USING PLAGIARISM FEEDBACK AS ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING TO SOCIALISE STUDENTS INTO DISCIPLINARY WRITING: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A. Hass
Department of Languages and Social Sciences
Central University of Technology, Free State
Bloemfontein, South Africa
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2623-8503

ABSTRACT

Plagiarism is an increasingly common offense at some South African institutions of higher learning. The plagiarism range of assessment tasks escalated during the last two decades, as a result of the changing student body that has entered universities after 1994. To address this problem, universities have implemented different electronic plagiarism detection programmes such as Turnitin and Safe Assign that can identify similarities in paragraphs of texts from different documents. The problem is that students are not being trained on how to interpret the results provided by these plagiarism detection programmes. Presently, feedback from plagiarism detection programmes is not being utilised as a self-assessment learning tool but instead is used as a discipline measure to penalise students. Given this gap, this theoretical article argues that the feedback from plagiarism programmes should be used by lecturing staff to teach students about citing and making knowledge claims to socialise them into the literacy of the discipline. This article draws from Knight's (2001) and Chew, Lin Ding, and Rowell (2015) model on assessment for learning, which argues that feedback on assessment tasks should be used to improve students' writing to avoid plagiarism. This emphasised the need for a standardised "Turnitin policy" be in place at institutions to enable a continuous learning experience for all students across the institution. The article concludes the critical role of lecturers to socialise students into the discourse community, by making explicit the rules of the discipline through assessment, resulting in students not being tempted to plagiarise.

Keywords: plagiarism, lecturers, writing, discourse community, assessment, discipline

INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism has become a common problem and reason for concern in higher education (Jiang, Emmerton, and McKange 2013; Lorenz 2013). Research done by Perrin (2009), Larkham (2002) and (Wager 2004) describes plagiarism when you use someone else's words, ideas, thoughts and reflections without acknowledging the source. Helgesson and Eriksson (2015, 3) define plagiarism as "copying" a part of an author's work, and using it without acknowleging

that the work has been borrowed. Most students entering the university are expected to confirm to the writing conventions of the discipline and the university in general. For students to be awarded with academic qualifications, they need to demonstrate an adequate degree of achievement and ability through formative assessment and examinations. Consequently, students are expected to submit assessment tasks that meet the assignment criteria and specifications which are assessed by a lecturer to check if the task has met the required standard (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). Students in general struggle to master the type of academic writing required at university level, as their schooling experiences have not prepared them adequately in this regard. The adoption of English by universities for teaching and learning purposes makes it hard for students to exhibit the ability to write in their own words, as they are second or third language speakers. In order for students to cope with the demands of writing expected at higher education, students often resort to plagiarism.

According to Sagoro (2013), most unversities have put forward prevention initiatives to enhance the institutional quality process, and to merge the supervision of the institution and academic staff. Whether this in fact happens or not, dishonest behaviours can be detected if an institution has strict rules and principled guidelines in place. The significant increase of available information on the internet with easy access for students has resulted in a growing temptation for students to download materials from websites, adapt it as much as possible, and to submit it as their own work (Culwin and Lancaster 2001). In addition, students are under severe pressure from classmates, family, and teachers to compete for grants, admissions, and a space in the job market (Šprajc et al. 2017).

Consequently, some students view education as a step in the ladder to success, and not as a continuous process which is valuable. Given this viewpoint on education, students tend to become more focused on the results of their assessment tasks, while neglecting the skills and knowledge they acquire during the process. Plagiarism takes on different forms and identities within institutions. According to Brown and Janssen (2017), there are many dominant ideologies that shape and guide plagiarism practices within an institution.

These ideologies include student writers who seek assistance from support staff in writing and e-learning centres to do a plagiarism check; how students interpret the results from the plagiarism detection programmes; and their grasp of reducing the plagiarism extend in their work independently. These factors enlighten the need for the plagiarism practices adopted by institutions. Given South Africa’s history of a socially hierarchical higher education system where access to university was only meant for a few elites, these institutional structures have created explicit challenges exclusive to our post-apartheid background. Therefore, higher education institutions and the students studying at them are more diversified, which eventually

informs the contexts in which these students are learning. Hence, new approaches to student academic support are needed.

The hypothesis of this article is that when students are actively engaged during classes on the expectations of disciplinary writing, it gives them access to the rules of disicplinary writing conventions on how to think and write in their disciplines. By equpping students with such literacy practices, they are more likely to avoid plagiarism.

Firstly, this article will briefly discuss the dominant culture and notions around plagiarism that inform plagiarism practices and pedagogies prevailing at universities. Secondly, the article attempts to examine the practicality of rethinking assessment task design practices that will embrace innovative and critical thinking amongst students to avoid plagiarism. Thirdly, the adoption of a socially contructed approach to replace the decontexualised model will be contexualised, where students are not alienated from the social context in which teaching and learning occurs. This article will consequently give evidence of how reimagining assessment task design for learning purposes, and guiding academic staff during assessment tasks on the requirements of subject discipline writing, can deter plagiarism.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

With the ever-growing resources available online, students are tempted to plagiarise more easily. There are many reasons why students resort to plagiarism. The most common remains the lack of guidance by lecturers on how to avoid plagiarism. Students are not made aware of plagiarism and its consequences from the onset in the classroom, but are often punished severly later when they are found guilty of such an offense. Subject lecturers often do not make students aware of good academic and writing practices to apply when they are conducting research for an assignment. This article aims to examine the hiatus that exists in giving explicit instructions and explaining the rules to students with regards to what referencing styles and evidence are acceptable by the discipline.

