# Plagiarism Issues and Concerns in Japan: Teacher Attitudes towards Plagiarism in English as a Foreign Language Writing

Robert E. GETTINGS

Geoffrey S. HUGHES

# Plagiarism Issues and Concerns in Japan:
# Teacher Attitudes towards Plagiarism in English
# as a Foreign Language Writing

Robert E. GETTINGS
Geoffrey S. HUGHES

Contents
1．Introduction
2．Research on Plagiarism
3．Interviews and Discussion of Results: Teacher Attitudes towards Plagiarism
4．Conclusion

## 1．Introduction

Plagiarism has become more prevalent in the contemporary world due to the increased growth of technology in what is referred to as the digital age. Never before has there been such wide-spread connection to information as there is today. This ease of connection through the use of the internet and access to a mass of knowledge and countless publications have created an environment where thoughts, words, and concepts can be easily copied and reproduced as another individual's work (Christodoulou, 2008).

Uncovering the reasons for plagiarism among Japanese university undergraduates, in completing both Japanese and foreign language assignments, is difficult. Some researchers have attributed it to cultural factors. According to Wheeler (2009), "students in Japanese higher education tend to have a more forgiving approach to plagiarism than those in Western universities" (p. 18). However, Sowden (2005) cautions that "generalizations about cultural background and its influence do need to be taken seriously, but we must beware of them degenerating into stereotypes" (p. 52).

Plagiarism may be influenced by other factors when students have to author texts in a foreign language, such as English. Plagiarism may stem from a lack of confidence using English effectively or may be connected to a student's stage of development as a writer in the target language (Pecorari, 2010). Personal attitudes, traits and situational factors have also been argued to be a major influence on students who plagiarize (Bennett, 2005). This study examines the attitudes of ten teachers, teaching in Japan, towards plagiarism in English as a

Key words： Plagiarism, EFL, Japanese University Teachers, Patchwriting

Foreign Language（EFL）writing.

## ２．Research on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a complex concept which describes a number of unacceptable academic writing practices. The modern concept of plagiarism is a product of cultural attitudes towards authorship that have their roots in the European Enlightenment（Pennycook, 1996）. Plagiarism can be defined generally as stealing or closely imitating another's written, creative, electronic, or researched work and identifying it as one's own without permission or appropriate citation（Bugeja, 2004）. However, an investigation of practical attempts to prevent plagiarism suggests there are no universally accepted rules or regulations for students to follow and that the details of the regulations are highly dependent on the policies of individual institutions or schools.（Myers, 1998）.

Detection of plagiarism is even more complex because the majority of plagiarisms, especially in longer student-produced texts, do not simply follow a simple 'copy and paste method' but rather take information from several different sources where certain words are changed from the original text and mixed with other ideas from a variety of sources（Christodoulou, 2008）.

Mazgovoy, Kakkonen, and Cosma（2012）, in evaluating current automatic plagiarism detectors, describe five types of plagiarism, three of which have relevance to this study: simple copy-paste or transcription; paraphrasing or changing parts of the copied text to hide the fact that it is plagiarized; and difficult to detect plagiarism, which includes direct translation of a source, using ghostwriters or copying ideas and opinions without citation.

### ２．１　Cultural Differences and Plagiarism

Cultural attitudes are often thought to be the main cause for plagiarism in Japan. Plagiarism is a complex concept. There is no one word that translates it into Japanese. Although plagiarism has been translated using words, such as *hyousetsu*（剽窃）or *tousaku*（盗作）they have very different connotations from the English, carry extremely negative associations, such as copyright infringement or piracy, and are usually not understood by students or university faculty alike（Wheeler, 2009）.

Day（2001）suggests that Japanese society does not usually value originality, but values the sharing of ideas, because it is more logical and important to share these ideas than to painstakingly take the time to document every source, idea, or phrase used in a composition. Japanese students are known to reproduce information that is considered right or correct and copy the information so that no error can be made（Sowden, 2005）.

