OCCURRENCE OF PLAGIARISM IN THE WRITING OF INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE BUSINESS STUDENTS AND ITS DETECTION BY SAFEASSIGN

BY

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates instances of plagiarism in essays of 23 international business students written for an ESL business communication course. The students’ papers were checked for plagiarism manually and by SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection platform within Blackboard’s compass2g. The findings indicate that the two most common types of plagiarism in international students’ writing are verbatim copying from sources and inappropriate paraphrase. Students also experienced significant challenges in following APA style conventions and made errors in punctuation and sentence structure when formatting in-text citations.

An analysis of SafeAssign reports indicates that the percentage of matching text is not a reliable indicator of plagiarism. SafeAssign showed a high percentage (at least 55%) of false positive plagiarism detection with references, titles, date/time and formulaic language flagged as potential plagiarism. SafeAssign performed best at identifying matches between student papers, inconsistently detected verbatim copying from sources and failed to detect inappropriate paraphrases.
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CHAPTER 1
PLAGIARISM: DEFINITION, TYPES, REASONS AND POLICIES

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty on university campuses have received increased attention in recent years as a phenomenon that “threatens the very heart of academia” (McLafferty & Foust, 2004, p. 186). The National Council of Teachers of English and the Council of Writing Program Administrators consider plagiarism “a serious issue” at US educational institutions (Hansen, Stith & Tesdell, 2011, p. 188). Plagiarism is viewed as a “dynamic,” “multi-layered” and “cross-cultural” phenomenon (Gu & Brooks, 2008) and has been described as “a slippery subject” (Liddell, 2003), “Pandora’s box” (Sutherland-Smith, 2005), “worm of reason” (Kolich, 1983), “college instructor’s nightmare” (McLafferty & Foust, 2004) “a moral maze” and “a legal minefield” (Park, 2003).

Academic dishonesty and cheating on college campuses is often referred to as an “epidemic,” and in multiple studies, 30% to 96% of students admitted to cheating at least once in their academic careers (Nonis, 2001). Research indicates that business students report higher rates of academic dishonesty as compared to students in other majors and tend to see cheating as acceptable behavior (Baird, 1980; McCabe, Butterfield & Treviño, 2006; Klein, Levenburg, McKendall & Mothersell, 2007; Phillips & Horton, 2000). International students studying at US colleges and universities are another at risk category for plagiarism due to their diverse cultural backgrounds and lack of awareness of what constitutes plagiarism in a western educational setting (Amsberry, 2010; Currie, 1998; Deckert, 1993; DeVoss & Rosati, 2002; Flowerdew & Li, 2007a; Gu & Brooks, 2008; Pennycook, 1996; Song-Turner, 2008; Sowden, 2005; Stowers & Hummel, 2011; Thompson & Williams, 1995; Walker, 2010). Therefore, the target group of this
research – international business students at a US university – would fall within a high-risk category for potential plagiarism.

Rapid technological developments in the last several decades resulted in emergence of new types of plagiarism known as “Internet plagiarism” (Austin & Brown, 1999) or “e-cheating” (Schiller, 2005). The emergence of dozens of online paper mills and writing assistance services raise educators’ concerns regarding the new types of plagiarism (Anderson, 1999; Auer & Krupar, 2001; Austin & Brown, 1999; Chao, Wilhelm & Neureuther 2009; Christenbury, 2009; DeVoss & Rosati, 2002; Junion-Metz, 2000; Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010; Martin, 2005; McLafferty & Foust, 2004; McLester, 2011; Ritter, 2006; Royce, 2003; Schiller, 2005; Voelker, Love & Pentina, 2012; Walker, 2010; Wood & Warnken, 2004).

Plagiarism detection tools emerged in response to students’ enthusiastic use of online resources to make the educators’ task of detecting plagiarism more manageable. Currently, four types of plagiarism detection software are available to educators:

- search engines (Google, Yahoo);
- software that detects similarities between papers entered in a database (WCopyfind, Glatt);
- web-based plagiarism software (Turnitin, SafeAssign, EVE2 Essay Verification Engine);
- online plagiarism checkers that check text, websites and other materials for matching sections (copyscape.com, plagium.com, contentplagiarismchecker.com, grammarly.com).

This paper investigates instances of plagiarism in the essays of 23 international business students written for an ESL business communication course and efficiency of their detection by
SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection platform used by the instructors for the class. The findings indicate that verbatim borrowing from sources and inappropriate paraphrases were common in student writing, even in the final assignment for the course. Students also experienced significant difficulties in following APA conventions, in particular with punctuation and structure of sentences incorporating in-text citations. SafeAssign reports have been found to have a high rate of false positive detection. Percentages and types of matches identified by SafeAssign require careful examination by instructors and may be an unreliable indicator of student plagiarism.
Defining Plagiarism

Despite a wide range of literature on plagiarism, defining plagiarism presents difficulties from theoretical, practical, methodological, sociocultural, psychological and pedagogical perspectives (Bretag, 2013; Bretag & Mahmud, 2009; Burkill & Abbey, 2004; Flowerdew & Li, 2007b; Gu & Brooks, 2008; Liddell, 2003; Pennycook, 1996; Song-Turner, 2008). Kolich (1983) dates the origin of the term “plagiarism” to the Latin word “plagiarius” which in direct translation means “a person who steals slaves.” Reportedly, the term “plagiarism” was originally used by Martial, a Roman poet, to refer to Fidentinus, another poet, who was allegedly reading Martial’s poems as his own. Martial criticized Fidentinus for “trying to enslave those who serve the mind of a master” (Kolich, p. 143). Modern definitions of plagiarism are varied in their approach and perspective (see Table 1):

Table 1. Definitions of Plagiarism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2014)</td>
<td>“The act of using another person’s words or ideas without giving credit to that person.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism.org (2014)</td>
<td>“The reproduction or appropriation of someone else’s work without proper attribution; passing off as one’s own the work of someone else.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coulthard (2004)</td>
<td>“At its simplest, plagiarism, or more accurately the type of plagiarism we as linguists are competent to deal with, is the theft, or unacknowledged use, or text created by another” (p. 433).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Howard (1995)</td>
<td>“Plagiarism is the representation of a source’s words or ideas as one’s own. Plagiarism occurs when a writer fails to supply quotation marks for exact quotations; fails to cite the sources of his or her ideas; or adopts the phrasing of his or her sources, with changes in grammar or word choice” (p. 799).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park (2003)</td>
<td>“Plagiarism involves literary theft, stealing (by copying) the words or ideas of someone else and passing them off as one’s own without crediting the source” (p. 472).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Writing Program Administrators (2014)</td>
<td>“In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2014)</td>
<td>“Plagiarism is using other’s ideas and/or words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. It may be intentional (e.g., copying or purchasing papers from an online source) or unintentional (e.g. failing to give credit for an author’s idea that you have paraphrased or summarized in your own words).”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jameson (1993)</td>
<td>“Plagiarism, in the broadest sense, is the misappropriation of materials (ideas, facts, words, structures) that were created, originated, or discovered by someone else” (p. 18).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The definitions above, though different in their scope and perspective, seem to agree that in the most general sense plagiarism involves **copying someone else’s work without giving credit to the source**. For the purpose of this research, plagiarism is understood based on the official definition of the University of Illinois:

Plagiarism is using other’s ideas and/or words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. It may be intentional (e.g., copying or purchasing papers from an online source) or unintentional (e.g. failing to give credit for an author’s idea that you have paraphrased or summarized in your own words).

(Retrieved from http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/research/academicintegrity.html)
Types of Plagiarism

Classifying plagiarism presents a significant challenge due to differing views on what constitutes plagiarism; however, a number of helpful classifications have been developed based on researchers’ understanding of practices and behaviors constituting plagiarism (Correa, 2011; Howard, 1995; Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010; Walker, 2010). Thus, Correa (2011) provides a general classification of practices constituting academic dishonesty which include plagiarism, falsification or fabrication of information, unauthorized possession of materials, cheating and facilitating academic dishonesty (p. 66). Three relatively recent types identified by Correa (2011) are cyber-plagiarism, cut & paste plagiarism and patchwriting. Howard (1995) provides a different classification of plagiarism which includes three main types:

1. **Cheating**, i.e. borrowing or purchasing work created by someone else;
2. **Non-attribution**, i.e. using sources without proper citations;
3. **Patchwriting**, i.e. borrowing text from sources with few changes.

**Intentionality** is used as one of the main criteria to classify plagiarism into two general categories: intentional and unintentional plagiarism (Chao, Wilhelm, & Neureuther, 2009; Fischer & Zigmond, 2011; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Pecorari, 2003). Though this distinction seems simple, intent is not always easy to establish. Yorke, Lawson and McMahon (2009) suggest strong and weak predictors of intentionality in student plagiarism. The strong predictors include the source of text (e.g. if an essay comes from an online paper mill, it is a strong predictor of potential plagiarism), inconsistency in citing sources (e.g. some parts of the essay contain proper citations, while one part does not), deception (e.g. apparent attempts to hide sources used in writing) and fiction (e.g. fabricated references). Among weak predictors, Yorke, Lawson and McMahon (2009) list collusion (involvement of others in creating the text), extent of
plagiarism (verbatim plagiarism or adaptation), amount of plagiarism (percentage of plagiarized text), context (student’s awareness of cultural and field-specific requirements) and experience (student’s awareness of plagiarism requirements). Therefore, in each particular case, instructors need to carefully consider a variety of factors to determine intent in plagiarism.

Kakkonen and Mozgovoy (2010) developed a classification of plagiarism that takes into consideration the capabilities of modern plagiarism detection software. The following types of plagiarism are identified:

1. **Verbatim copying** (direct copying from online resources or copying text word-for-word from a print source);
2. **Inappropriate paraphrase** (adding or removing words; deliberately adding mistakes; changing structure);
3. **Technical tricks to avoid plagiarism detection by software** (using characters from foreign alphabets, white-colored font or scanned text);
4. **Deliberately inaccurate references** (using non-existent references and broken links);
5. “**Tough plagiarism”** (plagiarism that is difficult to identify with software including text produced by ghost writers, translated text and presentation of someone’s artistic work in different media).
Turnitin.com, arguably the most popular plagiarism detection tool in the current market, developed its own classification of the ten most frequent plagiarism types:

Figure 1. Plagiarism Types by Turnitin


The classification of plagiarism types used in this research is described in Chapter 6.
Reasons for Plagiarism among ESL College Students

International students at US universities are often “viewed by Western instructors as persistent plagiarizers” (Deckert, 1993, p. 131). A number of factors have been identified by researchers to account for an epidemic of plagiarism among ESL students enrolled in western educational institutions. The most important of them are considered in more detail below:

1. Cultural Differences in Understanding the Concept of Intellectual Property, Common Knowledge and Plagiarism

The concept of intellectual property originated in the Western world, while Eastern cultures have for centuries based their educational system on memorization and imitation of the works of outstanding minds, which results in different understanding of plagiarism, common knowledge and ownership to intellectual property in the Western world and Asian countries (Amsberry, 2010; Currie, 1998; DeVoss & Rosati, 2002; Gu & Brooks, 2008; Pennycook, 1996; Song-Turner, 2008; Sowden, 2005; Stowers & Hummel, 2011; Thompson & Williams, 1995; Walker, 2010). Pennycook (1996) describes a case from his teaching experience that would sound familiar to most ESL/EFL educators. After giving an assignment to write a biography of a well-known person to his undergraduate students at Xiangtan University, he received a piece about Abraham Lincoln that caught his attention as it “had the ring of a text from elsewhere, of language borrowed and repeated” (Pennycook, 1996, p. 202). The instructor subsequently discovered that his suspicions were not unfounded: the text came from a textbook and was memorized by a student for a different class, and the student “was quite happy to produce it on demand” and did not consider it to be cheating or plagiarism (Pennycook, 1996, p. 202).

Indeed, Lund (2004) talks about three features of the learning style that students from Confucian-based educational environments are likely to display and which may result in
plagiarism in Western understanding. First, students in these cultures are taught to respect the written text and its creator, which may result in their reluctance to alter it to comply with US academic writing standards. Indeed, Shei (2005) notes that Chinese students may spend years imitating calligraphy and memorizing parts of classical works of literature but cautions the reader against thinking that the Chinese educational system does not involve any creativity. Therefore, when students reproduce the text that they have memorized before (as in the case described by Pennycook (1996)), they are demonstrating their knowledge of the source and their respect for its creator.

Second, students often lack critical thinking skills as they are taught not to question authority and accept written sources as absolute truth. Thus, Hayes and Introna (2005) note that in Asian universities, classes are often based on one textbook and do not require students to research multiple sources (p. 225). On tests and exams, students are expected to reproduce the textbook and lectures as close to the original as possible. Therefore, international students from these cultures face tremendous challenges in the US educational systems: most classes in undergraduate and graduate programs require extensive independent research, critical evaluation of different views on the same issue and formulating a unique opinion – all these tasks require well-developed critical thinking skills which were not addressed in the educational systems in the home countries of many ESL students.

Finally, Lund (2004) talks about the third reason of ESL students being more susceptible to plagiarism: lack of awareness regarding documentation styles for proper incorporation of sources. Indeed, out of 23 international graduate business students who participated in the current research, only 22% (5 students) were aware of a citation style and had any experience using it.
However, care should be taken not to consider culture the primary reason for plagiarism among ESL students. Thus, Liu (2005) cautions against believing the claims that plagiarism is accepted and even encouraged in the Chinese educational system. Using his own experience in Chinese educational institutions and research of Chinese composition textbooks, Liu (2005) claims that plagiarism is viewed as “an immoral practice” (p. 235). In fact, there are two words for plagiarism in Chinese (“piao qie” and “cao xi”), both of which have a negative meaning. ESL instructors need to take culture in consideration in evaluating potential cases of plagiarism to determine whether it was an intentional act of cheating or the result of students’ cultural background and perceptions.

2. Academic load including a large number of writing assignments in academic courses and pressure for high academic performance paired with insufficient language skills.

The course load at US universities and the pressure to get good grades for better chances of finding a high-paying job or continuing education has been named as one of the reasons contributing to student cheating practices (Chao, Wilhelm & Neureuther, 2009; Correa, 2011; DeVoss & Rosati, 2002; Jones, 2011; Park, 2003). The curriculum of college courses at US universities, in particular at the graduate level, generally includes several major written assignments, and ESL students are often “overwhelmed by the sheer amount of writing that is required in Western universities” (Stowers & Hummel, 2011, p. 166). In an attempt to handle the workload and achieve satisfactory academic performance, foreign students may resort to patchwriting as a means of saving time and effort while submitting seemingly satisfactory work to their professors. Indeed, Currie (1998) investigates a case of Diana, a native speaker of Cantonese, taking a course in Management and Organizational Behavior at the School of
Business at Carleton University. Diana experienced significant difficulties both with understanding concepts in extensive reading materials required for the class and producing coherent, concise and clear essays. In an attempt to “avoid making mistakes to make them [professors] less angry,” Diana resorted to textual borrowing which progressed in degree from one assignment to the next reaching 75% in the final assignment for the course (Curie, 1998, p. 7). Interestingly, the TA for the class considered Diana “a success story, both conceptually and linguistically” and was not aware of plagiarism in her assignments (Curie, 1998, p. 10).

Similarly, Abasi and Akbari (2008) express a concern that some educational practices, though implemented with the motivation of increasing student awareness of research in their relative discipline and encouraging extensive reading, may result in ESL students resorting to patchwriting due to their inability to critically process such amount of information.

Academic load at a US university may be more challenging for international students due to their developing language skills (Song-Turner, 2008). Song-Turner (2008) polled 68 post-graduate students at an Australian university with 95 percent of research participants being international students. The results showed that the main factors contributing to plagiarism among this population were “language problems and skills deficiencies” (Song-Turner, 2008, p. 49). Instructors need to consider ESL students’ capabilities to process information in English and produce original text in creating the syllabus in an effort to minimize plagiarism and cheating practices.
3. **Generational values of the Millennials.**

The current generation of students is part of the Millennial generation born between 1982 and 2002 (Evering & Moorman, 2012). This generation grew up using technology from cell phones to the Internet and has easy access to unprecedented amount of information (Considine, 2004). Prensky (2005) labeled this generation “digitally native” as opposed to the previous generations called “digitally immigrant” (p. 9). As a result of easy access to electronic sources, the Millennials view plagiarism differently from their instructors (Wood & Warnken, 2004).

4. **Development of technology, easy access to digital sources, development of word processing software, drastic increase in the number of term paper mills and online writing assistance services.**

Both educators and researchers have been voicing their concerns regarding rapid technological developments that make plagiarizing written assignments easier than ever before including easy access to digital texts, a large number of term paper mills and online writing assistance services that have surfaced in the last several decades (Anderson, 1999; Auer & Krupar, 2001; Austin & Brown, 1999; Chao, Wilhelm & Neureuther 2009; Christenbury, 2009; DeVoss & Rosati, 2002; Flowerdew & Li, 2007b; Jones, 2011; Junion-Metz, 2000; Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010; Kutz, Rhodes, Sutherland & Zamel, 2011; Liddell, 2003; Martin, 2005; McLafferty & Foust, 2004; McLester, 2011; Park, 2003; Phillips & Horton, 2000; Ritter, 2005; Ritter, 2006; Royce, 2003; Schiller, 2005; Walker, 2010; Wood & Warnken, 2004).

Various terms are used in literature to describe technology-assisted plagiarism practices including the following:

- cut & paste plagiarism (Correa, 2011)
- cyberplagiarism (Anderson, 1999; Correa, 2011)
• cybercheating (Phillips & Horton, 2000)
• electronic plagiarism (McLafferty & Foust, 2004)
• e-cheating (Schiller, 2005)
• e-plagiarism (Junion-Metz, 2000)
• Internet plagiarism (Austin & Brown, 1999)
• mouse click plagiarism (Auer & Krupar, 2001)
• online plagiarism (DeVoss & Rosati, 2002)

Internet-related plagiarism includes a variety of offences from copying and pasting from a website without giving credit to the source to downloading or purchasing a paper online. The latter deserves a more detailed consideration due to a drastic increase in the number of websites offering such services and student interest in them. Morgan and Vaughn (2010) distinguish two types of online resources providing “help” for writing assignments:

1. **paper mills** (i.e. websites where finished papers are instantly available for free or for a fee; customers can browse a wide selection of papers and download and purchase the ones they need);

2. **online writing assistance services** (i.e. websites offering to write a paper based on your specific assignment; such resources often offer fast delivery, editing services and accept credit cards).

