Departing from Punishing Plagiarism:  
Toward Addressing Ineffective Source Use Pedagogically

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Context

A workshop prepared for university/college writing instructors whose classes include second language (L2) writers.

Objectives

The main objectives of the workshop and provided materials are to:
1. help teachers understand the complexity surrounding source use, especially in the case of second language writers;
2. problematize the punitive approach to dealing with ineffective textual borrowing;
3. discuss the spectrum of textual borrowing strategies in student writing, ranging from direct, unattributed copying to effective textual borrowing;
4. provide teachers with effective and non-punitive ways of responding to problematic textual borrowing.

Time

90 minutes-2 hours

Materials

- Video link (http://youtu.be/tEskWSfrwzo)
- Excerpts with textual borrowing examples (see Appendix 1 below)
- Evaluation forms (see Evaluation form below)

Workshop Activities

Note: Instructions are directed to the workshop leader.

INTRODUCTION (15-20 min.)

Introduction and Activating Participants’ Background Knowledge
- Brief introductions (if more than 20 teachers attend, consider taking a poll rather than going around. (5-7 min.)
- Freewriting task (6-7 min.). Have participants answer the following questions, emphasizing that free writing prose or random bullets are sufficient.
  - When you hear “source use” what comes to mind?
  - What do you do in your course to help students avoid plagiarism?
- Have participants share one thought from their freewriting with a partner (2 min.)
- Encourage three volunteers to share with other participants. Segue into discussion on the workshop objectives and structure. (4 min.)

MAIN WORKSHOP CONTENT (75 min.)

Arranging Source Use along a Continuum of “Appropriateness” (25-35 min.)

- Elicit from instructors what the characteristics of a well-used source in student writing are (e.g. well-integrated with student’s own ideas, attributed to the original source, etc.) Write these ideas on one end of the wall under the heading “Effective source use.” Elicit what constitutes the worst possible offense when it comes to using sources (unattributed copying and pasting). Write that on the other side of the board under the heading “ineffective use of sources”.
- Tell instructors that they will now work in groups to examine the variety of textual borrowing strategies on the continuum between completely ineffective and desirable/effective source use.
- Each group gets an excerpt from a student paper (Hiroki’s in this case) and an original source upon which the excerpt draws (See Appendix 1)
- Attendees compare the student text against the source text and discuss with group members the textual borrowing strategies that the student is using. They place their excerpt on a spectrum on the board (One side should say “unattributed copying” and the other side “effective source use”.
- Once all the groups have placed their excerpts on the board, lead a brief discussion on which of the strategies may be acceptable to the teachers and which are not.
- Allow participants to ask questions and/or make comments, share observations etc.

Responding to Problematic Source Use (40-50 min.)

Think-pair-share (6 min.)
- Ask participants to discuss the following questions (if pressed for time, do these more as a poll—how many instructors would do X?)
  a. How would you respond to a paper with several instances of unattributed copying and pasting? Would you report a student like this to the academic honesty committee/fail a student on the assignment/arrange a meeting with a student to talk about it? Are there any other ways you’d respond to a paper like this?
b. Turnitin actually gives a green light on a paper that is 21% “plagiarized.” How do you feel about that?
c. Why do so many American instructors react so strongly when they come across a paper that they label as “plagiarized”?

Video (30-40 min.)
• Attendees watch a short video in which a teacher responds to the paper that the workshop attendees just examined in a student-teacher writing conference context. There are two scenarios: the first is punitively oriented while the second one is pedagogically oriented.
• Pause after scenario 1 to take a few comments and longer after scenario 2 to see what participants got out it.
• Allow time for comments and questions
• If time allows, encourage participants to brainstorm non-punitive language choices that they can use when responding to a paper like Hiroki’s and role-play a teacher-student conference. Ask volunteers to share.

WORKSHOP ASSESSMENT (3-10 min.)
• Workshop leader asks participants to complete this sentence. When I respond to instances of extensive copying in an L2 writer’s text, I will always/never....
• Collect. If time, take a few example answers, questions, and comments.

WORKSHOP REFLECTION AND EVALUATION (10 min.)

Workshop Evaluation—attendees fill out a brief evaluation form (see attached). Instructor collects and is available for one-on-one questions.
ANONYMOUS WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

List one or two things that were particularly useful to you in this workshop.

List one or two things that I could do to further improve this workshop.

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Appendix 1

**TASK:** Consider how Hiroki uses the wording of original sources (in boxes below) in the excerpts from his paper. Compare Hiroki’s source use against the original texts. Discuss where on the spectrum of effective source use the excerpt falls and place it on the board alongside the spectrum. You can list your reasons in bullet points at the bottom of your paper.

**From Frame, 2004, p. 221**

> All couples face specific challenges in their marital relationships, however, couples with divergent cultural backgrounds and values may find that these issues are exacerbated.

