



Awareness, Attitudes, and Instructional Behaviours of Pathways Faculty Towards Plagiarism

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Introduction

- Survey + focus group of EAL Pathways faculty and their reactions, responses, and attitudes to student plagiarism
- Departmental context (Jenn Cummins, Pathways)
- Existing literature (Kristina Oldenburg, Library)
- Preliminary findings (Jen Weldon, Library)

EAL Pathways

- EAL Pathways Program
 - English as an Additional language learners
 - Canadian Language Benchmarks 5 – 9
 - Academic, Workplace, Personal/Community
 - Between 700-900 students
- Additional programming: Job Skills EAL (HCA, Baking, Culinary), Hospitality Management support, IELTS prep, CELBAN prep, Grammar and Pronunciation courses

EAL Pathways

- Plagiarism in the Pathways Program
 - Since 2018, 54 reported plagiarism incidences
 - Developmental approach
- Current Experiences with Plagiarism
 - Stressful
 - Time consuming
 - Can be unproductive

Literature Search

Plagiarism and English as an Additional Language (EAL) adult learners.

- Broad search of existing research
- Scanned results for instructional strategies
- We used a few of the strategies to elicit reflection from focus group participants

Literature Search

Plagiarism policies:

- Plagiarism policies written at a “grade 16” level (Taylor & Bicak, 2019)
- Students do not understand plagiarism policies (Adam et al., 2017)
- Faculty do not understand plagiarism policies (Löfström et al., 2015).

Methods Overview

- Survey of EAL faculty on:
 - Faculty awareness of plagiarism procedures
 - Typical responses to plagiarism in the classroom, teaching students about plagiarism
 - Modified questionnaire based on Coalter et al., 2007 and McLeod, 2014
- Focus group questions were developed based on the results of the survey
 - Participants described their experiences and explained decision making processes when responding to plagiarism
 - Interventions or supports suitable for the EAL classroom

Survey

- 31 questions in Survey Monkey
- Data collected October 26, 2020 – December 3, 2020
- 18 responses
- 4 main question areas
 - Awareness and attitudes of plagiarism reporting procedures
 - Use of VCC and EAL department policies and procedures
 - Factors that influence response to plagiarism in the classroom
 - Interventions – methods to help students avoid plagiarism

Survey Results

- 72% had used the EAL Dept. Procedures to report plagiarism
- Providing information to students about plagiarism (n=17)
 - 94% discuss issue in class
 - 70% give written instructions at beginning of semester
 - 65% review concepts like plagiarism or unauthorized collaboration prior to assessments
 - 53% refer to academic code of conduct
- Types of plagiarism encountered (n=16)
 - 81% copying and pasting
 - 81% submitting work significantly different from previous work.

Survey Results

- I respond to plagiarism most often by (n=15)
 - 80% give a warning
 - 73% EAL department approach
 - 53% dealing with the matter informally
- Participants were asked to rank the factors that influenced their response to plagiarism
 - Whether I think the student has plagiarized intentionally or unintentionally (n=15)
 - 11 ranked this factor highest

Focus Group

- 2 Focus groups with 3 participants each
- Mid-December and Mid-February
- Question Areas
 - How instructors decide if plagiarism is intentional or unintentional
 - Example of plagiarism from their classroom – formal response
 - Type of plagiarism
 - Type of response
 - Outcome
 - Ideas about assignment design to prevent plagiarism
 - Supports that would help them to manage plagiarism in their classrooms

Emerging Focus Group Themes

- Once a piece of knowledge is in my head it's mine now
 - Students often struggle with recognizing that memorized information still needs to be cited
- Thresholds for EAL Department involvement
 - Wide variation in when instructors decide to involve EAL leadership
- Giving students the tools to avoid plagiarism takes time
 - Students want to get through their program quickly
 - Instructors don't have the time within a course to teach about paraphrasing, plagiarism, citation
- Interventions

Next Steps

- Short Term
 - Focus group data compilation and coding
- Medium Term
 - Validation by Department
 - Suggested interventions/assignments
- Long Term
 - Involvement of faculty
 - May include: Testing an intervention/assignment in a classroom setting
 - Submitting results of the study in a journal article

References

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