Dealing with plagiarism at a Japanese university: a foreign teacher's perspective

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Abstract

Most of the current research on academic plagiarism that is available in English deals with English writing done by native and non-native speakers. Little research has been done by native speakers teaching in a foreign language. This paper documents my own case as an American professor teaching at a Japanese university. The first section of the paper covers my experiences and difficulties in coping with an increasing amount of plagiarism in my classes conducted in Japanese. The next section summarizes the research I did on the definition of plagiarism, on the question of cultural influences, and on reasons students plagiarize. The following section reviews recommendations and measures that schools and researchers in the West are trying to implement to combat the problem. The purpose is to look for possible implications for the situation in Japan. The final section discusses the results of my reflective practice.

Introduction

I was naïve about the issue of plagiarism. During my first fourteen years of teaching at the college level in Japan, I never had to deal with it directly. I taught mainly Oral English and a few English composition classes, but the student levels were low and we worked on sentence and paragraph construction rather than on how to write a paper. I heard occasional grumbling by other English teachers about their students' lack of writing skills, but I never gave much thought to plagiarism.

That changed in 2002 when I began teaching an American Culture and Society class to 75 (67 Japanese, seven Chinese, and one Korean) non-English majors at Fukuoka International University (FIU). The condition for teaching the class was that I had to do it mostly in Japanese. I wanted the students to think about and react to the material I presented in class instead of just reciting a lot of names and dates, so I instructed them to write (in Japanese) their own opinions and thoughts in their homework assignments, which included four essays that reviewed key issues in the textbook and a group research paper that covered key issues in class. Over half of

the first essays contained an overabundance of sentences and expressions taken directly from the textbook. I gave few points to those students, but rewarded with more points and positive comments those students who expressed themselves in their own words. The group papers also had a lot of copied material, but as they were handed in at the end of the term, I could not give any feedback other than low scores or failing the students.

I had to rethink my approach. In the second year, I anticipated the students would plagiarize, so I spent more class time repeating what I expected and forbade on the homework and added a rough draft deadline for the group paper. Not feeling confident in my ability to instruct students how to write in Japanese, I spent no in-class time on how to take notes, paraphrase, summarize, use quotations, or cite references in a bibliography. I provided a copy of a well-written paper to be used as a model. Compared to the first year, fewer students plagiarized (about 10 percent), but there were still too many. In the last three years, I've become much stricter (usually warning students for the first infraction and failing them for a second), but the cat and mouse game continues and I spend a lot of time playing plagiarism detective when checking homework.

Two years ago I began teaching an Electronic Publishing class and confronted a more blatant type of plagiarism: students copying and pasting long sections from the Internet onto their own home pages. Again, despite my warnings and the setting of rough draft deadlines to make sure I could try to give individual guidance to the perpetrators, I still found numerous incidents of obvious copy and paste. The most vexing example was when I assigned the class to hand in a report outlining what they had learned from an Internet search for information concerning copyright laws. Over half the class e-mailed me one- and two-page reports taken verbatim from other websites.

This past year was overwhelming. I have never ranted and raved as much in my life. In addition to the other two non-English classes, I was given a seminar class in Electronic Publishing. The plan was to do a group publication in different formats, as well as have the ten students write a thesis paper. The ten students (five were Japanese, the other five Chinese) had been in my earlier Electronic Publishing class, so I expected them to have a higher awareness about the unacceptability of plagiarized work. I was wrong. Going over their rough draft short stories and essays for the group publication, I found seven of the papers contained major sections taken directly from the Internet. I made them rewrite the papers. The same thing happened when I collected the rough draft versions of their thesis papers. Three students had copied large sections from the Japanese Wikipedia site, while two others had patched together their entire papers from a variety of websites. Again, I had them redo the papers.

At wit's end, I decided to take a more intellectual than emotional approach to deal with the problem. I started researching how plagiarism is defined, what schools and teachers are doing about it, what cultural differences exist between Asian and Western cultures, and specifically if there is anything being done about it at Japanese universities. In short, I felt the need to engage in some reflective practice in order to improve my teaching and find an effective means to prevent the plagiarism from occurring in future classes.