Table 2 provides a brief description of six popular paper mill and writing assistance resources:

- academon.com
- writework.com
- schoolsucks.com
- studymode.com
- planetpapers.com
- wordprom.com

Table 2. Overview of Term Paper Mills and Online Writing Assistance Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web Address</th>
<th>Overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>academon.com</td>
<td>Figure 2. Academon.com Homepage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The website offers 150,000 essays on a wide range of topics with customers having an option to buy or sell their papers. Interestingly, the website also offers resources for improving writing (writing guides on proofreading, writing a business report, a case study, etc.) and a “free automated proofreader and plagiarism checker” (see Figure 3).
The website also offers custom writing services. Customers need to provide information regarding their assignment including number of pages, number of sources, type of project, level of academic writing, general subject, etc. The prices start at $18 for e-mail delivery within 15 days. However, papers can be written within 8-23 hours.

The homepage lists seven reasons why customers should buy papers from academon.com including the claim that papers are “plagiarism-free.”
The website presents itself as a source of “inspiration” with thousands of “topics to get you started.” The homepage contains a quote from Prof. Jacob Leland, PhD (according to the official website of the Tulane University (tulane.edu), Jacob Leland is postdoctoral teaching fellow in the Department of English) delivering “good news”:

“Good news: you can turn to other’s writing for help. WriteWork has over 100,000 sample papers.”

(Retrieved from writework.com)

The homepage also features a quote from Priyal, a university student:

“I have been using this service for over a year and it has definitely helped me in getting my essays done faster and getting a better grade.”

(Retrieved from writework.com)

The website offers three writing guides: on writing book reports, research papers and essays. The guide on writing research papers authored by Professor Shylaja Josyula, University of Toledo, contains a section on plagiarism. In particular, it gives a definition of plagiarism:
“It is the use of other people’s ideas and/or language without acknowledging the original source. Anyone can recognize that turning in another person’s work as one’s own is plagiarism. However, it is not always easy to identify plagiarism. There is misunderstanding of when the line crosses from research to plagiarism. The popular Wilson Mizner’s quote “copy from one, it’s plagiarism; copy from two, it’s research” is a case in point.”


At the top of the page, the website contains a link titled “Worried about plagiarism? Read this.”

Figure 6. Plagiarism Page on Writework.com

By clicking on the tab, users get an explanation of what is and what is not plagiarism. In particular, the website explains that it is not considered plagiarism when you “get ideas from original angles by checking out what’s already been written on the topic,” “refer to research conducted by others and properly cite the sources,” “learn from the structure and stylistic elements of other essays within the same genre or subject matter” and “compare your own work with that of others” (please note the spelling error in “site the sources” instead of “cite the sources”).

(Retrieved from writework.com)
Table 2 (cont.)

A search for “GE Case Study” (which was one of the major assignments in the course curriculum) revealed the following entry:

Figure 7. GE Case Study on Writework.com

The page contains an abstract (brief description) of the essay as well as the name of the user who downloaded the paper, date and grade received for the paper (in this case, the paper was uploaded in October 2012 and received an A-). To download the paper and get access to other papers on the site, users have two payment options: subscribe on a monthly or on a semester basis. The resource claims that the “semester pass” is the “best value” that is “popular with researchers.”
In contrast to the previous two websites, this resource does not attempt to disguise itself as a helpful resource for students, as evidenced from its title. The website presents a collection of resources including book reports and homework assignments. The website’s motto is “Download your Workload.” The homepage features a tab where you can submit a new homework assignment.
The website claims to be “inspiring better grades” and offers essays, AP notes, book notes and a citation generator. The welcome message on the homepage presents the resource as a helpful guide for students:

“Find Your Inspiration Today
StudyMode has enlightened millions of students since 1999. As one of the leading providers of online learning tools, our mission is simple: to inspire better grades. We do that by bringing our growing library of more than 1.5 million student-submitted course notes and research documents right to your computer – so you can study smarter (not harder).”

(Retrieved from studymode.com)
Planetpapers.com presents itself as “the last remaining website for students offering 1000’s of FREE Term Papers, Essays, Book Reports & Research Papers.” A number of papers are available for free but users are required to create an account. A large share of papers requires premium access which involves a fee.

The website contains a plagiarism disclaimer warning users that papers should be used only as “a research aid” (see Figure 11).
Table 2 (cont.)
To identify the efficiency of SafeAssign in detecting papers from online paper mills, three papers were randomly selected from free essays available on planetpapers.com: an essay on importance of avoiding plagiarism, a case study on indigenous Australians and a book report on Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austin. The papers were copied directly from the website in a Microsoft Word document and submitted to SafeAssign through DirectSubmit. All three papers were identified as 100% plagiarized.

Wordprom.com Figure 12. Wordprom.com Homepage

The website presents a searchable collection of admission essays to leading schools including Harvard, MIT, Stanford University, London Business School, etc. The resource seems to have an emphasis on business schools and MBA programs. Essays start at $29.99 with bundle options available. There is also an option to sell your papers.

The website contains a plagiarism disclaimer and informs users that wordprom.com “has agreed to provide access to the database for the use of Turnitin software” (retrieved from http://wordprom.com/no-plagiarism/).
The overview of above websites indicates that online paper mills and writing assistance services are easily available to anyone with access to the Internet. Such resources often present themselves as sources for inspiration, research tools and writing guides. Some paper mills even contain plagiarism disclaimers and claim that their papers are “plagiarism free.” In this regard, it is important for ESL students to know that using such services can constitute a serious academic offense. Paying for a paper written by someone else does not result in acquisition of the right to submit the paper as your own work.
Institutional Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policies

Macdonald and Carroll (2006) advocate the need for a “holistic institutional approach” to plagiarism that would help students acquire skills necessary for plagiarism avoidance through curricular design as well as appropriate procedures and regulations on the institutional level. However, university websites often do not contain clear guidelines of what constitutes plagiarism and, more importantly, how to avoid it. Thus, Yamada (2003) analyzed the websites of 10 North-American colleges regarding their representation of plagiarism and the helpfulness of available resources for ESL students. The study showed that the websites had a shared understanding of plagiarism as the use of other people’s words and ideas. The colleges made an emphasis on using citation styles and proper paraphrase; however, there were no clear guidelines of what constitutes a good paraphrase. In addition, Yamada (2003) argues for the importance of teaching inferential thinking as a strategy for paraphrasing and incorporating sources in your writing, which is not mentioned on university websites.

The University of Illinois Student Code contains regulations on academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism in Part 4 (Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure):

Paragraph 1-402(a):
“Cheating. No student shall use or attempt to use in any academic exercise materials, information, study aids, or electronic data that the student knows or should know is unauthorized.”

Paragraph 1-402(b):
“Plagiarism. No student shall represent the words, work, or ideas of another as his or her own in any academic endeavor.”

According to the University of Illinois Student Code, “plagiarism” includes the following acts:

- copying;
- direct borrowing without quotation marks and citations;
- improper paraphrase without citations;
- borrowed facts or information without citations.

A separate clause (paragraph 1-402I) is dedicated to fabrication of information:

“Fabrication. No student shall falsify or invent any information or citation in an academic endeavor.”


Paragraph 1-404 (Sanctions) establishes consequences of confirmed acts of academic dishonesty and plagiarism which include:

- a written warning;
- educational sanctions (make-up assignments which may be more difficult than the original assignment);
- reduced grade on the assignment;
- failing grade for the assignment;
- reduced grade for the course;
- denial of credit for the proficiency exam;
- failing grade for the course;
- possible suspension or dismissal from the university.

As evident from the above, though the University of Illinois provides a general definition of plagiarism and cheating, it does not include a comprehensive list of behaviors and practices which constitute plagiarism (for instance, submitting the same assignment for two courses), fails to list plagiarism avoidance strategies and seems to be more focused on consequences of academic dishonesty. The helpfulness of these provisions for ESL students could be limited, since even if students understand the importance of plagiarism avoidance, they often lack awareness of citation styles and source incorporation techniques. ESL students would need to use additional resources to discover plagiarism avoidance strategies and information about citation styles.
CHAPTER 2
BUSINESS WRITING AND BUSINESS STUDENTS

Nature of Business Writing

Instructors of business communication classes and researchers comment on the importance of understanding differences between general academic English and business writing (Jameson, 1993; Nienhaus, 2004). Thus, Jameson (1993) lists the following unique features of business writing that are prevalent in the corporate setting:

- varying expectations regarding documentation of sources based on the audience, situation and other factors;
- common practice of collective document creation without giving credit to the originator of ideas (instead, the name of the department and company is indicated as the source of the document);
- less stringent (as compared to academic writing) requirements to documenting sources (however, consequences of reporting incorrect information in business writing may be more severe including financial losses and damage to company’s reputation and credibility);
- standard practice of lower-rank employees creating documents which are then attributed and signed by their superiors (in business, it is not viewed as a case of plagiarism since employees are in fact getting paid for writing memos, letters and reports for higher-ranking executives).

Those features need to be taken into consideration by instructors of business communication classes; however, academic honesty standards and general plagiarism guidelines should be introduced to business students.
Citation Styles in Business Writing

Jameson (1993) defines a documentation style as “the use of textual indicators (internal references, quotation marks, parenthetical citations, footnotes, endnotes and bibliographies) to give credit to the originator of ideas, facts, words, and rhetorical structures that are not the writer’s own” (p. 18). Documenting sources in business writing has significant legal, practical and moral implications, since business memos, reports and other written documents are often used in making corporate decisions, acquiring assets, assuming liabilities and making contractual arrangements. Brien Nienhaus (2004) provides three main reasons to cite sources to students in his business communication class:

1) following legal requirements to credit sources;

2) providing information about sources in case verification of the information presented in writing is required;

3) providing support for your position in case the audience has opposing views.

Business writing does not seem to have a prevalent citation style; instead, a variety of citation formats may be used based on the type of writing, business standards or nature of publication. Thus, Leticia Camacho (2013) polled the editors of 439 business, financial and economic publications in the US based on the Journal Citations Reports (JCR) regarding the citation style that authors intending to publish their work in those journals need to use for their submissions to be accepted. The results revealed a lack of a dominant citation style in business publications. In fact, 62% of surveyed publications insisted on authors using a citation style developed specifically by such publication. Among standard documentation styles, the most prevalent were APA (10%), Harvard (9%) and CMS (7%). MLA as a preferred citation style was not used by any of the publications in question.
Academic Dishonesty among Business Students

Research indicates that business students display higher rates of academic dishonesty and plagiarism as compared to students with other majors (Baird, 1980; McCabe, Butterfield and Treviño, 2006; Klein, Levenburg, McKendall & Mothersell, 2007; Phillips & Horton, 2000). A study done by John Baird in 1980 (34 years ago) revealed a massive extent of cheating among college students: 75% of 200 students admitted to cheating in some forms (23% of all surveyed students were majoring in business). An interesting finding of this study (confirmed by Klein, Levenburg, McKendall and Mothersell in 2007) was that business students were more tolerant towards cheating than students of other majors. The reason given by business students to explain dishonest academic behavior was that they have a massive amount of work, and cheating helps them cope with it (Baird, 1980, p. 519).

More recently, McCabe, Butterfield and Treviño (2006) conducted a large scale study to investigate cheating practices among graduate business students. The results raised educators’ concerns: 56% of graduate students who participated in the survey (which was distributed at 54 colleges and universities in the US and Canada and covered two academic years (2002-2003, 2003-2004)) reported that they committed acts of cheating and other academic dishonesty as compared to 47% of students from other majors. The most common type of dishonesty was cheating on tests by learning what would be on the test from students who previously took it (reported by 23% of graduate business students) (McCabe, Butterfield and Treviño, 2006, p. 299). The most important reason for cheating among graduate business students was “observed peer behavior” (p. 300).

In response to Primetime, a news program on ABC that aired in August 2004 and claimed that business students are more likely to engage in cheating practices than students from other
majors, Klein, Levenburg, McKendall and Mothersell (2007) conducted a survey among 268 students from various majors at a Midwestern public university. An anonymous questionnaire was used to collect basic demographic information and asked respondents to report cheating and plagiarism that they committed. Around 86% of respondents admitted to engaging in cheating and plagiarism practices in college. The researchers did not find that business students reported more plagiarism than students from other colleges; however, they discovered that “business students tend to be more lenient in their definitions of cheating than other professional students” (Klein, Levenburg, McKendall & Mothersell, 2007, p. 203). The three most common types of cheating practices among business students surveyed in the study were copying assignments, working with other students on projects that instructors assigned as individual work and sharing information about previously taken tests (which confirms the findings of the study by McCabe, Butterfield and Treviño in 2006).

John Walker (2010) criticized the self-reporting methodology used by previous studies as unreliable. Walker (2010) as an instructor of an international business class at a New Zealand university recorded instances of plagiarism discovered by him in assignments of 569 students over the period of five years. The students were instructed to write a business plan which they submitted to Turnitin. The instructor returned the drafts with detailed feedback including comments on any instances of plagiarism. Walker (2010) assumed a three-fold classification of plagiarism: “sham” paraphrasing (i.e. citing a source but presenting a quote as a paraphrase); “verbatim” copying (i.e. word-for-word copying from a source) and “purloining” (submitting other students’ writing as your own work) (p. 46). The results showed that about 25% of all analyzed assignments contained some instances of plagiarism. International students displayed a higher rate of plagiarism than domestic students and were engaging in extensive plagiarism and
verbatim copying. Interestingly, Walker (2010) created a profile of a student who is most likely to plagiarize: “... either male or female, an international student, studying internally, aged 21-30, and possibly in the fourth year of enrolment at university” (p. 53). On the other hand, a student who would be the least likely plagiarizer is a male or female domestic student who is 41 years of age or older and is in his/her first year of school. Walker (2010) discovered that sham plagiarism was more frequent in the first assignment; however, in the second assignment verbatim copying almost doubled. He hypothesized that it resulted from the instructor making comments on improper paraphrasing in the first paper, and students simply adding a source citation to the plagiarized material without making any other changes. Contrary to a number of other studies, this research did not reveal conclusive evidence that Turnitin was “a comprehensive deterrent to student plagiarism” (Walker, 2010, p. 55). Even being aware of Turnitin functionality and capacities, about a third of students exhibited instances of plagiarism in their first assignment.

The research indicates that academic honesty and plagiarism avoidance strategies should receive increased attention in a business communication class. Business students feel overwhelmed by their academic load, peer pressure and desire to succeed. The temptation to cheat may be even higher for international business students, who face additional challenges of cultural differences and insufficient English skills.
CHAPTER 3

PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOLS

Electronic plagiarism detection tools emerged in the last two decades in response to an epidemic of e-cheating or cyberplagiarism and a drastic increase in the number of online paper mills, giving instructors, educators, editors and publishers a more efficient and effective way to detect plagiarism (Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010). In the words of James Purdy (2005), “if plagiarism is easier to commit because of the Internet, it is also easier to catch because of the Internet” (p. 276). McLafferty and Foust (2004) distinguish three primary ways of electronic plagiarism checks: search engines (Google, Yahoo), software that detects similarities between papers entered in a database (Wcopyfind, Glatt) and web-based plagiarism software (Turnitin, SafeAssign, EVE2 Essay Verification Engine). The fourth category of technological tools available for combating plagiarism is a variety of online plagiarism checkers that check text, websites and other materials for matching sections (copyscape.com, plagium.com, contentplagiarismchecker.com, grammarly.com).

Search Engines as a Plagiarism Detection Tool

Prior to the emergence of specialized plagiarism detection software, educators often resorted to search engines (in particular, Google) to find plagiarism in their students’ papers. Indeed, google.com is a free and relatively effective tool for detecting matching phrases and sentences in writing. McCullough and Holmberg (2005) tested the effectiveness and efficiency of Google for detecting plagiarism in master’s theses. By “effectiveness” the researchers understood Google’s ability to find matching sources including those that are not freely available or require a subscription; “efficiency” is interpreted as the time restraints for finding matches – the researchers limited the search time to 10 minutes per paper. McCullough and Holmberg
(2005) selected 260 master’s theses from various disciplines available at the OCLC Worldcat database. They then searched Google for certain phrases from the papers allowing only 10 minutes for reviewing each paper. As a result, potential cases of plagiarism were detected in 57 papers accounting for 27.14% of all analyzed papers. The Google search identified “word-for-word matches for scholarly articles, abstracts from scholarly articles, non-profit agency websites, corporate websites, scholarly conference proceedings, personal homepages, government publications, online glossaries and encyclopedias, and course pages from universities” (McCullough & Holmberg, 2005, p. 440). Therefore, the authors concluded that Google can be used effectively and efficiently for identifying potential instances of plagiarism in master’s theses; though, checking every sentence or phrase in a paper would be time-consuming and inefficient. Similarly, Purdy (2005) compared the effectiveness of Google as a plagiarism detection tool against two fee-based services (EduTie and EVE2) and concluded that Google “performed on par with these fee-based services,” recommending educational establishments against purchasing access to subscription-based plagiarism tools (p. 282). However, using search engines, in particular, Google, is “tedious and labor intensive,” as each suspected phrase or sentence needs to be copied and pasted into the search engine (Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010, p. 136).

**Software for Identifying Matching Text**

The second type of technology for plagiarism detection identified by McLafferty and Foust (2004) is software needs installation on a specific computer and searches for matching text in a limited number of sources. One example of such software is Wcopyfind that can be found at http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/z-wordpress/software/. According to the resource,
Wcopyfind looks for similarities in a collection of files and generates reports if any matching text is found.