Pennycook（1996）suggests that there are moral or emotional elements attached to the

concept of plagiarism, that is, teachers who give importance to the concept are often "vehement defenders of 'correct' textual practices, desperately trying to promote [our] version of language and ownership" (p. 212). Sowden (2005) suggests that plagiarism is not usually considered a moral issue in Japan and teachers who have a strong sense of plagiarism are often in conflict with other teachers who do not value the same ideas.

The culture of Japanese education also has an influence on students' awareness of plagiarism. Although the educational system in Japan is changing, essay writing in the students' first language, Japanese, is still not usually taught in junior or senior high schools, other than in preparation for college entrance essays. Even 'English Composition' classes in high school still mostly focus on translation at the sentence level rather than on teaching students how to express their original ideas in essays. (Davies, 2001).

According to Pecorari (1997), the contrast "between the Anglophone and the Japanese view of using sources is so great that it can be understood only after repeated discussion and practice. Those [students] who had multiple sources of information about [plagiarism] had a much better understanding of the concept" (p.13). It follows, that if Japanese high school students do not learn how to write essays, they would have no chance of engaging in 'repeated discussion and practice' of issues related to plagiarism. This may be one of the reasons that researchers such as Wheeler (2009) have found that Japanese university students have difficulty with the topic of plagiarism, do not always feel that citation is necessary and usually struggle with the correct use of citation procedures. They simply have never been taught about it.

Japanese students' first training in essay writing in any language may very well be in their college first or second year English writing classes. Japanese students, then, may also encounter their first use of the word, plagiarism, in these classes.

## 2．2　Language learning and plagiarism

Some researchers have pointed out Japanese cultural values or the culture of Japanese secondary education as influences on students' lack of a concept of plagiarism. Other researchers believe that it is the lack of confidence EFL students have in their English writing ability that leads to plagiarism. Norris (2007) agrees that plagiarism is due to a fear of grammatical mistakes and possible punishment for any errors in their composition. Pecorai (1998), states that many students who are non-native speakers of English tend to see themselves as apprentices, and not having authority even over their own texts especially when they come from cultures in which humility is valued.

Marshall and Garry (2006) found that students at a New Zealand university with non-English speaking backgrounds had a higher acceptance of plagiarism than those with English

speaking backgrounds. Both groups, however, had a very high acceptance of plagianism from the web. For EFL learners, despite there being a predisposition for plagiarism as a cultural factor, perhaps the motivation for plagiarism stems from the ease and guarantee of a correct sentence. Cammish (1997) feels that "it is the fear of making mistakes in English which leads many students to stick too closely to their sources and prevents them from expressing their own ideas" (p. 153).

Pennycook (1996) raises the point that if we encourage students to use their own words rather than to plagiarize, when do students "come to own a language sufficiently that to say something 'in one's own words' makes sense" (p. 202). Howard (2001) and Pecorai (2010) suggest that EFL students are still developing as writers and often use a loose form of unintentional plagiarism, or patchwriting, where they copy from texts, edit them freely and add their own original writing as a language learning strategy. These same patchwriting strategies have also been identified by Mazgovoy, Kakkonen, and Cosma (2012) as strategies that intentional plagiarists use to to deceive readers and make copied text difficult to identify as copied.

Of course, there is no support for students using patchwriting as a form of deceptive plagiarism. Second language acquisition researchers, however, debate whether patchwriting should be approached and punished as plagiarism or focussed on as a valuable intermediate strategy that apprentice writers might use to improve their skills to the point that they were able to write 'in their own words.' Howard (2001) in her article, *Forget About Policing Plagiarism. Just Teach.*, suggests that too much of a focus on plagiarism is actually harmful to second language learners' writing development.

### 2．3　Personal and Situational Factors Related to Plagiarism

Of course, not all Japanese students who are beginning writers of English engage in questionable writing practices. Another trend in the research on intentional plagiarism focuses on individual personality and situational factors in students' choices to plagiarize. Bennett (2005) hypothesized,

> . . . that the occurrence of plagiarism could be predicted via three attitudinal considerations (individual perceptions of the ethicality of the practice, fear of penalties if caught and fear of failing a degree); two personal traits (goal orientation and academic integration), and three situational factors (financial, current grades achieved, and how strictly lecturing staff enforced anti-plagiarism rules).

