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Writing under the Gaze: Plagiarism Policies and International ESL Students Patchwriting

in Graduate School

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ABSTRACT

In this study I investigated how seven English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) international students at two graduate programs at the University of Ottawa wrote course papers in light of the university's policies on plagiarism. Informed by the New Literacy Studies, Bourdieu's social theory, Bakhtin's theory of language, and Ivanič's analytical framework of writer identity, the inquiry drew upon multiple sources of data involving field observations, artifact analysis, and interviews with the students, their course professors, and other faculty members over two consecutive academic sessions. The results indicate that patchwriting, defined as one writer working closely with other writers' texts while leaving behind traces of those texts (Howard, 1999), is a major strategy through which students make other peoples' words and ideas their own. The study further differentiates between *localized patchwriting* and *global patchwriting*, and offers an account of the reasons that give rise to each. It also discusses how educational practice simultaneously calls upon students to write as professionals and students, and considers the role that university plagiarism policies play in students' decision as to which identity to take up and textually enact. The study discusses faculty's mediation of plagiarism policies, and identifies a dissonance between their pedagogic response and the university's legalistic treatment of student textual borrowing practices that violate common practice. The research also considers the impact of institutional plagiarism policies on students and professors, and makes suggestions for the re-consideration of university plagiarism policies and documents.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

As reported in the media and experienced on university campuses, there is a widespread concern that plagiarism is on the rise, and this is understood to mean more students are cheating to get ahead. Increasingly university officials are turning to electronic tools to help detect these inappropriate practices. While there is concern for the situation, it is usually accompanied by the view that the whole problem is clear cut and easy to avoid: Either use quotation marks and include a citation, or put the ideas into your own words and include a citation. What, however, if we don't have those words? Additionally, what might it mean to write appropriate academic text in a language in which we are not fluent? In the initial stages of learning any new discipline, we start out with an impoverished vocabulary of language and ideas in the area. Where and how do those ideas become our own? In order to further our understanding of these issues, the present research study investigates university students' textual practices that are institutionally classified as plagiarism. Specifically it examines the citation practices of ESL graduate students in a Canadian university as they produce academic texts as part of their course requirements.

My interest in the topic stems from my own experiences as a student writer and can be traced back to the anxieties and anguish that I experienced as an English as a Foreign Language writer during my undergraduate years in my former home country of Iran. I vividly recall how I was simultaneously "terrorized by the literature" (Becker, 1986, p. 135) and stood in awe of the sophistication and scholarly style of published sources emanating from the Anglophone metropoles. Frequently finding myself imitating

and copying those sources in my own papers, I often felt dissatisfied with myself as a writer. I was aware that some of my borrowing practices were examples of plagiarism, but I knew of no other way to write papers. I often felt I was an incompetent writer any time I had to write an academic paper, and for this reason I resented writing papers in English. Over the years, I have listened to similar experience echoed by many other university students, and they have confided that, like me, they have used similar "borrowing" strategies, especially when they wrote in a language other than their first one. My perception of this widely shared and troubling experience has been one impetus to conduct the present study.

I also have been motivated to engage in this inquiry by my understanding of sociocultural theories of learning which focus on the social and distributed nature of learning, a view that challenges the notion of authorship as individual and original. If learning occurs by appropriating the mediational means of a community (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991, 1994), the view of plagiarism that rests upon the individual ownership of language and ideas is called into question and the dilemma for student writers is highlighted: On the one hand, they need to appropriate from others in order to learn and write and, on the other, they must put the words and ideas they borrow into their own words to avoid being labelled plagiarist. The challenge becomes more pronounced for students writing in a second language who might not yet have access to words of their own in the second language. Successful learners of a language do not learn the language from dictionaries, rather, they appropriate the language used by others in speech or writing (Bakhtin, 1986). This theoretical conflict between how humans are theorized to learn and how authorship is institutionally

represented provided not only an impetus for the present research but also with a theoretical framework to understand how international students writing in a language other than their own create text/knowledge in university courses under the watchful eyes of academic plagiarism policies.

In Table 1 on page 4 I have presented the text of a recent article written by an instructor of journalism that represents the institutional view of plagiarism currently in force in North American universities and brings to light some curious entailments of this view.

Table 1.

Plagiarism as an Ethical Category[1]

What's in a name?

Whether you call it plagiarism or a breech of intellectual integrity, Judith Ince argues that schools of journalism must take more steps to tackle the issue

An epidemic of plagiarism felled journalists across the continent last year. Other professions were not immune from the disease, either; stories of journalists stricken with dishonesty jostled with others about plagiarizing pastors, politicians, students and university presidents.

As a journalism student, I watched the casualties pile up with morbid fascination, but as a former university instructor, I was astonished by how little the media — or the sometime reporters who taught at my J-school — seemed to appreciate the motivations of cheaters and the potential solutions to the scourge of intellectual dishonesty. And, no one seemed ready to swallow the systemic medicine that might eliminate journalistic dishonesty of all kinds.

Although journalism schools and news organizations would likely agree with the ethics guide of *The Washington Post*, which describes plagiarism as "journalism's unforgivable sin," they also tend to characterize it as a uniquely individual failure of moral fibre. Universities tended to take a similar view until an explosion of cheating in the 1980s prompted experts in organizational behaviour, psychology, education

and ethics to re-examine the issue. These scholars investigated the personal characteristics of cheaters and developed strategies that might deter them.

After almost three decades of research, much empirical evidence reveals that academic fraud declines only when a systems-wide solution is found to confront it. Editors, publishers, and J-school instructors may benefit from addressing intellectual dishonesty as a problem requiring the attention of the entire institution.

Plagiarists in both the media and academia are adept at self-justification, and the most common — if least believable — excuse I have heard is "I didn't understand that what I was doing was plagiarism."

If this is true, then universities and newsrooms are doing a poor job of explaining it. *Plagiarism*, a pamphlet produced by Indiana University, is pithy and clear: "Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information."

Heeding this definition should make plagiarism easy to avoid. Writers should provide a source for both direct quotations and paraphrases. Quotation marks should be used to denote direct

quotations. Failing to use quotation marks around a direct quotation is considered plagiarism even if, somewhere else in the article, reference is made to the original source.

Paraphrasing seems to perplex some, but the basic rule is that in addition to giving the original source credit, a paraphrase must abandon the phrasing, vocabulary and voice of the original author.

Plagiarism gives the following examples of acceptable and "unacceptable paraphrases, using an extract from Lizzie Borden: A Case Book of Family and Crime in the 1890s", by Joyce Williams, et al.

The original reads:

"The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial laborers, and provided jobs

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[1] Source: Canadian Association of Journalists, retrieved January 05, 2007, from http://www.caj.ca/mediamag/fall2004/Media_Fall04.pdf .

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What's in a name?

for a rising tide of immigrants. With industry came urbanization the growth of large cities (like Fall River, Massachusetts, where the Bordens lived) which became the centers of production as well as of commerce and trade."

But this paraphrase is actually plagiarism:

"The increase of industry, the growth of cities, and the explosion of the population were three large factors of nineteenth century America. As steam-driven companies became more visible in the eastern part of the country, they changed farm hands into factory workers and provided jobs for the large wave of immigrants. With industry came the growth of large cities like Fall River where the Bordens lived which turned into centers of commerce and trade as well as production."

Plagiarism notes this passage violates the rules of academic honesty because no credit has been given to the original source, and the writer has only mixed up sentence order and changed some words.

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But here's a paraphrase that credits sources and uses the author's own words:

"Fall River, where the Borden family lived, was typical of northeastern industrial cities of the nineteenth century. Steam-powered production had shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, and as immigrants arrived in the US, they found work in these new factories. As a result, populations grew, and large urban areas arose. Fall River was one of these manufacturing and commercial centers (Williams 1)."

Writers who use a person's theory, research, opinions or ideas must credit them. Likewise, graphs, maps, statistics, drawings, diagrams, tables, or any other information that is not common knowledge must be attributed. So what is common knowledge? Facts that are known by most people, and available in many different sources do not need attribution. Examples of common knowledge where sources do not need to be given are: "Paul Martin is the prime minister of Canada, a country of almost 30 million people."

While some journalists, students, or instructors may plagiarize because they have a frail grasp of the concept, most are motivated by a constellation of personal and cultural factors.

PHOTO CREDIT: *Gauntlet/Chris Tait*

Linda Klebe Treviño, who teaches business ethics at Penn State University, says people cheat in their professional lives "for the same reason they cheat in other parts of their lives — usually because they think it will help them to get ahead or because they feel that they are under pressure."

Aaron Bolin, a psychologist who has researched academic dishonesty, says journalists, students and academics who plagiarize are likely motivated by two of the seven deadly sins, greed and sloth: "They want to get more articles published but they don't want to work."

Research by Bernard E. Whitley, Kevin L. Blankenship and Patricia Keith-Spiegen at Ball State University has sketched out a psychological profile of college cheaters, and it's not a pretty picture. As a group, these students are ready to justify dishonesty ("I didn't hurt anyone"), normalize it ("everyone does it"), and view deceit as a pervasive social norm. Unsurprisingly, they also have a prior history of cheating. Dishonest students expect success, and believe it will bring them huge rewards. But their behaviour outside the classroom would seem to set them up for failure: college cheaters abuse alcohol and drugs, steal, take risks while driving, and are personally less reliable than non-cheaters.

But a student's moral evaluation of academic deception is even more important than these personality factors in predicting who will cheat.

In research done at Arkansas State University, Bolin assessed students' perception of academic fraud by asking them to evaluate statements about it. Self-reported cheaters were likely to agree with such statements as, "Students should go ahead and cheat if they know they can get away with it."

I have included this article for a number of reasons. For one thing, it represents plagiarism as a straightforward phenomenon, the validity of which transcends all contexts. But more strikingly, the discussion is replete with vocabulary such as 'epidemic', 'immune', 'stricken', 'moral fibre', and 'dishonest'; metaphors that are associated with discussions of disease, and debates on good and evil. From this perspective, plagiarism is not only fraud, but the source of the transgression is located within the character of the writer. Those who plagiarize tend to

> . . . have a prior history of cheating. Dishonest students
> expect success, and believe it will bring them huge
> rewards. But their behaviour outside the classroom would
> seem to set them up for failure: College cheaters abuse
> alcohol and drugs, steal, take risks while driving, and
> personally less reliable than non-cheaters. (p. 2)

As the article further indicates, within this view of plagiarism, it is often customary to include a cure for the problem, what one author has described as "the worm of reason" (Kolich, 1983). The remedy almost uniformly involves a crash course in the de-contextualized skills of note taking and mechanics of attribution. One author has even written a one-page prescription in the journal *College Teaching* about this remedy titled "The quick fix: Curing plagiarism with a note-taking exercise" (Nienhuis, 1989). The assumption appears to be that with the administration of a mixture of note taking crash course and a strong dose of penal threat, the students will be vaccinated against this "sin against scholarship" (Burlingame, 1994) and the "perils of plagiarism" (Brown, 1975) will be eradicated.

While the above piece might represent a harsh characterization, it does tell us something about the general attitude towards plagiarism, a practice that has traditionally

been couched in terms of ethics, and dealt with as a subcategory of fraud (Daniels, 1960; Hawley, 1984; Johnson, 1997; Mallon, 1989; Mason, 2002; Nitterhouse, 2003). At the University of Ottawa, which is my home university and the academic context in which the present study was carried out, this attitude is reflected in a brochure published by the university's Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies which is indexed under research ethics. On the front page of this document, the reader encounters the following statement: "Beware of plagiarism! It's easy; it's tempting ... but it can be very costly! Last year, more than 100 University of Ottawa students who were accused of plagiarism received various sanctions, including expulsion from the University" (University of Ottawa plagiarism brochure, 2006). This is one of the documents that each graduate student receives in an information package on the first day of his or her orientation session, and incoming students routinely get lectured on the consequences of plagiarism during their orientation session.

Another article which I have inserted into this document (see Table 2 on page 8), highlights the extent to which universities in North America are committed to enforcing their views of plagiarism.

Table 2.

North American Universities Enforcing Plagiarism Policies[2]

McGill Student Penalized for Not Using Internet Plagiarism Service

A student at McGill University is challenging a controversial new rule requiring all students to submit essays to a U.S.-based for-profit company that checks papers for plagiarism.

Jesse Rosenfeld, a second-year student in McGill's international development program, received a zero on an economics assignment after he refused to submit the paper to Turnitin.com, a company that has compiled a database of more than one million student essays.

McGill recently signed a contract with the California-based company and now requires students in many courses to have their assignments vetted by Turnitin.com before being submitted for grading.

...

In the United States, where about 400 colleges subscribe to Turnitin.com for an annual fee of $1,000 to $10,000 (U.S.), critics have argued that because student papers are copied into a database in their entirety, the service violates students' copyrights.

...

In Canada, in addition to McGill, Turnitin.com has signed contracts with the University of Toronto, the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria and Ryerson University. At the U of T, students may refuse to submit their papers to Turnitin.com. If they refuse, they are required to provide evidence of original work, including rough drafts and an annotated bibliography.

Meanwhile, Rosenfeld plans to launch an action arguing the McGill requirement also violates basic rights and freedoms recognized in law, including the principle of presumption of innocence.

[2] Source: (2003, November) Canadian Association of University Teachers, retrieved January 20, 2007 from http://www.caut.ca/en/bulletin/archives/

This report describes the legal battle over a student's refusal to hand over his paper to the relevant office at McGill University that routinely screens students' papers for plagiarism. The report indicates that many North American universities have enlisted the service of private IT companies to police these policies. In discussion with a number of University of Ottawa faculty members, some indicated that they possessed the very software mentioned in the report (i.e., *Turn-it-in* ©) in order to detect plagiarism in student papers. This shows how stringent universities in North America are about plagiarism and the enforcement of their plagiarism policies through both the use of new technology as well as their teaching staff. Faculty members at the University of Ottawa, similar to their colleagues in many other academic institutions, have been delegated the power and agency to police the institutional plagiarism policies. As part of this enforcement, they have been advised to have "a policy on plagiarism and describe it clearly in [their] course outline" and give their "students examples of academic fraud" (Centre-for-University-Teaching, 2001). As agents of the institution, "professors owe a duty to the University and to the majority of honest students not to allow the dishonest few to profit from their crimes" (p. 44).

While universities continue to use the language of crime and punishment in their responses to student plagiarism, I have come across intriguing cases of plagiarism in very unlikely places. For instance, in March 2002 the *Ottawa Citizen* newspaper[3] reported that an unduly large number of students who were taking an ethics course at an engineering department at Carleton University were found to have plagiarized their papers. The news was quite ironic when read against the institutional representation of plagiarizing students

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[3] Source: Retrieved January 16, 2007, from http://shazam.econ.ubc.ca/~info/e490/ethics.htm

as ethically infirm, and it was revealing in many respects: The very fact that plagiarism

had occurred in an ethics course in which students had most likely been taught the basics

of ethics served to raise questions about the validity of the institutional representation of

plagiarism as an ethical category. It was also significant that an unprecedented number of

students had plagiarized in one course. Was it reasonable to assume that all the

plagiarizing students taking the course had moral issues? The context in which plagiarism

had occurred was also worthy of attention. The course was a typical humanities course

offered at a so-called hard science discipline which tends to represent different student

populations as well as different reading and writing tasks that they often engage in

(Braine, 1995; Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Casanave & Hubbard, 1992). In other words,

in a discipline in which students generally write lab reports, deal with formulae, and

numbers, they had been asked to generate texts on typical social science topics such as

"gender issues, whistle-blowing, sustainable development and software piracy"; topics

that tend to be alien to hard science disciplines and their students. Further, the very

pervasiveness of what had been regarded as plagiarism hinted that there might be more to

the phenomenon of plagiarism than the institutional definition of plagiarism would want

us to believe. In this particular case the university's response to student plagiarism was to

hand out "penalties ranging from a zero grade on the assignment to a mandatory failure in

the course resulting in students losing a year or possibly being dismissed from the

program" (Carleton University, 2002). What was even more intriguing was that a year

earlier at the same university about a hundred students from the faculties of arts and

social sciences and management had been found plagiarizing. Could the ubiquitousness

of plagiarism be indicative of something else that traditional, narrow treatments of

plagiarism fail to address or take into account? Might the widespread occurrence of

student plagiarism be a sign that the assumptions that underlie institutional

representations of writing/learning and writers' relations to their texts are unwarranted? It

was questions such as these that motivated me to look deeper into plagiarism and ask

whether the prevalence of plagiarism could reveal something about learning and writing

that plagiarism policies might overlook or perhaps be in conflict with. This is especially

worthy of attention as it is well documented in the literature that plagiarism is indeed

widespread. For instance, Martin (1984) observes that "plagiarism is more prevalent in

academia than normally acknowledged. Because it is a 'taboo' topic, administrators are

ill-equipped to investigate allegations of plagiarism" (p. 183). More recently, Kenny

(2007), in her discussion of available methods for detecting internet plagiarism by

nursing students in the UK, testifies to the ubiquitousness of plagiarism by stating that in

addition to UK, "Australia, America, South Africa and Finland are also reported to be

encountering problems with this new wave of academic dishonesty" (p. 15).

In a recent article in *The Charlatan*, a Canadian university newspaper[4], a fourth-

year sociology and philosophy major draws our attention to the contrast between the

institution's view of plagiarism and students' views of it. He accuses the university's

education model of requiring students to cram huge amounts of information without

much reflection and little sense of authentic learning activities. The view that students

might plagiarize because they are bombarded with more information than they can

handle, or because they feel disconnected from the culture and values of the education

system also finds expression in the research literature (Ritter, 2005). Reflecting on his

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[4] Source: *The Charlatan* (Carleton University's Newspaper, Ottawa, Canada), retrieved January 30, 2007 from http://www.charlatan.ca/index.php?option=com_contact&catid=12&Itemid=38

own lived experiences and those of other students, he is able to suggest plausible

alternatives to the institutional representation of plagiarism and its account of why

students might plagiarize.

Reformulating Perspectives on Authorship

The view of plagiarism understood as the inappropriate use of an author's words

or ideas without proper citation that has been presented in the first part of this

introduction, rests on a formulation of authoring as a solitary and original act carried out

by an individual. This view of the author, however, has been effectively challenged with

the publication of Foucault's text "What is an author?" (1984) and Roland Barthes' titled

"The author is dead" (1977). In his work, Foucault traced the origin of the present

construct of author, locating its emergence in the culturally and historically specific

material circumstances of Western bourgeois society of the 18th century. Describing the

changing assumptions and practices about the relationship between texts and writers, that

have occurred over time, Foucault revealed that in the Middle Ages literary texts used to

circulate anonymously without being attributed to particular authors while at the same

time texts that are currently categorized as scientific used to be judged to be true by virtue

of being attributed to recognizable authors. Interestingly this contrasts with a modernist

view of authorship whereby the pattern of attribution has been reversed. That is, literary

texts gain their authority by actually being attributed to identifiable authors whereas

scientific texts gain their authority by being impersonally objective, without being

considered true by virtue of being attributed to particular authors (Foucault, 1984, p.

109). Foucault's work provided insight into the historical specificity of our present notion

of author – and by extension, our view of plagiarism.

Additionally Foucault demonstrated the discursive function of the notion of

author in the exercise of power by constraining the proliferation of meaning. The author,

Foucault explained,

> . . . is a certain functional principle by which, in our
> culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by
> which one impedes the free circulation, the free
> manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and
> recomposition of fiction. In fact, if we are accustomed to
> presenting the author as a genius, as a perpetual surging of
> invention, it is because, in reality, we make him function in
> exactly the opposite function. (p. 119)

In his view the construct of author emerged to achieve specific social purposes,

namely, to discipline and punish transgressive acts against the dominant economic regime

of post-Enlightenment era:

> Once a system of ownership for texts came into being, once
> strict rules concerning author's rights, author-publisher
> relations, rights of production, and related matters enacted
> – at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the
> nineteenth century – the possibility of transgression
> attached to the act of writing took on …. (p. 108)

Having revealed the social functions that the notion of author has played in the

West, Foucault urged readers not to ask what an author is but ask what it does in order to

explore the social functions (Jaszi, 1994) of this historical construct. This has given rise

to a different paradigm in the studies of authorship and its associated notion of plagiarism

in a range of disciplines including law (Jaszi, 1994; Woodmansee, 1984; Woodmansee &

Jaszi, 1995), literature (Hutcheon, 1986; Randall, 2000), and rhetoric and composition

studies (Ede & Lunsford, 1990; Howard, 2000, 2007; Lunsford & Ede, 1994; Lunsford & West, 1996).

Critiquing the notion of author from a different perspective, Barthes (1977) severed the author from the text by highlighting that this link is basically a metaphysical one given that meaning is in fact a play of difference in the linguistic sign system. Alluding to Sausurrian linguistics that disrupts the traditionally assumed expressive function of the linguistic sign, Barthes points out that

> . . . the whole of the enunciation is an empty process,
> functioning perfectly without there being any need for it to
> be filled with the person of interlocutors. Linguistically, the
> author is never more than the instance writing, just as I is
> nothing other than the instance saying I: language knows a
> "subject" not a "person" .... (p. 145)

Barthes reasoned that in contrast to the traditional assumptions that the author temporally precedes the text, the author should in fact be conceived of as a mere scripter who "is born simultaneously with the text, [and that the author] is in no way equipped with being preceding or exceeding the writing" (1977, p. 145). He further argued that the act of writing does not express antecedent meanings as has traditionally been assumed; rather it performs an act as in the Speech Act Theory of language (Austin, 1962) and, as such, the meaning of a text lies in the very act performed rather than an expression of a prior meaning by the author. As Barthes put it, "the enunciation has no other content (contains no other proposition) than the act by which it is uttered" (p. 46).

It is worth highlighting that both Foucault and Barthes arrived at a similar conclusion in their understanding of author. For both theorists, the concept of author is implicated in the exercise of power and the constraint on human freedom. Similar to

Foucault, Barthes showed that the traditionally assumed relation of the author to the text

served to "impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the

writing" (1977, p. 147). In other words, the author as a Modern figure is linked to the

desire to exclude subversive meanings threatening dominant regimes of truths.

Having disrupted the traditional author-text relationship, Barthes (1977) further

pointed out the intertextual constitution of all writing.

> A text is not a line of words releasing a single "theological"
> meaning (the "message" of the Author-God) but a
> multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none
> of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of
> quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture.
> (p. 146)

Barthes' position, reinforced by similar observations made by others about the

intertextual nature of both the production and reception of texts (Bakhtin, 1981; Kristeva,

1980), has effectively challenged the orthodox " notion of 'writing' and 'writer' as

singular, solitary acts and agents (Lunsford, 1999, p. x) which has underpinned the notion

of author for the past few centuries. This unraveling has profoundly de-stabilized the

construct of author and since the construct of plagiarism also rests on these very

assumptions, it too has been challenged. As Ede and Lunsford have remarked, these

theoretical assaults have forcefully revealed that "one cannot own ideas or words" (Ede

& Lunsford, 1990, p. xviii).

What is This Inquiry About?

Institutional policies offer a conflated definition of plagiarism that lumps together

a number of disparate acts as fraudulent (Howard, 1995, 2000, 2007). Based on these

policies, for instance, plagiarism includes not only such deceptive acts as submission of

someone else's work as one's own but also failure to use one's own words while paraphrasing. Close paraphrasing even if the writer acknowledges the source would be considered plagiarism and, hence, an act of fraud. As a case in point, a University of Ottawa's document refers to close paraphrasing as a form of plagiarism and categorizes it as academic fraud on par with such behaviour as the submission of "a work of which the student is not the author ..." (General Regulations, University of Ottawa Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, 2004).

A specific critique of this notion of plagiarism is advanced by the rhetoric and composition scholar, Rebecca Howard (1992, 1995, 1999, 2000, 2007), as she calls for a re-conceptualization of plagiarism based on her unpacking of the comprehensive definition of plagiarism that "asserts a unity among disparate textual practices" (Howard, 2000, p. 474). She suggests we abandon the current judicio-moral response to what has been misleadingly categorized as plagiarism. Introducing the concept of *patchwriting* defined as a composing process whereby writers are engaged in

> ... copying from a source text and then deleting some
> words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-
> for-one synonym-substitutes. (Howard, 1995, p. 788)

For Howard patchwriting is a learning activity through which students and experienced writers "interpret and build upon the ideas and words encountered in their sources" (Howard, 1999, pp. 7-8). She has called for a distinction between patchwriting and deception, and for a re-categorization of these distinct practices. To support her argument for de-criminalizing patchwriting, she cites numerous cases in which unmarked appropriations have been detected in the writings of professional writers. This persistence of patchwriting in the writings of both beginning and accomplished writers, she suggests,

indicates that patchwriting must be "a fundamental part of the writing process" (Howard, 1999, p. 8). Howard has most recently suggested that, given the insidiousness of plagiarism and its underlying metaphors, the term should altogether be discarded in favour of other more specific signifiers such as fraud, insufficient citation, and excessive repetition (Howard, 2000, p. 488). Her work has important pedagogical implications as in her view this conceptual differentiation has the potential to open up "possibilities for actually teaching students how to read, synthesize, and write about sources" (2007, p. 13).

The present inquiry in part builds upon this scholarly work to empirically investigate how seven international students from diverse linguistic backgrounds writing in English as a Second Language at two graduate programs at the University of Ottawa produced their academic papers under the gaze of institutional policies of plagiarism. Of particular interest is what and how they appropriated from the writing of others in order to construct their own texts. I was also interested in understanding how the appropriated material became transformed into their 'own' words in order to avoid the charge of plagiarism. While the primary focus was on the seven international graduate students, the study also included interviews with course professors as well as other professors at the two programs in order to learn about how they understood and mediated institutional plagiarism policies. Their interviews also served to provide important contextual information about the academic culture which the students were negotiating.

A Note on a Terminological Choice

To avoid a possible confusion, it would be appropriate to state early on that in this study I tend to use the term *transgressive intertextuality,* suggested by Chandrasoma,

Thompson, and Pennycook (2004), rather than *plagiarism* to refer to textual appropriative practices that might be violating common practice. The reason for this terminological choice is that while this study contributes to the literature on student plagiarism and is about those textual borrowing practices that are often categorized as plagiarism, it is not about plagiarism as fraud. I therefore think transgressive intertextuality conveys this distinction. Apart from this, the term transgressive intertextuality does not invoke the stigma and condemnatory connotations of plagiarism that immediately pre-empts understanding student writing practices. A further reason for this choice is that this designation foregrounds the intertextual nature of all writing and is theoretically congruent with current views on the nature of writing (Allen, 2000; Barthes, 1977; Bazerman, 2004; Kristeva, 1980; Porter, 1986). On this basis, I will use plagiarism only to signify rather clear-cut cases of deception such as submission of a ghost-written paper or submission of some one else's work as one's own.

Overview of Chapters

In Chapter II, I provide a focused review of the research literature on student writing and its relation to plagiarism, highlighting the contributions of these studies and identifying some aspects that have remained unexplored.

In Chapter III, I describe the theoretical frames that inform the study. These theories include the social theory of literacy associated with the New Literacy Studies, key concepts from Bourdieu's theory of practice, sociocultural theory of learning with a focus on the Bakhtinian contribution, and the analytical framework of writer and identity proposed by Ivanič (1998).

In Chapter IV, the research methodology, the research contexts, the participants, and steps taken to address the issue of research adequacy are addressed. I also describe the analytical heuristics that have informed data analysis as well as a description of the analytical process. I will also recount the challenges and limitations that the sensitive nature of the research topic had for the present inquiry.

In Chapters V and VI, I discuss how students developed their papers based on the sources they read, introducing the notions of localized patchwriting and global patchwriting and providing an account of the reasons that give rise to each.

In Chapter VII, I identify two discourses at work that simultaneously call upon the students to occupy two subject positions, considering which subject positions the students take up in light of university plagiarism policies present in the context of writing.

In Chapter VIII, professors' mediation of university policies on plagiarism is addressed. This is accompanied by a discussion of the effects of these policies and documents on professors and students.

And lastly in Chapter IX I offer some reflections on the implications of the study for theory and practice.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

In this chapter I provide a review of prior research that the present study builds upon. Studies of relevance to student plagiarism can be broadly grouped in two categories. One group has investigated student textual borrowing either in quasi-experimental contexts or has relied on questionnaires as the primary mode of data collection. The other group, in contrast, has taken a naturalistic approach examining the phenomenon as students were reading and writing in their academic courses without any intervention. Below I provide a review of the studies in the first group and will then proceed to those in the second group. After each group of studies is reviewed, a commentary will be provided to highlight the contributions of each of these bodies of research to our understanding of student plagiarism, and to identify what remains to be investigated. It is important to note that in line with the underlying cumulative conception of knowledge production in quantitative studies, the review of studies within this paradigm follows a chronological order. With respect to qualitative studies, while I try to follow a chronological order, in some instances I do not stick to this order so that I can discuss studies based on their thematic similarity.

Research Studies with a Quantitative Orientation

One of the early studies that brought to light some of the complexities around the notion of plagiarism was that of Chaney and Duncan (1985). They investigated the views and policies of 75 journalism schools and 365 news media organization in the USA in order to arrive at a uniform definition of plagiarism and associated policies for the two

closely related social institutions, They analyzed plagiarism policy documents as well as the results of a detailed questionnaire given to heads of the journalism schools and the editors of the news organizations. The study revealed strong agreement on clear-cut cases of fraud, but significant discrepancies about what actually constituted plagiarism between educators and editors. For example, while 66% of the educators thought that borrowing ideas was a form of plagiarism, only 17% of editors took the same position. Additionally, 61% of the surveyed newspaper editors thought the broadcast of a wire story without attributing it to the service was plagiarism, while 93% of the broadcast editors disagreed. The study revealed the difficulty in coming to a consensus about how plagiarism should be defined. In spite of the observed disagreements over what might be considered plagiarism, both groups agreed on the seriousness of the act once a case of plagiarism was established, and both groups of respondents called for disciplinary action against the plagiarist.

Another study carried out in North American academia (Kroll, 1988) examined what college freshman thought about plagiarism and why it was wrong. A questionnaire was administered to investigate the reasoning and attitudes of 150 English-speaking college freshmen (75 men and 75 women) participating in a first-year composition course at a large American University. The coding for the responses was informed by Kohlberg's moral development theory. Students were asked to (1) state their reasons why plagiarism was unacceptable, (2) rate five standard explanations derived from different ethical explanations such as Self-Respect, Fairness, Consequences for the Academic Community, Obedience to Rules, and Teacher-Student Relationship, and (3) rate their

reactions to plagiarism. This took place before the students had any formal introduction to the notion of plagiarism.

Analysis of the subjects' responses to the question asking them to state their reasons why plagiarism was unacceptable resulted in six categories. Those with the highest frequency were "Individual Responsibility, Fairness, and Ownership" (p. 211). With respect to the five possible explanations of why plagiarism was wrong, the mean rating for the Fairness explanation was significantly higher than mean ratings for the other four explanations. These findings inform us that the majority of the students queried took "plagiarism seriously: They tend[ed] to be concerned when it occur[ed], to condemn it as nearly always wrong , and to endorse punishment for offenders" (p. 219).

In another study that in part highlighted the extent to which student writers at large are dependent on their sources, Campbell (1990) investigated source use by English-speaking L1 and L2 freshmen students. Using a controlled design study, she randomly sampled 30 students (20 L1 freshmen, 10 ESL students) dispersed over five composition classes at an American university. The instructors gave the students the first chapter of an undergraduate anthropology textbook to read for homework. The students were advised that this was going to be background reading for an upcoming composition assignment and that it was not necessary to learn everything presented in the chapter. At the same time, the terminology used in the chapter was discussed in a class session. The students were then given a composition topic for which they had to rely on terminology used in the chapter. The researcher then sampled and statistically analyzed instances of source use in the compositions based on six types of sources use: *Quotation, Exact Copy, Near Copy, Paraphrase, Summary,* or *Original Explanation* and the function of the

source (a foregrounding or back-grounding role) and its location (First Paragraph, Body Paragraph, Last Paragraph).

The study revealed aspects of writing from sources that are important in relation to students' writing. The use of *Near Copies* were not only significantly present in the writings that the students produced but they were also common to compositions written by both types of students (L1 and L2), though with different frequencies.

While the studies above were done in the context of North America, Deckert (1993) conducted a study in Hong Kong to discover the degree to which second language students of a different background were familiar with the tradition of academic writing in the West. The student sample consisted of 211 (170 first-year and 41 third-year) Chinese undergraduate students from various fields of science. A questionnaire was administered to the students to determine their competence in recognizing plagiaristic writing, their perceptions of inappropriateness of plagiarism, and their views on those who plagiarize. The questionnaire was administered before they had received any instruction about plagiarism. The students' responses were coded using a modified version of Kroll's (1988) moral orientations-based categories.

One of the interesting findings in connection with a question that asked students about "the extent to which they felt they had actually copied words of other writers without indicating the use of a source" (p.134), revealed that 88.8% of students admitted to having engaged in the practice from "a little bit" (n = 122) to "a lot" (n = 29). By comparing Chinese students' responses with those obtained by Kroll (1988) for American students, Deckert showed that Chinese students seemed to be concerned only with "doing independent work and then only with a pronounced egocentric emphasis. That is, they

viewed plagiarism to be wrong because it hampers their own learning and disturbs their own sense of personal integrity," (p. 142) as opposed to Kroll's American students' concern for author's rights and ownership.

In another quasi-experimental study that was conducted to uncover the nature of student plagiarism to help prevent it, Roig (1999) investigated the paraphrasing of native English-speaking undergraduate college students at an American university. In Part I of the study, 196 students were given a relatively complex two-sentence paragraph, as determined by a Flesch-Kincaid readability analysis. The students were then asked to paraphrase it in an imagined scenario in which they would be incorporating the paragraph in a term paper. The results of this section of the study showed that 46% of the paraphrased paragraphs which the subjects wrote contained strings of words in excess of five words from the source text which could be considered plagiarism. Roig attributed subjects' over-reliance on the source text to their "lack of paraphrasing practice" (p. 976). Interestingly, the remaining 56% of the paraphrased paragraphs that did not contain instances of plagiarism exhibited distortions of the original two-sentence paragraph. Roig attributed this distortion as well as the minimal modifications in the paraphrased sentences, which could qualify as plagiarism, to the high complexity of the original paragraph (Roig, 1999, p. 976).

In Part II, the same procedure was repeated with 196 new undergraduate students, but this time a different but easier two-sentence source text was used. The results of this part showed that a lower percentage (only 15%) of the paraphrased paragraphs contained instances of plagiarism. The general conclusion that Roig drew from Parts I and II of the study was that "students will use writing strategies that result in potential plagiarism

when they face the task of paraphrasing advanced technical text for which they may lack the proper cognitive resources with which to process it" (p. 979).

In a subsequent three-part quasi-experimental study that examined professors rather than students, Roig (2001) investigated professors' paraphrasing to explore whether or not professors from different disciplines have different criteria for paraphrasing and plagiarism. In Part I of the study, involving 158 professors from a range of disciplines at five institutions in the US, the subjects were asked to read a two-sentence paragraph along with six rewritten versions and decide whether the rewritten versions had been plagiarized, not plagiarized, or that they cannot make a determination of plagiarism.

In Part II of the study, involving 104 professors, the subjects were asked to paraphrase the same two-sentence paragraph which had been previously administered to students in Roig (1999). The findings showed that "a significant number of college professors may be using a style of paraphrasing that could be interpreted by others as possible plagiarism" (p. 315).

In Part III of the study, Roig asked professor from the same discipline (n = 104) to paraphrase two texts with different difficulty levels: One text was the same from Study II (more difficult) and a new, less difficult two-sentence paragraph. Analysis of the resulting paraphrases showed that the majority of subjects appropriated more than five words (i.e., plagiarism) from the more difficult source text when paraphrasing it whereas in the case of paraphrases of the less difficult source text, all the subjects had appropriated less than five (i.e., no plagiarism).

In a more recent study that aimed to explore if explicit instruction and monitoring of student source use would have any impact on their copying, Moon (2002) investigated

sophomore Korean university students' source use through an in-class summary writing task in English. In this controlled study, the researcher asked 29 undergraduate students who were taking English classes to write summaries of an English text in two stages: Once before they received any instruction about plagiarism and once after they received a three-hour instruction on what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, using the very summaries produced by students in the first stage as instructional materials for teaching plagiarism. Subsequent analysis of the occurrence of exact copying in the subjects' first and second summaries revealed that the instruction had a considerable impact on reducing copying in students' summary writing.

While the results of this study showed that instruction on plagiarism influenced subjects' copying, a closer examination of the nature of the study tends to raise questions about the finding. According to the study, the English source text that the students had to summarize "was about Japanese textbooks, a topic that the students were all familiar with and had sentiments and opinions about" (p. 1357). The fact that the topic was familiar to the subjects makes one wonder whether the subjects copied less due to the instruction they received about how to avoid plagiarism or whether it was a function of their familiarity with the topic that they had to summarize, as Roig's (1999, 2001) study demonstrated. In a converse manner, Moon's findings seem to corroborate Roig's study by highlighting the important role that familiarity with a text plays in whether or not student writers might plagiarize.

