Conceptualisations of and Responses to

Plagiarism in the South African Higher Education System

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Abstract

Violations of academic integrity are a cause for concern in universities around the world and plagiarism is one of the most significant examples of these academic integrity issues with which universities are grappling. The approach taken to managing plagiarism depends to a large extent on the understanding of the phenomenon within institutions. This study investigated how plagiarism is conceptualised and responded to in the South African Higher Education system and how this impacts on teaching and learning. Data was collected from 25 out of the 26 South African public universities; the missing university had just been established and did not yet have policies or processes in place. The data was primarily in the form of documents known in these institutions as 'plagiarism policies', along with a wealth of other related policies and reports. This was supplemented by interviews as a means of verifying the document analysis with seven plagiarism committee members from across the three institutional types in South Africa, namely: traditional universities, comprehensive universities, and universities of technology. Using Bhaskar's (2008) critical realism as a metatheory and Archer's (1995) social realism as both a substantive theory and analytical framework, the experiences and events of plagiarism management were critically examined. Critical realism considers these experiences and events at the level of the empirical and the actual, in order to identify the mechanisms at the level of the real from which these emerge. Social realism argues that when undertaking such an analysis in the social world, this entails identifying the emergent properties of both the parts (structure and culture) and people (agents). Therefore, the data was analysed using Archer's analytical dualism to identify structural, cultural and agential mechanisms shaping the understanding of plagiarism and the practices associated with managing the phenomenon.

The study found that dominant in the sector was an understanding of plagiarism as always being an intentional act, with implications for teaching and learning practices, which then focused on identifying and punishing incidents of plagiarism in student writing. A legal discourse was found to permeate the universities' plagiarism management systems, such that most procedures replicated the legal framework. This was seen to undermine the identity of universities as teaching and learning spaces and of students as novice members of the disciplinary fields. The study further

highlighted that due to plagiarism being perceived as an intentional act, punishment in almost all universities is prioritised as the key means of attending to plagiarism in these institutions. This emerged as a structural constraint to students' acquisition of academic writing norms. Such understandings and approaches were seen to be complementary to the risk-aversion of many institutions in a globalised era of university rankings. As increased bureaucracy has been put in place to attend to incidents of plagiarism, including obligatory reporting thereof, an unintentional consequence emerged, where it was at times simpler for academics to ignore incidences of plagiarism than to act on them.

Turnitin was frequently referred to across the data as the preferred text-matching tool, but Turnitin together with other text-matching tools, was often used in a way that complemented the understanding of plagiarism as always being an intentional act. The study found that text-matching software was largely misunderstood to be plagiarism software, where the similarity index was perceived to be a measure of plagiarism. This led to an understanding that students needed to paraphrase texts in order to avoid detection by the programme, and this may inadvertently encourage plagiarism, as students are taught to write towards the software.

The research found that in those instances where educational responses to plagiarism were in place, they often demonstrated a lack of understanding of academic literacies development and the extent to which norms of knowledge production are disciplinary specific. Most (but not all) of the data about educational responses focused on add-on workshops and the signing of a declaration form, indicating that the student has not plagiarised. The workshops were seen to emphasise technical skills, such as the punctuation norms of referencing, and were often offered in a generic format by people outside of the target disciplines. These workshops were found to ignore the connection between the technical skills of referencing and the norms of knowledge construction, with a potential deleterious effect on the development of authorial identity.

Finally, the data showed a few instances where particular institutions acknowledged that plagiarism occurs along a continuum, where on one side is intentional plagiarism associated with cheating and requiring punishment, and on the other side is unintentional plagiarism, which is understood to require an educational response, and was seen to emerge from either a lack of understanding of academic literacy norms, or from negligence. Literacy development with regard

to taking on the norms of knowledge-making in the academy was seen to be a complex and lengthy process that was fundamental to educational endeavours of facilitating epistemological access, while cases of negligence were seen to be mainly caused by technical oversight rather than a lack of access to the relevant knowledge production norms.

The study concludes by arguing that cases of intentional plagiarism require quick and appropriate punishment, but that there also needs to be an institution-wide understanding that unintentional plagiarism often emerges from students failing to access the specific knowledge-making norms of the discipline. There is thus a need for academics to be aware of the complexities related to taking on literacy practices, and who also understand the role of feedback in this process. But it ought not to be assumed that academics would have such insights simply by virtue of their expertise in the discipline. These academics need to have carefully constructed staff development support, as they take on such pedagogical approaches.

The study argues that the dominant conceptualisation of plagiarism in the domain of culture as an intentional act and the complementary policies and processes in the domain of structure as focusing on detecting and punishing incidents of plagiarism, fail to address plagiarism in appropriate educational ways.

SEGOPOLWA

(Abstract translated into Sepedi language)

Ditlolo tša botshepegi bja dithuto ke tlhobaelo e kgolo kudu ka mo diyunibesithing go ralala le lefase e bile go utswa ga dikgopolo (plagiarism) ke se sengwe se bohlokwa kudu go ditaba tša botshepegi bja dithuto, tšeo diyunibesithi di šoganago le tšona. Mokgwa wo o tšerwego go laola go utšwa ga dikgopolo o ithekgile kudu tabeng ya go kwešiša tiragalo ka mo ditheong. Thuto ye e nyakišišitše gore go utswa ga dikgopolo go kwešišwa le go laolwa bjang ka go lenaneo la Thuto ya Godimo ka Afrika Borwa le gore se se huetša bjang go ruta le go ithuta.

Tshedimošo e kgobokeditšwe go tšwa go diyunibesithi tša mmušo tša Afrika Borwa tše 25 go tšwa go tše 26, yunibesithi yeo e sego gona ke yeo e sa tšwago go hlongwa e bile e be e se na dipholisi goba ditshepedišo tšeo di lego gona. Tshedimošo e gabotse e be e le ka sebopego sa dingwalwa tšeo di tsebegago ka gare ga ditheo tše, bjalo ka 'dipholisi tša go utswa ga dikgopolo', gammogo le bontši bja dipholisi le dipego tše dingwe tša maleba. Se se ile sa tlaleletšwa ka dipoledišano le maloko a šupago a komiti ya go utswa ga dikgopolo go tšwa go mehuta e meraro ya ditheo ka mo Afrika Borwa: diyunibesithi tša tlwaelo, diyunibesithi tša kakaretšo le diyunibesithi tša theknolotši, bjalo ka mekgwa ya go tiišetša tshekatsheko ya dingwalwa. Ke šomiša Tirišo ya Tshekatsheko (Critical Realism) ya Bhaskar (2008) bjalo ka teori ya nyakišišo le Tirišo ya Leago (Social Realism) ya Archer (1995) bjalo ka teori ya tšhomišego le ya tlhako ya tshekatshekego, maitemogelo le ditiragalo tša taolo ya go utswa ga dikgopolo di ile tša lekolwa ka tsitsinkelo. Tirišo ya Tshekatsheko (Critical Realism) e hlokometše maitemogelo le ditiragalo mo maemong a Tirišo le a Bonnete gore o kgone go šupa mekgwanakgwana mo maemong a Bonnete go tšwa mo di tšwelelago gona. Tirišo ya Leago (Social Realism) e bolela gore ge o dira tshekatsheko e bjalo ka go lefase la leago, se se akaretša go hlatha dilo tšeo di tšwelelago bobedi dikarolo (sebopego le setšo) le batho (baemedi). Ka gona, tshedimošo e ile ya sekasekwa go šomišwa tshekatsheko ya mokgwabobedi ya Archer go hlatha sebopego, setšo le mekgwana ya boemedi yeo e betlago kwešišo ya go utswa ga dikgopolo le ditiro tše dingwe tšeo di amanago le go laola tiragalo.

Nyakišišo ye e hweditše gore seo e lego se sentši ka go lefapha le ke kwešišo ya go utswa ga dikgopolo bjalo ka tiro yeo e lego ya maikemišetšo ka mehla, le ditlamorago tša ditlwaelo tša go ruta le go ithuta, tšeo di tsepeletšego go hlatha le go otla ditiragalo tša go utswa ga dikgopolo ka

go dingwalwa tša baithuti. Ngangišano ya semolao e ile ya hwetšwa go tsenya ditshepedišo tša diyunibesithi tša taolo ya go utswa ga dikgopolo go fihla moo e lego gore bontši bja ditshepedišo bo boeleditše tlhako ya semolao. Se se ile sa bonwa e le go nyatša boitšhupo bja diyunibesithi bjalo ka mafelo a go ruta le go ithuta le go ba a baithuti bjalo ka maloko a bahlahliwa ba mafapha a dithuto. Nyakišišo ye e tšwetšepele go gatelela gore ka lebaka la go utswa ga dikgopolo ge go bonwa bjalo ka tiro ya maikemišetšo, kotlo ka mo diyunibesithing moo e nyakilego go ba ka mo go tšona ka moka go beilwego pele bjalo ka mokgwa o bohlokwa go šogana le go utswa ga dikgopolo ka mo ditheong. Se se tšweletše bjalo ka sebopego sa lepheko go baithuti go hwetša ditlwaelo tša go ngwala tša thuto. Dikwešišo le mekgwa e bjalo di be di bonwa ka tlaleletšo go tšhabo ya kotsi ya ditheo tše dintši ka mo pakeng ya lefase ya maemo a diyunibesithi. Ge taolo ye e okeditšwego e hlongwa go tlo šogana le ditiragalo tša go utswa ga dikgopolo, go akaretša le go bega ga kgapeletšo gona moo, ditlamorago tšeo e bego e se tša maikemišetšo di a tšwelela moo e lego gore ka dinako tše dingwe go be go e ba bonolo go dirutegi go ka hlokomologa ditiragalo tša go utswa ga dikgopolo.