The remainder of this paper summarizes what I have found. The first section deals with the problem of defining plagiarism. The next section examines the question of cultural influences and other reasons students engage in plagiarism, whether inadvertently or not. The following section reviews recommendations and measures that schools, teachers, and researchers in the West are trying to implement to combat the problem. The final section considers the results of my reflective practice to look for possible implications for my present situation in Japan.

What is Plagiarism?

What exactly is the definition of plagiarism? Is it the same as a violation of copyright laws? Is it a universally understood concept? Does it differ from country to country? Most of the research I have found focuses mainly on English writing done by both native and non-native speakers, but it reveals a great deal about the complexity and scope of the problem.

Myers (1998) explains that there is no single recognized definition of plagiarism, and it exists in the form of institutional rules and regulations rather than as a law, such as copyright. Myers (1998:2) writes that these rules and regulations "are based on Western academic conventions that are formulated and interpreted somewhat differently across institutions. For example, one university may include some notion of 'intent' as part of the definition of plagiarism while others do not."

Among the definitions Myers (1998:2) cites are (1) "using the ideas or words of another person without giving appropriate credit" and (2) "the failure in a dissertation, essay, or other written exercise to acknowledge ideas, research, or language taken from others." Myers (1998) also explains how plagiarism and copyright are not exactly the same.

> Plagiarism may violate copyright law, but not necessarily.… As a concept it is both broader and weaker than copyright. An author may plagiarize from government documents, which are not copyrightable, from work with expired copyright, or from work in the domain of "fair use" without breaking the law. Both plagiarism and copyright are closely related

concepts that have formed attitudes and beliefs about intellectual property in the West (Myers 1998:2).

In trying to come to grips with what constitutes plagiarism, Dryden (1999) surveyed research that calls for a "postmodern" perspective on and definition of plagiarism. Dryden (1999) states that defining plagiarism used to be simple and that throughout the twentieth century most U.S. university writing handbooks took the position that copying someone else's words without attribution was wrong and the term itself was etymologically linked to "kidnapping" and "piracy."

The "postmodern" position on plagiarism, however, has different interpretations, but all question earlier assumptions. Dryden (1999) cites Buranen and Roy's (1999:xviii) idea that

one cannot own words and ideas. All we can do is honor and recompense the encoding of those ideas, the use of those words, in the certainty that such honor and compensation are negotiated in contexts of time and place, class and power, within social and economic considerations.

While the modern assumption of words belonging to individual writers seems fairly common in the West, the postmodern stance, according to Dryden (1999), views language and ideas as social before they are individual.

Cultural Influences on Students' Plagiarizing?

A good portion of research has been devoted to cultural differences concerning plagiarism. In particular, the dividing line has been between Western thought and Asian thought. Researchers often note that the educational environment of students from various Asian countries stresses memorization of passages of text and encourages borrowing directly from the writing of others.

Ross (1993:145) quotes a Chinese teacher's explanation: "Knowledge belongs to society, not to ourselves. If you have knowledge, it is your duty to give it to others. Students (…) cannot view their talent as private property." Hu (2001:54) claims that not only in China but also in Italy, science and history students are required to find source answers and copy them. Thompson and Williams (1995:27-28) write that many Asian students "copy well-respected authors and leaders in their societies" and that this "shows intelligence and good judgment."

Dryden (1999) uses a quote from a Japanese colleague to shed light on Western and Eastern epistemologies. The colleague explained about what was generally expected of Japanese undergraduates in the writing of their senior theses.

> Students are supposed to show how well they can understand several books and digest them in a report or a paper. They aren't asked for original ideas or opinions. They are simply asked to show a beautiful patchwork…. As long as you mention all the books in your bibliography, you can present the ideas from the books as if they were yours, especially if your patchwork is beautiful (Dryden 1999:5).

Buranen (1999) quotes a Chinese-born and American-educated colleague who claimed that in Asian scholarly tradition "the use of other sources is a sign of respect for the received wisdom and knowledge of others," and that "being able to quote or cite the work of 'the masters' is a way of demonstrating one's own learning or accomplishment" (Buranen 1999:69). The colleague goes on to say that it's not necessary to use footnotes or document these references because it is assumed that "any knowledgeable reader or audience knows the source" and it might be "an insult to a reader's intelligence" (Buranen 1999:69).