Although plagiarism detection software is used by universities to reduce plagiarism, such programmes are often only available at student support structures such as libraries, writing centres and e-learning technology units.

Students are expected to take their assignments to such units to check for plagiarism, and to request assistance from staff to reduce the plagiarism extent of an assignment. Due to these assumptions, it becomes easier to frame plagiarism attempts as a crime instead of teaching it as morally wrong, and emphasising the importance of academic integrity, and thus informing our pedagodical practices. The danger in framing plagiarism attempts as a crime at instituions is that the teaching element is sometimes lost, instead of regarding it as a skills set to be taught

and learned (Blum 2010). Given this gap, this article argues that support staff are not discipline specialists, and would not know what are considered as acceptable knowledge claims in the different disciplines, and might therefore advise students wrongly.

METHODOLODY

This article draws from a theoretical stance which involves a literature review method that will be conducted by analysing related research that was previously conducted. The research by Wacker (1998) found that a theoretical article depends largely on conceptual definitions, explanations, simulations and field limitations, and provides a framework for analysis to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field. This article seeks to draw from concepts literature and the researchers' own expecriences and reflections to develop a more in-depth understanding of the lack of guidance and teaching provided by academic staff on how to avoid plagiarism. The article aims to examine this gap, and to provide solutions on how subject lecturers can assist students by including plagiarism education in the assessment process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dominant culture and ideologies informing plagiarism practices at universities

Due to the significant increase in plagiarism attempts by students, most universities have taken plagiarism seriously. Universities are now compelled to update and implement their anti-plagiarism policies. Such policies differ from "*reactive policies*" (this occurs when plagiarism is regarded as a severe academic offense when it occurs, but not aggressively pursued), to "*pro-active policies"* (this occurs when institutions seriously attempt to reduce plagiarism through technical and other means).

Pro-active policies dictate that institutions are not allowed to issue the same assignment specifications each year. They need to research the content matter to ensure that model essays are not available on websites, whilst necessitating drafts of submissions to limit the chances for students to plagiarise (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). It remains a challenge for most institutions to substitute an active policy with a proactive one to diminish the apparently rising culture that makes academic dishonesty acceptable in academic institutions. This means that standards across universities are not equal, and students would want to move to an institution where the rules and consequences are more relaxed. The availability of online resources 24 hours and seven days of the week enables a wealth of information, which can lead to great confusion amongst students.

According to Motala (2017) students have raised concerns that plagiarism might happen

by accident because of their inexperience and uncertainty regarding referencing and might reference incorrectly without being aware of it. To eradicate the problem, Ashworth, Bannister, and Thorne (1997) empahasise the importance for lecturers to judge the severity of plagiarism and dishonesty with delibetate intention to cheat for considerable gain being regarded as more serious than cheating unintended. This article therefore advocates the critical role of lecturers in teaching students how to distinguish between ethical and unethical academic behaviour, given the plethora of information available. One common practice adopted by higher education institutions is that plagiarism should be taught by support staff such as writing centre practitioners, and this is where I position my contribution to the dialogue on the dominant culture that informs plagiarism practices at universities. The role of lecturers in the instruction of literacy skills which includes reading and writing in a subject discipline has always been downplayed. Mgqwashu (2009; 2016) point out that literacy practices or "ways of being" are not made explicit and open for students to critique but are rather imposed on their identity. The article by Evering and Moorman (2012) on rethinking plagiarism in a digital age emphasises that one of the most common causes for plagiarism is the rise in the available sources, and the fact that students are not always clear regarding the correct usage of information.

The inexplicitness of plagiarism in academia is compared to a "code" that students are supposed to crack, but no one mentions it to them that it exists, or explains to them how it works (McKenna 2012). In addition to the above, this article argues that the rules of the discipline should explicitly be taught by the subject lecturers, such as what type of information and references are accepted by the discipline to back up an argument. This confirms the findings by Šprajc et al. (2017) that the overflow of online resources, without exact specified authorship, could be one of the main challenges, causing students to struggle to determine what information to use, and what not to use. Contrary to the preceding notions, Carrol (2002) highlights other reasons for plagiarism, such as the growing number of students assigned per lecturer, the burden for high evaluations, poor time management, and the discontent of students with their learning (Carrol 2002). This argument was also supported by various studies (Ashworth et al. 1997) that confirmed that overcrowded classes together with limited contact with lectures often result in unethical academic behaviour. Given the above viewpoints, it becomes apparent that lecturers are overwhelmed with large classes, with very limited lecturing time to teach writing skills and discuss expectations related to assessment tasks.

This emphasises the largely adopted practice within institutional contexts of overburdening academic staff with responsibilities, with no time to teach soft skills, and only focusing on content delivery. Student writers also have their own ideologies and perceptions as far as plagiarism is concerned. A large body of researchers (Ashworth et al. 1997; Childers and

Bruton 2016; Fish and Hura 2013; Halupa and Bolliger 2015) have noted that students are unaware of good academic writing practices, and how to produce their own ideas and quality publications. Consequently, they downplay their dishonest behaviour, and do not regard borrowing ideas from other sources as an offense.