Turnitin gantši go boletšwe ka yona ka mo go tshedimošo bjalo ka sedirišwa seo se ratwago sa go tswalanya sengwalwa, eupša Turnitin mmogo le didirišwa tše dingwe tša go tswalanya sengwalwa gantši di be di šomišwa ka tsela yeo e bego e thekga kgopolo ya go utswa ga dikgopolo bjalo ka tiro ya maikemišetšo ka dinako tšohle. Nyakišišo e hweditše gore softwere ya go tswalanya sengwalwa go be go kwešišwa kudu gore ke softwere ya go utswa ga dikgopolo, moo tšhupaboteng ya tshwano e bego e bonwa e le mokgwa wa thwii wa go utswa ga dikgopolo. Se se hlotše kwešišo ya gore baithuti e be ba nyaka go akaretša dingwalwa gore ba široge kutullo ka softwere e bile se se ka no hlohleletša ka maikemišetšo go utswa ga dikgopolo bjalo ka ge baithuti ba rutwa go ngwala kgahlanong le softwere.

Nyakišišo e hweditše gore go maemo ao diphetolo tša thuto go go utswa ga dikgopolo go lego gona, gantši di bontšhitše go hloka kwešišo ya tlhabollo ya go bala le go ngwala ka dithutong le bogolo bja gore ditlwaelo tša tšweletšo ya tsebo ke tša kgalemo ye e itšeng. Bontši (eupša e sego ka moka) bja tshedimošo ka ga diphetolo tša thuto di tsepeletše go ditlaleletšo tša diwekšopo le go saena ga fomo ya tiišetšo yeo e laetšago gore moithuti ga se a utswa dikgopolo. Diwekšopo di bonwe e le tša go gatelela bokgoni bja theknikale bjalo ka ditlwaelo tša tshwao ya go šupetša e

bile gantši e be di abiwa ka sebopego sa kakaretšo ke batho bao e sego ba dithuto tšeo di lebeletšwego. Diwekšopo tše go hweditšwe gore di hlokomologa kgokagano magareng ga bokgoni bja theknikale bja go šupetša le ditlwaelo tša kago ya tsebo ka khuetšo ya bokamoso go tlhabollo ya boitšhupo bja go ba mongwadi.

La bofelo, tshedimošo e bontšhitše maemo a mmalwanyana moo ditheo tše itšeng di dumetšego go ba gona ga go utswa ga dikgopolo ka go fapana, mola ka lehlakoreng le lengwe go utswa ga dikgopolo ka maikemišetšo go amanywa le go se tshepagale e bile go nyaka kotlo, e bile ka lehlakoreng le lengwe ke go utswa ga dikgopolo mo e sego ga maikemišetšo, moo go kwešišwago gore go nyakwa phetolo ya thuto e bile go bonwe o ka re go tšwa go go hloka kwešišo goba go tšwa go bošaedi. Tlhaelelo ya kwešišo e hlalošitšwe bjalo ka tlhaelelo ya khwetšo ya ditlwaelo tša tlhamo ya tsebo ka go tša thuto. Tlhabollo ya go ngwala le go bala mo maemong a e bonwe e le yeo e raraganego e bile e le tshepedišo e telele yeo e lego motheo go maitekelo a thuto a go nolofatša phihlelelo go teori ya tsebo. Maemo a bošaedi a dumetšwe ka gare ga tshedimošo gore a hlola ke tlhokomelo ya theknikale e sego tlhaelelo ya phihlelelo go ditlwaelo tša maleba tša tšweletšo ya tsebo.

Nyakišišo ye e fetša ka go fahlela ka gore melato ya go utswa ga dikgopolo ka maikemišetšo e nyaka kotlo ya ka pela ya maleba eupša gape le gore go nyakega gore go be le kwešišo yeo e nabilego ya setheo gore go utswa ga dikgopolo ka maikemišetšo gantši go tšwelela go baithuti bao ba palelwago ke go fihlelela ditlwaelo tša tšweletšo ya tsebo ye e itšeng ya thuto ye itšeng. Ka gona go na le nyakego go dirutegi tšeo di tsebago ka ga mathata ao a nyalelanago le go šogana le ditiro tša go ngwala le go bala bao ba kwešišago mošomo wa go fana ka pego ka go tshepedišo ye. Eupša a se gwa swanela go nagelwa gore dirutegi di tla ba le tsebo e bjalo ka gore ba na le bokgoni ka go thuto yeo. Dirutegi tše go nyakega gore go be le thekgo yeo e hlamilwego ka šedi ya tlhabollo ya bašomi ge ba šogana le mekgwa ye.

Nyakišišo ye e hlagiša gore kgopolo ye e tseneletšego ya go utswa ga dikgopolo ka go legoro la setšo bjalo ka tiro ya maikemišetšo le dipholisi tša tlaleletšo le ditshepedišo ka go legoro la sebopego bjalo ka ge go tsepelela go utolla le go otla ditiragalo tša go utswa ga dikgopolo go palelwa ke go rarolla go utswa ga dikgopolo ka ditsela tša maleba tša thuto.

Publications and Conferences

Aspects of this study have been presented at the following conferences:

- ICED-HELTASA Conference 22-25 November 2016, Cape Town, South Africa. Title: *How the South African Higher Education System conceptualises and responds to plagiarism*.
- Rhodes University PhD Conference, 18-20 October 2017, Grahamstown, South Africa. Title: *Plagiarism: Criminal Intent or Incompetence*?
- 4th International Conference Plagiarism across Europe and Beyond 2018, 9-11 May 2018 Ephesus, Turkey, Title: *Plagiarism in Higher Education: Discarding a common-sense understanding.*
- Radio Interview on *Cape Talk/702* on 14 August 2015 date https://soundcloud.com/primediabroadcasting/amanda-mphahlele-talking-about-policing-plagiarism
- Seminar presentation: Academic Integrity Seminar, University of Johannesburg, 31 July 2018, Topic: *Plagiarism practices and responses by education institutions*.
- Seminar presentation: Centre for Academic Technologies, University of Johannesburg, 08 October 2015, Topic: *Turnitin as a pedagogic tool to manage plagiarism*.

Aspects of this study have been published in the following:

- Online articles in *The Conversation*.

McKenna, S., & Mphahlele, A. (2015). *Policing plagiarism could make universities miss real problems*. Available online at http://theconversation.com/policing-plagiarism-could-make-universities-miss-the-real-problems-45172

Mphahlele, A., & McKenna, S. (2019). *Universities must stop relying on software to deal with plagiarism*. Available online at https://theconversation.com/universities-must-stop-relying-on-software-to-deal-with-plagiarism-113487

- Book chapters:

Mphahlele, A., & McKenna, S. (2018). Plagiarism in the South African Higher Education system: Discarding a common-sense understanding. In S. Razı, I. Glendinning, & T. Foltýnek (Eds.), *Towards consistency and transparency in academic integrity*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

- Journal articles:

Mphahlele, A., & McKenna, S. (2019). The use of Turnitin in the higher education sector: Decoding the Myth. *Assessments and Evaluation in Higher Education Studies*, *44*(7), 1079-1089. doi:10.1080/02602938.2019.1573971

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List of Acronyms

APFEI -	Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity
BRICS -	Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa
CR -	Critical Realism
DoE -	Department of Education
DHET -	Department of Higher Education and Training
EAIP -	Exemplary Academic Integrity Project
HAI -	Historically advantaged institution
HDI -	Historically disadvantaged institution
HoD -	Head of Department
NRF -	National Research Fund
SADC -	Southern African Development Community
SAHE -	South African Higher Education
SR -	Social Realism
UoT-	University of Technology

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Integrity in higher education is fundamental to teaching, learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge. It is crucial to every countenance of the educational process and failure to demonstrate integrity by higher education institutions may affect their credibility as bodies that grant academic qualifications. Around the world, common breaches of integrity are considered an extensive challenge for institutions of higher learning (MacDonald & Carroll, 2006; Mansoorizadeh, Rahgooy, & Hamedan, 2016; Shrivastava, 2017).

Within the broad arena of academic integrity come a number of key issues. These include such problems as the falsification of data (Adeleye & Adebamowo, 2012), the inclusion of honorary authorships where the "author is listed without having fulfilled the usual requirements to justify their inclusion" (Vaux, 2018, p. 901), and others. Contract cheating, for example, which is defined as the "submission of work by students for academic credit which the students have paid contractors to write for them", is another growing concern in the literature (Clarke & Lancaster, 2006, p. 1). Within these many ethical considerations, is the issue of plagiarism, which is addressed in this thesis. While the definition of plagiarism is dealt with in more depth in the next chapter, for now we can essentially define it as "presenting the work or ideas of others as original, without acknowledgement" (Powell, 2012, p. 3).

The concern about the prevalence of plagiarism is not evident only within the higher education sector. The media also draws attention to the issue, with frequent stories making news headlines which portray plagiarism as a 'scandal', or as Hunt has aptly put it, "the headlines leap across the tabloids like stories on child molestation by alien invaders" (2002, p. 1). Media stories that raised a stir in the past in this regard include the Arizona State University professor who resigned because he was accused of plagiarism (Ryman, 2017); the Australian students who were kicked out for 'contract cheating' (Jacks, 2016); the South African academics from North West University who were accused of 'stealing work' (Fengu, 2017), and many others. Such frequent reports not only

raise a concern about the integrity of higher education at large, but also bear serious consequences for the individuals involved.

It is not only higher education that experiences such challenges; other sectors are also affected. For instance, politicians are regularly forced to resign over incidents of plagiarism (Kotch, 2008); journalists are fired (Wemple, 2014), and artists are blamed for enjoying unfair economic benefits off the work of others (Plaugic, 2015). There is no doubt that plagiarism threatens universities' trustworthiness as producers of knowledge, and as places in which young thinkers are educated, and this undermines the quality and value of education itself (Maruca, 2006). Plagiarism has been described as "the worm of reason" (Kolich, 1983, p. 141), the "scourge of academic life" (Angélil-Carter, 2000, p. 3), and "the nemesis of originality" (Sutherland-Smith, 2005, p. 1). A corresponding perception is that it is an "academic felony" (Laird, 2001, p. 56). It is thus of great concern to understand how it is conceptualised and managed in universities.

