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FACTORS INFLUENCING
NON-ENGLISH STUDENTS' ACTS
OF PLAGIARISM

AMY O. BENSON

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The American University in Cairo
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Factors Influencing NNES Students' Acts of Plagiarism

A Thesis Submitted to
The English Language Institute
TEFL Program
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

by
Amy O. Benson

June, 1999

The American University in Cairo

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A Thesis Submitted by
Amy O. Benson

To the Department of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

June 1999

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the possible contributing factors that lead to acts of plagiarism at the American University in Cairo. The purpose of this study was to identify the reason or reasons for nonnative English speaking (NNES) students' acts of plagiarism by quantifying the students' experience with, familiarity of, and attitudes toward the use of another's words or ideas. Also explored was the possible relationship between students' lack of English proficiency and plagiarism. By identifying what is behind students' acts of plagiarism, instructors may better understand their students' behavior, and find a possible solution as to how best to deal with the problem.

Past research has found that the nature of plagiarism among NNES students' plagiarism differs from NES student plagiarism. Factors to be considered are a NNES student's proficiency and attitude toward plagiarism, as well as her or his experience with the concept of plagiarism. The literature is limiting in that Asia is its primary subject and that little of it is empirical in its design. This study has broadened the literature by examining if and how these possible contributing factors of NNES plagiarism were found to contribute to acts of plagiarism among Egyptian students at AUC.

Participating in the study were 165 undergraduate students from both the Intensive English Program (IEP) and the Freshman Writing Program (FWP). A questionnaire was administered to the subjects inquiring about their knowledge of the concept of plagiarism, their attitude toward it as well as test their ability to recognize different acts of plagiarism. Because it is unclear what influences NNES student plagiarism, this study set out to investigate students' perspectives of

plagiarism with the hope that the factor or factors that lead to NNES student plagiarism would be pinpointed.

Neither proficiency, familiarity, nor culturally influenced attitudes toward plagiarism appeared to have an effect on NNES students' plagiarism. In general, students across proficiency levels were able to recognize extreme cases of plagiarism. However, the students were less successful in recognizing paraphrase plagiarism.

Knowledge about the university's Academic Policy was found to have very little effect on students' ability to recognize plagiarism. Length of time spent enrolled in university courses was also found to have little effect on this. However, students' written comments on the open-ended portion of the questionnaire provided evidence for a positive relationship between experience with academic writing and students' better understanding of plagiarism.

The desire to receive a high grade and laziness were both reasons cited by students as to why some students plagiarize. Students also claimed to know that plagiarism is "wrong." A pattern of student comments also emerged identifying insufficient language skills and lack of training as chief causes of NNES student plagiarism.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Problem and Its Setting	1
1.2 Importance of the Study	2
1.3 Research Questions	3
1.4 Definitions of Constructs	4
1.5 Definitions.....	4
1.6 Abbreviations	5
1.7 Variables	5
1.8 Assumptions.....	7
1.9 Delimitations of the Study.....	7
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Plagiarism is a Western Concept.....	12
2.3 The Difference Between NNES Students' Plagiarism and NES Students' Plagiarism.....	14
2.4 Proficiency as a Factor of NNES Student Plagiarism	17
2.5 Students' Culturally Influenced Attitudes Toward Plagiarism.....	23
2.6 Students' Familiarity With the Concept of Plagiarism	27
2.7 Other Possible Motives Contributing to NNES Student Plagiarism.....	29
2.8 Conclusion of Literature Review.....	29
2.9 Rationale For the Present Study.....	30
3. THE METHODOLOGY	32
3.1 Introduction.....	32
3.2 Subjects.....	32
3.3 Instrumentation.....	33
3.4 Procedure.....	34
3.5 Treatment of Data.....	34
4. RESULTS	35
4.1 Introduction.....	35
4.2 Research Question 1.....	35
4.2.1 Can Students Recognize Acts of Plagiarism?.....	36
4.2.2 What Previous Experience Have Students had with Plagiarism?..	39
4.2.3 To What Extent are Students Informed About the Academic Policy at AUC?.....	44
4.3 Research Question 2.....	45
4.4 Research Question 3.....	48
4.4.1 What are AUC Students' Attitudes Toward Crediting an Author's Work?.....	48

4.4.2 What are AUC Students' Attitudes Toward a Person Who Commits Plagiarism?	49
4.5 Research Question 4	53
5. Discussion.....	55
5.1 Introduction.....	55
5.2 Students' Familiarity with the Concept of Plagiarism.....	55
5.3 The Relationship Between Plagiarism and Students' English Proficiency.....	63
5.4 Students' Culturally Influenced Attitudes Toward Plagiarism.....	66
5.5 Other Possible Motives Behind AUC Students' Plagiarism.....	69
5.6 Conclusion	71
5.7 Implications for Teaching.....	72
5.8 Limitations of the Study.....	74
5.9 Suggestions for Further Research	75
6. REFERENCES	77
APPENDIXES	82
Appendix A: ELI Graduates' Ability to Recognize Plagiarism	82
Appendix B: Questionnaire Given to Students	84

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem and Its Setting

Plagiarism is becoming an important and controversial topic in the field of Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. Students' misuses of original texts are common in the ESL/EFL classroom. Instructors teaching at universities with a Western academic orientation or tradition find that many of their nonnative English speaking (NNES) students have a serious problem with plagiarizing (Sherman, 1992; Deckert, 1993; Pennycook, 1996; Locastro and Masuko, 1997). A student's act of plagiarism can be taken as a personal affront to the teacher and it can reflect poorly on a student's intelligence and academic integrity. Academic writing involves the successful integration of information with proper acknowledgment of the sources used (Campbell, 1990). This is often a challenge for both teachers and NNES students in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) settings.

With a majority of students for whom English is a foreign language, the American University in Cairo (AUC) is subject to the phenomenon of student plagiarism. This is a point of concern for teachers and professors at AUC. In Arrigoni's study (1998), which explored AUC professors' expectations and reactions to student writing, one professor described plagiarism at AUC as "rampant" (p. 86).

When the subject of plagiarism is brought up in conversation among teachers at AUC, hackles are raised and everyone has something to say. In informal interviews of AUC teachers and professors, when asked why they believe students plagiarize, they gave a range of answers with no consensus as to which is the most viable. The reasons given were: "It's cultural"; "It is laziness"; "The students don't care"; "They lack critical

thinking skills"; "They lack the English ability"; "They don't understand what it is"; "They have never had to write anything before"; and "These students were praised in their previous schools for reciting word-for-word from the text."

It is unclear what factors may contribute to acts of plagiarism at AUC. This study investigated the possible contributing factors that lead to plagiarism committed by students enrolled in the Intensive English Program (IEP) and the Freshman Writing Program (FWP) at AUC. The purpose of the present study was to identify the reason or reasons for AUC students' plagiarism by quantifying the students' experience with, familiarity with, and attitudes toward the use of another author's words or ideas. Also explored was the possible relationship between plagiarism and students' lack of English proficiency. AUC is an English-medium university with a majority of its students being NNEs. AUC's formal academic policy contains a section which stresses the seriousness of the offense of plagiarism. The study's goal was to identify what is behind students' acts of plagiarism at AUC so that instructors may better understand their students' behavior, and find a possible solution as to how best to deal with the problem.

1.2 Importance of the Study

Plagiarism is an important topic in TEFL. It is recognized as a serious problem in EAP courses. There is much speculation made by teachers as to why plagiarism is a problem at AUC. However, the factors explored in this study have only been potential explanations. Without even the beginnings of a consensus on why students plagiarize, there is little hope for a solution. While instructors had many different explanations for the problem, the students had yet to be asked about what they think are the

reasons behind plagiarism. The purpose of this study was to pinpoint the factors contributing to student plagiarism.

The identification of contributing factors is a crucial step in minimizing plagiarism at the university. Some teachers at AUC will be affirmed in their original beliefs of why students commit plagiarism, while others will be surprised at the results. It is hoped that the findings of the present study will provide the opportunity for the heightening of teacher awareness of student behaviors. This heightened awareness has the potential to lead to more focused teaching about plagiarism.

The results of this study may not be generalizable outside of AUC without taking into consideration that the students at AUC are a unique group in a unique educational setting. However, the findings concerning the contribution of academic pressures, culture, and level of proficiency to students' plagiarism may be applicable to other English-medium universities with a majority of NNES students. Insight from this study can be used in future research on plagiarism for similar EAP settings.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to better understand better the factors that influence AUC students' acts of plagiarism, this study explored the following questions and sub-questions:

1. Are students familiar with the concept of plagiarism?
 - a. Can students recognize acts of plagiarism?
 - b. What previous experience, if any, have they had with plagiarism?
 - c. To what extent are students informed about plagiarism and the academic honesty policy at AUC?

2. What is the relationship between plagiarism and students' English proficiency?
3. What are students' attitudes toward plagiarism given their familiarity with the concept?
 - a. What are AUC students' attitudes toward crediting an author's work?
 - b. What are AUC students' attitudes toward a person who commits plagiarism?
4. What are other possible motives behind AUC students' plagiarism?
 - a. To what extent do students plagiarize due to academic pressures?
 - b. To what extent do students plagiarize due to laziness?

1.4 Definitions of Constructs

In the present study, the word "plagiarism" refers to "taking the words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas of other people and using them as if they were your own" (Hamp-Lyons, 1984). The operational construct for the term "plagiarism" is as it is stated in the AUC Handbook (1997): " 'the passing off as one's own the ideas or words of another' (Webster's Dictionary) from published or unpublished sources, including the work of fellow students."

1.4.1 Definitions

There are three types of plagiarism that were referred to in this study. They were defined as follows:

1. *Patchwork plagiarism* is the use of words from an original text but in a different order (Hamp-Lyons, 1984).

2. *Paraphrase plagiarism* is the use of the overall ideas and organization from an original text, but using different words and grammatical structures, without citing the source (Hamp-Lyons, 1984).
3. *Outright plagiarism* is five or more contiguous words copied word-for-word from the original text without proper documentation (Hamp-Lyon, 1984).

1.4.2 Abbreviations

1. **AUC** refers to the American University in Cairo.
2. **EAP** refers to English for Academic Purposes.
3. **EFL** refers to English as a Foreign Language.
4. **ELI** refers to the English Language Institute, which includes levels 98, 99, and 111. The ELI also includes graduate students.
5. **ESL** refers to English as a Second Language.
6. **FWP** refers to the Freshman Writing Program at AUC which includes levels 112 and 113.
7. **IEP** (Intensive English Program) refers to the intermediate and upper levels of the English Language Institute, which includes levels 98 and 99.
8. **NNES** refers to nonnative English speakers/speaking
9. **NES** refers to native English speakers/speaking

1.5 Variables

The **independent variable** for this study is *proficiency* (research question #1). Do students plagiarize to compensate for inadequate language ability? All the research questions asked were examined according to the proficiency level of the students.

There are four **dependent variables** in this study. The first was the students' ability to recognize the different *types of plagiarism*. There are

three types of plagiarism addressed in the present study: patchwork, paraphrase, and outright plagiarism (Hamp-Lyons, 1984). In terms of academic honesty, the three types are equal in severity, but they are not equally obvious. Can students recognize the different types of plagiarism in provided writing samples? Can students recognize a writing sample that has credited sources correctly?

The second is *familiarity with the concept and definition of plagiarism* (research question #2). Familiarity includes having heard of the word "plagiarism," having had the word "plagiarism" explained, or having been accused of an act of plagiarism. To what extent do students know about the academic policy at AUC that forbids plagiarism?

A third dependent variable, which correlates with research question #3, is *attitude toward plagiarism*. This refers to the regard a student holds for giving credit to an author for the author's writing. Do students feel crediting an author is important? Or do they feel words in print are public property to be shared? This also refers to the opinion a student has about an act of plagiarism and with what words they would describe a plagiarizer.

Motivations for plagiarism are various incentives that have to do with academic pressures that lead to an act of plagiarism. *Motivations for plagiarism* relate to research question #4. Academic pressures are pressures to meet deadlines and to receive a passing grade as well as a student's tendency toward laziness.

The one **moderating variable** considered in this study is *previous schooling*. Students' exposure to plagiarism may vary depending on the schools they attended before entering AUC—private language school, private international school, or Egyptian government school.

1.6 Assumptions

This study operated under five assumptions:

1. Plagiarism exists at the American University in Cairo.
2. There are factors that influence plagiarism.
3. These factors can be defined and described.
4. There are contributing factors to plagiarism specific to EFL/ESL learners that differ from the contributing factors that lead to NES plagiarism.
5. Plagiarism is an important issue at AUC and in Western academic communities in general.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

This study investigated students' reasons for committing plagiarism, their familiarity with the concept of plagiarism, if and how their proficiency levels contribute to plagiarism, and their attitudes toward the act of plagiarism. This study sought to address the issue of plagiarism from English source texts only, and did not address plagiarism in translation. Results of the study can be generalized to AUC students in the Intensive English Program and the Freshman Writing Program who attended secondary schools in Egypt. It is these two programs that serve as the English language training ground for the larger academic community of AUC. Only students in the ELI and FWP were examined in order to focus on the factors that influence students' acts of plagiarism in an EFL situation. Students outside these two departments come from various language and educational backgrounds and cannot be considered EFL students.

Teachers' and professors' attitudes, lessons, experiences or policies concerning plagiarism were not examined. Plagiarism alone is the subject of this study, not other forms of academic dishonesty.

This study refers to but does not analyze the ethical issue of whether impressing the western notion of plagiarism on non-Western students is academically or culturally sound. This study assumed that students attending AUC need to be aware of the importance of avoiding plagiarism.

The issue of plagiarism in English speaking and plagiarism in a non-English speaking language education research. The literature reviewed spans 17 years of studies beginning in 1991, examining plagiarism in the context of second language writing. The recent interest in this issue is perhaps due to the increase of students studying or hoping to study in the United States, and to the increased effort scholars publishing their work in English. The current era is an era of global communication through English as the lingua franca of the world. As technology brings the whole of the world closer together, the cultural differences are vanishing from the international arena. (Kumaravadivelu, 2003)

The growing phenomenon is being called in the literature of language teachers and researchers.