The interface of Wcopyfind is shown below:

Figure 13. Interface of Wcopyfind

The interface does not look user-friendly and may require some training; however, this type of software may be helpful in detecting student-to-student plagiarism.
Online Plagiarism Checkers

The last several decades have seen a tremendous increase in the number of online resources that offer plagiarism checks. Below is an overview of several resources available to users of the World Wide Web:

- **Copyscape.com**

Figure 14. Copyscape.com Homepage

Copyscape is a resource that can be used by owners of webpages to see if their content has been used by other online resources. Search is done simply by entering the online address of your webpage.
- Plagium.com

Figure 15. Plagium.com Homepage

Plagium.com offers free plagiarism-checking services. The text up to 24,791 characters can be typed or pasted online and checks for matching text.

- Contentplagiarismchecker.com

Figure 16. Interface of Contentplagiarismchecker.com
The website offers plagiarism checks for a fee. Files can be uploaded or text can be copied and pasted online. A sample report is shown below:

Figure 17. Sample Originality Report by Contentplagiarismchecker.com

- Grammarly.com

Figure 18. Grammarly.com Homepage

In addition to plagiarism checks, Grammarly.com offers grammar and error checks with explanations.
Web-Based Plagiarism Detection Software: Turnitin and SafeAssign

Plagiarism detection software emerged in response to changes that occurred on the plagiarism “battleground” in the last several decades including abundance of term paper mills, easy access to digital texts and dramatic growth of copy-and-paste plagiarism (Heather, 2010). Several systems are available to instructors and students for plagiarism checks including Turnitin by iParadigms and SafeAssign by Blackboard, which will be considered here in more detail.

Turnitin

Turnitin, arguably the most popular plagiarism detection software currently available on the market, was developed by iParadigms and first launched in 2007 (Heckler, 2013). According to Turnitin.com as of the start of 2014, over 1.6 million instructors at 10,000 institutions in 135 countries use Turnitin to collect and evaluate students’ assignments. According to the company, every minute three new users join the service, and institutions using Turnitin for collecting student assignments have been reporting a significant reduction in plagiarism rates (Royce, 2003).

The software was originally developed by four UC Berkley graduate students including John Barrie as a peer review tool (Read, 2008). Teaching a large class and realizing the limited time he had for giving detailed feedback on a 10-page research paper, Barrie provided his students with an opportunity to review each other’s work online. The response was unexpected: students flocked to Barrie’s office to report plagiarism in their peers’ work. Since then, Turnitin added a variety of features including peer review and online grading and gained worldwide popularity.

Turnitin.com (2014) claims that all papers submitted to the system are compared against three main sources: over 40 billion current and archived webpages, a database of 300 million
student papers previously submitted for plagiarism check to the Turnitin database and extensive databases of Turnitin’s partners that include textbook publishers, reference collections and libraries.

**SafeAssign**

SafeAssign was developed by Blackboard as a part of a course management system and is currently available to University of Illinois instructors and students within Illinois Compass2g (compass2g.illinois.edu). Similarly to Turnitin.com, SafeAssign compares papers against a variety of sources and generates originality reports with percentage of matches. As distinct from Turnitin, users have no control over settings of plagiarism checks.

According to the Blackboard Learn SafeAssign Student Guide, SafeAssign uses the following sources for plagiarism checks:

- Internet
- ProQuest ABI/Inform database (with 1,100 titles and 2.6 million articles)
- Institutional document archives (all papers submitted by users at a certain institution)
- Global Reference Database (papers voluntarily added to the database for preventing cross-institutional plagiarism).
When submitting an assignment, students see the following screen that includes a legal disclosure and an option to add their paper to the global reference database:

Figure 19. SafeAssign Student Submission Page
Upon collection of assignments, the instructor sees a summary page with all submissions including total percentage of matches for all submissions:

Figure 20. Instructor’s SafeAssign Summary Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Test File</th>
<th>Matching</th>
<th>SA Report</th>
<th>Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mon, Nov 25, 2011, 01:15 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2012, 02:43 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2013, 05:51 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2013, 01:46 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sat, Nov 30, 2013, 10:14 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wed, Nov 27, 2013, 01:50 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2013, 08:46 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2013, 11:06 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2012, 07:04 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sat, Nov 23, 2013, 03:35 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fri, Dec 13, 2013, 12:32 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demo User</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sat, Nov 23, 2013, 02:21 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, Nov 24, 2011, 11:37 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SafeAssign generates originality reports for each paper that indicate the total percentage of matching content and links to matching sources. Instructors have the option to make the report available to students or keep it hidden. A sample report is shown below:

Figure 21. SafeAssign Originality Report
By clicking on each match, instructors can view the percentage of each match and compare the uploaded manuscript to a matching source:

Figure 22. Matching Fragments in a SafeAssign Report

The Blackboard Learn SafeAssign Student Guide explains that the percentage indicates the “probability that two phrases have the same meaning,” but “can also be interpreted as the reciprocal to the probability that these two phrases are similar by chance” (p. 5). Instructors are offered general guidelines regarding potential plagiarism based on the total percentage of matches in a paper:

- If a paper scores below 15 percent, it is likely to be original and may include quotes and standard phrases.
- If a paper scores between 15 and 40 percent, it may include multiple quotes, poor paraphrases or plagiarism. Instructors are recommended to manually review the paper.
- If a paper scores over 40 percent, it is highly likely that it is plagiarized.
Effectiveness of Plagiarism Detection Software

Relatively few independent studies have been done to gauge and compare the effectiveness of plagiarism detection software in identifying and preventing plagiarism, in particular, among second-language writers. The research on plagiarism detection tools can be broadly classified into two groups:

1. studies comparing plagiarism rates between two groups of students when one of the groups submits their assignments to the instructor using a plagiarism detection system, and the other – by e-mail or a different way without being aware of plagiarism checks (Braumoeller & Gaines, 2001; Heckler, 2013; Martin, 2005; Stapleton, 2012).

2. studies comparing the efficiency of several plagiarism detection tools (Hill & Page, 2009; Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010).

An overwhelming majority of studies in the first group reveal that the use of a plagiarism detection tool indeed reduces the rate of student plagiarism. Bear Braumoeller and Brian Gaines (2001) investigated whether warnings against plagiarism and the open use of plagiarism detection software would have an effect on plagiarism rates among students. Student submissions were analyzed by a fee-based program known as Essay Verification Engine (EVE) available at www.canexus.com. The main findings of the study were that warnings against plagiarism proved to have a “negligible effect, at best”; however, the open use of plagiarism detection software had an “impressive” impact on deterring plagiarism (Braumoeller & Gaines, 2001, p. 836). The researchers made cautious conclusions that plagiarism detection platforms are “useful”; however, their reports are not “definitive” and require additional investigation (Braumoeller & Gaines, 2001, p. 836).
Paul Stapleton (2012) conducted a study at a Hong Kong tertiary institute to answer the question of whether awareness of the fact that written assignments would be checked by Turnitin for plagiarism would prevent students from plagiarizing. Stapleton (2012) also intended to investigate how matches identified by Turnitin represented actual cases of plagiarism. The research was done with two graduate classes with 22 students in each taking the course in Written and Spoken Discourse. Both classes received warning against plagiarism; however, one of the classes submitted their written assignments via e-mail and was not aware of plagiarism checks, while the other received a tutorial on using Turnitin and submitted their assignments through this service. The results indicated that students using Turnitin indeed had lower percentages of plagiarism in their papers than the other class; however, the study revealed that instructors need to carefully examine Turnitin originality reports instead of relying on the total percentage of matches found in papers. In the papers of the class that used Turnitin for submitting assignments, “almost all of the matching text was in fact non-intentional plagiarism” (Stapleton, 2012, p. 131).

Nina Heckler (2013) researched the effectiveness of Turnitin as plagiarism “deterrent” used in the Introduction to Sociology class at a southern university. In the fall 2010 semester, students were not aware that their papers would be examined for plagiarism by a detection system (360 students); while in the spring 2011, students submitted their written assignments through Turnitin (304 students). The results showed that the use of Turnitin was indeed an effective tool for plagiarism prevention: in the fall 2010 semester, the mean rate of matching text according to Turnitin originality reports was 16.33%, while in the spring semester when students were aware of the plagiarism detection software the rate dropped to 9.76%. In both instances, the largest source of plagiarism was other students’ papers followed by the Internet and publications.
Heckler (2013) also discovered that males tend to have more matches in their writing than females. Therefore, this study echoed the findings of previous similar studies emphasizing the fact that “telling students that plagiarism will be monitored is also a cognitive and value-setting approach” (Heckler, 2013, p. 244).

The second group of studies compared two or more plagiarism detection technologies, and the results of this research are mixed. Thus, Jacob Hill and Elaine Page (2009) from A.C. Buehler Library at Elmhurst College compared the efficiency of SafeAssign and Turnitin by analyzing twenty documents in various subject areas written by graduate and undergraduate students. The authors of the papers verified that their writing was original, which was an important factor for the study. The researchers divided the papers in four groups: the first group represented original papers; additional plagiarized material was added to the papers in the next three groups (from web pages, free and proprietary databases). Therefore, the papers submitted to Turnitin and SafeAssign for plagiarism checks contained 85 percent of original material and 15 percent of plagiarized content. The results indicated that although both systems did not have a perfect plagiarism detection rate, Turnitin “had a higher detection rate overall by a significant margin and also had the higher detection rate by plagiarized-source category” (Hill & Page, 2009, p. 175). In addition, Turnitin outperformed SafeAssign in false detection, potentially due to an option of excluding quoted material from plagiarism checks, which is unavailable with SafeAssign. The researchers conclude that Turnitin is a more effective plagiarism detection tool but caution against looking exclusively at percentages of originality reports as both platforms flagged materials that were properly quoted, cited and referenced.

Kakkonen and Mozgovoy (2010) evaluated the efficiency of eight plagiarism detection systems: three of the systems were “hermetic,” i.e. platforms capable of searching for matching
text in papers entered in a database (Wcopyfind, Sherlock, AntiPlagiarist); three systems were web-based plagiarism detection services (SeeSources.com, EVE2, Plagiarism-Finder), and the remaining two combined the functionality of hermetic and web-based platforms (SafeAssign and Turnitin). The researchers investigated the effectiveness of the systems in detecting verbatim copying, inappropriate paraphrase and technical tricks used to prevent plagiarism detection (e.g. inserting non-Latin letters or scanned text). The results indicated that SafeAssign had “the best all-around performance” with its weakest feature being the ability to identify plagiarism in papers obtained from a paper mill; Turnitin worked “reasonably well,” and EVE2 and Plagiarism-Finder showed “catastrophic” results being unable to detect any instances of plagiarism (Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010, p. 155). The type of plagiarism that presented the biggest challenge for all plagiarism detection services was inappropriate paraphrase and use of synonyms.

The above research indicates that plagiarism detection software can indeed be a powerful tool for curbing plagiarism. The awareness that their assignments will be checked for plagiarism prevents many students from plagiarizing. However, the effectiveness of plagiarism detection software has not reached a stage in its development when originality reports can be a reliable predictor of student plagiarism. Different platforms and services seem to have their strengths and weaknesses, with no software producing excellent results in detecting all types of plagiarism.
Criticism of Plagiarism Detection Software

Plagiarism detection software has generated controversial reactions among students, educators, researchers and legal rights activists. A number of criticisms of the use of plagiarism detection tools have been voiced in recent years, which can be broadly classified into the following major categories:

1. Concerns regarding intellectual property rights (Carbone, 2001; Purdy, 2005; Purdy, 2009; Read, 2008).

The largest players in the plagiarism detection market (Turnitin, SafeAssign) add any papers submitted to the service to their database for future searches. In addition, if matches are detected with such papers, their full text can be retrieved by instructors using the service or provided to professors upon request. This has raised concerns over intellectual property rights of students submitting their papers using plagiarism detection platforms. Read (2008) cites a case of two students from McLean High School in Virginia who filed a suit against iParadigms, the owner of Turnitin, asking for $900,000 as a compensation for the papers they had to submit to the service against their will. The case was dismissed; however, it raised important issues regarding student rights and database regulations.

2. Punitive function of plagiarism detection software violating trust between students and instructors and turning teachers into “plagiarism police” (Carbone, 2001; Morgan & Vaughn, 2010; Parry, 2011; Purdy, 2005).

James Purdy (2005) indicates that the use of plagiarism detection software is reminiscent of “hunt for prey,” in which the student is “a wily and cunning trickster,” and the teacher is a “hunter out for the kill” (p. 277). Indeed, instructors using plagiarism detection tools may find
themselves spending more time “policing their students instead of teaching them” (Read, 2008, para. 7).

3. **Inability of plagiarism detection systems to identify certain types of plagiarism** (Correa, 2011; Heather, 2010; Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010).

Certain types of plagiarism are not identified by plagiarism detection software due to its nature including inappropriate paraphrase, text created by ghost writers and artistic plagiarism (Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010). In addition, in a second language classroom, students could obtain papers in their first language from online or print sources, translate them into English and submit as their original work. This type of plagiarism is likely to be left undetected by existing plagiarism detection software (Correa, 2011).

Specific actions can also be taken to “trick” plagiarism detection software into not being able to identify plagiarized materials. Such tricks range from simple ones such as insertion of white font characters that are invisible to the eye but read by plagiarism checkers (Kakkonen & Mozgovoy, 2010) to more advanced ones such as modifying the character map, rearranging glyphs in the font and converting text to Bezier curves (Heather, 2010).

Among other criticism of plagiarism detection tools are potential connection between plagiarism detection services and online paper mills (Purdy, 2005), inconsistency and unreliability of originality reports generated by the systems (Purdy, 2005; Royce, 2003).
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

General Description and Background of Research Participants

The research was conducted in two ESL graduate classes at a large Midwestern university. Both classes were comprised of MSTM (Master of Science in Technology Management) students who were placed in the ESL class based on their TOEFL scores and an internally administered English Placement Test. The two ESL classes were taught by two instructors who followed the same curriculum and met weekly to discuss the students’ progress and curriculum changes. In total, 23 students participated in the research (11 students in one section, and 12 – in the other).

The language background of research participants is presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Language Background of Research Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L1</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All research participants spent a considerable amount of time learning English both in EFL and ESL contexts. The majority of students spent between 10 and 20 years studying English (see Table 4).

Table 4. English Learning Experience of Research Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Learning English</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 10 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-20 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 25 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perception of Plagiarism by Research Participants at the Start of Semester

A survey (see Appendix A) was administered at the start of semester with the purpose of collecting students’ background information including their understanding of plagiarism and prior exposure to writing with sources and using a documentation style. Despite a wide range of language backgrounds and an extended period of exposure to learning English, a vast majority of research participants demonstrated similar and fairly basic understanding of plagiarism; however, there seemed to be a consensus that plagiarism is a “bad thing.” Table 5 shows the definitions of plagiarism provided by students:

Table 5. Students’ Definitions of Plagiarism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ine one or two sentences, please describe how you understand “plagiarism.”</td>
<td>Illegal form of copying others work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No copying sentences or ideas from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bad thing!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism is an act of copying from someone else, it could be copying text from them or even just the idea without getting consent from them and/or giving them the proper credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>you just copy the paragraph even the sentence in your work without informing the original author.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Every student needs to do their article by themself. Don’t allow to copy from other people including picture and sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism is the act that copy other copyright document, music, video... without permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism is copying other people’s idea, whole sentence, or adaptation some words without citing the reference or source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism is that you use someone’s ideas, works or written papers, but claim it as your own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It means that we use other’s opinion or arguments without no showing the sources of these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I first met the word in the academic integrity workshop. In my opinion, it means duplicating other’s writings or articles without marking the original source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism is the most important basic rule which all students should keep in education. All students express their own idea in their research or assignments, and they do not duplicate other’s creature without citation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To copy someone’s concepts, written materials and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It means that you take any information and do not mention the source. Stealing others’ efforts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ine one or two sentences, please describe how you understand “plagiarism.”</td>
<td>Plagiarism is something related to mal practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directly using or paraphrasing another author’s article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To copy, to cheat, use others material and make them as yours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Copy others idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>That is a crime but just referencing is ok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Copy somebody else’s work. I think it’s more like stealing wisdom from others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Google some pieces of information, and paste it on your own essay or something like that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steal other people ideas or contents without any declares where is the original ideas come from.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from the above table, most responses recognize plagiarism as an “act” or “form of copying,” including copying “others work,” “sentences,” “text,” “ideas or contents,” “some pieces of information,” “concepts” or “written materials.” Several definitions emphasize the importance of **proper citations** and giving credit to the sources:

> “It means that we use other’s opinion or arguments without no showing the sources of these.”

> “Plagiarism is copying other people’s idea, whole sentence, or adaptation some words without citing the reference or source.”

> “you just copy the paragraph even the sentence in your work without informing the original author.”

A number of definitions seem to define plagiarism in **legal terms** using the words “illegal,” “steal,” “crime,” “cheat” and “mal practice”:

> “Stealing others’ efforts.”

> “Plagiarism is something related to mal practice.”