Additionally, research affirms that despite advanced plagiarism detection technologies and punitive measures being instituted by institutions against plagiarising students, plagiarism is still regarded as a considerable challenge for institutions of higher learning (MacDonald & Carroll, 2006; Magaisa, 2013). The literature suggests that a range of issues of academic integrity remain of utmost concern in the higher education sector. A survey of American college students conducted by Pew Research Center in 2011 revealed that over the previous 10 years, plagiarism in students' writing increased by 55 percent. Numerous cases of contract cheating were also reported in various Australian universities (Vicenti, 2015), whereby the majority of students admitted they bought their assignments. As a result, two students were expelled and 70 faced severe penalties. A large-scale survey undertaken in Australia found that though few students admitted to have been engaged in contract cheating (only 814 out of a total of 14 086), 68% of their teachers suspected unoriginality in students' work, and when further investigations are often done, for the most part "their cases are substantiated 90 to 100% of the time" (Harper, Bretag, Burton, Newton, Ellis, Rozenberg…Haeringen, 2018, p. 26). From a European context, a large-scale survey of 80 000 students and 12 000 faculty members reported a significant rise in cheating behaviour in US and Canadian higher education institutions (McCabe, 2005). Glendinning (2014) reviewed plagiarism policies across European universities and arrived at the conclusion that many institutions have

poorly developed policies. The discussion on plagiarism policies is further expanded in Section 3.4.

This evidence on the current trends on plagiarism and increased concerns about its effect on higher education quality are driving rationales for this study. There is not much by way of research into how plagiarism is understood or handled in the South African Higher Education (SAHE) sector and there was a need to focus in on that issue. This thesis is a small contribution towards studies that are needed to interrogate the issue within the country. At a more micro level, my interest in undertaking research into issues of plagiarism in SAHE emerges from my former role, where I was employed as a teaching and learning consultant tasked with administering Turnitin software. It was evident that there was not much understanding about what the software could and could not do, and there was a sense that plagiarism could be addressed outside of the curriculum. Furthermore, in my current role as an academic in a comprehensive university in South Africa, I have been exposed to frequent acts of plagiarism amongst students, as well as confusion amongst students and academic staff as to what constitutes plagiarism, and how to manage it. In the context of the continued prevalence of plagiarism and the uncertainties concerning the concept, the aim of this study is to investigate how plagiarism is understood and handled in institutions of higher learning and how these views and responses affect teaching and learning practices.

1.2 The context of higher education

The academic field is shaped and governed by policies and procedures (Sutherland-Smith, 2013a), with the aim of directing individuals in how to behave in a particular setting (O'Regan, 2006). The existence of policies about teaching and learning matters such as plagiarism, not only indicate how seriously institutions regard issues of misconduct (Grigg, 2010), but also document the best ways to avoid complications when allegations are made. The way in which universities define and describe issues of academic integrity in policy conditions constitutes how they will be understood and addressed (Bretag & Mahmud, 2011). The construction of such policies does not happen in isolation. Their context is complex, and as policies condition institutional actions, so they in turn are conditioned by a number of local and global issues. In order to contextualise this study, and position the issue of plagiarism within the enablements and constraints of the larger situation, the bulk of this chapter outlines the key structures and cultures within which this study on

conceptualisations of plagiarism in the SAHE system takes place. One of those issues is the broader higher education context, which receives discussion next.

1.2.1 The landscape of higher education

In an attempt to redress the inequities within SAHE during apartheid that resulted in a sector characterised by unevenness in terms of history, access to human and physical resources, and differences in functioning of institutional types (Bunting, 2006), from 2002 onwards, the Ministry of Education implemented a series of institutional mergers and incorporations (South Africa, Department of Education (South Africa. DoE), 2001) to reframe the higher education system. The mergers and incorporations resulted in a number of new institutions. Before this time, the SAHE system comprised of 21 public universities, 15 Technikons,[1] 120 Colleges of Education,[2] 24 Nursing Colleges, and 11 Colleges of Agriculture. Some of the 21 universities and 15 Technikons were merged, and campuses amalgamated, to form 23 universities of various forms, and then three new universities were opened to give rise to the present landscape of 26 public higher education institutions. Through this complex process, the system was no longer characterised by the binary divide between universities and Technikons, and instead became differentiated into three types of universities: 11 traditional universities, nine comprehensive universities (comprehensives), and six universities of technology (UoTs), as illustrated in Table 1.1.

Fundamentally, differentiation by type implies that each type of university offers unique sorts of programmes and addresses a specific niche within the sector. For example, traditional universities are intended to offer primarily formative and professional degrees at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, ranging from honours to master's and doctoral degrees (Bunting & Cloete, 2010). UoT-type institutions are meant to primarily teach career-orientated undergraduate diplomas, with postgraduate studies in a few niche areas (Bunting & Cloete, 2010).

[1] Technikons were institutions that offered national diplomas focused on preparing graduates for the world of work and were replaced by universities of technology, which continue to offer vocationally focused qualifications but are no longer subject to a nationally approved curriculum; and which can also offer postgraduate level programmes (CHE, 2010).

[2] Colleges of Education offered teacher training and were amalgamated with various higher education institutions in the period preceding the national mergers.

Comprehensive universities are institutional types that are intended to integrate both traditional universities and UoT programmes (CHE, 2004). The rationale behind having differentiated institutions comprising these three types was to develop a system that would better cater for the socio-economic needs of the country (CHE, 2004). Importantly, the new landscape was meant to unsettle the hierarchies of race built into the apartheid system and lead to a higher education system that is inclusive of different student's constituencies, particularly women, black people, and working class students (Kraak, 2006) and which offer opportunities for education across the social divides built into the apartheid system. The institutional differentiation by race that characterised the previous system, coupled with a binary divide of type, was thus meant to be replaced through this process of mergers with a sector that was unshackled from its past and which could offer a much more sophisticated and broad set of offerings. The move away from the binary divide of university and Technikon, to a more nuanced three-type system of traditional, comprehensive and University of Technology, was intended to ensure better articulation between institutions; a wider range of programmes on offer to meet the needs and interests of students; and a spread of programmes to meet the economic and other needs of the country (Kraak, 2006).

This new differentiation into three types of institutions, suggests that each type of university potentially deals with slightly different types of knowledge. The type of knowledge associated with the traditional university is more disciplinary and transdisciplinary, falling within the natural, humanities and social sciences, whilst the University of Technology focuses more on the application of knowledge to the workplace (Bunting & Cloete, 2010). This means that the disciplinary approaches to teaching and learning are also contextual. However, as Trowler and Cooper (2002) and Becher and Trowler (2001) have observed, institutions often adopt identities that are not commensurate with the responsibilities they were assigned. In response to issues of status or funding, there may be cases of academic drift, and this has been experienced in the South African sector (CHE, 2016), which has the potential to create confusion, and have a negative impact on the teaching and learning process.

Table 1.1: South African public universities by type and history

Key: HDI = Historically disadvantaged institution. HAI = Historically advantaged institution. UoT = University of Technology.

University Name		University Type	History[3]
1.	North-West University (NWU)	Traditional	Merged
2.	Rhodes University (RU)	Traditional	HAI
3.	University of Cape Town (UCT)	Traditional	HAI
4.	University of Fort Hare (UFH)	Traditional	Incorporation/HDI
5.	University of the Free State (UFS)	Traditional	Incorporation/HAI
6.	University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)	Traditional	Merged
7.	University of Limpopo (UL)	Traditional	HDI
8.	University of Pretoria (UP)	Traditional	HAI
9.	University of Stellenbosch (SU)	Traditional	HAI
10.	University of the Western Cape (UWC)	Traditional	HDI
11.	University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)	Traditional	HAI
12.	Nelson Mandela University (NMU)	Comprehensive	Merged
13.	Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU)	Comprehensive	New 2015 (previously Medunsa and briefly part of University of Limpopo)
14.	Sol Plaatjie University (SPU)	Comprehensive	New 2014
15.	University of Johannesburg (UJ)	Comprehensive	Merged
16.	University of Mpumalanga (UMP)	Comprehensive	New 2014
17.	University of South Africa (UNISA)	Comprehensive	Merged
18.	University of Venda (UV)	Comprehensive	HDI
19.	University of Zululand (UZ)	Comprehensive	HDI
20.	Walter Sisulu University (WSU)	Comprehensive	Merged/HDI
21.	Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)	UoT	Merged
22.	Central University of Technology (CUT)	UoT	Merged

[3] The complexity of the mergers and the pre-and post-apartheid SAHE structuring means that the designations in the 'history' column remain open to interpretation.

23.	Durban University of Technology (DUT)	UoT	Merged
24.	Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT)	UoT	HDI
25.	Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)	UoT	Merged
26.	Vaal University of Technology (VUT)	UoT	Merged

(Adapted from Moyo, 2018, p. 66; CHE, 2018, p. 13)

The knowledge and literacy practices of each institutional type can be argued to vary (Shay, 2013; Wheelahan, 2007). The need for and structure of differentiation in higher education, is by its nature always congruential as a hierarchy of institutions comes into play (Becher & Trowler, 2001). However, the controversies around differentiation take a particular perspective in South Africa given that the system is plagued by the legacy of the other differentiation that existed under apartheid, namely that of differentiation by race. Differentiation by history is illustrated in the final column of Table 1.1, which presents un-merged universities as either historically advantaged institutions (HAIs), or as historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs); but this is a simplistic rendition that fails to truly represent the ways in which the merged institutions carried the different institutional histories with them as structures and cultures into the newly-formed merged institutions.

During the apartheid era, universities designated for whites were highly resourced, and enjoyed relative autonomy from the state, while universities designated for various black groups were severely under-resourced and were expected to comply with a great deal of interference by the apartheid state (Cooper, 2015; Ntshoe & De Villiers, 2008). Furthermore, most universities designated for white students were urban, and most universities designated for black students were rural. These geographical contexts continue to have an impact on the students and staff that institutions can attract, long after apartheid has ended. Though the democratic government used mergers and amalgamations to ensure the racial divisions of these institutions were eradicated, the demographics still reflect their histories (CHE, 2016). Different historical contexts of these universities still impact on teaching and learning today (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012; Muthama & McKenna, 2017).