Only in the past few years has there been a formal interest in the area of plagiarism among ESL students, and the potential for research is far being exhausted. The literature is limited in number of studies and by a slight use of subjects as well as in terms of its research design. The most studies have primarily examined plagiarism among university students from China and Japan in ESL and EFL situations. Some of the literature reflects the frustrations of both instructors of Asian students and Asian students themselves due to the persistent problems concerning plagiarism and the cultural factors that cause their resistance to plagiarism. At western style universities in Asia, plagiarism has led to accusations, called papers and expulsions. Research concerning ESL plagiarism needs to expand

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The issue of nonnative English speakers and plagiarism is a new area in second language education research. This literature review spans 10 years of studies, beginning in 1990, examining plagiarism in the context of second language writing. The recent interest in this issue is perhaps due to the increase of students studying or hoping to study in the United States and to the increase in NNES scholars publishing their work in English. The current explosion of global communications is establishing English as the lingua franca of the world. As technology brings the scholars of the world closer together, more cases of plagiarism are emerging from the international academic, scientific and political communities (Myers, 1998). This growing phenomenon is being called to the attention of language teachers and researchers.

Only in the past ten years has there been a formal interest in the area of plagiarism among NNES students, and the potential for research is far from exhausted. The literature is limited in number of studies and by similar use of subjects as well as in terms of its research design. The major studies have primarily examined plagiarism among university students from China and Japan in ESL and EFL situations. Some of the literature reflects the frustrations of both instructors of Asian students and Asian students themselves due to the persistent problems concerning plagiarism and the cultural factors that cause those students to plagiarize. At Western-style universities in Asia, plagiarism has led to accusations, failed papers and expulsions. Research concerning NNES plagiarism needs to expand

beyond Asian cultures in order to learn if and how these findings from Asia are generalizable to other non-Western cultures.

The research design of most studies in this area is problematic in that it is primarily non-empirical. Three of the major articles in this area are what might be termed position papers, based on a combination of case studies, anecdotes and personal opinions. Only two studies have qualitatively examined the reasons why NNES students plagiarize. Further empirical evidence concerning why NNES students plagiarize is therefore needed.

Sharon Myers, Ron Scollon, and Alistair Pennycook are three researchers who have added a great deal to this area with their insights into the effects of the Western notion of plagiarism on nonnative speakers with their position papers. Scollon (1995) and Pennycook (1996), drawing on their extensive experience with teaching within a Chinese culture, both discussed how cultural values influence one's writing style and how this must be taken into consideration when dealing with NNES student plagiarism. Myers (1998) also discussed the complex nature of plagiarism, pulling evidence from Chinese scientists who struggle with the notion of plagiarism. Myers proposes that cultural values, deficient experience with academic English, and poor proficiency contribute to NNES plagiarism.

Experimental evidence in this area is not completely absent. Two of the major studies that qualitatively examined NNES students' perceptions of plagiarism were done by Deckert (1993) and Locastro and Masuko (1997). Deckert used questionnaires to find that Chinese students in Hong Kong were able to define but not able to recognize examples of plagiarism. Locastro and Masuko (1997) used both a small number of questionnaires and interviews to do an ethnographic investigation of why plagiarism is common among Japanese students. The researchers found that not only

were cultural values, proficiency, and unfamiliarity with the concept factors in student plagiarism, but that lack of experience with writing in their L1 and L2 played a part as well.

In the attempt to lessen the amount of plagiarism in the English language classroom, Myers, Scollon, Pennycook, Deckert, and Locastro and Masuko have investigated the possible linguistic, cultural, and rhetorical reasons behind NNES students' plagiarism. They have brought to the surface how NNES plagiarism differs from NES plagiarism and have presented a variety of possible factors leading to ESL/EFL plagiarism. These include lack of proficiency, lack of awareness of standards, academic pressures, and attitudes toward plagiarism. All of these have appeared as suspects in NNES students' plagiarism to varying degrees. However, due to the non-empirical research design of the position papers, the small scale of the qualitative studies, and the broad range of findings, more research is needed in this area in order to identify the factors contributing to NNES plagiarism.

The studies discussed in this review are the major studies in the area of ESL/EFL plagiarism from the researchers mentioned above. Also reviewed are the findings of others who were not necessarily investigating NNES plagiarism specifically, but who discuss plagiarism as it relates to their studies examining second language writing. The majority of the articles reviewed came from books and journals dealing with second language teaching and learning. Descriptors used in the research for this study were ESL, EFL, plagiarism, writing, and culture.

Studies were chosen for inclusion in this literature review on the condition that they dealt with plagiarism in academic writing. Research examining plagiarism among NNES students and some NES students was included. The articles discussing the plagiarism among NES students is

used to compare with the findings of the studies discussing NNES students. Not included in this literature review are studies focusing on methods used to teach students how to incorporate sources into academic writing. Also not included were articles discussing institutions' plagiarism policies or administration procedures used in cases of university students' being accused of plagiarism.

The significance of the NNES plagiarism problem is related both to the problem's solution and also to its controversial nature. It is only when researchers are better able to understand the reason or reasons for student plagiarism that solutions for how teachers can deal with NNES plagiarism can be developed. This problem is also significant in that "plagiarism" is often spoken in the same breath as terms such as "ethics," "morals," and "cheating." The association of plagiarism with one's moral standards makes it a sensitive topic. Unlike grammar errors or poor organization in a composition, plagiarism is traditionally not seen as an error. It is perceived as a crime associated with a student's deceit. This is dangerous when dealing with students and scholars from different cultures who are likely to have different perceptions of plagiarism. Just as plagiarism and ethics may be commonly associated, so may plagiarism be associated with cultural imperialism.

2.2 Plagiarism as a Western Concept

Plagiarism is not a universal concept. It is an ideology invented in the West. The notion of plagiarism is based on the Western cultural values of individuality, authorship, and ownership (Scollon, 1994; Howard, 1995; Pennycook, 1996; Myers, 1998). Western students have these Western ideologies ingrained in them from a young age (Howard, 1995). The injunction, "use your own words" is not a new concept for NESs like it is

for many NNEs. Although many institutions around the globe have adopted anti-plagiarism policies, the concept of plagiarism has little history or stamina in a non-Western culture.

In Howard's (1995) close examination of plagiarism in the college classroom, she pointed out that the word plagiarism comes from the Latin *plagiarius*, which means *kidnapper*. Howard explained that while formal copyright laws were first established during the era of the printing press, the idea of preserving the credit of the original author existed in the West during the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The researcher asserted that respect for individuality, authorship, and ownership, widely accepted by the West as a global truth, actually stems from the cultural construct born of Western society's emphasis on technology and the economy.

There appear to be two camps in the fundamental approach to plagiarism in the NNEs classroom. While there is agreement that plagiarism is indeed a product of the Western world, some see the problems with plagiarism among NNEs students as being a pedagogical issue while others see it as a question of ethics. The former show concern for the non-Western student accused of a Western-conceived crime. Pennycook (1994) and Scollon (1994) both recommended the subject of plagiarism be approached with sensitivity. They also discussed the possible consequences of requiring American notions of academic honesty of students from different cultures. On the other hand, Deckert (1992), while admitting that the Chinese plagiarizers he examined were not deliberately deceitful in their acts of plagiarism, referred to their acts as "learned plagiarism" (p. 95) stemming from the Chinese respect for imitation. Rather than addressing the difference in writing norms for American and Chinese cultures, Deckert emphasized the Chinese tendency to copy words straight from texts. Deckert stressed the importance of

teaching Chinese students of English how to write autonomously, in the Western fashion.

No matter where the researcher stands on the ethnocentrism of plagiarism, the literature is unified in the conclusion that NNES students must learn to document sources and use their own words when working in a Western context. Crediting authors is part academic English writing and students must do it in order to succeed in the world of English academia. Teacher awareness has also been identified as an essential in the EFL/ESL classroom. A teacher of NNES students needs to know that words copied from a text do not necessarily equal deliberate deceit on the part of the student. Teachers who bristle and become offended by acts of plagiarism may need to know more about why NNES students' plagiarize.

2.3 The Difference Between NNES Students' Plagiarism and NES Students' Plagiarism.

The literature recognizes that acts of plagiarism are not exclusive to NNESs. There are many cases in the United States and other English-speaking countries of politicians, professors, and students who are reprimanded for taking others' words and using them as their own (Myers, 1998). However, the research also recognizes that the nature of NES students' acts of plagiarism and NNES students' acts of plagiarism can differ. This section compares the findings of two studies completed by Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (1995), and Kroll (1988) both of which investigated the motivations and ethical issues associated with NES student plagiarism —with the findings of Deckert's (1993) and Locastro and Masuko's (1997) studies investigating NNES student plagiarism.

A study done in the United Kingdom by Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (1995) examined different aspects of plagiarism and NES

students. This study examined what "cheating behaviours" are committed the most frequently and why from the perspective of 128 NES undergraduates from the science department of a United Kingdom university. Responses to questionnaires asking students how often they take part in certain cheating crimes indicated fabrication of references, paraphrasing and copying without references were the three most frequent offenses. The main reasons given by the students for this behavior were academic pressures such as time, stress, and desire for a high grade.

Kroll (1988) explored why American university students believe plagiarism is wrong, in an attempt to find out what ethical issues the students associate with plagiarism. The study consisted of 150 freshmen who were given an open questionnaire asking them to write an explanation of why they feel plagiarism is wrong. The answers were then placed by the researcher into six categories which included: individual responsibility, fairness, ownership, honesty, laziness, and crime and punishment. The majority of the students gave reasons placed under the headings of individual responsibility, fairness, and ownership. The subjects expressed the need for students to write independently and creatively for the sake of their own learning. A majority of the students described plagiarism as the stealing of an author's property and as an dishonest act because it means receiving a grade for work one did not do. Kroll excluded all NNEs students from the study assuming that their conception of plagiarism would differ from that of the American students.

Rather than asking why students plagiarize or why it is wrong to do so as Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead and Kroll did, Deckert (1993) examined whether NNEs students were familiar with the concept. He attempted to find out if 211 Chinese students in Hong Kong were able to recognize cases of plagiarism when given a series of different versions of

the same paragraph containing different types of plagiarism. Deckert then asked the students why plagiarism is wrong by having students agree or disagree with statements such as "When I write this way, I am unfair to myself" in a likert scale fashion.

Locastro and Masuko (1997) explored the relationship between culture and Japanese students' attitudes toward plagiarism. They asked students accused of plagiarizing in their theses why they plagiarized and why they thought other students plagiarize. Reasons given ranged from lack of time to complete the work, students not feeling their English was adequate and not being aware of the concept or its seriousness. Locastro and Masuko concluded that the Japanese students' plagiarism is not necessarily due to a difference in cultural upbringing, but due to lack of experience with both the concept of plagiarism and with academic writing itself. Although the students may have had an idea that they should not copy words straight from the text, they did not have enough experience in academic writing to know how to avoid it.

By comparing the findings from the studies of NES student plagiarism with the findings from Deckert's and Locastro and Masuko's studies concerning NNES students, the differences between NES and NNES student plagiarism emerge. While Kroll (1998) concluded that college students from the United States feel plagiarism is wrong because it violates the rights of the author, is unfair to other students, and inhibits individual learning, Deckert (1993) concluded that his NNES subjects were unconcerned with giving credit to the author and with any injustice done to their classmates. Rather, the Hong Kong students expressed how copying from a text was harmful to their "sense of personal integrity" (p. 142). It was also found in Deckert's study that NNES students were not

able to recognize all types of plagiarism. This will be discussed further in section 2.6.

Reasons such as time pressure and desire for a high grade were the most popular answers given by the NES subjects in Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead's (1995) study. These same reasons were also given by the Japanese students who had plagiarized in their theses in Locastro and Masuko's (1997) study. However, Locastro and Masuko's subjects who linked plagiarism to academic pressures further related the act to their lack of confidence in their language ability and lack of understanding of the concept of plagiarism.

Although the reasons for NES and NNES plagiarism may overlap in some instances, there are factors that must be taken into consideration when dealing with NNES students that do not apply to NES students. The possible contributing factors will be discussed in the following sections.

2.4 Proficiency as a Factor of NNES Student Plagiarism

Lack of language ability has been identified as a factor leading to NNES plagiarism (Locastro and Masuko, 1997). Nonnative English speakers may feel insecure about their language ability and rely on copying words from other sources. Students may not only feel unsure about their language proficiency, but also about their ability to write academic English. Students may plagiarize to make up for their lack of writing ability. The research suggests that many NNES students have not fully developed the writing skills needed in academic English (Campbell, 1990). Although students' English abilities might be sufficient to pass the TOEFL or a similar test, they may not necessarily be able to write academically (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995). Students who are not yet

proficient in their academic writing may rely on plagiarism as a crutch in their academic work.

Locastro and Masuko (1997) discussed both issues of students' insecurity with their language ability as well as their insufficient experience with writing academic English. This section will first discuss students' lack of confidence in their use of the English language followed by the developmental factors of writing that might contribute to plagiarism.

As earlier discussed, Locastro and Masuko (1997) found that Japanese students had very little experience writing academically in either Japanese or English. Some of the students interviewed claimed that lack of English proficiency was a major reason for plagiarizing. Although the students had an idea that what they were doing was considered wrong, they did not understand why they should change the authors' words into their own poor English.

Lack of confidence in one's language ability appears to be a factor in why Chinese scientists, taking part in the competitive world of international science, have been accused of plagiarism. Myers (1998) examined Chinese scientists' plagiarism and its effect on their ability to participate in the world of scientific scholarship. The lingua franca of science is English. If the level of a scientist's English proficiency is not high enough to write fluently and publish research she or he is at a disadvantage. Myers discussed investigations of Chinese scientists who plagiarized English texts. In these cases it was found that the Chinese scientists' data were legitimately theirs, but the words they used to explain it were not. The Chinese scientists, according to Myers, saw this as acceptable because the scientific work and the ideas behind it were original. It was only the language that was borrowed.