> “Copy others idea

> That is a crime but just referencing is ok.”
Interestingly, only one definition explicitly focuses on plagiarizing from **online sources** found with a search engine: “*Google some pieces of information, and paste it on your own essay or something like that.*”

Therefore, at the start of semester, the students demonstrated general awareness of plagiarism as **an act of copying without giving proper credit to the sources**. The responses indicate that the research participants viewed plagiarism as a negative phenomenon and seemed to disapprove of it. **None of the definitions given by the students claimed that plagiarism is an acceptable practice.**
Students’ Awareness of Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies at the Start of Semester

At the start of semester, prior to any instruction on plagiarism and plagiarism-avoidance strategies, students were asked to share what ways of avoiding plagiarism they knew. Student responses are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Students’ Awareness of Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What are some ways/strategies for avoiding plagiarism in writing? | Using a public system.  
Do not look at other’s work.  
Do not use internet  
Using your own words and using the citation  
don’t do that  
best way is to ensure that while writing you have no access to other person’s text and make a conscious efforts to ensure that your ideas and written texts are unique.  
Paraphrase the idea you cite into your words  
write your article by yourself  
just write it in oneself.  
Citation, mark quote, paraphrase  
Try to focus on your own works.  
To avoid plagiarism in writing, we should use certains ways for citation such as quotation, paraphrasing and summarise.  
Paraphrasing by reorganizing the original ideas and interpreting them in your own words.  
I think that the best way for avoiding plagiarism is students should make brainstorming with their own idea first without any searching.  
To announce that all the material are checked by each others.  
Reading a lot about the giving subject then trying to develop any previous ideas with my own creative opinions. (imagination)  
I don’t know much about it  
Using citation and quotation.  
Know how to quote properly, paraphrase but detailing from where you got that information, be aware of citation rules  
Think myself with my own thought  
Do my best on every subject and work, trying to write something annually.  
Be a creative writer  
Synthesize the ideas, expression or contents to become your own contents and always present owner’s name of original work. |
Although the students seemed to share a general understanding of plagiarism as a negative practice that needs to be avoided, their ideas of how to accomplish this vary significantly and indicate little exposure to working with sources in academic writing. Only two responses mention all three academic strategies for incorporating sources in writing (paraphrasing, summarizing and quotations):

“To avoid plagiarism in writing, we should use certains ways for citation such as quotation, paraphrasing and summarise.”

citation, mark quote, paraphrase.”

A number of respondents indicated that the way to avoid plagiarism is to use only your own ideas, even use creativity and imagination:

“Be a creative writer.”

“Think myself with my own thought.”

“Reading a lot about the giving subject then trying to develop any previous ideas with my own creative opinions. (imagination).”

“I think that the best way for avoiding plagiarism is students should make brainstorming with their own idea first without any searching.”

“Using a public system.

Do not look at other’s work.

Do not use internet.”

A number of responses mention the importance of citations as a plagiarism avoidance strategy:

“Know how to quote properly, paraphrase but detailing from where you got that information, be aware of citation rules.”
“Using your own words and using the citation.”

Finally, one of the respondents admitted that s/he did not have sufficient information about the topic, while another student simply stated the importance of avoiding plagiarism: “don’t do that!”

Only 5 participants indicated that they were aware of a documentation style (APA, MLA), and 7 respondents wrote an academic paper that required incorporation of sources in their experience prior to the ESL class in question.

Overall, the students showed basic awareness of plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty that includes “copying” other people’s ideas and words without giving credit to the source. They branded plagiarism as a “crime” and an act of “cheating” and “stealing.” Despite recognizing the fact that plagiarism needs to be avoided, the research participants had little expertise in strategies of working with sources in academic writing. Only few responses mention summarizing, paraphrasing and quotations as ways of incorporating sources, while most participants indicated that plagiarism can be mostly avoided by using your own ideas, thinking creatively, using imagination and brainstorming.
Course Curriculum: Course Goals and Objectives

The International Business Communication is a one-semester four-skill course with emphasis on writing designed for international business students (MBA, MSA, MSBA and MSTM programs). The course offers 4 contact hours and 0 credit hours. Students who scored under 103 (79 to 102 range) on the TOEFL are required to take an internally administered English Placement Test (EPT). The EPT consists of two sections: a writing assignment and an oral interview that are scored separately. Based on their performance on the EPT essay, students are either required to take an ESL writing class or are exempt from it.

The course has the following objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the 7 Cs of effective business writing (complete, clear, concrete, correct, concise, courteous, character).

2. Write a reader-centered business memo that incorporates the 7 Cs principles as well as the “you-attitude.”

3. Demonstrate awareness of audience and purpose in their writing and speaking through their choice of language, tone, organization (direct vs. indirect approach), and medium of communication.


5. Use appropriate evaluative language and reporting verbs in a summary-critique.


7. Integrate sources in their written and oral assignments without plagiarism (by paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting).

9. List characteristics of successful oral presentation in terms of the 3 Ps (preparation, practice, and presentation).

10. Deliver an oral presentation on a business communication topic of their choice with clear and engaging visual aids, speech, and body language.

11. Give constructive feedback to peers on their writing and speaking.

12. Demonstrate awareness of potential problems in cross-cultural communication.

13. Demonstrate an understanding of effective job search communication skills (e.g. skills involved in writing successful cover letters, resumes, job interviews).

14. Write a business case analysis with a clear problem statement, justification, recommendations and action plans.

15. Search library databases to locate sources that are relevant to a business research topic.

(Retrieved from the course blog at http://esl505ta.blogspot.com/?zx=e467040a773bedc6 on March 2, 2014)
Syllabus Overview and Coverage of Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies and Documentation Styles

The class met twice a week for 80 minutes during fall 2013 semester. The focus on the course is on development of written and oral communication skills for business students (please see Appendix C for the daily syllabus and Appendix D for the first day handout). In the fall 2013 semester, the course included four major assignments that students submitted to SafeAssign (research participants had no access to SafeAssign plagiarism reports):

1. Unit 1: Diagnostic Memo Revision

Figure 23. Sample Memo

Companies have evolved by adopting technology regardless of the industry, as a result almost every task an employee performs relies on it. The IT Department is in charge of managing and providing the above-mentioned, carrying within a great responsibility, because the productivity of the employees is directly related to the availability of technology among the organization.

Being dependent on a key element can be very risky for the company, if there is not a proper plan to be executed in the case of an emergency. Please try to imagine our company working without any of the following services due to a technological disaster:

* Calendar, Contacts, Email.
* Business Software (ERP, CRM, Office Suite).
* Internet, Storage, Data.

To overcome the chaos that could generate a lack of such services, the Safety Department has developed a plan to overcome these issues. The principal actions among this proposal are:

* IT staff will conduct meetings with each department representatives, to understand the critical technology services related to their work, so they can provide an alternative solution.
* Non-IT staff will be trained with the necessary knowledge and tools, for accessing the principal services, so the IT staff can dedicate entirely to fix the main problem.
* Drills will be held to prepare both the IT and non-IT staff in case of an emergency.

With that being said, we request your support regarding the Technology Disaster Preparedness Training Plan, by letting our department execute it, and making it mandatory for all employees.

Regards,

Safety Manager of Illini Corp

On the second day of class, students write a diagnostic memo. This assignment is not graded but is used by instructors as a starting point for a general assessment of students’ writing skills. After covering a variety of business writing strategies in class (memo writing basics, types of memos, audience and purpose in writing, reader-centered writing and conciseness), students were asked to revise their original memo and write a second memo with a different purpose and audience. Students were expected to apply the skills they acquired in class during the first unit to
their first graded assignment. In this unit, students did not discuss plagiarism and were not introduced to citation styles or plagiarism avoidance strategies.

2. Unit 2: Oral Presentation

Figure 24. Sample Page from a Presentation

Voice Mail Etiquette

Index
- Effective Detailing of Outgoing Messages.
- When to Check and How to Check Voicemail.
- Leaving Effective Voicemails.
- When should we not leave a voice mail

This unit is designed to improve students’ oral presentation skills essential in the business world. The topics covered in class included presentation outlining, creation of visual aids and presentation delivery skills. The students selected a business-related topic (e.g. job interviews, effective resumes, Skype interviews) for their presentation from a list suggested by the instructor and delivered a presentation in class. The assignment also included a dress rehearsal, a post-presentation conference with the instructor and a written reflection on the topic. No assignments were collected through SafeAssign for this unit.
In this unit, students produced two written assignments based on the same case: “General Electric: Major Appliance Business Group (Abridged)” from The Study Case Handbook: How to Read, Discuss, and Write Persuasively about Cases (pp. 197 – 213) by W. Ellet. The students first wrote a summary of the case and then evaluated five modifications suggested in the case. In this unit, we discussed summarizing techniques as well as critical thinking strategies.
4. Unit 4: Red Lobster Case Essay

The final assignment in the course was a case study based on the Red Lobster case from Harvard Business School. The students were asked to propose a solution for the Red Lobster restaurant chain based on the current circumstances and management decisions described in the case study.

Throughout the semester, the course covered the basics of plagiarism identification and avoidance including the following topics:

- definition of plagiarism: what acts and practices constitute plagiarism;
- plagiarism avoidance strategies: summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting;
- citation styles: why and how;
- APA style: in-text citations, references and general formatting requirements.

The students were expected to implement plagiarism avoidance skills in written assignments throughout the semester with the final assignment following all conventions of APA style and containing no instances of plagiarism.
CHAPTER 5
TYPES AND FREQUENCY OF PLAGIARISM IN STUDENT WRITING: SAFEASSIGN VS. MANUAL PLAGIARISM CHECKS

Data Collection

All major written assignments created by 23 research participants during one semester (fall 2013) for the ESL business communication class were collected for this research. The assignments included a memo, a summary of a case, a critical evaluation of a case and a case study. Only final drafts of student papers were analyzed, and grades or feedback given by the instructors were not taken into consideration. During the semester, students submitted their written assignments to SafeAssign, but only the instructors were able to see originality reports. Students did not have access to the information regarding the percentages of matching text in their essays.

Upon collection, all assignments were repeatedly submitted to SafeAssign through Direct Submit, a function allowing instructors to generate originality reports without adding papers to the institutional database. The sources provided to the students for each assignment were added to the SafeAssign database to ensure that student papers were checked against the sources in addition to the regular SafeAssign database.

All student papers were also manually analyzed for plagiarism. Each paper was closely examined by the researchers and compared to the sources provided to the students for completing the assignment. Any student’s text that raised concerns regarding plagiarism (such cases were generally detected due to inconsistency of such text with the learner’s interlanguage, use of the same words/phrases by different students, absence of grammar errors in a portion of an essay while the rest of the paper contained numerous grammar problems) was checked against the
source/sources for the assignment to detect any matching text. If verbatim borrowing or inappropria
te paraphrase was detected, the case was classified accordingly. In the manual analysis, student papers were not compared against each other to identify any student-to-student borrowing.

Finally, SafeAssign originality reports were compared to the manual analysis. All instances of plagiarism identified by SafeAssign and in manual checks were classified by type and counted. Conclusions were made regarding frequency, type and nature of plagiarism detected by SafeAssign and manual checks.

Types of plagiarism detected by SafeAssign were classified into the following categories:

- Matches with other students’ papers;
- Matching text in the References section of the paper;
- Text in the “to” and “from” lines of business communication messages;
- Verbatim copying from a source;
- Signal phrases (which may include names of authors and titles of the sources used by students);
- Formulaic expressions (e.g. “please, contact me if you have any questions,” “I’m looking forward to hearing from you”);
- Title of the paper;
- Date/time;
- Correctly quoted material (any text that was correctly quoted and cited by the student but flagged by SafeAssign as matching text);
- Text in the subject line of business communication messages.
Manual plagiarism checks focused on detecting *verbatim copying from sources* and *inappropriate paraphrase*. 
Instances of Plagiarism in Student Writing

The tables below contain the statistics for instances of plagiarism detected by SafeAssign and manual plagiarism checks in four major assignments:

1. Diagnostic Memo Revision

In the first assignment written by the students for the class, SafeAssign detected 71 cases of plagiarism including 12 cases of verbatim copying from a source and 14 matches with other students’ papers (see Table 7). The cases of false positive detection were classified into four categories:

- Text in the “to” and “from” lines of the memo (23 cases);
- Formulaic expressions (e.g. “please, feel free to contact me”) (15 cases);
- Dates/time (3 cases).

Table 7. Instances of Potential Plagiarism Detected by SafeAssign in the Diagnostic Memo Revision Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbatim Copying from a Source</th>
<th>Matches with other students’ papers</th>
<th>Text in the “to” and “from” Lines of the Memo</th>
<th>Text in the Subject Line of the Memo</th>
<th>Formulaic expressions (e.g. please contact me, etc.)</th>
<th>Dates/time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Manual plagiarism checks performed by a close examination of student papers and their comparison to the original source provided to the students for completing the assignment identified additional 42 cases of plagiarism (see Table 8). In addition to 12 cases of verbatim borrowing detected by SafeAssign, 23 more cases were identified when students borrowed from the source without using quotation marks. The length of borrowings ranged from 4 to 20 words. The student papers also contained 19 cases of inappropriate paraphrase which were not detected by SafeAssign.

Table 8. Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually in the Diagnostic Memo Revision Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbatim Borrowing from a Source (4-20 words)</th>
<th>Inappropriate Paraphrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. GE Case Summary

In the second assignment, SafeAssign identified a total of 86 cases of potential plagiarism (see Table 9). The largest category was matching text found between students’ papers (40 cases), followed by matches in the references section (32 cases), signal phrases (12 cases) and title of the paper (2 cases). The large number of matches between student papers may be the result of a relatively short length of the assignment and a detailed outline that students received for completing the assignment. Since all students were summarizing the same article using the same prompt, some of their sentences could have had matching fragments.

Table 9. Instances of Potential Plagiarism Detected by SafeAssign in GE Case Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instances of Potential Plagiarism Detected by SafeAssign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbatim Borrowing from a Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the cases detected by SafeAssign, manual plagiarism checks revealed 18 cases of verbatim copying from the source ranging from 4 to 12 words and 10 cases of inappropriate paraphrase (see Table 10).

Table 10. Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually in GE Case Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually (in addition to the cases identified by SafeAssign)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbatim Borrowing from a Source (4-12 words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Critical Evaluation of GE Case

In the third assignment, SafeAssign detected a total of 144 cases of potential plagiarism (see Table 11). The largest group of matching text was matches with other students’ papers (69 cases), followed by verbatim copying from the case study (11 cases). The cases of false positive detection were classified into the following groups:

- References (25 cases);
- Title of the paper (14 cases);
- Text in the “to” and “from” lines of the memo (9 cases);
- Dates (6 cases);
- Appropriately quoted material (5 cases);
- Signal phrases (3 cases);
- Formulaic language (2 cases).

Table 11. Instances of Potential Plagiarism Detected by SafeAssign in the Critical Evaluation of GE Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbatim Borrowing from a Source</th>
<th>Correctly quoted material</th>
<th>Matches with other students’ papers</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Signal phrases</th>
<th>Title of the paper</th>
<th>Text in the “to” and “from” Lines of the Memo</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Formulaic language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A close examination of the papers and their comparison with the source identified additional 32 cases of plagiarism (see Table 12). The students continued the practice of verbatim borrowing from the source without quotation marks copying strings of words ranging from 4 to 20 words (14 cases). The papers contained 17 cases of inappropriate paraphrase undetected by SafeAssign. One essay contained four sentences borrowed verbatim from the assignment prompt provided by the instructors to the students for completing the assignment.

Table 12. Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually in the Critical Evaluation of GE Case

| Cases of Plagiarism Identified Manually (in addition to the cases identified by SafeAssign) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Verbatim Borrowing from a Source (4-20 words) | Inappropriate Paraphrase | Verbatim copying from the assignment prompt |
| 14 | 17 | 1 |
4. Red Lobster Case Essay

In the final written assignment for the course, SafeAssign detected 122 cases of potential plagiarism (see Table 13). The largest group was represented by matching text in students’ papers (33 cases), followed by 9 cases of verbatim borrowing. Similarly to the previous assignments, SafeAssign reports contained numerous instances of false positive detection classified as follows:

- References (67 cases);
- Signal phrases (5 cases);
- Dates (5 cases);
- Correctly quoted material (2 cases);
- Text in the “to” and “from” lines of the memo (1 case).

Table 13. Instances of Potential Plagiarism Detected by SafeAssign in Red Lobster Case Essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbatim Borrowing from a Source</th>
<th>Correctly quoted material</th>
<th>Matches with other students’ papers</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Signal phrases</th>
<th>Text in the “to” and “from” Lines of the Memo</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A manual plagiarism check revealed additional 38 cases of plagiarism (see Table 14). In addition to 9 cases of verbatim borrowing from sources detected by SafeAssign, 17 cases ranging from 4 to 20 words borrowed from a source were detected. The papers contained 21 cases of inappropriate paraphrase, which, similarly to the previous assignments, were not detected by SafeAssign.

Table 14. Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually in Red Lobster Case Essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually (in addition to the cases identified by SafeAssign)</th>
<th>Verbatim Borrowing from a Source (4-20 words)</th>
<th>Inappropriate Paraphrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total results of SafeAssign plagiarism checks are shown in Table 15 below. The largest group of matches in SafeAssign reports was represented by matching text in students’ papers with a total of 156 cases. The software detected 124 matches in the references sections of the papers submitted to the service. The other categories of matches included text in the “to” and “from” lines of messages (33 cases), verbatim borrowing from sources (32 cases), signal phrases (20 cases), formulaic expressions (17 cases), titles of papers (16 cases), dates/time (14 cases), correctly quoted material (7 cases) and text in the subject line of business communication messages (4 cases).
Table 15. Total Instances of Plagiarism Detected by SafeAssign in Student Papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of plagiarism detected by SafeAssign</th>
<th>Number of instances detected in student papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matches with other students’ papers</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text in the “to” and “from” lines of business communication messages</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbatim borrowing from a source</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signal phrases</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulaic expressions (e.g. “please, contact me if you have any questions”)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of the paper</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/time</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctly quoted material</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text in the subject line of business communication messages</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>423</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total results of manual plagiarism checks are shown in Table 16 below. A close examination of student papers revealed 72 additional cases of verbatim borrowing from sources, 67 cases of inappropriate paraphrase and 1 case of verbatim borrowing from an assignment prompt.