In a questionnaire-based study of students' perceptions of plagiarism by Overbey and Guiling (1999), the researchers elicited 150 undergraduate English-speaking students' perceptions about plagiarism, their judgments of correct source citation, and

their evaluations of written assignments containing plagiarized material. In contrast to Kroll's (1988) study in which she did not untangle different types of practices subsumed under plagiarism, in this study the questionnaire asked about students' views about blatant examples of plagiarism as well as other subtle textual appropriative practices that are generally categorized as plagiarism. It also asked the students to rate the following based on a 5-point Likert scale: (1) unacceptable textual appropriation that has come to be called "apparent plagiarism" (Currie, 1998; Pecorari, 2003), (2) absence of citation in a source-based article, (3) the acceptability of nine possible ways of incorporating library source materials into their papers such as the *APA* or *MLA*, and (4) six examples of student referencing practices in an imagined paper based on five journal articles.

The fact that the researchers in this study distinguished between different textual practices that are generally lumped together as plagiarism led to some interesting findings. Students' responses varied depending upon what textual appropriative practices plagiarism seemed to designate. While the majority of students (69.9 %) were against blatant cases of plagiarism and called for disciplinary action for the perpetrator, only 3.2% of respondents believed that apparent plagiarism should be subject to disciplinary action. What could be concluded from this finding is that students generally do not expect to be punished for a textual practice that lacks an intention to deceive. This serves to point out writer's intent as an important dimension in any discussion of plagiarism, thus deepening our understanding of the notion of student plagiarism.

A further finding of this study is that student responses revealed that the majority of them (1) did not know about the rhetorical importance of citation in writing, and (2) believed that it was acceptable to put information from sources into one's own words and

provide a reference only at the end of the paper or "put information into one's own words without providing a reference anywhere" (p. 12). This is an important finding in that it further reveals some of the complexities of plagiarism and textual appropriation even among North American students whom one expects to be familiar with plagiarism.

In a another recent controlled design study that involved 39 L1 freshman students and 48 third-year students learning English as a second language in China, Shi (2004) examined the effects of the subjects' first language and the writing task type on students' textual borrowing. Shi used two pre-selected source texts, and then asked half of the randomly selected students in each group to complete a summary task while the other half completed an opinion task. She then compared students' summaries with sources to identify exact or near verbatim retention of strings of words from sources with or without acknowledgement. Through a two-way *ANOVA* analysis, she found out that both the task type and subjects' first language had a statistically significant effect on the words borrowed. Another finding of this study was that not only did the third-year ESL Chinese students appropriate more from the sources, they also tended not to use references for words that were either copied, or slightly modified, or syntactically reformulated from the source texts in contrast to their North American freshmen counterparts.

In another controlled study, Keck (2006) investigated paraphrasing skills of 153 freshmen students (79 L1, 74 ESL) through a timed summary task based on two randomly distributed version of an almost identical 1000-word English source text (with an almost identical readability score of 11). Similar to those of earlier researchers (Campbell, 1990; Shi, 2004), he coded the occurring paraphrases in the summaries as *Near Copy, Minimal Revision, Moderate Revision,* and *Substantial Revision.* The findings

revealed that L2 writers used significantly more Near Copies than L1 writers.

Conversely, the summaries of L1 writers contained significantly more Moderate and

Substantial Revisions than those of the L2 writers. Keck's study highlighted the

differential performance of L1 and ESL writers in textual appropriation.

Research Studies with a Quantitative Orientation: A Commentary

The studies reviewed above have shed light on some important aspects of the

phenomenon of student plagiarism. Chaney and Duncan's study (1985), for instance,

brought to the fore some of the complexities surrounding the notion of plagiarism by

highlighting absence of consensus over what exactly constitutes plagiarism, even

amongst professionals in the same field. Their work exposed what Howard (2007) has

characterized as the unwieldy nature of the notion of plagiarism. Another study indicated

the extent to which plagiarism is treated as a moral category not only by the academic

institutions *but also* by the students who have bought into the ideology of authorship

underlying the notion of plagiarism (Kroll, 1988). Others have highlighted how the

familiarity, or distance, of a task and linguistic content plays a role in the way students

appropriate the language of others in their writing (Campbell, 1990, Roig, 1999, Keck,

2006). Some revealed the cultural specificity of the notion (Deckert, 1994, Shi, 2004),

while one study highlighted that even experienced writers like university professors

might patchwrite when encountering unfamiliar content (Roig, 2001).

As valuable as these findings are, they could be critiqued on several grounds. The

quasi-experimental approach of the studies has exposed them to what I would term the

problem of authenticity of the rhetorical context. The controlled design of many of these

studies that ask participants to produce their texts has rendered the rhetorical context of

student textual borrowing unnatural and reductive, which is far removed from the natural contexts in which students typically write their term papers. For example, often the acts of summary writing, paraphrasing, or textual borrowing are part of a bigger task representation (Flower, 1994). Writers rarely paraphrase for the sake of paraphrasing or write summaries as an end in itself. Moreover, the genre of student writing in the authentic contexts of their disciplines is quite different in that students (1) tend to write in a more sustained fashion and generate lengthier texts, (2) they compose their text over an extended period of time with a lot of revising in the process, and (3) their writings are subject to grading and assessment. Often student papers as "occasioned academic products" (Johns & Swales, 2002, p. 16) are assessment genres on which students are graded. It could therefore be assumed that that authentic student writing is associated with a degree of stress, which may be absent in the controlled context of many of these studies.

An additional critique can be made about their general cognitive orientation of the studies that prompted the studies to focus on subjects' mental processes while they engaged in summary writing, or on their personal attitudes about plagiarism. This focus on the subjects' mind detached from the contingencies of the social world resulted in overlooking the effects of such issues as power relations that holds between students and professors on student writing or even the personal histories of each subject that has a bearing on the act of writing (Ivanič, 1998).

Research Studies with a Qualitative Orientation

One of the early naturalistic studies that involved an exploration of plagiarism was a case study by Hull and Rose (1989). The focus of the study was the topic of

student remediation, and it was done with the primary aim of gaining insights into whether or not there were any cognitive or social reasons for why some students were underprepared. Conducted within the paradigm of the process approach to the study of writing dominant in the 1980s, Hull and Rose focused on a piece of writing by a 19- year old English-speaking college student, Tanya, who was preparing for nursing college in a basic reading and writing course. After a period of four months of instruction and interaction with the participant, the researchers asked Tanya, the remedial student, to read a nursing case study and then summarize it. The researchers relied on video-supported simulated recall procedure. That is, they recorded Tanya's composing and later replayed it to prompt her to recall what she had been thinking while composing. They then examined Tanya's summary which revealed not only what had mistakenly been labelled cognitive or linguistic "deficiencies" but also textual appropriations that could be deemed plagiaristic. However, a subsequent detailed interview with Tanya about the perceived problematic features of her summary revealed underlying motivations and intentions. When the researchers closely read Tanya's summary and compared it with the source text, they realized that she had lifted sentences from the original and situated them in her summary and that she had a patchwork approach to writing a summary. When the researchers began to talk to her about this apparent plagiarism, they learned that she was "operating with two intentions here: to display knowledge … and to show she's 'not that kind of student that would copy'" (p. 148-149). In listening to Tanya, the researchers found that the procedural rule she had followed in creating the summary in part had its origin in the injunction against plagiarism from her past instruction. Schooling for this student had been mainly punitive in the past, and her patchwork and explanation of it

showed that she wanted to "be a successful student this time around" (p. 148) and the apparent plagiarism in part derived from her desire to display knowledge in order to "signal her good academic citizenship" (p. 148).

Hull and Rose's (1989) detailed study took into account the perspective of the student writer in the analysis and was able to understand that the student's problematic writing (and her apparent plagiarism) was sensible and had a logic that derived from her desire to learn and succeed rather than to deceive. The situated understanding of the student's text made it possible to uncover hidden aspects of plagiarism otherwise inaccessible through Tanya's problematic text.

In a case study that was part of a larger examination of disciplinary expectations and evaluations, Currie (1998) investigated plagiaristic textual appropriation of Diana, an undergraduate speaker of Cantonese, in one of her courses at a Canadian university. Currie described the importance of context in explaining why the student had plagiarized. Through interviews with Diana and her course TA as well as the analysis of the texts that Diana had produced, Currie was able to reveal a complex set of issues behind the participant's plagiarism that involved her difficulties with the cognitive demands of her course, her general learning processes, and her insecurity with her second language. Currie's findings provided a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon of student transgressive intertextuality by highlighting some of the contextual aspects of its occurrence. Similar to Hull and Rose's (1989) study, her case study was motivated by a desire to understand plagiarism, but unlike their study, Currie examined Diana's transgressive intertextuality in a much more authentic rhetorical context as Diana wrote for her course.

Another study of relevance to student plagiarism is one conducted in the UK by Lea and Street (1998). Using an academic literacies approach, the researchers relied on a number of data sources such as interviews with undergraduate students and their instructors, observation of group sessions, and samples of students' papers to understand aspects of student socialization into the particular ways of knowing in the students' fields. As far as plagiarism was concerned, the study found that the occurrence of transgressive intertextuality could be attributed to differences between the students and faculty understandings of plagiarism. They found that students were not fully aware what actually constituted plagiarism, and more importantly, that the students "were confused to understand the implicit relationship between acknowledging the source of the text and acknowledging the authority of the text" (p. 167). They also found out while "the issue of referencing sources [seemed] clear; for students the boundary between their sources and their own account [was] less certain ... as they feel ... that all of their knowledge is implicated in others' text" (pp. 167-168). This finding is especially important in that it links student plagiarism to the construction of authority and points to the possibility that not only might there be differences between student and professors' intersubjectivity about plagiarism but also differences between their relations to text and knowledge.

A more recent ethnographic study that has primarily focused on student plagiarism is an inquiry conducted at a South African university by Angélil-Carter (2000). Her study had two phases. In phase one, she examined the assignments of one undergraduate student named Tshediso over a period of one year and interviewed the professors who marked his essays. In phase two of the study, she collected and analyzed papers written by first-year and third-year undergraduates in a social science discipline

that "showed signs of difficulty in the complex task of synthesizing the words and views of others into an essay" (p. 53) as well as those that did not exhibit this difficulty. She also interviewed the students and lecturers who marked these papers. Similar to Lea and Street's (1998) study, Angélil-Carter explained students' plagiarism in terms of their developing understandings of their roles as academic writers and their socialization into particular ways of knowing and construction of authority in their writing. The study provided a multilayered understanding of some of the reasons that gave rise to student plagiarism. Corroborating findings of some of the quantitative studies reviewed earlier, the researcher highlighted a number of possible reasons that include students' difficulty with the academic discourse, students' motivation to "try on" the academic discourse by appropriating the lexis or structure of the new discourse and the "hybridization of discourse" that involved the "mixing of old and new discourses" (p. 37). That is, the students unintentionally mixed different literacies within one single utterance. This hybridization highlighted the possible role that students' adherence to literacies other than academic could play in their production of transgressive texts as these literacies might entail relations to text and scholarship different from those valued or expected in (Western) academia.

Angélil-Carter's finding about the role of students' previous literacy practices in their plagiarism is similar to that reported by Cadman (1997). In her study, Cadman investigated the difficulties that a number of East Asian graduate students had with writing their masters' theses at an Australian university by exploring their own texts with them. One challenge that transpired during these collaborative explorations of students' texts was plagiarism. For instance, while the researcher and one of the participants were

reviewing her text, they came across an ambiguous statement by Plato; when the researcher suggested to the participant that they should actually read the extract in the Republic to clarify Plato's statement, the participant stated that the piece in question was actually from a feminist critique of Plato, unreferenced in her chapter (p. 6). Further interviews with the students, prompted Cadman to conclude that what appeared to be plagiarism could be attributed to the broader epistemological orientation of the participants' cultures and their sense of self as writers. That is, the students' prior cultural context had inculcated in them a sense of respect for authority, predisposing them to think that that their role as scholarly writers consisted of recounting the words of authority. While the Australian academic context required the students to have a voice of their own, the students in her study simply did not "*dare* to be *original*" (Cadman, 1997, p. 5, *italics* original). Cadman therefore attributed the observed plagiarism to the cultural identities of the students, concluding that the "confusion about the self" (p. 8) as writers was the underlying reason for students' plagiarism.

Another study that has pointed to identity in relation to student transgressive intertextuality is that of Ivanič (1998). Aimed to understand how writing academic assignments encouraged individuals to take on particular identities, and how they felt about this positioning, Ivanič studied the textual identities that eight mature students at an institution of higher education in the UK created through their writings. Drawing on a range of ethnographic data including student papers, semi-structured interviews, and observations, she documented the discoursal choices that the students made, the origins of these choices, and the dilemmas they faced as they wrote their essays. One of the dilemmas that the study revealed was that of plagiarism. For instance, in the text of one

of the students, called Valerie, Ivanič identified what is institutionally considered

plagiarism, that is, patching stretches of words borrowed verbatim without using

quotation marks. In an analysis that corroborates the findings of earlier research (Hull and

Rose, 1989), subsequent interviews showed that from the student's perspective, Valerie

had made those copied extracts her own by selecting parts of the source text which

resonated with her, and connecting them to her own life, and by making sense of them.

The study therefore revealed that attributing deception to Valerie's appropriation was

tantamount to depriving her the only way through which she could make these new ideas

her own. The finding of this study provides an alternative view of plagiarism that tend to

look at students apparent student plagiarism as an opportunity to try out unfamiliar ideas,

languages, and discourses rather than an intention to deceive.

In another research study that drew on document analysis, interviews, and

questionnaire, LoCastro and Masuko (2002) tried to confirm whether or not the reasons

that earlier research had uncovered about student plagiarism were applicable in Japan,

and also aimed to collect the attitudes and views of Japanese students regarding

plagiarism. They collected and analyzed data from (1) senior theses, in English and

Japanese at a Japanese university, (2) summary-reaction papers written by learners who

were enrolled in an academic English course in Japan, and (3) input from learners in the

form of responses to questionnaires and interviews. An analysis of their interviews and

questionnaires with the students further confirmed many of the findings provided in the

literature on plagiarism. Most of the students admitted that they had copied from their

source. The analysis of interviews and questionnaire responses showed that students'

plagiarism was due either to their low language proficiency to paraphrase or summarize

others' ideas or their unfamiliarity with what might constitute plagiarism, why it was

negative in the Western culture, or how to avoid it. The researchers traced the genesis of

the rampant plagiarism to the particular sociocultural context of Japan, especially to the

Japanese educational system in which the typical Japanese student does not receive any

instruction on how to write extended papers in their first language and that the instruction

they receive about writing in the context of EFL classes in high school does not prepare

them for future tertiary level academic work. The omnipresence of plagiarism

documented by this study points to the fact that there might be more to plagiarism than

meets the eye, and as such, this study points to a need for further research on the

phenomenon.

In her study titled "Dealing with plagiarism when giving feedback," Fiona Hyland

(2002) investigated the impact of plagiarism on teachers' feedback on students' writing.

The study looked at the feedback which two teachers provided on the writings produced

by six students in two preparatory English for academic purposes courses at a University

in New Zealand. Relying on data elicited through think aloud protocols and interviews

with teachers and the six ESL undergraduate students, Hyland found that due to the

sensitivity of the topic, the teachers had to provide indirect feedback on problematic

textual appropriative practices of the students, which was not effective in addressing the

issue. The study showed the dilemma that teachers have to deal with when giving

feedback on student plagiarism: whether to accuse students or to compromise by

approaching the issue in an indirect way. Equally important, the study also revealed the

impact of this on student learning and writing. When the teachers resorted to indirectly

addressing student plagiarism by discussing referencing, the students did not readily

connect referencing and inappropriate borrowing and did not grasp the reasons for referencing other peoples' work, even after they received instruction about it. The study highlights the stigma attached to plagiarism, revealing some of the negative impacts of plagiarism on the educational process.

In an inquiry into the discursive construction of success and failure, Starfield (2002) investigated students' plagiarism in terms of their social class positioning and broader societal oppression. She examined two papers, one by Sipho, a black female student, and the other by Philip, a white male student, which they wrote for an undergraduate sociology course at a South African university. Relying on systemic functional linguistic coupled with interviews with the students and the course professor, Starfield examined the papers that the two students wrote in response to one of a three topics that the course professor in a first year sociology course had assigned. Starfield's close linguistic analysis of the papers revealed the textual reproduction of social hierarchy. Philip came from a historically privileged white middle class background with literacy practices similar to that of the college, and shared many of the conventions valued in academic writing. This proximity enabled him to create a text that showed he had successfully negotiated with authorities who populated the sources he read for the paper, and had constructed a powerful, authoritative textual and discoursal identity for himself. For instance, writing in response to the essay cue that comprised a lead-in ("The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism") followed by an unattributed quote from Weber's work, Philip was able to "show where the quote in the essay topic came from in Weber's text and show how it was not referring to the "doctrine itself but to an interpretation of it" (p. 127). Philip could demonstrate a sophisticated knowledge of

academic textual and intertextual worlds and their complex citation practices which helped him write a more powerful paper. In contrast, Sipho's prior class-based literacy practice had not equipped her with the rules and conventions of successful writing within the powerful genre of academic writing, and this in part led her to either over-reference authorities or reproduce a large chuck of Giddens in his essay which prompted the professor to query her "Are these your own words? This is not clear" (p. 127).

In a study that involved non-native or ESL graduate students, Pecorari (2003) collected writing samples from the theses and dissertations written by 17 Masters and PhD students. Her close comparison of samples of the texts with the sources revealed that all 17 writers gave misleading impressions of their source use. Follow-up interviews with the students confirmed many of the earlier findings in the literature that students' inappropriate source use could not be explained by their intention to deceive and that there were a range of reasons for it. For instance, in the thesis that one of the students named Ingrid had produced, she detected unacceptable source use. Follow-up interviews with her and her professor showed that Ingrid was operating with misguided assumptions. Misinterpreting method section as being cliché, she had mistakenly assumed that there were no expectations of originality in this section of her thesis, and accordingly, she had copied the methods from her sources. Even though Pecorari states that her study primarily provides empirical verification for the anecdotal evidence in the literature on reasons for students' plagiarism, her study uniquely brings in the notion of genre in the analysis of students' textual practices, allowing for a more refined discussion of student transgressive source use in light of the generic features of the text in question.

Another study of student plagiarism is that of Chandrasoma, Thompson, and Pennycook (2004). Reporting the results of two separate studies at two universities in Australia, the researchers collected writing samples by 22 Asian undergraduate students from different disciplines. They also interviewed the students along with 10 faculty members. The researchers analyzed students' intertextuality in light of their descriptions and perspectives. This analysis resulted in two key findings in relation to student intertextuality that transgresses academic conventions. The first finding was the theme of student resistance in relation to apparent plagiarism that the dominant juridical view fails to take into account. For instance, the researchers found that in the paper of one student called Natalie there were certain phrases that she had copied verbatim from a source without attribution (p. 179). When they listened to Natalie's own account, she expressed her dislike for academic values and practice and was fully aware of the erratic nature of her referencing as well as the fact that she had copied. A second key finding was the important role of context in deciding what forms of intertextuality are transgressive and what forms are not. The finding suggested that any decision with respect to plagiarism was dependent on such consideration as "the level of, and background of the students, the nature of the assignment, the attitude of the lecturer, and the nature of the discipline" (p. 189). The situated conception of what might constitute transgressive intertextuality was brought to light by the following example. Natalie's paper contained unattributed copying, but the professor who marked her paper judged the essay to be acceptable even though the source that she had copied from was a very well known text and the professors would likely have been aware of the textual similarities. In contrast, in the paper of another student, named Catherine, there were instances of unacknowledged borrowing

from a class source which were known to both the course professor and Catherine, which the professor considered transgressive. This showed that even invoking such apparently transparent notions as common knowledge was highly context dependent. In light of the complexity of intertextuality, the researchers proposed the notions of *transgressive* and *nontransgressive intertextuality* in favour of plagiarism to avoid the automatic accusation embedded in the term and to allow for a situated understanding of how forms of intertextuality may become transgressive.

It is worth noting that a recent theoretical work (Ritter, 2005) has advanced a similar argument in relation to plagiarism in its fraud sense. The studies reviewed above have been careful to make a distinction between plagiarism in student writing and plagiarism as cheating (as when buying a paper from an on online paper mill). However, Ritter (2005) has argued that the latter type of plagiarism could well be a mode of resistance. In her words, the students "patronize online paper mills not because of any desire to outwit the academic system of authorship, but because of their cultural and ideological disconnection from the system itself" (p. 602). Ritter's position effectively dissolves the traditional distinction maintained in the plagiarism literature between textual plagiarisms versus plagiarism as cheating.

It would be in order here to mention two studies that corroborate some of the findings in Chandrasoma, Thompson, and Pennycook's study (2004) just reviewed. The following two studies reveal the complexity of intertextuality and source use, and serve to highlight how intertextuality could be shorthand for a complex set of socio-cognitive processes as students are socialized into their academic communities and acquire the literacy practices of their prospective communities.

The first of these two studies is that of Berkenkotter, Huckin and Ackerman (1991). This case study was an investigation of the initiation of a first-year PhD student, named Nate, into a discourse community. Relying on ethnographic data involving participant observation, interview with the faculty, fieldnotes from one research methodology course which Nate was attending, Berkenkotter, Huckin and Ackerman (1991) closely kept record of Nate's developing ability to write the introduction section of term papers that Nate wrote in the first three semesters of his PhD program. Using Swales and Najjar's (1987) model of rhetorical moves that describes the manner in which professional writers construct intertextual connections with earlier research in the genre of research articles, Berkenkotter, Huckin and Ackerman examined Nate's referencing practices in the introduction section of his paper. The aim of this year-long longitudinal study was to gain insights into how Nate appropriated the schema and rhetorical knowledge associated with his writing community. Through a comparative analysis of Nate's writings produced over the three semesters, they were able to identify a qualitative difference in the way Nate relied on his sources. For example in the paper that he wrote in his first semester, his use of citation as a persuasive strategy (Gilbert, 1977) was found to be ineffective. "Instead of including citations to specific works," the researcher argued, "he mention[ed] [the four authors he had cited] only in passing ... By not placing his research within a larger disciplinary frame of reference, he [could not] offer his audience a warrant in the form of citations which designate an established field to which his present study will contribute" (p. 221). In contrast, in the paper that Nate wrote in the last semester, he wrote introductions that were very intertextually sophisticated compared to the one he wrote early on. They were "heavily indebted to concepts and terminology in

the literature (p. 229) that Nate cited. As a result, Nate's later texts gained strength

through the deployment of intertextual strategies that he had acquired in the meantime.

This study revealed the extent to which students' effective citation is a function of their

knowledge of the socially determined expectations of their discourse community.

The second study of intertextuality is that of Dong (1996) who examined how

English-speaking professors socialized their graduate students into their disciplines

through citation practices. This study lasted 6 months and involved 3 senior Chinese PhD

candidates from three different science disciplines along with their professors. Dong

collected all major drafts of the first chapter of the students' dissertation, conducted text-

based as well as semi-structured interviews, and observed professor-student conferences.

The findings of the study showed how the apparent superficiality of citation could hide

layers of complexity. An example from one of the research participants called Sam

highlighted the point: Sam's intertextuality in the introductory section of his dissertation

chapter (that was going to be published as a stand alone article) was simultaneously

driven by (1) relevance to his knowledge claims, (2) representation of multiple views on

the research on his topic, (3) importance of frequently cited studies. Over the succeeding

drafts of his developing article, he moved from 11 citations in the first draft of the

introduction section to 32 citations in the eighth draft. This increasing number of

intertextual links was motivated by Sam's developing awareness of the need to "point to

the controversial nature of the prior research findings" (p. 442). Sam was able to create a

research space for his position by actively using negational and affirmative citations of

research findings. Dong's study showed the important role of intertextuality in the

success and failure of the three students in terms of creating a research space for their

own work "by identifying connections among the citations through comparisons and contrasts" (p. 441). Similar to Berkenkotter, Huckin and Ackerman's (1991) study, Dong's unveiled the many socio-cognitive processes that were at work behind the seemingly mechanical source use and documentation in academic writing.

A most recent study that explored the intersection of citation and transgressive intertextuality is that of Pecorari's (2006). She investigated ESL graduate students citation behaviour in terms of their adherence to the dominant disciplinary expectations of citation. Pecorari collected samples from the theses and dissertations the nine students had written in the disciplines of biology, civil engineering, education, and linguistics. Supplementing her textual analyses with interviews with the students and their supervisors, she found out that the student writers had used sources in ways that diverged from the disciplinary expectations such that at times their source use could be misconstrued as plagiaristic. The findings of this study showed that intertextuality varies across disciplines and that there are variations in what is socially accepted as appropriate intertextuality, which pointed to a situated conception of what might constitute plagiarism. The findings also demonstrated the occluded nature of citation (with citation being defined as reference plus incorporation of textual materials from the cited source) in academic writing; that is, citation is a feature of writing that is not ordinarily visible to the reader, and reader has no way of knowing whether she is reading material original to the citing source or whether the citing source is merely a secondary source for the material referenced. This finding in turn pointed the extent to which any decision of textual transgression could be a hermeneutic activity , calling for a consideration of the broader social context to understand the immediate textual practices (Simms, 2003).

The studies so far reviewed have focused on plagiarism as it relates to students. Two recent studies (Flint, Clegg, & MacDonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005) have examined plagiarism in relation to professors. Sutherland (2005) investigated the views of eleven English for Academic Purposes (EAP) professors teaching an introductory writing subject in two different faculties at an Australian university. Through questionnaires and interviews with the professors aimed at gaining their perceptions and definitions of plagiarism, the researcher found that while the majority of professors took into account the presence or lack of intent in their reaction to plagiarism in student writing, a minority maintained that "all acts of plagiarism are, by definition, intentional, as students are well aware of the policy and know that copying is punishable under the regulation" (p. 88). She found that most teachers were comfortable using Internet software and free website search engines to check through Internet search and retrieval techniques to detect plagiarism. However, many the professors were discouraged by such factors such as a busy workload, concern over their academic image, or burdensome administration to pursue cases of plagiarism. Sutherland's findings show that, although many professors may not be able to pursue plagiarism, in the minds of many of them the orthodox notion of plagiarism as cheating is entrenched, and they can therefore invoke it in relation to plagiarism in student writing.

A second study involving faculty members was one conducted by Flint, Clegg, and MacDonald (2006). They interviewed 26 professors from different academic disciplines at a British university. Based on professors' responses, they classified the respondents' views of the relationship between plagiarism and cheating into four groups. For some cheating and plagiarism were the same, for some they were separate issues, for

some there was some overlap between the two, and for others plagiarism was a subcategory of cheating. An important finding was that the "most common view from all disciplines was that plagiarism and cheating share common characteristic but also have essential differences" (p. 150). A conclusion that could be drawn from the findings of this study is that while for many professors there is a difference between cheating and plagiarism, there are some who treat them as the same. Because students tend to pass through different courses, and perhaps different programs, throughout their program of studies, they might find themselves interacting with professors who hold a criminalized view of plagiarism and their writings might be subject to such a judgment.

Research Studies with a Qualitative Orientation: A Commentary

The qualitative studies reviewed above have addressed some of the limitations of the quasi-experimental studies reviewed earlier by studying the phenomenon of student plagiarism in the natural context of student writing, and have complemented those findings by considering some of the contingencies of the natural contexts in which students read and write. Overall, findings of these studies have shed light on aspects of the complex topic of plagiarism. They have shown that invoking deception as an explanation for students' textual transgression would not only be naïve but also pedagogically unproductive. The studies have uncovered a range of reasons and motivation for students' textual transgression: it could well arise from students' desire to learn (Hull & Rose, 1989; Ivanič, 1998), or be motivated by their resistance to academic conventions (Chandrasoma, Thompson, & Pennycook, 2004). They also have made us aware of the importance of context and genre in deciding what constitutes intertextual transgression (Chandrasoma, Thompson, & Pennycook, 2004; Pecorari, 2006), and have

shown how the phenomenon of occlusion of intertextuality in texts that students read could give rise to it (Pecorari, 2006).

While these studies have provided us with a much more sophisticated conceptualization of students' textual transgressions, there are still knowledge gaps in connection with the phenomenon. The majority of these studies have focused on freshmen undergraduate students, L1 or L2, rather than graduate students. In the few cases where the studies involved graduate students, they focused either on senior students such as PhD who were about to join the professional ranks, or on their final texts such as theses or dissertations which are only traces of the situated histories of their productions. There is a need to focus on beginning graduate students such as MA or first-year PhD students who are immersed in their studies, engaged in reading and writing, and interacting with their peers, professors, and sources.

There are certain considerations that render investigating the issue of textual transgression an especially interesting topic in relation to such graduate students. This cohort is qualitatively different from their undergraduate counterparts. They tend to participate in different literacy practices and have shown to have different attitudes to text and authorship (Kaufer & Geisler, 1989). For many of them graduate school is a time when they begin their journey toward a professional identity (Belcher, 1994; Casanave, 2002; Prior, 1998) and they are often expected to strictly adhere to the rules and conventions of professional academic writing. More importantly, though, as Casanave (2002) has observed, due to the breadth and seriousness of graduate school, students tend to be exposed to more scholarly voices and intellectual traditions that tend to make it harder for them to develop a voice out of them. This puts graduate students' textual

appropriation in a different light which by itself merits further exploration. An additional

reason for the importance of exploring the issue with graduate students is that they tend

to be more mature, and as a result they might have already experienced a wider range of

genres, acquired certain textual practices, and have formed allegiances to certain social

and cultural discourses that might create unique tensions as they read and write in

graduate school (Clark & Ivanič, 1997).

An important issue in connection with plagiarism that appears to have remained

unexplored is the consequences of institutional plagiarism policies on student writing and

development. The studies reviewed above have focused on what plagiarism is or what

might be the reasons for its occurrence rather than on what it does socially. It will be

informative to know about the likely impact of institutional plagiarism policies on student

writing, or about their implications in the reproduction of inequalities. Because language

is not only a means of conveying propositional meanings but also a form of capital

(Bourdieu, 1986, 1991), it is important to examine student textual transgression in terms

of symbolically mediated social control. Along this line, the role of plagiarism policies in

the construction of academic hierarchies, reproduction of inequalities and social control

appears to have remained uncharted territory to date.

Furthermore, in light of earlier studies of faculty perceptions that have pointed to

variances in professors' views about plagiarism (Chaney & Duncan, 1985; Roig, 2001;

Roy, 1999), it is important to investigate what might be the impacts of these variances on

the way students read and write. What makes such an investigation a worthwhile

endeavour is the insights about the interested nature of all forms of knowledge (Berlin,

1988; Bourdieu, 1991; Hall, 1997; Pennycook, 1989) and the (pedagogical) actions that

could arise from those knowledges. In light of the contemporary critique of plagiarism as an ideological construct (Barthes, 1977; Foucault, 1984; Scollen, 1995), the role of plagiarism in the containment of human subjects, constructions of subjectivities, and exercise of power within the situated, local interaction of student-professors has received little, if any, empirical scrutiny.

As insightful as the studies reviewed above (Cadman, 1997; Starfield, 2002) have been about the link between students' transgressive textual appropriative practices and their sociocultural identities, they are too few in number and there is a need for further research. In light of current thinking that conceives of all literate acts as simultaneous acts of identity (Ivanič, 1998; Lam, 2000; Maguire & Graves, 2001; Masny, 2005; Reder & Erica, 2005), it is important to further study the intersection of student intertextual appropriation and construction of identities.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Positioning

In this chapter I delineate the theoretical perspectives that inform the study. These perspectives include the social theory of literacy associated with the New Literacy Studies, key ideas from Bourdieu's general theory of practice, sociocultural theory of learning with an emphasis on the Bakhtinian contribution to this theory, Howard's analytical heuristic of patchwriting, and Ivanič's analytical framework of writer identity. While there are many overlaps among these perspectives, each foregrounds a different aspect of academic writing. A strong theme that connects all these perspectives together is their focus on the situatedness of human practice. The point of departure in all is the social. What makes the perspectives commensurate is that they all locate the mind in the social world and emphasize the primacy of social interaction in the constitution of subjectivity, thus blurring the boundary between the social and the individual.

Academic Writing as Social Literacies

The first theoretical lens informing the study is a social theory of literacy associated with the New Literacy Studies (Barton, 1994; Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000; Gee, 1996; Street, 1993a, 1995). This theory has its roots in the social turn in social sciences that foregrounds the significance of the particular cultural and political contexts in the constitution of the individual. The social account of literacy stands in contrast to text analytical or formalistic conceptions of writing as well as the cognitively oriented theories that primarily conceive of literacy as an individual attribute and a

mental phenomenon, theories that have underpinned much research in second language writing under the rubric of product and process approaches to writing for the past two decades (Canagarajah, 2002; Raimes, 1991). While subsuming earlier views that see literacy learning either as acquisition of language skills or as socialization into a community of practice, a social perspective moves beyond by examining literacy at deeper epistemological levels associated with social ways of being in the world (Street, 1993a).

A social account of literacy is based on a number of fundamental premises. A central insight is that literacy is mainly a form of social practice (Barton, 2000). Literacy is primarily what people do with reading and writing; it is the cultural ways of using reading and writing to achieve socially recognized purposes. As such, literacy is seen as a set of social practices in which reading and writing play an integral part. Literacy seen as social practice immediately foregrounds the situated nature of reading and writing in a given time, place, and discourse. People's use of literacy is governed by culturally specific set of conventions rather than a set of universal features of reading and writing transferable across contexts. Literacy, as Scribner and Cole's (1981) work demonstrated long ago, involves not only the ability to read and write a particular script but also the capability to deploy this knowledge in specific contexts of use in socially appropriate ways. The shift away from literacy as an individual attribute in favour of socially acquired ways of using reading and writing is one of the fundamental tenets of a social account of literacy.

Literacy as social practice brings to light another dimension of literacy that is relevant to the present study: literacy inherently has a plural character. It allows us to talk

about literac*es* rather than literacy in the singular. As soon as we realize that there are

multiple ways of reading and writing associated with different social groups that exist *a

priori* to the individual and into which ways individuals are socialized or apprenticed

(Heath, 1982; Scribner & Cole, 1981), it becomes apparent that literacies are always

institutionally located (Gee, 1992, 1996; Luke, 1997). When literacies are positioned

within social institutions, it will be possible to consequently factor in the role of

institution in supporting, or marginalizing, particular literacies. The plurality of literacy

offers a way to talk about forms of reading and writing in terms of their domination and

marginalization.

A conception of literacy as social practice calls to mind another important

consideration vis-à-vis reading and writing. Literacy, construed as social practice, is

always integrated into other social practices that include a cluster of interrelated ways of

talking, valuing, interacting, thinking and interacting that together constitute particular

forms of being in the world (Gee, 1990). Seen as such, literacies are linked to historically

specific social ways of being in the world or social identities. A social theory of literacy

therefore, helps us understand the deeply intertwined nature of reading and writing with

individuals' sense of identity. The deep connection of literacy with peoples' sense of

identity and how they make sense of the world is particularly revealed when literacies

come in contact (Bizzell, 1986; Martin-Jones & Heller, 1996; Shen, 1989; Street, 1995).

The understanding that there is a plurality of literacies and that they are

institutionally positioned, further enables us to talk about ways in which modern forms of

power are subtly exercised. As current philosophic thinking has uncovered, power also

has microscopic dimensions that is always already there in social interactions, and that

power should not be narrowly conceived of as being amassed in the hands of a one social group rather than the other (Collins & Blot, 2003). Realizing that literacy is plural and institutional is tantamount to saying that it is contested, thus automatically putting literacy on the political agenda (Street, 1995). It allows us to account for the role that literacy plays in social hegemony and distribution of power by asking such questions as Why this literacy? Whose literacy is supported at the exclusion of whose literacy? How is this literacy validated or otherwise? and Whose identity and way of life is being excluded? (Baynham, 1995; Masny, 2005; Masny & Ghahremani-Ghajar, 1999). It helps us to factor in issues of dominance and marginalization as well as the symbolic violence exercised by institutions, and also consider the role that literacy plays in the (re)-production of social inequalities. A social theory of literacy therefore provides this study with a richer conceptualization of literacy that links texts, power, and identities. This is an important insight given the centrality of literacy in such powerful institutions as schools that gate-keep individuals' access to social goods and services (Bernstein, 1971; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Gee, 1996).

At the analytical level, the social theory of literacy provides three levels of analysis in the study of literacies that will be of direct relevance to the current study. These units of analysis include the levels of *literacy practices*, *literacy events*, and *text*. To better understand what it means to be literate in a sociocultural context, all the three levels needs to be taken into account at the same time. Making sense of literacy starts with an understanding of literacy practices which include the culturally identifiable patterns of literate behaviour of a given social group (Tusting, Ivanič, & Wilson, 2000). More importantly, though, the notion of literacy practices includes not only what people

actually do with literacy but also the unobservable subjectivities such as the values and attitudes (Street, 1993a) that people have toward reading and writing. It involves people's conceptualization of literacy as to what it comprises and what it does not. As far as the current research is concerned, the notion of literacy practices will be an important component as it will allow for taking into account participants' understandings of their reading and writing. Moreover, the construct of literacy practices, coupled with the awareness that literacies are ideologically inscribed, foregrounds the likelihood of tensions between research participants' conceptions of what it means to read and write in their contexts of writing.