Not all researchers, however, buy into the cultural differences theory. The debate between Sowden (2005) and Liu (2005) concerning Chinese students in an ESL (English as a second language) setting is a good example. Sowden (2005) takes the position that Chinese students' plagiarizing can be attributed to their cultural background, while Liu (2005) insists that plagiarizing in a second language is predominantly a linguistic matter and that the main problems for Asian ESL students are poor language and writing skills. Liu (2005:234) also claims that copying is not part of Chinese educational tradition and that Chinese textbooks stress the importance of citation of sources and acknowledgement of others' work as a sign of respect. Memorization as a learning technique is common, but never intended "as a tool for copying" (Liu 2005:237).

Many researchers have examined the issue of plagiarism across cultures, but few have explored the students' own perceptions and attitudes toward plagiarism in the academic context of their first language (L1). One notable study is that of Rinnert and Kobayashi (2005), who analyzed questionnaire and interview responses from 605 Japanese university students and 76 American university students. Rinnert and Kobayashi (2005) compared the responses across disciplines (science versus liberal arts) and academic levels (undergraduate versus graduate). The results suggested the following.

1. Japanese students, particularly at the undergraduate level, do not have much knowledge of citation of sources.
2. Japanese students do not perceive the borrowing of words or ideas without citing the source to be entirely negative.

3. Academic discipline may be more influential than academic level on students' knowledge and attitudes toward citation conventions. That is, liberal arts majors seem to be more aware of the need to credit sources than science majors are.

4. Graduate students perceive correct citation to be more important than do undergraduate students.

5. American students receive more formal L1 writing instruction than Japanese students do, particularly in the areas of how to support points in a paper, how to quote correctly, and how to paraphrase.[1]

<div align="right">(Rinnert and Kobayashi 2005)</div>

Of particular relevance are Rinnert and Kobayashi's (2005) explanations of possible reasons for the above points. First, at the high school level in Japan, there are few opportunities for students to gather information from outside sources and evaluate it critically. Second, at the university level in Japan, there is no systematic training in citing references in the L1, let alone in English or another second language. Classes in the first two years of university in Japan tend to be lecture-based. Written assignments in these classes consist primarily of student reports in which students must show their understanding of the topic or lecture contents. Citation is generally not required.

Third, the concept of plagiarism is unclear, particularly about where the line is drawn between the students' own ideas and others' ideas. Added to this is the confusion about what is common knowledge in a certain field and what are borrowed ideas. Fourth, there is a lack of strict and consistent policies prohibiting plagiarism in student writing at Japanese universities (Rinnert and Kobayashi 2005).

Other Influences on Students' Plagiarizing

Various U.S. studies have tried to ascertain why students engage in academic dishonesty. According to Bricault (1998), the reasons include stress, grades, time, workload, course difficulty (Lipson and McGavern 1993); peer pressure, a high rate of return involving less personal effort and a low risk of getting caught, a value system that "do[es] not prohibit cheating" (Payne and Nantz 1994); unfair and overly demanding teachers (McCabe and Trevino 1993); the fear of failure; and the belief that collaboration enhances the learning process (Lipson and McGavern 1993). Bricault (1998) also believes that ignorance is a key factor and that students are likely to plagiarize by mistake rather than intentionally.

Hall (2005:5) concurs that many American students come to university unprepared for dealing with the rules for academic writing. Hall (2005) spends several pages examining the issue of plagiarism from the students' point of view. While not condoning the practice, Hall (2005:12) believes it is imperative that if institutions and individual teachers are serious in their efforts to prevent students from plagiarizing, they need to be aware that the act often arises from confusion and different sets of expectations.

A separate category that needs to be considered is that of non-native speakers. In addition to the various possible reasons given above for student plagiarizing, a lack of confidence in second language writing skills must be mentioned. Buranen (1999:73) believes that much of the plagiarizing done by ESL and EFL (English as a foreign language) students is the result of their "fear of punishment for grammatical 'mistakes'…and the desperation it can prompt is what provokes much of the copying and 'plagiarism' that takes place in writing classes."