Spanish scientists were also found to plagiarize due to their low level of English proficiency. St. John (1987) interviewed Spanish scientists about the strategies they used to write scientific studies in English. One of the strategies identified was patchwork plagiarism. Spanish scientists admitted cutting and pasting others' words from English articles, using no citations, when writing their own research because they lacked the English proficiency to compose an entire research report. The scientists interviewed stressed that the ideas were their own; they were just using parts of English sentences and phrases as a tool to express their ideas on paper.

The subjects in Locastro and Masuko's (1997) study, Myer's (1998) Chinese scientists and St. John's (1987) Spanish scientists plagiarized because they felt they lacked the linguistic competence to write as a native speaker would. However, proficiency applies not only to word choice, grammar and surface structure of a students' writing. It also refers to proficiency in writing academic English. According to Campbell (1990), writing is a skill that is developed with experience and time. Native speakers go through stages before they reach the point where they can write academic English well.

In order to illustrate how a student's writing development may be a reason for NNES plagiarism, the debate of proficiency versus culture must be first be introduced. The controversy is between whether NNES students' writing ability is affected by their step-by-step writing development or if it is due to their reliance on their writing style learned in their L1. In other words, do NNESs have difficulty adapting to the standards of academic English due to proficiency/developmental reasons or due to culturally-influenced writing styles?

Both developmental and cultural factors have the potential to lead to NNES plagiarism. If students are still developing in their L2 writing proficiency, then copying others' words may still be used as a crutch in their writing. If students rely on the style of writing they learned in their L1 when writing in English, then what is transferred from their L1 in their English writing may conflict with the norms expected of them in academic situations. Although both sides of the debate may help explain NNES plagiarism, a better understanding of the two sides may lead to a clearer solution to the problem.

By reviewing the studies done by Locastro and Masuko, Connor and McCalls, Mohan and Lo, and Campbell, the arguments in favor of the theory that developmental learning or learning in stages influences NNES writing ability are introduced. These studies refute the assertion that Kaplan made in his benchmark study (1966) that culture plays the sole part in NNES academic writing. This debate is important to the discussion of plagiarism in that it explores the possible relationship between proficiency and plagiarism as compared to the relationship between culture and plagiarism.

First to be addressed is the influence of culture on NNES writing. The discussion of culturally influenced writing styles began with Kaplan's studies published in the 1960s and 1970s. Kaplan (1966) proposed that Chinese and Arabic students' problems with writing academically in English were due to negative transfer from their L1. Kaplan put forth the idea that Chinese students are deficient in their ability to write academic English because they follow a writing style based on Chinese rhetoric. Kaplan claimed that the students transferred the Chinese structure of the 'eight-legged essay' to their writing in English. Since Kaplan introduced this theory of negative transfer, the debate has been ongoing in the area of

second language writing as to whether culturally influenced rhetorical styles or developmental factors play a role in NNES writing.

Kaplan's theory of culture-specific rhetorical patterns and its effect on L2 writing was investigated by Connor and McCagg (1983). The researchers wanted to see if rhetorical writing patterns would be apparent in NNES students' paraphrasing of passages based on the immediate recall of text when compared with NES students' passages. It was found that the NES students' paraphrased writing samples differed from the NNES students' samples in that the NES writers reorganized the ideas from the text and added their opinions while the NNES writers stayed with the original pattern of the text. On the basis that the NNES students appeared to be constrained by the structure of the original text, it was concluded that this difference was more likely due to the students' lack of training in how to write than because of culturally influenced writing styles. The students needed training in how to write according to the norms of academic English discourse

Mohan and Lo (1985) upheld Connor and McCagg's (1983) findings that students' difficulty with writing was due to lack of training and not due to negative transfer. Mohan and Lo conducted a study in order to find out whether NNES students from China in Canada and in Hong Kong were being taught how to organize their writing in the ESL classes. They found that the teaching in these two ESL programs were directed toward sentence-level accuracy of student writing with very little concern for the overall structure and organization. It was concluded that poor academic writing produced by second language learners can be attributed to incomplete EFL instruction rather than interference from a student's L1.

Mohan and Lo (1985) challenged Kaplan's theory of the 'eight-legged essay' by asserting that the 'eight-legged essay' no longer exists in present-

day Chinese writing. They claimed that modern Chinese writing is a lot like English academic writing. They refuted Kaplan's idea even further by suggesting that modern Chinese writing and English academic writing are so similar that the transfer of writing styles might even help Chinese learners to write in academic English. The researchers went on to qualify this by stating that learning how to organize and structure one's writing develops late in a first language and is learned through explicit teaching.

Although Connor and McCagg's (1983) and Mohan and Lo's (1985) studies did not address plagiarism specifically, they do direct attention to lack of experience and training that could contribute to NNES student plagiarism. Avoiding plagiarism and citing sources is part of writing academic English. If the overall structure and patterns of academic English are not being taught, it can be inferred that the concept of plagiarism and means of avoiding it are not being taught either.

It has already been discussed that Locastro and Masuko (1997) found language proficiency to be related to plagiarism. An even more important finding in their study of Japanese university students is that plagiarism may be related to the students' lack of experience with writing. The students in their study had never developed their writing skills during primary and secondary school in either their L1 or in English. The students' main experience with writing in English was with personal essays. The students had never written an objective, academic paper before entering university and had not yet developed the skills to do so. The researchers claimed that the students plagiarize not because of cultural factors as it was first thought, but plagiarized in order to make up for their lack of writing experience.

Campbell (1990) stressed that plagiarism was part of the process that will eventually lead to good academic English writing if given the time and

experience. Campbell compared NES and NNES students in their ability to incorporate information from background readings into their academic writing. She found that the NNES students could summarize a reading but did not cite sources and often copied word-for-word from the text.

Campbell suggested that students most likely know that they should use their own words to summarize, but copy instead for fear of sounding too colloquial and non-academic.

Campbell (1990) further suggested that the incorporating of background texts and citing sources is a maturation issue. She hypothesized that as students write more in an academic context and become more confident in their writing ability, they will have less need to copy. Campbell concluded that low proficiency is a possible contributing factor of plagiarism. However, it is not just proficiency in terms of the language as a whole that contributes to plagiarism, but it is the proficiency level in the context of academic English writing.

Both proficiency in terms of the confidence of a nonnative speaker and in terms of the student's development in academic writing have been discussed. The research illustrates how the basics such as structure and organization of academic English writing are not always understood by NNES students in academic situations. If this is the case, then the avoidance of plagiarism is most likely not being addressed explicitly in the ESL/EFL classroom.

2.5 Students' Culturally Influenced Attitudes Toward Plagiarism

Although the literature presents a strong case for developmental factors as the primary influence in NNES students' difficulties with writing, Kaplan's research still holds as a strong argument for the influence of culture on student writing. From language to language, culture to

culture, rhetorical notions of academic writing may vary. One's cultural background affects one's writing style (Matalene, 1985; Gregg, 1986; Hinkel, 1994). A student's L1 writing style may include what Western individuals consider plagiarism.

The research on NNES student plagiarism in China repeatedly emphasizes the distinct difference between Western and Chinese cultures. The Westerners value individual knowledge just as strongly as the Chinese believe knowledge belongs to the community. One can look outside academia to the world of business for a timely example of this difference in attitudes toward what is termed "intellectual property".

Both China and Taiwan have booming industries based on literature counterfeiting and music and software pirating, which costs the U.S. billions of dollars each year. An article in the *World Press Review* (Yuan, 1994) reporting on Taiwanese businessmen forced to burn all books in violation of copyright laws, addressed Chinese culture as a reason for the rampant stealing of intellectual property. The idea of intellectual property is new to Chinese culture. In ancient China, great artists were those who perfected the imitation of other great artists. A perfect imitation was considered an honor to the original creator to be enjoyed by the public.

Just as copyrighting is a new concept for Asia, so might be attributing an author or using one's own words for a NNES student. Gregg (1986), in defense of Kaplan, criticized Mohan and Lo (1985) for being too simplistic in their assertion that the problems of Chinese scientific writers are due to their learning development of academic English and is unrelated to different culturally influenced rhetorical styles. Gregg admits that Kaplan may have gone too far in his conclusions about the negative transfer and culture. However, Gregg emphasized that it cannot be denied that culture plays a role in student writing.

Gregg (1986) illustrates this by comparing the values and writing styles of Western and Chinese cultures. Western culture values individuality, autonomy, creativity, and directness. This is reflected in the originality of ideas, natural language and clarity which are required in academic English writing. Chinese culture values community over the individual, traditional ideas and the reliance on authority. According to Gregg, these qualities can be observed in Chinese expository writing which is abstract, descriptive, and relies on long quotes and paraphrases from other authors without the citing of sources.

The Western value on directness and the Chinese value on indirectness oppose one another in the two cultures' writing styles. In Matalene's (1985) account of her experiences teaching writing to Chinese students in China, she explained her struggle with her Chinese students, who often wrote—as it appeared to Matalene—circuitously. Matalene's students did not understand why their teacher wanted them to express themselves so blatantly. While Matalene thought of direct statements as a component of clarity, the Chinese students thought of direct statements as insulting to the reader. This example of cultural difference in writing may also be applicable to situations of NNES student plagiarism.

Western writers expect to get credit where credit is due (Meyers, 1998). This is an attitude not found in Chinese culture. According to Matalene (1985), Chinese writers use what Western writers call plagiarism as part of their Chinese writing convention. The Chinese refer to it as "imitation" and believe imitation is a step toward enlightenment. There is a Chinese proverb which Matalene used to illustrate this: "Keep reading the three hundred Tang poems until you are familiar with them and you'll be able to fabricate, if not compose." (p. 803). The author of this proverb is unknown.

Just as different cultural values influence writing styles, culture also influences non-Western, nonnative English speakers' attitudes toward plagiarism. Matalene (1985) compared Chinese NNES students' misunderstanding of plagiarism with other cultural misunderstandings that often occur between the Chinese and Americans. For example, when a NNES student plagiarizes, it is similar to an American not knowing that it is considered impolite not to take off one's shoes when entering a Chinese home. According to Matalene, what is familiar for the native speaker is unnatural and possibly awkward for the nonnative speaker. Matalene was continually surprised when, in spite of repeated corrections, she kept receiving her students' use of "fixed phrases" (pg. 795) without references. Rather than creating one's own way to express an idea or reference the source as is acceptable in academic English, Chinese students memorize others' words throughout their lives and choose them according to the idea they wish to express.

Chinese cultural values do not allow for the convention of plagiarism. Howard (1995) points out that plagiarism cannot exist in Chinese writing because the Chinese value authority over originality. Everything is borrowed from someone else and therefore no words belong to any one person. According to Howard, there is no reason for the concept of plagiarism to exist when words and ideas belong to everyone as a collective.

The literature illustrates that culturally influenced attitudes toward ownership, authority, and creativity may influence a NNES students' writing. However, it is only Chinese culture that has been addressed. Arab culture also differs from the West in its attitude toward what may be shared with the community. Like Asia, Egypt has been reprimanded for its extreme violations of Western-enforced laws protecting intellectual

property (Dowell, 1996). This present study explored whether possible contributing factors of plagiarism found in Asian culture can also be found in Middle Eastern culture. This study also examined whether other characteristics of Arab culture, not found in Asia, may influence NNES plagiarism.

2.6 Students' Familiarity With the Concept of Plagiarism

A student's culture may influence the way she or he perceives plagiarism. However, the literature has shown that students may plagiarize because they are not even familiar with the concept. Students may have never had the idea of plagiarism explained to them properly. The research also suggests that students' lack of previous experience with the notion of plagiarism.

NNES students in the English classroom often hear the phrase "use your own words." For students who were raised in an education system that tested rote memorization, using one's own words is much easier said than done. Sherman (1992) investigated mismatched writing expectations between Western teachers and Italian NNES students and found that Italian learners did not know what plagiarism was because they had very little experience with writing in their L1. Plagiarism for these students had never been an issue because of the memorization-driven curricula of the Italian secondary classroom.

The only empirical analysis conducted on NNES students' familiarity with plagiarism was completed by Deckert (1993). Deckert distributed questionnaires to 170 Chinese first-year and 41 third-year Chinese university science students. The questionnaire asked the students about their knowledge of and attitudes toward plagiarism, and tested their ability to recognize acts of plagiarism when given examples of plagiarized

and non-plagiarized passages. Deckert found that only four of the 170 Hong Kong science students had ever had the word "plagiarism" explained to them, although it did appear in the academic policy at their Hong Kong-based Baptist College. The students were being held accountable for a policy they did not understand.

The majority of Chinese students surveyed were able to recognize cases of outright plagiarism, or cases where words were copied straight from the text. However, the same students were unable to recognize passages containing patchwork plagiarism and paraphrased passages without references. Deckert concluded that students may only be partially informed about or experienced with the concept of plagiarism. The researcher recommended that explicit instruction on how to avoid plagiarism be given in the ESL/EFL classroom.

A pilot study (Benson, 1998) conducted in AUC's English Language Institute (ELI) investigated Egyptian students' ability to recognize different types of plagiarism in given passages. Although the results of the pilot study were inconclusive due to the small sample size, the results did provide information pertaining to the extent of ELI students' knowledge about plagiarism. Only 30% of the 60 students surveyed recognized that a paraphrased passage was plagiarized, while a passage containing patchwork plagiarism was identified as plagiarism by half the students. A majority of the students were able to recognize cases of outright plagiarism or passages containing no plagiarism.

Institutions abroad and here at AUC have anti-plagiarism policies that the students are expected to adhere to. The research implies that NNEs may not know what plagiarism is or how to avoid it. The pilot study (Benson, 1998) mentioned above was expanded for the present study.

2.7 Other Possible Motives Contributing to NNES Student Plagiarism

The research shows that neither NNES nor NES students are immune to the stress of academia and the temptation to cut corners in order to receive a good grade. Along with lack of proficiency and lack of familiarity with plagiarism, Locastro and Masuko (1997) found that a number of students also gave lack of time as a reason for plagiarism. In interviews with Hong Kong students who had been accused of plagiarism, Pennycook (1996) found that students blamed their choice to copy from the text on a heavy workload.

As mentioned in section 2.3, Franklyn-Stokes and Newstand (1995) found that the majority of the university students from the United Kingdom surveyed felt that grades were the main reason for academic deviancy. It is possible that certain NNES students would plagiarize even if they had a high level of proficiency as well as a native speaker-like familiarity with and cultural awareness of plagiarism. However, other factors must be considered before accusations are made.