Another situational factor is the ease with which students can use the internet to find information from various sources, buy readymade essays online or order customized essays (Mazgovoy, Kakkonen, & Cosma, 2012).

Besides the ease of internet related cheating, if EFL students see the internet texts as an authentic model for their writing they will find that "one text or a significantly long phrase may appear in several online documents without citation" (Pecorari, 2010, p. 159). There are very few condemnations of this as plagiarism. Marshall and Garry (2005) found that students evaluated copying material from the internet as much less serious than copying from a book or another student. They suggest that copying form the internet is a widely engaged in every-day practice in modern society and that students' previous experience of copying internet materials in non-academic settings may also influence their attitude towards digital plagiarism in academic settings.

## 3．Interviews and Discussion of Results: Teacher Attitudes towards Plagiarism

What are the attitudes and concerns of EFL teachers in Japan towards plagiarism? To explore this topic, interviews were conducted with ten teachers using the following questions as guidelines:

1．How would you define plagiarism?
2．When do you see plagiarism in your students' work?
3．Why do you think students plagiarize?
4．What are your concerns about plagiarism?
5．What do you think teachers should do to prevent plagiarism? What do you think schools/universities should do to prevent plagiarism?

All of the interviewees could be described as Anglophone, were fluent in English, and had studied in graduate degree programs either in Anglophone countries or in satellite campuses of a foreign university in Japan. In this sense, they all had a strong sense of the importance of understanding and avoiding plagiarism found in Anglophone academia. Half were Japanese nationals, half native speakers of English from North America. They had all taught English in Japanese schools for 10 to 30 years. Five of the teachers also had teaching experience in Japanese high schools. Although they taught at different colleges in Sapporo, they all had extensive experience teaching English to first and second year university students.

Interviews were conducted under the promise of anonymity. No information is included to compromise the identity of any teacher or the institution where he or she works. The responses are summarized below.

### 3．1　How would you define plagiarism?

None of the teachers were able to translate the word plagiarism into an equivalent Japanese term. However, all teachers mentioned stealing another person's words and presenting them as one's own as part of the definition of plagiarism. All teachers included copying and pasting text from a source as a major part of their definition and as the most frequent form

of plagiarism that they faced. One teacher stated that in Japan, getting a report written in a previous year for the same course from a *sempai*, an older friend or club member, and passing it as one's own work was a fairly frequent form of plagiarism. Another teacher defined plagiarism simply as "cheating."

Although eight of the interviewees also included taking someone else's ideas and presenting them to others as if they were one's own in their definition, they were more concerned in their daily teaching experiences with the copying of text than the copying of ideas. Three teachers mentioned students using a translation homepage to translate a Japanese text to English as a type of plagiarism. Only two of the ten teachers, however, were strict about references and citation. Part of the reason for this was that other teachers had intentionally changed their writing assignments by asking students to write about their opinions or experiences so that plagiarism would be difficult or impossible. Citation was not considered necessary for this kind of writing.

Intentional deception, dishonesty or cheating were mentioned by all teachers as part of the definition of plagiarism. Students who plagiarized were 'stealing,' trying to get a better grade without doing the proper assignment, being unfair to other students who did their best or being 'sneaky.' There seemed to be a consensus that students who copied on exams, submitted assignments that were all or mostly copied from the internet, or submitted an assignment that was copied from a *sempai* were being dishonest. This dishonesty put teachers into an unpleasant, adversarial role with the students when they were challenged.

All of the teachers defined the word plagiarism as a foreign, non-Japanese concept. One Japanese EFL teacher reported that when she decided to teach her class about plagiarism, she realized that she didn't know how to translate the word and had to look it up in a dictionary. She couldn't find a translation that was suitable. Six teachers mentioned that when they introduce rules about plagiarism in their first and second year English classes, students are not familiar with the concept. Students find plagiarism difficult to understand and don't see how it applies to them. They don't seem to feel a personal, moral importance to not plagiarizing.