The second level of analysis comprises literacy events. Literacy events are social situations in which written language plays an integral role in the participants' interactions and the unfolding negotiation of meaning (Heath, 1982). The importance of this level in itself, and for the current inquiry, lies in the fact that (a) it is at this level that intangible literacy practices can be inferred through observation, and (b) it allows for taking into account not only the written text but also the talk around texts by participants in such literacy events as course seminars and professor-student conferences.

The third level of analysis comprises texts. Texts mediate literacy events. A fuller understanding of the written texts can be achieved when we read them in light of the literacy practices that give rise to them. The three levels of practices, events, and texts provide a richer analysis of the written language that ultimately links the words on the page to the broader institutional and cultural context, thus making it possible to take into account power relations and possibilities of oppression in academia.

Academic Writing as Symbolic Power

A second theoretical lens that I will draw upon is Bourdieu's general theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1984, 1991; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), which to a large extent also informs the academic literacies perspective outlined above (Collins, 2000). In making sense of academic writing and educational practice, I will draw on two of Bourdieu's signature notions of *field* and *habitus* together with the interrelated notions of *symbolic capital, legitimate language, legitimate speaker, and Skeptron.* This theoretical perspective deeply situates the research participants' actions by historicizing them.

The notion of field allows me to see the social space of education as a differentiated field of practice in which students and professors are hierarchically positioned. It will highlight the fact that all actions are situated within a context that is inscribed by differential power relations. It also allows me to construe the context of participants' literate practice in capitalist terms as a marketplace in which they exchange cultural capital with an eye to increasing their capital. The notion allows me to always ask, What is the position of this participant relative to that? Who has the "status authority" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 108), and How does this institutionally structured power relation affect participants' negotiating a problem? It provides a way to ask questions and see aspects of educational practice that could otherwise be overlooked. It also helps bring in relations of power at both the interpersonal and institutional level.

The notion of habitus, defined as history represented as nature (Bourdieu, 1977) or those durable and transposable feeling and thoughts that are a function of one's class, race, gender, nationality, or ethnicity positioning (Reed-Danahay, 2005), will allow me to bring in the history to the moment of participants' practice in the form of their

historically acquired dispositions. The construct will help me understand that the participants' sense making of practice is filtered through their habitus which dispose them towards certain attitudes, values, or ways of acting that are shaped by their life trajectories, and that these historically shaped dispositions operate at a level that is partly unconscious (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002). Although Bourdieu has not strictly used the term *literacy* in his works, literacy as socially constituted ways of reading and writing in at the heart of his general theory. As such, literacy practices are part and parcel of an individual's habitus (see Bhola, 1996; Luke, 1995 for a similar argument). That literacy, as socially acquired forms of language use, is integral to an individual's habitus is readily discernable when Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) point out that as individuals acquire a language they also acquire a certain socially recognizable manner of using the language. In the present inquiry, the construct of habitus, therefore, will allow me to take into account the participants' prior literacy practices as they negotiate writing tasks. Habitus also allows me to always ask, Who is this participant? and What life trajectories has she or he had? in order to better understand how they might be making sense of the writing tasks and what strategies they might be using in tacking those tasks.

The notion of symbolic capital affords me to conceive of language and literacy as a sociohistorically inherited form of power rather than solely language or literacy skills comprising only *a*historical, abstract linguistic forms. Seen in this light, academic writing can be examined as an instrument both of knowledge *and* domination (Mahar, Harker, & Wilkes, 1990). In this sense, as Foster (1986) observed, to understand who is in power is partly to understand who has mastery over this symbolic power. Success therefore is in part defined by individuals' access to, and exhibition of, this capital. This view ties in

well with the political commitment of academic literacies perspective in that it reveals academic writing as a social practice willed to power. Academic writing, or more accurately academic literacies, therefore, needs to be made sense of in such socially significant terms as a desire for access, cultural capital, and distinction. Taking up such a perspective would automatically lend a critical edge to an inquiry in that it would serve to reveal, and therefore denaturalize, interested agendas of participants in a particular context.

The interrelated concepts of legitimate language and legitimate speaker in turn highlight that only a particular kind of literacy might qualify as symbolic capital, and that authority and legitimacy of literacy is a function of the speaker's socially sanctioned position. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) explain in their discussion of the origin of pedagogic authority and the authority of language, these notions help bring to light that "what merits transmission, the code in which the message is to be transmitted, the person entitled to transmit it or, better, impose its reception" (p. 109) are in part a function of the socially based status authority of the speaker. That is to say, legitimacy as well as authority does not inhere in the language but something that is externally conferred on both the speaker and the language. Closely related to this observation, is the notion of *Skeptron* (Bourdieu, 1991) that suggests a speaker's, or a writer's, authority does not totally reside in the linguistic utterance; rather, authority is in part socially conferred on the speaker (or writer), and it is therefore partially a function of the social positioning of the speaker (or writer). The notion of *skeptron* will inform this study by offering an analytical perspective on the pedagogical practices that might confer on, or withhold from, the students the right to speak with authority.

Sociocultural Theory of Learning

Current social theories of learning posit that the mind is socially founded and semiotically mediated (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). Individuals learn as they internalize the semiotic means that accompany social activities. Within this discourse on learning, appropriation of language as the "tool of tools" (Wells, 1999, p. 7) plays a central role due to the pervasiveness of language in all human social activities.

One theorist whose works have been immensely influential in the development of sociocultural theories of learning is Bakhtin (Wertsch, 1991). Of particular relevance to this study is the Bakhtinian theory of language learning and use (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986; Volosinov, 1973). This theory highlights that individuals acquire speech genres and social languages from the actual utterances they encounter, that is, from the language used by speaking subjects in actual sociocultural-historical contexts. The Bakhtinian view of language use and learning highlights the fundamental role of appropriation in human development. As Bakhtin characterizes it, nobody learns her language from dictionary; rather this learning comes about as individuals' appropriate situated uses of language (Bakhtin, 1986). Appropriation of the linguistic sign is a core notion within the Bakhtinian theory of language, emphasizing the role that this appropriation plays in the development of an individual's sense of identity. Language is imbued with ideology and is a site for struggle over ideological hegemony (Volosinov, 1973). Depending upon whom we interact with, whose language we make our own, and where the appropriation takes place, we develop different senses of who we are and different ways of relating to the world.

This perspective on language offers a number of theoretical insights that shape the way I conceive of learning and language use realized as academic writing. One such insight, deriving from the Bakhtinian notion of dialogism of language, is the notion of intertextuality. Any act of writing is both a response to prior texts and texts yet to be uttered. The semantic content of an utterance can be richly captured when we conceive of it as an active response to earlier texts. With respect to this study, this insight prompts me to read and analyze the participants' texts as active responses to a range of earlier utterances such as their course readings, professors' written and oral statements, course documents, and institutional documents as well as published texts in a given disciplinary domain. The notion of intertextuality therefore provides a theoretical justification for analysis of students' texts in conjunction with these prior texts.

Another insight of the Bakhtinian perspective is that appropriation and understanding are always active rather than passive acts. Individuals do not approach others' utterances as *tabula rasa*, so to speak. As situated subjects, they bring in their own particular socially acquired evaluative and conceptual horizons to the utterances they come in contact with. Understanding, as Volosinov (1973) characterized it, is a highly active process in which interlocutors respond to a sign with a sign. What this means in the context of the present study is that, as individuals come in contact with the utterances of others' and strive to understand them, their "evaluative orientations" (Maguire, 1994) come into contact with those of others. This could lead to the possibility of ideological clashes or differences in intersubjectivity among the research participants. This insight, therefore, alerts me to be especially mindful of the possibilities for tensions during data collection and analysis.

An additional insight for the present study derives from the notion of *heteroglossia*. Language for Bakhtin is not a homogeneous entity; rather it is seen as socially differentiated genres of use (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 262). These language genres are not on equal footings; some are authoritative while others are not. The authoritative genres, as Bakhtin put it, are those powerful languages associated with religion, politics, morality, adults, and teachers while the internally persuasive genres are those that are socially marginalized and do not have any institutional backing. As far as the present study is concerned, the notion of *heteroglossia* and the differentiation among genres not only emphasize the hierarchical power relations among these different languages or discourses, they also depict the possibility of relating to them differently depending upon individuals' positioning with respect to them. That is, different individuals might see a particular language as either authoritative or internally persuasive. For example, depending upon whether or not one is a teacher or a student, one tends to have a different relationship to the language used by teachers. This differential relationship to a particular type of language use prompts me to be mindful of the different relations that the research participants might have toward the words of others.

While the Bakhtinian notion of appropriation provides the theoretical justification for characterization of how individuals generally learn social languages and adopt associated identities, one scholar who has examined the notion in relation to student writing is the composition scholar Rebecca Howard (1992, 1995, 1999). Combining the Bakhtinian notions of dialogism and appropriation with a historical examination of models of authorship in the West along with numerous examples of imitation in the work of accomplished contemporary writers, Howard has shown how all writers, beginning

and accomplished, collaborate with others' texts through a process that she has termed

patchwriting to make those texts their own. Howard has defined *patchwriting* as a

process in which the writer evaluates a source text, selects passages relevant to their

purposes, and transforms those passages to their new context (Howard, 1999). Using the

metaphor of sculpture, she describes patchwriting as a form of *pentimento* (Howard,

1992) or a verbal sculpture in which one writer works with the work of another while

leaving traces of that text. Relying on Bakhtin's notion of authoritative genres, Howard

has argued that patchwriting is not a sign of deceptive intent but rather a gesture of

reverence toward the authoritative utterances of others with which developing writers are

collaborating to sculpture their own texts out of. As Howard (1999) puts it,

> The patchwriter recognizes the profundity of the source and
> strives to join the conversation in which the source
> participates. To join the conversation, the patchwriter
> employs the language of the target community. (p. 7)

For this reason, Howard has called for patchwriting to be viewed as positive and

non-transgressive because it is an attempt by the writer to engage with the language

particular to their prospective academic disciplines. Students therefore should be viewed

not as failed authors and untrustworthy *Others* if they engage in patchwriting. Howard's

notion of patchwriting provides an analytical heuristic for empirical investigation of the

Bakhtinian notion of appropriation, and for this reason it informs this study.

Academic Writing: Textual Construction of Social Identities

Current social theories of literacy that foreground specificity, discursivity and

multiplicity of ways of reading and writing (Prior, 2001) have given rise to a recent

research tradition on academic writing and the construction of textual identity. The basic premise of this tradition is the belief that writers simultaneously construct, and are constructed, by their texts (Fairclough, 1992b). Therefore, writing not only represents ideational meaning (Halliday, 1994) but also represents the writer in terms of his or her sociocultural membership.

Recently there has been a number of influential studies on the intersection of academic writing and identity (Clark & Ivanič, 1997; Ivanič, 1998) that offer a systematic way to empirically explore the link between writing and identity. The present study is in part informed by the analytical articulation of writer identity in the latter work. This framework analyzes the notion of writer identity into four major components: *autobiographical self, discoursal self, self as author, and possibilities for selfhood*. The autobiographical self involves a writer's prior life history in terms of his or her access to sociocultural discourses, affecting how writers write. The discoursal self refers to the identities that writers textually construct in their texts through using social languages associated with particular social groups. The self as author component relates to writers' expressions of authorship, authoritativeness, and authorial presence in the text. This aspect covers such questions as "How do people establish authority for the context of their writing?" as well as "To what extent do they present themselves or others as authoritative?" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 27). The possibilities for selfhood component involve those social ways of being in the world that are available to writers in their context of writing. Similar to the process in which ideology constructs subjects through the process of *interpellation* (Althusser, 1971), these socially sanctioned types of being call upon writers to perceive themselves in certain ways and textually enact those in their writing.

As writers always write within a particular discourse providing them with particular ways of using the language as well as particular subject positions to take up in their writings, writers always represent themselves in particular ways as they construct their texts. Construction of such identities could be both conscious and unconscious (Recchio, 1991; Ritchie, 1998). However, it is important to remember that within a given context there might be competing discourses that are subject to a privileging pattern (Wertsch, 1991). That is, one discourse could be dominant, and, hence, more visible, and writers may consciously and/or unconsciously take up the identity options they call upon them to take up. As far the present study is concerned, this way of looking at writing and identity will enable me to conceive of textual features of the research participants' texts as issues of identity construction in the sense that any textual decisions that they make as they compose are bound to represent them in certain ways, and are motivated by their perception of what identities are valued in a particular context.

Rationale for the Study

Why These Theories?

I spent 18 years of my adult life under a politically repressive system in Iran that made every effort to limit its subjects' freedom in all of its manifestations - e.g., public expression of this very sentence would be reason enough to deprive any writer of his or her right to employment under the system. This first-hand experience of oppression has predisposed me to identify with critical theories that aim to lay bare forms of oppression. While in contexts like my country of origin, one feels oppression, breathes oppression, and sees social inequalities blatantly encoded in the laws of the land, in contexts where the rhetoric of liberal humanism reigns high, one has to look harder in unlikely places for

subtle forms of oppression. The social theories informing this study tend to highlight how two of these unlikely sites, literacy and the educational system, can be implicated in the ongoing struggles for social domination in the broader socioeconomic context.

Why International Students?

I have decided to focus on ESL international graduate students for a number of reasons. I share very similar experiences with them. I speak and write English as a second language, and I think this gives me an initial common ground with this group of students to start with. Another reason is that many of these students come from educational traditions that are significantly different from Canada, and I personally know how stressful and anxiety inducing it is to find yourself thrown into an unknown context. I have been in the same situation and have experienced the stress. I therefore tend to identify with this group of students. A further reason is that the number of such students in Canadian universities is on the rise due to stricter student visa rules in the neighbouring country to the south[5], and I think it would be beneficial to understand and document some of the struggles and challenges that these students might be experiencing at Canadian universities.

Gaps in the Literature

As was discussed in the literature review, almost all of the studies that have investigated the topic of student transgressive intertextuality have focused on first or second language undergraduate students. The handful studies that have involved graduate students have focused on either senior graduate students or the finished texts of the theses

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[5] Source: "More Arab Students Eye Canada after Sept. 11" Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), retrieved December 20, 2006 from http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2002/10/13/arabstudents_021013.html

or dissertations that these students had written. It is important to investigate the issue of transgressive intertextuality in connection with junior level graduate students' writing in a second language.

An important issue in connection with the notion of plagiarism that appears to have remained unexplored is the consequences of university plagiarism policies on student writing. The majority of studies that have investigated student transgressive intertextuality have focused on what plagiarism is in order to help prevent it. It is informative to examine plagiarism in terms of what it does by investigating its effects on students and educational practice. In light of Bourdieu's ideas adopted in this chapter that help us see language as a form of capital, it is important to consider plagiarism in connection with symbolically mediated social control.

Furthermore, given that earlier studies of faculty perceptions have pointed to variances in professors' views about plagiarism (Chaney & Duncan, 1985; Roig, 2001; Roy, 1999), there is a need to investigate what might be the impacts of these variances on the way students read and write. In addition to the above gaps in the literature, while earlier studies (Cadman, 1997; Starfield, 2002) have pointed to the link between students' transgressive textual appropriative practices and their sociocultural identities, the studies are too few in number and there is a need for further research. In light of the theoretical framework adopted in this chapter, further studies into the intersection of student intertextual appropriation and construction of identities could contribute to the scant literature on the topic.

Research Questions

Prompted by the perceived gaps in the literature discussed above, this study was guided by two primary and one secondary research questions. The primary questions asked:

1. How do international ESL graduate students produce their texts in light of university policies on plagiarism?

2. What authorial identities do these students construct as they write in light of these policies?

The secondary question asked:

3. How do professors mediate university policies on plagiarism, and how do these policies impact student writing?

The strong social focus of the theories informing this study has methodological implications. It calls for a naturalistic approach to the study of student writings to situate them in their context of occurrence. I have, therefore, adopted an ethnographic approach to understand students' texts in light of the local knowledge (Geertz, 1983). The next chapter details the methodology adopted to address the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Method of Inquiry

In this chapter, I explain my epistemological stance, highlighting my biases and commitments that have informed this inquiry from start to finish. I also position myself with respect to the contested issue of research adequacy, and explain some of the steps that I have taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the study by providing samples from the audit trail. In line with this, I also include a description of the analytical heuristics that informed data analysis. Finally, I recount the challenges and limitations that the sensitive nature of the research topic had for the present inquiry.

In writing this chapter, I have decided to include my narrative of the research process. Very often research reports are represented in such a way as if they have been conducted in a vacuum (Coffey, 1999; Sayer, 1992), concealing the contingent nature of studies. All research is situated activity and, in the particular case of qualitative inquiry, because the research often involves prolonged presence in the field, researchers are more likely to come up against constraints that can impact the final product of the research. A description of some of the constraints affecting the research should therefore be included in the final report. Moreover, during the process of research, researchers are not simply documenting the experiences of their participants' but also their own (Clandinin & Connolly, 1994). On these grounds, I have decided to include some of the anxieties and difficulties that I experienced throughout the process.

Being Candid about my Biases

As the primary instrument of research (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delmont, 2003;

Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Eisner, 1998), I have brought certain assumptions and

commitments to this inquiry that have impacted it from its inception right through data

collection, analysis, and its reporting. In the interest of research transparency and also

with the explicit purpose of contributing to the current scholarship that works to

deconstruct the tyranny of scientific objectivity (Heshusius, 1994), I take my lead from

authors such as Wolcott (1994) and Richardson (2000b) and reveal my commitments in

order to highlight the extent to which all studies, this one included, are perspectival, and

consequently, only partial truths (Clifford, 1986).

My epistemological commitments. I am an "anti-Platonist". I understand that we

make sense of the world and relate to it in sociohistorically specific ways, and that there

is nothing foundational about this sense making process (Foucault, 1981; Rorty, 1979,

1991, 2000). This deceptively straightforward insight has had a profound impact not only

on the way I have come to conceive of writing and literacy, but it has also impacted the

design and conduct of the present inquiry. This nonfoundationalist position has helped

me grasp the extent to which some perspectives on the world have historically gained

dominant positions at the exclusion and marginalization of other perspectives. My

intellectual break from objectivism has helped me understand the extent to which

research as a social practice is a value-laden activity and a form of interested knowledge,

and that research is never innocent and neutral. This perspective has allowed me to ask

myself many questions along the way that I would otherwise have not asked as a

researcher. It also made me sensitive to many issues as I was experiencing and

conducting the inquiry that needed to be addressed. For instance, when I would ask myself, "Now, whose interest is my study serving?" I had to own up to the fact that at one immediate level the answer was, "My own interests." This required me to think of ways to care for the interests of my participants. I would therefore try to create a relationship with my participants that were mutually beneficial and congenial. For instance, one of the things that I was mindful of as a result of this was that during interviews with the participants in which, as the researcher, I was in a position of power and had the "interactional control" (Fairclough, 1992b) by asking the questions and setting the topic, I made every effort to relinquish this control by letting the participants speak such that we collaboratively negotiated the topic. I therefore avoided sticking rigidly to the interview protocols. This contributed to a more respectful interview context and lowered power differentials. Further, in light of the sensitivity of the topic being explored, I strived to make the interviews with the participants as personal as I could by sharing my own challenges with academic literacy so that we could know each other and share our life experiences (Mishler, 1986).

Perhaps the most important impact of the nonfoundationalist perspective on me has been the intellectual struggle with the issue of research adequacy. I have been grappling with the vexing question of How do I know that I didn't get it totally wrong? As soon as in one's mind "naïve realism is replaced by the assumption of multiple constructed realities, there is no ultimate benchmark to which one can turn for justification" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 295) of the certainty of the results of an inquiry. This has turned the issue of research adequacy into a highly contested issue, and, in response to this, there has been a continuum of responses ranging from revisionist

equivalents to conventional canons of rigor (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to a range of postmodernist alternatives (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delmont, 2003, p. 157) that have offered totally different conceptualizations of validity in such forms as validity-as-culture, validity-as-ideology, or validity as instrumental utility which stress the situated and constructed character of validity. Validity, from this view, should be judged by the criteria of the particular interpretive tradition one is operating in rather than by universalistic criteria of discovery and evaluation.

As I write this chapter, my current thinking with respect to research adequacy represents a similar break from the legitimation criteria deriving from the objectivist epistemology. However, in the face of the numerous alternatives put forward by the educational research community, I have decided to adhere to the criteria advocated by several authors most notably Eisner (1997, 1998), Wolcott (1994), Piantanida & Garman (1999), and Richardson (2000a) who encourage researchers to aim for aesthetically derived criteria of producing a credible, compelling, and persuasive research field account that could ring true and come across as conceivable experience. I have, therefore, worked to craft an account in light of those criteria. The reason for this is that I strongly believe that the major function of educational inquiry is to enhance our understanding and inform practice. With this conviction, I have endeavoured to construct a research report that could pass the tests of credibility and cogency.

At the same time, to guard against the likely charge that there are no criteria governing qualitative inquiries (Eisner, 1998; Silverman, 1993), I have followed some admittedly conservative measures suggested in the literature of qualitative inquiry as well as those commonly used in the community of second language researchers. I have

followed a variety of techniques to enhance the credibility of the study. For instance, I have incorporated several data sources to achieve triangulation of sources, made every effort to be engaged in the field as long as possible to develop sensitivity to recurring themes and events and capture those that were salient, and presented my interpretations to the participants to increase the face validity of the research (Lather, 1991). I have to immediately point out the positivist origins of some of these measures that I took. For instance, the notion of triangulation is based on the idea that there is a stable social reality that is objectively out there apart from the methods used to capture it (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delmont, 2003). The notion ignores how the theories, methods, and instruments used in research constitute the realities they describe, and that the data that is collected through different data sources might not necessarily be additive simply because they are not converging on the same objective reality.

In light of the critique made of the assumption of a stable, objective social reality that underlies such analytical strategies as triangulation and constant comparative method, I have to note that I have followed these methods and strategies merely as sensitizing concepts and primarily as heuristic devices which are useful in guiding research rather than creating objective knowledge (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delmont, 2003). This is also based on recommendations from the educational research community that all that qualitative researchers can do is to make sure they provide good grounds for their interpretation rather than naïvely believing that measures such as triangulation can help them arrive at certain, infallible truths (Eisner, 1998; Wolcott, 1994).

Research Participants

The participants in this study were seven international graduate students, fifteen professors, one teaching assistant, and one lead tutor at the University of Ottawa's Writing Centre. Table 3 provides a snap shot of the student participants.

Table 3.

Student Participants[6]

Name	Sex	Country	Discipline	Term of study	TOFEL score (Out of 677)
Amorita	F	Chile	Communication	1st	594
Hamud	M	Lebanon	Counselling	6th	Exempt
Lee	M	China	Communication	1st	586
Hako	F	Japan	Communication	1st	603
Osman	M	Somalia	Education	6th	620
Salma	F	Spain	Communication	1st	599
Mala	F	India	Education	1st	588

Three of the professors and the teaching assistant were the instructors of the three courses at the Faculty of Education and the Department of Communication that I observed during Spring and Fall sessions of 2005. I also interviewed twelve faculty

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[6] All names are pseudonyms.

members and the lead tutor at the writing centre to capture other faculty members'

perspectives on transgressive intertextuality. These professors were from the disciplines

of communication studies, education, and linguistics.

Recruitment of Participants

Recruitment of the students began soon after I obtained the relevant ethics

approval for the study on March 4, 2005. In what follows, I will include the story of the

research process as I experienced it (Bochner & Ellis, 2003; Van Maanen, 1988). The

first serious and time consuming challenge that I encountered was finding recruits. The

sticking point at this early stage was that since students' academic literacy practices were

an integral part of the study, and since the underlying social theory of literacy required

that I take into account the three interrelated levels of literacy practices, literacy events,

and texts (Barton, 1991; Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000), the study necessitated that I

observe the academic context in which the prospective students would produce their

texts. The problem that I soon found myself grappling with was that I would find willing

students who were dispersed in different courses. This created problems as it was not

practical to observe four courses simultaneously, with only one participant in each

course. The challenge of recruiting participants was an early lesson in the importance of

carefully considering the practical aspects of a research study. I recalled that many of the

studies that I had read in the field of second language writing research had glossed over

these challenges, only reporting what Van Maanen (1988) has described as

"methodologically silent" research accounts which rather mislead the reader about the

pragmatic challenges of doing research. I soon started to panic in light of the deadlines

of my degree program.

To get around the problem, I started to explore the possibility of first identifying a few courses in two or three different disciplines and then recruit several international students in each of these courses. I thought that I would do with 4-5 students given that it was a naturalistic inquiry. This required that I first identify the courses, and then recruit willing professors. Because the design of the study called for observation of courses, the professors were in fact the gatekeepers through whom I could negotiate entry into the site and recruit students. After recruiting professors, I then had to wait, keeping my figures crossed that (1) enough international students would enroll in those courses, and (2) two or three of those students would be willing to participate in the study. Strategizing thus, I first started scouting academic disciplines in my host university, selecting such disciplines as Political Science, Sociology, and lastly Philosophy. Soon I realized that except for Philosophy, all graduate courses in those disciplines were offered in French.

Subsequently, I tried my luck at another major university in the national capital region. I contacted fifteen professors in a number of social sciences departments such as Political Science, Economics, International Relations, Sociology, East European Studies, and History which I thought would be writing intensive and which I had a personal interest in. However, out of the fifteen professors contacted only one responded. Interacting with prospective participants had its lessons for me as well. For instance, in my communication with the sole professor who responded to my inquiry, I had mentioned that "I would be analyzing students' papers". What I had meant by *analyzing papers* was simply an analysis of the interaction of students' texts and context during the process of their creation rather than an analysis of their content. However, the responding professor had taken it to mean *analysis of the content* and wrote back to me questioning

my qualification for such an analysis. Clearly the professor and I did not share the same intersubjective world and we had different interpretations. I soon realized that in communicating with prospective participants, I needed to step out of the jargons of my field that had become second nature to me and try to use language that is as accessible as possible to them. Another realization that came as a surprise to me was the high level of reluctance on the part of some faculty members to find themselves under the focus of a researcher.

Back again to the more familiar territory of my own university, I began to inquire at several other departments than my own such as Philosophy and Communication to identify courses and recruit their professors. Soon, I secured an appointment with the professor of one course that the academic assistant of the Department of Philosophy had suggested to me as being very popular with international students from not only the philosophy department but also from others such as Sociology and Women Studies. During the meeting with the professor, I explained the purpose of the study, adding that, as part of the study, I would be observing his class for a full semester and I would also be interviewing him based on the papers that my prospective participants in his course would compose. A few days later, I received the following email from the professor tactfully declining to participate:

Date:	Thu, 31 Mar 2005 10:27:00 -0500 (EST)
Subject:	Re: Follow-up to our meeting
From:	XXXX@uottawa.ca
To:	

Dear Mr. Abasi,

After consideration, I conclude that I should decline. I was leaning to saying yes, but given the reservations I expressed when we met and my associated concern not to put any students in a special situation, and, further, the fact that my answers to interview questions would be very general indeed -- I conclude in all that it is best just not to proceed.

I wish you luck elsewhere. My sense is that, owing to your thoughtfulness and the inherent interest of your hypothesis, the project will be a worthy one.

Best,
xxxx

As I was scouting other departments to gain access and recruit participants, I encountered other difficulties that made planning difficult and served to delay entry and data collection. For instance, the following email is from the academic secretariat of one of the faculties I approached:

From: <xxxx" @uottawa.ca> 🔲Add to Address Book

To:

Subject: Re: Question

Date: Wed, 13 Apr 2005 11:59:29 -0500

Because of the collective agreement, we cannot give information about who will teach what until April 30, it does get close to deadline, but students still have time to register for classes, some students register early and make changes other register regardless of who will teach, you can always contact me on May 1st! I'll be happy to help you.

xxxx

Gradually getting more anxious about gaining access, I focused on my own home department hoping that I might be able to recruit participants more easily. Initially, I had avoided this for two reasons. One was that I was concerned about the ethical issues of confidentiality of the participants and the general consensus against researching one's own turf (Creswell, 1998; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Wolcott, 1994). The other reason for my reluctance was that I intended to study a domain that was thematically new to me. I felt that I needed to be participating in the courses pretty much similar to other students and do all the readings to immerse myself in the context. In an unfamiliar context, I would be better able to see things that I might not be able to see in my own faculty in which I had been immersed for the preceding three years. Running into problems in the recruitment process, I resorted to my own department in the hope that some faculty members who knew me personally might respond favourably. I left recruitment letters in the mailboxes of all the faculty members (see Appendix A). By the time I received the positive responses of two faculty members, the Winter semester of 2005 was coming to

an end. I therefore had to count on Spring session of 2005. Upon receiving the two

positive responses, I met with the professors in person to further discuss the study. They

both generously consented (see Appendix B) to participate in the study, on the condition

that I would not ask them to comment on any particular student's paper. One of the

professors also stated that because in his course students occasionally reveal very

personal experiences, he needed to first obtain all course members' consent. Thus, access

was accomplished at the expense of the exclusion of interviews based on the papers of

individual student which I had initially envisioned to be an important data source.

With these arrangements, I gained access to two Spring session courses: a

counselling course and a course in research in Education. Following our prior agreement

with the course professors, each of them gave me a ten-minute time slot to publicly

introduce myself and the study to the whole class, after which time, I left copies of letters

of invitation to students (see Appendix C) that contained my contact information. I was

subsequently contacted by one student (Hamud) from the counselling course, and two

(Osman and Mala) from the Education course.

This was a good start, but I realized that I needed more participants to obtain

additional data. I was therefore forced to repeat the same sequential process of identifying

courses popular with international students, first recruiting course professors, and then

students from those courses during Fall 2005. This time a young, new professor found my

research topic of interest and relevant and readily consented to participate in the study.

He later explained that he continually had international students in his courses and

because writing was the most challenging activity for many of these students he was

enthusiastic to know more their challenges so that he could be in a better position to help

them. However, his consent had three provisos that (1) he expressed an overriding concern for the confidentiality of his students and for this reason he said would not be asked to comment on any particular student during the upcoming interviews, and (2) that I should be participating as an active class member when it came to class presentations, and (3) that I should share the findings with him, to all of which I gladly consented. Thus, my second round of data collection started in Fall 2005. On the first session of this course, I introduced myself and my research and distributed recruitment letters. To my relief, all the four international students in the course responded positively.

Research Settings

I observed three courses during Spring and Fall semesters of 2005, as summarized in Table 4 on page 80. Since two of the courses were intensive Spring courses offered over approximately 2 months, I felt that a more prolonged observation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2003) would add to the credibility of my interpretations by providing better grounds for making those interpretations. I therefore decided to observe an additional graduate course at the Department of Communication in the Fall semester of 2005 that lasted four months. Another reason that prompted me to observe this course had to do with the criticism regarding the short duration of many studies on second language writing (Braine, 2002). I believed that within the time constraints of a PhD program, a six-month study would contribute to the enhancement of the study.

A further reason for not limiting data collection to my own faculty derived from recommendations made to researchers against researching their "own backyard- within [ones'] own institution or agency, or among friends or colleagues" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 21). There is a widely shared belief that researching in a context in which one

occupies an insider position might compromise data collection in that the participants might withhold information. Moreover, too much familiarity with the context might have predisposed me to ignore things that an outsider might have otherwise noticed.

Table 4.

Courses Observed

Date	Course site	Discipline	Total # of students/ # of international ESL students	Session/week	Duration of observation (month)
Spring 2005	Graduate	Counselling	34/4	2	2
Spring 2005	Graduate	Education	31/3	2	2
Fall 2005	Graduate	Communication	10/4	1	4

Profiles of Student Participants

In this section I would like to provide the profiles of the seven international students who were the primary research participants in this study. In sketching the profiles I have in part relied on the participants' own statements that they provided during the interviews we had. While these profiles might be said to be part of the results of the study and could be incorporated into the results chapters, I have decided to include them

in the methodology chapter because the focus of the study is going to be on the texts that these students produce rather than on the students themselves.

Hamud

Hamud was a Lebanese student in his mid-20s. When we met, he had been in Canada for less than two years, and he was completing the last course requirements of a Master's of Education (M.Ed.) program in counselling. During his first year in Canada, he had been taking some courses at a university in Québec as a special student where he developed an interest in counselling. While at that university, he had "a lot of time on [his] hands during the second half of that special student program" when he had "ended up reading a lot of stuff on colonialism, and post-colonialism, which eventually spilled over into multicultural psychology." Prior to coming to Canada, he had been in the US for a year living with a family member. Back in his home country, he had completed his bachelor's in psychology at an English-speaking university. Four years of studies at this Anglophone institution modeled closely on the North American system had helped Hamud to gain a good command of English such that he could ask for an exemption of proof of language proficiency when applying to the University of Ottawa.

Hamud came from an affluent family. His father was a seasoned diplomat, and because of his father's diplomatic career, Hamud had spent years away from his home country. As a result he had been exposed to many cultures. As he described it in one of my interviews with him, he had been uprooted repeatedly, an uprooting that had been "thankfully … followed by a re-planting process." He described himself to me as a person with a hybrid identity who could easily switch identities when circumstances required. Hamud was well-read and had a passion for philosophy and literature. He was

very sensitive to language, and he had a sophisticated style when he spoke or wrote. In fact his English was so good that I occasionally had to consult my dictionary as I was transcribing the interviews with him.

Hamud had previously been the research assistant to the professor who was teaching the course in which I recruited him. He had worked with the professor on some research project that had involved locating sources, reading articles, summarizing relevant articles and creating a detailed annotated bibliography. He had also taken two other courses with the same professor. He was proud of the fact that a paper of his had been accepted for presentation at a conference in March of the following year.

Hamud was an articulate person. During the interview, it would take only a hint to get him to talk at length about an issue. He would volunteer information, and would come across as a very reflective and insightful individual. He was the sort of person who is a joy to talk with. Both of my interviews with lasted at least one hour more than initially planned.

Osman

Osman was a student in his late 20s from Somalia. In his first email to me in which he expressed willingness to take part in the study, he had signed the email as "Osman the Nomad". When I initially saw this signature, I though he meant it in a figurative sense as a person who belongs to no particular place. But later he explained that he was in fact from a nomadic tribe in his country, and that he had a sense of strong attachment to his roots. Civil strife in his homeland had forced him to leave his country. He had fled his country and had been living in Europe for a few years, where he

eventually finished a math degree and became a teacher. Because many members of his extended family had taken refuge in Canada, he decided to move to Canada to join them.

When we met, he had been living in Canada for two years, had done a year of graduate work in math at a Canadian university, but had decided to switch and do a Masters of Education (M.Ed.) while his application for permanent residency in Canada was in progress. Osman's English was very good and he had easily passed the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Osman's written English was very good as he had learned English in parallel with the language of his host country in Europe during his undergraduate years. At the time of recruitment, Osman was completing the last course in his program and he was soon to graduate.

Amorita

Amorita was a 24-year old Chilean woman in her first semester of a masters' program in Communication studies. She had finished a journalism degree in Chile and had worked for two years as a junior reporter for a local newspaper in the capital city. She and her husband had come to Canada on a two-year government scholarship, and she had to go back to work in a state agency for a period equalling the scholarship period. Amorita was very committed to her home country and followed the rapid political developments with enthusiasm that one would expect of a serious journalist. As she described it, she "wanted to return and start working because mainly because I don't want to miss part of the development of my country. It's the first time we're going to have woman president. I want to get involved into the process instead of watching it."

She had decided to come to Canada because of her earlier history with the country. In her early teens, her father had decided to send her to stay with her uncle in a

city in Ontario to learn English. She had stayed for one school year but had to go back again. Her early exposure to English had enabled Amorita to pick up the accent, and when she returned home, she had done her best to maintain her English by going to different language schools. Her spoken English was much better than her written English. In order to improve her writing skills, she was enrolled in an advanced writing course at the Second Language Institute while she was also taking her domain specific courses.

Lee

Lee was from China. He was in his late 20s, and was on a scholarship from the Chinese government to finish a master's degree in Communication. At the end of the first session of the course in which I introduced my research, he approached me and readily expressed his willingness to take part in the study. He was especially happy about the possibility of receiving help with his writing as compensation for his collaboration in the inquiry.

Lee had been a TV broadcaster in his home country and had a popular blog that, he proudly said, would get an average of 15,000 to 20,000 hits a day. Lee was an outspoken and friendly person, and could reach out to you despite the language barrier. Determined to get admitted to a Canadian university, he had taken intensive TOEFL preparation courses at a privately-owned language institute in a large urban centre in his country for nine months, and after two unsuccessful attempts, he could achieve 586 which had been high enough to meet the University of Ottawa's English language proficiency requirement for students whose first language is other than English or French.