Main contributing factors of plagiarism in higher education

The reasons for plagiarism in higher education have become a topic of interest for many authors. The reasons differ from being sluggish (Dordoy 2002), inadequate time management (Dordoy 2002), peer pressure, (Devlin and Gray 2007; Dordoy 2002; Errey 2002; Park 2003; Wilhoit 1994), pressure to obtain top marks (Dordoy 2002; Park 2003; Wilhoit 1994), academic skills, teacher factor, different pressures from the public, and pride (Šprajc et al. 2017). The reasons for plagiarism can be classified as follows: technology and information, control, penalty and consequences, academic writing skills, lecturer aspect, pressures from the external public, self-importance, and other reasons. Reasons for plagiarism such as confidence, accomplishment, desire, and paper drive are debated by several authors (Angell 2006; Rettinger and Kramer 2009; Williams, Nathanson, and Paulus 2010). Plagiarism is often not an intentional act by students. The increase in group submissions (Wilhoit 1994), misinterpretation of rules (Dordoy 2002), and being uninformed of what plagiarism involves (Dordoy 2002) are some of the reasons for students committing plagiarism.

Contrary to the above reasons, the findings by Underwood and Szabo (2003) indicate that academic dishonesty is an adequate choice for many with a fear of failure, whilst time-management challenges are also provided as a reason for students making themselves guilty of academic misconduct. Fish and Hura (2013) believe that plagiarism is more likely to take place when students do not have a clear understanding of what plagiarism entails, when they observe that it is common amongst their peers, and when the believe that plagiarism has minor consequences. On the other hand, Barnas (2000) believes that the core cause for plagiarism is the lecturer aspect.

This article supports Barnas' argument that lecturers should do more to teach students about acts of plagiarism, and that they should serve as advocates for promoting anti-plagiarism strategies. The findings by Rettinger and Kramer (2009) also confirm that the most common cause for plagiarism is the inadequate composition of lecturer notes that lead to incorrect in-text referencing. It is important for students to know what the researchers' words are, not only written, but verbal as well. Concerns such as distinguishing between primary and secondary sources can contribute towards plagiarism, as it might not be clear to students. Consequently, in agreement with Rettinger and Kramer (2009), my view is that lecturers should not

underestimate their effective role in preventing plagiarism within the institutional environment.

The findings by Songsriwittaya et al. (2009) confirmed that the main reason for students displaying dishonest academic behaviour such as plagiarism, is their ambition to obtain high grades, and to compare their achievements with classmates. Students with performance goals will most probably commit plagiarism compared to students who set mastery goals. The viewpoints of Engler, Landau, and Epstein (2008), and Hard, Conway, and Moran (2006) are also notable, as their research enunciates that plagiarism is a direct result of social customs and peer relations. Their definitions discovered that students mainly plagiarise because of time constraints, or simply because they did not believe that they could score high marks by submitting independent work (Šprajc et al. 2017). They further discovered that a noteworthy proportion of students plagiarise because they know of peers who plagiarise, and therefore believe that it is a common practice (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). With the easy access to both digital and advanced digital technology, some researchers have found that students are more likely to disregard academic integrity to commit plagiarism than otherwise (Chang et al. 2015). It is evident that most students resort to plagiarism due to their urge to compete with classmates and their desire to score high marks.

Plagiarism prevention measures implemented by institutions of higher learning

It has commonly been accepted in higher education that there have not been any practical solutions on a plagiarism preventative approach in a classroom setting, but rather at an institutional level. Historically, plagiarism detection programmes have never been used previously for higher education studies (QAA 2016). With the significant increase in plagiarism, higher education institutions are forced to adopt anti-plagiarism policies as well as technology to detect it. Well-known plagiarism detection programmes such as SafeAssign Turnitin, and MyDropBox are strategies in place to deter plagiarism (Mahabeer and Pirtheepal 2019). The framework suggested by Scanlon (2003) proposes that the only solution to deter plagiarism is the implementation of a clear and consistent policy which should be enforced. Despite of these plagiarism detection programmes major challeges in assessment practices continue (Walker 2010). Research by Razi (2015) and Walker (2010) argues that these strategies on its on cannot resolve plagiarism, and and still remains the responsibility of academics to score assessments tasks and to assess the degree of plagiarism which requires a systematic approach. Similarly, the research by Chew et al. (2015) concludes that it remains the responsibility of academic staff to decide if the highlighted text is legitimate or not in the specific discipline and institution.

Previously, lecturing staff were expected to draw from their experience and knowledge of

individual students to spot cases of plagiarism, and then communicate with university tutors to give penalties. Walker (2010) therefore suggest that academics should approach plagiarism reports with wariness as it does not always reflect "genuine plagiarism" and points out that is the academic's responsibility to evaluate the extend of plagiarism and if it occurred intentionally or accidentally. Today, most universities have had to implement increasingly technical resolutions in order to implement their proactive anti-plagiarism policies, using "Web-based plagiarism detection services" (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). In their research, Culwin and Lancaster (2001, 36–41) revised several such anti-plagiarism services and discovered that each of them offered a similar service which hyperlinked the Web pages of a student's submission that contains similar text. As lecturers become more conscious of their role in teaching disciplinary writing conventions, they can advise students on how to paraphrase the hyperlinked parts in assessment tasks or remove or add words and sentences in their tasks.

The research of Culwin and Lancaster (2001, 36–41) further proposed four stages of plagiarism in the detection process. They explained that their model is developed to demonstrate how an automatic pro-active method to plagiarism detection can be applied. During the *collection stage*, students are expected to submit their work on the system, generally through a "Web front end". Subsequently, the *detection stage* follows, where the research assignment is put through a detection process, which results in a record of student submissions, or groupwork submissions, which seem similar.