Two of the Japanese native teachers mentioned that their idea of plagiarism had changed over the years. One reported that she only started thinking about changing her teaching methods related to plagiarism when students complained that other students in class were submitting papers that had been circulated by their *sempai*. Another teacher had not given plagiarism much thought until she became involved in a disagreement with two of her team-teaching colleagues when they had to decide the grade of a student who had copied some of their final essay from the internet.

In the early 1990s, one of the interviewees was told by a supervisor that plagiarism was not taught in Japan until graduate school. Seven of the ten interviewees in this study, however, teach all or part of the concept of plagiarism to their students as part of EFL writing training in the first two years of college. They were uncertain whether this is also done in other disciplines.

On the other hand, four of the teachers pointed out that some elements that make up the broad concept of plagiarism such as cheating, copying from a book or from another student or submitting a report that was copied from a *sempai*, are also considered dishonest in a traditional Japanese cultural context. Those with experience teaching high school also reported that students are taught that cheating or copying is bad, beginning in elementary school. Cheating on exams is especially emphasized.  This approach, of looking at native Japanese concepts of academic integrity, does not seem to have been examined in the research.

All of the teachers also recognized that many students were engaged what Pecorari (2010) calls "non-deceptive" plagiarism. (p. 149)  Teachers felt that often, students had no clear concept of plagiarism. They did not realize that their writing practices were unacceptable. Patchwriting, summarizing, copying phrases or parts of sentences, copying texts and adjusting the vocabulary, grammar or sequence of ideas were strategies that some teachers accepted, to a certain extent.

Although over-reliance on these strategies was identified as plagiarism by eight of the teachers, some teachers felt that, when used reasonably, these strategies could help students learn to use English more effectively. In this case, the teachers did not classify the strategy as plagiarism. The strategies seemed to fall into a grey area in which the interviewees had no consensus about where to draw the line between acceptable practice and plagiarism.

### ３．２　When do you see plagiarism in your students' work?

The question of *when* students plagiarize is closely related to teachers' definition of *what* plagiarism is and *why* students might plagiarize. The teacher interviewees, however, consistently mentioned two factors, opportunity and the pressure of personal frustration or need.

One consensus was that students will not intentionally plagiarize unless they have the opportunity to do so easily. Four of the interviewees stated that students seldom plagiarized in their classes because it was difficult or impossible to do so. One teacher avoided writing assignments in class, relying mostly on multiple choice tests. Two gave writing assignments that asked for the kind of personal opinions or information that would be difficult to copy from another source. A fourth interviewee began all writing assignments in class where the students could be supervised. They had no chance to copy from another source. For

homework, students were only allowed to edit or improve writing that they had begun in class.

Six teachers mentioned that students seem to plagiarize more when they are given longer reports or assignments, especially because these types of assignments tend to involve factual research. One teacher mentioned that in her experience students copied from the internet no matter whether she gave them assignments in English or in Japanese. Another teacher mentioned that teachers who share the same types of assignments, for example in a campus wide English language program, and repeat them over many years open the opportunity for *sempai* to easily pass on past reports that received good grades to their younger friends.

Teachers also mentioned that it is easier for students to copy and paste all or parts of an assignment from many sources on the internet than to copy from printed texts. One teacher mentioned that Wikipedia was especially popular. Even when students could find a better answer in the textbook, the ease of using Wikipedia made them more dependent on it. However, he stated that in his experience, although only five or six students out of 100 would copy directly from the internet, more would use automatic translation for all or part of their report. It also seemed that some students would copy text from a Japanese homepage and use an online translation service to produce some of the English for their reports.