Plagiarism is not a black-and-white issue. Pennycook (1996) stressed that it is simply not enough to define plagiarism for one's students. Pennycook urged teachers to examine the complexity of plagiarism as well as question its impact on NNES students. If the student's culture, lack of proficiency, or familiarity with the concept of plagiarism are not taken into consideration, negative stereotypes may be spread.

2.8 Conclusion of Literature Review

This literature review has discussed the issues that surround NNES student plagiarism. The nature of plagiarism among NNESs may differ

from that of NESs. Factors considered to be possible factors contributing to NNES student plagiarism are: a NNES student's proficiency, cultural perception of plagiarism, experience with the concept of plagiarism and motivations such as saving time and wanting a good grade. These factors appear repeatedly in the literature establishing their legitimacy as possible reasons for NNES plagiarism. However, the research is limiting in that Asia is its primary subject. This study broadens the literature by examining if and how these possible contributing factors of NNES plagiarism are found to contribute to acts of plagiarism among Egyptian students at AUC.

2.9 Rationale For the Present Study

Lack of familiarity with the concept, lack of proficiency, students' attitudes, and other motives have all been identified as possible factors in NNES students' plagiarism. The research done in Asia does bring to light many questions in the area of plagiarism and EFL learners in EAP settings. The literature illustrates that there are many possible reasons why NNES students plagiarize. Likewise, the variety of reasons discussed in this literature review are also possibilities as to why AUC students plagiarize. Nevertheless, plagiarism is a serious problem at AUC. Whether student plagiarism is due to inherent cultural differences, lack of proficiency, lack of awareness, or other motivations, AUC needs a diagnosis of this problem before it can be remedied.

The Intensive English and Freshman Writing Programs at AUC are EAP settings. Despite the fact that avoiding plagiarism is not implicit in the IEP's and FWP's goals and objectives, teachers and professors from all AUC disciplines work under the assumption that the IEP and FWP exist not only to bring students' English up to AUC standards, but to prepare

the students so that they may perform successfully in a broader academic environment.

By examining the contributing factors of plagiarism in the EAP courses at AUC, this study seeks to make suggestions to the IEP and FWP as to how they might best deal with the problem of student plagiarism. The academic honesty policy of AUC includes a definition of plagiarism. It is the university's responsibility to investigate why its academic standards are not being met.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In order to answer the four research questions postulated by the present study, questionnaires were distributed to students enrolled at the American University in Cairo (AUC). This chapter describes the present study's subjects, instrument, instrument procedure and how the data collected was analyzed. This study was conducted in order to investigate the reasons behind NNES student plagiarism. Results from this study are potentially generalizable to similar settings. The methodology in this study was designed to yield the most reliable and useful results possible.

3.2 Subjects

One hundred sixty-nine AUC undergraduates took part in this study. Each subject was enrolled in one of AUC's English Language courses (98,99, and 111) , or in the Freshman Writing Program (112 and 113). Levels 98 and 99 make up the Intensive Language Program (IEP) and consist of students with the lowest proficiency levels. Students enrolled in the IEP are not yet admitted into university credit courses due to their low English ability. Level 111 consists of students with mid-range English ability who still receive three hours of English instruction per day, but are also enrolled in university credit courses. English 112 and 113 are part of the Freshman Writing Program (FWP) and consist of students with an English ability that allows them to function at the university level.

Students from all these courses vary in their ethnic and educational backgrounds; however, the majority are Egyptian students with previous schooling completed in private language, private international, or Egyptian government schools. Only students who had completed secondary school

in Egypt were included in this study in order to control for subjects who may have had different cultural and educational backgrounds and therefore different understandings of plagiarism. Classes were chosen according to classroom teachers' availability.

3.3 Instrumentation

A refined version of a previously tested questionnaire was the instrument used in this study. The original questionnaire was developed and used in a pilot study in spring of 1998. In the pilot study, the questionnaire was administered to 60 students attending the ELI. The original questionnaire was modified for the instrumentation of the present study to address problems found in the pilot study.

The structure of the questionnaire (see Appendix B) was modeled after the questionnaire Deckert (1993) developed for his study examining perspectives on plagiarism among students in Hong Kong. The instrument for the present study consisted of five sections: *General information*; *Previous schooling*; *Recognizing plagiarism*; *Why do people plagiarize?*; and *Describing people who plagiarize*. The questionnaire consisted of 41 multiple-choice items and two open-ended questions. The first open-ended question asked what word best describes someone who plagiarizes. The second open-ended question allowed the students to write any comments about why they believe some students plagiarize. The *Recognizing plagiarism* section provided five situations in which students compare an original passage from a Naguib Mahfouz editorial with writing samples based on the passage. The subjects were asked to identify whether the writing samples were plagiarized and if so, how serious they considered the error. Three types of plagiarism were represented: patchwork, paraphrase and outright plagiarism. Two of the samples contained no plagiarism.

Data concerning language ability, attitudes toward crediting an author's work, attitudes toward the act of plagiarism, and various possible motivations for plagiarism were collected using a Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* with a neutral option.

3.4 Procedure

The questionnaire was administered during a two-week period in March of 1999. The researcher administered the questionnaire to all 15 classes without the classroom teacher present. Standardized instructions were read to all 15 classes (except in the case of level 98, which will be discussed at length in the Discussion section). The students were informed that the questionnaire was for a research project and that the researcher had no interest in their identities, only in what they think. Students were allowed to ask questions concerning directions and/or vocabulary of the administrator before and during the completing of the questionnaire

3.5 Treatment of Data

Percentages and frequencies for each item of the questionnaire were calculated. Percentages were sorted by proficiency level where appropriate. Inferential statistics were then used to analyze the data. One-way tables were tested using confidence intervals to test if the data were statistically significant. The confidence levels were set at .95, except in the case of multiple comparisons in which the level of significance was set at .99 in order to avoid making a Type I error.

Chapter 4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The data for this study were collected by means of a questionnaire distributed to undergraduate students enrolled in AUC. The data were examined in terms of the four research questions. Each of the 43 items, including two open-ended questions, were coded to be analyzed according to the research items. Originally 189 undergraduate questionnaires were completed by students. Twenty-four of these were removed from the analysis either because they were completed by students who were not Egyptian or who did not complete secondary school in Egypt. In this chapter, the descriptive statistics for the 165 undergraduate questionnaire responses are reported.

4.2 Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Are students familiar with the concept of plagiarism?

Data used for this research question were taken from a total of 16 items in the questionnaire.

4.2.1 Sub-question for research question 1: Can students recognize acts of plagiarism?

One of the ways in which students' familiarity with the concept of plagiarism was judged was by students' ability to recognize acts of plagiarism. Data concerning the ability of students to recognize plagiarism were elicited from five writing samples which appeared beside an original text (see Appendix B). Three of the five writing samples contained either

paraphrase, outright or patchwork plagiarism. Two of the student samples contained no plagiarism but differed in their format. The passage coded "no plag. 1" contained the name of the source, author credit and a properly cited quote. The passage coded "no plag. 2" contained a paraphrase of the original passage with credit given narratively to the author. The students were asked to identify which of the passages (if any) had plagiarism present.

Percentages (and frequencies) of students who correctly or incorrectly identified the presence of plagiarism in five writing samples are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Students' ability to recognize plagiarism, by percentage (and frequency)

Writing Samples	Correct	Incorrect
A. paraphrase	25 (42)	75 (123)
B. outright	96 (156)	4 (7)
C. patchwork	72(118)	28(46)
D. no plag. 1	88(145)	12(20)
E. no plag. 2	95(156)	5(8)

One-way confidence intervals, using Student Systat, were used to determine whether the results from the *recognizing plagiarism* section differed significantly across passages. In order to determine statistically significant results, the confidence level was set at .95. A significant difference was found in the case of paraphrase plagiarism. While the other passages were similar in students' ability to recognize the presence or absence of plagiarism correctly, paraphrase plagiarism was significantly different. Students were able to recognize the more extreme cases of

plagiarism such outright and patchwork plagiarism. Most were also able to recognize passages where credit was correctly given to the author. However, the students were generally unable to detect paraphrase plagiarism.

The results of the item concerning students' ability to recognize acts of plagiarism were compared with the students' proficiency levels. Proficiency level was categorized by the level the subjects were enrolled in at AUC— 98, 99, 111, 112, or 113. (All subjects were sorted by level, examined separately, and then compared with the other proficiency levels.) See Table 4.2 for the percentages and frequencies of students sorted by proficiency who correctly identified the presence of plagiarism.

Table 4.2
Students' ability to recognize plagiarism sorted by level of proficiency, by percentage and frequency

Writing Sample	Students at each level who correctly identified the presence of plagiarism				
	98 [35]	99 [29]	111 [31]	112 [36]	113 [30]
A. paraphrase	26 (9)	24 (7)	10 (3)	28 (10)	40 (12)
B. outright	97 (34)	86 (24)	97 (30)	100 (36)	97 (29)
C. patchwork	83 (29)	48 (14)	58 (18)	86 (31)	80 (24)
D. no plag. 1	77 (27)	90 (26)	80 (25)	100 (36)	93 (28)
E. no plag. 2	94 (33)	93 (27)	100 (31)	94 (34)	100 (30)

Confidence intervals were used to determine whether the results from the *recognizing plagiarism* section (for each type of plagiarism) differed significantly across proficiency levels. To control for a Type I error arising from multiple comparisons, the confidence level was set at a conservative .99. A significant difference was found at the $p < .01$ level between the responses of 111 and 113 students in the case of paraphrase plagiarism. Generally, proficiency level did not have an effect on students' ability to recognize plagiarism. In fact, the 98 level students, who had the lowest level of proficiency, did just as well as, if not better than the English 112 and 113 students in identifying cases of patchwork and outright plagiarism.

4.2.2 Second sub-question for research question 1: What previous experience, if any, have students had with plagiarism?

Data for this sub-question were elicited with 9 items included in the questionnaire (See items 11-19 in Appendix B). The questions asked the students whether they had ever had the English word "plagiarism" explained to them in their previous school or at AUC and whether any teacher from their previous school or from AUC had ever commented to them or a classmate that they had plagiarized. Those who answered "yes" to having had a teacher—either at their previous school or at AUC—comment to them or a classmate about having plagiarized, were also asked to indicate how many times this had happened. Table 4.3 shows the percentage of students who answered "yes" to the previous experience questions. The *Total* column reports the percentages and frequencies of all 165 subjects combined. Table 4.3 also shows the students who answered "yes" to the previous questions sorted by proficiency level. It is clear from the results shown in the *Total* column that few students received any

information concerning plagiarism prior to AUC. The gradual rise in numbers from level 98 to English 113 shows that students are more likely to receive information about plagiarism the higher the level they are enrolled in.

Table 4.3
Students' previous experience with plagiarism, by percentage (and frequency)

Previous Experience Questions	Students who answered "yes"					
	98 [35]	99 [29]	111 [31]	112 [36]	113 [30]	Total [165]
Had plagiarism explained at previous school	17 (6)	17 (5)	16 (5)	36 (13)	27 (8)	22 (37)
Comment from teacher at previous school	3 (1)	3 (1)	1 (2)	31 (11)	20 (6)	13 (21)
Had plagiarism explained at AUC	37 (13)	59 (17)	74 (23)	94 (34)	93 (28)	70 (115)
Comment from teacher at AUC	0 (0)	17 (5)	13 (4)	36 (13)	47 (14)	22 (37)

Confidence intervals were used to determine whether the students' experience with plagiarism differed across proficiency levels. Due to the multiple comparisons done in this set of statistical operations, the confidence level was set again at .99 to avoid the risk of a Type I error. The results from the question, "Before you entered AUC, had a teacher ever explained for you the English word *plagiarism*?" show that the English 112 students' responded affirmatively in significantly higher numbers (at the $p < .01$ level) compared to the responses of 98, 99 and 111 level students.

The responses of English 112 students concerning teacher comments about plagiarism received at their previous school were also found to be significantly higher at the $p < .01$ level when compared with the lower levels. The responses of 113 students to this same question were also higher compared to the 98, 99 and 111 students' responses. However, using a confidence interval, it was found that the difference of the 113 level students' responses from the lower levels was only significant at the $p < .05$ level.

In response to the question asking whether students have had the word "plagiarism" explained to them at AUC, English 112 and 113 student responses showed that these students have had the term explained to them significantly more at the ($p < .01$ level) than the 98 level students.

The fourth question, asking the students if they or a classmate had ever received teacher comments about plagiarism at AUC also yielded significant results. It was found that 98, 99, and 111 level students' responses were significantly lower (at the $p < .01$ level) than those of the English 113 students. Responses from 111 level students differed significantly (lower) at the $p < .01$ level compared to the students enrolled in English 112 and 113.

Out of the 13% of the total number of students that claimed they had received comments about having committed an act of plagiarism at their previous school, a third of these students had this happen 1 to 3 times. Twenty-five percent (or 5 students) claimed to have received comments about having plagiarized before attending AUC "more than 3 times". Out of the 22% of the total number of students that claimed they or a friend had received comments about having plagiarized at AUC, 73% (or 27 students) responded that this happened 1 to 3 times. Twenty seven percent (or 10

students) identified that they or a friend had received comments more than 3 times about having plagiarized while at AUC.

Also related to the sub-question, "What previous experience, if any, have students had with plagiarism?" was a questionnaire item asking whether the students knew of a friend or classmate who had plagiarized. Those answering "yes" were then asked if they believed their friends' or classmates' action was wrong and if they believed the friends or classmates who plagiarized believed it was wrong. Table 4.4 shows the percentage of students sorted by proficiency level (with all 165 undergraduates grouped in "total" row) who claimed to know of classmates or friends who have plagiarized.