In the South African context, the type, the history and the geographic location of a university has significant implications (Cooper, 2015; Leibowitz, Bozalek, van Schalkwyk, & Winberg, 2015). This includes implications for resource allocation, recruitment, and retention of skilled workforce (Ndebele, Muhuro, & Nkonki, 2017). For instance, rural universities, because they predominantly draw students from their immediate surroundings, not only often have insufficient economic infrastructure (McKenna & Boughey, 2014) due to a large proportion of students being unable to pay substantial fees, or indeed any fees at all, but they also have difficulty attracting and retaining staff. Thus, academics in these institutions often end up with higher workloads (Ndebele et al., 2017). Higher workloads reduce "conducive conditions for engaging in satisfying and meaningful teaching and learning" (CHE, 2016, p. 315), and might impact negatively on the attention given to individual students' learning needs, including sufficiently equipping students with academic writing norms, an issue to which I return in Chapter Two.

Furthermore, the national shift towards differentiation of three types of universities through mergers, amalgamations and policy is to some extent undermined by the relatively 'blunt' funding formula, whereby degrees are far better subsidised than diplomas, and postgraduate students accrue far more funding than undergraduate students. This shows a slippage in the planned SAHE differentiation as all universities compete for the offering of degrees and postgraduate qualifications, rather than the more vocationally focused diplomas (Kraak, 2006).

Drawing from the above discussion, generally a differentiated higher education landscape has implications for the manner in which teaching and learning is conceptualised and valued across the sector, which could affect how plagiarism is handled. While this study attempts to consider such contextual issues as it analyses the conceptualisations of plagiarism by universities, other identity issues, such as the fundamental purpose of a university, equally come into play. Therefore, in the next section, I briefly examine a few different roles played by universities.

1.2.2 The multiple roles of higher education

Debates about the purpose of higher education in society are ongoing globally. Universities emulate, to a particular extent, the social structures and the economic, cultural and political dispensations of the societies they serve (CHE, 2013). In South Africa, the move into the democratic era made way for new stakeholders to enter into the higher education sector, which

have their own aspirations and have generated "new challenges and priorities for the public higher education system" (Habib, 2013, p. 69).

From the national policy angle, the purposes of Higher Education in South Africa are clearly indicated in the Education White Paper 3 of 2007:

> The development individual's intellectual abilities and aptitudes; equip individuals to make the best use of their talents; for achieving equity in the distribution of opportunity and achievement among South African citizens; address the development needs of society and provide the labour market, in a knowledge-driven and knowledge-dependent society, with the ever-changing high-level competencies and expertise necessary for the growth and prosperity of a modern society; teaches and trains people to become responsible and constructively critical citizens; contribute to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge; engages in the pursuit of academic scholarship and intellectual inquiry in all fields of human understanding, through research, learning and teaching (South Africa. DoE, 1997, p. 3).

Emphasis in national policy is increasingly placed on the role universities play in the advancement of the economy (Akor, 2008; Mundial, 2000). This is in line with global trends, where the competitive advantage of the country in the knowledge economy depends on the performance of the university as a major source of new knowledge. The Post-School White Paper of 2013 (South Africa. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)) arguably shifts the discourse even more strongly towards the university as primarily serving as an economic driver.

While the production of knowledge is often positioned at the centre of the universities' responsibilities (Badat, 2009; Boulton & Lucas, 2011; Shore, 2010), with the shifting role of universities, the purpose of knowledge generation also seems to be changing, bearing significant implications for the legitimacy of knowledge and the structures that underpin its production and control (Lea, 2004). The traditional way of producing knowledge, which was often 'for its own sake' where the utility of the knowledge was of less concern than the development of the disciplinary field, is seen to be replaced by the need for "efficiency and responsiveness to the economic requirements of the country" (Quinn, 2003, p. 70). Thus, even within the generally uncontentious notion of the university as a place of knowledge creation, there are differences in understanding as to the purpose of this role. On the one hand, the university is expected to encourage individuals to pursue their academic scholarship and pursue knowledge for a deepening

understanding of the world, while on the other hand, emphasis is placed on fulfilling the social and economic demands for knowledge (de Jager & Brown, 2010), creating a dilemma of priorities.

This dilemma is gradually steering universities away from pure scientific or social science research into privatisation and commercialisation of knowledge (Giroux, 2005; Shore, 2010). While some academics continue to conduct research for the purpose of contributing to the body of knowledge – which often takes the form of abstract or blue-sky research (CHE, 2013), many are being steered away from this by various institutional drivers. Instead, they focus more on measurable research outputs that have the potential for commercial gain. Mamdani (2008) raises the issue that the focus on finding immediate solutions to real world problems, can come at the cost of advancing abstract knowledge.

Higgins expresses the value of pursuing knowledge for the sake of deepening one's understanding and not just advancing practical projects that are "socially useful" (2000, p. 116). He further argues that though blue-sky knowledge sometimes appears to many as being of less value because of its 'not for profit' nature, the kind of graduate pursuing this kind of research still becomes useful to society, as this knowledge is capable of shaping a writer's conduct. Metz agrees and states that "those who pursue knowledge for its own sake come to prize the truth and to speak it more often than those who pursue other kinds of knowledge, where the more truth-appreciators a society has, the better off it is likely to be in the long-term" (2013, p. 34).

Shore (2015) argues that this tension over the purpose of research, along with other tensions as to the purpose of the university, has further created a great shift in the approach to management of universities. The focus is not only on pedagogy, research, and community service, commonly known as the three pillars of higher education (CHE, 2016), but equally on issues of avoiding liability, with more concern on the reputation of the institution and sustaining relationships with stakeholders, while preserving the market share, than on social contribution. Universities have become particularly risk-averse, as they are now very much competitors against one another in an era of university rankings where they need to battle for the same students (Giroux, 2005).

Different perceptions as to the role of higher education briefly discussed above are specifically important to this study as they affect the way in which teaching and learning is carried out, particularly knowledge production with its close link to issues of plagiarism. In Chapter Two I will

argue that the production of academic knowledge is particular, nuanced in nature, and goes far beyond simple construction of words and sentences. So, when knowledge production in a university is legitimated and constrained by external stakeholders, its nature and purpose are likely to serve the requirements of those parties, potentially exposing writers to ways that may not help them write to avoid plagiarism. Some of these stakeholders are discussed in the next section, starting with the role played by the public in influencing teaching and learning practices.

1.2.3 The public

The media plays a major role as an informant to the public, especially on matters related to academic integrity, such that when allegations of plagiarism arise, as mentioned earlier, they become 'breaking news' that can populate across diverse media platforms for extended periods. Such reactions in the public realm place universities under pressure to respond in a way that will seem appropriate in the eye of the public. Stories such as Professor Shahid Azam from the University of Regina[4] (Leo, 2014), force universities to become publicly accountable and they often respond punitively. In some cases, plagiarism policies are amended in response to public enquiries (Sutherland-Smith, 2014). The Australian University of Newcastle's case of plagiarising students and academics (Newcastle Herald, 2010),[5] reportedly caused most institutions to revisit their plagiarism policies and practices, leading to extensive policy redesign in some institutions (Sutherland-Smith, 2010).

Given that institutions are increasingly concerned with image and their portrayal in the press (Teferra & Altbach, 2004), it is perhaps unsurprising that the media is now seen as a major aspect of the context of higher education. It can be argued that the resultant risk aversion has greatly constrained the way in which many institutions attend to concerns about plagiarism (Sutherland-Smith, 2014). Universities are not only accountable to the public for their practices, they also of

[4] Azam was accused by his former student of publishing a journal article written from the student's thesis. The professor ended up withdrawing the paper (Leo, 2014).

[5] 140 students and two academics at University of Newcastle were caught plagiarising, where the university's response was "to implement a lot stronger plagiarism control" (The Newcastle Herald, 2010).

course respond to the state, especially where it is a major institutional funder, as is the case in South Africa where this study takes place.

1.2.4 Funding and government policy

Globally, while universities seem to count on the public for their reputation, they depend on the government for at least some of their funding (Aitchison & Mowbray, 2016; Mundial, 2000). State funding is the major source of higher education funding in many European countries, where universities get up to 70% of their income from government allocations (De Dominicis, Pérez, & Fernández-Zubieta, 2011). In the United States of America, the state contributes more than 67% towards universities' funds in the case of public institutions (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, & Leachman, 2013).

Table 1.2 below shows different funding sources of universities and the percentage of funding contributed to individual universities in South Africa. The government is a major source of most university funds, with an overall contribution of 43% of the sector's costs, followed by tuition at 38% and third steam funding at 22%. Nonetheless, due to the increasing number of students entering South African tertiary institutions, the ability of the government to finance higher education adequately has been stretched to the breaking point, which has led to student protests at particular universities over the last two decades, escalating to national protests against rising university fees in 2015 and 2016. The government has been put under severe pressure to increase the current contribution to the university budget (CHE, 2016), though most increases have been to increase National Student Financial Aid Scheme allocation, rather than institutional budgets. Consequently, universities find themselves increasingly seeking relief through 'third stream income' (Lemmer, 1999) such as "employer contributions, bequests and donations, institutional investments, contracts, consultancies, and the expansion of private programmes and institutions" (South Africa. DoE, 1997, p. 40).