This is then followed by a "*human-led stage*" called "confirmation", where an assigned person validates whether the similarity described signifies plagiarism. It is possible for the system to falsely report similarities, also known as a "*false hit"* (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). The similarity could be the result of two students legitimately quoting from the same cited sources, which does not count as plagiarism. Any similarity still regarded as plagiarism proceeds to the further *investigation stage*, which could lead to a penalty. According to Culwin and Lancaster (2001, 36–41) the detection process is the "*computationally intensive"* stage, as a significant number of student assignments need to be compared with one another to detect intracorpal plagiarism and compared to external sources to detect extra-corpal plagiarism.

The biggest challenge is to determine which "possible disguised parts" of the assignment are stored where (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). In addition to finding true hits, detection systems should also not be capricious to ensure that they avoid "*missed pairs"* (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). A "missed pair" refers to a pair of submissions where there is substantial similarity, but the "detection engine" does not point out, or flag it as such (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). Furthermore, submissions might be processed independently as they come in, or group processed. Either way, a complete set or *corpus* of submissions is

prepared during frequent time pauses (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41).

The "*judgementally complex* stage" is when tutors have confirmed any noticed similarity during the detection process (Culwin and Lancaster 2001, 36–41). Knowledgeable tutors must ensure that they are reliable, not capricious, and clear. It can therefore be argued that a person involved during the plagiarism detection process will need training and require extensive knowledge on what "undue similarity" is. This suggests that the process requires subject experts who have knowledge of the field at hand, and who are aware of the principles of good teaching (Leask 2006, 197). To a large extend, the work of many authors (Landau, Druen, and Arcuri 2002; Carroll 2007; Oxford Centre for Staff Development 2002) concurs with the above viewpoint, as they all highlight the importance of teaching academic writing paraphrasing skills to students to become conscious of their practices, and where they may be plagiarising. In addition, the research by Brown and Janssen (2017) affirms the importance of teaching the requirements and rules of good referencing practices and advising students accurately on how to test their individual work before submitting it.

Moving forward, I direct the argument toward unpacking the critical role of lecturers in educating students on the expectations of writing in their subject disicpline, and by so doing, eliminating the decontextualised approach of divorcing students from their social contexts, which has become a common phenomenon at most universities.

Rethinking assessment practices to embrace innovative and critcal thinking amongst students to avoid plagiarism

As noted above, there are several dominant ideologies that underpin and continue to inform plagiarism practices. Chew et al. (2015) noted that since the change of view on plagiarism detection a shift occurred in the thinking of the role of Turnitin as a self-taught instrument for students. Knight (2001, 21) made a valuable contribution by linking plagiarism to poor assessment practices. He states, "plagiarism is an example of students who respond, logically to teachers' slack assessment practices" (Knight 2001, 21). Consistent with his findings, Davids and Waghid (2017) criticise the currently assessment practices in higher education as being problematic and emphasises the disengagement between, assessment practices, and teaching and learning. Furthermore, this argument was also supported by Razi (2015) who argues that assignment writing on its own is a complex process for students but more perplex for academics to design assessment tasks which aims to discourage plagiarism and assessing such tasks.

They further advocate for assessments to unfold during teaching time with a purpose instead of standardised institutional tests should be part of teaching and not isolated events (Davids and Waghid 2017). A shift from the recycling of assessment tasks to assessment that

involves critical analysis of varied present articles, or analysing the previous week's newspaper articles, will be helpful and should be encouraged. Furthermore, Knight (2001) encourages lecturers to design distinctive tasks by comparing papers, reviewing a current publication, and annotating bibliography, where students will not be tempted to plagiarise. Sheridan (2015) confirms that the result of plagiarism decreases a person's creativity and originality. For such type of assessment tasks students will demonstrate enthusiasm to think critically rather than wasting time on searching for information on the internet. There is a need to give serious consideration to the design of assessment tasks, and for lecturers to adapt their practices to accommodate the diverse student body that they teach.

In line with reimagining assessment task design, the research of Brown, Rust and Gibbs (1994) enumerate that students should not only be part of the learning process, but also in compiling of course material, the setting of assessment tasks, discussing assessment criteria, and providing feedback. It is important for students to be active participants in the assessment process by obtaining their views on the types of assessment methods they would favour to determine their learning outcomes. This may entail a parting from the "one-size-fits-all" approach to assessment practices as advocated years earlier by practitioners (Black and Wiliam 1998; Knight 2001). Their findings encourage the idea of assessment tasks that generate feedback that contributes towards students' learning. Carless (2009) points out that a major factor that limits ethical learning-orientated assessment practices is the absence of trust and how mistrust can restrict assessment development and fruitful student learning. Consequently, Carless (2009) recommended to move away from "defensive" assessment. Barnard, Schurink, and De Beer (2008) believes that personal drive such as desire and ambition can also function as a possible menance to ethics because personal ambitions and desires may persuade a person to only act in the best interest of yourself, dishonestly.

This perspective aligns with the findings of Ramsden (2008) who picked up that assessment was regarded an as add-on activity instead of being an important aspect thereof. In addition, he argues that this outlook on assessment is perceived as being more significant than the discipline knowledge, and the techniques for assessing and if indeed they are assessing discipline knowledge accurately. It can therefore be argued that when we start thinking of rethinking assessment practices, we need to pay attention to what Badat (2010) notes, as the purpose of higher education is to "produce, through engagement between dedicated academics and students around humanity's intellectual, cultural and scientific inheritances, highly educated graduates that ideally can think effectively and critically; have achieved depth in some field of knowledge, and have a critical appreciation of the ways in which we gain knowledge and an understanding of the universe, of society, and of ourselves" (Badat 2010, 3). Whether or

not this actually takes place, knowledge cannot be produced if students are being given the same type of assessment tasks over and over, as they will not see the need to do any research when the information is already available to them. In their contribution towards the rethinking of assessment practices, Stefani and Carroll (2001) also support the principle of assessment for learning by arguing that plagiarism must be an approach to make sure that lecturers give clear instructions and information on the rules in the discipline with as far as crediting sources and citation.

