a qualitative investigation of students' views in order to come up with an understanding of the participants' academic writing behavior.

1. How do students' view textual borrowing and source citation?

As the second goal, this research will investigate the relationship between students' views and their actual performance in their academic writings. To this end, it will address questions 2 to 3 quantitatively:

- 2. Is there any relationship between originality of language and students' views of textual borrowing and source citation?
- 3. Is there any interaction effect of source citation on the relationship between textual borrowing and originality of language?

## 1.4 Significance of the study

Success in writing for academic purposes depends more heavily on discipline-specific terminology and awareness of cross-disciplinary diversity in thinking and communication processes than on the general rules of paragraph development and organization (Zhu, 2004). Simply put, each academic community or discipline has unique ways of expressing ideas, particularly in written communication (Hirvela, 1997; Maroko, 2013; Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996). One of the conventions refers to the ability to integrate information sourced from earlier researchers with the shared area of specialization and inquiry (Campbell, 1990). In fact, academic texts are built upon borrowing pieces of texts from other sources and joining them together to make

new meaning. Such a process is governed by complex conventions mainly manifested through explicit citation, and violation to these conventions perpetrated by novice writers can threaten the originality of their academic texts (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Crocker & Shaw, 2002; Fairclough, 1994; Pecorari & Shaw, 2012; Shi, 2010). To add on, textual borrowing and citation practices as two major factors in achieving originality of language in academic writing also simultaneously have potential to function as two possible sources of unintentional plagiarism (Shi, 2010). As Pecorari (2012) puts it:

Inexperienced writers and those with English as a second language have the most to gain from a copying strategy. Therefore, they are perhaps most disadvantaged by disagreement about whether that strategy is legitimate, but nobody is well served by the disagreement. It is imperative that this question be debated in the wider research community as a first step toward achieving a stable consensus (p. 10).

Investigating ESL students' textual borrowing practices and citation practices while writing in English as a second language is important, therefore, in that it sheds light on the blank spots of the task, and thereby helps them avoid unintentional plagiarism and its consequences.

Outcomes of this research may be of value to EAP teachers to be aware of the academic needs of ESL graduate students of sciences and engineering, and raise their consciousness of their disciplinary conventions of academic writing.

This research can help experts involved in EAP materials preparation and syllabus design to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of the tasks to be able to rethink their methodology and revise the contents of academic writing courses through shifting focus from text mechanics to discourse. One way to achieve this goal is to raise students' awareness of discipline specific norms of textual borrowing and citation practices, and as Maroko (2013) exemplifies, this can be achieved through selecting authentic corpus-based materials from students' own discipline. That is to say, to improve the quality of academic writing and avoid involuntary threats to the originality of academic works, new EAP materials should include discipline specific terminology, as well as conventions and rules required for the related discipline.

The findings of the study reported in this research can also be of value to the development of English for research purposes (ERP) course for students of sciences and engineering at graduate level. This ERP course can help students achieve their discipline-specific thinking, communication processes, and terminology.

Academic writing is a bridge that links together the various pieces of the puzzle of knowledge (current and prospective) in any field of science. Therefore, accuracy of information, reliability of findings, and professional integrity of the researcher are of high importance in academic writing.

Another significance of this study is the questionnaire designed for this research. The questionnaire is different from similar ones in that it refrains from directly pointing at students' behavior, and thus, by putting them in a judgement position, elicit more real and reliable responses from the respondents. This questionnaire can determine how likely a student has the potential to plagiarize, and which factor is more influencing in leading that student towards plagiarism. This way, faculties and supervisors can have a profile for students and provide them with necessary skills to help them avoid plagiarism.

## 1.5 Definition of key terms

**Academic dishonesty:** academic dishonesty includes "cheating," "fraud," and "plagiarism," the theft of ideas and other forms of intellectual property—whether they are published or not (Jones, 2001).

Academic integrity a social contract in which individuals have a duty to follow the rules and norms of academia as well as a duty to ensure their peers also follow such rules and norms (Jones, 2001).

Academic writing a source-based writing in which the text is centered on a topic that is supported by academic materials such as books, journal articles, charts or graphs. Academic writing is based on a set of disciplinary conventions called the academic style that forms a framework within which scholars stake their claims to the original source they have used.

Copyright the exclusive right to reproduce or authorize others to reproduce artistic, dramatic, literary, or musical works; It is conferred by the Copyright, designs and patents acts 1988...Copyright lasts for the author's lifetime plus seven years from the end of the year in which he died (Law & Martin, 2009).

**Discourse community** a group of people with common interests who may never meet each other, and only newsletter with a particular form of text which they use to pursue their goals, unites them (Borg, 2003).

**EAP** English for Academic Purposes; English appropriate for higher education setting; In this research, EAP refers to the academic English language and research skills used by graduate students for successful participation in their academic tasks such as writing research articles, writing a graduate thesis, scientific lectures, etc.

**Intellectual property** intangible property that includes patents, trademarks, copyright, and registered and unregistered design rights (Law & Martin, 2009)

**Intertextuality** according to Kristeva (1986), each academic text is populated with other texts organized to generate new knowledge claims. In this study, following Kristeva (1986) as well as Fairclough (1992) and Shi (2010) intertextuality means that text has much in common in terms of language and discourse, and follow similar processes of making meaning.

**ESL** (English as second Language): in this study, refers to all conditions of learning English whether EFL, ESL or ESOL

**Originality** Pecorari (2003) defines originality in terms of transparency of meaning. She claims that an original text indicates the relationship between the source and the cited text accurately. In this research, originality is defined in the same way as a feature of a text with a clear distinction between the words of the author, and the words that the author has borrowed from others' sources.

**Similarity index** Turnitin returns results in terms of similarity index. This index is the percentage of matched words or chunk of language that that Turnitin is able to find for the tested document. In the present research, similarity index was taken as a representation of the originality of the text.

**Plagiarism** According to *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* 2010), any attempt to pass someone's work in any form—paraphrase, direct quotation, or idea description—as of your own or to write from other sources without giving them proper credits is regarded as plagiarism.

Citation Referencing to or acknowledging the sources of ideas, data and other evidence in written assignments (Neville, 2007). In this study, citation behavior refers to the writers' efforts and decisions to use and locate the sources of information.

**Textual borrowing** "copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym substitutes" (Howard, 1993, p. 233). It is a widely used technique in second language writing in which writers recycle sentences or fragments from other documents to express their own ideas (Cameron, 2007).

**Textual capital** the knowledge about texts, and about the relationships between texts, which students from vastly different backgrounds possess (Starfield, 2002)

**Basic Academic Practitioners (BAP)** based on cluster analysis of the scores of the respondents' to the questionnaire, those who had little or inadequate knowledge of writing from sources hence scored low in the questionnaire were labeled Basic Academic Practitioners (BAP).

**Informant Academic Practitioners (IAP)** based on cluster analysis of the scores of the respondents' to the questionnaire, those who had acceptable knowledge of writing from sources hence received intermediate scores in the questionnaire were labeled Informant Academic Practitioners (IAP).

Advanced Academic Practitioners (AAP) based on cluster analysis of the scores of the respondents' to the questionnaire, those who had adequate and good knowledge of writing from sources, and hence received high scores in the questionnaire were labeled Advanced Academic Practitioners (AAP).

**Unintentional plagiarism** the unconscious incorporation of language or idea into a written academic task, despite the prevalence of explicit knowledge against doing so.

Citation competence an intertextual skill of referencing which clarifies and expresses writer stance and attains rhetorical functions in academic writing (Ma & Qin, 2017, p. 213).

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