Mala

Mala was in her mid 20's, and came from India, but was originally from Bhutan. At the time of recruitment, she had just begun her program of studies in education. She was still in the process of settling down and had a lot of anxiety about life and education in Canada. She was taking the Spring course partly because she had to, and partly because she wanted to "know more about different theorists" early on in her program to help her with her eventual thesis that she was anxious about. She was a sociable and soft spoken person who was enthusiastic about participating in the study even though she felt she was overwhelmed with the course work during the intensive spring session. Mala had a background in literature, and intended to do her thesis in the area of comparative education.

Hako

A woman in her mid 20s from Japan, Hako had just started her studies toward a master's degree in Communication. She had chosen to come to Canada at the suggestion of one her Canadian teachers in her home country who had told her about life in Canada and that education would be cheaper than US. She had previously done a BA in a field that, while it was called International Communication, was not at all related to what she was doing in her master's program in Canada because it had been designed to prepare students for the business communication needs of the Japanese corporate world.

Hako used to work with an NGO in her home country and had a passion to learn about the workings and effects of media in societies. In fact, what had motivated her to attend a graduate program in Communication was the genocide in the African country of Rwanda where hundreds of thousands of people were massacred by a rival ethnic group.

She had been amazed at the role that media played in this massacre. The incident had prompted Hako, who was a deeply compassionate individual, to learn more about the political uses of media.

Salma

Salma was a 23-year exchange student from Spain. She had been one of the only four students at her university who had qualified for the exchange opportunity. Salma had chosen Canada because she knew French and she had thought she would brush up on her French in Canada and improve her English simultaneously. She was also motivated by the prestige assigned to having studied at a North American university. Salma readily signed up to participate in the study on the first day and was extremely collaborative. She was supposed to be in the program for one year. All the courses that she would complete could be transferred to her home university to count toward her master's degree in media studies. Although she was not required to submit a TOEFL score as part of her exchange agreement, she had taken the test, scoring 599 on it. While she was taking the course that I observed, she was also taking an advanced writing course at the Second Language Institute of the University to improve her writing skills.

Data Sources

Data sources included observations, interviews, and artefacts and a researcher's diary. In addition to the nature of qualitative inquiry that renders reliance on these sources indispensable, there were other reasons at work that necessitated reliance on such data sources. First of all, the theoretical perspective on literacy that underpinned this inquiry posits three levels of analysis, comprising literacy practices, literacy events, and texts. Literacy practices involve attitudes and perceptions of literacy users in a given

sociocultural contexts, and as such, these can best be inferred by observations. Many of these attitudes are so internalized that literacy users may not be able to verbalize them and can only be inferred in "light of local knowledge" (Geertz, 1983, p. 167) gained through an ethnographic approach. Literacy events can only be documented through observations. Texts, as the third analytical level in a social perspective of literacy, are the tangible final products of literacy events. A more complete analysis and understanding of texts can only be achieved if they are situated in the contexts of literacy events and practices. Reliance on multiple sources of data also was in line with the common practice in the community of second language researchers where it is believed that triangulation enhances qualitative research (Braine, 2002; Norton, 2000b; Prior, 1992, 1998; Tardy, 2005).

Class Observations

Upon gaining access, I attended all course sessions without exception. I had read in the research methodology literature about the difficulty of effective observation, but I had to experience it first hand understand what that meant. For one thing, initially it was difficult to discern what was relevant and what was not. At first everything would appear to be somehow be relevant, which made taking fieldnotes overwhelming. Early into my data collection, I took many notes that later proved insignificant in light of the research questions. As I took notes, I tried to jot down my interpretations at the moment, or later tried to create a conceptual network with my readings. I made a practice of typing out all the notes after each observation, during which time I would rely on memory of the observed session and would add more interpretive notes to those field notes. Drawing on my earlier experience as an assistant in a research project on literacy, and also bearing in

mind recommendations that analysis should be simultaneous with data collection

(Merriam, 2001; Wolcott, 1994), I tried to prune the data early on to make them

manageable when analysis intensified after data collection. Table 5 shows a sample

fieldnote along with additional interpretive notes.

Table 5.

A Sample of Fieldnotes

Wednesday, June 6, 2005
The following ideas were discussed today:
-White guilt -White privilege
The notion of 'discourse' was introduced, and the professor gave a lot of examples to make this notion tangible for the students. Today, the class primarily followed a lecture format.
Today a very moving video was shown in which a number of people of different races living in the US talked about their experience of discrimination.
As always, Hamud actively participated in the discussion portion of class. He made many controversial comments that led to heated exchanges of ideas. The professor characterized Hamud's questions as 'some very important'.

In the two Spring courses, my participation was more of a non-participant

observer type. In these courses, I was treated as an outsider with an agenda and was not

perceived as a class member. For example, when students paired up or formed discussion

groups, they did not include me in their formations. Part of it had to do with the course

professors' treatment of me who tended to exclude me. However, in the Fall course on

Communication course, I was able to be a participant observer. The professor had asked

me to actively participate in the course and take responsibility for at least one class presentation as a condition of my field access. The professor's inclusive treatment of me as one of the students over time had the effect that the four participants in this course tended to see me as their classmates rather than an outsider. We would talk about the course readings in class and in coffee shops and this significantly worked to create a highly egalitarian relationship between me and these students, so much so that on one occasion, I became the participant of a mini-research project done by one my participants in this course.

As soon as I started to gain access and recruit participants, I made a practice to keep a researcher's diary. This was motivated by a desire to both create an audit trail to enhance the trustworthiness of the study through confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 2002), and also to record any methodological decisions that I made during the process of inquiry. I also included any feelings or emotions that I experienced along the way, as suggested by earlier researchers (Richardson, 2000b). Tables 6 and 7 on page 90 exhibit samples of the methodological and personal notes that I took.

Table 6.

Samples of Methodological Notes

Tuesday, March 23, 2005

- Recruitment challenges
- Problem with text-based interviews with professors
- Access issues

Today, I met with Professor XXXX at the Department of Philosophy. He listened to my description of the study intently. Initially, he said he would be willing to allow me to observe his course, but as soon as I mentioned that I would also be interviewing him based on students' writing, he became apprehensive, saying he would like to mull over his participation in the study further. I have a feeling that he wants to say no. In any case, I now think I need to be careful about how I should best introduce the study in order not to scare people off. Professors seem to be reluctant to talk about specific students. Do I need to become more circumspect? Or do I need to be more diplomatic about what I say and how I introduce the study. I need to check the literature on deception, ethics and so on. I have a feeling that interviews with professors about students' papers that I envisioned to be a component of the data sources in the study is not going to be practical.

Monday, July 18, 2005

    - Plagiarism as a sensitive topic
    - Participant attrition

XXXX sent an email to me, which was also cc'ed to the course professor, and said she's withdrawing from the study. In retrospect, I have some good hunches about why XXXX dropped out. During the text-based interview with her, some of the questions that I asked about her use of sources unwittingly sounded as if I was interrogating her, and she became rather defensive. Part of her tenseness was because of the fact that before we started the interview, I explained to her that one of the focuses of the study is to understand why some students write in ways that are considered plagiarism. Also, during the interview, I mentioned that I would soon interview the course professor. I guess she has probably panicked, thinking that the professor's attention might be drawn to her paper. She most probably dropped out of the study to pre-empt my discussing her paper with the professor.

Table 7.

Sample of a Personal Note in the Researcher's Diary

Monday, August 29, 2005

   - A disconcerting feeling of ambiguity

Today after meeting with XXXX, I felt both happy and fearful when he asked me to give him a copy of the findings as one of the conditions of his participation. I felt happy because my study will have what Kvale (1996) and others call pragmatic validity of a naturalistic study in the sense that it will probably be read by, and hopefully influence, an educator who regularly deals with international students. I felt fearful because I'm right now grappling with a depressing question of "Will I be able to pull this off?" I keep asking myself, "Will I be able to finish the dissertation successfully and also keep my promise to this professor?"

Interviews

Interviews were the most direct method of data gathering. I conducted interviews with the student participants, the three course professors and one course TA, and twelve professors from the faculties of Education and Communication. In addition, as many professors tended to refer international students to the Writing Centre to improve their papers, I thought it was important to gain the perspective of the writing centre staff. I therefore conducted a detailed interview with the lead tutor in the Centre who also happened to be the coordinator of the Centre (see Appendices D & E for recruitment letter and the consent form).

I conducted two rounds of interviews with the student participants, each lasting between 45 minutes to 90 minutes. The first interview was carried out at the beginning of the semester. This initial interview aimed to set the stage for the upcoming collaboration throughout the term, provide the students with information about the study, obtain

information on their particular life trajectory and their previous educational backgrounds, and know about the plans and motivations for pursuing a graduate degree. In short, through this interview, I was able to gain insights into the "autobiographical self" (Ivanič, 1998) of each student. During this interview, I followed a semi-structured interview format, and made every effort to turn it into a friendly conversation with a purpose.

The second round of interviews was conducted at the end of the semester when the students had received their papers from the course professors. This round of interviews followed a text-based interview format (Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, 1983; Prior, 2004) in which the interview was driven by questions concerning the text that that the student had produced. Prior to each interview session, I had obtained a final copy of each student's papers and, after an analysis of the intertextuality of each paper and the patterns of source use, I had highlighted sections of the paper. During the interview, the conversation would revolve around those aspects of the texts. Text-based interviews are especially suited to studies of literacy because they allow for bringing in the insights of the writer into the textual analysis, without which many aspects of the text would evade analysis. Because of the unique case of each paper, I had to devise a specific interview protocol for each student following each textual analysis.

It is important to note that conversations with the student participants were not limited to the two semi-structured interviews. I would meet with them before or after classes, and sometimes we would chat over a coffee. These conversations naturally were spontaneous and, therefore, not recorded. On a daily basis, and relying on memory, I would note in my researcher's diary any statements by the students that appeared to be

relevant to the research. Occasionally, I also would chat in person or communicate with some of the students after the data collection had formally ended.

I also conducted interviews with the three course professors. The aim of these interviews was primarily to understand professors' expectations, gain insights into valued academic literacy practices, understand how they mediated university plagiarism policies, and obtain their evaluations of the papers that the student participants had produced. This latter purpose, however, could not be realized as the three course professors' without exception expressed reluctance to comment on the papers of any specific student due to the sensitive nature of the research. During these interviews, while I followed a semi-structured approach, I took care to be prepared for and capture the unexpected.

I also interviewed 12 faculty members and one lead tutor at the Writing Centre (see interview protocols in Appendix F). The rationale for interviewing faculty members from the disciplines was that I believed the student participants would ultimately find themselves in courses taught by other faculty members, and it would therefore further enrich the study to include their perspectives on university plagiarism policies and the way they tend to mediate these policies. These interviews typically lasted 30 minutes to an hour, and in some cases exceeded an hour. Prior to each interview, I would send a copy of the interview protocol to give a sense of what I would be asking and help the participants to reflect on their responses. This also helped focus the interviews and make the most out of them.

Artefacts

A further data source comprised the artefacts. This included the rough drafts and final versions of the papers that students wrote, the class notes they had taken during the

courses, course documents such as outlines and handouts, all email communications sent out on listservs, as well as documents that had a bearing on the courses such as the writing style guides. I also collected documents published by the University that were relevant to the study such as brochures on plagiarism policies and handbooks for the faculty, as well as online information posted on the University of Ottawa websites.

Any exploration of literacy ultimately brings the researcher to the final written product (Baynham & Prinsloo, 2001; Ivanič, 1998; Street, 1995). In this inquiry, one major guiding research question entailed an understanding of the way student writers had handled intertextuality when they had used sources. This naturally required an identification and tracing of borrowed materials. Identification of intertextuality is a very difficult, if not an impossibility. Indeed, intertextuality is shown to be an occluded aspect of writing (Pecorari, 2002, 2006). In order to trace the unmarked borrowed materials, as soon as I gained access, I read all course readings carefully so that I get to know different authors that were discussed in each course and their arguments. I also listened and took careful notes during each observation session to be fully immersed in the topics to facilitate the tracing. However, in many cases, I had to ask the participants themselves to help out with identifying the borrowed sections. Even with measures, there were cases when students could not remember the sources from which they had borrowed. Despite these difficulties, I was able to identify many of the sources that the students had relied on in writing their papers. This provided enough grounds for comparison and the emergence of patterns.

Data Analysis

While it is said that the interpretive act in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis is a mysterious act and that there exist nearly as many strategies as there are qualitative researchers (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 153), I have nonetheless decided to follow traditional qualitative strategies widely used by researchers in second language writing research community (Casanave, 2003; Dong, 1996; Prior, 1992; Spack, 1997). I have, however, followed these strategies simply as heuristics (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delmont, 2003) rather than as pathways to arrive at objective knowledge. Throughout the analysis, I have aimed to interpret the data together to create a reasonable account in order to create something that can be sensible, and ultimately useful for practice (Creswell, 1998; Eisner, 1998).

It is hard to isolate analysis from data collection in qualitative studies since analysis is part and parcel of data collection. For instance, because the researcher is no camera, the decision to take note of this event rather than that event is itself an analytical one. With this in mind, after I collected the data and started intense analysis, I followed a variety of strategies to bring meaning to the data. I started reading the interview transcriptions over and over such that after some time I could vividly visualize the interview sessions. This immersion in data enabled me to retrieve from memory a statement or event with ease.

Next, I developed themes out of all the data using two major strategies. One strategy was that of constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 2001) in which I grouped recurring events or statements under categories that had something in common (see Appendix F for a list of categories thus developed). In naming

the categories, I followed the most common practice of data analysis through which "the

investigator comes up with terms, concepts, and categories that reflect what he or she

sees in the data" (Merriam, 2001, p. 182). To increase the credibility of the study

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 2002), I shared my meanings with the

participants. Table 8 shows a sample of my member- checking communications with the

participants.

Table 8.

Sample of a Follow-up Communication with a Participant for Confirmation

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October 9, 2005

Hamud, I have been reading and re-reading the transcripts of the extended chat that
we had a while back in order to analyze them. At one point in the second interview,
you said that you'd put in certain references in your paper in order, as you put it,
'not to get busted for plagiarism'. Would I be correct in interpreting this that when
you were writing the paper, you had that yellow plagiarism brochure you talked
about in mind, and that you were writing with this fear at the back of your mind?
Please read the attached transcript and let me know if my conclusion from your
statement about being busted for plagiarism is correct.

Hamud's response:

Oh, yes! It's a fair conclusion.

Researching a Sensitive Topic

Although the topic of this study was not plagiarism as fraud, and despite that fact

that I would make it clear to the participants that the study was not about academic fraud,

the term plagiarism would per force came up when gaining access and also during

interviews with the participants. The social and institutional stigma attached to plagiarism

rendered the research a sensitive one due to participants' perception of "embarrassment

[and] the possibility of discovery and sanction" (Lee & Renzetti, 1993, p. 5). This sensitivity had several implications for this study. First of all, it made recruitment of participants and access difficult. For example, the unexpected resistance that I encountered recruiting faculty members from research-oriented graduate schools who were not willing to let me into their classes was perhaps in part related to their concern over the incriminating nature of plagiarism for their students. At other times, the prospective recruits who had initially expressed willingness decided to decline to participate. In one instance, one student who was participating in the study abruptly decided to withdraw when she found out that I might be interviewing her professor about her paper.

Topic sensitivity further had a constraining effect on data collection. In my initial design, I had incorporated interviews with professors about the texts that the participating students would produce. However, as soon as the word *plagiarism* necessarily came up when I attempted to describe the study to them in more detail, they would express reluctance to comment on any specific student's paper. In fact, all the three course professors made their participation conditional on the absence of this component.

Another impact of the sensitivity of the topic was on me, as the instrument of research. It forced me to be especially aware of the privacy of the participants in the study, and to anticipate and avoid any harm to them (Fontana & Frey, 1994) in light of the stigma attached to the plagiarism. As far as the students were concerned, I made sure not to share my analysis of their papers with the professors. I talked to the students at length about my views, revealing my opposition to the notion of plagiarism. I also reassured them that I would strictly respect their privacy.

A further implication of the sensitivity of the topic of the research was for the way I would conduct the interviews and its effect on data collection. To avoid causing the students participants to experience negative feelings such as stress, embarrassment or shame (Brannen, 1988; Sieber, 1993) for the way they had written their papers, I made every effort to be very indirect lest they misconstrue my text-based questions as inquisitional or lest they perceive me as questioning their integrity. I took care to pose my questions in such a way that it might not be taken as a criticism or accusation of the way they had used their sources. Throughout the interviews I strived to come across as approving rather than condemning or judgmental (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). At times I wanted to probe an aspect of their text but I would sense they might misunderstand my intention, and as a result, I would not follow up on that. For this reason, occasionally during the analysis, to compensate for these constrains on data collection, I had to rely on my informed speculations as to the motives and/or perspectives of the student writing a paper.

Although the sensitivity of the topic had some constraining effect on this inquiry, it also had some beneficial effects for the students, which tended to mitigate the likely risks attached to participation in a study involving a sensitive topic. The text-based interviews with the students allowed them to talk about their experiences of writing their papers which, as they admitted on several occasions, helped them to gain a new perspective on their experiences. At times, the students told me they found the talk enjoyable since it was on a topic that was of interest and immediate relevance to them. In one instance, it was a "cathartic experience" (Lee & Renzetti, 1993, p. 9) for a student when she realized what she had been doing was not unethical at all but a common issue

that was part of the learning process. These beneficial effects for the participants,

therefore, tended to mitigate the risks of their participation in a study that was sensitive.

CHAPTER FIVE

International ESL Students Patchwriting in Graduate School

The first research question that guided the study was intended to explore how international graduate students write in light of university plagiarism policies. While written texts by themselves are only traces of how they have come to be, and an exclusive focus on them would provide few insights into their histories of production and reception (Prior, 1994; Willinsky, 1990), they are nonetheless at the core of literacy events and practices (Fairclough, 1992a; Lea & Street, 1999). Therefore, in order to investigate this research question, it was necessary to focus closely on the students' texts, and then gradually move up to the literacy events and practices out of which they emerged. Moreover, since the present inquiry was an investigation of what is institutionally labelled as plagiarism, and because plagiarism is an intertextual category, it was imperative to focus on the texts that the students produced.

When I started data collection, I did so with some awareness of the difficulty of identifying the intertextual presence of other texts in a text (Bazerman, 2004; Devitt, 1991; Jameson, 1993; Pecorari, 2006). With this sense of apprehension, during the data collection process, I avidly read all course readings over and over. I also intently listened out for the words, phrases, notions, and linguistic turns that kept coming up during lectures, seminars, and other literacy events such as student-professor interactions. I would meticulously log these in my research journal in the hope that they might prove necessary in the looming textual analysis that sooner or later I had to grapple with. And

sure enough, these precautions proved to be immensely valuable during data analysis. I have to point out, though, that I have probably failed to identify the presence of many borrowed materials in the participants' papers simply because of the inherent intertextuality of all writing and the impossibility of tracing the intertext of the participants' papers in their totality. In fact, even the students themselves at times were not able to say where they had picked up this phrase or that idea when I resorted to them to help me trace the intertext of their papers. However, what I managed to identify by way of tracing sources and closely comparing papers and sources was more than enough to discern a pattern in the way the students had approached their sources.

In addition to gaining knowledge and familiarity with the key texts and authors in each course through my role as a participant observer, textual clues and professors' written feedback on the papers also aided me in recognizing "the words of the other" in the participants' papers. Through a drawn-out process that included numerous trips to the library and online journal searches, I closely compared students' papers against their sources to understand how they had used these sources. The result of this close textual analysis revealed that all but two of the papers contained many patchwritten sections that could be readily mapped onto the sources. The extent and instances of these borrowings varied across the papers such that it was possible to place them along a continuum that stretched from excessive reliance to minimal reliance on sources. At one extreme, these borrowings could potentially qualify as fraud as defined by the plagiarism documents published by the University of Ottawa widely distributed on campus, while at the other extreme, borrowings were either minimal or carefully followed prescribed borrowing practices as defined in the literature (Bazerman,1985; Swales & Feak, 2000) and in the

university documents and (anti)plagiarism pedagogies. Further, as I delved deeper into students' papers, another feature of students' papers came to light that involved the macro level of development of ideas which I have labelled *global patchwriting* which will be addressed in Chapter Six. In what follows, I present illustrative examples of students' patchwriting at the micro lexico-syntactic level that I refer to as *localized patchwriting*. I start with patchwritten pieces that bordered on transgression, gradually moving on to the other end of the spectrum. The examples presented are from the source-based papers that the students wrote in the three courses that I observed: Education course (Mala and Osman); Counselling course (Hamud); and Communication course (Amorita, Salma, Hako, and Lee).

Localized Patchwriting: Illustrative Examples

One illustrative example is an excerpt from Mala's paper, depicting borrowing practices that could institutionally qualify as fraudulent despite the fact she had acknowledged her source earlier in her text. The boldfaced sections in the following excerpts are directly borrowed language from one source :

> **Education is stuck** and **it does not know where to move**
> **and it does not have tools to move with. Education's**
> **conceptual tools are** very **inadequate. They are not even**
> **up to old tasks, such as the tasks of understanding a**
> **textbook or solving an algebra problem, let alone the**
> **new kind of tasks that education must face in this era of**
> **global competition. Better tools are coming available,**
> **but it takes conceptual tools to understand and use**
> **them. The most basic of tools are our conceptions of**
> **knowledge and mind.** (Mala's paper, p. 2, boldface added)

The original reads:

> Yet in very fundamental ways, **education is stuck. It doesn't know where to move and it doesn't have tools to move with.** The dialogue, both within and outside the education profession, does not advance. The same blunt statements (including this one) are made over and over. The tools education needs are, of course, conceptual tools. In this so-called Knowledge Age, this is the first requirement for any human experience to advance. The argument I develop throughout this book is that **education's conceptual tools are** woefully **inadequate. They are not even up to old tasks, such as the tasks of understanding a textbook or solving an algebra problem, let alone the new order of tasks that education must face in this era of global competition. Better tools are coming available, but it takes conceptual tools to understand and use them. The most basic of tools are our conceptions of knowledge and mind.** That, I argue, is where change has to start if education is to become unstuck. (Bereiter, 2002, p. 4, boldface added)

The next illustrative excerpt is from Amorita's paper who was writing for the Communication course:

> There should be **some recognition of the extent to which techniques like surveys and other consumer satisfaction measures** increase **the participation of citizens in governmental affairs.** We should **recognize** that market technologies such as **surveys increase** the **participation of citizens in governmental** affairs but **these measures do**

> **not replace politics and engagement as the defining**
> **relationship between government and the public** (Ryan,
> 2001). (Amorita's paper, p. 5, boldface added)

The original reads:

> However, there also needs to be **some recognition of the**
> **extent to which techniques** such as **surveys** and **other**
> **consumer satisfaction measures** improve **the**
> **participation of citizens in governmental** processes.
> These instruments are likely to involve a wider public
> representation than would otherwise be possible. Here, the
> concern is **that these measures do not replace politics**
> **and engagement** in policy processes **as the defining**
> **relationship between government and the public.**
> (Ryan, 2001, p. 107, boldface added)

Another example comes from Lee's paper in the Communication course where he is recounting why the internet is different from traditional media:

> On point of how the internet is influencing on the society,
> some people present that **the Internet facilitates civil**
> **society activities by offering new possibilities for citizen**
> **participation. Civil society facilitates the development of**
> **the Internet by providing the necessary social basis—**
> **citizens and citizen groups—for communication and**
> **interaction. (Yang, 2003)** (Lee's paper, p. 2-3, boldface
> added)

When compared with the original, heavy borrowing readily becomes apparent:

> Civil society and the internet energize each other in their
> co-evolutionary development in China. **The internet**
> **facilitates civil society activities by offering new**

> **possibilities for citizen participation. Civil society**
> **facilitates the development of the Internet by providing**
> **the necessary social basis – citizens and citizen groups –**
> **for communication and interaction.** (Yang 2003, p. 405,
> boldface added)

Still another example is from Hako's paper from the Communication course, discussing the use of new media in political campaigns:

> **In the 2000 presidential US election, for example,**
> **independent candidate Ralph Nader mobilized** a big
> **network of his supporters**, who he could gather through
> the use of his website. **For an independent candidate**
> **with** little **funds and minor coverage from mainstream**
> **media the internet is a cheap and speedy way of**
> contacting **potential voters** (Papacharissi, 2002).
> (Hako's paper, p. 4)

A comparison with the original source text reveals too close a correspondence between Hako's paper and her source:

> For example, **in the 2000 presidential US election,**
> **independent candidate Ralph Nader** was able to use his
> website to connect and **mobilize** a large **network of**
> **supporters. For independent candidates with** limited
> **funds and** sparse **coverage from the mainstream media,**
> **the internet** presents **a cheap,** convenient, and **speedy way**
> **of** reaching out to **potential voters.** (Paparachissi 2002, p.
> 24, boldface added)

A further example comes from Salma's paper, who was writing in the

Communication course:

> Anonymity is another characteristic of cyber-space.
> **Anonymity online assists** citizens **to overcome identity**
> **boundaries and communicate more freely and openly,**
> **thus promoting a more enlightened exchange of ideas.**
> On other hand, **the lack of solid commitment negates the**
> **true potential of the internet as a public sphere**
> (Papacharissi, 2002). (Salma's paper, p. 6, boldface added)

This paragraph is a piece of text that Salma has woven out of two disparate

paragraphs in the original. Part of the first paragraph reads:

> **Anonymity online assists** one **to overcome identity**
> **boundaries and communicate more freely and openly,**
> **thus promoting a more enlightened exchange of ideas.**
> (Papacharissi, 2002, p. 16, boldface added)

Interwoven with this piece from another section of the original paper:

> **The lack of solid commitment negates the true potential**
> **of the internet as a public sphere.**
> (Papacharissi, 2002, p. 22, boldface added)

In contrast to the above examples, the following excerpt which comes from

Hamud's paper written for the Counselling course stood at the other end of the continuum

of source use. He had incorporated the source materials into his text in an institutionally

and professionally acceptable manner. For example, a comparison of the following

paragraph with the source cited revealed that only word borrowed from the sources was 'phenotypical':

> Values, beliefs, (h)eritage, culture: words that are loosely
> employed in day to day vernacular and whose definitions
> are lost not merely in translation, but also in the ambiguous,
> loosely interchangeable meanings that we allow ourselves
> to attribute to them. Culture is often reduced to a
> **phenotypical** description and understood primarily as a
> function of ethnicity. This conjecture, however, is generally
> misleading as it stereotypically projects inaccurate
> attributes onto groups of individuals based solely on race
> and physical appearance (Tsang, Irving, Alaggia, Chau &
> Benjamin, 2003). (Hamud's paper, p. 2)

Here is the source text in which the word *phenotypical* appears only once:

> In education, Shih (1998) describes the practice of
> categorizing people into discrete ethnic groups based on
> external observable criteria such as appearance and country
> of origin as **phenotypical**. Such definition of ethnicity runs
> the risk of encompassing people from diverse cultures that
> may have little in common. (Tsang, Irving, Alaggia, Chau,
> & Benjamin, 2003, p. 363)

The paper written by Osman represented a special case. In his paper there was an abundance of direct quotes that were carefully documented and neatly demarcated from the body of the paper. There were no discernable instances of localized patchwriting in the text. The presence of many direct quotes in his paper was significant, and had to do with Osman's investment in the course. I will address this phenomenon in detail later in the chapter under the rubric of students' desire for, or resistance to, learning.

Understanding Localized Patchwriting

In what follows I will discuss the reasons for the participants' observed localized patchwriting. As will be demonstrated, there is much more to students' unacceptable source use than initially meets the eye. In fact, behind the surface of students' transgressive intertextuality, there are several undercurrents simultaneously running. These include students' shortage of linguistic capital, their struggle for symbolic legitimacy in their encounter with alien ways of talking, reading, and writing, their social positioning, and the life circumstances under which students create their texts. I will also consider how presence or absence of patchwriting is related to students' desire for, or resistance to, taking up the particular academic literacy valued in the context of writing.

Borrowing linguistic capital. Similar to many other academic institutions of higher education in North America, as part of the requirements for admission into the University of Ottawa, international students whose mother tongue is a language other than English must provide evidence of their language proficiency. The University accepts the results from several testing agencies. For instance, on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the applicants should present an overall test score of 580 on the paper-based format (237 on computer; 92 on Internet based) and a score of 4.5 in the Written Section of the test (24 for Internet based format) (University of Ottawa, 2005). The assumption is that these language proficiency test scores are indicative of international students' ability to undertake studies in their respective disciplines. However, these test scores have been notoriously inaccurate in determining future success by these English- as- a-Second- Language students (Ayers & Peters, 1997; Hoeffer & Gould, 2000; Krausz, Schiff, & Hsie, 2005; Simner, 1998). Research has

shown that these standardized proficiency test scores do not necessarily show students

future success such that, in the case of the TOEFL, the Educational Testing Service has

advised institutions "to avoid making admission decisions based solely on TOEFL

scores" (Simner, 1999, p. N/A).

That these scores are not a good indicator of many international students'

linguistic competence to undertake studies in their prospective disciplines is corroborated

by the experiences of many disciplinary professors. For instance, one disciplinary

professor interviewed gave the following assessment of the majority of her ESL

international students in her courses:

> Sometimes I go over ESL students' papers with them and
> when I talk to them I see that they have understood it, it's
> just the way they've written it that's not clear. And I
> understand of course that there are linguistic limitations to
> how you can express highly abstract concepts. One
> distinguishing characteristic obviously is grammatical
> mistakes and weakness in clear articulation of ideas. And
> sometimes the organization is different too; very often their
> papers are fragmented, disjointed, in a way and it could be
> a language issue, it could be rhetorical culture. (Sue, a
> faculty member, July 2005)

All of the student participants in this study had satisfied the minimum English

language proficiency as part of their admission requirements. One would have assumed

they could handle the linguistic demands of writing in English. However, this was not

true for the majority of the participants; all but two of them were struggling with formal

academic English. For instance, throughout all my class observations, I noticed that as

soon as the class convened Hako would bag her *ipod* headset and pull out another set of

her expensive digital gadgets that included a voice recorder and a dictionary, discreetly

placing the recorder somewhere next to her paperwork on the desk to record all

professor's lectures and class discussions. Frequently I would see her consulting her

digital dictionary as the lectures and discussions were in progress. At the end of the

semester when I was interviewing her, she remarked about her struggle with English in

the better half of the course as follows:

> During the first couple of sessions, I was just worried about
> whether I would understand what the professor was saying,
> or [whether] I can take notes, or … yeah … so I didn't
> really care for how much I understand the concepts so I
> was struggling the first few sessions and gradually got to
> understand the professor's English. So, in the middle of the
> course, when I just felt confident, the essay was due.
> (Hako's interview, November 2005)

Struggling with formal written English was a common experience for the majority

of the participants. While talking about the reasons for her slow progress on her paper,

Amorita described her strategy that goes to show the challenge she had with writing in

English:

> I started writing in Spanish first, but then I found out that
> it's going to take me too much time. So I stopped and I
> started writing in English but all the places that I had
> difficulty with the words and with the concepts I put them
> in Spanish and I continued writing. So at the end I started
> reviewing that and made the English translation of those
> parts and try to fix it completely. (Amorita's interview,
> November 2005)

She went on to add that:

> I think I have many problems in writing. I feel like I'm
> missing words; I don't know how to explain things in
> English and as I don't know when I try to, I end like
> saying the things that I want to say in a *more simplistic way*
> *than I wanted to*. I want to develop an idea more and
> doesn't happen. That's the basic problem for me.
> (Amorita's interview, November 2005, *italics* added)

Of significance here and directly related to the question of why the majority of students resorted to patchwriting is Amorita's statement of "more simplistic way than I wanted to". In fact, the students felt that their English was limited, and that if they solely relied on their own language, their papers would appear unscholarly. Patchwriting, as a result, was their way of compensating for this perceived shortcoming. In fact, Amorita managed to get 6 out of 9 on the language criterion for her Communication course final paper that involved "style and skill in presentation: clarity of expression, eloquence, mechanics of word choice, grammar, spelling" (Professor's feedback on Amorita's paper). Given Amorita's language ability, which at times made expressing her ideas difficult, she would not have been able to reasonably meet this evaluative criterion unless she resorted to close borrowing from her sources. In explaining why there were so much close correspondences between her paper and her sources, Amorita talked about her difficulties with academic writing and explained:

> I have problems with organizing the paper, using
> complicated language because I'm used to using simple
> language and when I started this course I thought "Oh, no!"
> I'm at the graduate level now and I need to improve.
> (Amorita's interview, November 2005)

She reflected, with a visible sense of guilt, on the fact that at time she had to patchwrite in writing her paper:

> That was very difficult because my language was like … I couldn't write academically, but I feel I'm more confident now; yeah … it was hard, and to be honest, I had to take a lot of sentences from, you know, here and there. (Amorita's interview, November 2005)

Amorita's sense of guilt and her confession about her patchwriting derived from the instruction that she was getting in the advanced writing course that she was taking in parallel with her Communication course where she said she had been exposed to the institutional edict linking close reliance with immorality and fraud.

Most of the participants in this study found academic writing not only challenging but also at times an occasion for embarrassment. For instance, Hako expressed this feeling in the following terms when we were reviewing the course professor's rather discouraging comments on her paper:

> I know the essay was not of my best, and there are actually many corrections on my essay. *I was embarrassed with my low quality English writing*. But I'm glad at least it can be a help to your study. (Hako's interview, November 2005, *italics* added)

A similar struggle was expressed by Lee. On the first session of the semester, when the professor was introducing the course, he pointed out that students had to read at a least 100 pages a week, and that they should be well prepared to participate in class discussions and share their reflections. In his interview, Lee complained about the high load of reading and the difficultness of the articles:

> It's so hard. It really depends on the writer of the journal,
>
> but some of them use academic words a lot, big big words!
>
> And I can't just go through. If there are more than 3 words
>
> I don't know in a sentence, I can't get the meaning at all.
>
> So I was like, checking, looking up the words, writing
>
> some words, I'm so busy I can't really finish 100 pages or
>
> so. (Lee's interview, November 2005)

Later on in the interview, when I asked him, Now that you have submitted your paper, what would you like the professor to think of you?, his response indicated struggle with writing; a difficulty that might easily go unnoticed when we only see the final product:

> That I as a students thought a lot about this concept; that I
>
> struggle a lot behind the paper; [that] behind the essay I
>
> put lots of time and efforts to just write one sentence. Like
>
> it's very stressful, it was very stressful. So I hope he can
>
> pick up some of the efforts. (Lee's interview, November
>
> 2005)

The participants' perception of the need to closely rely on the language of their sources becomes more prominent when their papers are viewed against their professors' expectations conveyed to them both explicitly and implicitly. For example, in the Education course, the following expectation about the quality of student papers was imparted to the students by one of the course documents:

> Suggested readings must be done prior to the class and
>
> student work must be written *with care and precision.*
>
> (Course outline, p. 2, *italics* added)

And in the same document under the section describing the final paper, we read:

> The paper should show evidence of *appropriate academic writing style* and should conform to the guidelines of Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for scholarly writing. (p. 4, *italics* added)

In a follow-up interview with the Education professor, when I queried her about what she meant by "scholarly writing" mentioned in the course outline, she explained that she expects the students to "write in a sustained form, what is, in fact, called *la langue soutenue*" (Sonia's interview, July 2005). A similar expectation was expressed by another disciplinary professor when he pointed out that "at the graduate level, it's important that people feel confident and capable to express themselves in a refined and scholarly language" (Mark's interview, July 2005). The Communication course professor had a similar perception when he was describing his expectations regarding papers to be submitted in graduate school, "To me, my way of seeing writing [is that] it has to be reflected upon, … the choice of language, the choice of words for that matter, is very important" (Duncan's interview, December 2005). Many disciplinary professors would say in one way or another that they would hold their graduate students' papers to the same criteria as they would for their own professionally established peers. For instance, one disciplinary professor said:

> When I read students papers I usually make comments on the papers; the sort of comments on papers that are sent to me to review. I don't say to students that you're not going to be published; but I definitely make the same kinds of comment as when I were reviewing. (McKay's interview, September 2005)

These requirements are in fact a call by the professors to students to demonstrate the symbolic capital which they obviously do not have. It is important to note that the majority of the students in this study had not previously written anything as serious as these graduate papers and they simply lacked the "linguistic capital" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 116) to meet the high demands placed on them by the course professors. Faced with a challenge they felt they could not surmount, they felt a need to utilize the language of their sources to meet the expectations, or at least give a semblance of coherence and intelligibility to their papers. This point was well reflected in the words of a seasoned professor with years of dealing with international students when she said that many international students still need to improve their English despite their TOEFL scores:

> These students don't have the words or the words they feel
> are necessary in order to say what they want to say. Thus,
> they would revert to a nice way that somebody else said it.
> It's easier for them to fall back on the way somebody else
> has said it because they can't do it themselves. (Miles'
> interview, an Arts professor)

A comment on Mala's paper in which the professor suggested that she could have gotten editing support from the Writing Centre also highlighted a similar challenge that many of the students had with the linguistic demands of their courses.