The findings by Chew et al. (2015) concluded that the aim of Turnitin is not to be utlilised as a "plagiarism detection tool" (policing tool) to penalize students but rather be used as a powerful self-assessment learning instrument to assist students. One way to achieve this is through the use of the Turnitin originality report as a pedagogical device to improve the academic writing practices of students through by allowing them multiple submission options (Mahabeer and Pirtheepal 2019).

The research by Chew et al. (2015) suggests that for such an approach to be successful, students will need explicit explanations on the interpretation of the original report to avoid misinterpretation and emotional stress and fear amongst students. This calls for a standardised "Turnitin policy" be in place to enable a continuous learning experience for all students in an institution; and Turnitin similarity reports should not be the sole determinor to identity student plagiarism (Chew et al. 2015).

The research by Lorraine et al. (2001) suggested that academic staff who instruct students to write essays as an assessment task should model to students what a good essay looks like and show them how to acknowledge the sources used. In a recent article, Mahabeer and Pirtheepal (2019) enumicates that appropriate assessment design must be rooted in student plagiarism prevention. They further noted that assessment practices where students are not active participants, and assessment tasks that remain the same every year does not stimulate original thinking, thus influences acts of plagiarism (Mahabeer and Pirtheepal 2019).

The adoption of a socially constructed approach to contexualise the context of teaching and learning

A large body of theoretical and conceptual frameworks is available on how to reduce the plagiarism range in higher education. This includes the eradication of the decontextualised model of literacy by Boughey and McKenna (2015), which model divorces students from their social context, and which has been largely criticised by them. These authors are of the opinion that this model denies students access to the disciplinary literacy practices such as reading, writing, thinking, and speaking. Within the wider institutional context, assumptions about

literacy practices are that such practices should be outsourced to support staff such as reading and writing lab practitioners, while lecturers focus on delivering the content. Based on these parameters, the contextualised model contributes positively to the academic identities of students, as it considers reading and writing practices at university as profoundly socially constructed.

In agreement with Stefani and Carroll (2001), I concur that the decontextualised model is not as useful as assisting students with writing skills, which forms part of the mainstream courses that they are taking. This argument was also supported by many researchers (Jia et al. 2012; Shah, Modha, and Dave 2016; Soori et al. 2015), who propose that lecturers should directly be involved in checking the students' assignments. This article therefore argues that the teaching of literacy practices in a course should not be the responsibility of support staff, but of the lecturer as the subject discipline specialist.

The research by Leibowitz and Bozalek (2014) concluded that writing centres cannot engage adequeately with lecturers in a thorough dialogue about the role of writing and the type of tasks set, partly because of the supremacy such a project has, and partly because of the person-power considerations. There is still a serious need in the institution to create awareness of the important role that lecturers play to nuture academic writing skills, and the limitations of writing centre practitioners to foster such skills. On a more practical level, Luckett (1995; 2001) argues that knowledge and skills are discipline specific, and that they are more socially and culturally located than the more practical skills, such as computer literacy, which may be flexible and may easily be moved from one discipline to another. This assertion was originally highlighted by Breier (1998), who suggested that generic skills can generally be taught, and can then simply be shifted from one discipline to another.

Contrary to this, Luckett (2001) identified that complex skills such as communication, interpersonal, problem-solving and reasoning skills are discipline specific and demand knowledge of the different discourses. Lecturers, as the subject experts, already meet this requirement, as they have access to powerful knowledge, since their task is to ensure that discipline knowledge is communicated when they teach in order for students to become part of the discourse community. As a writing centre coordinator, I engage with many students, and I came to realise that language is not a barrier for them, and that lecturers need to be made aware that students know how to write, they just find it hard to write in their subject disciplines.This emphasises critical awareness of literacy practices in the disciplines, and was supported by writing centre practitioners in South Africa, who argue that "academic literacy practices could not be separated from learning how discourse functions, or from socialising students into disciplinary practices from the political consequences of learning or exclusion of learning the

academic language" (Archer and Richards 2011, 7).

Also drawing from the work of Gee (1990 in Jacobs 2005, 478), advocating that a contextualised approach postulates that people who have been appointed to teaching discourses are in the best position to change the social structures at institutions that continue to marginalise non-mainstream students. I propose a literacy foundation development course to be implemented in each academic programme, as students need to acquire new literacies during each level of study, and not only in their first year. From these perspectives, the challenges faced by students with regards to plagiarism is evident to stem from the alienating approach in the higher education context (Boughey 2005).

Socialising students into disciplinary writing

The Socially Constructed Theory by Boughey and Mckenna (2015) highlights the importance to teach students how to make evidence-based "knowledge claims" that are expected by specific disciplines to master the academic literacies. For students to be able to make evidence-based knowledge claims, they should be made aware of what is valued in the discipline and should be taught how to make and substantiate such claims. To conform to the writing in the discipline, students should be exposed to frequent writing practices that permit them to test and enhance the type of claims and evidence that "count" within a specific discipline, as well as how they relate to an argument. This is achieved through frequent drafting and handling with feedback. Drawing on Knight's (2001) assessment for learning, he postulates that students should get continous feedback on their assessment tasks, which gives them a chance to improve on their writing.