Table 1.2: Proportion of institutional funding per source and institutions grouped by type 2017

Universities		State %	Tuition %	3rd stream %
TRADITIONALS	North-West University (NWU)	42	34	25
	Rhodes University (RU)	40	39	22
	University of Cape Town (UCT)	32	28	41
	University of Fort Hare (UFH)	42	44	9
	University of the Free State (UFS)	38	36	26
	University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)	40	37	23
	University of Limpopo (UL)	46	40	13
	University of Pretoria (UP)	35	33	32
	University of Stellenbosch (SU)	32	22	46
	University of the Western Cape (UWC)	43	26	26
	University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)	30	41	29
	OVERALL Traditionals	**37**	**33**	**31**

COMPREHENSIVES	Nelson Mandela University (NMU)	37	31	32
	Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU)	54	28	17
	Sol Plaatjie University (SPU)	73	22	6
	University of Johannesburg (UJ)	38	37	25
	University of Mpumalanga (UMP)	80	25	6
	University of South Africa (UNISA)	42	42	16
	University of Venda (UV)	46	43	12
	University of Zululand (UZ)	49	38	13
	Walter Sisulu University (WSU)	47	50	3
	Overall Comprehensives	**43**	**39**	**18**

U O T S	Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)	47	34	19
	Central University of Technology (CUT)	50	40	10
	Durban University of Technology (DUT)	46	39	15
	Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT)	44	32	24
	Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)	51	37	12
	Vaal University of Technology (VUT)	48	36	15
	OVERALL Universities of Technology	**48**	**36**	**16**
	OVERALL SAHE	**43**	**36**	**22**

(Adapted from CHE, 2019, p. 95)

A portion of the 'state funding' presented in Table 1.2 is allocated to universities based on their research outputs. Research outputs include master's and doctoral graduates, publications in accredited journals, approved scholarly books or book chapters, and approved conference proceedings. The funds allocated for such research was approximately 10% of the overall block grants awarded to universities during the financial years 2014/15 and has remained relatively constant. It is argued that the formula used to arrive at this percentage made raising funds through research more viable for universities and has thus been a major driver in the increase in research productivity (Muthama, 2019). Institutions are expected to meet different benchmarks in research output per institutional type, per permanent academic staff.[6] While most institutions have battled to achieve these benchmarks, research productivity has increased significantly since performance-based funding was introduced (CHE, 2019; South Africa. DHET, 2019).

These quantitative reward measures put pressure on institutions and academics to act in a particular way (CHE, 2016) and so have not been without critique. Firstly, rewarding of research as measured in quantifiable metrics creates concerns about the integrity with which the research is produced, implicating the quality of such research. There seems to have been an increase in publication in low impact journals (Butler, 2003, 2004; McLeod, 2010). Thomas and De Bruin (2015, p. 1) reportedly discovered "extensive" plagiarism in 19 South African journals in articles mostly written by academics. Secondly, research seems to be given priority over undergraduate teaching, given the much higher funding allocated to research outputs (Akor, 2008). For instance, the low throughput rates are often attributed to less attention on student learning by academic staff, in pursuit of meeting required research outputs (Marginson, 2015; Teichler, 2011). Furthermore, despite repeated concerns raised by the Department of Higher Education and Training about such practices (2015), most universities allocate financial incentives directly to those academics who publish (Muthama & McKenna, 2017). These incentives, in the form of research funds or in the case of some universities, salary bonuses, have been seen to have 'perverse consequences' (South Africa. DHET, 2015).

[6] Traditional universities are expected to produce 1.25 research output units per permanent academic staff member and 0.5 units for universities of technology; with unique criteria and targets for comprehensive universities aligned to each university's programme and qualification mix (CHE, 2016).

The move towards utilitarianism in research is not just about the content and focus of research. It is also about the drive for outputs in order to boost universities' status, placement on international rankings and, in the case of South African universities, their funding. The Department of Higher Education and Training's rewarding of publications, regardless of the quality of the content, provided that are published in one of the lists of approved journals, has had consequences (2019). In these cash-strapped times, this has led to universities strongly pushing academics to publish, and this has had a number of unintended consequences, such as: 'salami slicing', where one piece of research is unnecessarily stretched over multiple publications; predatory publications, where articles are published in dubious journals that do not follow quality assurance processes and which do not contribute to the development of the field; and, as relevant to the current research, plagiarism (South Africa. DHET, 2015; 2019). While the national funding formula has arguably been a significant mechanism for the rapid increase in publications by academics in South Africa, it can also have been seen to have driven a concern with the number of publications rather than the quality and significance of such publications (Muthama & McKenna, 2017).

While the tension created by government funding strategies seems to create conflict of interest between teaching and research in ways that affect the credibility of knowledge production, globalisation can be seen as another structure influencing the production and flow of knowledge in higher education at a broader level.

1.2.5 Globalisation

Economies are becoming increasingly interdependent. Information and communication technologies have opened more possibilities of knowledge access and dissemination. Gunter and Van der Hoeven have noted in this regard that:

> Globalisation mean the gradual integration of economies and societies driven by new technologies, new economic relationships and the national and international policies of a wide range of actors, including governments, international organisations, business, labour and civil society (2004, p. 1).

When South Africa was reinstated into the global community after the lifting of apartheid era sanctions, the implication was that the country would start to utilise global policies in the local setting (CHE, 2016). These changing trends are evident in the adjustments made to the structures

of higher education institutions. The SAHE system adopted some of the structures from other countries and contextualised these to the South African environment. It is not uncommon to draw from those who have already implemented and solved the complexities in their contexts (Akor, 2008). One example is the differentiation of institutions discussed earlier in this chapter. This impacted the nature of educational institutions and the manner in which education is provided (Nayyar, 2008).

What makes globalisation become even more significant to this study is the multiple effects it has on internationalisation and massification. This is because, as viewed by Teichler (2004), many aspects of university internationalisation and massification either foster the global expansion of higher education, or have happened in response to that expansion. In the South African context, massification of higher education has been a response to global pressures regarding responsiveness to internationalisation, and an increasing demand to include groups that did not previously have access to higher education (Bundy, 2006).

The issue of increased participation rates is detailed in the National Development Plan, which ambitiously proposed a target of 30% by 2030 (NPC, 2011), while the White Paper for Post School Education (South Africa. DHET, 2013) later suggested a lower target of 25%. There has been close to a 100% increase in student numbers from the end of apartheid in 1994, when student numbers were sitting on 500 000, to 2016, when there were 975 837, with a further 112 000 in private higher education institutions, as shown in Table 1.4. More than 74 000 of these 975 837 students come from countries outside of South Africa (CHE, 2016) (see Table 1.3 below). Attracting and retaining these students' calls for significant changes within the country's higher education institutions, including alignment of institutional goals with national goals that would further qualify an institution to be validated by international communities of practice (Lewin, 2008). Due to the diversity of students involved, students' acquisition of disciplinary literacies is highly complicated, an issue to which I return in Chapter Two.

Internationalisation has benefits and disadvantages. Amongst the benefits is the cross-border movement of students and academics, which allows for exchange of knowledge and other skills

(Heuser, Martindale, & Lazo, 2016, p. 439).[7] Moreover, developing countries such as South Africa stand to benefit a great deal from internationalisation, through tapping into opportunities such as creating linkages into foreign markets, uplifting research standards by attracting the best students from other countries, and contributing to regional economic transformation (Chapman & Lupton, 2004). In addition, fundraising through fee-paying international students counts as another benefit (Heuser et al., 2016). In South Africa in 2016, non-South African students comprised 7% of the student body, considering Tables 1.3 and 1.4 below.

Table 1.3: Headcount enrolments of all non-South African students from 2012 to 2017

Country	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
SADC	53 058	53 800	52 947	52 878	49 403	48 641=71%
Other African	11 352	11 922	11 947	12 128	11 895	11 693=17%
Rest of world	7 065	6 727	6 640	6 742	6 649	6 053=9%
Unknown	1 384	1 410	1 465	1 212	1 434	1 649=3%
Total	72 859	73 859	72 999	72 960	69 381	68 036=100%

(Adapted from CHE, 2019, p. 8)

Table 1.4: Headcount enrolments by race from 2012 to 2017

[7] These authors expand the activities that characterise internationalisation as "Cross-border student mobility: study abroad (including language training), student exchanges, student research abroad, and internships abroad; Cross-border faculty mobility: visiting professorships, faculty exchanges, research project collaborations, expert consultants, and guest lecturers; University partnerships: research collaborations, grant collaborations, programme collaborations, knowledge sharing/transfer (libraries, archives, databases, laboratories), patent development and commercialisation, faculty exchanges, student exchanges, and faculty and staff development; Expansion of institutional programmes and influence through offshore branch/satellite campuses; International training and development programmes to build capacity in other countries (e.g., global health, education, public policy/administration, law); Engagement with/membership in international education organisations (e.g., IIE, UNESCO, NASFA, CIES, IAEA); Hosting international academic conferences; Domestic-based foreign language preparation/training; Domestic-based international studies programmes; Domestic-based work with international populations (e.g., immigrants, refugees, IDPs, etc.); and Supporting international scholarship opportunities" (Heuser et al., 2016, p. 439).

Race[8]	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African	662 123	689 503	679 800	696 320	701 482	763 767=74%
Coloured	58 692	61 034	60 716	62 186	61 963	64 772=6%
Indian	52 296	53 787	53 611	53 378	50 450	50 131=5%
White	172 654	171 927	166 172	161 739	152 489	148 802=14%
Unknown	7 608	7 447	8 855	11 589	9 453	9 512=1%
Total	953 373	983 698	969 154	985 212	975 837	1 036 984=100%

(Adapted from CHE, 2019, p. 8)

Apart from the benefits brought about by internationalisation, a number of concerns have been raised. Firstly, academic integrity scholars are concerned about the likelihood of cross-border movements to magnify the exchange of different forms of fraud between institutions and systems (Heuser et al., 2016). It is also argued that perhaps individuals might engage in dishonest practices due to the absence of monitoring and development mechanisms in receiving institutions (Heuser et al., 2016).

The proportion of international students to domestic students in Australia was considered to be the highest in the world during the 2000s; an era in which concerns about uncommon writing behaviours amongst students were first highlighted (Bretag, 2016b). Diverse perspectives on integrity potentially make defining plagiarism – and interpreting and practicing accepted academic norms – a challenge due to significant differences in cultural norms. Therefore, when a large cohort of students from different cultural backgrounds to that of the majority university population enter

8 The Department of Labour in South Africa continues to designate racial categories. Coloured refers to a person who has been described as of mixed races between European 'white' and African 'black' during the apartheid era, where today there is no homogeneity in the designation of Coloured identity, as this group overlaps with others from larger identity groups as well (Du Plooy, 2018). Indians are people of Indian descent, and both genetically and politically, Africans, Coloureds and Indians are termed 'black people' (Employment Equity Act 55, 1998).

Table 1.4 indicates the racial demographics of the student body but includes students of all nationalities. The racial demographics of the South African population are as follows: African 76% Coloured 9%, Indian 6% percent and white 9% (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

higher education, they are likely to have an influence on curricula, where the sustenance of traditional ways of knowledge production might be threatened. The issue of different cultural norms is further expanded in Chapter Two, to explain how this concept might also become a gatekeeper to access to academic norms.