Among the participants in this study, the case of Osman and Hamud were unique. In their papers there were no traceable instances of patchwriting. One prominent feature of Osman's paper was that there were many instances of direct quotes form his sources in his paper that were neatly documented and demarcated from the rest of the paper, and I could not trace any instances of patchwriting in the paper.

The uniqueness of Hamud's paper lied in the manner in which it had been fluently and competently crafted. There were no traceable close textual correspondences between his paper and the sources he had cited. His use of intertextuality resembled that by professional academic writers (Bazerman, 1985; Swales, 1987, 1990; Swales & Feak, 2000). That is, he had been able to identify the overall import of the sources, select a handful of key words that acted as shorthand for the overall meaning (Small, 1978), make generalizations over several sources, impose a unifying meaning on these desperate sources, and, more importantly, subjugate these meanings to the argumentative purposes of his own paper. His paper was received quite positively by both the course professor and the TA. Here are some of the comments on his paper: "… what you had written was probing and thoughtful …," and "Your anecdotes were evocative, personal, and highly reflective, and you flawlessly incorporated many references that included works outside the course content which showed your obvious effort and thoughtful reflection." The few negative comments made on Hamud's paper either were of a substantive nature, or concerned the required sections that the professor or the TA had found missing in his paper. Unlike the papers by the rest of participants in the study whose papers had been scribbled all over by the professor or the TA, there was almost no feedback on Hamud's language.

In contrast to the other students whose limited linguistic capital made writing a discomforting, or even embarrassing, experience for them, Hamud enjoyed writing. For instance, when asked if he had any difficulties in writing his paper, he said one of his problems was that he tended to keep on writing in excess of what was required:

> I think that main thing I struggle with in writing papers is
> keeping it limited. You know limited to either what's

required to a certain couple of topics because I tend to try

and do too much. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

Hamud was not the average graduate student. Although in his early twenties, he was well-read, had a passion for philosophy and literature, and was very sensitive to language. Born into an affluent Lebanese family, he had a rich, varied educational background, and could effortlessly exhibit literary "distinction" (Bourdieu, 1984). The following piece from his final paper shows Hamud's facility with English and his relative sophisticated style which made it unnecessary for him to resort to patchwriting:

> I am an Arab whose ego speaks a foreign language. My
> inner-dialogue, which (next to rubbing my index against
> my thumb) is my most basic form of contact with self, is
> expressed in English – a language that my aunts and uncles
> have, at best, a mediocre grasp of. I am almost as different
> from my mother culture as I am from "Western" culture. At
> the risk of sounding melodramatic, I am the by-product of
> repeated up-rooting – thankfully always followed by a
> delicate "re-planting" process. I have moved around so
> much I can pack a medium sized suitcase in 12 minutes flat
> and as a result seem to have no distinct cultural ties to any
> given place. (Hamud's final paper, p. 7)

His professor described him in the following terms:

> Relative to students in class [he] is a very very bright
> person with lots to say, some of it a little bit unformed, but
> cooking on all kinds of levels and be very wonderful to
> have this student as a doctoral student. (Kevin's interview,
> July 2005)

Hamud's command of English was so good that occasionally I would find myself looking up some of the words that he used during the interviews.

However, as mentioned earlier, Hamud's background made him an exception. Indeed, as the case of other participants discussed above reveals, many international students in graduate schools in Canadian universities are having difficulty at the level of language. Many are admitted to graduate schools while they do not possess the requisite command of the language. As such, a significant number of them tend to be still in the process of learning the language as they undertake their studies. As we saw above, their close reliance on sources, realized as patchwriting, is indeed a sign of their effort to gain the linguistic means that they so desperately need to meet the literate demand of their courses. Indeed, language learning is a process of borrowing from others and, as Bakhtin (1986) points out, "[t]he words of a language belong to nobody, but still we hear those words only in particular individual utterances, we read them in particular individual works ... (p. 8)," patchwriting is in part a reflection of students' attempt to acquire the linguistic means to accomplish the literate demands placed on them in the graduate courses. From this perspective, students' close reliance on their sources acted as scaffolds (Bruner, 1962) for accomplishing their writing task, without which many of the students in this study would not have probably been able to successfully negotiate their papers.

Struggle for symbolic legitimacy. In general, graduate school is the start of serious academic work. For many, it is the start of a long journey toward specialization in a particular academic discipline with its own literacy. As students enter graduate courses, they are faced with ways of talking and writing about the world that are often far

removed from those that are familiar to them. For instance in the course outline of the

Counselling that I observed at the Faculty of Education, we read:

> Classes will involve a mixture of theoretical, experiential,
> and practical components. Students will be invited to
> examine the philosophical and ethical issues behind the
> quest for a culturally sensitive counselling—an exploration
> informed by a range of contemporary thinking embodied in
> feminist, narrative, and other collaborative postmodern
> therapies. (p. 1)

Over the span of this intensive summer course lasting about two months, students

had to read dense theoretical and philosophical texts articulated from a variety of

perspectives, and be able to talk about their practices and life experiences from the

discursive position of the course. For instance, one key notion of this course was that of

"discourse" in its poststructural sense. The following statement by the course professor

indicated that he was quite aware of the difficulty that the students might have in dealing

with the unfamiliar way of talking about the world that the course advocated:

> I think with the word 'discourse', it's so current in
> academia and so rare in the lay context that I have to admit
> I sometimes wonder you know what kind of a stretch this is
> for students at a master's level who are not intending to go
> on a doctoral work ... [for these MEd students] it's quite a
> stretch. There's a lot of re-thinking about things that is
> necessary, I think, to really start to grasp the notion of
> discourse .... (Kevin's interview, July 2005)

Students in this course were expected to appropriate, and in fact be appropriated

into, the particular literacy offered in the course. In the course outline, the professor had

emphasized that, as one of the goals of the course, students should demonstrate that they can "utilize an expanded vocabulary of terms for discussing multicultural counselling, discourse, power, identity politics, etc." (p. 1).

Similarly in the Communication course that I observed, students were supposed to be able to talk and write about media in ways that political scientists and media scholars do about political participation of citizen in a democracy, and also be able to talk and write about media in terms of such notions as political public sphere, rational-critical debate, videomalaise, spin doctoring, political marketing, etc. According to the course outline, for instance, one aim of the course was to foster in students "a critical awareness of the pervasiveness of political values and ideologies in all forms of media communications" (p. 1) as opposed to their more familiar way of making sense of media as neutral conduits of news and events. As part of the course requirements, all students had to actively participate in seminars. They were advised that the evaluation of their participation would be based on "the quality of contributions (e.g. clarity, insight and *facility with the ideas*, concepts, and arguments addressed in the course materials) to the class discussions rather than the mere frequency of participation" (pp. 2-3, *italics* added). Students were required to read and reflect upon 100 pages of relatively dense theoretical readings before coming to class every week. As the above quote from the course outline demonstrates, similar to the counselling course, students were expected to show facility with the ideas and concepts in class discussions and in their papers.

The same held true in the Education course. Students were supposed to read philosophical texts and demonstrate effortless use of the theory of knowledge construction introduced in the course. The course outline stated that students were

required "to integrate and synthesize complex theoretical and scholarly materials and to demonstrate their understanding through classroom interaction and scholarly writing" (p. 1). These good-willed requirements motivated by the professors' desires to help their students to become insider members of their discourse communities were, however, difficult for many of the students to meet.

In all of the three courses observed, the students were required by the end of only four months -- in the case of the two summer courses, in the span of about two months -- to write within the relevant "Discourses" (Gee, 1996); they were in fact explicitly told that they would be assessed on their ability to invoke the relevant discourse both in class discussions and in their papers. However, these discourses often were so alien to the majority of participants that they were struggling with invoking them when speaking or writing. For instance, in the following example from his paper for the Education course, Osman is trying to delineate a central notion of the course:

> In this section, I will use the Popperian framework (the Problem, Tentative Theory and Error Elimination) as I attempt to engage students in **epistemically progressive** knowledge building experience. I will use five Popperian cycles in order to move students towards that state of **epistemically progressive** learning. Popper (1999) argued the following, regarding the process of **epistemically progressive** exercise:
>
> *Learning means that unsuccessful or discarded solutions drop more and more to the level of passing reference, so that eventually the successful attempt at a solution appears to be almost the only one left. This is the elimination*

procedure, which depends upon pluralism of attempted

solutions. (p.5) (Osman's paper, p. 5, boldface added)

Osman appears to be struggling with the notion of "epistemically progressive"

that figured repeatedly in the course readings and which was in fact at the heart of the

theory introduced in the course. In the space of one short paragraph he has used this key

phrase three times. In the text-based interview, he commented about his piece, stating

that:

> The course was heavily about Popperian theory. I didn't
> have any ideas about Popper and his theories, and it was
> very difficult to understand them. The ideas were
> completely new for me, or maybe I was exposed too much
> to this theory in the course. (Osman's interview, July 2005)

Osman's struggle with "mastering" (Wertsch, 1998) the particular literacy

advocated in the Education course exemplified by frequent repetition of the notion of

"epistemically progressive" suggests that this literacy is alien to him. This foreignness is

eloquently described by Bakhtin (1981) in his discussion of appropriation of the words of

the other:

> not all words for just anyone submit easily to this
> appropriation, to this seizure and transformation into
> private property: many words stubbornly resist, others
> remain alien, sound foreign in the mouth of the one who
> appropriated them and who now speaks them; they cannot
> be assimilated into his context and fall out of it; it is as if
> they put themselves in quotation marks against the will of
> the speaker. (p. 294)

When probed about the reason for using a direct quote from the source in this paragraph, Osman explained that that because of the short duration of the course and newness and difficulty of the course, he did not have the time to actually digest what he had been reading:

> As I said from the beginning, like, the course was very
> quick; it was a crash course, let's put it that way.
> Everything happened so fast and we've been reading so
> much and we didn't have time to absorb it. I wasn't really
> sure I could explain the meaning of that part if I changed it
> and said it some other way. I think it's best to quote when
> you're not sure. You have absorbed it ... yeah, it's best this
> way, I think. (Osman's interview, July 2005)

The alienness of this particular discourse had made it illusive for Osman to assimilate it into his own words. Osman's solution here, therefore, was to use a direct quote from the source text in his paper instead of trying to make it his own. Moreover, as Volosinov (1973) points out in his discussion of the relationship between reported and reporting speech, the "reporting context strives to break down the self-contained compactness of the reported speech, to resolve it, to obliterate its boundaries" (p. 120) to make it possible for the reporting speech to assimilate the reported speech, and to subjucate it to the borrower's unique semantic purposes. Accordingly, the minimal merging of Osman's voice with the borrowed words of the other reveals the extent to which this particular way of speaking is authoritative (Bakhtin, 1981) for him.

A similar situation held for participants in the Communication course. One of the central readings in this course was Habermas (1991) *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society* in which the author traces

the history of the public sphere from the 17th century to the later 20th century, arguing that

the political public sphere has become "refeudalized" by powerful interest groups such

that the possibility of a rational-critical debate is no longer possible due the intervention

of these forces. This situation, he argues, has jeopardized Western liberal democracy.

This way of talking about political life was alien to all the research participants in the

Communication course. To give an example, in her paper, Hako had referred to

Habermas in the past tense, thinking that he was a 17th century philosopher, thus

revealing her unfamiliarity:

> Given hierarchic social structures and excluding political
> system, public sphere wouldn't have existed at the time
> Habermas introduced this idea. After centuries, however,
> the utopian 4th domain seems getting more realistic with the
> invention of new media technologies which connect people
> in the world. (Hako's paper, p. 1)

The course professor has scribbled the following comment next to this piece,

"Habermas is still alive". In a follow-up communication with her, I received an email

from Hako that shed more light on her difficulties. She wrote:

> Another lesson is that, in English journals, usually the
> writer says, "Dr. XXX examined ..." you know? in past
> tense. So I sometimes believe the person is already dead!!
> (it is kind of embarrassing though.) You will find a short
> note from Duncan on my Essay, "XXX is not dead yet!" it
> was funny. I will try not to make that kind of silly mistakes
> next time.(and the sex of the famous person is another
> tricky thing to tell because sometimes you are not familiar
> with female and male first names in English.) (Hako's
> email, February 2006)

In this connection, the Counselling course professor stated the following as he was talking about his desire for the students to demonstrate their appropriation of a sophisticated discursive literacy:

> We develop new distinctions and new words for the distinctions and because we have a new distinction we're able to speak about the topic at hand in more complex ways. So I'm expecting that the students will do the readings, listen to me and each other and start to use some of the language, not all of it, but language that helps them to make a point that resonates with them with regard to the topic at hand. I can see students who don't do this struggling to articulate something that someone who does it more effectively has very little difficulty articulating because they picked up some distinctions and some vocabulary which help them to address or name a particular problem in a clear and in an efficient way. Students vary on this, and I guess my evaluation of them as graduate students tend to vary as well. (Kevin's interview, July 2005)

As the above statement suggests, professors' expectation in general was that the students need to begin to think, speak, read and write in terms of the particular discourse in the course, and show mastery, if not appropriation (Wertsch, 1998) of the discourse. Students as less powerfully positioned subjects perceived that they needed to take up and invoke the particular literacy associated with the course.

Combining the twin notions of "legitimate speaker" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) and "legitimate language" (Bourdieu, 1991) with the notion of discourse (Foucault, 1972), as a super ordinate notion subsuming language use, into the more general notion of

legitimate discourse, I would like to argue that students' close reliance on their sources was in part a consequence of their struggle to take up the unfamiliar literacy valued in their courses (Gee, 1996; Angélil-Carter, 2000). As the students encountered these literacies, they resorted to patchwriting to gain legitimacy by demonstrating competence in deploying the legitimate discourse in a legitimate manner. Corroborating earlier research citing the difference between students' differing discourses with the elitist academic discourses (Chiseri-Strater, 1991; Courage, 1993; Lea & Street, 1999; Starfield, 2002) as a major source of students' writing difficulties, a similar dissonance was in evidence between the participants' rather lay discourses and those they encountered in their courses.

It is important to note that occurrence of patchwriting in students' papers was greatest in sections of their papers that were dealing with either theory or difficult notions of a philosophical nature. It could be argued that the frequent occurrence of patchwriting in these sections is in part due the distance between students' familiar ways of thinking, speaking, reading, and writing and the mostly esoteric nature of the discourses that they were dealing with. Their patchwriting, from this perspective, can be viewed as a consequence of their effort to close this gap, and to represent themselves as writers competent enough to invoke the legitimate discourse in their courses. As Bartholomae (1985) observed about the novice student writing in academia:

> The student has to appropriate (or be appropriated by) a
> specialized discourse, and he [sic] has to do this as though
> he [sic] were easily and comfortably one with his [sic]
> audience, as though he [sic] were a member of the academy
> or an historian or an anthropologist or an economist; he
> [sic] has to invent the university by assembling and

mimicking its language while finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, on the one hand, and the requirements of convention, the history of a discipline, on the other. He [sic] must learn to speak our language. Or he [sic] must dare to speak it or to carry off the bluff, since speaking and writing will most certainly be required long before the skill is 'learned'. And this understandably, causes problems. (p. 135)

Two points in Bartelomae's remark are of particular significance: One is that for students to survive in academia, they are required to represent themselves as legitimate writers of the academic discourse long before they have the means to do so, and second, that they should construct a semblance of legitimacy to survive as they work their way through university. In a similar fashion, it could be argued that patchwriting in the participants' papers was an attempt by them to feign legitimacy to meet the writing demands of the course as well as to help them learn and survive academically. Seen in this light, students' close reliance on their sources as well as their occasional transgressive intertextuality were an indication of their effort to negotiate the difficulties they had in encountering unfamiliar forms of reading, talking, and speaking about the world. This is in line with the findings of earlier studies that students' production of unsuccessful texts has to do with the complexity of learning to write in their disciplines (Angélil-Carter, 2000; Belcher, 1994, 1995; Boughey, 2000; Cadman, 1997; Lea & Street, 1999; Prior, 1995, 1998)

That close reliance of sources in the form of patchwriting is a way for students to gain legitimacy can be exemplified by the following representative piece from one of the participants. Not relying on her sources, the writer slips into unintelligibility, thus losing

legitimacy as a competent writer, which was signalled by a large question mark placed next to it by the professor:

> Moreover, critics of Habermas' rational public sphere,
> representing Lyotard (1984), deny the third principle,
> Rational/ Critical, insisting that than in a rational way,
> anarchy, individuality, and disagreement foster enhance
> true democratic release. Therefore, the consensus from the
> rational-critical public debate is not representing all
> citizens' intentions, but of just limited.
>
> (Hako's paper, p. 2)

As another example, Mala's paper for the Education course had two sections. In the first section she was trying to situate her paper in light of the course readings and the theoretical framework of the course, and, in the second, she was delineating how she applied the Popperian theory in her tutoring practice. In the text-based interview, when I probed her about the patchwritten pieces in her paper, she explained:

> Well, in this part I'm really saying some of the things that
> for example Bereiter and Popper have said about
> knowledge making, and the reason you see so many words
> from for example Bereiter is because, you know, I'm not a
> philosopher, so I have to say exactly what they have said.
> But in the other part of my paper I'm explaining the way I
> used their theory. (Mala's interview, July 2005)

This statement seems to show that the unacceptable intertextuality in Mala's paper is due to her struggle to deploy this newly encountered way of speaking about knowledge building and educational practice.

A similar pattern of patchwriting was in evidence in Lee's paper. When asked about the reason, he explained:

> The theory part was very difficult and I had to take pieces
> from this and that paper to do it .... Ah, in here, it wasn't
> very difficult because I'm kind of talking about my
> experience when I was a TV broadcaster and blogger back
> in China. (Lee's interview, November 2005)

While the majority of the participants in this study were struggling with appropriating others' word, Hamud's paper represented a unique case. Hamud's particular circumstances enabled him to fluently invoke the legitimate discourse without needing to patchwrite from his sources, and thereby positively influencing both the TA and the professor. It was his last course in his program; he had already taken a similar course with the same professor, and he had closely worked for the professor as a TA for a semester that involved a considerable amount of reading and interacting with the professor. This relatively longer exposure time, and perhaps more opportunities to try on the legitimate discourse in his literate activities, had instilled in him the appropriate academic disposition valued in the course. Because of this particular history, he felt quite at home in the course. When I asked him if the readings in the course were new to him, he responded:

> Oh, no! None of it was new. I'm pretty sure you know I
> don't have the course pack. And I didn't read any of the
> actual articles that were required because it felt like I was
> reading the same over. I was simply in that class to hear
> what other people had to say and to see what other people's
> take was to get a perspective that was different than mine.
> (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

As is evident from this quote, Hamud had already read similar articles in an earlier course with the same professor. This prior familiarity became further apparent during the text-based interview with him. When asked if he had come across any new ideas or notions in the course, he replied:

> I don't think I picked up on any terminology that I didn't have prior to coming into the course beside may be the concept of 'white guilt' which fascinates me. I think I had a pretty sound knowledge base of the course material itself that I didn't pick up anything from the course in terms of terminology. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

Although Hamud's paper exhibits his competence in invoking the legitimate discourse, it is important to point out here that due to his positioning in the university hierarchy he was not considered a legitimate writer. As it will be shortly demonstrated in the next chapter, contrary to what many cognitively oriented earlier research has aimed to show (Berkenkotter, 1984; Blakeslee, 1997; Flower, 1988; Hyland, 2002; Penrose & Geisler, 1994), authority is not totally a function of the written text; rather it is in part externally conferred on writers based on whether or not they are institutionally sanctioned as such. As we will see later, this had implications on Hamud's textual practices that ultimately undermined his authority.

A survival strategy. It is now commonplace to say that texts are produced out of, and are positioned within, complex sets of relationships and processes in particular times and places, and that they can not, therefore, be fully understood as "self-contained and independent entities, knowable apart from their own time and the time of their recovery" (Nelson, Treichler, & Grossberg, 1992, p. 14). In light of this, to better understand why the majority of the participants in this study patchwrote, it is necessary to examine their

papers within the broader context of their lives, and explore the bearing that it had on their text production (Currie, 1998; Leki, 1995). Many international students who are admitted into Canadian universities tend to be bright students in their own countries, who have been able to come to Canadian universities through merit-based scholarships from their countries. As one professor observed:

> This is a place that they work hard to be at and there's been
> a lot of barriers and struggles and frustrations often before
> they have arrived here and there is a mindset that this is a
> place of higher learning and I've never met a student in our
> own faculty that has been deceitful to want to cheat on their
> writing abilities at all. (Matt's interview, September 2005)

When these students who have worked hard to get into Canadian universities find themselves in graduate courses, they often encounter unfamiliar discourses, and find that they have to write in a language in which they have little experience. On top of this, many of these students are sponsored for a limited period of time to do the requirements of their programs. For instance, Amorita was to be in Canada for a maximum two-year scholarship by the government of her country, and she felt pressured to finish within the time period. Otherwise, she feared, she would have to deal with the possibility of compensating the funding ministry in her home country. The feeling of urgency in the face of limited language proficiency and dense and difficult readings created a high level of anxiety for these students, as they felt they might not be able to complete the requirements in time, or that they might fail the courses which could prolong their studies. For many of these students, this was a frightening scenario both financially and in terms of face. Hako, for example, had quit her job, and decided to self-fund her education out of her savings. As she explained:

> When I was in university in Japan, I also worked in a
> company as a business communication person, but when I
> finished university I told myself 'No, I'm not good for this
> job' and didn't want to be there any more. At first I was
> going to the US but an English teacher who was Canadian
> told me to come to Canada and he said it will be cheaper …
> No, I don't have a scholarship and I pay the tuition myself,
> from my savings. (Hako's interview, October 2005)

It could be argued that patchwriting was a survival strategy that many of the participants used in order to ease up their stressful experience in the university. It provided them with a means to make up for their shortcomings to meet their course requirements. It also helped reduce their anxiety level, which in turn served to facilitate their learning. It is important to note that students were taking other courses at the time, and that they had to meet the literacy demands of those courses as well. As part of our consent agreement, I had undertaken to help the participants with the papers they were writing in other courses, and I was witnessing firsthand their efforts and struggles. The students were spending their energies on multiple fronts and, without the help of patchwriting, they would have hardly been able to finish their various writing assignments and term papers.

When the students read and hear professors' assessment criteria, they become even more anxious. One of the students for example expressed this anxiety as follows:

> You see your English level, and the professor says he wants
> a paper that is written by … like … a professor, you think
> 'Oh! No, no, I can't do this with my English. (Salma's
> interview, November 2005)

Indeed when students see such criteria as "care and precision," "scholarly," and "confident writing," and they see their own level of language, it leaves them no other choice but to patchwrite to meet such criteria. The majority of students in this study feared that they might not be able to pass the courses in which they were so much emotionally and financially invested. In addition, for many of the participants, writing was perceived to be a matter of make or break because they thought they were not able to meet the assessment criterion of participation in class discussions to earn that portion of the total grade for the courses. For instance, in the Communication course, the students were required to actively participate in class discussion and their evaluation for this portion of the total grade for the course was assessed on the basis of "the quality of contributions (e.g. clarity, insight and facility with the ideas, concepts, and arguments addressed in the course materials) to the class discussions rather than the mere frequency of participation" (pp. 2-3). Throughout my class observations, I noticed that all of the participants were passive most of the time, and they felt that they might have already lost this portion of the total mark by not actively contributing to the class discussions. Because of this, writing for them became even more vital in terms of enabling them to successfully complete the course and continue with their studies. Talking about his difficulties during the course, Lee said:

> Speaking in class is so difficult for me… like a nightmare!
> Of course writing is difficult, but for me, it's less scary than
> speaking in class. (Lee's interview, November 2005)

Timelines and deadlines were not helping the students either. In the communication course, the students were required to submit their essays a month prior to the end of the course. This was because the essay was only one of three assessment

measures which included class participation as well as one class presentation (10%), an essay (50%), and a formal examination (40%). Given this arrangement, the students had to generate a legitimate paper within the span of two months. This meant that they were required to write as they were busy making sense of 100 pages of readings each week in addition to other readings for their other courses. This was a challenge for the students particularly considering the difficulty they had in reading and understanding complex materials as pointed out by Salma:

> I'm finding the readings ... I'm very slow, very very slow
> in reading the articles and books. I think an article that a
> Canadian student can read in two or three hours can take
> me a whole day. (Salma's interview, November 2005)

And a similar statement by Hako:

> The books and articles were very academic, so it's a lot of
> time for me to understand them, just *understanding* them.
> So it was like double difficulty; understanding journals was
> very hard. (Hako's interview, November 2005)

The important point here is that the students resorted to patchwriting not with an intention to deceive their professors, but with the intention to remain in their programs and increase their chances of learning and success. The above discussion coupled with earlier research that suggest students' copying is a natural developmental stage in learning to write in their disciplines (Campbell, 1990; Currie, 1998; Howard, 1992, 1995, 1999; Prior, 1995; Spack, 1997), therefore, call for viewing patchwriting as a legitimate stage in the process of students learning and socialization into their disciplinary communities, rather than labelling it as plagiarism and penalizing it as fraud.

A desire to learn. Another dimension to the presence, or lack of, patchwriting in students' papers was their desire for, or resistance to, taking up the discursive ways of speaking and writing in their courses. In what follows I will draw on the notions of *investment* (Norton, 2000b) and *authoritative* and *internally persuasive* words (Bakhtin, 1981) to analyze the presence or absence of patchwriting in the participants' papers. I will show that while the presence of patchwriting is indicative of students' desire to "own" (Ivanič, 1998; Ivanič & Camps, 2001; Riley, 2006) these discourses, its absence, in turn, betrays the presence of a counter culture that encourages resistance to taking up, or learning, these discourses (Alpert, 1991; Candela, 1998; Willis, 1976).

Although Norton has used the notion of investment in her discussion of acquisition of a second language rather than writing proper, I concur with Angélil-Carter (1997) that it could as well be used to describe the relation of student writers to the discourses they come in contact with. Drawing on Bourdieu's economic metaphor, Norton (2000a) describes learners' reasons for language learning in terms of their investment in the second language to increase the return in symbolic and material capital. The higher the return, the more willing the learners invest in learning the second language.

The notion of investment allows Norton (1997) to ask such questions as What is the learner's investment in the target language? or How is the learner's relationship to the target language socially and historically constructed? in order to explain learners' desire, or lack of it, to acquire a second language. Following Norton, I would like to ask similar questions about my participants' socially and historically constructed relationship with

the discourses presented to them in their courses in order to explain their desire for, or resistance to, appropriating these discourses.

As demonstrated in previous sections, an analysis of students' source use revealed that in the majority of them there were numerous instances of close correspondence between students' papers and their sources. As mentioned, the degree of correspondence observed could be spread out along a continuum. At one end of this continuum stood Mala's paper in which these textual correspondences bordered on transgression while at the other stood Hamud's paper that was free from any patchwritten portions. In between these two extremes stood Amorita's, Salma's, Hako's, Lee's and Osman's texts. In the papers of the first four, there were instances of patchwriting with varying degrees and frequencies. Within this group, Osman's paper, however, represented a unique case in that, while there was no patchwriting in evidence, there many direct quotes with little integration into the body of his paper.

This variation in the way the words and ideas of the other had been taken up and incorporated in the participants' papers can be accounted for by the differential investments that they had made in their courses, and by extension, in the discourses that they were supposed to be socialized in. The participants brought with them their own unique sociohistorically shaped autobiographical identities (Ivanič, 1998) as well as their unique visions for their personal and professional futures. As a result they exhibited varying degrees of willingness to take up the discourses.

Hako, for example, was eager to take up the ways of speaking about the media that the course advocated. Her decision to do a master's in communication derived from this eagerness to learn and know about the role of media in interethnic and international

conflicts. This desire to learn had prompted her to self-fund her studies. As she

recounted:

> One of the reasons I'm interested in Communication is that
> when I saw TV program it was about Rawanda. There was
> a huge conflict in Rawanda and one of the causes of this
> conflict was the radio broadcasting, and I was so shocked
> watching the program. People who know each other and
> who live next door suddenly killing each other because of
> the radio broadcasting. I was like "Oh, my God! It's not
> gonna happen in Japan! That was a huge huge shock for
> me. And then I started wondering what if that happens in
> Japan or to me? What do I think. Yeah, that was so
> interesting. Probably that's why I chose to study
> communication and that's why I'm taking political uses of
> media. So I love this program and I think it's worth paying
> for it from my savings. (Hako's interview, October 2005)

A compassionate individual, Hako went on to share her plans after completing her

studies:

> I'm pretty much interested in helping people in poor
> countries, like in African countries or Asian, and I'm
> pretty much involved in that kind of, I don't how to say ...
> organizations and activities. I'm a member of an NGO in
> Japan helping Cambodian kids, so it's my dream to be a
> help to poor people who are suffering from something. And
> because I'm very interested in media, journalism, I'm kind
> of thinking using that skill and knowledge, somehow I
> wanna help them like in .. I'm not quite sure yet what job it
> can be. (Hako's interview, October 2005)

Salma had different reasons for her interest and enthusiasm for her course. She had chosen to come to Canada to learn from courses, improve her English, and enrich her world experience. As she put it:

> Well, I can profit from some courses here. It's also good
> for the resume , because you can say you've been in a
> foreign country and this and that ... I don't like doing
> nothing, not engage [with the courses and readings]; if I do
> a thing I like to engage in it ... I used to live in France on
> another student exchange [program], I can speak French
> and I like Canada. Canada is bilingual so I wanted to
> improve my English because English is the language I have
> been studying most all my years. (Salma's interview,
> October 2005)

Mala had decided to take this particular course because she wanted to expand her educational horizon and explore what other possibilities were available as she was reading and thinking about finding a research topic for her masters' research:

> I thought I knew more about Curriculum theory and I
> thought it wouldn't be a bad idea to know about some other
> theories. That's how I ended up in this course. (Mala's
> interview, June 2005)

These three were the participants whose papers exhibited instances of patchwriting. They had invested a lot in their courses, and were hoping to gain a lot out of them. Because of this high level of investment, they were quite willing to appropriate the ways of speaking and writing associated with their course. Their patchwriting seemed to be at once a reflection of their desire for, and their struggle with, owning those unfamiliar ways of speaking and writing. In the meantime, the interplay of participants'

simultaneous desire for, and struggle with, those discourses happened under the watchful

eyes of the university plagiarism policies that forced them to adhere to use their own

words or fully demarcate their own words from those that they had borrowed to avoid the

charge of plagiarism.

As mentioned above, Osman's paper had a unique characteristic. His paper was

free from patchwriting, with many direct quotes. When asked about his reasons for

taking the course, he said:

> I have limited time to finish, and this course was the only
> summer course that I could get, and it's fair to say I didn't
> choose it. (Osman's interview, July 2005)

Osman's reasons for signing up for the course were quite different from the rest of

the participants and, as the quote indicates, he had minimal investment in the course. His

commitment to the course was limited to successfully passing the course and fulfilling

the degree requirements for graduation. In fact, at one point in the interview when I asked

Osman if the theory of knowledge construction that underpinned all activities in the

course was new to him, his response revealed a negative "evaluative orientation"

(Maguire, 1998) toward the theoretical perspective offered in the course when he said:

> It's just a fancy name for what I've always been doing.
> That's what you constantly do as a teacher. I don't know
> why we need to make it so complicated. (Osman's
> interview, July 2005)

Osman was evidently reluctant to talk about educational practice in terms

advocated in the course, which was indeed what the course was all about. Read against

this background, it could be argued that the lack of patchwriting and the representation of

the words of the other as clearly demarcated statements in Osman's paper is a reflection of this resistance to learning. As a student, Osman felt he was coerced into taking up the course literacy, but he was resisting this imposition in his own way. While he was deploying the legitimate discourse in his paper, he was covertly representing it as the imposed words of the Father (Bakhtin, 1981) by carefully demarcating this discourse from his own language and to avoid any merging of his own voice and those that he was representing. This is similar to the case recounted in Wertsch (1991) about the representation of Stalin's speeches by the Soviet media in the mid 20th century where the media would signal the dictator's speeches as imposed by directly quoting those speeches.

As Bakhtin points out, the authoritative word is transmitted rather than represented; it does not allow any dialogue with it and it does not allow it to be mixed with the receiver's words. Osman's perception of the course as imposed had made him reluctant to try to appropriate the discourse. He, therefore, transmitted what he had read without attempting to mix his own voice with them. Osman's use of direct quotes was his way of resisting the discourse, and it was a way for him to "disown" (Ivanič, 1998; Ivanič & Camps, 2001) the perspective on educational practice and knowledge building that the course was about. Moreover, as Donley and Doncaster (2001) and Volosinov (1971) have argued, direct quotes represent a minimal degree of reader's engagement with sources compared to paraphrasing because there is a minimal degree of mixing of the reporting speech and reported speech, and therefore, a minimal degree of analysis by the reporting speech. Indeed, because "analysis is the heart and soul of indirect discourse" (Volosinov, 1973, p. 129), the preponderance of direct quotes in Osman's paper indicated

little by way of his desire to seriously engage with the way of thinking, reading, and writing that the course was advocating. Indeed, his relative low mark of B could perhaps be attributed to this half-hearted engagement with his sources and the missing analysis in his paper that, in the words of a professor, had given a "directory style" character to his paper.

Reflections

This chapter revealed that the majority of the participants closely relied on their sources to produce their own texts. This pervasiveness provides empirical support for the claim that patchwriting is a learning opportunity for students. The account further went beyond this general claim by detailing some of the motivations behind patchwriting that derived from students' desire to gain linguistic capital, symbolic legitimacy, and their personal and financial investment in their education. I have been personally surprised by one revelation of this study, and that is, those students who were enthusiastic about learning and wanted to make the best of their program of studies tended to patchwrite more. The fact that, for example, Hako had spent a lot of money in buying expensive recording gadgets to record seminar sessions and re-listen to those sessions at home on her own pace serves to show the extent of her desire to learn. I keep asking myself if the students had been forbidden to engage in this type of textual practice, how would they have been able to create their texts. The very fact that none of the professors accused any of the students' of textual transgression suggests that professors were aware of the challenges that their students were experiencing in their encounter with the academic discourses of their courses, and that in practice university plagiarism policies that categorize this type of close reliance as plagiarism gets filtered through the pedagogical

lens of the professors. While I believe patchwriting is not a bad practice to be condemned due to its learning value, I also think that some practices tended to contribute to it. For example, requiring students to weekly read 100 pages of dense readings while they simultaneously had to read for their other courses during the same week, or the short duration of intensive Spring courses that left little time for students to experiment, and gradually feel comfortable, with the academic literacies they encountered.

CHAPTER SIX

Global Patchwriting: Student Writer as a Bricoleur

As participants in this study relied on sources to produce their papers, many of them created texts that exhibited certain features that had prompted the professors to comment on them. These included dominance of one or a handful of sources in papers, absence of a clearly articulated line of argument, and juxtaposition of large chunks of borrowed materials. The papers had a quality that can best be described as a *bricolage* or a "pieced-together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 4). The metaphor of *bricolage* is particularly apt to describe these macro textual features because, similar to a bricolage in which each patch preserves its uniqueness without assimilating into its new context, the borrowed textual materials in students' papers tended to preserve their original rhetorical contexts without being assimilated into the rhetorical context of the students' papers.

I have chosen to refer to the marginalization of the student's voice in the paper in relation to the voices of authoritative others as *global patchwriting* in order to signal the presence of patchwriting at the macro level of the development of ideas and creation of unique meanings. In what follows I present some illustrative excerpts from the students' papers, and will then consider professors' reactions to students' global patchwriting. A discussion of the reasons for students' production of such texts will then follow.

To start with, in Mala's thirteen-page paper written for the Education course, we are faced with materials reproduced from a handful of sources for over six pages. As we read along and ask the Bakhtinian question of "Who is doing the talking?," (Wertsch, 1991), the answer is that it is the sources doing the speaking rather than Mala. Mala's

absence from her paper is such that the paper is a retelling of course readings. In response to this, the professor has commented, "All these are good stuff but too long - it's become a lit review" (Mala's paper, p. 6). Mala's paper is an example of the papers that one professor characterized as "a telephone book directory of quotes" (Catherine's interview, October 2005). She has simply reproduced the words of others without these materials being integrated into a line of argument. Expecting a clearly articulated line of argument, the professor has commented midway in her paper that, "You must by now articulate your purpose, e.g., say how you will apply the framework in the context of your teaching" (p. 5).