Table 16. Total Instances of Plagiarism Identified Manually in Student Papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of plagiarism detected by manual checks</th>
<th>Number of instances identified in student papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbatim borrowing from a source (4-20 words)</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate paraphrase</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbatim copying from an assignment prompt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 6
EFFECTIVENESS OF SAFEASSIGN IN PLAGIARISM DETECTION

SafeAssign identified 423 matches in all student papers analyzed for this research. The following observations are made regarding efficiency of SafeAssign in detecting cases of true plagiarism:

1. SafeAssign has a **high rate of false positive plagiarism detection**, i.e. text that is not actually plagiarized is flagged by the service as potential plagiarism and is included in the total percentage of matching text. In fact, 216 cases of text flagged by SafeAssign fall within this category, which constitutes 55% of all matches in SafeAssign reports. The following types of information are consistently detected by SafeAssign as matching text:

   - **references (total 124 cases in all analyzed papers)**

   Figure 27. References Section in a Student’s Paper

   ![References Figure]


   Figure 28. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign

   ![Matching Figure]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matching: 100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded Manuscript: Harvard Business School Case, 511-052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Source: Harvard Business School Case, 511-052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 27 shows that nearly all entries in the paper’s references section are flagged by SafeAssign as matching text, including the word “References.” In this particular paper, the platform found no other matching text; however, due to the references, the total percentage of matching comprised 20%, which, according to the SafeAssign user guide, requires additional consideration by the instructor. This emphasizes the importance of not relying only on percentage of matching text when using SafeAssign. Interestingly, all the matches in this paper were identified as matches with other students’ papers (as opposed to matching external sources) (see Figures 28 and 29).

- signal phrases (total 20 instances in all analyzed papers)

Figure 30. Signal Phrase Flagged as Potential Plagiarism by SafeAssign

In 20 cases, signal phrases and in-text citations were labeled by SafeAssign as matching text. The software identifies signal phrases and in-text citations as potentially plagiarized text since they often contain the name of the author, title of a source and year of publication which
may be repeated in several students’ papers since all students are using the same sources for the assignment. SafeAssign does not allow instructors to exclude this type of text from plagiarism checks.

- **formulaic language (total 17 cases in all analyzed papers)**

Figure 32. Formulaic Language in a Student’s Paper

After these training you will know a role to play in a disaster preparedness plan. Thank you for your cooperation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Figure 33. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matching</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded Manuscript:</td>
<td>Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Source:</td>
<td>Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 34. Formulaic Language in a Student’s Paper

This memorandum is to propose you to adopt the mandatory technology disaster preparedness training for the employees. Also, we sincerely invite you to attend the 1st council for the plan to establish pattern for all the employees. ③ If you have any question, please contact specialassistantforCEOindisasterpreparednessplan@IlliniCorp.com.

Figure 35. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matching:</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded Manuscript:</td>
<td>If you have any question, please contact <a href="mailto:specialassistantforCEOindisasterpreparednessplan@IlliniCorp.com">specialassistantforCEOindisasterpreparednessplan@IlliniCorp.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Source:</td>
<td>If you have any question please contact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By “formulaic language” in this research we mean standard phrases occurring in business communication (letters, e-mails, memos), e.g. “Please feel free to contact us,” “Thank you for your cooperation,” “We are looking forward to hearing from you.” SafeAssign consistently highlights sentences and phrases of this type as matching text; however, it is not entirely clear how the source of matching text is identified, since there may be hundreds of online sources that contain similar text. For instance, in the last example, the text “Thank you for your cooperation” was matched with the sentence “Thank you for your help” on the website of the Mentoring + Befriending Foundation at http://www.mandbf.org/news/mbf-news/development-of-volunteering-and-mentoring-hub-your-views-wanted (see Figures 38 and 39).
The matching of this language by SafeAssign as potential plagiarism needs to be taken into consideration by business communication instructors, since assignments in business writing courses often include business letters, memos, e-mails and reports where certain standard phrases and sentences are expected, generally towards the end of the message.
- title of the paper (total 16 cases in all analyzed papers)

Figure 40. Title in a Student’s Paper

*Evaluation of the five possible project C modifications date: November 13, 2013*

Figure 41. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uploaded Manuscript:</th>
<th>Matching: 96%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the five possible project C modifications date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Internet Source: | Evaluation of Five Possible Modifications for Project C Date |

If the research participants chose to incorporate the title of assignments in the papers submitted to SafeAssign, the titles were often highlighted by the software as matching text in other students’ papers. Since students tended to use the same or similar title as requested by the instructor, it is likely that in every paper submitted to SafeAssign (with the exception of the first paper with a title) titles were identified by SafeAssign as matching text, increasing the total percentage of matches in the entire paper.

- text in “to” and “from” lines of a business communication message (14 cases in all analyzed papers)

Figure 42. “To” and “from” Lines in a Student's Paper

*To: All employees From: PYU Date: 9/23/2013 Re: All Employees require technology disaster safety training*
Text in the “to” and “from” lines of memos written by students for the class was flagged as matching text; generally, matches were identified with the same assignment uploaded by other students. Since the students received the same writing prompt, they tended to address their memos in a similar way, which resulted in the text being identified as matching fragments by SafeAssign.

- dates and time (14 cases in all analyzed papers)

In certain cases, dates and time are flagged by SafeAssign as a potential match. For instance, the screenshots above show that the text “5:30 pm to 6:30 pm NOTE” was matched by the platform to a schedule of AAMA Karate School (see Figure 46):
Figure 46. AAMA Karate School Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AAMA KARATE SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLASS SCHEDULE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAMA KARATE SCHOOL – CLASS SCHEDULE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, &amp; Thursday: 5:45 PM to 6:30 PM: 6yrs to adult – beginners – White belt 6:30 PM to 7:00 PM: Cardio Kickboxing 14 to Adult 7:30 PM to 8:00 PM: Intermediate and Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday: 5:30 PM to 6:20 PM: Hanshi’s class - 15yrs through Adult – Blue Belt and Above 6:25 PM to 7:30 PM: 15yrs through Adult - Yellow belt and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday: 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM: 13yrs to adult – Misc. Studies 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM: private lessons and special interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday: Closed = (exception) special classes – tournament practice; demonstrations; other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday: Closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The date in the memo below was matched with a date in another student’s paper.

Figure 47. Date Used in a Student’s Paper

Memo [Project C Management team]

To: Tom Corcoran From:  Date: 11/24/2013 Re: Analysis of five modifications

Figure 48. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign

- quoted material (7 instances in all analyzed papers)

Figure 49. Quote Used in a Student’s Paper

variety of selection(Exhibit 1). One study showed: “a pretty strong relationship between alcohol consumption and check per guest: the more a customer’s order is made up of alcohol, the higher the check” (Xun Yao Chen, 2013).
Unlike Turnitin, SafeAssign does not have a function of excluding text in quotations from the plagiarism check. Due to the nature of this class, most assignments did not contain a significant number of quoted text; however, the situation could be different in a general academic English class.

- text in the subject line of memos (total 4 instances in all analyzed papers)

Text in the subject line of memos was detected as matching text in 4 instances.

2. SafeAssign is effective in comparing student papers submitted to the database and identifying matching text. In total, SafeAssign reports for all analyzed assignments contained 156 matches with other students’ papers. However, careful consideration needs to be taken to analyze each match to identify whether students did indeed borrow from each other’s papers.
For instance, in the paper below SafeAssign identified 16 sentences that matched the text in the paper of another student:

**Figure 53. Sample Student Paper**

The percentage of matching text in each case ranges from 62% to 100%:

**Figure 54. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign**

**Figure 55. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign**

The number of matches, their nature and the fact they contain the same grammar errors indicate that there is a high probability that the students did borrow from each other’s papers.
However, in the paper below matches with other students’ papers seem to be incidental and may not actually represent student-to-student borrowing.

Figure 56. Sample Student Paper

SafeAssign identified matching text with papers of 6 other students with the percentage of matching text totaling 52%, which puts the paper in the high risk category for plagiarism. However, a close examination of the matches shows the following:

- the first match is the title of the case used by the students, which would qualify as false positive detection:

Figure 57. Signal Phrase in a Student’s Paper

Figure 58. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign
- the next two sentences may be matching due to the fact that the instructors asked the students to incorporate this information in the assignment. In fact, they may be examples of poor paraphrase rather than student-to-student borrowing:

Figure 59. Text in a Student’s Paper

```
better results to the organization.

General Electric Major Appliance’s business group came up with a new business initiative known as dishwasher business (MABG). This project was mainly launched to boost their sales on dishwashers. For implementing this new strategy Project C invested $ 28 million. This
```

Figure 60. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign

```
Uploaded Manuscript:  General Electric Major Appliance’s business group came up with a new business initiative known as dishwasher business (MABG)

Internet Source:  General Electric Major Appliance’s business group came up with a new business strategy for their dishwasher business (MABG)
```

- the next instance of matching text is a quote:

Figure 61. Quote in a Student’s Paper

```
project was focused on improvising 5 basic things: According to Wheelwright (1992), 1) "Improving the quality of the factory environment 2) Skills training in technical problem solving 3) Revisions in GE’s management information and support systems. 4) Adding a value engineering development cycle. 5) Drop construction of the integrated computer control room". As any new project executing hurdles, even this project faced many implications such as inadequate up front planning and lack of commitment in delivering the
```

- the next case shows matching text with 72% of matching:

Figure 62. Text in a Student’s Paper

```
Corcoran had to choose the modification which provides best results to the GE organization and apart from that Corcoran and team wanted to make sure that the project and its outcomes were not compromised by the failure to act appropriately.
```
A comparison of the two sentences shows that they have the following part matching exactly:

_Corcoran and the team wanted to make sure that the project and its outcomes were not compromised by their failure to act appropriately._

The original case study used by the students for this assignment contains the following sentence:

_While nobody liked the prospect, having spent a year trying to “do the right thing” and to respond consistently to Welch’s injunction of “do it right the first time,” Corcoran and the team wanted to make sure that the project and its outcomes were not compromised by their failure to act appropriately._


Therefore, it is likely that the students borrowed the text from the original source, rather than copied it from each other’s papers.

-the final two cases identified by SafeAssign as potential plagiarism are the references:

_Citation:_

6 Wheelwright, Steven C., "General Electric: (Abridged)." Harvard Business School Case 693-067, December 1992. (Revised November 1993.)
Therefore, none of the cases identified by SafeAssign as matching text in student assignments are likely to be cases of student-to-student plagiarism for this paper. In fact, out of 156 student-to-student matches, only 3 papers raise suspicions regarding this type of plagiarism.

3. SafeAssign fails to identify cases of patchwriting and inappropriate paraphrase. The paper below indicates that SafeAssign does not perform well in identifying poor paraphrased texts.

The diagnostic memo revision assignment completed by one of the students was analyzed by SafeAssign. The platform found one match and calculated the total percentage of potential plagiarism for the paper as 3%.

Figure 65. Sample Student Paper

The only matching sentence was a formulaic phrase at the end of the memo:

Figure 66. Matching Text Detected by SafeAssign
The manual analysis of the same paper and its comparison against the article provided to the students as a source for the assignment, which was also uploaded to SafeAssign through DirectSubmit, revealed **11** cases of patchwriting and poor paraphrase (see Table 17):

**Table 17. Cases of Patchwriting Identified in a Student’s Paper**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Writing</th>
<th>Source (Lynn, 2012a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our system can be impact by <strong>disaster strikes</strong> so it is time for a <strong>business recovery from a disaster</strong> and we should <strong>have a plan in place before the disaster strikes</strong>, and also <strong>staff who are already trained</strong>.</td>
<td>Anyone who has actually managed a business’ recovery from a disaster knows that the most critical factor when it comes to business and operation continuity is having a plan in place before the <strong>disaster strikes</strong>. While disaster recovery will always involve some on-the-fly decision making and adapting to realities on the ground, both of these can be made orders of magnitude easier by <strong>having contingency plans and systems already in place</strong>, and <strong>staff who are already trained</strong> how to implement them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreover, <strong>after experiencing a disaster, a company still not is ready for running by full staff</strong>.</td>
<td>Also, it’s practically guaranteed that, <strong>after experiencing a disaster, a company will not be running with its full staff</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therefore, contingency plan is necessary <strong>to keep day-to-day operations</strong> and continue system that works <strong>in a remote location and ready to access</strong> so it is the right time to set up our disaster preparedness. This is emergency situation that need to be prepare.</td>
<td>Disaster preparedness means having, at the very least, the data and apps that are required <strong>to keep day-to-day operations</strong> already running <strong>in a remote location and ready to access</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees should <strong>access the corporate network</strong> to access material for an emergency and they should be train in the schedule that is conducted by human resources department.</td>
<td>Contingency plans detailed in your disaster plan for employees to <strong>access the corporate network</strong> and its resources in an emergency should serve as the basis for your training plan. Once you have compiled the procedures that need to be taught, you can set a schedule for training.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Writing</th>
<th>Source (Lynn, 2012a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firstly, staff members will learn how to access the VPN from the off-site and cloud services from the virtual infrastructures. Secondly, every employee will be instructed on how to <strong>access alternative communications during a disaster</strong> including an emergency voicemail box set up on a PBX or VoIP system that employees can use for calling.</td>
<td>Employees should also be instructed on how to <strong>access any alternative communications available to them during a disaster</strong>. These could include an emergency voicemail box set up on a PBX or VoIP system that gives periodic updates on an emergency situation employees can call in to check on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees also learn how to <strong>use supplied beepers, walkie-talkies, or specially cell phone during disaster.</strong></td>
<td>Or it could comprise training staff to <strong>use supplied beepers, walkie-talkies, or specially designated mobile phones</strong> for use in an emergency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, every system can be impact by disaster strikes so it is time for a business recovery from a disaster and we should have a <strong>plan in place before the disaster strikes</strong>, and also staff who are already trained.</td>
<td>Anyone who has actually managed a business’ recovery from a disaster knows that the most critical factor when it comes to business and operation continuity is <strong>having a plan in place before the disaster strikes.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreover, <strong>after experiencing a disaster</strong>, a company still not is ready for running by full staff.</td>
<td>Also, it’s practically guaranteed that, <strong>after experiencing a disaster, a company will not be running with its full staff.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therefore, contingency plan is necessary to <strong>keep day-to-day operations</strong> and continue system that works in a remote location and ready to access so it is the right time to set up our disaster preparedness.</td>
<td>Disaster preparedness means having, at the very least, the data and apps that are required to <strong>keep day-to-day operations</strong> already running in a remote location and ready to access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firstly, it is easier than ever and there are many tools to support critical situation such as <strong>cloud computing, virtualization and powerful mobile devices</strong> that most of users already have one.</td>
<td><strong>Cloud computing, virtualization, and</strong> the continuing increase of always-connected and relatively <strong>powerful mobile devices</strong> in the hands of end-users are all key ingredients in deploying a strong and effective disaster preparedness solution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Writing</th>
<th>Source (Lynn, 2012a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inter-department planning for disaster preparedness is important</strong> to corrobrate between departments in an organization.</td>
<td>This is why <strong>inter-department planning for disaster preparedness is important</strong>, including meeting with all representatives of every department in an organization and finding out which key functions, information, and systems must be available in an emergency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees should <strong>access the corporate network</strong> to access material for an emergency and they should be train in the schedule that is managed by human resources department.</td>
<td>Contingency plans detailed in your disaster plan for employees to <strong>access the corporate network</strong> and its resources in an emergency should serve as the basis for your training plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As evidenced by above data, inappropriate paraphrase is not effectively identified by SafeAssign, potentially due to the fact that students make certain changes in the original text including inserting, deleting or rearranging words, changing verb tenses or sentence structure. In most cases, those changes are not sufficient for student writing to qualify as good paraphrase; however, it prevents SafeAssign from identifying the text as matching the original source.
4. SafeAssign performs inconsistently in verbatim borrowing from sources. In all analyzed papers, SafeAssign identified 32 cases of verbatim borrowing from sources; however, manual plagiarism checks revealed additional **70 additional cases of verbatim borrowing** ranging from 4 to 20 words. Thus, in the diagnostic memo the following sentence was not identified by SafeAssign as verbatim borrowing:

Figure 67. Text in a Student’s Paper

According the article that wrote by Samara Lynn, it said that almost three-quarters of the largest segment of business and the economy, SMBs, currently do not have an emergency contingency plan. Disaster preparedness plan is like a back up of all the information that we

The original source for the assignment contains the following sentence:

*Almost three-quarters of the largest segment of business and the economy, SMBs, currently do not have an emergency contingency plan.*

(Lynn, 2012a, retrieved from [http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2408092,00.asp](http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2408092,00.asp)).

Therefore, verbatim borrowing of 21 words went undetected by SafeAssign.
Patterns of Plagiarism

The analysis of SafeAssign reports and manual plagiarism checks for 92 papers created by students within the course of one semester indicates that the two most problematic types of plagiarism are verbatim copying from a source and inappropriate paraphrase. Students copied phrases and sentences ranging from 4 to 20 words in row without quotation marks or reference to the source. There seems to be a perception that if a source is provided for an assignment, students are given the right to freely copy from the source. SafeAssign identified 32 instances of verbatim borrowing, and manual checks – additional 72 cases.

Poorly paraphrased sentences presented the second most common type of plagiarism. Though SafeAssign did not directly identify inappropriate paraphrases, manual checks revealed 67 instances of sentences in which only minimal changes were made, resulting in the text being too close to the original to be considered paraphrased. This finding underscores the importance of teaching paraphrasing techniques in ESL business communication courses and providing students with extensive opportunities for practice.
Analysis of In-Text Citations in the Red Lobster Case

One of the objectives of the course was to for students to learn documenting sources using the APA citation style. At the start of semester, only 5 students (about 21% of research participants) were familiar with any documentation styles. In the final assignment for the course, the students produced a case essay in which they were asked to make a decision regarding marketing of the Red Lobster restaurant. The primary source for this assignment was “Red Lobster,” a case study by Bell and Riis (2011) published Harvard Business School. The students were asked to incorporate at least two additional sources with suggested sources listed in the assignment prompt (for full details of the assignment please see Appendix E). The essay was to be written following all conventions of the APA citation style which was covered in class during the semester including APA in-text citations and references.