Internationalisation poses some educational challenges to higher education, which include loss of highly skilled people to other countries (World Bank, 2002). The World Bank in January 2014 published a report that African migrants to the rest of the world have doubled between 1980 and 2010, reaching 30.6 million (Ehrhart, Goff, Rocher, & Singh, 2014). Since 1990, Africa lost 20 000 academic professionals to other countries. Moreover, Africa recruits and hires expatriates at a cost of more than USD 4 billion a year. Furthermore, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, the former president of South Africa, stated that the 3.6 billion USD spent on a yearly basis to educate professionals who leave the country every year, "is almost equal to the USD 4 billion that we pay 150 000 expatriates that we import" (Africa, 2015, p. 1). Losing such a number of professionals to other countries while we still have the problem of replacing ageing academics with young professionals, constitutes a significant concern in SAHE (Altbach, Androushchak, Kuzminov, Yudkevich, & Reisberg, 2013), where losing experienced academics either by migration or by retirement harbours major implications for education. The most disturbing matter is losing the expertise and experience these academics have in (local) knowledge production (CHE, 2016). For this reason, this becomes a compelling teaching and learning issue.

What makes the situation even more pervasive in the SAHE sector is that the numbers of academics in the profession and those enrolled for postgraduate degrees, are insufficient to replace the migrating and retiring cohorts (CHE, 2016). Table 1.5 below shows that the number of entries of young academics into the field has decreased remarkably from 2014. Owing to this, some institutions have devised means to cope, and that includes increasing retirement age and offering contract appointments for those retired to keep them in the system. This explains the increased rate of academics above 60 years of age from 619 in 2004 to 1359 in 2012 (CHE, 2016), and a continuous increase four years later to 6 141 in 2016. See Table 1.5 below.

Table 1.5: Headcount academic staff members by age grouping from 2012 to 2017

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
< 30	13 002	13 053	10 661	11 846	11 945	10 944=19%
30-39	12 168	12 861	12 892	13 506	13 880	14 883=26%
40-49	11 773	12 012	12 051	12 813	12 972	13 368=24%
50-59	9 456	9 289	9 417	9 929	10 115	10 664=19%
>=60	5 174	5 356	5 470	5 980	6 141	6 668=12%
Total	51 573	52 571	50 491	54 074	55 053	56 527=100%

(Adapted from CHE, 2019, p. 51)

While student enrolment numbers have doubled since the end of apartheid, the growth in academic staff has not kept pace, in a way that has created a discrepancy in the teacher-student ratios per field. It is proposed that Science, Engineering and Technology ought to have a 1:17 ratio; Business and Commerce should not exceed 1:32; Education at 1:26 and Humanities gets a ratio of 1:25 (CHE, 2016). On the contrary, Table 1.6 shows that teacher-student ratios have remained much the same since 2011. Even in the QS ranking within BRICS,[9] South African universities rank poorly concerning student to staff ratios. This has led to increased class sizes and increased workloads, which affect the time available for student development. The choice of forms of assessment and feedback given to students has also become limited.

This is significant for this study because the literature consistently points to the influence of assessment design in the incidence of plagiarism (Gallant, 2008). For example, it is often the case that to counter fraudulent behaviour, academics are encouraged to require students to submit drafts indicating the process taken to accomplish an assignment, along with the finished product (Carroll, 2002). This might not be a feasible approach in a large class, because assessments and feedback complement one another. From a knowledge production perspective, feedback is seen as central

[9] BRICS is a trade and development agreement between five developing economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

to scholarly knowledge creation (Aitchison & Mowbray, 2016). It affords students the opportunity to develop their academic skills (Carroll, 2002). The time-consuming nature of developmental feedback makes it difficult to implement in large classes; an issue to which I return later. Therefore, students in large classes may be denied the opportunity to learn knowledge production norms effectively.

Table 1.6: FTE Student: Staff ratio by field of study from 2012 to 2017

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Business & Commerce	54	48	48	46	46	33
Education	61	63	63	65	59	65
Humanities	38	39	39	36	37	37
SET	20	21	21	21	21	21
Overall	26	27	27	26	25	26

(Adapted from CHE, 2019, p. 58)

Additionally, owing to massification, institutions are confronted with a number of students who are underprepared for higher education (Gosling, 2009). While massification can be understood in terms of the constraints placed on the system by increased student numbers, various researchers have indicated that the implications go far beyond this (Case, Marshall, McKenna, & Mogashana, 2018). In his seminal piece on massification, Trow (1994) argues that when a higher education system begins to serve 20% or more of a country's 18 to 23-year-old age group, it has shifted from an elite system to one that is massified. South Africa has just exceeded this tipping point (CHE, 2019). Trow (1994) goes on to point out that many assumptions about reading and writing practices which may have been taken for granted in an elite system fall short in a massified one. The need to more explicitly induct students into the literacy practices in a massified system is exacerbated by students often coming from poor schooling backgrounds.

In South Africa, with its schooling system described as "dysfunctional" (South Africa. DHET, 2013a, p. 8), students are often marked as unprepared for higher education. The extent of the

unpreparedness has been measured by the throughput[10] rate in the system, which still needs much improvement (South Africa. DHET, 2016).

To address the problem of unpreparedness, extended curriculum programmes were designed to breach the articulation gap. Arguably, some of these programmes created some more gaps and required changes that affected the coherence of the curricula, because, by their nature, they were designed to address entry problems and not other key systemic issues constraining student learning (CHE, 2016). These programmes often lack "the capacity for addressing substantial in-curricular transitions or for sustaining focused academic literacy development throughout the curriculum" (CHE, 2016, p. 165). Therefore, fundamentally, the shift from elite to a mass higher education system requires opportunities for teaching and learning practices that are aimed at careful orientation of all students into the relevant academic knowledge practices. Non-exposure to the literacy practices of higher education, and a lack of opportunities for practice of these, may well have implications for plagiarism, an argument I return to in the next chapter.

1.2.6 Managerialism

The context of globalisation of higher education presented above, and all the pressures it exerts on higher education, have steered the management of universities worldwide in a particular direction (Shore & Wright, 2000). Many universities have adopted an ideology of managerialism (CHE, 2016; Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016). Managerialism is a concept that is greatly influenced by capitalist ideology, which in academia entails an adoption of business-like management styles by a sector, or individual academic institution. The capitalist ideology privileges "maximising efficiency and productivity over effectiveness; managerial expertise over scientific expertise and individual rather than collective values" (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2006, p. 326). Managerialism works on the premise that all aspects of the academic endeavour need to be carefully managed and monitored for enhanced efficiency.

[10] The throughput rate calculates the number of first-time entry undergraduate students of a specific cohort of a specific year who have graduated either within the minimum time, or up to two years beyond the minimum time, to the number of students in the baseline enrolments of that cohort (CHE, 2018, p. 10).

It has been argued that, in education, the capitalist ideology defies the ideology of the public good,[11] because it commercialises education. The ideology of the public good on the other hand values – amongst other things – collectiveness, truthfulness, and openness (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). These two ideologies co-exist in higher education systems around the world, but the way in which the capitalist perspective has gained momentum over the public good ideology, Kezar and Bernstein-Sierra (2016) argue, threatens the integrity of the academic institution in many ways. For instance, in the United States of America, in response to funding cuts, some universities have, as revenue generation and cost-cutting measures, outsourced[12] services and activities that often have a "fundamental education component, such as residence halls and bookstores" (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016, p. 330; see also Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

While outsourcing may in some areas have little effect on the core purpose of higher education, in others it might threaten institutional values (Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005). An issue of concern about such commercial arrangements is that they are based on financial determinants, with little regard paid to how they will affect students' experiences (Giroux, 2005). In South Africa, the call to end outsourcing was central to the 2015 and 2016 #FeesMustFall student protests (Badat, 2016). The argument was that outsourcing practices often result in workers being treated poorly, and universities are expected to be spaces of social justice where all who work within them are treated in a fair and humane manner.

The incursion of managerialism is found to be amongst the driving forces behind the understanding of academic institutions as commercial companies, where students might see adhering to high ethical standards as of less significance than attaining a qualification for the job market (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016). The attempt to reduce plagiarism in such instances might be less effective.

[11] A public good ideology towards knowledge production is a non-capitalist ideology that supports particular values on how knowledge is produced, and disseminated (Kezar et al., 2005). Among others, it prioritises "the collective good of society over individual benefits from education, equal access, and excellence in education, truthfulness and openness of the research enterprise" (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016, p. 327).

[12] Outsourcing is the contracting out of services or products to outside suppliers instead of providing the services or products through in-house resources. A form of privatisation, university outsourcing usually involves a long-term profit-sharing arrangement with corporations who are adept at performing a given task, and able to do it at a lower cost than institutions themselves (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016, p. 330).

In South Africa, the rise of managerialism occurred in the early 2000s, when the country became open to the outside world after the isolation of apartheid. As the higher education sector started to respond in various ways to globalisation, the ideology of managerialism started to rise (CHE, 2016). During this period, several monitoring mechanisms were introduced, including external quality assurance policies and processes; performance management systems; programme accreditation; and institutional audits managed by Higher Education Quality Committee. These policies often introduced quantitative measurements of performance for both universities and individual staff. Quantitative measurements of performance arguably affected academics' practices both favourably and unfavourably. While these measures encouraged accountability, they created competition between teaching and research, where academics who are seen as researchers enjoy more benefits than those who focus on teaching and learning, thus creating a tension between the two (Chidindi, 2017).

Kezar and Bernstein-Sierra (2016) argue that the values underpinning managerialism translate into ethical compromises, such as the conflict of purpose between a university and other stakeholders, and that consumer-orientated approaches to education privilege the interests of individuals over collectives. As Kezar and Bernstein-Sierra state, cheating among university students has "increased alongside such capitalist trends, causing many scholars to question the role of institutions in matters of academic dishonesty" (2016, p. 325).