This model promotes the idea of plagiarism as part of the lesson plan where it is discussed in class. Knight (2001, 21) argues that "poor assessment practices invite plagiarism". The ideal of this approach is for lecturers to realise that assessment is given for learning purposes, and therefore should be conscious of the function to help students to identify their errors and rectify misconceptions in their assessment tasks. This model was also in line with the findings by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA 2016, 13), which stated that feedback on students' work should be specific, clear, and detailed, and should be accessible to students through several written, verbal, and online mechanisms. By providing feedback to drafts of students, lecturers would introduce students to disciplinary ways by learning how to write in their subject discipline.

This is still a challenge, as many lecturers underestimate their role in teaching students the rules of plagiarism, and are therefore more than happy to refer them to support services staff to be assisted with plagiarism challenges. This viewpoint was supported by Hodges (1997, 78),

who noted that the different ways in which academic staff can support students to enhance their writing.This is also consistent with the research of Maxwell and Schwimmer (2016) who acknowledge that in order for academics to assist students it is important that they include mini assessment tasks that will assist students to learn referencing and paraphrasing within the withing the spcific disicpline they teach, which is, academic writing skills. The fostering and acomplishment of academic writing skills in such a manner that it strenghten the academic process instead of just focusing on plagiarism detection (Maxwell and Schwimmer 2016).

The findings by Flower (1979) and Paxton (1994) confirm that students pay far more attention to the final mark on their assignments where there is no feedback compare to work in progress where feedback is given. This report highlights that student should consider plagiarism as a key aspect of their learning. Like the main argument of this report, it is recommended that the results from plagiarism detection software should be used to give formative feedback to assist students to avoid plagiarism, and it must be successfully integrated into the computer-generated systems for electronic submissions.

CONCLUSION

This article has highlighted the main reasons why students resort to plagiarism, and possible measures to deter it. If lecturers should critically reflect on their role to assess students for learning purposes by introducing them to disciplinary writing, it is possible to see the merit in a feedback-centered approach instead of an add-on activity to their work. It would be a variable step to give students continuous feedback on their assessment tasks, and not only a final mark which provides no opportunity for improvement, and thus missing the chance to learn how to write in the subject discipline.

By opening a discussion on the importance of teaching academic literacy skills to students and thus ensuring that they have access to the disciplinary ways of writing, I have demonstrated the critical role of lecturers to socialise students in academics and developing their academic identity. Shifting to approaches that support a humanising pedagogy with student writers has much to offer in the rethinking of assessment pedagogy and practices. Ideally, plagiarism should be used as an effective tool, if used correctly, to teach students the literacies of the discipline, such as the knowledge that is valued by the discipline, and what constitues a good argument in the discipline, rather than referring students to academic support services. The classroom should be a place where students can engage in a conversation on plagiarism, and how to distinguish between ethical and unethical behaviour when selecting and using information for an assesment task.

This article has mainly argued that lecturers should become conscious of their role in

teaching the literacy practices of the discipline such as writing, reading, speaking and arguing, and avoid outsourcing the task to external practitioners in the institution. The expectations that are then brought to the classroom will be framed involving a discourse that enables the student to become an academic. This will therefore be the departure point from what has become the common classroom tenet, which stresses the importance of seeking plagiarism assistance from external practitioners such as librarians, writing centre and e-learning staff, over the role of lecturers as discipline experts in teaching plagiarism rules. The merit of using plagiarism feedback for assessment purposes largely depends on well-formulated and -planned assessment tasks embedded in teaching the writing rules of the discipline; thus, ensuring that students are equipped with literacy practices such as reading, writing, and thinking in preparation of becoming future academics. This article does not contend that the usage of feedback for assessment purposes is the only approach to avoid plagiarism, but there is potential in using plagiarism feedback to socialize students into disciplinary ways of writing by adapting to a more active classroom engagement. Plagiarism feedback has the potential to enable classroom engagement and improve teaching philosophies and assessment practices, whilst curbing the influx of students to seek assistance from support staff on how to avoid plagiarism. Through engaging with students as potential academics, the classroom engagement has the potential to become more accommodative as lecturers invest in the becoming of students as discipline experts.

REFERENCES

Angell, L. R. 2006. "The relationship of impulsiveness, personal efficacy, and academic motivation to college cheating." *College Student Journal* 40(1): 118–131.

Archer, A. and R. Richards. 2011. "South African writing centres as alternate pedagogical spaces." In *Changing spaces: Writing centres and access to higher education in South Africa*, ed. A. Archer and R. Richards, 5–15. Stellenbosch: Sun Media.

Ashworth, P., P. Bannister, and P. Thorne. 1997. "Students on the Qualitative Research Methods Course Unit. Guilty in whose eyes? University students' perceptions of cheating and plagiarism in academic work and assessment." *Studies in Higher Education* 22(2): 187–203.

Badat, S. 2010. *The challenge of transformation in higher education and training institutions in South Africa.* Development Bank of Southern Africa.

Barnard, A., W. Schurink, and M. A. De Beer. 2008. "Conceptual framework of integrity." *South African Journal Industrial Psychology* 34(2): 40–49. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v34i2.427.

Barnas, M. 2000. "'Parenting' students: Applying developmental psychology to the college classroom." *Teaching of Psychology* 27: 276–277.

Black, P. and D. Wiliam. 1998. "Assessment and classroom learning in Assessment in Education." *Principles, Policy & Practice* 5(1): 7–74.