Table 4.4

Students who claimed to know friends or classmates who have plagiarized, by percentage (and frequency)

# of friends	98 [35]	99 [29]	111 [31]	112 [36]	113 [30]	total [165]
none	97 (34)	76 (22)	80 (25)	53 (19)	53 (16)	73 (120)
knew 1 to 3 friends	0	10 (3)	13 (4)	42 (15)	20 (6)	17 (28)
knew more than 3 friends	1 (1)	14 (4)	3 (1)	1 (2)	27 (8)	10 (16)
Total # of all students who knew friends who had plag.	1 (1)	24 (7)	2 (5)	47 (17)	47 (14)	27 (44)

After combining the number of students who knew of classmates or friends who had "copied words from a book, newspaper, magazine or someone else's research paper without indicating where the words came

from" significant differences were found across proficiency levels. Using confidence levels set at the .95 level, it was found that a significantly larger percent of English 112 and 113 students' knew friends who had plagiarized at the $p < .05$ when compared with the 98, 99, and 111 level students' responses. The percentages of 99 level students' positive responses were also found to be significantly higher (at $p < .05$) when compared to 98 level students' responses.

Only nine of the students from English 112 and 113 directly entered the FWP from secondary school. A majority of the students who took part in the study were spending either their second or third semester at AUC. The apparent trend of FWP students knowing of more friends who have plagiarized may be due to amount of time spent at AUC rather than due to proficiency level.

Table 4.5 below includes only those subjects in Table 4.4 (See items 17-19 in Appendix B) who indicated that they knew of friends or classmates who had plagiarized. Table 4.5 shows the results (sorted by proficiency level) from items asking whether subjects believed their friends or classmates were wrong for plagiarizing and if they believed their friends or classmates knew it was wrong to do so. Significant results across proficiency levels were not sought from these two items due to the small number of respondents.

Table 4.5

Judgment of students on friends who have plagiarized, by percentage (and frequency)

Statements	98 [1]	99 [7]	111 [5]	112 [17]	113 [14]	total [44]
Classmate/friend is wrong	100 (1)	43 (3)	80 (4)	71 (12)	71 (10)	69 (30)
Classmate/ friend knows it is wrong	100 (1)	43 (3)	40 (2)	59 (10)	86 (12)	64 (28)

The last question which corresponds with students' experience with plagiarism was a Likert type question. The students were asked if they *strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree* or were *neutral* when presented with this statement: "Students who plagiarize or copy from sources don't know that plagiarism is wrong." *Strongly agree* and *agree* were combined and *strongly disagree* and *disagree* were combined to create one "agree" and one "disagree" category. These were combined due to the interest in whether students agreed or disagreed with the statements, not in the degree to which they agreed or disagreed. This question is similar to the questions addressed in Table 4.5. The difference is that the Likert scale question is more general in that it does not directly concern the students themselves, or their students' friends or classmates. Descriptive statistics showed that 27% of all 165 subjects felt that students who plagiarize do not know it is wrong, while 57% disagreed with this statement. A surprisingly large 16% of subjects chose the neutral option for this question.

4.2.3 Third sub-question for research question 1: "To what extent are students informed about plagiarism and the Academic Honesty Policy at AUC?"

The data for this question were elicited in three questions. The first asked the subjects whether they knew about AUC's Academic Policy. The second asked the subjects if they had read AUC's Academic Policy. The third was a correct or incorrect multiple-choice question asking what AUC's Academic Policy deals with (See items 8-10 in Appendix B).

Out of 165 undergraduates, only 38% claimed to know about AUC's Academic Policy. Thirteen percent of 165 students indicated that they had read the policy. Fifty-three percent of the total 165 students correctly identified what the Academic Policy deals with; 42% admitted that they did not know what it dealt with, and 5% of the subjects chose an incorrect answer. Table 4.6 shows the subjects' knowledge of AUC's Academic Policy sorted by class level.

Table 4.6
Students' knowledge of AUC's Academic Policy, percentage (and frequency)

Questions	Students who know about and/or have read AUC's Academic Policy					
	98 [35]	99 [29]	111 [31]	112 [36]	113 [30]	Total [165]
Know about policy	29 (10)	31 (9)	87 (27)	25 (9)	27 (8)	38 (63)
Have read policy	11 (4)	1 (2)	31 (10)	1 (2)	10 (3)	13 (21)

Confidence intervals set at the .95 level were used to determine whether the results from these items differed significantly across programs. It was found that the results from 111 level students concerning both these questions differed significantly (at $p < .05$) when compared 98, 99, 112, and 113 level students. More 111 level students had read the policy than any other level. However, the percentages (and frequencies) for having read the policy are very low across all the levels. Overall, students at AUC are uninformed about the University's policy forbidding plagiarism.

4.3 Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between perceived causes of plagiarism and students' English proficiency?

Data for this research question were elicited from a total of 8 items from the questionnaire. They were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Five of the items concerned the students' ability to recognize plagiarism using the student writing samples which were presented in this chapter under Research Question 1 (See Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 and items 20, 22, 24, 26, and 28 in Appendix B).

Besides the items addressing students' ability to recognize plagiarism, data concerning the relationship between proficiency and plagiarism were also elicited from three Likert scale items. The subjects were asked to identify if they *strongly agreed*, *agreed*, *disagreed*, *strongly disagreed* or were *neutral* concerning the following statements:

1. Some students plagiarize because they cannot say it better than the original author.

2. Students plagiarize because they do not feel they write very well.

3. Students plagiarize because they do not feel they write very well in English.

Strongly agree and *agree* were combined and *strongly disagree* and *disagree* were combined to create one "agree" and one "disagree" category. These were combined due to the interest in whether students agreed or disagreed with the statements, not in the degree to which they agreed or disagreed. In all three items *neutral* was chosen less than 10% of the time. *Neutral* was not considered because it is unclear whether the students responded this way because they had no opinion or because they did not understand the question. Table 4.7 shows the percentages of students who agreed with the statements concerning proficiency sorted by level of proficiency.

Table 4.7

Students who agree that students plagiarize due to insufficient language ability, by percentage (and frequency)

Statements	Proficiency level					Total
	98 [35]	99 [29]	111 [31]	112 [36]	113 [30]	
they cannot say it better than the original author.	71 (25)	45 (13)	77 (24)	72 (26)	80 (24)	69 (114)
they do not feel they write very well	60 (21)	55 (16)	77 (24)	64 (23)	67 (20)	66 (109)
they do not feel they write very well in English	49 (17)	52 (15)	74 (23)	62 (22)	57 (17)	58 (96)

Sixty-nine percent of all respondents agreed with the statement that "Some students plagiarize because they cannot say it better than the original author." Results were similar for the statement, "Some students plagiarize because they do not feel they write very well," with 66% of students in agreement. For the statement "Some students plagiarize because they don't feel they write well in English," 58% of students agreed. No statistically significant differences were found either across proficiency levels or questions. No matter the students' level of proficiency or amount of time spent at university, a considerable number of students agree that some students plagiarize due to insufficient English language ability.

4.4 Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What are students' attitudes toward plagiarism given their familiarity with the concept?

Data were collected from a total of 12 items of 3 different item types. Two Likert-type scale questions were used to ask students if they agreed or disagreed with cultural value questions concerning ownership and authorship. Three multiple-choice questions were used to elicit from the students how they would describe a person when they plagiarize. Five multiple-choice questions were also used to ask students how serious they considered the different cases of plagiarism they detected in the writing samples in the *Recognizing plagiarism* section, presented under Research Question 1 (See Table 4.1 and Table 4.2). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze these data.

4.4.1 First sub-question for Research Question 3: "What are AUC students' attitudes toward crediting an author's work?"

The data for this question were collected with two Likert type questions on a five-point scale spanning from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* with a neutral option. *Strongly agree* and *agree* were combined, as were *strongly disagree* and *disagree* (See items 31 and 32 in Appendix B).

Thirty five percent of the subjects agreed, but 55% disagreed that students plagiarize because they think it is not important to give credit to an author. Forty-six percent of the subjects agreed, while 44% disagreed that students plagiarize because they believe things in print belong to everyone.

4.4.2. Second sub-question for research question 3: "What are AUC students' attitudes toward a person who commits plagiarism?"

The data for this question were elicited through three multiple-choice questions (coded below as items A, B, and C) in which the students were asked to choose what word they felt best described a student when they plagiarized (See items 39, 40, and 41 of the questionnaire in Appendix B). Table 4.8 shows the break-down of which words the students chose from those provided.

Table 4.8
Choosing words to describe students who plagiarize, by percentage (and frequency)

	confused	pressured	stupid	none of these
A	20 (32)	30 (50)	22 (36)	28 (47)
	dishonest	lazy	innocent	none of these
B	45 (74)	34 (56)	2 (4)	19 (31)
	uninformed	bad	hurried	none of these
C	17 (28)	18 (29)	35 (58)	30 (50)

A majority of students chose the adjective "dishonest" to describe students when they plagiarize. The students appear to have been torn between "dishonest" and "lazy" which were part of the same item. Both "pressured" and "hurried" were chosen by half or more of the students supporting the idea that academic pressure may be a factor in why some students plagiarize.

In order to elicit from students words not given as choices in the items above, an open-ended question was included in the questionnaire which

asked the students if there were any other words they felt described someone when that person plagiarized (See item 42 in Appendix B). The questionnaire had space available for 3 words. Sixty percent of the subjects chose to answer this question. Some of these subjects used all three spaces while others wrote only one or two words.

The adjective "lazy" was the most frequent response in for this open-ended item (26 out of 165 respondents). The adjective "dishonest" was the second most frequent answer (20 out of 165 respondents). Both "lazy" and "dishonest" were included as choices in the multiple-choice items addressing this same question. However, because "lazy" and "dishonest" were included under the same item, students were forced to choose between the two. This may explain the frequency of these two words as responses to the open-ended question.

Other responses to this open-ended question were "no self-confidence" and "insecure." Combined, these two responses appeared 18 times. The phrase "no time" showed up a notable 13 times. Other words or phrases which appeared between 5 and 10 times were: victim, no ideas, careless, inexperienced, narrow-minded, not good at English, uninformed, uninterested and "irresistible." Undoubtedly descriptions such as these which appeared repeatedly but not frequently—fewer than 20 times—nevertheless reflect trends in students' attitudes toward plagiarizers.

Five multiple-choice questions also eliciting students' attitudes toward plagiarism concerned how serious the subjects perceived the three different types of plagiarism—paraphrase, outright and patchwork. The students were asked to judge the student samples they identified as having plagiarism present as *not serious*, *somewhat serious* or *very serious* (See items 21,23,25, 27 and 29 in Appendix B). Only the three passages that contained

plagiarism were analyzed statistically due to the small number of responses concerning the passages containing no plagiarism (See Table 4.1). Table 4.9 below shows ratings of seriousness by students who correctly identified plagiarism in each of the three writing samples containing plagiarism.

Table 4.9

The degree to which students considered the samples identified as containing plagiarism to be serious, by percentage (and frequency)

Samples	Students' ratings of seriousness		
	NS	SS	VS
A. paraphrase	45 (19)	45 (19)	10 (4)
B. outright	3 (5)	27 (42)	70 (107)
C. patchwork	25 (29)	58 (68)	17 (20)

ns (not serious) ss (somewhat serious) vs (very serious)

Confidence intervals were used to determine if there were any significant differences in how students perceive the severity of different types of plagiarism. The confidence level was set at .95. The two passages containing no plagiarism were neither included in Table 4.9 nor in the statistics due to the small number of students who incorrectly identified the passages as being plagiarized. In the case of the paraphrased passage, too few students recognized it as being plagiarized to draw any meaningful statistics from the data concerning its severity. Nevertheless, it should be noted that out of the small number of students that recognized paraphrased

plagiarism, 45% of these thought of it as being not a serious offense. The significance of this will be discussed in the Discussion chapter.

The confidence intervals showed that outright plagiarism was considered by the students to be a *very serious* offense at a significant $p < .01$ level. Patchwork plagiarism was considered by the students to be a *somewhat serious* offense also significant given a $p < .01$ level. Patchwork plagiarism is generally regarded by university instructors to be a very serious offense, yet the majority of students only found it to be *somewhat serious*. This interesting observation will be discussed further in Chapter 5. A significant difference (at the $p < .05$ level) was also found between how students perceive the severity of paraphrase and outright plagiarism. How students judged the three different types of plagiarism was also examined across proficiency levels in order to examine whether exposure to plagiarism influenced the students' perceptions of its seriousness.

Tables 4.10 (A, B and C)

The degree to which students considered the offense in samples identified as containing plagiarism to be serious, by percentage (and frequency).

Table 4.10 A
Seriousness

Paraphrase Plagiarism

	98	99	111	112	113
Not Serious	55 (5)	14 (1)	67 (2)	50 (5)	50 (6)
Somewhat Serious	33 (3)	57 (4)	33 (1)	40 (4)	50 (6)
Very Serious	11 (1)	29 (2)	0	10 (1)	0

Table 4.10 B

Seriousness

Outright Plagiarism

	98	99	111	112	113
Not Serious	0	0	7 (2)	3 (1)	3 (1)
Somewhat Serious	20 (7)	50 (12)	30 (10)	33 (12)	7 (2)
Very Serious	80 (27)	50 (12)	60 (18)	64 (23)	90 (26)

Table 4.10 C

Seriousness

Patchwork Plagiarism

	98	99	111	112	113
Not Serious	21 (6)	21 (3)	33 (6)	29 (9)	25 (6)
Somewhat Serious	55 (16)	64 (9)	50 (9)	61 (19)	54 (13)
Very Serious	24 (7)	14 (2)	17 (3)	10 (3)	21 (5)

Confidence intervals were used to determine if there were significant differences in how students perceive the severity of different types of plagiarism across proficiency levels. The confidence level was set at .99 in order to control a for Type I error arising from multiple comparisons. The two passages that contained no plagiarism were not included in this table due to the low number of students that incorrectly identified them as having plagiarism. Paraphrase plagiarism was also not included in the statistical operations, but it was included in Table 4.11, so it can be compared with outright and patchwork plagiarism.

It was found that 99 level students judged outright plagiarism as being *somewhat serious*, rather than *very serious*, at a significantly higher

level ($p < .01$) than English 113 students. However, the majority of students across proficiency levels were found to judge outright plagiarism as *very serious*. There was also very little difference in how the subjects across proficiency levels judged patchwork plagiarism. There appeared to a consensus among the students that patchwork plagiarism is only a *somewhat serious* offense.