Interviewees mentioned that although teachers can use internet search engines to try and catch copying, students can intentionally make detection difficult by changing vocabulary, grammar, or changing the order of words and phrases in the copied texts. As plagiarism detection tools improve, students' ability to beat the system tends to improve as well. Teachers mentioned many of the strategies described in Mazgovoy, Kakkonen, & Cosma (2012).

Another window of opportunity that was reported for students to plagiarize was when teachers did not or could not carefully assess student reports. Two teachers mentioned that they did not have the time to check all of the students' reports carefully all of the time. Other teachers mentioned that some students will plagiarize only when they feel that they can get away with it. Three teachers mentioned that some students thought that copying was an easy way to get a good grade as long as they felt certain that they would not be found out. Another teacher mentioned that when she challenged a group of students about copying from the internet they seemed amazed that she would care or even notice that they had copied. Other teachers said nothing about copying, why should she?

Teachers also frequently mentioned that students will plagiarize when their frustration or need is strong, especially because of a lack of time or a lack of English ability. If students are asked to complete assignments that require skills that they have not learned or that they

perceive as being too difficult or overwhelming they will be more likely to see copying as the only way or the easiest way to complete the assignment.

Lack of time was also perceived as a factor frustrating students in completing assignments. Students can become overwhelmed when they fail to balance their limited time between studying for each class, part time work and personal obligations. One teacher felt that plagiarism was more common toward the end of the semester, when students had less time because of the conflicting demands of classes, and especially when they needed the credit from a particular course to graduate.

In considering *when* students plagiarize the emphasis in this section has been on external factors: the opportunity to copy easily from many sources, the inability of teachers to assess assignments deeply enough to detect plagiarism and, from students' points of view, a lack of time and English ability necessary to complete a task without plagiarizing. The emphasis in this section has also been mostly on what teachers reported about intentional plagiarism, when students consciously decide to cheat or try to beat the system. It was clear that most interviewees are changing their teaching methods so that students cannot plagiarize, so that they must learn to use English well enough to express their ideas 'in their own words.'

### 3.3 Why do you think students plagiarize?

In answering *why* students engaged in questionable academic writing practices most teachers also mentioned the two external factors described in the *when* section above: opportunity and the pressure of personal pressure or need. They mentioned these factors especially when describing why they thought that students intentionally plagiarized. They also mentioned personal or personality factors. Two teachers classified students who intentionally plagiarized as lazy or unmotivated. Another teacher thought that plagiarism was most common among the 'worst' students. Some mentioned it as common among students who weren't interested in their studies.

Teachers also reported that while some students plagiarized intentionally and tried to cheat, other students engaged in questionable academic writing practices with no intention of plagiarization. They either had very little idea of what it meant to plagiarize or they were only engaging in writing practices that they had been taught or that were acceptable in other classes.

All teachers believed that one reason that students engaged in this non-deceptive plagiarism was because of cultural influence. The cultural influences that teachers listed could be categorized as influences from traditional Japanese culture, the culture of Japanese schools, or the particular educational culture of a single classroom. Because of these influences, students either found it difficult to understand what it meant to plagiarize or didn't see the importance

of taking the many rules about plagiarizing seriously.

Some teachers believed that traditional Japanese or Asian cultural values, such as the importance of group rather than individual knowledge, such as copying as a way of showing acceptance and agreement with the author, or not seeing a need to reference all information were influential in students not having a clear conception of what it meant to plagiarize. Several teachers felt that even though they included a lesson on plagiarism at the orientation to a class, students didn't understand or see a connection to their personal study practices.

Beside the influences of traditional culture, most teachers also mentioned the culture of Japanese education. Most students do not learn about plagiarism before university. In the 1990s, one teacher was told by a supervisor that Japanese students would not learn about plagiarism until they entered graduate school. Some teachers felt that because EFL classes were the only place where students encountered the concept of plagiarism, students seemed to think that plagiarism was not so important. Several teachers felt that because the university did not have a universally accepted and enforced plagiarism policy, students were receiving different messages from teachers about which practices were acceptable and not acceptable in academic writing.