Non-native speakers also suffer the disadvantage of being more prone to getting caught because of their lack of writing skills in a second language. Buranen (1999:70), in discussing international students in Southern California, explains that plagiarism is "simply easier to identify in the writing of nonnative speakers of English…. [The] passages copied or barely paraphrased from another source interspersed with the nonidiomatic usage of a second language writer of English…fairly leap off the page." Studies in the U.K. also show that international students are over-represented in the statistics of those being punished (Carroll 2004:3).

One more reason for students' plagiarism is the ease of doing so in the Internet age. McCabe (2003) reports that the results of large self-reporting surveys among American students showed that in 1999 about 13% answered that they regularly used material from the Internet without any attribution. By 2003, the number had risen to 41%. The last few years have also seen a large number of websites such as "Cheat.com," "Evil House of Cheat," "Term Paper Warehouse," and "High Performance Papers" that offer ready-made research papers for free or in some cases for a charge of up to $15 to $20 a page. Levinson (2005) reported the owner of one such company was selling between 500 to 1,000 essays a week, mainly to overseas students studying in the U.K.

Measures being Taken and Suggestions being Made
Studies in the U.K., the U.S., and Australia show that at least 10% of students' work at the university level may be plagiarized (Carroll 2004). If, as such research indicates, plagiarism among students is increasing globally, what are educational institutions and teachers doing to

deal with the problem?

Although the Internet now makes it easy for students to copy and paste, it also makes plagiarized text easy to detect. Many institutions are turning to Internet-based plagiarism-detection services to detect and deter cases of academic dishonesty.

One such service is Turnitin.com, which, according to its website, has thousands of clients in over 90 countries. Turnitin checks for possible plagiarism by taking papers that are submitted and comparing them to its own databases, as well as to the databases of the institutions it has licensing agreements with. Turnitin's databases include tens of millions of student papers already submitted; millions of commercial pages from books, newspapers, and journals; and a current archived copy of the Internet (Wikipedia 2007). Critics of Turnitin and similar services claim there are potential legal issues involved concerning students' legal rights (Foster 2002).

Allen, et al. (2005) provide an example of how institutions are using these services. Allen, et al. (2005) report that five universities in Australia and New Zealand participated in a trial program using Turnitin's service. All five universities had pre-existing programs to educate students on what plagiarism is and its associated risks, but the authors say that "there has been evidence that information presentation alone does not change student behavior and that the presence of detection technology assists in educating students, by active feedback, on the relevant issues" (Allen et al. 2005:3-4). After conducting various trials, all five universities decided to use Turnitin's service as part of an "education-detection-policy approach, backed by a suitable level of support and training" (Allen et al. 2005:7).

In the U.K., the government-funded Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) in 2002 set up a plagiarism advisory service to help higher learning institutions combat plagiarism. The service promotes a holistic approach to plagiarism prevention that incorporates institutional policies and procedures, teaching practice, and study skills instruction. A key element of the approach is helping teachers to "design out" opportunities for plagiarism.

JISC's plagiarism advisory service offers advice and guidance on how to deal with plagiarism, and provides materials about copyright and data collection, disciplinary processes, and study skills. Its plagiarism detection service uses Turnitin to enable schools and faculty to do electronic checks of students' work. Over 80% of U.K. universities have adopted the Turnitin detection service (Northumbria Learning 2006).

In the U.S., Hall's (2005) paper outlining the philosophy of Rutgers University's Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines programs (WAC/WID) has gained widespread attention. Hall (2005) explains in detail the basic principles and gives examples of concrete activities for institutions to consider in carrying out a comprehensive anti-plagiarism initiative. The four basic principles are:

1. Prevent plagiarism through pedagogy.
2. Foster serious ongoing campus dialogue about plagiarism as an intellectual concept and a social phenomenon.
3. Get students involved in developing anti-plagiarism activities. Help faculty, administrators, librarians, and tutors understand the student experience of plagiarism and incorporate that into their interactions.
4. When prevention fails, make the plagiarism intervention not only an occasion for punishment, but also an educational opportunity, a way to prevent the next plagiarism.