1.2.7 Information Technology and the use of 'plagiarism software'

Attributable in part to globalisation, the emerging demands posed by a technologically advanced knowledge economy place the education system under enormous pressure. In the knowledge economy, the availability of information is not only maximised, but issues of authorship are also blurred. The abundance of information is fuelled by the rapid growth of Information Technologies, which in turn impact on the way in which knowledge is both produced and disseminated. As a result of the nature of these technologies, digital text is characterised by fluidity, multiple authors and readers, and can be constantly altered (Ficsor, 2002). Therefore, the existence of authorship rights over any particular text becomes unclear (Aitchison & Mowbray, 2016; Sutherland-Smith, 2016a). For example, the construction of text through wikis and hypertext make appropriate acknowledgement of text difficult, as the authors or developers are not as visible as those of a

textbook or periodical (Aitchison & Mowbray, 2016; Sutherland-Smith, 2013b). It therefore makes the traditional discourse of authorship appear too restricting when it comes to the norms of sharing, as the discourse not only "hinder(s) the ability to transfer best practices" and learn from mistakes, but also hampers creativity and innovation in authors (Haas & Park, 2010, p. 3). Students in a seamless digital era, flooded by social media collaborations, may experience the rules against sharing as violations of their own practices, which render ownership and the importance of originality unreasonable (Buranen & Roy, 1999). These proliferations of technologies call for new models of how knowledge is pursued in higher education, in order for institutions to compete successfully in the global space (Adam, 2016; Bano & Taylor, 2015).

The SAHE national policies undeniably acknowledge the urgent need for transition (Czerniewicz, Ravjee, & Mlitwa, 2006), in order to reposition universities within the global sphere and the contemporary nature of learning relevant to a 21st century graduate. The SAHE national policies emphasise that "successful policy must restructure the higher education system and its institutions to meet the needs of an increasingly technologically-oriented economy" (South Africa. DoE, 1997, Sec.1.13).

Extant research affirms that Information Technologies have a dual impact on how plagiarism is understood and how it is responded to (Stephens, 2016). To emphasise the degree to which it can be a threat, and yet equally useful if it is carefully utilised, technology is considered a "double-edged sword" (Nilsson, 2016, p. 620). As much as it has brought "unforeseen opportunities", it has also opened doors for "digital plagiarism" (Wan & Scott, 2016, p. 418). By reason of ease of access to information, the Internet and other Information Technologies are therefore seen by many as promoting academic misconduct such as plagiarism; using paper mills services such as ghost-writing or contract cheating; collusion; and many others. Nevertheless, others understand the Internet as another means of expanding perceptions of authorship (Aitchison & Mowbray, 2016; Grigg, 2010); collaboration and global contribution to writing (Brimble, 2016); and the prospect of reshaping traditional issues of crediting sources (Sutherland-Smith, 2016a).

In an attempt to fight academic misconduct emanating from the use of technology, most universities around the world now use text-matching software as part of their approach to manage plagiarism (Mphahlele & McKenna, 2019a). Though these software packages do not detect

plagiarism, as one might be led to expect, but rather highlight chunks of text that match with other sources, certain companies nevertheless providing these technologies are eager to promise instructors what they want to hear. Even the names of some of the software suggest they can detect plagiarism (Plagiarisma, PlagiarismDetect, PlagiarismFinder, PlagScan, PlagTracker, Strike Plagiarism, PlagAware). Some of them promise to detect plagiarism by giving a particular score, which can then be used as a reference for plagiarised material. However, "'originality scores' or speaking of 'originality checking' is rather misleading, as originality cannot be proven" (Weber-Wulff, 2016, p. 627). Owing to the complex nature of plagiarism discussed earlier, when it comes to the disagreement over what constitutes plagiarism and the difficulty to determine the writer's intention, it is generally not yet possible to construct a technological solution that could successfully determine plagiarism, because any definition is inescapably open for interpretation (Pecorari & Petrić, 2014). Instead, software is generally only able to indicate duplicated word sequences, which may still be properly referenced. The existence of plagiarism is, ultimately, a finding only a human being can accurately make.

While text-matching software has become increasingly sophisticated and offers a range of enormously useful information for academics and students, there are also a number of pitfalls with these systems, ranging from functionality, to the issue that interpreting results generated by these software packages can be challenging and may require the special training of instructors. It is 'irresponsible' to arrive at conclusions based on similarity numbers only, and this can lead to false accusations of plagiarism (Weber-Wulff, 2016, p. 2).

A test conducted on 15 of the most commonly used text-matching programmes suggested that most of the systems over-report plagiarism, that they include potentially unjustified sources, and that text that is appropriately cited is sometimes highlighted as unoriginal, even after the programme has been set to exclude direct quotes (Weber-Wulff, Möller, Touras, & Zincke, 2013). Additionally, some programmes report different results on very similar work, where the use of multiple systems by instructors is highly recommended (Weber-Wulff, 2016). Moreover, in a new concern, it has been shown that scammers are taking advantage of these programmes to gather students' papers for selling in paper mills (Weber-Wulff & Köhler, 2008). Alongside over-identification, there is research that presents the opposite problem, with the software often missing copied sources (Jaschik, 2009). A comparison study of Turnitin, SafeAssign and Google conducted

by Susan Schorn revealed that, while SafeAssign detected only 43.4% of the copied material and Turnitin detected 60.76% of the matching documents, Google could locate up to 91.3% (2007, 2015). Due to all the challenges and shortcomings related to the use of text-matching software, using multiple systems by instructors is highly recommended (Weber-Wulff, 2016).

Importantly, the software programmes frequently flag sentences and phrases that are not plagiarised but are commonly used expressions, which presents a particular problem in fields such as Law and Physics that are replete with expected shared phrasing. Where institutions are placing significant emphasis on the Overall Similarity Index without due interrogation of that score, students can be penalised for acquiring the discursive phrasing of the discipline (Mphahlele & McKenna, 2019b). This is clearly illustrated through the Turnitin report for this thesis. The final version of this PhD thesis was uploaded to Turnitin, which returned a report with a similarity index of 7%, though the report indicated that no single 'source' on the extensive Turnitin database matched more than 1% of the text in this thesis. As the table below illustrates, comparing the relevant sections of the thesis to the Turnitin 'source' of one of the supposed 'sources' shows the extent to which common phrases or shared issues of discussion accounted for this 1%.

Table 1.7: Turnitin report table

Text as it appears in this PhD thesis	"Matching" text as it appears in source
Rhodes University 13 Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning Conceptualisations of and Responses to Plagiarism in the South African Higher Education System	octoral research on educational technology in higher education curriculum design. Lynn Quinn has worked in the field of education throughout her career. She is currently the Head of Department of the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning at Rhodes University, and has been involved in the field of academic development since 1995. Her particular interest and research focus is 11 CHAPTER 1 on academic staff development. She
3.4.3. Agency ..... 90 3.6. Conclusion ..... 93 CHAPTER FOUR ..... 94 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ..... 94 4.1. Introduction ..... 94 4.2. Research design 94	ITIQUE ON E-LEARNING 80 3.5.1 Trade-off between richness and reach in education 81 3.6 ADULT LEARNING 84 x 3.7 CONSTRUCTIVISM, KNOWLEDGE INTERESTS AND E-LEARNING 87 3.8 OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION (OBE) 90 3.9 CONCLUSION 93 CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 94 4.1 INTRODUCTION 94 4.2 FOCUS OF RESEARCH 95 4.2.1 Research approach 96 4.2.2 Methodological considerations 99 4.3 RESEARCH
[1] Technikons are institutions that offered national diplomas focused on preparing graduates for the world of work and were later replaced by Universities of Technology, which continue to offer vocationally focused qualifications	Employment and Professional Flexibility (REFLEX) project 51 2.5.3.2. Confederation of British Industry (CBI) report on preparing graduates for the world of work 58 2.5.4. National perspective: Higher education responding to the needs of the knowledge economy 61 2.5.4.1.

authorship are also blurred. The abundance of information is fueled by the rapid growth of Information Technologies (ICTs), which in turn impact on the way in which knowledge is both produced and disseminated. As a result of the nature of these technologies, digital text is	claim on the professional identity of lecturers in higher education. Disciplines vary greatly in terms of the way in which knowledge is produced, recognised, structured and therefore presented to students, and as Moore suggests, "Differing epistemological concerns of
Gooding-Brown (2000) calls for a disruption of such ideas through "a critical dismantling of the concept of structures" which inform social and cultural practices (Gooding-Brown, 2000:36).	to the desire and attempt to uncover the assumptions or 'rules' which inform the firmament of social and cultural practices (Gooding-Brown 2000:36) and which constitute the subjects within them. Disruption carries with it a sense of uncovering and dismantling, in order to
present, there is no software able to detect when it is ideas that have been taken from elsewhere and cast as the author's own. It is important to note that, in cases where the originality report comes match-free, it does not necessarily guarantee that text is plagiarism free. Because the	Vocational Education, Employment and Training as essential for all young Australians to develop (See Table 2.5). It is also important to note that the Mayer Committee report (Mayer, 1992:7) recommended the following definition of key competencies: Key Competencies are

Forensic linguistic analysis is an approach used to compare suspected plagiarised strings from a legal perspective. Research into forensic linguistics, which consists of applying linguistic methods and analysis in forensic contexts (McMenamin, 1993, 2002; Sousa-Silva, Grant, & Maia, 2010), has been effectively used in cases of fraud where linguistic evidence is important; and "has demonstrated that the likelihood that a text or set of texts has not been produced independently, can be determined accurately" (Sousa-Silva, 2013, p. 16).

Despite various shortfalls, web technologies can be useful in identifying clear incidents of plagiarism and providing the necessary evidence to act. It has also been discovered that such software can be good at detecting other forms of academic misconduct, such as collusion (Weber-Wulff, Köhler, & Möller, 2012). Much of the literature in favour of the use of such software argues that its most effective use is as a pedagogical tool, rather than a policing one. It is shown to add an enormously positive aspect to the development of student writing when used in such a way. Atkins and Nelson (2001) provide a passionate and enthusiastic endorsement of the usefulness of text-matching technologies, while McCarthy and Rogerson (2009) support the positive pedagogical effects these technologies demonstrated on postgraduate students in analysing the software results to improve their writing. Similarly, Davis and Carroll (2009) explain how the software is useful for instruction rather than assessment purposes, and Eckstein (2003) argues that the technology could foster accountability and a culture of academic integrity if appropriately implemented.