The learning culture of individual classrooms was also listed as an influence. One teacher pointed out that writing practices that were allowed by one teacher were condemned by another. These influences confused students so that they had no clear idea of what was acceptable or not.

Only three of the ten teachers taught students how to cite information in reports. One felt that simply teaching students to write a reference list was enough. One teacher reported that when she challenged students about a text that they had copied without using quotes or citation, the students didn't seem to understand exactly what the problem was, no matter what she explained. She reported that another student's response to this kind of feedback was "But you told us to write references!" Not only did the student not understand the concept plagiarism, she felt that copying and pasting information into her report was the proper meaning of 'including a reference'.

Besides the influence of traditional culture, educational culture and the culture of individual classrooms on students' lack of understanding of plagiarism, most teachers also recognized students' experience as beginning writers of English as an influence on their straying over the line into unacceptable academic writing practices. Three teachers emphasized that although some students may also plagiarize because it is easy to do so, a large portion of students plagiarize due to a lack of confidence or insecurity with English which leads them to copy text rather than to create prose. Copying brings "the safety of using someone else's words" to

English.

The interviewees' responses were in line with the literature on plagiarism in Japan which emphasizes either the importance of cultural influences or the centrality of students experience as beginning writers of English as the main factor in students' non-deceptive plagiarism. Teachers, however, mentioned cultural influence more often.

In Japan, the only part of the plagiarism concept's package that seems to be agreed upon is that cheating or direct copying, especially on a test, is unacceptable. Though the interviewees are teaching about plagiarism to undergraduates, there may be some kind of cultural gap that is prohibiting clear communication between teachers and students, even if both are Japanese nationals. The messages that students receive from the general culture and various classrooms, especially about practices such as patchwriting, that have been described as grey area, seem to be confusing students.

### ３．４　What are your concerns about plagiarism?

Teachers expressed concerns that plagiarism, especially intentional plagiarism, is by nature ethically or morally wrong, is unfair to other students, prevents real learning and growth and if developed into a habit, may lead to future academic or professional difficulties.

Although only three teachers identified plagiarism as specifically ethically or morally wrong, six others used value laden words like 'cheating' or 'stealing,' which have ethical or moral connotations, to describe it. Similarly, three teachers identified plagiarism as unfair to other students. Students who submit a report they have received from a *sempai* or that is a patchwork of copied texts will often receive a higher grade than a student who produced their own original work. Besides being unfair, it can reduce the motivation of the serious students who have worked harder for a lower grade. This kind of cheating can change the atmosphere of the classroom.

Several teachers mentioned that by plagiarizing, students lose the chance to improve their skills that honest engagement with the writing task would offer them. As mentioned above, the effect of plagiarism on class morale can lower the motivation of other students to learn as well.

Four teachers felt that the habit of plagiarism would have a negative effect on students' professional lives. It might encourage dishonesty in the workplace, lead others to distrust information that the plagiarizer might present in the future, or have legal ramifications, especially if the plagiarized work is published in print or on the web.

３．５　What do you think teachers should do to prevent plagiarism?　What do you think schools/universities should do to prevent plagiarism?

As mentioned above, students will not plagiarize if their assignments are designed so that it is difficult or impossible to do so. Eight of the interviewees had evaluated their teaching goals and had already adjusted their teaching methods in order to deal with plagiarism, even though some of them did not use the word plagiarism in class. All of the teachers had strong policies against copying that supported their class goals. Three of the teachers had rules on writing references or citing information in the text of assignments.

Teachers suggested many ways of changing their teaching methods to make plagiarism more difficult. Shorter assignments were recommended, especially assignments which were less research driven. Assigning writing which requires students to voice an opinion rather than do research also appears to limit plagiarism. Having students do the major part of their writing in class, under the watchful eye of the teacher, can prevent students from submitting reports written by others. Requiring students to submit assignments online can allow teachers to use search engines to find evidence of plagiarism. Each teacher found a method that suited and met the needs of their students and also suited their individual teaching styles. Constant feedback about the rules of the class concerning plagiarism was also recommended.