Specific activities in the first principle include developing and disseminating materials and resources for both teachers and students to increase their awareness of the problem, encouraging plagiarism-proof assignments and course design for teachers, and conducting surveys among faculty to determine what they see as the causes and what kind of help they would like (Hall 2005).

Activities in the second principle include sponsoring both faculty and student forums, discussions and lectures that encourage analysis of plagiarism as a complex problem with many causes and no simple solution. Components of the third principle include helping teachers understand plagiarism from the student perspective, involving the library staff in training students how to find sources and how to evaluate the appropriateness of the sources, and conducting anonymous surveys among students to gauge their understanding of plagiarism (Hall 2005).

The fourth principle includes training faculty how to detect plagiarism and use search-engine strategies and tools, as well as working with administration, faculty, and students to develop a system of dealing with cases of plagiarism. Hall (2005) recommends that the approach include sanctions, but should not be purely punitive and should involve the students in its development and administration.

McGowan (2005) also believes that institutional guidelines for informing students about the meaning of plagiarism and its consequences alone are insufficient, particularly for international students writing in a L2. McGowan (2005) proposes a strategy for giving students

the chance to learn not only the mechanics of academic writing and citing references, but also the reasons for the requirements and help in learning the specific language and structures needed to fulfill those requirements.

McGowan (2005) advocates putting a positive spin on the reasons behind the importance and tradition of academic integrity rather than using the language of crime and punishment to warn and scare students. This would require a kind of apprenticeship involving (1) an introduction to the concept of research-based writing and (2) time to absorb the language structures, sentence patterns, and word choices required by academic conventions. McGowan (2005:52) explains.

> Students need a starting point for moving on from using "their own" words, which may be an informal style or the inappropriate translation of a culturally foreign language choice, to searching out and applying the language that is typically used within their new discipline. They need to engage in "active learning" to help them recognize how their *reading* can inform their *writing*.

The initial focus of McGowan's (2005) strategy would be lessons, done early in a course, that use exercises in which the students (1) first read a short article (representative of the discipline or genre they are studying) for content, (2) identify stages of development in the article, and (3) note the language items that are used in each stage. The students would then be encouraged to follow the stages and re-use the language items (e.g., "According to Jones, …" "Jones claims …" etc.) in their own writing assignments. McGowan (2005) believes that by using this type of "genre analysis" over a period of time, teachers can help students discover stock phrases used in their own discipline or genre and encourage them to re-use the phrases to express the their own content.

McGowan (2005) acknowledges that planning and adding these "genre analysis" activities might appear to be an extra burden to already busy and often overworked teachers, but believes it is worth it. McGowan (2005:53) writes, "Initially it may indeed mean some extra work, but the payoff in the long run should mean that much time is saved counselling individual students who don't understand why the plagiarized work they have submitted is unacceptable."

Rinnert and Kobayashi's (2005) study gave the authors some useful insights for ways in which teachers can facilitate students' acquisition of academic literacy. The implications included the following.

1. The classroom experience should be used to help students become actively involved in the development of their own academic literacy. Discussions can be held on what

students know about citing sources in their own language, what their experiences are, and what the teacher expects.

2. Teachers should guide students in budgeting their time, generating ideas, finding relevant references, and using quotations to enhance the quality of the students' writing.

3. Teachers should avoid homework assignments that encourage copy and pasting and overemphasize mechanical accuracy and a regurgitation of meaningless facts.

4. Teachers should try to create an environment that enhances learning through the communication of meaning. This means helping students see books and articles as things that can be challenged and debated. Borrowed words and ideas, properly cited, can be used to support the students' own ideas and make them more persuasive.

5. In order to avoid contributing to more student confusion, it is important for teachers in the same institution to follow a coherent, unified approach to academic literacy instruction.   (Rinnert and Kobayashi's 2005)

An Attempt to Form an Anti-Plagiarism Policy

My research showed me that plagiarism by both native speakers and non-native speakers in not just the English-speaking world but elsewhere is indeed a serious problem. Schools, administrators, researchers, and teachers are aware of and concerned about the issue. Many ideas are being presented to deal with it. Regardless of whether a punitive, pedagogical, or holistic approach is taken, the researchers listed earlier all seem to agree that institutional guidelines and cooperation are necessary for any anti-plagiarism program to be effective.