4.5 Research Question 4

Research Question 4: What are other possible motives behind AUC students' plagiarism?

Data were elicited with 3 Likert scale questions in which the students could *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree*, or *strongly disagree* (See items 36, 37, and 38 in Appendix B). For purposes of analysis, choices of *strongly agree* and *agree* were combined, as were *strongly disagree* and *disagree*. *Agree* and *disagree* were combined to make one agree and one disagree category because the interest was in whether the subjects agreed or disagreed with the statements, not in the extent to which they agreed or disagreed.

There are two sub-questions for research question 4. The first sub-question is "To what extent do students plagiarize due to academic pressures?" The second sub-question for research question 4 is "To what extent do students plagiarize due to laziness?" The results for these two sub-questions for research question 4 are included in table 4.11 below, which shows the percentage of all 165 subjects, sorted by proficiency level, who agree with the following three statements:

1. One reason why some students plagiarize is that they have to meet deadlines and copying takes less time than using their own words.
2. Students who plagiarize believe they will not be caught.
3. Students plagiarize because they don't want to spend much time working on their assignment.

Table 4.11

Students who agreed with academic pressure statements, by percentage (and frequency)

Statement	Class Level					Total
	98 [35]	99 [29]	111 [31]	112 [36]	113 [30]	
Due to deadlines	75 (26)	66 (19)	78 (24)	66 (24)	73 (22)	72 (118)
Do not believe they will be caught	45 (16)	55 (16)	64 (20)	52 (19)	67 (20)	57 (93)
Laziness	68 (24)	76 (22)	90 (28)	64 (23)	64 (19)	72 (118)

In order to answer the research questions for the present study, the results presented in this chapter will be examined at length in the following Discussion Chapter.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This study investigated factors influencing NNES students' acts of plagiarism. Examined were students' familiarity with the concept of plagiarism; the relationship between English proficiency and plagiarism; attitudes; and other potential motives such as laziness and academic pressures. This chapter discusses the results of the present study.

The discussion includes the findings from the responses elicited from the 165 undergraduate students. Three types of graduate students also took part in this study for the purpose of comparison with the undergraduate students. Questionnaires were distributed to the graduate students with the aim of incorporating their results as a secondary part of the larger undergraduate study. The graduate students respondents who were asked to respond to the questionnaire included students enrolled in the English Language Institute (ELI), NNS graduate students not enrolled in the ELI, and NS graduate students. The size of the graduate student sample was much smaller than that of the undergraduates, therefore, these results were not examined statistically. Nevertheless, the information provided by the graduate subjects proved pertinent to the present study.

5.2 Students' Familiarity with the Concept of Plagiarism

The findings revealed that only a small percent of students had had plagiarism explained or had a teacher comment to them about plagiarism before coming to AUC. What is interesting is that many more students in the upper levels 112 and 113, claimed to have had the term "plagiarism" explained and/or had received comments about having plagiarized in their previous schools (See Table 4.3). This is odd due to the fact that,

within each class level, 85% to 97% of the students came from similarly organized language schools. The students, on the whole, had very similar educational backgrounds.

Although there is insufficient data to provide a solid explanation as to why the FWP (112 and 113 level) students claimed to have had plagiarism explained to them in their previous schools, a speculation is possible. One possibility for this discrepancy is that English 112 and 113 students did not remember when and where they first heard the word "plagiarism". Many of the English 112 and 113 students had been enrolled at AUC for more than a year. Another explanation may be that the more the students hear from teachers about plagiarism, the more they think that it was actually explained to them previously. Perhaps plagiarism was explained in the students' previous schools, but in a different context, in a different language, and/or with a different importance attached to it by teachers.

If the students did very little writing in their previous schools, then perhaps the definition of plagiarism would not be remembered or deemed important until the students began writing with some frequency. Plagiarism may also become more important (and therefore memorable) to students once they begin academic writing which requires the use of sources. It was called to the researcher's attention by the 98 level students that they did not know what the term "plagiarism" meant. Because of this, the standardized directions for the administration of the questionnaire were modified for 98 students to include a definition of the term "plagiarism." A handful of students nodded their heads in recollection of the term. Some students commented that the term had been explained to them, but never in English.

According to their teachers, only one of the 98-level classes had received instruction earlier in the semester concerning plagiarism, but

these students did not appear to remember the meaning of the term and asked for (and were given) a definition. These same students recognized paraphrase plagiarism (See items 20-29 in Appendix B) to the same degree as another 98 level class which had not received any previous instruction concerning plagiarism. Ninety-eight and 99 level students primarily write in-class essays. Library research is not incorporated into the IEP's curriculum. The students that *had* had the term "plagiarism" explained to them did not appear to recognize it or have it as part of their active vocabulary.

Many of the English 112 and 113 students, who are primarily assigned research papers, actually groaned and rolled their eyes when they heard the word "plagiarism." They were not only familiar with the term, but appeared tired of it. However, there were no significant differences found between English 113 and 98 level classes when it came to recognizing paraphrase, outright, or patchwork plagiarism.

There is a clear relationship between class level and number of students who had the term "plagiarism" explained to them by a teacher at AUC. Table 4.3 in the previous Results Chapter shows that only 37% of 98 level students had had "plagiarism" explained to them, while almost 95% of English 112 and 113 students had had the word explained. None of the 98 level students had received or had had a classmate receive comments from teachers at AUC about having plagiarized. However, almost half of the English 113 students had experienced this situation at AUC. This can most likely be attributed to the amount of time spent at AUC (many of the English 113 students are repeaters—some multiple repeaters—of 113 and earlier levels). Additionally, as mentioned above, English 112 and 113 students write many research papers, while the lower-level students do not.

This trend of English 112 and 113 students having more experience with plagiarism carries into the number of friends or classmates students have who have plagiarized. The number of friends or classmates that 112 and 113 FWP students claim to know who have plagiarized doubles the numbers from the 98, 99, and 111 levels. Again, this division between the high and lower levels can probably be attributed to greater time spent in university and the number of out-of-class writing assignments required in the more advanced levels. Also, FWP instructors may penalize students for plagiarism. The FWP may be the place where plagiarism changes from an abstract term to an academic concern with consequences attached.

Besides asking the students if they knew of friends or classmates who had plagiarized, they were asked whether they believed what their friends or classmates did was wrong (see Table 4.5), and also if they thought their friend(s) believed it was wrong. In all the levels, with the exception of English 99, the majority of the students agreed that their friends or classmates were wrong for copying words without saying where they came from. Although there were too few students who knew friends who had plagiarized to make any conclusions, there was a tendency among students who believed their plagiarizing classmates were wrong to also feel that their classmates knew it was wrong to do so. The subjects appear to know that plagiarism is unacceptable university behavior.

It was only among 111 level students that discrepancy was found between the above two questions. Eighty percent of these students believed their friends or classmates were wrong for plagiarizing, but 40 percent felt their friends or classmates did not know what they did was wrong. Interestingly, a significant difference was found between English 111 students who had read the AUC Academic Policy and the rest of the class levels who had not (see Table 4.6). Even though many of the 111 level

students had knowledge of plagiarism in terms of the policy concerning plagiarism, many still did not feel their classmates understood plagiarism to be a university offense.

Twenty seven percent of the undergraduates overall believed students plagiarize because they do not know it is wrong. Fifty seven percent disagreed with this statement. Overall, the subjects felt that students know that plagiarism is forbidden. Sixteen percent of students chose the *neutral* option for this question. It is interesting that such a large number of students did not feel more strongly about this question. It may be true that students responded that plagiarism was wrong because they had heard from their teachers that they would fail or be asked to rewrite a paper if they plagiarized. However, it might be unclear to the students to what degree it is considered "wrong." This issue as well as the degrees of seriousness students attach to the different types of plagiarism will be addressed further in the section on Students' Attitudes Toward Plagiarism later in this chapter.

Only 38% of the undergraduate students claimed to know of AUC's Academic Policy and fewer had read it. The exception to this was the group of 111 level students. The number of students enrolled in English 111 who both knew about and had read the policy was significantly higher than in the other class levels. However, English 111 students were the subjects least able to recognize paraphrase plagiarism and came just behind 99 level students in recognizing patchwork plagiarism. The policy defines plagiarism as "passing off as one's own the ideas or words of another." English 111 students' awareness of the university policy together with their inability to recognize plagiarism suggests that awareness of a university policy forbidding plagiarism is not enough to stop students from committing plagiarism.

Wilhoit (1994), in his paper on how to help NES students avoid plagiarism, emphasized that the confusion among students concerning plagiarism is due to its broad variety of definitions. AUC's definition of plagiarism as stated in the Academic Policy mentions the taking of both words and ideas. Although this is a standard definition of plagiarism, it provides very little hard information about just what constitutes plagiarism and what does not. The taking of another's words is a concrete concept that is sometimes used synonymously with the term "copying." However, the Academic Policy does not specify *which* use of *how many* words comprises an act of plagiarism. The taking of another's ideas is an even -more -abstract notion. In the open-ended portion of the questionnaire some of the students commented on the confusion surrounding the practical definitions of plagiarism. One respondent wrote, "Some [students] don't know that also when changing the words a bit of the original text, that it is still plagiarism. They have to be more informed." An English 112 student expressed the complexity of plagiarism with the comment "Some students plagiarize because they don't know accurately the meaning of plagiarism. They may think that plagiarism is only to copy the word of another peer [sic]."

These comments echo those of Japanese students, enrolled in an English-medium university in Tokyo, about the fine lines of what is and what is not considered an act of plagiarism recorded in Locastro and Masuko's (1997) study. Locastro and Masuko suggested that because students have no prior experience with the concept of plagiarism, it is the university's responsibility to provide adequate information concerning plagiarism. Wilhoit (1994) asserted that the answer to the problem of student plagiarism is the "adequate repetition and reinforcement" (p. 162) of how to avoid it. The data collected in the present study concerning

students' familiarity with the AUC Academic Policy suggests that there is a difference between familiarity with the definition of plagiarism and truly understanding what constitutes an act of plagiarism.

The questionnaire included a multiple-choice question designed to determine if students claiming to have read the AUC Academic Policy had in fact done so (See item 10 in Appendix B). The item was weak because respondents could easily glean the "correct" answer from the questionnaire's context, so the responses to this question were not analyzed closely. In the end, the subjects were quite honest and admitted not knowing about the policy or what it addressed. While 45% chose the correct answer to the question, 50% of the students indicated that they did not know what the AUC Academic Policy was. Five percent of the students chose distracters.

The majority of the subjects were able to recognize the more extreme examples of plagiarism—outright and patchwork. The majority of the students could also identify the passages that did not contain plagiarism. However, the less blatant paraphrase plagiarism was only correctly identified as plagiarism by one fourth of the 165 undergraduate students. These results are similar to what Deckert (1993) found in his study with ESL university students in Hong Kong. Paraphrase plagiarism appears to be the most difficult type of plagiarism for NNES students to recognize.

Eighteen graduate students enrolled in English Language classes at the English Language Institute were also asked to identify which passages contained plagiarism. The graduates had a slightly higher percentage of correct answers when it came to paraphrase plagiarism and a slightly lower percentage of correct answers concerning patchwork plagiarism. Overall, the results of the graduates, when compared with undergraduates, were similar. This could be due to the similar exposure the graduate

students had received concerning academic writing while enrolled at AUC. It should be noted again, however, that the sample size of ELI graduates was much smaller than the number of undergraduates that took part in the present study. (see Appendix A showing the percentage of the 18 graduates who correctly identified the writing samples containing plagiarism.)

To gain insight as to why paraphrase plagiarism was especially difficult for the undergraduate subjects of this study to identify, the researcher gave the same questionnaire item on the questionnaire to general NES graduate students enrolled in AUC. Out of five NES graduate students, four correctly identified the paraphrased passage as containing plagiarism. All of the NES graduates correctly identified patchwork plagiarism. Interestingly, paraphrase plagiarism was also found to be difficult for NESs to recognize in a study conducted by Roig (1997). Roig asked 396 undergraduate students from a college in New York to identify cases of plagiarism in a series of 10 rewritten paragraphs placed beside an original text. Examples of paraphrase plagiarism were identified by only 40% to 50% of these NES students.

The findings show that the more advanced class levels have had considerably more exposure to, and experience with, plagiarism. However, having plagiarism explained, receiving comments from teachers concerning plagiarism, knowing classmates who have plagiarized and knowing that it is wrong do not necessarily make a difference in the students' ability to recognize plagiarism. Students enrolled in English 113 appear to have more familiarity with plagiarism, yet they were not significantly superior in their ability to recognize plagiarism when compared with 98 and 99 level students.

5.3 The Relationship Between Plagiarism and Students' English Proficiency

Proficiency level was defined in the present study as the level of English class the subjects were enrolled in at AUC: English 98, 99, or 111 in the ELI, or courses 112 and 113 in the FWP. The problem with this definition is that the variable of *experience* was not accounted for. Many of the students enrolled in 111, 112 and 113 have been at AUC for a year or longer. Students' ability to recognize plagiarism might have less to do with how well they speak, read, and write English and more to do with how much experience they gained while in university.

Despite this uncertainty concerning proficiency in the present study, it still appears as if proficiency has little to do with students' ability to recognize plagiarism. This is evident in the data collected from the English 98 students who performed comparably to the English 113 students in recognizing patchwork plagiarism and better than English 113 students in identifying outright plagiarism. English 98 students did not do as well in the case of recognizing paraphrase plagiarism. However, the difference between English 113 and 98 level students' ability to recognize paraphrase plagiarism was insignificant. The similar results of the two extreme proficiency levels cannot be explained by the two groups' equivalent amount of experience. Out of the 35 students, at the 98 level, only one was a repeating student. Ninety-seven percent of the English 98 students were in their first semester at AUC at the time the questionnaire was distributed.

The first-semester English 98 students may have received some explanation of the meaning of plagiarism, but as discussed in the section above concerning students' familiarity with plagiarism, very few students even recognized the term "plagiarism" when it was presented by the

researcher. Thirty seven percent of English 98 students indicated that a teacher at AUC had previously explained the term "plagiarism," and none of these students had ever received comments from teachers about having plagiarized. This is compared to the 93 % of English 113 students who indicated having heard the term "plagiarism" explained, and 47% of these students who had received comments from teachers about having plagiarized. Although English 98 students and FWP 113 students differ greatly both in their proficiency levels and experience concerning plagiarism, their ability to recognize different types of plagiarism did not differ significantly. Neither proficiency nor experience appears to have much of an effect on students' ability to recognize plagiarism.