Marriage life and conflict with partner cannot be separated in any marriages. Every couple has various problems about the partner. However, in case of intercultural marriage couples, they are more likely to face hardships or conflicts than monocultural couples.
Over the last three decades there has been an unprecedented increase in interracial and intercultural marriages (Chan & Smith, 1995; Ibrahim & Shroeder, 1990.) In fact, the rate of immigrants to the US is over 1.2 million people a year (Camarota, 2001). Intermarriage is occurring in more than 50% of American couples and 33 million people live in homes where at least one other adult has a different religious tradition (McGoldrick & Gioranom 1996).

According to Frame (2004), intercultural marriages has been an unprecedented increase. The rate of immigrants to the US is over 1.2 million people every year. Intermarriage is occurring in more than half of couples.
Lia, a Chinese American is often frustrated with Danny, her Caucasian husband because she believes that he does not always understand what she says to him. Danny claims he makes extra effort to communicate clearly with Lia, however, the fact that English is Lia’s second language poses some special difficulties. Danny says that Lia does not always understand his humor and therefore, sometimes fails to laugh at his jokes or to realize when he is teasing her. On the other hand, Lia feels that when they argue, Danny has the upper hand because he is more proficient in English than she.

According to Frame (2004), the paper illustrates the example story, the story about Chinese American women and her Caucasian husband. She is likely to doubt her husband understands what she said every time in English. In addition, no matter how her husband endeavored to communicate with her clearly, She still has hard time to grasp his cultural speeches such as jokes, slangs or idioms. To make matter worse, she feels disadvantage when she argues with his husband in English because English is not her first language (Frame, 2004, p.225). Language is one of the most common problems intercultural marriages.
Culture plays an important role in nonverbal communication, and it is one aspect that helps to influence how learning activities are organized. In many Indigenous American Communities, for example, there is often an emphasis on nonverbal communication, which acts as a valued means by which children learn. In this sense, learning is not dependent on verbal communication; rather, it is nonverbal communication which serves as a primary means of not only organizing interpersonal interactions, but conveying cultural values, and children learn how to participate in this system from a young age.[3]

Basically, there are two types of communications: verbal and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication is communication, which is operated by means of speaking in other words; verbal communication is based on language. On the other hand, non-verbal communication is communication, which convey meaning through behaviors, facial expressions, eye contacts and body languages etc. Culture plays an important role in nonverbal communication, and it is one aspect that helps to influence how learning activities are organized. In many cultures, for example, there is often an emphasis on nonverbal communication, which acts as a valued means by which children learn. In this sense, learning is not dependent on verbal communication; rather, it is nonverbal communication which serves as a primary means of not only organizing interpersonal interactions, but conveying cultural values, and children learn how to participate in this system from a young age. In other words, each culture has different meaning in certain behavior. Meaning of nonverbal communication based on culture too.
An underlying concept for work with intercultural couples should be a respectful stance of learning about a particular couple’s experience, and their view of their challenges. The findings in this study support the idea that not all intercultural couples face the same stressors and experiences as they merge two cultures into their relationship. Clinicians must be careful to work on problems the client has identified as problems, and not commonly held beliefs or stereotypes. A client as the expert stance will allow the clinician to learn not only what might be helpful to a particular couple, but will also set up the couple up to constructively look at what strengths and resources they can bring to their problem solving.

If partners can’t find solution they must find a psychologist or counselor to help them. An underlying concept for work with intercultural couples should be a respectful stance of learning about a particular couple’s experience, and their view of their challenges. The findings in study support the idea that not all intercultural couples face the same stressors and experiences as they merge two cultures into their relationship. Psychologists must be careful to work on problems the client has identified as problems, and not commonly held beliefs or stereotypes. A client as the expert. stance will allow the clinician to learn not only what might be helpful to a particular couple, but will also set up the couple up to constructively look at what strengths and resources they can bring to their problem solving.
From Donovan, 2004

This study found that the perceptions successful couples had about themselves and their relationship heavily impacted whether or not they viewed a particular stressor as such. The themes of seeing similarities between the spouses, learning about each partner’s culture, supporting each other, personal preparation, and seeking out support from others are all areas around which clinicians can focus conversations. As clients recognize what strengths they have in these areas, these strengths can be utilized and supported in interventions which work to build up resources available to the couple. As the positive aspects of intercultural relationships are explored and discussed, clinicians can work with couples to find and take advantage of the unique strengths and resources they have as a result of their different cultural backgrounds.

Research also shows that successful partners have good perceptions about themselves and their relationship like being focus on similarities between the spouses, learning about each partners culture, supporting each other, personal preparation, and looking for support from others help psychologists to help marriages that are not successful. As partners recognize what strengths they have in these areas, they can use these strengths in interventions which work to build up resources available to the couple. Psychologists can work with couples to find and take advantage of the unique strengths and resources they have because of their different cultural backgrounds.
References