All instances of in-text citations were analyzed in 23 case essays and classified based on their compliance with APA conventions (as presented in Rules for Writers by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, seventh edition, which was used as a textbook for the class). All citations containing errors or defects were then subdivided by the type of error into the following categories:

1. sentence structure errors (related to the use of signal phrases; grammar mistakes not related to signal phrases were not taken into consideration as being outside of the scope of this research);

2. punctuation errors (including omission of spaces, unnecessary or missing commas, incorrect italicizing or missing quotation marks related to in-text citations and signal phrases);
3. inclusion of the full title of a source in a signal phrase (instead of the author’s name);
4. missing page/paragraph numbers with quotations;
5. inclusion of the author’s full name.Initials in an in-text citation;
6. failure to quote verbatim borrowings;
7. incorrect identification of elements for inclusion in an in-text citation;
8. incorrect placement of in-text citations in a sentence;
9. missing year after the author’s name;
10. inappropriate reporting verbs;
11. missing author’s name;
12. using author’s first name in an in-text citation.

The data for all in-text citations are shown in the table below including number of instances and samples (for the full analysis please see Appendix F). By “instances” in this case we mean the number of sentences extracted from students’ essays containing an in-text citation. If one sentence with an in-text citation contained multiple violations of APA conventions and style, it was classified separately under different categories. For instance, the following sentence extracted from a student’s essay was classified as one instance of incorrect punctuation (missing space between the author’s name and the year of publication), one instance of incorrect identification of elements to be included in an in-text citation (the name of the database (Proquest) is included along with the title of the article), one instance of inclusion of the full title of a source in a signal phrase and one instance of incorrect placement of in-text citations in a sentence (in the middle of the sentence as opposed to the end).
According to Ziobro (2010), *Proquest, Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter* (p. 1), they found out the trend that customers are willing to pay 2.5% higher than regular price.

Therefore, the above sentence contains four violations of APA conventions based on the classification used in this research. Table 18 contains an analysis of all in-text citations found in the case essays arranged by the type of errors:

Table 18. Analysis of In-Text Citations in Red Lobster Case Essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation Type</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Number of instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-text citations following APA conventions with no evident errors</td>
<td>Furthermore, Ziobro (2010) states that average check in the casual restaurants are steadily increasing for 2.6% (p. 1).</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-text citations violating APA conventions or containing structural errors related to the use of signal phrases</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citations containing punctuation errors</td>
<td>In article Milford Prewitt (1997). Stymied by segment wide glut, leading dinner-house chains seek sales growth strategies. Red Lobster got highest ranking in food restaurants in the United State. (p. 166)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citations with a the full title of a source in a signal phrase (instead of the author’s name)</td>
<td>According to the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)” (Market Realist, 2013, p. 1) and “Report Information from ProQuest” (ProQuest, 2010, p. 3). An increase in spread means the income distribution is widening. If household income starts to grow again, then restaurants that serve the middle market could benefit.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errors in sentence structure, generally related to the use of signal phrases</td>
<td>Fifth, based on Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) say that “consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food or occasional expensive dishes” and “Without price reduction and promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount”.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of the author’s full name or initials in an in-text citation</td>
<td>Simply, it means when a company thinks that sticking with the current position will protect it from losing its market share (John S. Hammond, Ralph L. Keeney, and Howard Raiffa, 1998).</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation Type</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Number of instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missing page/paragraph number when a quotation is used</td>
<td>The company was thought of as “a dated chain that served cheap, frozen, mass-produced seafood.”</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect placement of in-text citations</td>
<td>According to Ziobro(2010), <em>Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter</em> (p.1), they found out the trend that customers are willing to pay 2.5% higher than regular price.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect identification of elements to be included in in-text citations</td>
<td>According to Ziobro(2010), <em>Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter</em> (p.1), they found out the trend that customers are willing to pay 2.5% higher than regular price.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing year after the author’s name</td>
<td>If the restaurants are more than the market as Chen mentioned before, Lopdru should make a decision of shutting or merging ineffective restaurants in long-term.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate reporting verb</td>
<td>In addition, based on the Report Information from Big Spenders Ald Casual-Dining Restaurant by Paul Ziobro, he referred“ fewer customers are eating out, but those who do are spending a bit more, leading to more profitable sales for casual-dining restaurants.(p.1)”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing author’s name in an in-text citation</td>
<td>While one might ask “if the remodels are successful, why not move things along more quickly” (p. 11), the answer is that changing all 690 locations simultaneously is too risky because it will require a great amount of capital, so it is better to trigger the project carefully.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using author’s first name in an in-text citation</td>
<td>Lastly, Red lobster should target re-positioning premium restaurant because low cost strategy does not help Red Lobster increase sales. According to Report Information (Paul, 2010), although Darden’s Red Lobster chain decrease the menu price by promotion, Red Lobster same store sales was not increase in promotion period.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL NUMBER OF SENTENCES WITH IN-TEXT CITATIONS: 66**
As shown in the table above, out of 66 instances of in-text citations found in 23 student essays, only 17 (26%) in-text citations followed APA conventions. The remaining 49 (74%) sentences contained one or several violations of APA citations, incorrect sentence structure, punctuation and other errors.

Figure 68. APA In-Text Citations in Red Lobster Case Essays

The frequency of errors in in-text citations is shown in Figure 69 below:

Figure 69. Frequency of Errors in APA In-Text Citations

Interestingly, the students had the highest number of errors in the area of **punctuation**. Punctuation errors ranged from missing spaces to incorrect comma placement and incorrect
placement of periods with in-text citations at the end of the sentence. The second most common problem was inclusion of the full title of a source in the sentence as opposed to referring only to the author’s name, even when the title is long. Finally, students seemed to struggle with sentence structure after incorporating signal phrases.

The same data was used to analyze the use and frequency of signal verbs and expressions for introducing sources. The results of this analysis are presented in the graph below (Figure 69). As evident from the chart, students used a limited number of reporting verbs and expressions, with the most prevalent one being “according to” (used 20 times). It is followed by “states/stated” and “shows/showed” which were found 5 and 4 times, respectively. Reporting verbs were used in the present and past tense

Figure 70. Occurrence and Frequency of Signal Verbs and Phrases in Red Lobster Case Essay
The above data indicates that though the students realized the need to cite sources in their writing, they experienced significant difficulties with technical aspects of using a documentation style in source-based written assignments. Punctuation presented the most significant challenge when the students attempted to incorporate titles, authors’ names, in-text citations and quotation marks in their essays. This problem is likely the result of several factors including lack of students’ prior exposure to citation styles, insufficient time spent in class on punctuation use, a limited amount of time given to students for completing the assignment which, coupled with a heavy academic load of business students (in particular, at the end of semester), prevented them from further researching and implementing APA conventions. These findings emphasize the importance of not only raising students’ awareness of the need to incorporate citations but also exposing them to detailed rules of a citation style, possibly with an emphasis on punctuation.

The students also experienced difficulties with identifying the information that needs to be included in a signal phrase or an in-text citation and structuring sentences containing a reporting verb. The students also used a very limited number of reporting verbs and signal phrases resorting to a more familiar “according to” in most cases. ESL writing instructors need to show their students the strategies for identifying the types of information required for in-text citations and provide practice with a variety of reporting verbs and signal phrases, with an emphasis on changes occurring in the sentence structure upon their incorporation.
Perception of Plagiarism, Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies and Citation Styles by Research Participants at the End of Semester

The second survey (see Appendix B) was administered at the end of semester to gage changes in students’ awareness of plagiarism and plagiarism avoidance strategies. The students’ responses to the question of how their understanding of plagiarism changed throughout the semester are shown in Table 19.

Table 19. Students’ Perception of Plagiarism at the End of Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did your understanding of plagiarism change throughout the semester?</td>
<td>It’s proper to cite with sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is a serious offence, not advisable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maybe the rules to follow to avoid it. The concept was kind of clear, but the way to write my papers in a proper way improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before this semester, I don’t know we cannot use our own paper two times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I should keep to avoid plagiarism for overall class from learning about plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By seeing bad manners in our country, it’s not common for us to use citation and quotation. So it’s a pretty useful topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I became more conscious when I get a new information from any resource to refer to it in my work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We can avoid plagiarism by citation original sources with using APA format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paraphrase the sentence and change word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I need to cite for common sense information, just for specific information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is very important when I express my opinion to public because it can be cause of cheating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Copying online available data and facts is also considered plagiarism so we should use citation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I learned about the citation style which can help me avoid any sort of unwilling plagiarism by providing appropriate citations to the different sources which I use to I my write-ups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I understood that if I would like to borrow someone’s idea I need to add reference correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If I want to use someone’s idea, I have to give some credits to him/her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I made a mistake about one of the assignments, I just use the original article’s sentence without “”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 19 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did your understanding of plagiarism change throughout the semester?</td>
<td>I understand better than before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I thought that the information on the web is no problem, but, we should mention about this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I understand the what plagiarism is and try to avoid plagiarism in my writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’s important that no only to cite others word but also your own words which show in the previous paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I understood how to avoid plagiarism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As evidenced by above responses, students reported a clearer understanding of plagiarism and found it to be “a pretty useful topic.” Four responses emphasize a better understanding of plagiarism avoidance strategies. A number of responses talk about a specific new aspect or rule that students learned about in class:

- necessity to cite information from the web:

  “I thought that the information on the web is no problem, but, we should mention about this."

  “Copying online available data and facts is also considered plagiarism so we should use citation.”

- inappropriateness of verbatim copying without quotation marks:

  “I made a mistake about one of the assignments, I just use the original article’s sentence without ‘‘’.”

- providing citations for borrowed ideas:

  “I understood that if I would like to borrow someone’s idea I need to add reference correctly.”

- using common knowledge without citations:

  “I need to cite for common sense information, just for specific information.”
- self-plagiarism:

“Before this semester, I don’t know we cannot use our own paper two times.”

“It’s important that no only to cite others word but also your own words which show in the previous paper.”

In response to the question regarding the difficulty of writing assignments using the APA citation style, 7 respondents (43%) said that using APA was not difficult, while the rest experienced certain challenges in following APA conventions. The respondents found the following aspects of APA confusing or difficult (see Table 20):

- in-text citations;
- a large number of rules;
- verb tenses;
- differences between in-text citations and references.

Table 20. Challenges of Using the APA Citation Style Reported by Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During this semester, we wrote papers using APA. Do you find a difficult to write papers using a citation style? If yes, what aspects of APA do you find challenging?</td>
<td>Yes, the in-text citation sometimes seems ambiguous to me and don’t know which is the most proper way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was not difficult as we had a APA simulator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes it is difficult because it is complicated and a lot of rules. But rules are important in important matters, and this is definitely an important matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I think it was difficult. I have to remember how to cite it, and which tense I have to use. Really difficult for me at the first time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No, I don’t used APA style because most of assignment don’t need to use APA. I think that it is hard to memorize about the rule, so I just bring some paper about APA style for using next time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was difficult, especially the difference of in text and reference rules, difference of intext citation at signaling and ending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No at all. there are plenty of resources teach you how to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, APA style is too many rules too follow and hard to remember.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, we have to recognize the correct form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During this semester, we wrote papers using APA. Do you find a difficult to write papers using a citation style? If yes, what aspects of APA do you find challenging?</td>
<td>yes, I think it is another language even I am not familiar in English yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We deviate from the standard APA format sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes, it sometimes hard to get the citation right without any mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If it doesn’t require to write every time, I think it is not difficult to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I often have difficulty finding own words to explain my opinion in my article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My answer is ‘yes’. The most challenge things about the APA style is that I am not familiar with it and couldn’t memorize the specific rules of APA. For this reason, It takes time to adopt it in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think it’s not really hard, just need some practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, it’s difficult, especially facing some detail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon completion of the class, the students showed increased awareness of plagiarism avoidance strategies as compared to the start of semester. In the start of semester survey, only two responses mentioned three academic strategies for incorporating sources: paraphrasing, summarizing and quoting. At the end of semester, eleven students mentioned one or more of these strategies, and seven responses emphasized the need to use a citation style (see Table 21).

Table 21. Students’ Awareness of Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies at the End of Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the ways of incorporating sources in your writing?</td>
<td>Using in-text citations, reference list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intext citations, references &amp; APA abbreviations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quoting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citation, Paraphrase, Quotation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>““ “ is best way to express sources which are brought something from others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Question</td>
<td>Participants’ Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the ways of incorporating sources in your writing?</strong></td>
<td>I’ll try to use paraphrasing so that I have limited risk of plagiarism. I don’t use generator, but use “Rules for Writers” and internet to find out the proper citation quote, paraphrase, summarize. Usually use the textbook and sometimes use the search engine. Always refer my content to the original sources. Searching the source on the internet paraphrasing, citation, quotation searching on-line library, refer to other’s I work, googling APA style citation use proper citation for all types of sources and use quotations and/or the author’s name to describe that the source of information was somewhere else. Paraphrase, citation dictionary that teacher taught in the class search some information on website use my own words. The internet and lecture from professor I changed to own word and structure of sentences to insist my opinion There are three ways to integrate other’s opinions: Quotation, Paraphrasing, Summarizing. I usually use paraphrasing way. Use the apa style or Chicago style to use the sources. Summarization paragraph quote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All respondents indicated that the class provided sufficient coverage of plagiarism avoidance strategies and APA (see Table 22); however, an analysis of the final written assignment for the course indicates that students need additional instruction in using the APA documentation style and paraphrasing strategies.

Table 22. Students’ Perception of Sufficient Coverage of Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies in the Course Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel that the class provided sufficient coverage of plagiarism-avoidance strategies and APA? If not, what else would you like to know.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The class has provided sufficient coverage of plagiarism-avoidance strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think it provided sufficient coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I think it was sufficient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think that this class touch about plagiarism well, but APA is hard to understand short-term because I didn’t spend time to study about APA own myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want to practice more, still I making some mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes I do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge from this class is sufficient for writing with avoid plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, it’s enough for me to use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was sufficient for our writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, it is enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes it covers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes I think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When the total time is considered, this class provide enough information about plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, the teacher provided lots of related information about apa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, all students agreed that it is important to cover plagiarism avoidance strategies and the basics of a citation style in a business communication class (see Table 23). The reasons mentioned by respondents include importance of such strategies for their future business career and misunderstandings regarding plagiarism that they might have had before the class.

Table 23. Students’ Perception of the Importance of Covering Plagiarism Avoidance Strategies in a Business Communication Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Participants’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you think it is important to cover plagiarism avoidance strategies and citation style in a business writing class? Explain your answer.</strong></td>
<td>Yes. In business world it’s important to cite others sources since sometimes the source might need to pay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is very important to cover plagiarism avoidance strategies and citation styles in the business class as it would be very helpful, going forward in our career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is important because it helps us for all of the classes of our program, and in a writing class, the rules about plagiarism should always be part of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I think so. While doing business, we have to write a lot of things such as memo or operating report. It is extremely important to avoid plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think plagiarism avoidance was enough, but citation style need more time to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Its important because we have many opportunities to write the essays and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes. It’s because we have to write lots of business analysis every week. So it’s important to make sure not to plagiarism other’s work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes because most of the students do not know all the plagiarism strategies and they might easily be fell in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, it is important. I usually do research by using Google and library in my works. Sometimes I need historical data. I can use knowledge from this class to reference them correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The content which teach in the class was enough for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, as both of them are important in business writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes. To help us understand the importance of original work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, citations are a good way to avoid plagiarism and its good to cover them in the ESL Class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, sometimes we need to refer to other sources to complete our essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes we can familiar with these in natual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, because plagiarizing is a serious problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes it is useful!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Question</td>
<td>Participants’ Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think it is important to cover plagiarism avoidance strategies and citation style in a business writing class? Explain your answer.</td>
<td>It is important because some actions that is a plagiarism may misunderstand. Therefore, people are not realized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I think it is very important to understand the plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is important to know it, because I have never learned about it before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes because it helps me avoid use others idea without make a citation and might avoid the law suit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes, it’s helpful for international students who have never learnt it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the responses of the end-of-semester survey indicate that the class was successful in raising awareness about plagiarism and introducing plagiarism avoidance strategies to ESL business students. However, even though all respondents reported that the coverage of these topics in class was sufficient, the analysis of their final assignment indicates that an overwhelming majority of students continued to make mistakes in using a citation style and need further instruction in appropriate paraphrasing techniques. An ESL writing class needs to focus on technical elements of a citation style and provide clear guidelines for paraphrasing to enable students to successfully incorporate sources in their writing.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The plagiarism analysis of 92 written assignments created by 23 international business students in the course of one semester for the ESL business communication course and SafeAssign reports generated for these papers revealed the following:

1. The papers contained multiple instances of **104 instances of verbatim copying** (4-20 words) from sources. Students copying directly from printed or online sources without using quotation marks or reference to the source.

2. The papers contained 67 instances **inappropriately paraphrased text**, i.e. text that was insufficiently changed to be considered properly paraphrased. Paraphrasing is generally a difficult skill for ESL students, and the findings indicate that additional instruction in paraphrasing techniques is required.

3. The students experienced significant difficulties in using a citation style (APA). Out of 66 instances of in-text citations in the final assignment for the course, only **26%** of citations were formatted following all APA conventions. The remaining cases contained multiple errors with punctuation and sentence structure errors occurring most frequently.

4. Student perceptions of plagiarism and plagiarism avoidance strategies changed throughout the semester towards a more detailed understanding of what actions constitute plagiarism and what to do not to plagiarize. At the end of semester, students were aware of paraphrasing, summarizing and quotations as source incorporation strategies and the importance of using a citation style.
5. SafeAssign reports may not be a reliable indicator of plagiarism in student papers. SafeAssign displays a high rate of false positive detection with the following types of text commonly flagged as potential plagiarism:

- references
- text in the “to” and “from” lines of business communication messages
- signal phrases
- formulaic expressions (e.g. “please contact me if you have any questions)
- title of papers
- date/time
- correctly quoted material
- text in the subject line of business communication messages

In fact, over 55% of matches (235 instances) identified by SafeAssign fall within this category.