All of the teachers defined plagiarism as somewhat of a problem which needed to be addressed on a school-wide policy level. However, they also described that it had been difficult to reach a consensus with other teachers on what practices should be considered plagiarism. A common concern was that a plagiarism policy needs to be created which is supported by the staff and is strictly enforced by all. Some teachers stressed that the policy needs to be linked to students' grades to be effective. All students should learn the official policy on plagiarism. One teacher gave the example of requiring all students to attend a 90 minute lecture during freshman orientation.

## ５．Conclusion

Plagiarism is a complex concept that has its roots in the culture of the European Enlightenment and that is becoming an increasingly important concept in academic writing, especially in professional English academic writing, for students all around the world. As suggested by the research, however, plagiarism is not a Japanese cultural concept nor is it usually taught in Japanese elementary or secondary schools.

On the other hand, as was pointed out by several of the teachers interviewed in this study, there seems to be a native Japanese prohibition against cheating or copying on tests as well as against submitting another's assignment as one's own, that is taught as early as elementary school. This Japanese concept of academic integrity also seems to be taught without any

reference whatsoever to the foreign cultural concept of plagiarism. These findings, although based on a small sample of teacher interviews, suggest that more research into native Japanese cultural values about academic integrity may be as necessary as cross-cultural studies of plagiarism.

The ten teachers in this study had a particular focus on teaching EFL, especially to first and second year college undergraduates. Their students were learning the basics of essay writing and plagiarism, probably for the first time, both at the same time. They all felt that students had difficulty understanding plagiarism on both abstract and practical levels. Most of the interviewees agreed with Norris (2007), that no matter what approach is taken, "institutional guidelines and cooperation are necessary for any anti-plagiarism program to be effective" (p. 11).

In other words, policies must be implemented and then enforced by all teachers, across all disciplines, not only by EFL teachers, if plagiarism is to be taught about effectively. If a university-wide anti-plagiarism policy is to be effective, it probably needs to be taught in Japanese along with basic Japanese academic essay writing, not in an undergraduate EFL class. If students are to have the 'repeated discussion and practice' that Pecorari (1997) deems necessary, essay writing and avoidance of plagiarism should be taught in tandem in Japanese.

The teachers in the study were also concerned with students' development as writers and saw unintentional plagiarism, mostly patchwriting or internet translation, as prohibiting that development. They were more concerned with teaching students to express themselves in English prose, in their own words, without relying heavily on patchwriting or online translation from Japanese to English, than on proper citation. Howard (2001) believes that an over emphasis on policing plagiarism has a negative effect on students and that teachers need to focus on supporting students in developing writing skills that move them away from strategies involving simple copying, patchwriting or internet automatic translation.

Patchwriting is particularly problematical because teachers reported that they do not have a consensus with their co-workers about how to deal with it or use it as a learning tool. From the student point of view, this lack of consensus among colleagues will cause confusion about what is or is not acceptable, what is or is not considered plagiarism. More research on teacher and student attitudes on the various kinds of patchwriting strategies is necessary.

In this sense, it may be in the best interest of Japanese EFL students if teachers avoid teaching about plagiarism or designing lengthy assignments that require research until undergraduate students are able to use English "sufficiently that [is] to say something 'in one's own words' makes sense" (Pennycook, 1996, p. 202). Rather than focussing on proper citation,

theft of intellectual property and other key concepts of plagiarism, it may be sufficient for EFL teachers to rely upon and reinforce the native Japanese cultural value that copying or cheating on tests is wrong.

As was mentioned above, research may be needed, not in studying Japanese students' attitudes towards plagiarism, but on their attitudes towards native Japanese cultural concepts of academic integrity as well as on linguistic strategies (Pecorari, 2010) which they can use in moving from a reliance on patchwriting or online translation to expressing their ideas in their own authentic English voices.

## [References]

Bennett, R. (2005). Factors associated with student plagiarism in a post-1992 university. Journal of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 30(2):137-162.