It should be stressed, however, that students' ability to recognize plagiarism is not equal to students' ability to avoid plagiarism. The English 98 students' performance may have differed significantly from that of English 113 students if they had been asked to summarize or paraphrase a ten-page long original text and had the results analyzed for plagiarism. Campbell (1990) compared NNES and NES students' ability to incorporate information from background texts. NES students were found to be much more able to use their own words in their summaries. This would be an interesting task to compare across proficiency levels of NNES students.

In the *Why do students plagiarize?* portion of the questionnaire, students did point out that language ability plays a part in why some students plagiarize. The majority the subjects agreed with the following three statements about why some students plagiarize: [because] they cannot say it better than the original author; they do not feel they write well; and they do not feel they write well in English (see Table 4.7). The data collected from the ELI graduates show very similar responses. NNES subjects in Campbell's (1990) study commented that they plagiarized in

order to avoid sounding too simplistic. Locastro and Masuko (1997) found that, more important than the problem of insufficient language ability was students' insufficient experience with writing.

Proficiency in English and developmental issues concerning writing in English are closely linked. If a student is lacking self-confidence in either language ability or writing ability—or both—plagiarism may be used to compensate for the feelings of insecurity. Evidence for this appeared in the students' responses to the open-ended question asking why students plagiarize. Fifteen students reinforced the opinion that students plagiarize because the author's words are superior to their own. One student wrote "Sometimes it is difficult to change the author's words in anyway. Some things are meant to be. If we change it, it won't be effective." Another student commented on how difficult it is to "find a word to replace it [the author's word] so you can use it."

An English 112 student pointed a finger at insufficient writing ability as the reason why students plagiarize by stating, "Students plagiarize because they do not master the writing skill much and they want their writing looks good so they plagiarize thinking that they won't be caught and no harm is done [sic]." Campbell (1990) suggested that proficiency not only involves language and writing abilities, but reading ability as well. This same point was raised in a conference presentation given by an IEP instructor (Calderbank, February 1999) at AUC. Calderbank pointed out that the demands that instructors put on their NNES students may contribute to the plagiarism problem. Students are often assigned a heavy reading load about topics or subject matter that are unfamiliar to them. Shortly after the readings are assigned, an essay is due. Difficulties may arise when students are expected to absorb and incorporate the new language of a given topic, as well as being able to form their own opinions

and write critically on the issue. There were a handful of student comments that pointed to inadequate reading or critical thinking abilities to explain why students plagiarize. A 111 level student wrote "I believe students plagiarize because they don't understand what they read." An English 112 student stated, "I think students usually plagiarize because they don't have anything to say."

Along similar lines to the above, Campbell (1990) concluded in her study that avoiding plagiarism is a skill that NNES students develop with time and experience. This was not supported by the data concerning students' experience with plagiarism and their ability to recognize plagiarism in the present study. The FWP students, with more experience with plagiarism, did only marginally better than the 98,99, and 111 level students when it came to identifying examples of plagiarism. However, a handful of higher level students wrote comments about how they only grasped the concept of plagiarism after having spent some time at AUC. One FWP 113 student wrote, "They [students] don't know exactly what plagiarism is. I only got to understand it by the end of 112 class. It takes time to completely understand what it is."

5.4 Students' Attitudes Toward Plagiarism

The majority of the subjects did not believe that "students plagiarize because they do not feel it is important to give credit to an author." More subjects, but not the majority, believed a contributing factor to plagiarism is students' feeling that words in print belong to everyone. "Dishonest," "hurried," and "lazy" were the three words picked by over 30% of the students. These same words, and parallel concepts such as "cheater," "no time," and "careless," were repeated in responses to the open-ended

question asking students if there were any other words besides the ones provided that they felt described persons when they plagiarize.

Adjectives implying that students plagiarize because they do not have enough information about plagiarism were also found in the responses. "Confused" and "uninformed" were chosen, respectively, by 20% and 17% of the students in the multiple choice items (see Table 4.8). Similar responses that were repeatedly found in the open-ended questions were "inexperienced" and "no self-confidence." However, the bulk of the respondents wrote adjectives that can be placed into one of three categories: a person when they plagiarize is either a cheater, is pressured by a heavy work load, or is too lazy to bother. It should be noted that the word "innocent," placed next to "dishonest" and "lazy" in a multiple-choice item, was chosen by only 2% of the subjects.

The subjects expressed very little mercy when describing persons when they plagiarize. This was interesting in that the negative adjectives they used were often on the same page as comments concerning students' inability to "say it better than the author" or expressing confusion about what constitutes plagiarism. A few students addressed this discrepancy in their open-ended comments: "It is hard to know what plagiarism is exactly," and "Students are sometimes ignorant and sometimes dishonest," both from English 112 students. An English 98 student wrote, "There are two reasons [for why students plagiarize]: (1) They don't know that what they do is plagiarism. (2) They want to write easily without any effort." A graduate student made the distinction between two different acts of plagiarism: "non-intentional" and "intentional." According to this graduate student those who plagiarize non-intentionally do so because they are "uninformed," while those who plagiarize intentionally were described as being "dishonest, pressured and lazy."

An explanation for subjects' conflicting opinions of why students plagiarize is that students may know that plagiarism is wrong because their teachers tell them so and can penalize them accordingly. However, it is unclear whether the students really feel or understand why plagiarism is considered to be such a crime. Evidence of this can be seen in how students who correctly identified examples of plagiarism judged the different types of plagiarism in terms of their seriousness (See Table 4.9 and Table 4.10). Of the students who correctly identified patchwork plagiarism, 45% deemed it "not serious" and 45% called it "somewhat serious". Only 10% judged paraphrase plagiarism "very serious." Due to the small number of correct responses, this measure was not analyzed statistically, but it is included for the sake of comparison. Only 70 percent of the subjects judged outright plagiarism as a serious offense.

The most interesting responses were concerning patchwork plagiarism. Less than 25% of the subjects across proficiency levels felt that patchwork plagiarism was a "very serious" offense. Fifty-eight percent judged this type of plagiarism to be "somewhat serious." The ELI graduates questioned for comparison had similar rankings to the undergraduates. Similarly, subjects who correctly identified patchwork plagiarism in Deckert's (1993) Hong Kong study judged samples to have "some wrong use." Five out of the five NES graduate students felt the patchwork plagiarism example in the present study contained "a lot" of plagiarism.

No conclusions can be drawn from the five NES graduate students' rankings of seriousness, which differed from those of the NNES students, due to the small NES graduate sample size. However, patchwork plagiarism is generally deemed a serious offense by NES teachers. It is not surprising that teachers and NNES students often have

miscommunications concerning plagiarism. A FWP 112 student commented that "Students do not know how serious is plagiarism. Students must be taught how to avoid plagiarism, how to refer to the source and how to make uses of the sources in a legal way [sic]."

How students respond to a questionnaire and what they actually do and believe in academic practice may differ when dealing with a face-threatening issue such as plagiarism. Informal conversations not included in, but related to, this study led the researcher to believe that although most students at AUC know that plagiarism is considered wrong, they themselves do not condemn it internally.

The notion that words and ideas should be our own is a Western one (Scollon, 1994; Howard, 1995; Pennycook, 1996; Myers, 1998). From the age of five, students in American schools are encouraged to draw pictures and write stories that are different from their classmates' work. It is common to hear an American child tattle to his or her teacher or mother that a friend has "copied" them, whether it be in art, story-writing or hairstyle.

Students at AUC may know that plagiarism is wrong in principle, but they may not truly believe or feel it is morally wrong. This could explain why—despite students' experience, knowledge of the Academic Policy, ability to recognize plagiarism, and proficiency level—there is still a problem with plagiarism at AUC. Can the moral weight of this issue as it is understood in the West be taught?

5.5 Other Possible Motives Behind AUC Students' Plagiarism

Both academic pressures and laziness were indicated by the majority of subjects as reasons why some students plagiarize. (See Table 4.11 in the results chapter for the exact percentages across proficiency levels.) Students were given both the choices of "dishonest" and "lazy" in one of

the multiple-choice items asking subjects to indicate which adjective best described a person when they plagiarized. It was evident that the students were torn between these two adjectives. Forty-five percent chose "dishonest" while 34 percent chose "lazy." However, many of the students who chose "dishonest" then wrote "lazy" (and vice-versa) in answer to the open-ended question.

Grade pressure, deadlines, and too much work were reasons given by many subjects in the present study. This was evident from both the subjects' responses to the Likert scale questions concerning laziness and academic pressures and from their written comments. Similar reasons have appeared in other studies involving NNES and NES students' perspectives on plagiarism. Franklyn-Stokes and Newstand (1995) found NES students who plagiarized did so in order to receive high grades. Locastro and Masuko's (1997) Japanese EFL subjects indicated lack of time as a reason for student plagiarism. Pennycook (1996) found that Chinese students blamed their plagiarism on a heavy workload. An English 113 student simply wrote in the open-ended portion of the questionnaire, "It is easier and quicker to copy than to come up with something." An English 112 student commented, "Some students plagiarize because they don't like the subject they are writing about, pressured with midterms, or trying to get a high-mark for raising their GPA [sic]." One reason given for why students plagiarize which is unique to AUC, is that good grades can lower a student's tuition fees. A FWP 113 student addressed this point by stating that, "To get bad grades means to get from one [tuition] category to the other, feeling by that, that they disappointed their parents. It is a lot of pressure. And in addition to that the value of cheating is not shared by students here [sic]." It may be that insufficient reading and writing skills

are the reasons some students blame time pressure for their acts of plagiarism.

As mentioned in the previous section concerning cultural attitudes, perceptions of laziness and dishonesty may be due to different cultural notions of the seriousness of plagiarism. A student who copies words from an original text may not see the offense as being as serious a crime as the instructor might deem it. These contributing factors unique to NNES students do not excuse NNES students' plagiarism, but must be taken into consideration before penalties are initiated and dangerous stereotypes established.

5.6 Conclusion

Neither proficiency, familiarity, nor attitudes toward plagiarism appeared to have an effect on NNES students' ability to recognize plagiarism. In general, students across proficiency levels were able to recognize extreme cases of plagiarism. However, the students were less successful in recognizing paraphrase plagiarism.

It was found that familiarity with the AUC's Academic Policy, part of which forbids plagiarism, had no effect on students' ability to recognize plagiarism. Students who had read the Academic Policy actually did more poorly than those students who had not read the policy. Being familiar with the Academic Policy is not an adequate education for NNES students on the topic of how to avoid plagiarism.

The results of the *recognizing plagiarism* section of the questionnaire did not support the idea that familiarity with the term had an effect on NNES students' understanding of plagiarism. However, evidence to support the argument that university experience assists in the understanding of plagiarism was found in many of the students'

comments. These students claimed they did not understand the concept of plagiarism until they had spent a semester or more in the FWP.

The NNES students were able to recognize cases of plagiarism and claimed that they thought such acts were wrong. However, their judgments of paraphrase and patchwork plagiarism as "not serious" suggest that there is a difference between how NNES students and their instructors perceive the seriousness of plagiarism. The students may agree that plagiarism is wrong because their teachers have told them that it is, but they may not deem the avoidance of plagiarism a moral imperative.

5.7 Implications for Teaching

Teachers and administrators may be asking students to adhere to a concept the students do not fully understand. NNES students may or may not know the definition of plagiarism. Pennycook (1996) asserted that it is not enough to simply define plagiarism for one's students. Patricia Prinz (February, 1999), at the Contrastive Rhetoric Conference held at AUC, argued that summarizing and paraphrasing are skills that require training and time. EFL students need to develop these necessary skills in order to be able to 'use their own words,' while giving credit to the author. The students' confusion expressed in both the qualitative and quantitative data of the present study signals a need for explicit teaching about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. This explicit teaching should be introduced early on in the students' university career and repeated throughout a given semester or academic year. In addition to teaching about plagiarism, students must be helped in developing the skills that can help avoid it.

The complexity of plagiarism makes it difficult for NNES students to understand its subtleties. NNES students who may have little or no

previous experience with the concept require extensive and continuous training in writing academic English. A set curriculum across proficiency levels would ensure that all students receive the same information pertaining to plagiarism no matter their previous experience or background. This could relieve professors and instructors from having to make guesses about the knowledge and motivations of their NNES students on this issue.

Not only do NNES students enrolled in Western-run institutions need to be trained in the skills of how to avoid plagiarism, but teachers need to be aware of the possible contributing factors of NNES plagiarism. Retherford and Zaki (1999) presented a paper that investigated the opinions of ESL and non-ESL instructors at a community college in New Jersey concerning why students plagiarize. A difference was found, with ESL instructors believing that students plagiarize due to different cultural upbringing and inability to understand the concept of plagiarism, whereas non-ESL instructors were found to believe students plagiarize because "it is easier" (p. 3). Other differences were found between the two categories of instructors in that the ESL instructors described the definition of plagiarism as differing from culture to culture, while the majority of non-ESL instructors assumed that plagiarism holds the same meaning cross-culturally.

University instructors do not always have extensive experience or training with NNES students. They should be equipped with information concerning their NNES students' background experience, possible perceptions and potential difficulties with the concept of plagiarism. Ignorance in this area could cause serious miscommunications between teachers and students.

It is difficult to address the problem of NNES students not taking plagiarism as seriously as their instructor might. The importance of a cultural value is not easily taught. Training can help in the practicalities of avoiding plagiarism, but will not necessarily communicate its moral weight. Perhaps only by spending an extended period of time in a Western-academic setting can an NNES student gain real cultural understanding of the concept of plagiarism. It should be noted that NNES students do not need to have a Western perspective of plagiarism for any other reason than to succeed in the Western-run academic and business worlds. The notion of plagiarism is not connected, in any objective sense, to a "better" way of thinking. However, it is a concept that is spreading internationally in the realms of academia, business and intellectual property law. NNES students with little or no experience with the Western concept of plagiarism need to know and understand its importance before venturing out into the international world.