6. The largest category of matches detected by SafeAssign was matching text in students’ papers (156 instances). However, only 3 papers could contain text borrowed from other students’ writing. The remaining matches were incidental or were the result of students copying text from the same source, rather than from each other.

7. SafeAssign is inconsistent in identifying verbatim copying from sources. In addition to 32 cases detected by SafeAssign, additional 72 instances were found by manual checks. It is not clear why verbatim copying is flagged in some cases and not others.

8. SafeAssign fails to detect inappropriate paraphrase. Instructors need to closely examine texts to identify this type of plagiarism.
Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study indicate that SafeAssign used in an ESL classroom may be a helpful tool in detecting plagiarism in student papers; however, it should not be used as a primary or conclusive method of plagiarism detection. SafeAssign does not allow educators to adjust plagiarism check settings to exclude quoted text, references or any other text. As a result, SafeAssign reports contain a high percentage of false positive plagiarism detection. The software consistently flags references, signal phrases, formulaic language and titles as potential plagiarism. An analysis of papers that scored high percentages of matching text (50% and up) on SafeAssign reports showed that some of those papers contained no instances of actual plagiarism. However, papers scoring low with SafeAssign should not be immediately cleared as containing no plagiarized text. The system does not identify poorly paraphrased text or proper use of documentation style conventions. SafeAssign is also inconsistent in detecting verbatim copying from sources with up to 20 words copied directly from a source remaining undetected. Here are some suggestions for ESL instructors using SafeAssign:

- SafeAssign should be used as a supplementary rather than primary plagiarism detection tool in ESL classes;
- Since SafeAssign does not include the option of excluding text from plagiarism checks, one option would be to instruct students to submit their papers to the system without references. It might significantly reduce the number of false positive matches;
- Each instance of matching text should be carefully examined and analyzed by the instructor to determine whether it is indeed a case of actual plagiarism.

Conclusions should not be made solely based on the total percentage of matching
text generated by SafeAssign reports. Either low or high percentages may not be indicative of the presence or absence of plagiarism in a paper;

• Matching text identified in the papers of several students needs to be carefully analyzed prior to making a determination whether students actually borrowed text from each other. Multiple instances of such matches were actually text borrowed from the original source.

• Sources used by students for assignments need to be carefully examined by instructors when analyzing student papers. Inappropriate paraphrasing or patchwriting is not detected by SafeAssign; it remains the instructor’s responsibility to identify such cases.
Suggestions for Further Research

The study did not purport to investigate more intricate cases of plagiarism that are harder to detect and require additional investigation such as plagiarism of translated text, ghost writing and technical tricks to avoid plagiarism detection by software. Further research could be done to investigate the mechanisms of text matching used by SafeAssign to account for inconsistency of its reports and methods of preparing and submitting essays to SafeAssign to minimize false positive detection. Research for comparing the efficiency of SafeAssign with other plagiarism detection software (e.g. Turnitin) in an ESL business communication class would have a significant practical value for educators. Another area of interest is development of ESL students’ paraphrasing techniques and patterns of errors made by international students when incorporating sources in writing.
REFERENCES


doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2006.12.005


## APPENDIX A: START-OF-SEMESTER ESL BACKGROUND SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is your first/native language?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you speak any other foreign languages (in addition to English)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long have you been studying English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you taken any ESL courses (including writing courses) in the US? If yes, please specify the course.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever written a business memo? <em>(A memo is a short written message used for internal communication in a business).</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever written a summary?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever written a critique?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever written a case-based essay? <em>(A case-based essay is an essay based on a case study in which you usually need to make a decision or provide your evaluation of a business case).</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever written an essay in which you needed to incorporate/use other written sources (books, journal articles, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In one or two sentences, please describe how you understand the concept of “plagiarism.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some ways/strategies for avoiding plagiarism in writing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you familiar with any documentation/citation styles?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you answered yes in the previous question, please specify which documentation style/s you are familiar with.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>What papers do you need to write for classes in your major?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What skills would you like to develop/improve this semester?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you ever used an online textbook/reference book for ESL classes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If your answer in the previous question is “yes,” please specify the online textbook/reference book you used.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B: END-OF-SEMESTER PLAGIARISM SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name (last name, first name)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please define the term “plagiarism” in view of the information covered in class this semester.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did your understanding of plagiarism change throughout the semester?</td>
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<tr>
<td>During this semester, we wrote papers using APA. Do you find it difficult to write papers using a citation style? If yes, what aspects of APA do you find challenging?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the ways of incorporating sources in your writing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out of the ways listed above, which ones do you use most often in your own writing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you feel that the class provided sufficient coverage of plagiarism-avoidance strategies and APA? If not, what else would you like to know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If you are not sure how to incorporate a citation or create a reference entry, where do you find relevant information?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How did you use <em>Rules for Writers</em> by Diana Hacker (textbook)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think you will use <em>Rules for Writers</em> textbook after you complete this class. Explain your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think it is important to cover plagiarism avoidance strategies and citation styles in a business writing class? Explain your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In class and at home we did several exercises on APA and plagiarism on paper. Would you have preferred to do them as online exercises with immediate feedback? Explain your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other questions, suggestions, ideas regarding APA, plagiarism avoidance strategies and Rules for Writers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Lesson</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| August 27, 2013 | Introduction  
1. Introduction to the course  
2. Syllabus overview  
3. Ice-breaker  
4. Basics of effective business writing |
| August 29, 2013 | Diagnostic Memo                                                      |
| September 3, 2013 | Memo Basics  
1. Effective memo writing process  
2. Characteristics of a successful memo  
3. Essential elements of a memo |
| September 5, 2013 | Types of Memos  
1. Memo types (good news, bad news, persuasive)  
2. Reflection on the diagnostic memo (guided by questions)  
3. Memo writing workshop |
| September 10, 2013 | Audience and Purpose  
1. Importance of considering audience in writing  
2. Audience analysis  
3. Types of audience |
| September 12, 2013 | Writing a Reader-Centered Memo  
1. Establishing common ground with the reader  
2. Adopting a “you-attitude”  
3. Emphasizing the positive  
4. Using bias-free language  
5. Emphasizing benefits for the reader  
6. Following business etiquette |
| September 17, 2013 | Conciseness; Review of Memo Writing Basics  
1. Review of reader-friendly memo-writing strategies  
2. Conciseness  
3. Creating an outline for the second memo |
<p>| September 19, 2013 | Personality Testing |
| September 24, 2013 | Presentation Outlining |
| September 26, 2013 | Visual Aids |
| October 1, 2013 | Presentation Delivery |
| October 3, 2013 | Presentation Delivery: Asking/Answering Questions and Active Listening |
| October 8, 2013 | Library Day |
| October 10, 2013 | Introduction to Avoiding Plagiarism |
| October 14, 2013 | Paraphrasing and Quoting |
| October 17, 2013 | Summarizing |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 22, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Presentations; Summarizing</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Presentations (Business e-mail etiquette; Giving and receiving compliments).&lt;br&gt;2. Summarizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 24, 2013</td>
<td><strong>APA Style</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>October 29, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Presentations&lt;br&gt;2. Critical Thinking&lt;br&gt;3. Introduction to the critical evaluation assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Problem and Position Statements</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 6, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Evidence (cont.); Action Plan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Decision Essay Outlining</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Sections of a decision essay&lt;br&gt;2. Logical sequence in a decision essay&lt;br&gt;3. Language used in different parts of a decision essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 19, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Workshop for GE Summary and Critical Evaluation Assignment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 21, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Presentations; APA Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Presentations (Questions to Ask at Interviews; Cover Letters)&lt;br&gt;2. APA Style Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 3, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Presentations; Plagiarism Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Presentations (Non-Verbal Communication; High vs Low Context Cultures)&lt;br&gt;2. Plagiarism review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5, 2013</td>
<td><strong>Peer Perception of the Red Lobster Case Essay</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 10, 2013</td>
<td><strong>INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview: This course is designed for international graduate students in the Business programs. It is an all-skills course with both writing and oral components designed to help international students succeed in English-medium business courses and careers. Its primary focus is on introducing students to common writing genres in business programs, such as memos, critiques, and case-based essays. Strategies for avoiding plagiarism while integrating and documenting sources will also be introduced and practiced. General principles of successful business writing, such as awareness of audience and purpose, effective thesis statements, PIE structure, coherence, clarity, conciseness, and formal style/tone will be discussed and practiced throughout the semester. Readings related to business communications are used as a stimulus for discussion of a topic and/or as a source of research and support in writing and speaking assignments. In order to promote oral skills, students will participate in regular discussions, role plays, oral presentations, and group conferences throughout the semester.

Grade Policy for the ESL Writing Service Courses:
Letter grades are based on performance of students on class assignments and participation in class. A passing grade for this course is a grade of “B-” or higher. Grades are recorded as S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory) on the student transcript, but instructors will grade on a letter grade scale throughout the semester.

Your grade will be made up of the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic memo revision</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of a case article</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical analysis of a case-based essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case-based essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation (homework, in-class activities)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre- and Post-Presentation Conferences and Reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer’s Help Exercises (15 exercises minimum)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Demographics: Unlike the other service courses, the course is only open to students in the MSA, MBA, MSBA, and MSTM programs. The students normally have completed their undergraduate studies in their native countries and have come to the US to work on their graduate education or as a visiting scholar.

Required textbook #1: *Rules for Writers* by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers

Required textbook #2: *Improving Business Communication Skills*
Optional textbook:

Student Assessment: There will be no final exam for this course. Your written assignments will be graded on organization, content, conventions and vocabulary/style. All writing assignments are due at the assigned time, and late papers will be penalized. We will employ a process method for completing papers, and you can expect to revise your drafts one or more times before it is considered “done” and ready to be graded.

Course Management System: The course website can be found at ____. All assignment and homework information will be posted here.

Student Participation: This is an ENGLISH language class. Everyone is here to improve his/her language skill. You must therefore stick to speaking in ENGLISH at all times in the classroom. You are also not allowed to use any electronic devices (e.g. laptops, cell phones) while lectures or activities are in progress. Violating this rule will result in confiscation of your device until the class is over. Frequent violation of these classroom policies will result in a 0-point mark for your participation grade.

Homework and reading assignments may be given daily. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss homework and readings. Participation in class discussions and activities is expected and will contribute to the final grade—this includes encouraging the participation of others. A grade of zero will be given to all work missed due to an unexcused absence. Late homework may not be accepted or will be marked down.

Attendance Policy for the ESL Writing Service Courses:
Students are required to attend all classes. If, for some reason, you must be absent, please contact the instructor before class. IF YOU ARE ABSENT, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL NOTES AND ASSIGNMENTS. Two tardies (times late) count as one absence, no matter if it's 1 minute or 10. If you are tardy more than 20 minutes, it counts as an absence. After three absences, you will receive a verbal warning from the instructor. After four absences, the ESL Writing Director will be notified and you will receive a formal probation warning. After 5 absences, you may fail the course. Remember, students who are chronically absent or late are in danger of failing the course at the director’s discretion.

Plagiarism Policy for the ESL Writing Service Courses:
One of the main goals in this course is to teach you how to avoid plagiarism and how to uphold academic integrity principles. As you know, the consequences of plagiarism are serious. Plagiarism is one type of academic dishonesty which may result in a student’s suspension or dismissal from the University. At the very least, it will result in a failing grade in the course at the director’s discretion. Therefore, the work you turn in for this class MUST BE YOUR OWN. Do not plagiarize or you will receive an F on the assignment and in the course!

All students will be required to submit their major assignments to the Compass 2g SafeAssignment database in accordance with campus policies and procedures regarding academic integrity.
Finally,
Communication and understanding are important elements of this class. If at any time you have questions about the course content or about your papers, please ask in class, communicate with me by email, or make an appointment to see me. I will do my best to be available and responsive.
APPENDIX E: MAJOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

1. Diagnostic Memo Revision

**Purpose:** This assignment aims to provide students opportunities to revise their diagnostic memo in terms of audience and purpose awareness, clear subject line, conversational tone, proper organization of message, conciseness, and signposting.

**Type of Assignment:** Business Memo

**Task:** You will submit two items by the end of this unit:

1. **Revised diagnostic memo** you have written on Day 2 so that it satisfies the following criteria you have learned (or will learn) in Unit 1:
   - clearly achieves its intended purpose (e.g. good news, bad news, persuasion) with the most effective organization (e.g. direct vs. indirect approach)
   - is reader-friendly with "you-orientation" and common ground
   - contains clear subject line, conversational tone, conciseness, and effective signposting

2. **An additional memo** based on the same article, but with a different audience and purpose as below:

   Read the article about why technology disaster preparedness training is important for businesses and how it can be implemented. As the safety manager at Illini Corp, write a memo to the CEO of Illini Corp persuading him to adopt a mandatory technology disaster preparedness training. Explain why this training is necessary/important for the company.

**Formatting Requirements:** The length of each memo should be one page Times New Roman, 12, single-space. If you are not familiar with a memo format, you may use a memo template. Follow these steps to find a memo template for Microsoft Word (Click the Office or File tab -> Click New -> Type in “Memo” in the search box and download the template to use).

**Source Requirements:** You may refer to the article in your memo while citing it properly.

**Plagiarism Disclaimer:** Your revised memo should be free from plagiarism. Although we have not covered plagiarism avoidance strategies, please remember that copying and pasting from the article is considered plagiarism. If you borrow any wording, facts or ideas from the source, please remember to mention it.

**Deadline:** September 24, Tuesday, before class via Compass2g (additional instructions to follow). Please include both memos in one file and name the file "Diagnostic Memo Revision."
2. GE Case Summary  
Assignment Prompt: Summary of a Decision Case Article “General Electric: Major Appliance Business Group (Abridged)”  
Purpose: This assignment provides opportunities to practice summary writing as well as other effective strategies for avoiding plagiarism (paraphrasing and quoting). It also aims to introduce and assess APA citation style.  
Type of Assignment: One-page Summary  
Task: Read and discuss “General Electric: Major Appliance Business Group” (Ellet pp. 197-213) and produce a one-page summary of the key points in the case in their own words. The summary should demonstrate your ability to accurately summarize an article without including minor details or opinions, include proper APA-style citations, and avoid plagiarism with proper paraphrasing techniques.  
Formatting Requirements: The length of the summary should not exceed one page, Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing with 1 inch margins on all sides.  
Source Requirements: Please refer to “General Electric: Major Appliance Business Group” for this assignment. This article is located in Ellet (p. 197-213).  
Plagiarism Disclaimer: Your summary should be free of plagiarism. Use paraphrasing/quoting and in-text citations according to APA requirements.  
Deadlines/Timeline: Tuesday, October 29, before class.  
Submission Instructions: via Compass 2g and Moodle/Dropbox  

3. Critical Evaluation of GE Case  
Unit 4 Assignment 1 – Critical Evaluation of Potential Project C Modifications  
Purpose: Through this assignment, you will be able to…  
• Demonstrate critical thinking skills as applied to business situations (in this case, as applied to potential options in a decision-based case).  
• Evaluate potential change options of a decision-based case and identify strengths and weaknesses of each option.  
• Demonstrate understanding of business memo format (including audience and purpose)  
Task: Critically evaluate the 5 possible modifications for project C presented in the case using critical thinking skills and techniques taught in class, as well as general business knowledge and any outside sources that may be helpful. Each modification should be evaluated based on the positive and negative future impact or implications (i.e. which aspect of the change will help - or not help - achieve stated criteria) based on these criteria1:  

---  
1 Criteria taken from Ellet (p.140).
1. Does the option make a substantial contribution to competitive success?
2. Does the total cost of the option exceed 10% of the budget?
3. If there are additional costs for this option, can those costs be justified?
4. If there is additional time needed for this option, can that time be justified?

The memo should demonstrate the proper approach (informative) and include a critical analysis of each modification (both the positives and negatives of that modification and answers the four criteria questions).

**Formatting Requirements:** The length should be 2-3 pages in memo format (Times New Roman, 12, single-spaced, proper memo heading and signposting).

**Source Requirements and Plagiarism Disclaimer:** Every source mentioned in the paper must be cited in APA style. Both intentional and unintentional plagiarism will be penalized.

**Deadlines/Timeline:** November 11, 9 a.m.
**Submission Instructions:** Via Compass2G and Dropbox.
**Grading Criteria:** Refer to this grading rubric.

### 4. Red Lobster Decision Case-Based Essay Assignment Prompt

**Purpose:** Through this assignment, you will:
- Demonstrate their understanding of a basic structure and components of a decision case-based essay by composing a case-based essay according to a set structure
- Demonstrate their understanding of the key principles and concepts learned in this course

**Case:**

**Task:** Based on the details of the Red Lobster case, recommend a decision to Kim Lopdrup, president of Red Lobster. Tell him why it’s the best option and draft an action plan. Your essay should follow the state-and-prove method (Ellet, p. 135) and include an introduction paragraph with the position statement, body sections with decision options, criteria, proof of recommended option, and a critique of options, followed by a conclusion which discusses an action plan.

In order to better organize your essay, refer to the following reading materials provided by your instructor:


**Formatting Requirements:** The length should be 3-5 pages (Times New Roman, 12, double-spaced) excluding exhibits and references.

**Sources:** In addition to the case, you need to use at least **two** sources. The following are suggested sources; however you are free to select your own:
1. Darden analysis (http://marketrealist.com/2013/10/darden-analysis-darden-must-increase-decrease-average-check/)
   This is a multi-part analysis of different aspects of Darden restaurants. You can select any part/parts (scroll down to see the list of them).