What about the situation in Japan? If, as Rinnert and Kobayashi (2005) stated, Japanese universities do not have strict and consistent policies prohibiting student plagiarism, it would be too much to expect FIU to follow the U.K. example of using a JISC type of advisory service. I wondered if a coherent policy, or at least some guidelines, could be formed at FIU.

Informal conversations with Japanese teachers at FIU and other universities led me to believe that teachers are aware of the plagiarism problem, but the issue is considered one that requires teacher rather than top-down guidance. Developing and implementing an institutional policy such as the one Hall (2005) recommends seemed a nearly impossible task. I felt somewhat like Dryden (1999:5), who wrote, "Recently I have considered why it is that some Western academics find plagiarism widespread in Japan, while the Japanese themselves do not seem particularly troubled by such practices and are, in fact, often bewildered by the moralizing of Westerners."

Based on Hall's (2005) suggestion for conducting surveys with faculty for the purpose of raising awareness levels, I distributed a questionnaire (see Appendix) to the other 28 full-time teachers at FIU. Twenty-six were Japanese, one was Canadian, and one was Korean. All the

teachers were teaching a mixture of undergraduate and graduate classes. The questionnaire was composed of seven "open" questions and asked the teachers to give their own definitions of plagiarism, to explain if they had encountered the problem in their own classes and if so how they responded, and to give their opinions about the necessity for the university to create specific guidelines to be included in the student handbook.

Twenty teachers responded to the questionnaire. Not all questions were answered (for the specific number of responses to each question, see Appendix). Overall, the results showed that the teachers at FIU are aware of the plagiarism problem and individually are providing guidance, but generally prefer an educational rather than an institutionally-guided punitive approach.

In response to question one, the teachers' definitions of plagiarism at FIU were similar to those that are provided in the literature on plagiarism at Western universities (Myers 1998; McDonnell 2004). Some of the definitions were not limited to academic plagiarism, but included descriptions of a broader range of plagiarism.[2] Below are some examples. (The translations of the original Japanese are my own.)

1. "Presenting an original idea or information or someone else's words as your own."
2. "Without citing the source, using another person's words, sentences, pictures, images, artwork, lyrics, etc. as if they are your own."
3. "In general, using words and sentences copied from published material or from the Internet and presenting them as your own."
4. "Without getting permission to do so, using all or part of another's creative work and presenting it as your own."
5. "Showing another's written or creative work as your own."

There were varying opinions concerning what, if any, levels of plagiarism exist and what corresponding measures should be taken. Of the 20 respondents, 17 had found student plagiarism in their own classes. About half of the cases involved foreign students.[3] Of those who caught students plagiarizing, 15 gave strict warnings and made the students rewrite the papers, while the other two either failed the students or gave a lower score on the papers.

In response to the question about whether they are providing guidance in the classroom, 15 answered "yes" and five answered "no." This preference for teacher guidance and decision-making over a strict institutional policy was also apparent in the responses to the question about whether FIU needed a specific policy for what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences should be. Although five answered "yes," four answered "no" and five were

undecided.[4] The following reasons were representative of the rationale against a top-down policy. (The translations of the original Japanese are my own.)

1. "Student plagiarism is a problem that should be handled not by school authorities, but within the educational boundaries of the family and individual teachers."
2. "Suspending or kicking students out of school would be going too far. It's a difficult burden for teachers to prove student plagiarism clearly. We should strive to handle the problem through educational guidance."
3. "Japanese people have an insufficient awareness of plagiarism as a criminal act. We need to be more active in instructing our students about the consequences. We should make the students rewrite their papers as many times as it takes. In the case of students cheating on final exams, strict punishment is suitable."
4. "Students are not in the same category as researchers and professional artists. They're not making their living from their research or writing. While they are still in school, they need to be guided toward a proper sense of conduct and responsibility so they will become responsible adults. Making them rewrite a report or repeat a class should be sufficient punishment at this stage of their lives."
5. "The level of today's students has dropped considerably. If you ask them to write a report in their own words, they'll produce a simple elementary school report. Rather than a punitive approach, we need to give the students more educational guidance, more reading and writing practice."