Blum, S. 2010. *My Word! Plagiarism and College Culture*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Boughey, C. 2005. "Epistemological access to the university: An alternative perspective." *South African Journal of Higher Education* 19(3): 638–650.

Boughey, C. and S. McKenna. 2015. “Analysing an audit cycle: A critical realist account.” *Studies in Higher Education*. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2015.1072148.

Breier, M. 1998. “The Role of the Generic Skill in Lifelong Learning: Panacea or Pipe-dream?” *Journal of Education* 23: 73–100.

Brown, N. and R. Janssen. 2017. **“**Preventing Plagiarism and Fostering Academic Integrity: A Practical Approach.” *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice* 5(3):102–109.

Brown, S., C. Rust, and G. Gibbs. 1994. *Strategies for diversifying assessment in higher education*. Oxford, Oxford Centre for Staff Development

Carless, D. 2009. “Trust, distrust and their impact on assessment reform.” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 34(1): 79–89. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930801895786.

Carroll, J. A. 2002. *Suggestions for teaching international students more effectively.* Oxford: Oxford books.

Carroll, J. 2007. *A handbook for deterring plagiarism in higher education.* 2nd Edition. Oxford, England, Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development, Oxford Brookes University.

Chang, C. M., Y. L. Chen, Y. Huang, and C. Chou. 2015. “Why do they become potential cyber-plagiarizers? Exploring the alternative thinking of copy-and-paste youth in Taiwan.” *Computers and Education* 87: 357–367.

Chew, E., S. Lin Ding, and G. Rowell. 2015. “Changing attitudes in learning and assessment: Cast-off ‘plagiarism detection’ and cast-on self-service assessment for learning.” *Innovations in Education and Teaching International* 52(5): 454–463. https://doi.org/10.108 0/14703297.2013.832633.

Childers, D. and S. Bruton. 2016. “‘Should it be considered plagiarism?’ Student perceptions of complex citation issues.” *Journal of Academic Ethics* 14(1): 1–17.

Culwin, F. and T. Lancaster. 2001. “Plagiarism issues for higher education.” *Vine* 31(2): 36–41.

Davids, N. and Y. Waghid. 2017. “University tests should be part and parcel of teaching – not stand-alone events.” *The Conversation* 5 June. Education. https://theconversation.com/university-tests-should-be-part-and-parcelof-teaching-not-stand-alone-events-78481.

Devlin, M. and K. Gray. 2007. “In their words: A qualitative study of the reasons Australian university students plagiarize.” *Higher Education Research and Development* 26(2): 181–198.

Dordoy, A. 2002. “Cheating and plagiarism: Student and staff perceptions at Northumbria.” *Proceeding of Northumbria Conference, Educating the future.* http://www.jisepas.ae.uk/ imageBs/rbouing/hAtDto.dyooue. (Accessed 29 January 2009).

Engler, J. N., J. D. Landau, and M. Epstein. 2008. “Keeping up with the Joneses: Students’ perceptions of academically dishonest behavior.” *Teaching of Psychology* 35: 99–102.

Errey, L. 2002. “Plagiarism: Something fishy? ... or just a fish out of the water?” *Teaching Forum* 50: 7–20.

Evering, L. C. and G. Moorman. 2012. “Rethinking plagiarism in the digital age.” *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 56(1): 35–44. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.00100.

Fish, R. and G. Hura. 2013. “Students’ perceptions of plagiarism.” *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 13(5): 33–45.

Flower, L. 1979. Writer-based prose: A cognitive basis for problems in writing. *College English* 41: 19–37.

Gee, J. P. 1990. *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in Discourses*. Basingstoke, Falmer.

Halupa, C. and D. U. Bolliger. 2015. “Student perceptions of self-plagiarism: A multi-University exploratory study.” *Journal of Academic Ethics* 13(1): 91–105.

Hard, S. F. J., M. Conway, and A. C. Moran. 2006. “Faculty and colleges student beliefs about the frequency of student academic misconduct.” *The Journal of Postsecondary Education* 77(6): 1058–1080.

Helgesson G. and S. Eriksson. 2015. “Plagiarism in research.” *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 18(1): 91–101.

Hodges, E. 1997. “Negotiating the margins: Some principles for responding to our students’ writing, some strategies for helping students read our comments.” In *Writing to learn: Strategies for assigning and responding to writing across the disciplines,* ed. M. D. So⊄cinelli and P. Elbow*,* 77–103. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Jacobs, C. 2005. “On being an insider on the outside: New spaces for integrating academic literacies.” *Teaching in Higher Education* 10(4): 475–487.

Jia, S., D. Liu, L. Zhang, and C. Liu. 2012. “A Research on Plagiarism Detecting Method Based on XML Similarity and Clustering.” In *Internet of Things: International Workshop, IOT 2012, Changsha, China, August 17–19, 2012. Proceedings,* ed. Y. Wang and X. Zhang*,* 619–626. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

Jiang, H., L. Emmerton, and L. McKange. 2013. “Academic integrity and plagiarism: A review of the influences and risk situations for health students.” *Higher Education Research and Development* 32(3): 369–380.

Knight, P. 2001. *A briefing on key concepts: Formative and summative, criterion and norm referenced assessment*. Learning and teaching support network (LTSN) generic centre.

Landau, J. D., P. B. Druen, and J. A. Arcuri. 2002. “Methods for helping students avoid plagiarism.” *Teaching of Psychology* 29(2): 112–115.

Larkham, M. 2002. “Plagiarism and its treatment in higher education.” *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 26(4): 339–349. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0309877022000021748.