2. “Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining” by Paul Ziobro (https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwlEgmYu1jHZbmRZTGd4eUNnOWM/edit?usp=sharing)

   Additional Possible Sources:
   1. https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwlEgmYu1jHZRWNnRGR1WjJzRFk/edit?usp=sharing (an article about growth strategies for the restaurant business)
   2. https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwlEgmYu1jHZdlkJBWGdPZDZPTEU/edit?usp=sharing (an article about marketing restaurants)

Submission Instructions: Via Dropbox and Compass2g
Grading Criteria: Refer to the grading rubric.
APPENDIX F: IN-TEXT CITATION ANALYSIS (RED LOBSTER CASE ESSAY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct citations (17 instances):</th>
<th>Whereas, the key point of promotion should focus on the new segmentation: experientials who have average higher income than other segmentation (Bell &amp; Riis, 2010, p.8).</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Also Chen (2013a) states that “Red Lobster will be replaced by a disruptive business model, as is often the case with tech companies” (para. 6).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Furthermore, Ziobro (2010) states that average check in the casual restaurants are steadily increasing for 2.6% (p. 1).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moreover, if they change value position, they will have to identify target segment, promotion, and price, product, and place (Bell &amp; Riss, 2010).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thus, targeting on the same segment is not a suitable for the restaurant’s goal (Bell &amp; Riss, 2010).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More importantly, if people want going out to dine, they prefer to spend their money on fine dining and the restaurants that offer the uniqueness (Chen, 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>By targeting the premium casual segment it will also be able to cater to the two most lucrative customer types (i.e. Experientials and Indulgents) (Bell &amp; Riis, 2011).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This activity will require Red Lobster to allocate additional funding for all of its restaurants but this investment is likely to reach its breakeven point considering the prospect of increasing number of Experientials in the future, as Xun Yao Chen (2013) explains in his research.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Therefore, Lopdrup created a three phase plan in order to shifting market segment and keep their business profitable since 2004 for ten years plan (Bell &amp; Riis, 2010).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Furthermore, according to “Purchase Behavior of Segments Identified in 2008 Market Research Study”, new segmentation have potential to earn more money because “experiential” customers are tend to spend more money in each meal and they the number of annual meal is higher than other segment (Bell &amp; Riis, 2010, p.9).</td>
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<td>According to “Summary of Segments Identified in 2008 Market Research Study”, affordable price is not primary element to attract “experiential” segment but the decent atmosphere and environment of the meal occasion to customers for family gathering or business purpose (Bell &amp; Riis, 2010,</td>
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</table>
According to “Summary of Segments Identified in 2008 Market Research Study”, Red Lobster don’t need to put too much effort on “price” promotion and this will fit our segmentation and position strategy which we are not just provide affordable seafood and target our new experiential customers who are average income relatively high than other segmentation (Bell & Riis, 2010, p.8).

According to “Purchase Behavior of Segments Identified in 2008 Market Research Study”, our experientials customers will not tolerate bad service (Bell & Riis, 2010, p.9). Therefore, increasing our price is necessary in order to provide higher level of service and maintain the quality of food.

Also, the price of Red lobster was relatively higher than other restaurants in the same market because of the inherent problem of the seafood cost (Bell & Riis, 2011).

In addition, Ziobro (2010) argued in his article that customers were eating out less, but they tended to consume more expensive entrees.

The gap of low income and high income are widening (Chen, 2013).

Some might say that Red Lobster could benefit from using the new wood-fired grills for burgers and steaks, but Red Lobster should focus on being an expert in seafood, which is what Experientials expect (Bell & Riis, 2011).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Full title of the article is given in an in-text citation instead of the author’s name (19 instances)</th>
<th>Based on Ziobro(2010), Proquest, Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter, this paper describe some survey about the customer’s paying behavior, customer would like to paid more 2.5% for a dish, thus Red lobster could made some adjustment of their pricing to earn more profit.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>As the reference on Riell(1991), Slumping restaurant industry seeks new marketing ideas, they best way for Red Lobster to attract customer may hire some famous cooker or advisor to give them more information about how to keep their meal fresh and delicious, due to huge discount on disk was not permanent way and idea to attract customers.</td>
<td>Fifth, based on Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) say that “consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food or occasional expensive dishes” and “Without price reduction and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount”.

According to Key benefits of a restaurant owning properties (Part 22), indicate a restaurant business that owns its own building is a bit different from a restaurant business that rents its buildings or lands.

According to the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)” (Market Realist, 2013, p.1) and “Report Information from ProQuest” (ProQuest, 2010, p.3). An increase in spread means the income distribution is widening. If household income starts to grow again, then restaurants that serve the middle market could benefit. However, as long as the income distribution continues to widen, consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food, or occasional expensive dishes.

According to “Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining”, at the present time in the restaurant market, there are less consumers going out to restaurants, so the strategy to target all segments with affordable prices will not be convenient, also fewer consumers are spending more money in fine dining cuisine, so Red Lobster must change positioning towards experientials (Ziobro, 2010).

Moreover the advertisement should change the focus, since, referring to “Darden Analysis” (Chen, 2013), fine dining restaurant normally won’t promote ads on TV since it is not effective, and it will even harm their perception of customers, since exclusiveness should be promoted in different ways.

In addition, based on the Report Information from Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurant by Paul Ziobro, he referred“ fewer customers are eating out, but those who do are spending a bit more, leading to more profitable sales for casual-dining restaurants.(p.1)”

Promotion, according to Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) it mentioned, “Without price reduction and promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount. It looks like management understands they have to use promotions to attract customers. Most customers head out for a casual dining experience when they feel like treating themselves or there’s a promotion going on.”

According to Riell(1991), Slumping restaurant industry seeks new marketing ideas, price reduction, free foods are some ideas that are not fresh enough to attract customers.
According to Ziobro(2010), Proquest, Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter (p.1), they found out the trend that customers are willing to pay 2.5% higher than regular price.

In article Milford Prewitt (1997). Stymied by segment wide glut, leading dinner-house chains seek sales growth strategies. Red Lobster got highest ranking in food restaurants in the United State. (p.166)

In discriminated recipes and foods, pricing is not burden of budget from people in “Experientials”. In Darden analysis. Retrieved from http://marketrealist.com/2013/10/darden-analysis-darden-must-increase-decrease-average-check, “An increase in spread means the income distribution is widening, which is what we’ve been seeing.”

Additionally, from “Darden analysis” by Chen describes the interesting information that the income distribution keeps going to be more widen.

Through the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)”, the author Chen, X. Y. (2013) pointed out that the US household’s income distribution between the upper level households and the lower level ones is widening and their overall income have decreased a little since 2005, when considered for inflation.

According to Bell and Riis (2010)“Red Lobster” case, Red Lobster, a chains of seafood restaurant, has conducted a modification since 2004.

In addition, according to “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check,” the author concluded that the wealthier people are getting richer (Chen, X. Y., 2013), and, according to “Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining,” the author also pointed out that the customers who eat out spend more currently (Ziobro, P., 2010).

There is another reason we need to consider. Based on Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Chen, 2013), the gap between poor and wealthy people is increasing.

According to Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining (Ziobro, 2010), checks for big spenders raised 2.6% in recent quarter.
some adjustment of their pricing to earn more profit.

As the reference on Riell(1991), Slumping restaurant industry seeks new marketing ideas, they best way for Red Lobster to attract customer may hire some famous cooker or advisor to give them more information about how to keep their meal fresh and delicious, due to huge discount on disk was not permanent way and idea to attract customers.

Fifth, based on Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) say that “consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food or occasional expensive dishes” and “Without price reduction and promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount”.

According to Key benefits of a restaurant owning properties (Part 22), indicate a restaurant business that owns its own building is a bit different from a restaurant business that rents its buildings or lands.

By using BCG Matrix Carl W Stern, (George Stalk, 2006), it helps the company allocate resources and is used as an analytical tool in brand marketing, product management, strategic management, and portfolio analysis.

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Darden Analysis which based on the market analysis and where should Red Lobster be supports this recommendation. It stated: “Red Lobster brand could move up into upscale brands, like the Cheesecake Factory (CAKE)”. (Xun Yao Chen, 2013)

Promotion, according to Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) it mentioned, “Without price reduction and promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount. It looks like management understands they have to use promotions to attract customers. Most customers head out for a casual dining experience when they feel like treating themselves or there’s a promotion going on.”

In article Milford Prewitt (1997). Stymied by segment wide glut, leading dinner-house chains seek sales growth strategies. Red Lobster got highest ranking in food restaurants in the United State. (p.166)
Additionally, from “Darden analysis” by Chen describes the interesting information that the income distribution keeps going to be more widen.

As Paul Ziobro (2010) suggests that Red Lobster should increase the prices to cover for the additional expenses from the renovation, purchase of quality raw material, hire better floor staff, trainings and other operational expenses.

According to the research in 2004 conducted by Red Lobster’s marketing team, it showed that freshness and quality of the seafood was the most important factors for choosing a seafood restaurant (Bell & Riis, 2011, p.4).

Through the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)”, the author Chen, X. Y. (2013) pointed out that the US household’s income distribution between the upper level households and the lower level ones is widening and their overall income have decreased a little since 2005, when considered for inflation.

Based on Ziobro(2010), Proquest, Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter, this paper describe some survey about the customer’s paying behavior, customer would like to paid more 2.5% for a dish, thus Red lobster could made some adjustment of their pricing to earn more profit.

As the reference on Riell(1991), Slumping restaurant industry seeks new marketing ideas, they best way for Red Lobster to attract customer may hire some famous cooker or advisor to give them more information about how to keep their meal fresh and delicious, due to huge discount on disk was not permanent way and idea to attract customers.

By using BCG Matrix Carl W Stern, (George Stalk, 2006), it helps the company allocate resources and is used as an analytical tool in brand marketing, product management, strategic management, and portfolio analysis.

Additionally, Red Lobster has to aware restaurant in fast food industry(Xun Yao Chen ,2013), because their prices are cheaper but Red Lobster focus on premium food and it cannot win this war with the pricing.

According to Chen (2013b), “Red Lobster’s guest traffic count doesn’t heavily lean towards higher check and lower volume or low check and higher volume” (para. 4), Red Lobster’s current message in promotion have no meaning, instead of spending for promotion, they could use the budget for further experientials survey.
The criteria for evaluating the decision is driven by the marketing research studies of the segments, and purchase behavior after the initial plan was executed from the study case “Red Lobster” (Bell&Riis, 2011).

On the other hand, Chen (2013b) states “There probably isn’t enough market if all those restaurants are redesigned towards higher average check per guest” (para. 6).

Darden Analysis which based on the market analysis and where should Red Lobster be supports this recommendation. It stated: “Red Lobster brand could move up into upscale brands, like the Cheesecake Factory (CAKE)” (Xun Yao Chen, 2013)

Simply, it means when a company thinks that sticking with the current position will protect it from losing its market share (John S. Hammond, Ralph L. Keeney, and Howard Raiffa, 1998).

One study showed: “a pretty strong relationship between alcohol consumption and check per guest: the more a customer’s order is made up of alcohol, the higher the check” (Xun Yao Chen, 2013).

According to Bell (2011) “Red Lobster has been observing a decline in the customers; due to the facts like not having many varieties on the menu and other reason was they did not have a specific strategy to cater different customer segments and eventually they were losing from all ends”.

In addition, based on the Report Information from Big Spenders Ald Casual-Dining Restaurant by Paul Ziobro, he referred“ fewer customers are eating out, but those who do are spending a bit more, leading to more profitable sales for casual-dining restaurants.(p.1)”

According to Riell(1991), Slumping restaurant industry seeks new marketing ideas, price reduction, free foods are some ideas that are not fresh enough to attract customers.

According to Ziobro(2010), Proquest, Big Spenders Aid Casual-Dining Restaurants --- Owner of Olive Garden, Red Lobster and Longhorn, Says Average Check Increased 2.6% for Industry in Recent Quarter (p.1), they found out the trend that customers are willing to pay 2.5% higher than regular price.

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In addition, as exhibit 1 shows,”experientials” spend greatly, especially on fine wine which generally has larger margin, and represent a large portion of Red Lobster customers(Bell, D. E., & Riis, J., 2010, p.9).

According to Bell and Riis (2010)“Red Lobster” case, Red Lobster, a chains of seafood restaurant, has conducted a modification since 2004.

According to Red Lobster Summary of Segments Identified in2008 Market Research Study, experientials are customers who most frequently go to the restaurants and have meals (Bill & Rils,2011).

There is another reason we need to consider. Based on Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Chen, 2013), the gap between poor and wealthy people is increasing.

According to Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining (Ziobro, 2010), checks for big spenders raised 2.6% in recent quarter.

Bill and Rils (2010), stated that experientials are motivated by sophisticated and upscale atmosphere (p.8).

Fifth, based on Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) say that “consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food or occasional expensive dishes” and “Without price reduction and promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount”.

According to Key benefits of a restaurant owning properties (Part 22), indicate a restaurant business that owns its own building is a bit different from a restaurant business that rents its buildings or lands.

According to Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining (Ziobro, 2010), checks for big spenders raised 2.6% in recent quarter.
menu and other reason was they did not have a specific strategy to cater different customer segments and eventually they were losing from all ends”.

The company was thought of as “a dated chain that served cheap, frozen, mass-produced seafood.”

Promotion, according to Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12) it mentioned, “Without price reduction and promotions, investors likely would have seen guest count fall by a larger amount. It looks like management understands they have to use promotions to attract customers. Most customers head out for a casual dining experience when they feel like treating themselves or there’s a promotion going on.”

Xun Yao Chen (2013) analyzed that “the difference in household income has going wide (refer to the below chart, Middle Class Income Spread).

Paul Ziobro (2013) said that “the rise in the average bill in recent months has pleasantly surprised restaurant companies and reflects less aggressive discounts, moderate menu price increases and customers ordering more expensive entrees” (n/a).

In discriminated recipes and foods, pricing is not burden of budget from people in “Experientials”. In Darden analysis. Retrieved from http://marketrealist.com/2013/10/darden-analysis-darden-must-increase-decrease-average-check, “An increase in spread means the income distribution is widening, which is what we’ve been seeing.”

This “bargain-hunters” should not be targeted anymore since they are not profitable customers because they aim to order only promoted menu items (Ziobro, 2010).

The modification included three phases, which are the improvement of operation, re-positioning the restaurant image from misconstrued “cheap, frozen, mass-produced” image to “freshness,” and re-modeling the interior as well as the exterior of restaurants to present a fresh, good quality image.

Given that Red Lobster has been implementing the three-phase modification to improve the image of the restaurant, it is a good chance to exploit this existing program to change the image from “approachable seafood” to “fresh and good quality seafood”, which will only have little additional cost.
Additionally, Red Lobster has to aware restaurant in fast food industry (Xun Yao Chen, 2013), because their prices are cheaper but Red Lobster focus on premium food and it cannot win this war with the pricing.

Darden Analysis which based on the market analysis and where should Red Lobster be supports this recommendation. It stated: “Red Lobster brand could move up into upscale brands, like the Cheesecake Factory (CAKE)” (Xun Yao Chen, 2013)

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One study showed: “a pretty strong relationship between alcohol consumption and check per guest: the more a customer’s order is made up of alcohol, the higher the check” (Xun Yao Chen, 2013).

It is reported that although the number of people who used to eat outside is decreasing, they are willing to spend more when eating outside (Ziobro, P., 2010), and also the rich people are getting richer (Chen, X. Y., 2013).

According to the recent customer segmentation study in the Bell, D. E., & Riis, J. (2010)’s article, a large segment of Red Lobster’s customers was not, as believed until now, the lover of affordable seafood, but the people who want to enjoy seafood to celebrate occasions with family, friend and colleagues.

Through the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)”, the author Chen, X. Y. (2013) pointed out that the US household’s income distribution between the upper level households and the lower level ones is widening and their overall income have decreased a little since 2005, when considered for inflation.

In addition to that, Ziobro, P. (2010) showed that today, fewer people were enjoying eating-out in the US.

As Chen, X.Y. (2013) recommended briefly, it is impeccable time that Red Lobster becomes upscale restaurant by coming out of current customer and positioning, which is not optional but necessary to maintain sustainable growth.

In addition, as exhibit 1 shows,”experientials” spend greatly, especially on fine wine which generally has larger margin, and represent a large portion of Red Lobster customers (Bell, D. E., & Riis, J., 2010, p.9).
In addition, according to “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check,” the author concluded that the wealthier people are getting richer (Chen, X. Y., 2013), and, according to “Big Spenders Aid Casual Dining,” the author also pointed out that the customers who eat out spend more currently (Ziobro, P., 2010).

| Failure to quote verbatim borrowings | According to the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)” (Market Realist, 2013, p.1) and “Report Information from ProQuest” (ProQuest, 2010, p.3). An increase in spread means the income distribution is widening. If household income starts to grow again, then restaurants that serve the middle market could benefit. However, as long as the income distribution continues to widen, consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food, or occasional expensive dishes. (verbatim borrowing from the source) |
| Incorrect identification of elements to be included in in-text citations | According to the article “Darden analysis: Darden must increase or decrease average check (Part 12)” (Market Realist, 2013, p.1) and “Report Information from ProQuest” (ProQuest, 2010, p.3). An increase in spread means the income distribution is widening. If household income starts to grow again, then restaurants that serve the middle market could benefit. However, as long as the income distribution continues to widen, consumers will flock to eating affordable but decent food, or occasional expensive dishes.

In addition, Market Realist clarified that average check per guest and alcohol sales in casual restaurants have the relationship of a linear function (as cited in Chen, 2013c, graph1).

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While one might ask “if the remodels are successful, why not move things along more quickly” (p. 11), the answer is that changing all 690
locations simultaneously is too risky because it will require a great amount of capital, so it is better to trigger the project carefully.

Red Lobster’s case (Bell & Riis, 2011) is to make a decision that how to set up Red Lobster’s marketing strategy in seafood restaurant industry to enhance competitiveness its market.

According to Purchase Behavior of Segment Identified (Bell & Riis, 2011), two types customer generally spent their money for eating over $22 per meal.

Lastly, Red lobster should target re-positioning premium restaurant because low cost strategy does not help Red Lobster increase sales. According to Report Information (Paul, 2010), although Darden’s Red Lobster chain decrease the menu price by promotion, Red Lobster same store sales was not increase in promotion period.

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<table>
<thead>
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