Bugeja, M. (2004). Don't let students "overlook" internet plagiarism. *Education Digest*, 70(2), 37-43.

Cammish, N. (1997). Through a glass darkly: Problems of studying at advanced level through the medium of English. In McNamara D. & Harris R. (Eds). *Overseas Students in Higher Education: Issues in Teaching and Learning*. London: Routledge: 143-155.

Christodoulou, I. (2008). The impact factor of plagiarism. *International Journal of Health Science*, 1(4), 113-114.

Davies, R. J. (2001). Japanese Rhetoric IV : Composition pedagogy in Japan. *Ehime Daigaku Kyouiku Gakubu Kiyo. Dai 2-bu, Jinnbunn・Shakai Gakka*, 34(1): 31-81.

Day, M. (2001). A meshing of minds: The future of online research for print and electronic publication. In J. Barber & D. Grigar (Eds.), *New Worlds, New Words: Exploring Pathways for Writing about and in Electronic Environments*, 251-277. New Jersey: Hampton Press..

Howard, R. (2001). Forget about policing plagiarism. Just teach. In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, The Chronicle Review, November 16, 2001. p. B24

Marshall, S. & Garry, M. (2005). How well do students really understand plagiarism? Paper accepted for the ASCILITE 2005 Conference, Brisbane, Australia.

Marshall, S. & Garry, M. (2006). NESB and ESB students' attitudes and perceptions of plagiarism. *International Journal of Educational Integrity*, 2(1), 26-37.

Mazgovoy, M., Kakkonen, T., & Cosma, G. (2012). Automatic student plagiarism detection: Future perspectives. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 43(4), 511-531.

Myers, S. (1998). Questioning authority: ESL/EFL, science and teaching about plagiarism. *Tesl-EK*, 3(2), 1-12.

Norris, Robert. (2007). Dealing with plagiarism at a Japanese university: A foreign teacher's perspective. *The East Asian Learner*, 3(1), 1-20. Oxford University Press. (2013).

Pecorari D. (1997). Cultural differences in the language classroom: How international students view plagiarism. Paper presented at the meeting of the *IATEFL Literature and Cultural Studies Special Interest Group*. July 12, Manchester.

Pecorari, Diane. (1998). Process citing: Avoiding plagiarism in student writing. *The Japanese Learner*, 16, 12-15. .

Pecorari, Diane. (2010). *Academic Writing and Plagiarism: A Linguistic Analysis*. Continuum; Reprint edition.

Sowden, Colin. (2005). Plagiarism and the culture of multilingual students in higher education abroad. *ELT Journal*, 59(3), 226-232.

Thomas, E., & Sassi, K. (2011). An ethical dilemma: Talking about plagiarism and academic integrity

in the digital age. *English Journal*, 100(6), 47-53.

Wheeler, Greg. (2009). Plagiarism in the Japanese universities: Truly a cultural matter? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 18, 17-29.

[Abstract]

# Plagiarism Issues and Concerns in Japan: Teacher Attitudes towards Plagiarism in English as a Foreign Language Writing

Robert E. GETTINGS

Geoffrey S. HUGHES

This study examines the attitudes and concerns about plagiarism of ten university EFL teachers （Japanese and North American）, in light of their experience in teaching first- and second-year undergraduates. Although three teachers were concerned with students not using proper citation, all of the teachers shared a concern that students were using copying either to deceive teachers in order to get a good grade or simply because they did not understand what plagiarism was. It was felt that anti-plagiarism policies need to be accepted by all members of the university community to be effective. Copying and pasting from the internet, patchwriting or use of homepage translation services were some of the problems that were mentioned.　Three teachers reported that, in their experience, Japanese students are taught from elementary school on that cheating or copying from another student, especially related to exams, were unacceptable academic practices. All teachers felt that the concept of plagiarism was a foreign rather than a Japanese concept. The results suggest that in future research it may be important to focus on a study of native Japanese cultural concepts of academic integrity rather than cross-cultural comparisons of student understanding of the foreign concept of plagiarism.