Leask, B. 2006. “Plagiarism, cultural diversity and metaphor – Implications for academic staff development.” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 31(2): 183–199.

Leibowitz, B. and V. Bozalek. 2014. “Access to higher education in South Africa.” *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning* 16(1): 91–109.

Lorenz, J. M. 2013. “Cheating & Plagiarism in Nursing.” http://nursing.advanceweb.com/Continuing-Education/CE-Articles/Cheating-Plagiarism-in-Nursing.aspx. (Accessed 24 September 2015).

Luckett, K. 1995. “Towards a model of curriculum development for the University of Natal’s Curriculum reform programme.” *Academic Development* 1(2): 125–139.

Luckett, K. 2001. “A proposal for an epistemically diverse curriculum for South African higher education in the 21st century.” *South African Journal of Higher Education* 15(2): 49–61.

Mahabeer, P. and T. Pirtheepal. 2019. “Assessment, plagiarism and its effect on academic integrity: Experiences of academics at a university in South Africa.” *South African Journal of Science* 11(5): 1–8.

Maxwell, B. and M. Schwimmer. 2016. “Professional ethics education for future teachers: A narrative review of the scholarly writings.” *Journal of Moral Education* 45(3): 354–371. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2016.1204271.

McKenna, S. 2012. “The Context of Access and Foundation Provisioning in South Africa.” In *Access and Success in Higher Education,* ed. R. Dunpath and R. Vithal, 50–60. Cape Town: Pearson.

Mgqwashu, E. 2009. “On becoming literate in English: A during- and post-apartheid personal story.” *Language Learning Journal* 37(3): 293–303.

Mgqwashu, E. 2016. “On developing academic literacy in the mother tongue for epistemological access: The role of isiZulu as the LoLT in a South African University.” *Current Issues in Language Planning* 15(1): 90–103.

Motala, S. 2017. “Achieving ‘free education’ for the poor: A realisable goal in 2018? Introduction Part III.” *Journal of Education* 68: 15–29.

Oxford Centre for Staff Development. 2002.

Park, C. 2003. “In other (people’s) words: Plagiarism by university students – literature and lessons.” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 28(5): 471–488.

Paxton, M. 1994. “Case studies of tutors’ responses to student writing and the way in which students

interpret these." Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education. Rhodes University.

Perrin, R. 2009. *Pocket guide to APA style.* 3rd Edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

QAA *see* Quality Assurance Agency.

Quality Assurance Agency. 2016. *Integrated quality and enhancement review: Student engagement. Information Bulletin 2010.* The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: Gloucester.

Ramsden, A. 2008. *The use of QR codes in Education: A getting started guide for academics' University of Bath*. Bath, UK.

Razi, S. 2015. Development of a rubric to assess academic writing incorporating plagiarism detectors. *SAGE Open* 5(2): 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177 %2 F2158244015590162.

Rettinger, D. A. and Y. Kramer. 2009. "Situational and personal causes of student cheating." *Research in Higher Education* 50(3): 293–313.

Sagoro, E. M. 2013. "Pensinergian mahasiswa, dosen, dan lembaga dalam pencegahan kecurangan akademik mahasiswa akuntansi." *Jurnal Pendidikan Akuntansi Indonesia* 11(2): 54–67.

Scanlon, P. M. 2003. "Student online plagiarism: How do we respond?" *College Teaching* 51(4): 161–165.

Shah, N., S. Modha, and D. Dave. 2016. "Differential Weight Based Hybrid Approach to Detect Software Plagiarism." In *Proceedings of International Conference on ICT for Sustainable Development: ICT4SD 2015,* ed. C. S. Satapathy, A. Joshi, N. Modi, and N. Pathak, 2: 645–653. Singapore: Springer Singapore.

Songsriwittaya, A., S. Kongsuwan, K. Jitgarum, S. Kaewkuekool, and R. Koul. 2009. *Engineering Students' Attitude Towards Plagiarism a Survey Study.* Korea: ICEE & ICEER.

Soori, H., M. Prilepok, J. Platos, and V. Snášel. 2015. "Utilizing Text Similarity Measurement for Data Compression to Detect Plagiarism in Czech." In *Proceedings of the First International Afro-European Conference for Industrial Advancement AECIA 2014,* ed. A. Abraham, P. Krömer, and V. Snasel, 163–172. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Šprajc, P. S., M. Urh, J. Janja, D. Trivan, and J. Eva. 2017. "Reasons for Plagiarism in Higher Education." *Organizacija* 50(1): 33–42.

Stefani, L. and J. Carroll. 2001. "A briefing in plagiarism." *Assessment Series No. 10*. York: Learning and Teaching Support Network.

Underwood, J. and A. Szabo. 2003. "Academic offences and e-learning: Individual propensities in cheating." *British Journal of Educational Technology* 34(4): 467–477.

Walker, J. 2010. "Measuring plagiarism: Researching what students do, not what they say they do." *Studies in Higher Education* 35(1): 41–59. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03075070902912994.

Wilhoit, S. 1994. "Helping Students Avoid Plagiarism." *College Teaching* 4: 161–164.

Williams, K. M., C. Nathanson, and D. L. Paulus. 2010. "Identifying and profiling scholastic cheaters: Their personality, cognitive ability and motivation." *Journal of Experimental Psychology Applied* 16(3): 293–307

Wager, E. 2014. "Defining and responding to plagiarism." *Learned Publishing* 27(1): 33–42. http://dx.doi. org/10.1087/20140105.