Another written comment by the professor on Mala's paper emphasizes the fact that the professor expected an integration of what she has read into a line of argument. The absence of a clear line of argument around which Mala's borrowings would have revolved contributed to the production of a paper without coherence and unity. In her comments, the professor had referred to this disjointedness:

> It would have strengthened your paper a lot *if you'd
> incorporated some of the claims/lit review inside* this
> summary of evidence of knowledge for K [the name of
> Mala's student] so that this paper did not read *disjointed.*"
> (Mala's paper, p. 13, *italics* added)

In Amorita's paper we witness similar characteristics. The following is a representative piece from her paper:

> When the term globalization has itself become even more
> globalised (**Giddens, 2002: xi**), the assumptions that
> communication via advertising had replaced ideological
> solemnity are being reshaped. Postmodern theorists

> emphasize how traditional structures of government and
> politics are out of step with contemporary cultural patterns
> and identity processes. (**Dahlgren, 2000:313**) Maybe, as
> the French theorist Gilles Lipovetsky points in his last
> publications we are not currently experiencing postmodern
> times but *hypermodern* ones. Times when we are
> experiencing the reconciliation of the three main axioms
> that characterize Modernity: Pluralist Democracy, Market,
> and Techno-scientific efficiency. (**Lipovetsky, 1992, 1994,**
> **1997, 2005**)

> (Amorita's paper, p. 6, boldface added)

As this representative sample suggests, Amorita's paper is heavily marked by

transmission of her readings, and the paper is more of an assemblage of others' ideas. A

clear stance is absent from her paper. In response to this quality of her paper, the

professor has made the following comments on her paper:

> First, no clearly articulated argument, thesis statement, or
> research question is presented. Consequently, the reader is
> provided with little sense of just what exactly you are
> trying to accomplish. The lack of a clearly stated argument
> also weakens the ability to drawn linkages from one idea to
> the next. This greatly weakens the overall effectiveness of
> the essay.

> (Professor's comments on Amorita's paper)

And the following comment as well:

> There is a third and related matter to consider that also
> relates to the use of quotations. Namely, when writing a
> paper one should avoid simply weaving together different
> quotations to 'tell the story'. Quotations should only be

used to 'back-up' or reinforce the argument one is trying to
develop.

(Professor's feedback)

As the comments indicate, Amorita has not subjugated the words of the other to

her own communicative and rhetorical purposes. It is interesting to note, for instance, that

at one point in her paper we read:

> A follow-up survey in Britain in 1999 found that 40 percent
> of 18-24 year olds in Britain were not even registered to
> vote, compared with just 8 percent of the general
> population (Pirie and Worcester, 2000. In Bennet,
> 2004b:2). This is just an example, we might say, but the
> true is that this number is becoming similar in many
> countries, making voting disengagement a globalised term
> too. It seems that people are mobilizing around questions
> that apparently have more direct bearing in their lives, their
> life plans, morality and/or identity (Dahlgren, 2000:312).

(Amorita's paper, p. 7, underline added)

In a marginal note the professor has wondered, "A follow up to what?". Here

Amorita has extrapolated a chunk of text from its original rhetorical context and

implanted it into her paper without recognizing that the phrase "As a follow-up" refers

back to earlier sections in the original text. Here again the borrowed texts have not been

assimilated to a line of argument in Amorita's paper.

Although Salma is more successful in creating a line of argument in her paper by

trying to apply the theoretical readings to a concrete case and thereby providing a unique

purpose, her paper also exhibits global patchwriting. She has relied excessively on one

author and has reproduced sections of this work fourteen times in the course of a 13-page

paper. Moreover, the following piece shows how Salma is, as one professor put it, to a large extent "a secretary to published authors, to the experts in the field" (Mark's interview, July 2005). This textual feature that consists of creating a bricolage of materials from published sources not driven by a unique rhetorical purpose is what I refer to as global patchwriting. In the following excerpts, for example, notice how many times the student has reproduced materials from one published source by an author named Papacharissi (2002):

> Universality is the characteristic that has deeply fostered the belief in the internet to be a new place to promote public sphere. The internet is a technology that provides simultaneous communication from any place all over the world. The only drawback of the Internet is related to the gap between the *have* and the *have-nots* (**Papacharissi, 2002**) ... it does not even *guarantee increased political activity or enlightened political discourse* (**Papacharissi, 2002; p. 13**) .... On the other hand, it also fragmentize the universe of users and threaten to *overemphasize [our] differences and downplay or even restrict [our] commonalities* (**Papacharissi, 2002, p. 17**).
>
> (Salma's paper, p. 3, boldface added)

And:

> Finally, according to exposed reflections, online debate do not appears to cause a real influence on current political activity (**Papacharissi, 2002**).... *For independent candidates with limited funds and sparse coverage from the mainstream media, the internet presents a cheap, convenient, and speedy way of reaching out to potential*

> *voters. A website may not make as much of a difference for*
>
> *major party candidates, who can afford campaign*
>
> *advertising and enjoy continuous coverage from the*
>
> *mainstream press* (**Papacharissi, 2002**, p.24).
>
> (Salma's paper, p.7, boldface added)

Salma is in effect reproducing authority rather than creating it. She is not putting forth a new perspective on things. This secretarial role is evident in the professor's comment:

> The *attempt* to link the situation in Spain to some of the perspectives on the relationship between the public sphere concept and new technologies and the use of supporting empirical evidence was very good ... Overall, your paper would have been strengthened by clearly articulating, in the introduction, what you *intended to argue* in addition to what was going to be examined. Your paper would have been more effective if you had also avoided excessive recounting of the literature. (Professor's feedback on Salma's paper, *italics* added)

The professor's choice of the words "attempt" and "intended to argue" in the above comment is revealing. Together these two seem to indicate that the professor thinks that Salma's paper is merely an attempt to make an argument rather than successfully making it. In other words, the professor expected to see a line of argument in Salma's paper which he did not see successfully executed.

Lee's paper is, as the professor has pointed out, "thinly based on the literature." Of the twelve sources that he had relied on, five were internet sources that included some non-specialist online sources such as Wikipedia that the professor asked not to use right

on the first day of the course. Lee's paper is an example of a bricolaged paper *par excellence*; he has merely juxtaposed words of the other to construct his paper, without any integration or synthesis. In the following excerpt from a page in his paper, he has patched together chunks of text from one author three times:

> On the credibility building and ethical problems on the blog, Meyer argued:
>
> Ethical standards develop over time through a natural selection process. Rules that work tend to be kept, while those that cause confusion eventually get dropped or repaired. So it is not surprising that a medium as new as blogging would be in a period of moral confusion. **(Meyer,2005)**
>
> "Once a blogger makes a post, that post should be treated as if it were carved in stone, and bloggers have a duty never to erase their posts ... warts and all," **(Meyer,2005)**
>
> When it comes to building trust, blogging's needs are no different from those of the old journalism. It helps if you know what you are talking about. And so one way for a journalist, blogger or mainstream, to earn and keep a reputation is by demonstrating subject matter competence. **(Meyer,2005)**
>
> (Lee's paper, p. 14, boldface added)

As the excerpt suggests, there is little integration of Lee's borrowings with his own text. In fact, the professor had not missed out on this feature such that on the assessment criterion of "Use of source materials: adequacy, pertinence, how well and appropriately they were used," he has assigned only 1 out of 3 to Lee's paper. Closely related to this absence of integration of his borrowing into a coherent text of his own,

exemplified by the excerpt above, the professor has given him only 9 out of 15 on the assessment criterion of "Overall substantive adequacy of the interpretation or argument you present: Does it reflect careful analysis? Creativity? Insight?"

Hamud's paper represents a different case, however. He has a strong presence in his paper, and whatever he has borrowed from others is at the service of making a point of his own. All his borrowings are in fact motivated by his rhetorical needs. His paper demonstrates an observation made by Wells (1993) about experienced academic writers whose composing process is underpinned by the assumption that writing requires having a line of argument, and that in creating an argument, the writer uses his or her line as a "structure in which to incorporate the ideas of others" (p. 66). In this respect, Hamud's appropriation of words of the other is driven by his intention to say something novel on the topic. When I queried him about this aspect of his paper, his response revealed that he had a sophisticated genre knowledge (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Bhatia, 1999) that included "an understanding of [the] epistemology, background knowledge, hidden agendas, rhetorical appeals, surprise value" (Tardy, 2005, p. 327) that were current in the context of writing. Hamud's awareness of the importance of a strong authorial presence in his paper was so strong that he followed a particular composing strategy in order to avoid being overshadowed by published authors:

> I write my paper out and then integrate these sources
> because I feel like if I do it the other way around then it
> influences everything. I'm way too conscious of building
> my paper around references instead of integrating the
> references into my paper. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

His genre knowledge included an awareness of the argumentative nature of academic writing. This was evident in his reaction to the professor's requirement that students had to rely on at least 10 course readings in their final papers, when he complained that:

> I feel like I can find enough sources to support or negate
> my argument. And I've done this for so many years and I
> know how to do so what's the point in keeping on doing,
> you know, and what am I learning now. It got to the point
> where I felt like it was limiting my train of thought limiting
> my learning. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)[7]

What these two statements indicate is that, based on his sophisticated knowledge, Hamud would start out with first conceiving of a rhetorical problem, then developing a line of argument based on this problem, and then incorporating the words of the other into his own paper, which itself motivated by a rhetorical need. At one point I asked him why he had cited a particular author in his paper, and he replied:

> [It's] an issue of credibility. I think if a student comes out
> and expresses his view, it's very different than when an

---

[7]Despite his sophisticated genre knowledge, diction, and rhetorical knowledge, Hamud was surprised with the assessment of his paper which was lower than what he had expected. In her feedback to him, the course TA explained the reason as follows: "Your anecdotes were evocative, personal, and highly reflective, and you flawlessly incorporated many references that included works outside the course content which showed your obvious effort and thoughtful reflection. However, I can't give you marks for the two extra sections that are not there, and neither can I give marks for sections of practice considerations when they are not clearly outlined ... Hamud, ultimately, what you had written was probing and thoughtful - however it was also incomplete. I'd give my right arm, really, to put an A+ on your paper, and if I had been given different standards to mark with then it may have been a different situation, but unfortunately I can't mark those extra areas if they aren't there. I hope this provides clarification into the results, and if you have any further questions, your best bet is to contact Kevin since I don't have authority to change marks at this point."

established author, a professional psychiatrist does that.

(Hamud' interview, July 2005)

As this quote indicates, Hamud is quite aware of his positioning in the context of writing and relies on the words of the other as rhetorical appeal to lend credibility to his paper. Therefore, for him intertextulity is a resource which is at the service of his own rhetorical meaning making, and in this regard his writing practices resemble experienced academic writers (Gilbert, 1977; Hyland, 2005; Law & Williams, 1982; MacDonald, 1989; Paul, 2000). However, the majority of the students in this study tended not to see published sources as a resource for developing a point of their own unique to the particular context of writing. It could also be argued that, in addition to their unfamiliarity with the scholarly conversations in their fields, since the students did not start out with a rhetorical intent that could motivate their source use, their papers ended up with a bricolaged quality. Their papers therefore failed to project a strong authorial presence that was highly valued by the professors.

As shown above, most of the participants in this study tended to reproduce old meanings by creating bricolaged papers out of their readings, which professors judged as less than successful. The question to ask is what are the reasons behind students' production of bricolaged texts? In what follows it will be argued that part of the reasons for students' not so successful production of strong papers had to be located in the differences between the literacy practices of these students and the practices dominant in graduate school. Literacy practices include the implicit attitudes and assumptions that literacy users in a particular context have toward reading and writing (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000; Lea & Street, 1999; Reder & Erica, 2005; Street, 1993b). Part of these assumptions and attitudes consist of participants'

epistemological orientations, their perceptions of their roles as writers, and the nature of writing in graduate school. In what follows some aspects of students' and professors' literacy practices that had a bearing on the way they viewed reading and writing in graduate school will be examined.

Professors' Literacy Practices and the Metaphor of War

Central to professors' literacy practices was the underlying metaphor of Academic Writing as War. Metaphors are important ways of how we make sense of the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1981), and I would like to argue that the above metaphor captures professors' epistemological orientation to writing and production of knowledge in graduate school. As I listened to professors and read their comments on students' papers, I soon realized they almost unanimously used such combat terminology as "back up your position", "take a position", and "defend your position" in talking about academic writing. This is evident in the following interview excerpts by one professor:

> For example I suggest to students that what you want to do
> to produce an argument is ask a question and then defend
> your position in answering that question. (Todd's
> interview, September 2005)

> Lots of times when I'm reading stuff and say, gee, there
> should be some references here. You're stating something
> that that you've got to support, some backup so to speak.
> Where's this idea coming from, you know. This kind of
> statement demands some kind of reference. (Larson's
> interview, June 2005)

Taking a position is realized in the form of a well articulated, convincing argument. In all interviews with professor as well as all course artefacts, "argument" was

the one notion that resurfaced frequently. Corroborating earlier research (Aisenberg &

Harrington, 1988; Annas & Tenney, 1996; Belcher, 1997), professors in general tended to

view academic writing as primarily construction of adversarial arguments. For instance,

during the course of a forty-five minute interview with one professor, she used the word

"argument" eighteen times. Similarly, in one of the course outlines, the word "argument"

occurred twenty-one times. These suggest that construction of an argument is at the heart

of academic writing. This is encapsulated by the following statement by another

professor from the Communication Department:

> I want your paper to be opinionated. If you're paper is
> opinionated you'll like your mark, I want you to take a
> position. It's like a referendum you're voting yes or no. I
> don't care what you vote really because it's 50/50 all the
> time or most times. I want to know why you're doing this?
> And I'm intelligent enough to appreciate your position even
> if mine differs from yours. But I want you to substantiate
> your position. So being opinionated for me is a fairly good
> criterion for a better grade. Soulless papers have no
> opinion. (Jacques' interview, October 2005)

Construction of arguments in turn rests upon the belief that academic literacy in

graduate school is a quintessentially rational endeavour (Dillon, 1991), as one Education

professor characterized academic writing as:

> letting everyone else's opinion go by the wayside and
> formulating your own and writing confidently about that. It
> is a higher order writing skill. (Matt's interview, September
> 2005)

And in the writing guide handout in the Counselling course, we read:

> Writing is rhetorical. We're generally hoping to convince
> readers of the importance of something dear to us. To do
> this, it helps to build a case, point by point, towards a
> compelling conclusion. If your summary seems
> unconvincing, you may not have prepared the ground for it.
> Examine the sequence of your argument. Have you built it,
> step by step, or are there gaps (or leaps) that leave the
> reader behind? You should be able to put a note beside
> every single paragraph indicating how it helps to further
> your case. If you can't, perhaps the paragraph doesn't
> belong.

These comments by professors suggest that for them the only authority is that of

reason. Arguably, it is this "academic disposition" (Bourdieu, 1991) that seem to

predispose them to critically approach the words and works of others rather than receive

them as authoritative (Bakhtin, 1981). This literate attitude was summed up by the

Communication course professor when he was explaining why he had added a study

guide for students to the course outline:

> So all [i.e., published works] are open to question. And so
> to me in terms of argument claims, it's really this idea of
> reinforcing the message to students that "Don't accept
> anything as fact", you know! The people that we hold up in
> highs .... I have tremendous esteem for Lawrence Lessig's
> work for example and there is a tendency to want to say
> "Oh, yes, Lawrence's everything he says is great" . Well
> no, he is a person like any other, his arguments may be well
> argued, well bounded, well grounded and have evidence to
> back it up but it nonetheless remains an argument or a
> claim. And so I suppose that sort of reflects my bias in
> terms of the study guide in terms of trying to encourage

> students to think of this as don't put your faith in any one
> scholar or any particular outlook. See it for what it is.
> (Duncan's interview, December 2005)

The above quote seems to point to two interrelated assumptions on the part of the

professors. One is that they construe academic writing as primarily consisting of

advancing arguments that could withstand rational scrutiny. The second assumption,

which is closely linked to the first, is that other writers' texts are seen as contingent

claims to truth (Bazerman, 1985; Bazerman, 1988; Hass, 1993; Higgins, 1993; Kaufer &

Geisler, 1989; Latour & Woolgar, 1979; Penrose & Geisler, 1994; Scardamalia &

Bereiter, 1991; Swales, 1987; Swales & Najjar, 1987; Tardy, 2005). This orientation to

writing/knowledge writing appears to predispose professors to treat the works of the other

are primarily claims to knowledge rather than definitive, indisputable, objective truths

that preclude critical engagement with them. In the Communication course outline,

students were given a set of guidelines on how to read published works that revealed a

complex set of assumptions held by the professors about reading and writing, knowledge

construction, and their roles as writers:

> Study Guide:

- When doing the readings, preparing for class discussions and
  research papers, and/or studying for literature-oriented exams there
  are seven key elements that need to be considered. They are:

- What is the author's 'thesis statement' or main argument?

- What are the main or primary points made by the author to support
  his/her thesis statement or main argument?

- What evidence does the author use to support the claims s/he makes (e.g. examples, statistics, theory, empirical studies, work of other authors, etc)? Be specific.

- What assumptions underpin the author's argument?

- What are the implications of the author's argument?

- How does the author's argument differ from or parallel the claims made by other authors?

- Are there any ideas presented, or claims made by the author, that can be applied to other contexts or settings? If not, why? If yes, give examples.

(Communication course outline, p. 5)

Based on this tacit epistemological orientation that appears to be so central to their own literacy practices, professors look for a substantiated claim to truth in students' papers, and accordingly, their assessments of graduate students' papers is primarily guided by this view of writing. As an example, one Education professor, when characterizing students' successful papers, explained:

> I think an A+ paper is a prominent line of argument. It's an argument that has been eloquently presented, supported, goes somewhere. I mean those are wonderful papers, wonderful papers. (Catherine's interview, October 2005)

In fact, this attitude is so fundamental to professors' literate behaviour that its absence in a graduate student's thesis was, in the words of one Linguistics professor, shocking:

> I was once reading a thesis … and so it was [i.e., a bunch of quotes linked together]. It was really quite shocking. And I

thought that person could have summarized that stuff.

(Larson's interview, June 2005)

A similar attitude toward missing a clearly articulated line of argument– which he characterized as a "creative spin" to which all borrowings are subservient - was expressed by the Counselling course professor:

> Sometimes the student kind of link together a lot of
> material but there is a sense that it's just a rattling off of
> lists. Whereas in the paper that's successful you can see
> that they really grabbed hold of something and applied it to
> their own experience and often introduced a creative spin.
> You can see that they've taken the construct and made it
> their own because they're applying it in a way that is not
> explicitly or literally what was said in any particular text.
> (Kevin's interview, July 2005)

Corroborating earlier research (Greene, 1992, 1995; Starfield, 2002; Tardy, 2005), this statement shows that professors do not expect students to simply reproduce their sources; rather they expect them to be "constructing a text that conveys some novel contribution to a textual conversation that is not found in the sources, but which is closely linked to them" (Abasi, Akbari, & Graves, 2006, p. 111). Precisely because of this attitude, all professors without exception assessed students' bricolaged papers as less successful. For instance, in his comments on Amorita's globally patchwritten paper, the professor stated:

> There is a third and related matter to consider that also
> relates to the use of quotations. Namely, when writing a
> paper one should avoid simply weaving together different
> quotations to 'tell the story'. Quotations should only be

used to 'back-up' or reinforce the argument one is trying to
develop.

(Professor's feedback)

It was due to this attitude to written text/knowledge that the Communication
professor, for instance, had mentioned "being critical" six times in reference to students'
final essays in the course outline. When asked what he meant by this term, he explained:

> I mean critical in terms of thoughtful. Reflect on these
> ideas. Don't accept ideas at face value. It's not because
> Castel or Lessings say X that X is the case. It's really about
> this idea of trying to foster in the students I guess becoming
> not cynics but agnostics. As a good researcher you should
> not believe anything anybody tells you until you see the
> evidence. And so critical in the context of the course
> outline, that's really what it's about. Don't take anything at
> face value until you've seen the evidence, you can weigh
> up the evidence and you can evaluate the arguments or
> perspectives that are being put forth which again as a
> researcher in my view, that's a fundamental outlook on
> things. (Duncan's interview, December 2005)

Significantly, when I pointed out that to this professor that he had used the word
"critical" six times, he was surprised. This suggested the extent to which this attitude was
ingrained in his attitude toward his professional literate behaviour. Creation of new
meanings by students rather than mere transmission of old ones is so valued in graduate
school that it leaves a lasting impression on professors when they see it in students' texts.
One Education professor, for instance said:

> One of the best students essays I ever got some years ago
> which I enjoyed thoroughly was ... she deliberately

> critiqued a position I had expressed; an argument I
> presented and a counter argument. (Todd's interview,
> September 2005)

Similarly in the description of an ideally successful paper in the course outline of the Education course, the criterion of "novelty and originality" had pride of place:

> An exceptional and outstanding response to the assignment.
> Not only complete in its content, with a clear and coherent
> presentation designed to communicate effectively, but also
> it adds something which novel and original and which
> distinguishes it from an A piece of work. A+ identifies
> exceptional work. (Course outline, p. 5)

In contrast, an examination of students' literacy practices revealed a different story about students' understanding of what underpins writing in graduate school.

Students' Literacy Practice and Silences on Adversarial Writing

In contrast to professors' repeated references to writing as claims to knowledge, in interviews with the majority of students in this study there was no mention of writing as argument. As with any analysis of discourse (Fairclough, 1992c; Kress, 1989), very often what the participants do not say is just as important as what they do say. As far as the participants' epistemological orientation was concerned, there was no reference in the interviews to suggest that they similarly viewed academic writing as construction of adversarial arguments. Still less was their conception of writing controlled by the metaphor of war. The interview data as well as textual evidence suggest that the particular academic dispositions that most of the participants brought to their context of writing played a major role in their construction of reproductive papers. There were numerous indications in what the students said of the fact that their prior literacy

practices, including academic and workplace literacies, had not instilled in them a disposition congruent with the one valued in graduate school.

For instance, Amorita used to be a journalism major in her undergraduate years and a practicing journalist in her home country prior to being admitted to the master's program. She brought the literacy practices associated with journalism genres to the essay she wrote. She had little prior experience in writing academic genres similar to the one she was required to write in the Communication course. She explained her prior literacy practices in her undergraduate years as follows:

> Depending on the courses, most of the assignments were
> journalistic assignment like write an article about this, go to
> the conference and make a note of that like you are writing
> for a newspaper, write a story. I had literary courses also.
> (Amorita's interview, November 2005)

Amorita's prior academic and professional experience as a story teller was radically different from professors' rationalist view of writing as a goal-directed adversarial argument. It certainly was radically different from the war metaphor and the resulting need for backing up one's position, defending one's position, and attacking other's position. As a result of this, she had not done this in her paper, and her professor reacted to it as follows:

> There is a third and related matter to consider that also
> relates to the use of quotations. Namely, when writing a
> paper one should avoid simply weaving together different
> quotations to 'tell the story'. Quotations should only be
> used to 'back-up' or reinforce *the argument* one is trying to
> develop. (Professor's feedback, *italics* added)

Mala, who came from a literary background, similarly came from an educational system that rarely, if ever, required her to write extended multi-sourced argumentative (Slattery, 1991) type of writing that required the student to critically rely on a wide range of sources. In talking about her past education, she recounted:

> I didn't write much back home. In my undergrad, I used to
> write only two-page or three-page papers, and I wrote about
> my thoughts or reactions to novels or short stories. (Mala's
> interview, July 2005)

In contrast, Hamud shared an orientation to writing/knowledge similar to those expressed by the professors. Hamud had done his undergraduate degree at an Anglophone university in Lebanon, which was modelled closely on the North American system, and as a result, he was very much familiar with the essayist literacy tradition (Farr, 1993; Lillis, 1999; Scollen & Scollen, 1981; Spellmeyer, 1989) in North American universities. At one point while he was talking about his undergraduate years, he revealed this familiarity:

> My senior thesis for my undergrad was intended to have a
> specific format, *APA* format, 30 pages, 20 references to be
> used. I had an old paper of mine that was about 15 to 17
> pages that I figured I'll just develop that into a 30-page
> paper. In the process of doing that in about 2 weeks before
> my paper was due, I figured, No I'm not satisfied with this,
> I'm not content with this. I scrapped it all. I just did nothing
> for about three days, had about ten days left to submit my
> paper. I ended up submitting a twelve-page paper. I thought
> it's supposed to be the crowning achievement of my
> undergraduate experience and I felt like I was just
> regurgitating what other people have said and I felt like I

> was just going to the library, taking out resources,
>
> summarizing, and synthesizing it and to a very large extent
>
> that limited my creativity because I was channelling all
>
> my attention on what other people have said and kind of
>
> trying to build around that. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

Moreover, when asked to characterize a good paper, Hamud clearly mentioned that it should advance an argument and that it should offer new meanings rather than re-produce old ones:

> So it's got to be well-written. I think it's got to be original.
>
> It's got to flow well and be coherent. Your argument has to
>
> be a logical. You have to be able to prove your point. I
>
> guess. It's got to be original. (Hamud's interview, July
>
> 2005)

At the time of this inquiry, Hamud had already taken close to eight courses in his graduate program, and in this process, he seemed to have picked up many of the literacy practices and attitudes that experienced academic writers have toward writing/knowledge in academia.

Hamud's educational trajectory enabled him to skillfully utilize the words of published authors to construct a strong authorial identity. In the following excerpt from his paper, note how he first re-voices both published authors as well as fellow classmates' statements made during the course only to critically engage them and advance a claim:

> Ethical considerations and cross-cultural morality
>
> According to Ibrahim (1996) and Pederson (1995), ethical
>
> decision-making guidelines in multicultural counselling are
>
> derived from one of three general perspectives: relativism,
>
> absolutism or a dynamic universalism that acknowledges

that people share similar characteristics yet accounts for the individual differences amongst them.

The relativist position avoids imposing judgment and strives comprehend behavior by framing it within its cultural context. Cultural relativism adopts a very situational outlook and assumes that guidelines for morally acceptable behaviors are dictated by the culture of the individual in question. Ethical guidelines are based solely on internal group criteria and ethical conduct is judged independently of standards used by groups outside the specific community. This is what Pederson (1997) describes as the emic approach to multicultural counselling.

Ethical absolutism, on the other hand, applies the same criteria across the board, assuming that all cultures should hold the same moral outlook .... This philosophy imposes "a single definition of reality on the plurality of cultural contexts" (Pederson, 1995, p. 36), and creates an impediment to understanding the worldview of the culturally different.

Finally, the universalist stance engenders an etic perspective by assuming that psychological processes are similar across cultures but are manifested in different ways (Pederson, 1997). Many scholars argue that universalism presents the most logical solution to the dilemma of establishing a multicultural ethical framework that meets the needs of all ethnicities, while respecting the inherent diversities among them (Sue, Arrendondo & McDavis, 1992) ....

Though in theory universalism accommodates for difference better than any other model, it does pose many

practical challenges. For starters, I hold serious reservations
as to whether it is possible to reconcile the clashes in
morality that are rooted in cultural upbringing. Some Arab
cultures approve of honor killings, while others still
practice female circumcision. How would one approach an
individual whose fundamental conceptualization of right
and wrong differs from your own? These points were
brought up in a class discussion revolving around cultural
definitions of abuse but no clear consensus was reached.
These issues are the very reason why cross-cultural
counselling is such a delicate endeavor.

(Hamud's paper, p. 4)

The "speaking subject" (Maguire & Graves, 2001) in the above piece is Hamud.

His voice is dominant, and the borrowed voices are simply props to his argument playing

a subservient role to the development of his claim. Hamud's choice of words also

projects a strong authorial presence (Charles, 2003; Hyland, 2002; Ivanič & Camps,

2001; Tang & John, 1999) when he writes "I hold serious reservations …." In the last

paragraph, there is no intertextuality and no mixing of voices. It's him doing the

speaking. Textual features similar to this in his paper contributed to very positive

assessments by both the course professor and the TA. I have to point out immediately,

though, that despite this comparatively strong authorial identity that Hamud was able to

project, his paper did not earn him a high mark in the course due to his position in the

academic hierarchy.

The experiences of many of the professors with other graduate students, and in

particular international students coming from distinct academic and cultural traditions in

which differing attitudes to text, knowledge and authorship prevail (Matalene, 1985;

Pennycook, 1994, 1996; Scollen, 1994, 1995; Sowden, 2005) corroborate that international students do bring in incongruent literacy practices which in part explain why some of these students have a "directory style of writing" in the form of globally patchwritten papers. In this connection, one Education professor stated:

> I know for a fact that academic cultures vary widely in the world and this is particularly an issue in my experience for students ... it's the fact that they are ESL students; it's the fact that they've done their previous work in another academic culture. It's particular for students who come from East Asia, China, Japan and Korea where the canons of academic culture are quite different. As an example in Japan, in the Faculty of Education, you would have a professor of education, like the European system, one professor who is *the* professor and then all the lecturers and assistant professors, and so forth they do things - it's usually a him - his way. And all the students do things his way. Eventually he dies off, somebody else becomes and then you do it that other way. So academic culture involves actually reproducing what this leading person does. In China a lot of academic work in part is built around memory work. So people memorize entire text and spew them back. And this is accepted academic practice in China. So for me the question is not whether they speak English as a second language so much as what the previous academic culture is. (Todd's interview, September 2005)

Since the literacy practices that most of the participants brought to their courses differed from those of the professors', they tended to transmit rather than transform their sources in the form of advancing unique meanings . Transforming earlier claims is the

heart and soul of all act of academic writing. Indeed all texts are intertextual, but " the fundamental question," as Alexander Lindey (1952) pointed out years ago in discussing plagiarism and originality, " is not whether [someone] has borrowed, but what he has done with the material he has taken" (p. 22).

What writers do as they craft their papers out of the words of others is an important consideration. Viewing writing as mediated action (Ivanič, 1998; Wertsch, 1991), we need to remember that a "crucial question is ... how has the person uttering the text borrowed from other voices to accomplish this action" (Scollen, Tsang, Li, Yung, & Jones, 1997, p. 228). The literate act, as was indicated by professors' statements and comments, is to create argued claims to knowledge. The important point to remember is that students would have probably been more successful had they shared the attitude to knowledge, text, and authorship that their professors held. Indeed, effective use of intertextuality and referencing in academic writing rest upon a whole set of assumptions that are often left unsaid (Hendricks & Quinn, 2000; Thesen, 1994, 1997); assumptions that students can only be expected to infer over an extended period of time as they interact with texts, professors, and more socialized peers. As I write this section, I recall that as a first year PhD student I myself did not have this attitude to the written text. I remember that during class presentations I had a tendency to restate the readings. It took me some time to realize that I needed to take a stance on what I was reading and stake out a claim. I am also now reminded that some of the metaphors like 'subjugate' that I have used to make a case in this chapter is similar to the combat metaphors that I identified in the professors' comments. This is evidence of the extent to which I have appropriated this attitude to knowledge/writing over the course of my graduate schooling in Canada. The

point is that the differences between the implicit attitudes of the students and those of the professors toward knowledge/writing appeared to partially explain why many of the students in this study produced reproductive essays. There were also other reasons at work as discussed below.

Global Patchwriting: Skeptron *Withheld*

In the previous sections it was suggested that professors viewed knowledge as reasoned claims, and that they construed the role of an academic writer as a critical consumer of earlier claims. This attitude was central to their literacy practices, enabling them to create novel meanings vis-à-vis the task, the literature of the field, and the audience (Groom, 2001). It was also argued that in order for professors to be able to critically engage the works of others, they needed to view these works as contingent knowledge claims advanced by fallible human beings rather than seeing these works as authoritative knowledge. It was also suggested that professors perceived themselves on equal footing with prior authors. As one professor put it, rationalism - that is, accepting no authority but that of reason – is a fundamental tenet of academic writing and creation of new meanings:

> It's not necessarily original like in a sense of somebody's
> original contribution to knowledge but it's original in the
> sense that the person is thinking for themselves, that they're
> thinking critically about the issues that are involved. They
> aren't accepting something merely because somebody
> [with] all these degrees [has said it] … So it's a kind of
> subversive position; it's like questioning authority
> including mine. (Todd's interview, September 2005)

This attitude underpins what it means to write in graduate school. The feedback that professors provided to students on their writings showed that their assessments of their papers were based on these expectations, and that their feedback was meant to help them succeed in picking up the academic literate disposition valued in their particular disciplinary communities. These pedagogic efforts on the part of professors to assist their students to take on this academically valued disposition were not enough to get the students to write authoritatively by having a line of argument. Simply knowing or being instructed on what it means to write in graduate school would not be enough for students to be successful academic writers. There is an important difference that one needs to take into account in understanding why the students tended to transmit rather than transform earlier claims (Carey & Flower, 1989; Dong, 1996; Flower, 1988; Penrose & Geisler, 1994; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1991). Professors are institutionally and socially positioned as authors who are authoritative, and are expected to transform knowledge and create new meanings rather than reproduce old ones. This differential social positioning and associated expectations tend to get translated into different perceptions of self as author on the part of professors and students.

Using the notion of *skeptron* (Bourdieu, 1991) that suggests power and legitimacy to speak (and write) an utterance does not reside in language *per se*; but is socially conferred, I would like to suggest that, despite the course professors' intentions otherwise, many of their instructional practices in fact served to position students as re-producers of authority rather than creators of it. These practices inadvertently encouraged the students to produce unsuccessful papers in the form of reproductive essays. As

Bourdieu (1991) explains in his critique of Austin's (Austin, 1962) narrowly conceived

speech acts theory:

> By trying to understand the power of linguistic
>
> manifestations linguistically, by looking in language for the
>
> principle underlying the logic and effectiveness of the
>
> language of institution, one forgets that authority comes to
>
> language from outside, a fact concretely exemplified by the
>
> *skeptron* that, in Homer, is passed to the orator who is
>
> about to speak. Language at most *represents* this authority,
>
> manifests and symbolizes it. (p. 109, *italics* original)

In light of this observation, I contend that some practices on the part of professors

had the opposite effect of actually withholding the *skeptron* from the students, rendering

them as "unauthorized" to write with authority. These practices positioned the students as

illegitimate writers without authority, forcing them to be mostly preoccupied with

demonstration of their learning rather than advancing claims and coming up with new

meanings. This positioning encouraged the students to perceive their roles as students

who should re-voice authority which got translated into unsuccessful globally

patchwritten texts. I would also like to argue that ironically some of the professors'

guidelines and comments on students' papers that were intended to help their students

write successfully actually served to maintain the distance between the professors and

students. These practices ultimately served to maintain and reproduce the educational

hierarchy. While my own experience as a student over the years and my course

observations in this study have convinced me that professors make every effort to help

their students succeed, I would like to argue that some of the guidelines in the course

outlines and some of the written feedback that the course professors provided to their students had the unintended effect of encouraging the students to write without authority.

In the course documents, students' writings were frequently referred to as "assignments". One consequence of this term is that it connotes imposition; something that has been imposed on students rather than a writing activity in which the writer has the freedom to choose what to write about and how to write about the topic. For instance, in the Communication course, students were expected to write an *assigned* "essay of approximately 3000-3500 words in length (excluding bibliography/references) focusing on one of the essay topics listed below" (Course outline, p. 3). Further, in the same document, students were even instructed on the number of the sources that they had to read to create their texts from: "[O]ne should anticipate drawing on (and properly referencing) somewhere in the range of 12-16 different works" (p. 15). This expectation was later reflected in the professor's feedback on Hako's paper:

> As was stated in the Essay Writing Guidelines in the course
> syllabus, "for a 3000-3500 word paper one should
> anticipate drawing on (and properly referencing)
> somewhere in the range of 12-16 different works". The
> paper you submitted is based on only nine sources. This
> does not constitute an adequate range of material for an
> assignment of this nature. (Professor's feedback)

Similarly, In the Counselling course outline, the students were unequivocally asked to actually *demonstrate* their learning:

> An APA referenced essay (guidelines in this syllabus)
> proposing key issues in multicultural counselling and
> providing specific examples of culturally sensitive

conversational practices to address these. The essay should
<u>draw on the language and concepts introduced during the
term</u>. This is a chance to demonstrate familiarity with the
readings and should <u>include references to at least ten of
these</u>. The writer should also be situated in the piece, and is
expected to draw on specific experiences (including in-
class experiences and previous assignments where relevant)
to depict the issues and practices discussed.

(Course outline, p. 2, underline added)

This type of "writing to order" suggested that students had little control on what they write, and it explained the lack of investment that some students had in the papers they wrote. It also demonstrated how the professors' expectations from student papers were different than those of professional academic writers. More importantly, these expectations were in conflict with the kind of statements and expectations regarding construction of authority in the form of new meanings by the students that were explicitly and implicitly conveyed to them, which are actually based on how institutionally *authorized* writers, like professors, are believed to compose.

On the first day of the class in the Communication course, as the professor was explaining essay requirements, at one point he mentioned that students should write their papers as if the audience did not know any thing about their topic. This statement was revealing: As Fairclough (1992) has shown in his discussion of the quartet ways in which prior texts are represented in a text, one important way in which intertextuality inserts itself in the text is in the form of condensed *presuppositions*, often textually realized as nominalized forms. The requirement by the professor that students should write to a lay audience who did not know any thing about the topic would effectively require them to

make manifest and elaborate many suppositions in their texts that they would have not

otherwise done. In practice, this required that students describe and explain many of

earlier texts and notions that in professional writers' writing would be treated as

suppositions or common knowledge. Moreover, as Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) point

out, being a student means "being-for-the-teacher" (p. 111). This means that in practice,

students very often tended to conceive of their audience no one other than the professor.

