

Innovative Pedagogy to Overcome Student Struggles with Plagiarism

Olivia Kennedy

School of Medical Bioscience

Nagahama Institute of Bioscience and Technology, Japan

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.46679/978819484836307>

Abstract

Plagiarism is a problem that affects English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners all over the world. Rather than simply labelling students who plagiarize as “offenders,” finding solutions to guide them away from it is of primary importance. Ten instructors teaching a 30-week EFL academic writing course at a large urban university in Japan were interviewed about their methodologies to do so. Two academic writing classes (N=40) were asked to write reflections on what they were learning and how it was being taught to them. The student reflections and instructor interview transcripts were coded and analysed, instructor strategies to deal with plagiarism proactively in this context identified, and student responses to these strategies explored. The strategies were largely found to be a combination of existing methods with one notable exception, which is introduced in detail here. It is based on Rubin’s Four Tendencies personality framework, which is a method that relies on instructors recognizing learners as responding to expectations in one of four ways and harnessing this to help them achieve. This personalized instruction can be seen as one of the modern approaches to facilitate learning and engagement outlined by Owens and Kadakia (2016). Student responses to it were positive, and the instructor using it felt that it both reduced stress and improved relationships with students. As such, the method

has been added to the departmental pedagogy for the next intake of students.

Keywords: EFL writing, Four Tendencies, translation software, machine translation

The easy access that the internet gives to a wealth of text ripe for copying and pasting on the one hand and readily available machine translation tools on the other has caused some worry that plagiarism has become increasingly common in recent years (Curtis & Vardanega, 2016.) Software to detect plagiarism has also become common, with some institutions now using such software to play a punitive cat-and-mouse game in an effort towards eliminating plagiarism. The ten instructors in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) academic writing program described in this chapter teach Japanese university students the traditional structure (Kennedy, 1998) of Western rhetoric. Kennedy describes this essay structure as having an attention-catching introduction, which is followed by a clear explanation of the context or background to the thesis. The introduction is supported by arguments that are finally tied together in a conclusion that restates the main points and moves the reader to concur. Students are taught to follow accompanying ideas about what constitutes acceptable academic practice in Western contexts. Plagiarism is, however, a common concern for instructors at the start of students' first year on campus. Defined by Bugeja (2004) as "stealing or closely imitating another's written, creative, electronic, photographed, taped, or promotional or research work, [and] identifying it as your own" (p. 37), plagiarism is not just a problem in this context and affects learners around the world (Park, 2003). The usage of machine translation to prepare assignments submitted for grading is also considered here to be a form of plagiarism, as learners doing so present work translated by software as their own writing. Rather than using the vernacular of crime to label students who plagiarize as "offenders," or trying to eradicate plagiarism by punishment, finding solutions to guide students away from plagiarism

This is a limited preview of the chapter.

To read the full-text chapter, get access by purchasing this chapter or consider buying the complete book. If your library has subscription to EBSCOhost, the chapter including other chapters of the book can be accessed through your library.

This chapter is a part of the book, '*Development of Innovative Pedagogical Practices for a Modern Learning Experience*' ISBN (paperback): 978-81-948483-6-3; ISBN (ebook): 978-81-948483-7-0

Book DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.46679/9788194848363>

Available via CSMFL Bookstore, Amazon, Google Play Books, EBSCOhost & EBSCO eBooks

L. Bradley & S. Thouësny (Eds), *CALL for widening participation: Short papers from EUROCALL 2020* (pp. 156–160). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2020.48.1181>

References

- An, D., & Carr, M. (2017). Learning styles theory fails to explain learning and achievement: Recommendations for alternative approaches. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 116, 410–416. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.04.050>
- Batane, T. (2010). Turning to Turnitin to fight plagiarism among university students. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 13, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.3126/nelta.v12i1.3440>
- Bugeja, M. (2004). Don't let students "overlook" Internet plagiarism. *The Education Digest*, 70(2), 37–43.
- Clarke, V., Braun, V., & Hayfield, N. (2015). Thematic analysis. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, 222–248.
- Curtis, G.J., & Vardanega, L. (2016). Is plagiarism changing over time? A 10- year time-lag study with three points of measurement. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 35(6), 1167–1179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1161602>
- Deci, E.L. (1971). Effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 18, 105–115. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0030644>
- Educational Testing Service TOEIC. (2018). 2018 report on test takers worldwide (TOEIC Listening and Reading Test). <https://www.ets.org/s/toEIC/pdf/2018-report-on-test-takers-worldwide.pdf>
- Fleming, N.D. & Mills, C. (1992). Not another inventory, rather a catalyst for reflection. *To Improve the Academy*, 11, 137–155. <https://doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0011.014>

- Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). A Meta-analysis of writing instruction for adolescent students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(3), 445-476. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.3.445>
- Gottlieb, N. (2005). *Language and society in Japan*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kennedy, G.A. (1998). *Comparative rhetoric: An historical and cross-cultural introduction*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/358570>
- Kirk, J., MacDonald, A., Lavender, P., Dean, J., & Rubin, G. (2017). Can treatment adherence be improved by using Rubin's Four Tendencies Framework to understand a patient's response to expectations? *Biomed Hub* 2,1 -12.
<https://doi.org/10.1159/000480347>
- Ludeman, P. M., & McMakin, D. (2014). Perceived Helpfulness of Peer Editing Activities: First-year students' views and writing performance outcomes. *Psychology Learning and Teaching*, 13(2), 129-136. <https://doi.org/10.2304/plat.2014.13.2.129>
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2009). *Kotogakko gakushu shido yoryo*. [The course of study for high schools]. http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/new-cs/youryou/eiyaku/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2011/04/11/1298353_9.pdf
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2011a). *The present condition of senior high school education*. Retrieved from MEXT:
http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/detail/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2011/09/27/1299178_01.pdf
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2018a). *Kotogakko gakushu shido yoryo kaisetsu*. [Explanation of the Course of Study for high schools].
https://www.mext.go.jp/content/1407073_09_1_2.pdf
- Mitchell, C. (2017). Language education pressures in Japanese high schools. *JALT Shiken*, 21(1), 1-11.

- Nabhan, S. (2019). Bringing multiliteracies into process writing approach in ELT classroom: Implementation and reflection. *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture*, 4(2), 156–170.
- Otani, T. (2008). SCAT. A qualitative data analysis method by four-step coding: Easy startable and small scale data-applicable process of theorization. *Nagoya University Bulletin of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development*, 54, 27–44.
- Owens, L. M. D., & Kadakia, C. (2016, April 26). Is reading a book a modern learning method? The Association for Talent Development. <https://www.td.org/insights/is-reading-a-book-a-modern-learning-method>
- Owens, C., & White, F. A. (2013). A 5-year systematic strategy to reduce plagiarism among first-year psychology university students. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 65, 14–21. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajpy.12005>
- Park, C. (2003). In other (people's) words: Plagiarism by university students - literature and lessons. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 28, 471–488. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930301677>
- Rakuten Research Inc. (2016). *Eigo ni kan suru chousa* [Survey on attitudes towards English]. <https://research.rakuten.co.jp/report/20160826/>
- Rubin, G. (2017a). Four Tendencies Quiz. Retrieved from https://quiz.gretchenrubin.com/?utm_source=website&utm_medium=resources_4Tquiz
- Rubin, G. (2017b). *The Four Tendencies: The indispensable personality profiles that reveal how to make your life better (and other people's lives better, too)*. Harmony Books.
- Rubin, G. (2017c). Gretchen Rubin's Four Tendencies for parents, teachers, and coaches. Retrieved from <https://api.gretchenrubin.com/wp->

- content/uploads/2017/08/Four-Tendencies-One-Sheet-Children.pdf
- Rubin, G. (2017d). Flash Evaluation. Retrieved from <https://api.gretchenrubin.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/The-Four-Tendencies-Flash-Evaluation.pdf>
- Rubin, G. (2020). Trying to Manage Children’s Schoolwork During COVID-19? My “Four Tendencies” Personality Framework may help. Retrieved from: <https://gretchenrubin.com/2020/04/four-tendencies-schoolwork-covid-19>
- Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *The American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Thomson, R. (2013). Implementation of criteria and standards-based assessment: An analysis of first-year learning guides. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 32, 272–286. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.676026>
- Underwood, P.R. (2017). Challenges and change: Integrating grammar teaching with communicative work in senior high school EFL classes. *SAGE Open*, 7(3), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017722185>
- Zemach, D. E., & Ghulldu, L. A. (2011). Writing essays: From paragraph to essay. Macmillan.

Appendix: Selected reflective journal prompts

1. Do you feel confident in your English writing? Why do you think that is?
2. Please think about your experiences of writing when you were a small child. Do you remember writing in Japanese in elementary school?
3. Please think about your experiences of writing when you were a young teenager. What do you remember about writing in junior high school? Please write about your experiences of writing in Japanese and in English during that time.
4. Please think about your experiences of writing when you were an older teenager. What do you remember about writing in high school? Please write about your experiences of writing in Japanese and in English during that time.
5. Do you think that this class is helping you to prepare for your future career?
6. Do you think that it is OK to use translation software to prepare your assignments for this course?
7. Do you copy and paste things from the internet to use in your university assignments?
8. Do you feel that you are making progress in your academic English writing?
9. Why do you think your instructors ask you to write reports? Please think about this course and your other university courses.
10. Please describe the process that you used to write the most recent assignment that you submitted for this course. Explain clearly why you used that process.
11. Do you think that your EFL academic writing skills have changed since last April? If so, please describe how your skills have changed.

About the author

Olivia Kennedy is a lecturer at Nagahama Institute of Bioscience and Technology in Shiga, Japan. She is passionate about improving student experiences of learning. Her research interests include the uptake, usage and acceptance of technology for language learning.