Concerning whether a clear definition should be printed in the student handbook, eight teachers agreed, six thought it unnecessary, and three were undecided. The one area where there was strong support was in the responses to the question about whether students should be given a detailed explanation (either in the student handbook or on a separate printout) of how to cite references in essays, term papers, and graduation theses. Seventeen of the 20 respondents answered in the affirmative.

In general, the results of the questionnaire indicated four points: (1) teachers at FIU are aware of the problem and concerned about it; (2) they understand that students need more guidance in how to write academic reports and cite references; (3) they are inclined toward the view that it is more important for teachers to raise students' awareness than it is for the institution to set a specific policy; and (4) foreign students are more likely to be caught.

Points (1) and (2) help to dispel the notion contained in the earlier Dryden (1999) quote about Japanese not being bothered by plagiarism. Point (3), however, reveals a clear difference between FIU and many Western universities. The research summarized earlier shows that

Western universities are increasingly advocating a combination of institutional guidelines and prevention through pedagogy, but at FIU and seemingly most Japanese universities pedagogy takes priority. Point (4) can be seen in the same vein as what ESL research shows: foreign students have more difficulty in using "their own words" in a second language and thus are prone to getting caught more often.

In further following Hall's (2005) advice about developing and disseminating materials and resources for teachers and students for increasing awareness of the problem and encouraging plagiarism-proof assignments, I presented the questionnaire results to the dean of academic affairs. The topic has since become an item on the academic affairs committee and there is a good chance a special printout for students will be prepared. Also, since receiving the teachers' responses, I have engaged several of them in enthusiastic discussions about plagiarism and what kind of guidance can be given the students. Three of the teachers told me that the questionnaire had given them an opportunity to reflect on their own teaching. They said they planned from the beginning of the semester to provide more detailed guidance and writing practice, particularly in their freshman homeroom classes.

Personal Teaching Changes

The next step in my reflective practice was to draw implications from my research in order to try to (1) raise both Japanese and foreign students' awareness of citation conventions and (2) give them more guidance from the start. Key among these implications were creating lesson plans that include taking time to introduce students to what plagiarism is, engaging them in discussion of the necessity of citation, and giving them more "active" reading and writing practice.

Specifically, I'm following (1) McGowan's (2005) advice about using "genre analysis" techniques for helping students acquire stock phrases and apply them in their own writing and (2) Rinnert and Kobayashi's (2005) advice about giving students writing assignments that allow them to use others' ideas and words to support their own opinions. This is in line with the JISC idea of "designing out" opportunities for plagiarism.

In my American Culture and Society class, I've allocated two class periods to introduce students to the importance of citation, some examples of summary and paraphrasing, and some stock phrases in Japanese.[5] I will continue to review these points and try to put a positive spin on them in subsequent classes. In following Rinnert and Kobayashi's (2005) advice to make sure writing assignments "go beyond requiring a simple display of knowledge to include engaging students' minds in analyzing, connecting and synthesizing ideas," I'm instructing the students to pick one theme to react to for every 50-60 pages from the textbook rather than

having them cover the contents of the entire section. In marking these essay assignments, I will give positive feedback and encouragement, praising the students for correct citation usage or pointing out where they should have used the stock phrases.

In the group term paper assignments, I will require the students to write a review of a recommended film. The review must include a section on relevant historical background, a summary of the plot and setting, and a section on what they think the original author's message was to the audience. The students must find two media reviews and use that material to either support or balance their own opinions. To reinforce the students' awareness of citing references, I'm borrowing Dryden's (1999) idea for having the students print out material downloaded from the Internet (or material copied from other print media), highlight with a colored marker the sections they use in the term paper, and hand in the print-outs with the paper. In the term paper itself, the students must highlight the passages taken from the other sources. At the end of the paper, the students must include a section explaining why they chose the material, as well as how they used it as either quotations or paraphrased commentary.