This was evident by a statement by one of the students:

> He [i.e., the professor] is always there at the back of my
> mind, because he is the only one who's gonna evaluate me;
> ... so I look at the outline, and, yeah, he is there like a God
> in my mind; and it's scary. (Amorita's interview,
> November 2005)

A similar perception of audience was also expressed by Hamud whose literacy

practices were closest to those of professional academic writers, and who got raving

comments on his paper. At one point toward the latter part of his paper, which coincided

with professor's announcement to class members that he had just hired a TA to assist in

marking the papers, Hamud's conception of the rhetorical context shifted, thus directly

affecting his writing. With respect to his reliance on earlier works, there was a definite

qualitative change in his paper before and after this announcement by the professor. He

explained this change as follows:

> Hamud: At the beginning it was more academic, and then
> later on it tapered off. I don't know if you picked up on
> this. I feel that the first three sections of my paper were a
> little bit higher quality and a bit more academic and then it
> slowly kind of tapers off towards the end.

Me: In what ways are these three sections more academic?

Hamud: More grounded in research. I think if you look at the frequency of works cited, most of the works cited are in the first three sections. The last two are a little more reflective, not so heavy on the analytical side of it and I think I had more of the TA in mind at that point. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

The professor's requirement that students should have a lay audience in mind when writing their papers was at once confusing and ironic. It was confusing because it did not match the participants' actual conception of audience which was first and foremost the course professor. It was ironic because it did not match the professor's explicitly stated goal of initiating students into professional literacy practices. In the following excerpt from the interview with the Communication course professor when he was describing that he expected to see an adequately researched paper, he also explained his goals for the students:

You know, one of the things we're trying to train you to do is research, and an essential part of that is, regardless of the area that you're writing about, is having at least a good sense of what's happening out there, what are people saying, what are arguments, what are the theoretical foundations, what are the concepts, what are tangible issues, and in terms of adequately researched is the issue of sort of conveying to the reader of the paper. *Just as with the journal article*, [you want to show] that you have surveyed the domain in sufficient detail in terms of publishing to make this paper publishable. So again I come back to this idea. Well for a paper this length 12 [sources] seems sort of about right in a general sense; and so for me that [i.e., the

number of sources] becomes an issue of adequacy in terms

of how adequately can I convey that I've surveyed the

field. Tied to that, in part, as well, is ... you may

remember in terms of the very sort of broad guidelines for

the essay, one of the things that was highlighted was that

you should try and *put yourself in the mindset of somebody*

who's trying to get an article published for a journal. So ...

all of that feeds into it. So in a way [an] adequately

researched [paper] incorporates or involves how closely

does one to approximate the requirements for journal

article, recognizing of course that these are masters'

students and there are things to learn. (Duncan's interview,

December 2005, *italics* added)

An interesting point that I wish to draw attention to is that contrary to the

rhetorical use of citation and referencing by professional academic writers to advance

their arguments (Gilbert, 1976, 1977; Hyland, 1999, 2002; Small, 1978; Swales, 1987,

1990; Swales & Najjar, 1987), the professors in this study sometimes used citation and

intertextuality as a surveillance technique to ensure that students would actually read the

assigned readings. While the pedagogic purpose of this technique was to ensure that

students would visit sources, it conveyed to students the wrong message about the

significance and reasons for using citations in writing. For instance, the following

statement is from the Counselling course outline:

Although this assignment [i.e., the essay] has a strong

component of personal reflection, make sure to engage with

the readings and to reflect on other course content,

including experiential exercises, speakers, and videos.

Include a minimum of ten references in your paper,

following APA guidelines (supplied) demonstrating your

familiarity with the material. Thin referencing and minimal use of new vocabulary/concepts will reflect poorly in the evaluation of the assignment.

(Counselling course outline, p. 3)

In summary, these practices served to position the students as *student writers* who should first and foremost be preoccupied with demonstrating what they have learned rather with constructing authority. For example, during my interview with Lee, I asked him if he had thought of publishing his term paper, and his response revealed his perceptions of his role as a student and the "showing-your-knowledge" nature of the context in which he was writing:

> Me: Lee, when you were writing your paper, were you at all thinking of publishing it?
>
> Lee: Excuse me, publishing you said?
>
> Me. Yes, publishing your paper in one of these academic journals we were reading from.
>
> Lee: Oh, no, no! [laughing]
>
> Me: Why not?
>
> Lee: Ali, I don't think anybody wants to read a student paper ... Not my paper, I don't think [laughs]
>
> Me: Why not.
>
> Lee: I mean, like, this paper is a test, I mean, not a real paper, [professor's name] is testing us... and I don't think ... no one wants to read it, well, I don't think I want to read something that another student writes.

Practices that positioned the students as student writers, therefore, prompted the students to conceive of a rhetorical context that was marked by recounting published sources.

Reflections

While discussions of student transgressive intertextuality have generally remained at the level of words and syntax, in this chapter I have argued that there is more to this appropriation than simply words and grammar. I suggested that students' transgressive intertextuality at a deeper level has to do with their orientation to knowledge and what it means to write in university settings, especially in graduate school. While it is possible for a student writer to fully put all that she has borrowed in quotation marks, the text that she produces in this way might still be considered unsuccessful. Therefore even if students carefully abide by university policies on plagiarism and put the borrowed words within quotation marks or use their own words to avoid being labelled as plagiarists, they still may not be considered effective academic writers simply because they have not staked out a claim to knowledge. Authors are often contrasted with plagiarists (Howard, 1999, 2000). However, as I suggested in this chapter, students' patchwriting at the macro level indicates that there could be an in-between space where a writer might be neither a plagiarist nor an author. In this sense, the notion of global patchwriting serves to disrupt the dichotomy of Author/Plagiarist by identifying Patchwriter as a third position of writing where a writer can not be categorized as either an author or a plagiarist.

When writing this chapter, I felt it was counter to my own experiences to think that some of the pedagogic measures that the professors had taken were not congruent with their intent to help the students produce successful texts. However, for the sake of

critical rationalism (Giroux, 2001), I thought that it was important to adopt a critical perspective and avoid merely describing these practices. I believed it was important to maintain a critical stance and ask What do these pedagogic actions and documents do socially? The intent has been to bring to light some of the unintended consequences of pedagogic practices rather than ascribe to them any ill-intentions.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Professional and Pedagogical Discourses: Working at Cross Purposes?

Professors' practices discussed in Chapter Six in fact pointed to the existence of

two discourses that were simultaneously in circulation in the courses observed. I have

decided to refer to them as professional and pedagogical discourses. Each of these

discourses called upon students to occupy a particular subject position (Davies & Harré,

1990; Fairclough, 1992c; Kress, 1989) and to textually enact the identities that each

afforded to them. In what follows I discuss the identities that students textually

constructed in response to the two discourses that were available to the students, and also

consider the role that plagiarism policies played in what identities the students tended to

take up.

Professional Discourse: Students as Producers of Authority

Some of the professors' pedagogic practices were articulated from a discourse

that made a number of interrelated statements about what it meant to be a professional

academic writer. In many course documents there was a strong emphasis on becoming an

author. For instance, in the course outline of the Education course, the term "argument"

repeatedly collocated with the term "author". The frequent collocation of author and

argument tended to convey the message to the students that to become authors they need

to write arguments. In fact, academic authorship for many of the professors interviewed

was equivalent to making arguments. One professor, for example, explained that he

approached students' papers with the same expectations as he would his peers. He stated:

> We're looking for the same thing: Argumentation. Just
> logic, analysis, evaluation. I mean, obviously in a
> professional, academic paper, I would expect a high level
> of analysis and evaluation. (Sean's interview, June 2005)

A similar statement was announced by the Education course professor when she

said:

> First, the most important element for any graduate student,
> I believe, [is] to create ideas; creating ideas are very
> important and the institution the society at large will
> welcome ideas. (Sonia's interview, July 2005)

She went on to point out the importance of writing in graduate school. In her

explanation, she seems to suggest that academic authorship and making arguments are

linked:

> You know, [writing] is basically the meat of any academic
> career, so to speak. We have to go through publication, we
> have to go with academic writing with theses; it's a way of
> making meaning; and it's really to be able to convey your
> philosophy, argue for you ideas in a very concise, precise
> way. (Sonia's interview, July 2005)

Another statement about what it meant to be an academic author conveyed a

message to the students to take up a critical disposition. Although the notion of critical

literacy connotes different meanings to different individuals (Barton, 1994; Belcher,

1995; Benesch, 2001; Luke, 1997; Pennycook, 1999; Slattery, 1990), I am here using it in

the sense characterized by Flower (1990) which is defined as "the ability to think about

and through written texts: to read not only for facts but also for intentions, to question

sources, to identify others' and one's own assumptions, and to transform information for

new purposes" (as cited in Kern, 2000, p. 37). For instance, one of the stated goals of the

Communication course announced right on the first page of the outline was "to enable

students to critically assess contending perspectives and theories of the role and

significance of media in democratic societies" (Course outline, p. 1). The professor

would frequently encourage students to take up a critical attitude toward whatever they

would read and "to reflect critically on disputed issues" (course outline, p. 1). This

critical attitude was not limited to the written texts; it was also encouraged in other

literacy events such as seminar discussions and student-professor conferences. In an

email sent out to all class members, the professor explained this expectation as follows:

> I do want to remind everyone that a key function of the
> discussions is for you to present/raise issues from the
> readings that you believe merits further attention (i.e.
> something which you find to be unclear, an alternative
> interpretation you may have, how two or more of the
> readings may be juxtaposed, an argument that you believe
> could be developed on the basis of the readings). Ideally,
> the aim of the discussion sessions is to
> critically/analytically engage, as a group, with the reading
> materials. For example, while we spoke about reading
> Schudson today, we did not directly address how
> convincing (or not) you found his argument to be (on its
> own, or in comparison to the claims set out be Herman and
> Chomsky). Or, how the arguments of the latter authors
> relate to Entman's taxonomy of public opinion. (Professor's
> email to class, dated Monday, 26 September 2005)

This was a common attitude across the three graduate courses observed in this study. For another example, in the Education course, one of the criteria of evaluation of students' oral presentations was whether or not presenters "critically reflect on assigned readings" (Course handout, p. 1). Similarly, in an email that the TA of the Counselling course sent out to all class members, she wrote that one important criterion was "critical reflection on the readings". When I probed the TA on this in a subsequent interview, she explained that after the grades for the first assignment were out, some of the students went up to her and inquired about the reason for their poor performance. In response to this, she sent the email to class members in which she stressed that critical reflection was an important aspect in assessing the first assignment, and would continue to be so in the final paper.

A closely related message that was also conveyed to the students through literacy events such as seminar discussions was that to become authors the students needed to be aware of the literature of the topic. Students were frequently reminded that they should know *who* has said *what* and that they should have an "evaluative orientation" (Maguire, 1994; Volosinov, 1971, 1973) toward what others had written on a particular topic. For instance, in an essay writing guideline that on the first day was introduced and discussed in detail in class, and frequently referred to throughout the course, the Communication professor highlighted students' critical awareness of the literature and their reliance on published works as a requisite for construction of author(ity):

> You should also consider alternative arguments and
> contradictory evidence that raises problems for your line of

argument and indicate how one might resolve these
problems.

(Communication course outline, p. 15)

The professors conveyed the literate attitudes that they tacitly adhered to as

professional academic writers. This was again evident in the same essay writing guide in

which the Communication professor revealed that these comments derived from his own

professional literacy practices:

> You should approach this assignment as though you [were]
> preparing an article for submission to a peer-reviewed
> academic journal. As such, the emphasis in your essay
> should be on critical analysis. Excessive description, the
> mere chronicling of events, rhetorical posturing and
> grandstanding should all be avoided.
>
> (Course outline, p. 15)

When I subsequently probed the professor to see if the expectations that he had of

his students were similar to the expectations about the texts that his own peers would

produce, it became apparent that his guidelines and comments were indeed based on his

professional literacy practices. In his description of what students should be doing while

composing their papers, the professor explained:

> You should try and put yourself in the mindset of
> somebody who's trying to get an article published for a
> journal. It's a question of how closely one approximates the
> requirements for journal article .... (Duncan's interview,
> December 2005)

Professors convey not only composing strategies deriving from their professional

literacy practices, but also professional reading strategies that derive from their

orientation toward knowledge making/writing in academia. In the readings guidelines

reproduced on pages 156-57 that was given to the students in the Education course, it is

significant that the person behind the published text is highlighted nine times by the word

"the author". Corroborating earlier research on the composing processes of expert

writers, the professor is conveying to the students an authorial disposition that views all

texts as authored claims (Hass & Flower, 1988; Kroll, 1993; Penrose & Geisler, 1994;

Spivey & King, 1989), and he is inviting the students to adopt this professional literate

attitude as well. He is making known to the students the valued literate attitudes in the

community and assisting the students to pick them up to gain insider status.

Another important clue to the fact that professors were trying to call upon the

students to occupy a professional literate identity was that all course readings comprised

peer reviewed articles published in the fields. In cases where the readings included books,

they were without exception edited books. As Gerald and Thelen (1993) have pointed

out, textbooks tend to gloss over the contingency of (written) knowledge, and to present

published works as established facts. In a sense, professors' reliance on articles as

opposed to textbooks was another mechanism through which they were inviting the

students to think and write as professional academic writers do. All of the professors

relied extensively on current peer-reviewed articles in the course packets. In the

Education course packet a number of the articles were drafts of papers still in press. This

further indicated to the students that they needed to keep abreast of the latest arguments

in the field which is what professional academics tend to do. In the Communication

course, the professor had listed on a full page the names of professional journals in the

field. On the first session, he encouraged all students to acquaint themselves with these sources as soon as possible.

The point here is that these practices were indicative of the fact that the professors was trying to initiate the students into the literacy practices of a professional academic writer through the tools of the trade and the literate attitudes associated with using those tools. Implicit and explicit messages about professional literacy practices culminated in highlighting a particular disposition valued in the community. Similar to the process of *interpellation* (1971) in which the individual is "hailed" by ideology to be a certain type of individual, these messages constituted an interrelated set of statements about what it meant to be a professional and that this discourse was calling upon the students to conceive of themselves as professional academic authors and think, speak, act, read and write accordingly.

That the essence as well as the ideal goal of graduate academic work was to help students to eventually take up an authorial identity and create meanings that are distinct from prior texts can be discerned from the following statement by an education professor:

> We're building on other peoples' ideas and words. That's what we do, right. That's what we do. That's what everybody is doing. That's what it's about. And so, how do you do that? Do you just take them and say, Ok, here is a bunch of quotes? (Catherine's interview, October 2005)

I would like to answer this professor's question by her own response to my question about her criteria for a successful paper:

> I think an A+ paper is a prominent line of argument. It's an argument that has been eloquently presented, supported,

goes somewhere. I mean those are wonderful papers,

wonderful papers. (Catherine's interview, October 2005)

Pedagogical Discourse: Students as Reproducers of Authority

Simultaneous with conveying to students literate attitudes associated with the

identity of a professional academic writer, some pedagogic actions that I observed in the

courses seemed to foreground a different identity for the students. These actions similarly

were part of a larger set of statements about who the students were supposed to be, and

they were being articulated from what I would like to call a *pedagogical discourse*. That

is, the actions conveyed literate attitudes that are associated with schooling, and whose

primary goal was to insure transmission and mastery of content. While professors'

comments, course documents, and lectures were frequently concerned with critical

reading and constructing well-argued knowledge claims, some of their actions invoked

the pedagogical discourse whose main concern was deference to (published) authority

and transmission of that authority. These practices tended to represent the courses as

primarily evaluative contexts in which the primary goal was to ensure that that students

would appropriate the particular literature and, importantly, to successfully pass the

course.

In the Counselling course outline, for instance, students were explicitly directed

to *show* that they have learned the curriculum:

> *Name and discuss* various barriers to self expression,
> opportunity etc. experienced by persons of particular
> cultural subgroups.

> *Utilize an expanded vocabulary* of terms for discussing
> multicultural counselling, discourse, power, identity
> politics, etcetera.
>
> (Counselling course outline, p. 1, *italics* added)

Right after this statement, the course outline reads that the essay "should draw on the language and concepts introduced during the term. This is a chance *to demonstrate* familiarity with the readings ... "(Counselling course outline, p. 1, *italics* added).

Similarly in the Communication course, the students were given five topics, out of which they had to choose one to write their essays on. These topics were directly related to the course themes. In a segment of the course outline that had the rubric of "Research Essay – 50% of final grade", the writing task was presented in an evaluative frame:

> Students are required to write one research essay of
> approximately 3000-3500 words in length (excluding
> bibliography/references) focusing on one of the essay
> topics listed below. The essays will be graded out of 50
> points.
>
> (Communication Course outline, p. 3)

In contrast to the professional writers' routine focus on referencing and utilization of earlier texts as a resource in the service of constructing author(ity), the faculty sometimes sent the message that the context of writing was primarily an evaluative one. For instance in the Counselling course, the professor has stipulated that students "should include references to at least ten of" the readings. (Course outline, p. 2, underline original)

Moreover, in an email sent out by the course TA to class members, students were even instructed about how to distribute the quotes from sources:

>Since the minimum number of references is 10, and your
>
>topics should be 5, I would aim for two quotes/references
>
>per topic. (TA's email, June 11, 2005)

When I later talked with the professor about the rationale behind assigning a set

number of references (or sources), his response revealed a pedagogic purpose:

>It's partly that nudge thing again. I want to make sure that
>
>they're out there engaging with literature and if they are
>
>called upon to point to literature. It means they need to read
>
>it ... I would expect students to be kind of referencing
>
>constructs that in certain domains it has receded into lay
>
>languages. (Kevin's interview, July 2005)

Statements of this kind derived from professors' roles as teachers who believed

that students should appropriate a body of disciplinary content, as suggested by the

following course requirement in the Communication course outline in which the

professors had asked that students were weekly supposed

>to have completed the required readings ***before*** attending
>
>the lectures/seminars.
>
>(Communication course outline, p. 1, underline & boldface
>
>original)

While professors' use of set references had the pedagogic intention of

motivating the students to read and learn the assigned readings, this was happening in the

presence of the university policies of plagiarism that found their way into the courses

through course outlines. While the professors' stress on references was pedagogically

motivated, students tended to interpret their emphasis on referencing in juxtaposition with

the plagiarism policies that dealt with referencing in the context of fraud and associated

punishment. This became more apparent when the students talked about their fears about plagiarism, using such phrases as "paranoia"[8]. In the case of the Communication course, the professor was required by his academic department to give out a plagiarism affidavit to students on the first day and ask them to sign and submit it along with their final paper (see Appendix H). This institutional intrusion served to distract students' attention from a concern for creation of an authorial identity when dealing with sources to an overriding concern over avoiding the stigmatic charge of plagiarism:

> **Academic fraud** is an act by a student which may result in a false academic evaluation of that student or of another. Without limiting the generality of this definition, academic fraud occurs when a student commits any of the following offences:
>
> (...)
>
> Submits a work of which the student is not the author, in whole or in part (except for duly cited quotations or references). Such works may include an academic paper, essay, text, an exam, research report, or thesis, whether written, oral, or other.
>
> (Fraud Declaration document, p. 17, boldface original)

Immediately below this piece, the university definition of what plagiarism is also reproduced as follows:

---

[8] An entry from the researcher's journal: Here I may be dealing with an example of how the research questions and indeed the focus of the study might have foregrounded the link of referencing with plagiarism for the participating students. In other words, had the focus of the study been something other than plagiarism, the association between referencing and plagiarism might not have readily come to the minds of the participants. This serves to show the extent to which all aspects of a research study including its topic and focus might play a role in constructing the reality it aims to describe.

> **Plagiarism** is taking another person's words (written or
> spoken), ideas, theories, facts (that are not considered
> general knowledge), statistics, art work, etc. and passing
> them off as your own. Simply changing the language of the
> information you are using also constitutes plagiarism if you
> do not acknowledge your source.
>
> (Fraud Declaration, p. 17, boldface original)

Reinforcing the importance of this message and increasing the stakes further for the students, the essay writing guideline reads:

> It is important for the reader/marker to make a distinction
> between what is your work and what is found in the
> literature. Therefore proper referencing is of the upmost
> importance. (Course outline, p. 15)

The presence of plagiarism policies that couched writing in moral-juridical terms was not limited to course outlines. They would also intrude in literacy events such as professor-student conferences – in unintentional ways. During my interviews with the communication professor in his office, for instance, I noticed that right behind him and next to a bunch of black and white papers on the wall there was the University's plagiarism policy brochure hanging, with its yellowish colour making it stand out of the bunch. As I was focusing on his face while interviewing him, this brochure had a blurry presence in the background. Most probably in their meetings with the professor the students must have had a similar vantage point and subliminal perception of the risks attending "crimes of writing". The point here is that the ever-present plagiarism policies sent the message that students need to be moral (i.e., "A moral writer credits where credit is due!") and avoid misappropriating other peoples' intellectual property.

It was against this background that students, as active "readers of classrooms as texts" (Dyson, 1984; J. Nelson, 1995; Walvoord & McCarthy, 1990) readily interpreted the context and identified which of the two identities was less risky to take up. Simultaneously called upon to be (academic) authors and students, the students perceived that it was more important, or more expedient and perhaps less risky, to be a student. Based on this reading of the context, they readily took up a disposition associated with this identity. Writing as students, they thought, would be a safer way to successfully negotiate the primarily evaluative context in which they were writing (Brunner, 1991; Hull & Rose, 1989). Answering the call of the pedagogic discourse to conceive of themselves as students and write accordingly, the students' interpretation and perceptions of the literacy tasks shifted focus from a concern for construction of authority to reproduction of authority. Perceiving themselves as students, they accordingly aimed to textually represent themselves in ways congruent with being a student. Specifically, they attempted to represent themselves as moral and intertextually knowledgeable writers. In what follows I will discuss each of these.

Representation of self as moral. One of the key documents in the three courses was the *APA* style guide. Students were asked to follow this guideline in writing their papers. Getting to know this writing style was so important for the Communication course professor that on the first day of the class, he remarked to the students that if they were to only learn proper APA referencing from his course, he would consider the course successful in its aims. Apart from this, correct usage of the APA style was included in the assessment criteria as well. Right on the first session of the course, the professor

encouraged students to purchase this handbook, reminding them that they would be

frequently consulting it in the course and indeed throughout their graduate program.

In the section on referencing in this important course artefact, one reads the

following:

> 3. 39 Citation of Sources
>
> Whether paraphrasing or quoting an author directly, you
> must credit the source (see the subsection in section 8.05 on
> plagiarism and section 3.41 on permission to quote).
>
> (The *APA* manual, 5th Edition, p. 120)

As can be seen, intertextuality/referencing are immediately cross referenced to

plagiarism. Under plagiarism, in turn, the student reader is interpellated as an ethical

subject by linking referencing to theft by implication:

> 6.22 Plagiarism
>
> Psychologists do not claim the words and ideas of another
> as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotation
> marks should be used to indicate the exact words of
> another. *Each time* you paraphrase another author (i.e.,
> summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence
> and change some of the words), you will need to credit the
> source in the text. (p. 349)

As the above excerpts suggest, the only reason that this document enumerates for

professional psychologist's (and other social scientists as well) use of referencing is

simply to avoid plagiarism. The document is silent on the multitude of rhetorical reasons

for which these professional writers use referencing (Cronin & Shaw, 2002; Geisler,

1994; Gilbert, 1977; Hendricks & Quinn, 2000; Kaufer & Geisler, 1989; Penrose &

Geisler, 1994) that has to do with knowledge construction. Remaining silent on the epistemological assumptions that underpin referencing, the message that this course document conveyed to the students is that they need to use it to avoid coming across as immoral.

In my interviews with the students, they highlighted that on their orientation days when they first started their graduate studies, they were frequently warned about plagiarism and the severe consequences to it at the University of Ottawa. They had been handed the University of Ottawa's documents that instructed them on how to avoid plagiarism. When I asked Amorita, for example, if she had ever received any instruction about plagiarism since she entered her graduate program, she said:

> Yes, like, 500 times. Everyday before I started classes there was, like, this international students' session, and there was the general one, the graduate studies one, the barbecue one; and in every session they give you this yellow sheet about plagiarism saying it's a crime; you don't do this. For graduate studies we had a large speech from the director of the FPGS about plagiarism, and all the concern about it. But it makes me think that there is a lot of plagiarism here. I don't know if it's real but the lady told us that they had found several cases last year so we're going through this, and we're going to be hard and you have do this properly because last year she told us there was a lot. (Amorita's interview, November 2005)

She went on to add that because of all these admonitions, writing for her had become "a little paranoia thing". Reflecting on referencing and why she does it in her paper, she said, "Because I have to. Because if I don't I'm afraid it's going to be taken as

plagiarism." Amorita's fear no doubt had intensified when on the first day of the course

professor had raised the topic of plagiarism, and asked all students to sign and submit the

fraud affidavit upon submission of their final papers.

Another example of this fear was evident in Hamud's writing. In a text-based

interview, I asked him to identify ideas, expressions and other technical terms that he

might have borrowed from the two sources cited in his paper. The response revealed a

fear that he had about intertextuality and source use. It showed that his referencing

strategy was more motivated by avoiding plagiarism and the desire not to be represented

as an unethical writer than by other motivations. As he put it:

> Honestly, I have no idea! I know Jones. I know that
> *morally intrinsic endeavour* is a term that Jones used. I
> remember that much. For morally intrinsic at least. I don't
> know about endeavour *per se*. But if my memory serves
> me right, this was an article that was talking about
> counselling as being morally intrinsic and pushing a certain
> set of values and beliefs. The thing with the Looba citation
> is that her book is again a collection of essays and I've read
> some of these essays and a lot of times what I'll do for fear
> of getting you know busted for plagiarism, if I have a
> certain idea that I remember coming across in a book that I
> use in my paper, I still cite the paper without necessarily
> remembering what essay it was in. I remember it was in
> that book. But I don't necessarily remember what part of
> the book it was, what it pertains to if it's the exact same
> definition that the author did. You know kind of talking
> about whether synthesize through my understanding but I
> quote her anyway. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

The preponderance of messages that the students were receiving in multiple ways about consequences attending the crime of plagiarism prompted them to primarily focus on this reductive aspect of referencing and be overly preoccupied with fending off possible charges of fraud and immorality rather than attending more productively to the rhetorical uses of it in the construction of knowledge. In this sense they tended to be sidetracked by the focus on plagiarism and the institutional intrusion of a discourse of crime and punishment in the context of learning and writing. As such the university plagiarism policies served to create a distracting fear for students.

Representation of self as intertextually knowledgeable. A second identity that the students perceived to be valued was representing themselves as being aware of earlier works in the specific domains of the courses. As students confronted comments such as, "Thin referencing and minimal use of new vocabulary/concepts will reflect poorly in the evaluation of the assignment" (Counselling course outline, p. 3), or such feedback on students' papers as the statement on Hako's paper (see below), they were prompted to be occupied with constructing this identity rather than create a "workable balance" (Bazerman, 1981) of the four aspects of professional written communication that include a balanced attention to the *object of study*, the *literature of the field*, the *author's self*, and the *anticipated audience*. The messages that students appeared to be receiving would encourage them to focus on the literature of the field more than on the other three aspects. For instance, in the following comment by the Communication course professor, the student is bound to perceive that it is very important to come across as knowledgeable of the literature:

> There also is a problem with the range of materials
> covered. As was stated in the Essay Writing Guidelines in

the course syllabus, "for a 3000-3500 word paper one should anticipate drawing on (and properly referencing) somewhere in the range of 12-16 different works". The paper you submitted is based on only nine sources. This does not constitute an adequate range of material for an assignment of this nature.

(Professor's feedback on Hako's paper)

Prompted by these cues, the students relied on referencing to represent themselves as writers who knew *who* had said *what* in the field. This preoccupation contributed to their production of heavily reproductive papers in turn. As an example, when I probed Salma on her reasons for referencing sources in her paper, her primary concern was:

I can say I want to show [professor's name] I've read the articles; I want to show him I know what all of these articles and books have said about the importance of internet in forming the public sphere. (Salma's interview, November 2005)

Hamud, the student in the Counselling course, had used a lot of cited expressions such as "ethical consideration", "cross cultural morality,", "emic," "situational outlook," "internal group criteria". As he was explaining his use of these terms, he stated that:

I was trying to show [the professor and the TA] that I was aware of the issues. I was also trying to make it sound as eloquent as I could, and I think that's key. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

Although he felt he had to textually construct this valued identity in his paper to meet professor's expectations, Hamud resented being positioned as a *student* writer, and expressed dissatisfaction with the practices that positioned him as such. For instance, in

reaction to the professors' requirement that students should rely on at least 10 sources in their papers, he complained that:

> I feel like it's very limiting to give a student say you know
> a course pack and say choose 10 articles that are here. You
> know, it's less limiting if you say "Pick ten topics!" Pick
> certain ideas and then go do research, you know. I know
> part of the reason [the professor] did it was he didn't want
> to overwhelm us with research. On the flipside, this is a
> graduate course and you should be made to go out and do
> research. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

Despite his dissatisfaction, Hamud did try to represent himself as knowledgeable in his paper and created an intertextually richer text that involved more sources than had been required by the professor. This was positively received by the TA marking his paper. In her comments she wrote:

> Your anecdotes were evocative, personal, and highly
> reflective, and you flawlessly incorporated many references
> that included works outside the course content which
> showed your obvious effort and thoughtful reflection.
> (TA's feedback on Hamud's paper)

Indeed stipulations such as the need for a pre-determined number of sources seem to reveal features of a school genre (Freedman, 1993; Kinneavy, 1971) which is more concerned with writer's demonstration of knowledge, and which primarily serves pedagogical purposes. This is evident from the following anecdote recounted by one of the professors whose referencing/intertextulity practice had once been judged to be overly concerned with the "self as author" (Bazerman, 1981). That is, in his manuscript he had overly foregrounded himself rather than the topic:

> Recently one of the reviewers [of a paper of mine] said cut
> out some of the academic *gobliguk*. Too much jargon, and
> we got to get through that. So, I kind of laugh, and say OK!
> So I slashed some of the theoretical stuff and reduced some
> of the references. (MacKay's interview, September 2005)

It is important to point out here that the less experienced students showed less resistance toward taking up the social role of *student* writer, and readily took up this identity as they tended to conceive of writing as an occasioned demonstration of their knowledge (Carey & Flower, 1989; Stotsky, 1991). For Mala, for instance, the final paper that she had to write was first and foremost an *assignment*, the audience of which was only the professor. As she put it, one of her primary aims was to show to the professor that she "had read and tried to make the paper academic".

Students' preoccupation with representing themselves as intertextually knowledgeable through referencing and intertextuality was in contrast to professor's views on the use of referencing. For professors referencing/intertextuality was one of the fundamental means through which writers can develop a unique voice of their own by treading a fine line between surrendering fully to earlier texts and invoking them for their own unique semantic purposes. For instance, one Education professor emphasized that students should utilize referencing/intertextuality as a resource out of which to fashion their own authority:

> I also make reference to proportionate use of others' ideas
> in the work that is your own. So, part of the discussion of
> plagiarism for me involves the notion of authorship,
> responsibility, and seeing work that is the student's
> thinking not only work that is a compilation of the thoughts
> of others but the combination of those citations begins to

give a unique and distinct flavour that become the student's
own. (Mark's interview, July 2005)

As the above statement suggests, self representation appears to be only one component of the overall authority that the writer can project as a person who is aware of previous conversations regarding a particular scholarly topic. However, the frequent intended and unintended messages that students received about the evaluative context of the writing served to tip over the "workable balance" for them. The students were in most cases concerned with one component of writing; one aspect that, important as it is, is not all that there is to the construction of a strong authorial identity (Angélil-Carter, 2000; Berkenkotter, 1984; Blakeslee, 1997; Cadman, 1997; Fort, 1971; Greene, 1991; Groom, 2000; Hyland, 2002; Riley, 2006). It is therefore important to remember that students' writing is situated in a context that is institutionally linked to grades and evaluation for success and failure. This serves to show the complexity of the rhetorical context which the students and their professors found themselves in as well as the challenges that two identities of student writer and professional writer can create for students and their teachers when it comes to writing.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Impact of Plagiarism Policies: "I felt like a security guard ...."

(Mary, a faculty member)

In this chapter I discuss how professors mediated university plagiarism policies and will offer some reflections on current university policies and a widely distributed document. This document is routinely given to each incoming international students as part of a package on their orientation sessions. I have especially focused on this brochure, which was a research artefact collected from the field, because it is widely circulated around the campus. Although it comes out in different shapes and colours every now and then, the content remains exactly the same which seems to point to an entrenched perspective on texts, writers, and their relations.

The university plagiarism policies, as legal documents, are couched in administrative terms, and mandate professors to detect and treat students' patchwriting as an instance of plagiarism. To help them police these policies, the university, as I was informed by two faculty members, even provides some professors with an electronic software called *Turn-it-In* © to detect student transgressive intertextuality. Many faculties and departments also require that professors include a reference to these policies in their course outlines. In the Department of Communication, professors are even required to include a fraud affidavit regarding plagiarism that students should sign and submit along with their essays.

While the university's policies as legal documents provide a reductive representation of transgressive intertextuality and the issues that might give rise to it,

almost all of the professors whom were interviewed in this inquiry provided a rich and complex understanding of the reasons that might explain students' transgressive intertextuality. During interviews, they would often describe the perplexing nature of transgressive intertextuality by using such adjectives and phrases as "murky," "confusing," "grey area," "slippery slope" or "tricky". Professors' awareness of the complexity of plagiarism highlighted the extent to which the university definition of plagiarism was rather naïve.

While professors would indicate that they had zero tolerance for plagiarism as fraud, they tended to see transgressive intertextuality more as a learning issue which had to do with students' socialization in the academic disciplines. They would therefore mitigate the legalistic university policies in light of their awareness of the complexity of the phenomena. Comments by professors were indicative of a pedagogic response on their part to the students' transgressive intertextuality. One professor, for instance, invokes a number of reasons such as the difficulty of content, language competence, and time pressure that might play a role in this type of transgression:

> I think for ESL [students] materials are difficult to read; it's
> [even] challenging for students for whom English is a first
> language. For students for whom English is a second
> language, they're having difficulty dealing with subject
> matter and with language and with construction of the
> ideas. So that's there. There's just the learning involved.
> And I think because of that pressure or challenge, there
> may be the propensity sometime to … out of exhaustion or
> struggle … here … this paragraph says it so well, I can't
> say any other way, so I just put that in. I think it's really

part and parcel of the learning process. (Catherine's
interview, October 2005)

Another professor attributed students' transgressive intertextuality to their

unfamiliarity with academic genres in graduate school, and this coloured her mediation of

university policies:

> Sometime students don't have experience in writing
> academic papers. They think that they can just take ideas
> from papers and they can present it as a synthesis without
> referencing to the people who said them .... Maybe it's
> their first experience writing a graduate paper, let's say,
> and they don't know how to do it; they haven't had any
> training in it. (Sue's interview, July 2005)

Still another professor invoked students' unfamiliarity with the scholarly

conversations in the field that resulted in their not knowing which ideas are common

knowledge and which ones are not:

> When do you cite and when you do not cite? I think to
> some extent that's a judgment call. When students are
> widely read and they know that there's certain ideas that
> are pretty common; then they insert them as general ideas.
> So that's a tough one. And I think it depends from one
> discipline to another; from one theoretical perspective to
> another. In the field of comparative international education,
> for example, there are some general ideas that are common;
> for example, in developing countries, education policies
> tend to be presented as a ways of social engineering. That's
> common. So one can put that without citing anyone
> because we've known that for 30 years and it's common. If
> however you're talking about education policies as a form

> of appropriation by certain stakeholder groups. That's more
> specific and then the term 'policy appropriation' has been
> used by a few authors. So then it's useful to cite that.
> (MacKay's interview, July 2005)

Another professor cited his consideration of intent and students' awareness of

referencing skills in his mediation of plagiarism policies:

> What happens often is that students who are not referencing
> properly, you know, they're not using standards around
> referencing and citing and all sort of things it can look like
> exactly like plagiarism, but without necessarily any intent
> to do it. It just reflects a lack of knowledge. (Sean's
> interview, June 2005)

Professors' responses suggested their reaction to student transgressive

intertextuality was situated and pedagogic. This attitude was also evident in the fact that

none of the students in the study whose essays contained transgressive textual borrowings

were accused of plagiarism. Apart from professors' primary sense of their role as

educators, there might have been other reasons at work. It could be argued that professors

failed to recognize transgressive intertextuality in the students' texts due to the occluded

nature of intertextuality (Cronin, 1981; Currie, 1998; Pecorari, 2006; Swales, 1996),

making it difficult for them to recognize textual transgression. While this feature might

have played a role in professors' reaction, in cases where this identification was not much

difficult - such as when the students had used familiar class readings, or when there were

obvious stylistic differences that could have betrayed transgression - the professors still

maintained a pedagogic response and would subtly point to the need for documentation

by casually scribbling such comments as "Reference!" or "It's all lit. review" to draw students' attention to the conventions governing use of sources.