5.8 Limitations of the study

Although it resulted in some significant findings, the present study did have limitations. The first limitation was that the present study deals with the ability to recognize plagiarism, but does not look at the ability to avoid plagiarism. A more telling task than to have students recognize examples of existing plagiarism may be to have NNES students summarize an original text without plagiarizing. This task would require a synthesis of skills and may provide more of a distinction between those students who truly understand plagiarism and those who simply know about it.

Another limitation of the present study was the fact that plagiarism is a face-threatening issue. This may have inhibited students from answering items on the questionnaire with complete honesty. It may even have less to

do with honesty than it does with students wanting to tell the researcher what they think the researcher wanted to hear. Most students know that plagiarism is considered against the rules. But students who do not believe in or understand its moral weight may not have wanted to admit this to someone they suspect feels otherwise.

In the *recognizing plagiarism* section of the questionnaire, the short length of the passages may have influenced the students' responses, especially in the case of the sample containing paraphrased plagiarism. Paraphrase plagiarism consists of the stealing of one's ideas. The passage supplied in the questionnaire had a very general topic: the importance of education. The subjects may have judged this example of paraphrase plagiarism as 'not serious' due to the common ideas it represented. Perhaps a longer passage with more original ideas may have elicited different student responses.

5.9 Suggestions for Further Research

During the year this study was being conducted, the subject of NNES students and plagiarism became a very popular topic among TEFL/TESL professionals. However, more research remains to be done in this area. The present study was one of the few quantitative studies involving NNES students' perceptions of plagiarism. It was the first completed study of its kind to involve Arabic speakers. More studies similar to the present study and Deckert's (1993) study investigating Hong Kong students' perceptions of plagiarism need to be completed involving students from other cultures. There appears to be a pattern emerging of NNES students' similar misconceptions and misunderstandings of the concept of plagiarism. The continuing or breaking of this pattern by investigation of plagiarism in

other NNES cultures would enhance our knowledge of how to address NNES student plagiarism.

As mentioned above in the limitations of the study section, a summarization or paraphrase task for the NNES speakers could yield some useful findings. A study involving a summarization task could investigate the same issues as the present study. Proficiency level, familiarity with the concept, and cultural background could be examined in terms of which students are able to avoid plagiarism in their writing. A study such as that may further confirm the findings of the present study or may result in new conclusions. In either case, the outcome could be very useful in determining which contributing factors need to be modified in order to prevent NNES students' acts of plagiarism.

The effect of explicit teaching of how to avoid plagiarism needs to be investigated. Explicit teaching is what the present study as well as other studies in this area recommend as the answer to diminishing NNES plagiarism. However, there is a paucity of research on explicit teaching of concepts such as plagiarism. An experimental study needs to be done measuring the difference in development between an NNES class receiving explicit instruction on how to avoid plagiarism and an NNES class receiving no explicit instruction on the matter.

Questions that still need to be asked as well as answered concerning NNES students and plagiarism are: Does explicit teaching on how to avoid plagiarism deter potential plagiarists? Does explicit instruction change NNES students' attitudes toward plagiarism? Do students without explicit instruction concerning plagiarism eventually learn how to avoid it? Is an understanding of plagiarism like language itself, in that the acquisition of it occurs only over time? Or, is plagiarism a cultural value in the sense that it may never be fully comprehended by people from dissimilar cultures?

In this age of rapid technological growth, these questions are becoming more and more crucial to answer. The advancement and further accessibility of the Internet is sure to lead to the eventual spread of the concept of plagiarism in the form of copyright and intellectual property laws around the globe (Dowling, 1996). The Internet also further supports English as the lingua franca of the technological world. It is in the hands of teachers and researchers to discover the most successful and sufficient means by which to train NNES students how to collect, cite, represent and incorporate sources into their academic writing so that they may succeed not only in the academic world, but in the international world.

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APPENDIX A

Table 2.1

ELI Graduate students' ability to recognize plagiarism by identifying and labeling writing samples from a total of 22 questions

Writing Samples

Writing Samples	Correct	Incorrect
A. paraphrase	18	4
B. straight	10	12
C. patchwork	12	10
D. no plag. (C)	18	4
E. no plag. (B)	12	10

Appendix A

ELI Graduate Students' Ability to Recognize Plagiarism

APPENDIX A

Table A1

ELI Graduate students' ability to recognize plagiarism, by percentage (and frequency from a total of 22 respondents)

Writing Samples	Correct	Incorrect
A. paraphrase	32 (7)	68 (15)
B. outright	100 (22)	0
C. patchwork	68 (15)	32 (7)
D. no plag. (1)	81 (18)	19 (4)
E. no plag. (2)	100	0

Questionnaire

Introduction

At university many classes require students to write research papers. Research papers require library and media resources to be used in order to gather information. This questionnaire is aimed at finding out what students at AUC know about using these materials and why some students' professors bring undergrads into research work.

Instructions

Please DO NOT put your name on this questionnaire. If you do not understand a question, please do not write anything on the questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix B

Questionnaire

I. General Information

For each answer, please use a pencil to darken the circle corresponding to the appropriate letter of the answer sheet provided.

1. Are you male or female?

- A) male
- B) female

2. Your previous school was

- A) a language school (Arabic, French, English)
- B) an Egyptian government school
- C) other

3. Did you attend secondary school in Egypt?

- A) yes
- B) no

Questionnaire

Introduction

At university many classes require students to write research papers. Research papers require library and media resources to be used in order to collect information. This questionnaire is aimed at finding out what students at AUC know about using these materials and why some students use them improperly. The results of this study will help AUC teachers and professors better understand their students' needs.

Instructions

Please **DO NOT** put your name on this questionnaire. If you do not understand a question, please ask the person administering the questionnaire for clarification. Thank you for your cooperation.

I. General Information

For each answer, please use a pencil to darken the circle corresponding to the appropriate letter on the answer sheet provided.

1. Are you male or female?

- a) male
- b) female

2. Your previous school was:

- a) a language school (German, French, English)
- b) an Egyptian government school
- c) other

3. Did you attend secondary school in Egypt?

- a) yes
- b) no

4. How many semesters (including this one) have you spent in the IEP (English 98 and/or 99) ?
- a) none
 - b) one
 - c) two
 - d) more than two
5. How many semesters (including this one) have you spent in English 111?
- a) none
 - b) one
 - c) two
 - d) more than two
6. How many semesters (including this one) have you spent in English 112?
- a) none
 - b) one
 - c) two
 - d) more than two
7. How many semesters (including this one) have you spent in English 113?
- a) none
 - b) one
 - c) two
 - d) more than two
8. Do you know about AUC's Academic Honesty Policy?
- a) yes
 - b) no
9. Have you completely read AUC's Academic Honesty Policy?
- a) yes
 - b) no
10. Which of the following does the Academic Honesty Policy deal with?
- a) the different academic courses offered by a department
 - b) information about the core and elective courses
 - c) the rules, regulations and penalties relating to a student's honesty in his or her coursework
 - d) information concerning honesty in the admissions procedure
 - e) I don't know

11. Before you entered AUC, had a teacher ever explained for you the English word "plagiarism"?

- a) yes
- b) no

12. Has a teacher or professor from your previous school ever commented (spoken or written) to you or a classmate that you or your classmate had plagiarized?

- a) yes
- b) no

13. (Skip if you answered "no" to #12 above.) If you answered "yes" to question #12, how many times did this happen?

- a) never
- b) 1 time
- c) 2 times
- d) 3 times
- e) more than 3 times

14. Has a teacher or professor at AUC ever explained for you the English word "plagiarism"?

- a) yes
- b) no

15. Has a teacher or professor at AUC ever commented (spoken or written) to you or a classmate that you or your classmate plagiarized?

- a) yes
- b) no

16. (Skip if you answered "no" to #15 above.) If you answered "yes" to question #15, how many times did this happen?

- a) never
- b) 1 time
- c) 2 times
- d) 3 times
- e) more than 3 times

17. Do you know of any classmates or friends who have copied words from a book, newspaper, magazine or someone else's research paper without indicating where the words came from?

- a) none
- b) 1 classmate/friend
- c) 2 classmates/friends
- d) 3 classmates/friends
- e) more than 3 classmates/friends

18. (Skip if you answered "none" to #17 above.) Do you think your classmate(s)/friend(s) were wrong for copying words without saying where they came from?

- a) yes
- b) no

19. (Skip if you answered "none" to #17 above.) Do you think they copied the words knowing that it was wrong to do so?

- a) yes
- b) no

(Please continue on the next page)

II. Using sources in writing

Part of being a graduate student is being able to do research. Doing research requires using other people's ideas without plagiarizing. In the left column below is an excerpt (or part) of a magazine article, from the *Al Ahram Weekly*. Please read this carefully then compare each student sample with the original. Is plagiarism present in any of the student samples? If so, how serious do you consider this error?

ORIGINAL

Education is the basis of any society-the foundation stone on which we can build a healthy future. It is a subject which must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In all its forms, and in all its stages, education is worthy of our closest attention.

Mahfouz, Naquib. (1994, Nov.). Towards a Modern Upbringing. *Al Ahram Weekly*.

STUDENT SAMPLE A

School is important for all groups of people. It is the building block which will ensure good years to come. Education is a very important matter and deserves a to be examined closely.

20. Is plagiarism present in **STUDENT SAMPLE A**?

a) yes b) no

21. (Skip if you answered "no" to #20 above.) If you answered "yes" to #20, how serious do you consider this error?

a) not serious b) somewhat serious c) very serious

(Please continue on the next page)

ORIGINAL

Education is the basis of any society-the foundation stone on which we can build a healthy future. It is a subject which must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In all its forms, and in all its stages, education is worthy of our closest attention.

Mahfouz, Naquib. (1994, Nov.). Towards a Modern Upbringing. *Al Ahram Weekly*.

STUDENT SAMPLE B

The basis for any society is education. It is the foundation stone which we can build a healthy future on. The subject of education must be treated with the utmost seriousness. At every level, education is worthy of our closest attention.

22. Is plagiarism present in **STUDENT SAMPLE B**?

- a) yes b) no

23. (Skip if you answered "no" to #22 above.) If you answered "yes" to #22, how serious do you consider this error?

- a) not serious b) somewhat serious c) very serious

ORIGINAL

Education is the basis of any society-the foundation stone on which we can build a healthy future. It is a subject which must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In all its forms, and in all its stages, education is worthy of our closest attention.

Mahfouz, Naquib. (1994, Nov.). Towards a Modern Upbringing. *Al Ahram Weekly*.

STUDENT SAMPLE C

Education, in all its forms and stages, must be treated seriously. In order to build a healthy future of a society, education must be paid attention to and a foundation stone put in place.

24. Is plagiarism present in **STUDENT SAMPLE C**?

- a) yes b) no

25. (Skip if you answered "no" to #24 above.) If you answered "yes" to #24, how serious do you consider this error?

- a) not serious b) somewhat serious c) very serious

ORIGINAL

Education is the basis of any society-the foundation stone on which we can build a healthy future. It is a subject which must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In all its forms, and in all its stages, education is worthy of our closest attention.

Mahfouz, Naquib. (1994, Nov.). Towards a Modern Upbringing. *Al Ahram Weekly*.

STUDENT SAMPLE D

The key to a successful community is making education a priority for all its members. Naquib Mahfouz in his *Al Ahram Weekly* column, states, "In all its forms, and in all its stages, education is worthy of our closest attention." Education is too important a need to ignore.

26. Is plagiarism present in **STUDENT SAMPLE D**?

- a) yes b) no

27. (Skip if you answered "no" to #26 above.) If you answered "yes" to #26, how serious do you consider this error?

- a) not serious b) somewhat serious c) very serious

ORIGINAL

Education is the basis of any society-the foundation stone on which we can build a healthy future. It is a subject which must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In all its forms, and in all its stages, education is worthy of our closest attention.

Mahfouz, Naquib. (1994, Nov.). Towards a Modern Upbringing. *Al Ahram Weekly*

STUDENT SAMPLE E

Education is the key to success for every community. Naquib Mahfouz, the famous Egyptian author, makes this point by stressing that in every manifestation, education will enrich a society and prepare it for the future.

28. Is plagiarism present in **STUDENT SAMPLE E**?

- a) yes b) no

29. (Skip if you answered "no" to #28 above.) If you answered "yes" to #28, how serious do you consider this error?

- a) not serious b) somewhat serious c) very serious

III. Why do people plagiarize?

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by darkening the circle which most closely indicates your level of agreement with each. For each of statements 30-38, please refer to the scale below:

- a) I strongly agree (SA)
- b) I agree (A)
- c) I disagree (D)
- d) I strongly disagree (SD)
- e) Neutral

30. Students who plagiarize think that it is not important to give credit to an author.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
31. Students who plagiarize believe what people write in books and newspapers belongs to everyone.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
32. Some students plagiarize because they cannot say it better than the original author.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
33. Students plagiarize because they do not feel they write very well.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
34. Students plagiarize because they do not feel they write well in English.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
35. One reason why some students plagiarize is that they have to meet deadlines and copying takes less time than using their own words.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
36. The students who plagiarize believe they will not be caught.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
37. The students who plagiarize or copy from sources don't know that plagiarism is wrong.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N
38. Students plagiarize because they don't want to spend much time working on their assignment.	a SA	b A	c D	d SD	e N

IV. Describing students who plagiarize

39. Out of the three words below, which word do you feel best describes a student when they plagiarize. CHOOSE ONE ONLY.

- a) confused
- b) pressured
- c) stupid
- d) none of these

40. Out of the three words below, which word do you feel best describes a student when they plagiarize. CHOOSE ONE ONLY.

- a) dishonest
- b) lazy
- c) innocent
- d) none of these

41. Out of the three words below, which word do you feel best describes a student when they plagiarize. CHOOSE ONE ONLY.

- a) uninformed
- b) bad
- c) hurried
- d) none of these

42. On the lines below, write any other words you feel describes a student when they plagiarize.

43. In the space below, add any comments you may have about **why** some students plagiarize. (You may write on the back of this paper.)

Thank you for your time in filling out this questionnaire!

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