In the Electronic Publishing and seminar classes, I will use a similar approach, but spend more time in class discussions concerning copyright laws, stock phrases, and different types of citation and referencing. I am also preparing reading assignments that require the students to notice and absorb more structures, sentence patterns, and word choices for citation. The basic strategy, to use McGowan's (2005:53) words, is "to encourage students to discover these language items within their readings and to *re-use* them to express *their own content*."

Conclusion

In closing, I can say that my earlier visceral reactions to the plagiarism I detected in my classes have been softened by my brief sojourn into the field of "plagiarism research." I can say clearly that I now have a better understanding of the complexities of the problem and the possible cultural influences on students' attitudes, as well as the reasons behind their lack of training in citation conventions. This has led me to adopt a more sympathetic view toward pedagogical prevention as opposed to an emphasis on detection and punishment.

I'm also encouraged by the willingness of my Japanese colleagues at FIU to respond to my questionnaire, debate the issue, and take steps to implement a more collective and active policy of prevention. By continuing to communicate openly, to share our experiences and teaching strategies, and to encourage committees to suggest specific institutional guidelines, we teachers can and must formulate unified strategies for reducing the amount of student plagiarism.

What I've outlined in this paper is only a small step forward in a time-consuming and Sisyphean task, but if we are to impart to our students any sense of academic integrity that they can carry with them into the world beyond university, such steps are imperative. As Hall (2005:5) says, "Maybe, just maybe, we can teach our way out of this mess."

Notes

1. Rinnert and Kobayashi (2005) caution that because the number of American respondents was small, further study is required to confirm the cross-cultural tendencies reported in their study.

2. For the translation of "plagiarism," I used the terms *tousaku, touyou,* and *hyousetsu* in the Japanese questionnaire. These terms all have legal implications and refer to stealing, theft, robbery, or taking someone's work without permission. Later, when I read Rinnert and Kobayashi's (2005) paper, I found they had used in their questionnaires the term *ukeuri*, which is an informal term that can be translated as "second-hand account" or "echo of someone else's words." The legal nuances in the terms I used may have influenced FIU teachers' definitions.

3. This seems to indicate that non-native speakers of not only English but any second language are prone to be caught plagiarizing because of their lack of writing skills in the second language. It also strengthens the argument for providing these students with additional educational guidance.

4. For the same reason as number 2 above, the legal nuances in the terms I used may have influenced FIU teachers' opinions concerning a preference for educational guidance over institutional policy.

5. Such phrases would include *Sato ni yoreba…to iu koto de aru* (According to Sato…); *Sato wa tsugi no you ni iu/kaiteiru/nobeteiru* (Sato says/writes/claims the following…); *Sato wa…to oshieteiru* (Sato explains that…); and *Sato no kenkai wa…* (In Sato's view…).

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Appendix
Plagiarism Questionnaire

1. What is your definition of "plagiarism"? (20 responses)

2. Do you think there are different categories of plagiarism? If so, what are they? For example, from minor to major cases. (20 responses)

3. In your teaching experience, have you had problems with plagiarism? If so, please describe the nature of the problem; the type of class in which it occurred; whether the students were foreign, Japanese, or both; and how you dealt with the problem. (20 responses)

4. Have you dealt with plagiarism on a preventative basis (i.e., educational guidance) in any of your classes? For example, do you teach students how to take notes for research papers, to summarize, to paraphrase, to use quotations, and to cite sources in a reference section or bibliography? If yes, please give details on the method you used and if it was successful. (20 responses)

5. Currently the students' guidebook has only two short descriptions about cheating (one on page 17, the other on page 20). Do you think the students' guidebook should contain (a) a detailed explanation of what constitutes plagiarism and (b) a detailed explanation of how to cite references in essays, term papers, and graduation theses? (17 responses to "a"; 20 responses to "b")

6. Currently the school posts a list of offenses that constitute cheating during final tests, but this has little relationship to papers produced during the course of the semester. Do you think the school needs a clear policy about what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences are? If so, do you have any suggestions? (14 responses)

7. Please add any other comments or thoughts that you have on this issue. (15 responses)