Ironically, then, while professors were mandated to treat student transgressive intertextuality as plagiarism, in reality they were reluctant to do so as they tended to see this type of intertextuality as mainly an issue related to learning rather than one of reprehensible moral infirmity. In this connection, one professor remarked, "You have the institutional policy and your own policy" (Larson's interview, June 2005). However, despite their reluctance, however, they had to incorporate these policies in their course documents and bring them to the attention of students. This put them in a difficult position in the sense that they had to simultaneously deploy two incommensurable discourses: one legalistic and one educational. This dilemma was characterized by one professor as follows:

> This past year I know there was a guideline/directive that
> we include in our course outlines. And so I reluctantly, I
> must say, put that in [the course outline]. I think
> aesthetically, affectively I had a reaction to that, … it was
> almost … I felt like a security guard …. My aesthetic or
> affective response for not wanting to include it was because
> that's just not the way that I want to enter into a
> relationship with my students when I'm teaching in a class
> and am learning with them. (Mary's interview, October
> 2005)

Professors' dissatisfaction with the imposition to take up the university's perspective on students' textual practices derived from their perception that this was counter to their mission as educators. They seemed to think that the intrusion of the legalistic policy of the university would serve to poison the student-professor relationship

and create a counter productive sense of mistrust. One professor explained the situation as follows:

> It's intrusive, I don't feel comfortable putting it but I'm
> gonna put it this year though, because it's a requirement
> now at the University that you put it there. But up until now
> I have sort of resisted that because I felt uncomfortable to
> put it there to sort of remind people of cheating and all that,
> especially when you're giving a graduate course. (Sue's
> interview, July 2005)

The intrusion into the pedagogical context also had a negative impact on students' writing. As suggested in the preceding chapters, this imposition along with the associated emphasis on prevention and detection of plagiarism created anxiety for the students. It tended to distract their attention from focusing on the more important aspects of academic writing and instead preoccupied them with a focus on making sure they avoid plagiarism. With their emphasis on avoidance and penalties attendant to textual transgression, these policies and documents, therefore, had the negative effect of inducing anxiety for the students. For instance, while Amorita used "paranoia" to highlight her fear of these policies, Hamud's mentioned "getting busted" in his explanation of his citation practices, and also pointed to a similar feeling among the students with respect to these policies:

> ... a lot of times what I'll do for fear of getting you know
> busted for plagiarism, if I have a certain idea that I
> remember coming across in a book that I use in my paper, I
> still cite the paper without necessary remembering what
> essay it was in. (Hamud's interview, July 2005)

In addition to the fear that the juridical framing of intertextuality created for the students, the administrative representation of plagiarism was counter-productive in another respect. The university has published a widely circulated four-page brochure about plagiarism that offers students the skills to avoid plagiarism (see Appendix G). This brochure, which all course outlines made reference to and which was visible on walls, contains the following information: On the first page it warns the students about plagiarism and draws their attention to the consequences. On the second page, it defines plagiarism as "taking another person's words, ideas statistics and passing them off as your own" (p. 2) that seem to include the textual practice of patchwriting observed in the writings of many of the students in this study. On the remaining two pages, some examples of acceptable and unacceptable source use along with a short bibliography of style manuals are provided. The document also mentions in passing that "Since we cannot always be original, it is entirely acceptable to present another person's ideas in your work. However, it must be done properly to avoid plagiarism" (p. 2).

Apart from providing an expansive definition of plagiarism that also includes such acts as wholesale submission of someone else's text, submission of a purchased paper, and close paraphrasing of source texts, the document represents plagiarism as a straightforward issue and only a matter of learning a few documentation skills to avoid it. The brochure is silent on the link between referencing, intertextulity, and the epistemological premises that underpin academic writing. As was suggested in the preceding chapters, there is more to referencing than being a means to avoiding plagiarism. Professional academic writers use referencing to foreground prior authors, their claims and constructions, and highlighting the contested natures of these claims

(Angélil-Carter, 2000; Geisler, 1994; Hass, 1993; Penrose & Geisler, 1994). However, this widely circulated brochure glosses over detailing these key assumptions that underpin academic writing in Canadian graduate schools.

I would suggest that this representation of intertextuality not only did little to inform the students of the central role that referencing plays in the construction of knowledge, but it was also potentially misleading for the students. Referencing, as Hendricks & Quinn (2000) have pointed out, is shorthand for a range of interrelated assumptions about writing. It is therefore more than a way of acknowledging the intellectual property rights of others. Importantly, the implicit assumptions that are glossed over in the document are often acquired over a long period of time as students interact with texts, peers, more knowledgeable others in their particular disciplinary communities (Ballard & Clanchy, 1988; Becher, 1989; Bizzell, 1982; Casanave, 1995). The silence of these documents can become even more detrimental to international students who might be coming from academic cultures with different literacy practices and dispositions toward the written text and scholarship (Matalene, 1985), a point that was highlighted in the comments of the Communication course professors when he was speaking about his mediation of plagiarism policies:

> Often there is a lack of clarity about what research means
> or how do I go about doing the stuff and I think that's also
> part of the learning process. There's a difference between
> going from one education system to another. I mean myself
> having gone through the expectation of the Canadian
> system and the expectation of the British system, there is a
> huge difference there. (Duncan's interview, December
> 2005)

It is perhaps safe to conclude that the reductive representation of what plagiarism is and giving the impression that it is only a matter of learning a handful of documentation skills would be an example of the institutional practice of mystery (Lillis, 1999). This practice can potentially serve to exclude the students who might not know the rules of the game by withholding from them the information. This practice can disadvantage international students who might come from academic or cultural backgrounds with distinct ideologies of authorship and scholarship and/or literacy practices. To give examples, Hako at one point remarked that, "In my country Japan borrowing from others is not so strict," and Mala described her previous academic literacy practices as follows:

> I didn't write much back home. In my undergrad, I used to
> write only two-page or three-page papers, and I wrote about
> my thoughts or reactions to novels or short stories. (Mala's
> interview, July 2005)

As Gramsci (1971) observed, whenever questions of language are raised, there could be larger issues at stake. Transgressive intertextuality is a question of language, and I suggest that one larger issue at stake behind transgressive intertextuality is that of access and inclusion. University policy makers and those in charge of drafting plagiarism policies and documents could revisit what is currently in place to facilitate international students' learning of the conventions, rules, and the assumptions that govern writing in graduate schools, and thereby better assist these students to master the socially powerful genre of academic writing.

CHAPTER NINE

Reflections

In this final chapter, I first recap the main results of the study and then discuss some of the implications. The study revealed that in general ESL students new to graduate school relied heavily on the published works of others to craft their own texts. This reliance on sources was observed at two levels. At one level, students appropriated the words and syntax of the published works, and at another, they appropriated the lines of argument they encountered in those texts. I differentiated between these two levels by referring to them as localized and global patchwriting, respectively, and examined some of the reasons for this practice. At the more visible level of words and syntax of others, localized patchwriting seemed to be prompted chiefly by the students' desire for linguistic capital, symbolic legitimacy, and academic survival. At the level of appropriating ideas and their development, it was suggested that patchwriting mainly had to do with the students' relations to knowledge/writing that influenced how they treated their sources.

The study further provided an account of two discourses at work, each beckoning the students to adopt a different identity, and think, read, speak, and write accordingly. It was suggested that professors' comments and actions served to simultaneously lay out two identities in front of the student: that of a professional writer and that of a student writer. While one set of practices invited the students to write as professionals, the other served to deny them the right to write professionally through its positioning effects. These two discourses were being deployed in the presence of the university policies on

plagiarism that treated textual appropriation in the context of fraud and punishment. It was indicated how the students' decision to answer which call was influenced by the presence of these plagiarism policies and documents. The students in general ended up as student writers, and textually represented themselves as such by representing themselves as moral and intertextuality knowledgeable.

Throughout class observations and interviews, it turned out that professors in general had a pedagogic response to students' textual transgression, and the university plagiarism policies got filtered through their educational lens. The imposition to represent the institution's predominantly legalistic view in their courses contrasted with the faculty's sense of self as educators, and this created a dilemma for them. As for the students, the plagiarism policies contributed to the creation of a distracting sense of anxiety and fear. The study finally considered the exclusionary effects of the university plagiarism policies and documents through their commission and omission. It is argued that these policies represent plagiarism in a reductive manner and at the same time they are silent on assumptions that underpin the use of intertextuality (i.e., citation) in academic writing.

Implications of the Study

Implications for practice. When I look back on my own experience during the early years of my PhD studies, I realize that in many ways my attitudes to scholarship and texts were similar to those of the students in this study. I remember that during class presentations I was under the impression that my role as a discussant was to recount the readings. It took quite a while for my attitudes to shift and for me to realize that my role as a presenter in class discussions, or as an academic writer in papers, was not to

regurgitate what others had said, rather to try to see their words in a different light and come up with a new perspective on things. After a number of courses, hours of interactions with my professors, and a good deal of observations at different literacy events such as talks and oral defence sessions I gradually began to crack the code of academic writing and access many of the assumptions underpinning professional academic writing.

What if, I ask myself, at the start of my studies, there had been workshops and educational materials aimed at explicating these implicit literate assumptions and attitudes, which provided opportunities for me to listen to professional academics talk about their literacy practices, what kind of writing they would value more, the politics of knowledge production and so on? While it would be naïve to suggest that socialization is simply a matter of "telling" students the rules and conventions, it is still true that such workshops could have expedited my socialization into the valued literacy practices in graduate school. It would have made a difference if I had been asked to attend workshops on academic writing early on in my studies instead of simply being given a stripped-down plagiarism brochure that revealed little about what writing in academia is all about.

With this experience in mind, I think this study provides enough grounds to make a case for holding such academic writing workshops for students as they commence their studies, during which they can have an opportunity to explore their own literate attitudes and those valued in Canadian universities. As one professor put it, students' transgressive intertextuality is an issue related to learning and authorship:

> [P]art of the discussion of plagiarism ... involves the notion
> of authorship ... and seeing work that is the student's
> thinking not only work that is a compilation of the thoughts

> of others but the combination of those citations begins to
> give a unique and distinct flavour that become the student's
> own. (Mark's interview, July 2005)

Student transgressive intertextuality is indeed an issue of authorship, and it is therefore a significant notion that merits to be foregrounded for students upon their entry in academia. I am here reminded of the words of another faculty member who highlighted the importance of writing in graduate school by starting that writing "is basically the meat of any academic career" (Sonia's interview, July 2005). Given the centrality of writing in academia and the fact that writing and content are often treated as two separate issues rather than intimately tied, students would benefit from closely examining the notion of author, highlighting the interwoven nature of writing and content, and focusing on the politics of writing and authorship in workshops, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes and even content area courses. In line with this, while I plan to publish the results of this study in professional forums to share them with the wider community of researchers and educators, I also intend to offer them in the form of workshops for incoming students. I am convinced that it is important to make explicit the rules and conventions of academic writing right from the start. This is even more important in the case of international students who might come from scholarly traditions different from those of North America.

The study also provides evidence for a case to be made to university policy makers to re-visit plagiarism policies, documents and directives. As was suggested in the study, the type of textual appropriation that is currently categorized under fraud is not only widespread but also motivated by a range of issues, some of which arise from the pedagogical practices, current academic arrangements, and the hierarchical structure of

the university. Such textual transgressions are in most cases innocent. Therefore, it would be more profitable to dissociate students' textual borrowing and their use of sources from plagiarism which stigmatizes these textual practices. Juxtaposing students' intention to learn with the intention to cheat would be counter productive. Furthermore, as the study demonstrated, faculty members may not treat students' textual transgression as fraud. They tend to view it as an issue that is related to learning and react to it as such. What then would be the rationale to continue framing issues of intertextuality – not acts of fraud - in legalistic terms, when it may not be treated as such by educators?

The study also reveals the reductive representation of plagiarism and its potential to mislead students. The potentially misleading effect of representing plagiarism as a matter of knowing a set of mechanical skills -- which is most visible in the widely distributed brochure about plagiarism -- points to the need for revising this brochure. In light of the results of the study, if I were to be asked to re-design this brochure, I would make a number of changes. I believe that this document can be very beneficial to students if it can provide more context on aspects of academic literate practice such as citation.

I would foreground the pedagogical purpose of the document by removing the reference to plagiarism and the threats of consequences. I would instead explain that in Canadian universities some types of writing are not only considered ineffective but also unacceptable because they violate current academic conventions. I would next introduce writing styles like the APA, or MLA as well as the conventions governing source use, providing detailed information as to why these styles are necessary, and include several illustrative examples of source use. More importantly, I would add detailed information about the reasons why academic writers use these conventions. The explanation would

include information on attitudes, assumptions, rhetorical and epistemological information that underlie use of citation conventions. And lastly, I would include information on the skills of critical reading and note-taking, providing examples.

The changes suggested above would involve both the skills and the implicit assumptions that underlie writing in graduate school as far as intertextuality, referencing, and knowledge writing are concerned. They would also provide a more meaningful context for the skills that currently are treated in a rather de-contextualized fashion in many institutional plagiarism documents. When source use is discussed outside of the context of plagiarism, students' inappropriate intertextuality would be more likely to be treated as a matter of how to assist them to write more effectively rather than an issue of fraud. It therefore would de-stigmatize students' unacceptable source use.

The study arguably has implications for faculty to the extent the results reveal that pedagogical practice is itself implicated in students' production of ineffective patchwritten texts through faculty demands for legitimacy and their positioning of students as writers without authority. This is obviously the dilemma of the pedagogical context for instructors. On the one hand, the faculty need to somehow make sure that the students are engaging with the readings and are gaining mastery over the particular literacies of their disciplines, on the other, they need to treat students as professionals-in-training and expect them to write as professionals. If pedagogical practice, especially in graduate school, is about socializing students into the literacy practices of disciplinary communities, faculty should perhaps think of alternative ways to achieve this purpose. One possibility could be the rhetorical deconstruction of samples of professional articles in class. Such an analysis will inevitably bring to the fore a range of rhetorical and

epistemological assumptions that underpin professional writing. I contend that this approach would be an effective way through which faculty can provide students with explicit and contextualized examples of how experienced academics write. In line with this, instructors can base their writing guidelines and requirements on professional practices and expect their students to gradually approximate them in their writings.

Contributions to the literature and theory. This inquiry contributes to the scholarly literature on students' transgressive intertextuality in that it brings into consideration the issue of epistemology. Previous studies that have invoked the notion of patchwriting in dealing with the phenomenon have for the most part remained at the level of language. This study, in contrast, refines the notion of patchwriting by considering it in the context of literacy practices that include the implicit attitudes that individuals have towards the written text. One main reason that I adopted the notion of patchwriting in characterizing the participants' textual borrowing practices was to refine this important notion by linking it up with the notion of literacy practices. Another contribution that the study makes to the literature of student transgressive intertextuality is that it highlights this type of intertextuality in the context of educational practices and the role they play in encouraging this type of intertextuality to occur. For instance, such writing standard as "scholarly" or "confident writing" set by professors actually encourage the students who are struggling with English to increasingly rely on the "scaffolding" (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) support of their readings. In this sense, this study not only supports the claim that students' textual transgression is tied to their desire for learning, but that some of the reasons for this transgression lie outside of the student writer and can be attributed to the very pedagogical context in which they compose their texts.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study points to two directions for further research. The results of the inquiry, along with those of earlier studies, point to a need for the re-consideration of institutional definition of plagiarism and associated policies in North American academia. However, one major question that remains to be answered before this body of empirical evidence can effect a change in the institutional practice is the process through which these policies are made. While recent research has shown the complexity of student transgressive intertextuality, little of this understanding has found its way into institutional plagiarism policies. A subsequent study, therefore, can shed light on the institutional policy making process so that research results can be brought to bear on the policy. A further direction for study involves gaining a deeper understanding of the topic of student transgressive intertextuality in relation to the diverse academic disciplines. During this inquiry I sometimes wondered what the study would have looked like if I had investigated the same topic within the hard sciences, for instance. Academic disciplines are "tribes" with their own unique cultures of inquiry, epistemological, and literate assumptions (Becher, 1989; Knorr-Cetina, 1999). It will be informative to investigate the same topic by examining the assumptions and practices of members of those academic cultures. This is especially intriguing when one considers the question in conjunction with recent research that has pointed to variations across disciplines in terms of intertextuality and writers' use of the literature of the field (Bazerman, 1988; Charles, 2003, 2006; Hyland, 1999; Samraj, 2004).

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Appendix A

COURSE PROFESSOR RECRUITMENT LETTER

Invitation to Contribute to a Study

Dear Professor ... ,

I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, conducting a study that involves English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) graduate students in the social sciences and humanities. I am writing to you to enquire whether you would be interested in contributing to it.

Importance of the Study

There is an increasing number of immigrant and international students at Canadian graduate schools for whom English is a second language, and yet there is little knowledge about these students' experience and strategies when they confront the requirements of English academic writing. Regardless of how prepared these students are in terms of such gate keeping language proficiency tests as TOFEL, CAEL, or IELTS, the challenges of academic writing still remain. This study will inform professors about what is happening to these ESL students and what can be done to help them overcome the difficulties they might be having with academic writing. As for the students, the study will provide them with an occasion to reflect on their writing practices, get to know professors' expectations and perhaps transfer these newly gained insights to other courses. This could potentially contribute to their disciplinary socialization and academic success.

What the Study Involves

I plan to explore the issue within the context of a number of graduate courses in different disciplines. Upon your permission, I would like to attend for a full semester one of your courses for two reasons: (1) the thematic novelty of your course for me, and (2) to get familiarized with the disciplinary culture of the course within which students write.

Upon your permission, on the first day of the course I will very briefly introduce my research to the class, giving them a handout with some information about the study and my contact information in case they are interested in participating in the research. Those who choose to participate will then share with me the papers they will be writing for the course, and take part in a couple of short interviews during the semester about English academic writing.

I also hope to have 1-2 short interview(s) with you to capture your perspectives and expectations as an educator. I would be asking such general questions as:

- What are the qualities that you expect in students' papers?
- How would you characterize a successful paper?
- When you read the papers written by your students, do you have any sense of them as writers?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ali R. Abasi   **Supervisor:**

PhD Candidate   Dr. Barbara Graves

Faculty of Education   Faculty of Education

University of Ottawa   University of Ottawa

Appendix B

<u>COURSE PROFESSOR CONSENT FORM</u>

Letter of Consent

I, ……………………………………………………, am invited to participate in the
the study titled *Discursive Appropriation and Construction of Authorial Identities: A
Case Study of ESL Students Writing in Graduate School* that is being conducted by Ali R.
Abasi.

I understand that this study investigates the experiences and challenges that
international ESL graduate students have with writing academic English. My
participation in the study will involve allowing the researcher to attend the course that I
am teaching for a full semester and participate in 1-2 interviews each lasting 30-45
minutes. The interviews will be about my perspectives and the expectations that I
generally have from students with respect to English academic writing. I am aware that
the interviews will not involve any personal or private issues, and that it will be tape-
recorded. I further understand that the researcher and his supervisor will have access to
the data, but my identity will remain anonymous to his supervisor.

I have been informed that, if I decide to participate in the study, it can provide me
with insights into the difficulties that international ESL graduate students might be
having with writing English academic writing.

I am aware that I can ask the researcher to stop attending my course at any time
during the research without giving any reasons, question the researcher about any part of
the research, and refuse to answer any interview questions that I might not feel
comfortable answering. I also consent to participate in the study on the condition that
anything I share with the researcher remain strictly confidential and that my identity will
be withheld should the results of the study enter public domain. I further understand that
the researcher will be a participant observer in class; that I can withdraw from the study
at any time should I feel uncomfortable about this; and that the research data will be kept
in a locked cabinet in the research supervisor's office for a period of 5-6 years.

I understand that in case I have any questions or complaints regarding the research I can contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research at the University of Ottawa at

I freely consent to participate in the above-said study.

There are two copies of this consent form, one of which I will keep.

_____	_____
Participant's Signature	Date

_____	_____
Researcher's Signature	Date

Researcher:

Ali R. Abasi,

PhD Candidate,

Faculty of Education,

University of Ottawa

Email address:

Supervisor:

Dr. Barbara Graves,

Faculty of Education,

University of Ottawa

Email address:

Phone:

Appendix C

STUDENT RECRUITMENT LETTER

Invitation to Participate in a Study

Dear student:

I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, and I am doing a study that involves international ESL graduate students majoring in Social Sciences and Humanities.

The purpose of the study is to understand international ESL graduate students' experiences and difficulties with English academic writing.

In case you decide to participate in this study, all you will have to do is share with me the papers that you will be writing for this course, and take part in 2-3 interviews (30-45 minutes each) with me at your convenience over the next semester.

Your participation in the study will be strictly confidential and voluntary. To reciprocate for your contribution, I will be glad to provide you with editing assistance for your other paper(s) that you will be writing in the semester.

If you are an international ESL student and are interested in contributing to the study, please contact me for more details by phone or email at:

Thank you very much.

Ali R. Abasi

Appendix D

DICIPLINARY PROFESSOR RECRUITMENT LETTER

Invitation to Contribute to a Study

Dear Member of the Faculty:

I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, conducting a study that involves English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) graduate students studying in different Social Sciences and Humanities disciplines. I am writing to you to enquire whether you would be interested in contributing to it.

The Study and its importance

There is an increasing number of immigrant and international students at Canadian graduate schools for whom English is a second language, and yet there is little empirical research about these students' experience and strategies when they confront the requirements of English academic writing. Regardless of how prepared these students are in terms of such gate keeping language proficiency tests as TOFEL, CAEL, or IELTS, the challenges of academic writing still remain. This study will inform professors about what is happening to these ESL students and what can be done to help them overcome the difficulties they might be having with academic writing. As for the students, the study will provide them with an occasion to reflect on their writing practices, get to know professors' expectations and perhaps transfer these newly gained insights to other courses. This could potentially contribute to their disciplinary socialization and academic success.

Your Contribution

As you are aware, your academic institution has plagiarism policies that define what constitutes plagiarism and how to respond to it. As part of my study, I would like to know how faculty members generally mediate these policies when they confront student writings that can be considered plagiaristic. Specifically, I would like to know how you would respond to and help ESL graduate students who might produce texts that might be considered culturally inappropriate in light of university plagiarism policies and English academic writing rules. For this reason, I hope to be able to have a short interview with you to capture your perspective as an educator in this regard. The interview will be about 30 minutes long.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ali R. Abasi   **Supervisor:**
PhD Candidate   Dr. Barbara Graves
Faculty of Education   Faculty of Education
University of Ottawa   University of Ottawa

Appendix E

DISCIPLINARY PROFESSOR CONSENT FORM

Letter of Consent

I, ..., am invited to participate in the study titled *Discursive Appropriation and Construction of Authorial Identities: A Case Study of ESL Students Writing in Graduate School* that is being conducted by Ali R. Abasi.

I understand that this study investigates the experiences and challenges that international ESL graduate students have with writing academic English. My contribution to the study will involve taking part in one interview lasting 30 minutes. This interview will be about my perspectives and the expectations that I generally have from students with respect to English academic writing. I am aware that the interviews will not involve any personal or private issues and that it will be tape-recorded.

I have been informed that, if I decide to participate in the study, it can provide me with insights into the difficulties that international ESL graduate students might be having with writing English academic writing. I also know that the results of the study maybe published. I have also been informed that the researcher and his supervisor will have access to the data, but my identity will remain anonymous to his supervisor.

I am aware that I can question the researcher about any part of the research, and refuse to answer any interview questions that I might not feel comfortable answering. I also consent to participate in the study on the condition that anything I share with the researcher remain strictly confidential and that my identity will be withheld should the results of the study enter public domain. I also understand that the research data will be kept in a locked cabinet in the research supervisor's office for a period of 5-6 years.

I understand that in case I have any questions or complaints regarding the research I can contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research at the University of Ottawa at :

I freely consent to participate in the above-said study.

There are two copies of this consent form, one of which I will keep.

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date

_____   _____
Researcher's Signature   Date

Researcher:

Ali R. Abasi,

PhD Candidate,

Faculty of Education,

University of Ottawa

Email address:

Supervisor:

Dr. Barbara Graves,

Faculty of Education,

University of Ottawa

Email address:

Phone:

Appendix E

Interview Protocols

Student Interview I (Preliminary Interview)

1. Let me tell you about myself and my studies.

2. Tell me about yourself (educational background, why you came to Canada, what you plan to do?, etc.)

3. Tell me about where you learned English.

4. Tell me about what you studied back home.

5. Tell me about your studies here. Have you previously taken similar courses? Which courses do you like best? How about this one?

6. Tell me about your major concerns now that you have started your studies.

7. Is there anything you would like to ask or know about me or this study?

Thank you.

Student Interview II

(Text-based)

1. Tell me how this paper came about (your feelings, your challenges, etc.)

2. What was the most difficult thing about writing this paper?

3. Did you take notes when you were reading your sources? Did you have any difficulties taking notes? What do you generally do? (Tactfully probe about his or her knowledge about plagiarism, etc).

4. Could you tell me where you picked up this phrase/structure/word/piece of text?

5. Why did you reference/not reference this phrase/word/piece of information/author?

6. Why do you generally reference or cite your sources? Why do you think you should cite in writing?

7. Who are you writing this for? Are you thinking about publishing it?

8. Who did you have in mind when you were writing this paper? Why?

9. In this paper, can you show me where you are talking and where your sources are talking?

10. When you were writing this paper, were you concerned about doing something that might be considered plagiarism?

11. Is there any thing about this paper that you would like to tell me that I didn't ask?

Thank you.

Interview Questions

Course Professors

- Could you explain how you understand plagiarism?

- What kind of writings would you consider plagiarism?

- How did you decide to/not to include plagiarism policies?

- In your opinion, why is it important to put a reference to the University's plagiarism policies?

- How would you react to unacceptable source use by students?

- Why do you think citation/referencing is important in writing?

- Generally speaking, what are the qualities that you expect in students' papers?

- What are the qualities of an A+ paper for you?

- Do you also teach at the undergraduate program? Are there any differences between teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels?

- Is there any thing that I did not ask about but you would like to talk about?

Thank you!

Interview Questions

Professors in the Disciplines

- Could you tell me what your understanding of plagiarism is?

- What kind of writings do you consider plagiarism?

- Why do think referencing is important in writing?

- Do you include a reference to the university's plagiarism policies in your course outline?

- How would you deal with the issue of plagiarism in students' papers?

- What do you think is the reason for what might be considered plagiarism in students' papers, especially in ESL students' papers?

- What do you usually do to help students who have difficulties with writing?

- What are the qualities that you expect in a student's paper?

- Why do think referencing is important in writing?

- Is there any thing that I did not ask about but you think I should know?

Thank you.

Appendix F

CODING SYSTEM

Themes and sub-themes

Writing Strategies (WS)

      Local Patchwriting (LPW)

      Global Patchwriting (GPW)

Literacy Practices (LP)

      Faculty Literacy Practices (FLP)

      Student Literacy Practice (SLP)

Student Literacy Habitus (SLH)

Epistemological Orientation (EO)

      Student Epistemological Orientation (SEO)

      Faculty Epistemological Orientation (FEO)

Writer Legitimacy (WL)

Intrusion of Institutional Plagiarism Policies (IIPP)

Detection of Transgressive Intertextuality (DTI)

      Occludedness of Source Use (OSU)

      Legal Issues (LI)

      Time Constraints (TC)

Policy and Reality Discrepancy (PRD)

      Faculty Views (FV)

      Challenges of Enforcement (CE)

Differentiating Effects of Writing (DEW)

Student Sense of Authority (A)

Positioning (P)

      Faculty Written Feedback (FWF)

      Student Perception (SP)

Students' Fears (SF)

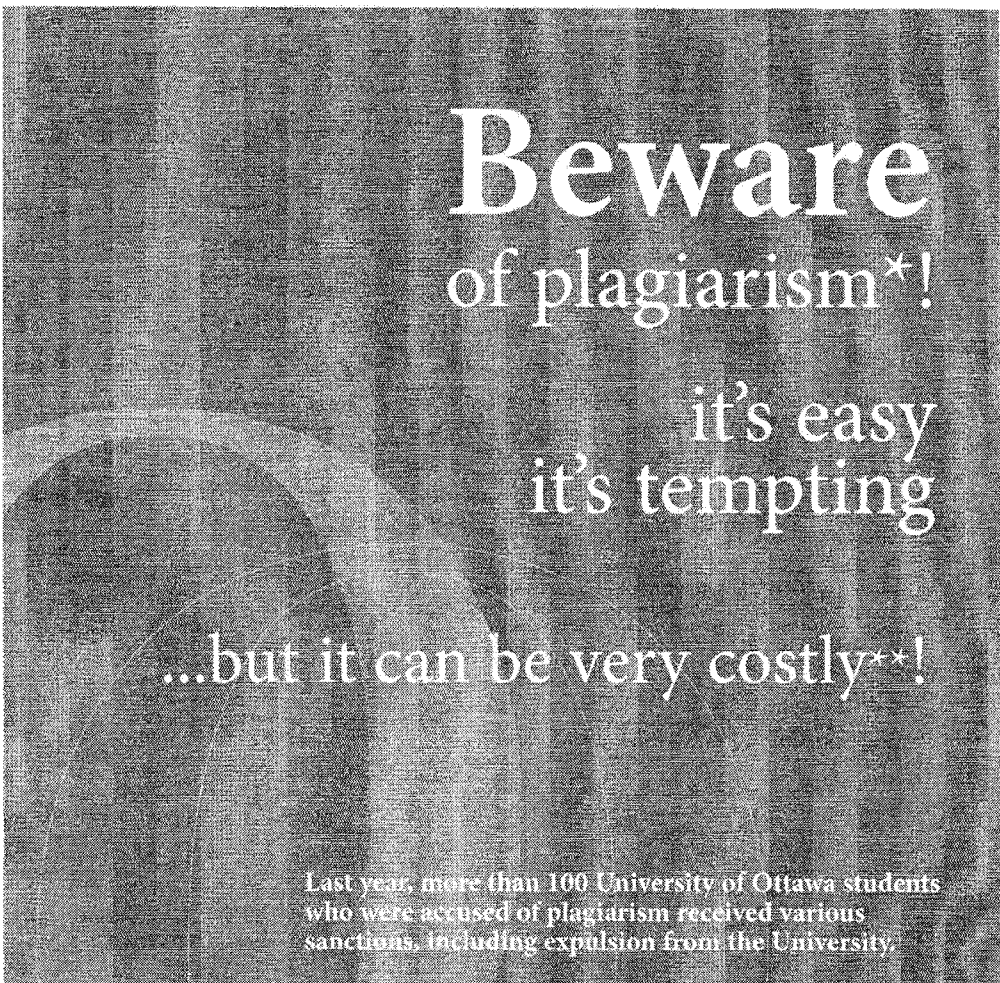Students' Command of Written English (SCWE)

Student Investment (SI)

Resistance to Learning (RL)

Appendix G

The University's Brochure about Plagiarism

University of Ottawa

Beware
of plagiarism*!

it's easy
it's tempting

...but it can be very costly**!

Last year, more than 100 University of Ottawa students who were accused of plagiarism received various sanctions, including expulsion from the University.

uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university

*   To plagiarize is to borrow someone else's words or ideas without mentioning his/her name and/or without using quotation marks ("..").

** Consult the Senate regulations on possible sanctions.
(www.uOttawa.ca/academic/info/regist/fraud_e.html)

www.uOttawa.ca/plagiarism.pdf

August 2006

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

PLAGIARISM is taking another person's words, ideas or statistics and passing them off as your own. The complete or partial **translation** of a text written by someone else also constitutes **plagiarism** if you do not acknowledge your source.

Since we cannot always be original it is entirely acceptable to present another person's ideas in your work. However, it must be done properly to avoid plagiarism.

PRINCIPLES AND RULES

- When borrowing another person's words, use quotation marks and include a complete reference (author's name, date, pages).

- Internet sources must also be acknowledged.

- When borrowing another person's ideas, acknowledge their origin.

- Do not paraphrase another writer's words and pass them off as your own.

TWO BASIC RULES

1. If you use someone else's words, data, etc., use quotation marks and give a complete reference.

2. If you borrow someone else's ideas, give a complete reference.

EXAMPLES

Should you want to use this source:

Over time technology has been instrumental in increasing industrial and agricultural production, improving transportation and communications, advancing human health care and overall improving many aspects of human life. However, much of its success is based on the availability of land, water, energy, and biological resources of the earth.*

*Pimental, David, "Population Growth and the Environment: Planetary Stewardship", Electronic Green Journal, #9, December, 1998. Online. Internet. [June 22, 1999]. Available www: http://egj.lib.uidaho.edu/egj09/piment1.html

WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE

You wrote*:	This is unacceptable because:
Research has shown that **technology has been instrumental in increasing industrial and agricultural production, improving transportation and communications, advancing human health care and overall improving many aspects of human life. However, much of its success is based on the availability of land, water, energy, and biological resources of the earth.**	• Other than the first four words, the text has been copied word for word from the original document without any quotation marks that would indicate that the passage is a quote. • The source you are using is not cited.
Research has shown that the advancement of **technology has been instrumental in increasing industrial and agricultural production, improving transportation and communications,** health care and overall **many aspects of human life.** (Pimental, 1998)	• Even though you mention your source, you use many of the author's words without quotation marks.
Research has shown that the advancement of science has been beneficial to the areas of agricultural and industrial production and communication and transportation fields. Furthermore, science has greatly improved health care and is the prime factor in a higher standard of life for many people.	• Though most of the words have been changed, the sentence structure has remained the same. • This is paraphrasing without indicating the original source.

* The words in bold are used in the source text.

WHAT IS **ACCEPTABLE**

You wrote:	This is acceptable because:
In his article on the effects of population growth on the environment, Pimental argues that "technology has been instrumental in increasing industrial and agricultural production, improving transportation and communications, advancing human health care and overall improving many aspects of human life. However, much of its success is based on the availability of land, water, energy, and biological resources of the earth" (1998).	• The author has been acknowledged, and the quoting technique which has been used is adequate since this is an Internet source. However, when you quote a printed source (book, journal, etc.), be sure to include the page numbers.
According to Pimental, "technology has been instrumental in increasing industrial and agricultural production, improving transportation and communications, advancing human health care and overall improving many aspects of human life" (1998). He cautions, however, that technological progress is dependent on natural resources.	• You have properly quoted and paraphrased the author.
According to Pimental (1998), technology has greatly improved our standard of living. He cautions, however, that technological progress is dependent on natural resources.	• This is the proper way to paraphrase and the author's ideas have been credited.

Referencing Styles

- *Writing and Style Guide for University Papers and Assignments*, prepared by F.-P. Gingras (Faculty of Social Sciences): www.sciencessociales.uOttawa.ca/guide-en.asp

- *History Essay Guide*, prepared by the Department of History. Available from the secretariat of the Department. www.uOttawa.ca/academic/arts/history/essay_guide_undergrad.html

- *Academic Writing Help Centre Writing Kit*:
  - APA (American Psychological Association) References: www.sass.uOttawa.ca/writing/kit/apa.php
  - CM (Chicago Manual) Reference: www.sass.uOttawa.ca/writing/kit/cm.php
  - MLA (Modern Language Association) Reference: www.sass.uOttawa.ca/writing/kit/mla.php

- *Style Sheet*. Working with Sources. Introduction to Research in English Literature, prepared by the Departement of English. For sale at the Campus Bookstore.

- *Pathfinders*: www.biblio.uOttawa.ca/lnx-list-e.php?sec=1&spec=54

Other resources:

- *How to avoid plagiarism*: www.socialsciences.uOttawa.ca/pdf/plagiarism2.pdf

- *"Says who?" Integrity in Writing: Avoiding Plagiarism*: www.sass.uOttawa.ca/writing/plagiarism.pdf

This leaflet was prepared by the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Social Sciences (first edition 1999).

Appendix H

Declaration
(This page must be attached to the essay)

According to the University of Ottawa Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Calendar:

Academic fraud is an act by a student which may result in a false academic evaluation of that student or of another. Without limiting the generality of this definition, academic fraud occurs when a student commits any of the following offences:

1. *Commits plagiarism or cheating of any kind.*

2. *Submits a work of which the student is not the author, in whole or in part (except for duly cited quotations or references). Such works may include an academic paper, essay, text, an exam, research report, or thesis, whether written, oral, or other.*

3. *Presents as research data material which has been falsified or concocted in any way.*

4. *Attributes a purported statement of fact or reference to a source that has been concocted.*

5. *Submits the same piece of work or significant part thereof for more than once course, or a thesis or other work which has already been submitted elsewhere, without written authorization for the professors concerned and of the academic units concerned.*

6. *Falsifies an academic evaluation, misrepresents an academic evaluation, uses a forged or falsified academic record or supporting document, or facilitates the use of a falsified academic record or supporting document.*

7. *Undertakes any other action for the purpose of falsifying an academic evaluation.*

The University of Ottawa Faculty of Arts defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is taking another person's words (written or spoken), ideas, theories, facts (that are not considered general knowledge), statistics, art work, etc. and passing them off as your own. Simply changing the language of the information you are using also constitutes plagiarism if you do not acknowledge your source.

Having read and understood the above definitions, I hereby declare that the attached written assignment is my own work and does not involve academic fraud:

Name: _____   Student Number: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____