However, if the use of technology becomes a threat, and the introduction of plagiarism detection services become policing software (Davies & Howard, 2016), then novice writers can end up writing for the software, with their primary focus being to reduce the similarity score (Weber-Wulff, 2016), thus entirely losing the purpose of writing coherently and contributing to the existing conversation in the literature. In such cases, students use the text-matching report to determine which sections of their assignment need to be reworked, and they submit the piece multiple times until the similarity index is sufficiently reduced. This is evident in the recent emergence of online paraphrasing tools being used by university students (Rogerson & McCarthy, 2017). Online paraphrasing tools (for example, https://smallseotoolz.net/online-article-rewriter) scan through the content to look for all the words that can be replaced with suitable synonyms or substitutes. These technologies offer free "services to paraphrase large sections of text ranging from sentences,

paragraphs, whole articles, book chapters or previously written assignments" (Rogerson & McCarthy, 2017, p. 1). Though re-engineered passages cannot be detected by text-matching tools, the resulting quality of the work is highly questionable, and the academic integrity of the exercise dubious. Since the manner in which technology is used affects the management of plagiarism, this research also examines the way in which some of these tools are conceived of in different institutions.

1.3 Research question

The question that this study seeks to address is:

How do South African Higher Education institutions conceptualise and respond to plagiarism?

1.4 Goals and significance of the research

The goal of this study is to address the above research question with the assumption that individual university contexts differentiated by typology, geographic locations, histories, unequal access to resources, a diverse student body, and many other contextual issues, might have a significant impact on how institutions conceptualise the concept of plagiarism, when shaping the practices followed to manage the phenomenon. The significance of this study can be found in the fact that South Africa, and its higher education system in particular, is increasingly entering the global space. Therefore, an analysis of their understanding of plagiarism helps to shed light on the system's assumptions about plagiarism and the implications of these assumptions on teaching and learning practices, not only as an information source for international and local partners, but also utilising the outcomes as a benchmark against global practices and understandings of plagiarism.

By identifying the mechanisms that emerge from policies, documents and interviews, through the lenses of theory, one can notice the teaching and learning implications of understanding plagiarism in a particular way. Therefore, this study may serve to inform academics on how student learning takes place, and how knowledge production happens, to stimulate their thinking on effective ways to enable such learning, in order to reduce plagiarism.

1.5 Outline of the thesis structure

This research comprises eight chapters. The purpose of this first chapter has been to highlight the rationale for conducting this study and to draw attention to the broader contextual issues within which this study on plagiarism is conducted. I have endeavoured to provide a 'broad brushstrokes' picture of some of the key issues internationally and nationally that condition practices in the South African higher education sector. As will be shown later, the Social Realist theoretical framing of the study demands a careful contextualising of the study in the understanding that what emerges within any particular site is enabled or constrained by numerous macro-level mechanisms at play. While a complete rendition of every potential mechanism is beyond the scope of a PhD study, this first chapter has been an attempt to provide a consideration of some of the key elements of the context, in particular the apartheid history of the sector, the development of a new form of differentiation into three university types, and the movement of the sector into a globalised knowledge economy.

Chapter Two discusses the main concepts and the substantive theories related to the study. The substantive theory of New Literacy Studies was used to make sense of how perceptions of plagiarism arise, whether as an intentional or unintentional practice, links with how teaching and learning take place. The literature is used to make sense of how the literacy practices of the academy are variously understood as a process of acquiring technical skills, where reading and writing has little or no relationship with the context within which it takes place; or, with an understanding of reading and writing as not simply neutral skills but embedded within the norms, values, history and expectations of a particular context.

Chapter Three introduces the philosophical positioning of the study. The chapter argues that in a social world deliberations as to the validity of knowledge produced are undertaken through careful consideration of the philosophical approaches. Thus, the chapter justifies the choice of critical realism (CR), the philosophy that underpins this study, which argues for a stratified view of reality; where the world is understood according to three levels of the real, the actual, and the empirical. A critical realist position holds that what is experienced in the world is insufficient reality to rely on. It notes that what is significant are the generative mechanisms responsible for those events and experiences, where the purpose of research is to go beyond the empirical to identify those

generative mechanisms (Bhaskar, 2008). Though CR provides a framework that enables a deeper understanding of the mechanisms shaping the understanding of plagiarism, CR alone does not provide sufficient tools to explain the mechanisms in the social world. Hence, the chapter also introduces social realism (SR), which provides the explanatory tools to assess that which takes place in universities, presenting what has been observed from data. The rationale for using SR as both a substantive theory and analytical tool is explained in this chapter. SR uses analytical dualism, which argues for the distinct separation of mechanisms constituting structure, culture and agency during analysis, to avoid conflating accounts.

Chapter Four outlines the methodology and clarifies its relevance to the theories and to the nature of the study. The chapter discusses the research process, from identifying the data sources to the analysis of the data, and notes how I arrived at identifying potential generative mechanisms shaping the conceptualisation of plagiarism by universities from the data, using Archer's frameworks of analytical dualism and situational logics – together with other substantive theories of literacies (academic literacies, ideological and autonomous models of literacies and the plagiarism continuum model, as discussed in Chapter Two). The section on 'Reflections on ethical clearance issues and other challenges related to the data collection process' is included to share experiences of the data collection journey, the ethical clearance challenges encountered during this journey, and how these encounters were traversed. While the section on reliability and validity was discussed in an attempt to justify the trustworthiness of my findings, enhanced by the processes and theories used in the study, ethical considerations acknowledged that the concept of anonymity could not be fully maintained throughout, due to the publicly available nature of some data sources.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven discuss the findings of the study. In these chapters, different mechanisms potentially responsible for shaping the conceptualisations of and responses to plagiarism are discussed. While Chapter Five presents the findings regarding plagiarism as conceptualised as an intentional act, with its management closely shaped by the legal discourse, Chapter Six presents and interrogates data on the superficial understandings of literacy that emerged due to the understanding of plagiarism as always being an intentional act. Finally, Chapter

Seven analyses the acknowledgement in some of the data of the existence of plagiarism on a continuum, along with the difficulties accompanying such acknowledgement.

Chapter Eight presents the conclusion of the study, in the form of a summary of the key research findings, as well as recommendations to higher education stakeholders about how the research findings can help to improve teaching and learning. The chapter also highlights the possible contributions of the research in the field of higher education, particularly within the related fields of academic integrity and academic literacies.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the broad context of the study and the rationale for conducting the research. To explain the phenomenon under study, this chapter outlines the main concepts related to plagiarism and the current debates around the concept of plagiarism. A conceptual framework is a structure that is developed by the researcher to explain how the phenomenon under study progresses (Camp, 2001). It systematically links to other concepts of the study including the theories used (Peshkin, 1993). While a literature review generally provides an overview of all the key texts on the phenomenon and points to a gap the study will attempt to address, a conceptual framework also ensures that the various debates about all key concepts are laid out to prepare the reader for the deliberations that follow. While this study is positioned within the wider field of academic integrity, the key concept is that of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is not a new concern, and its current conceptualisations have a long and complex history. Therefore, as a prelude, an overview of the origins of plagiarism is presented to clarify the impact that its history has had on its conceptualisation in current literature. A key notion in deliberations around plagiarism is that of intention (Price & Price, 2005). Did the person who plagiarised do so knowingly, or was this an error of oversight or ignorance? The subject of intention is thus discussed, to explain how a perception of plagiarism, whether as always intentional or potentially unintentional, influences the ways in which literacy and teaching and learning practices are viewed and approached. Fundamentally, a large part of this chapter tackles the widely-discussed notion of academic literacies and related models; as well as how this intersects with the concept of plagiarism. By linking these two concepts, literacy practices and plagiarism, an attempt is made to demonstrate how student learning takes place, and the complexities associated with acquiring acceptable academic writing norms by a novice writer are explored.

2.2 Framing plagiarism: The definitions and origins

While some researchers use the term plagiarism interchangeably with academic dishonesty, others classify it as just one form thereof (Singh & Remenyi, 2016), alongside such forms of misconduct as unfair practices, irregularity, and cheating (Chapman & Lupton, 2004; Cummings, Maddux, Harlow, & Dyas, 2002; Teferra, 2001). It is not ordinary practice to use standard dictionary definitions in an academic text, but in this case, to refine an understanding of precisely how plagiarism is defined in use in the academy, ordinary dictionary definitions receive consideration here, since these tend to form the everyday basis for how plagiarism is understood and interpreted across fora. Plagiarism is commonly defined as:

> The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own: e.g. There were accusations of plagiarism
> (https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/plagiarism).

Given that plagiarism is often linked to Internet use, it is worth looking at online definitions as follows:

> …the act of copying or stealing someone else's words or ideas and passing them off as your own work (www.yourdictionary.com/plagiarism, n.d.).

> [to] steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use another's production without crediting the source; to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source and the act of appropriating the ideas and language of another, and passing them for one's own (www.merriam-webster.com/plagiarism, n.d.).

> An act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorisation, and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author [with the following given as synonyms]: appropriation, infringement, piracy, counterfeiting, theft, borrowing, cribbing, passing off (www.dictionary.com/plagiarism, n.d.).

The common thread that runs through the above 'everyday' definitions is that plagiarism is a form of fraud, committed intentionally. Words such as 'take', 'steal' 'pass off' and 'appropriation' constitute some of the terms used in both criminal law and civil law (Mallon, 1989) which frame plagiarism within legal discourse. Plagiarism is not only 'taking someone else's work', but all the

definitions mention the important aspect of ‘passing it off as your own’. This raises questions as to whether this perception of plagiarism as an intentional act that always constitutes a crime or a form of fraud also applies to how it is conceptualised in educational institutions. One of the investigated areas in this study is how institutions as entities of learning are affected by the legal connotations regarding plagiarism, whether they draw on them in their rules and regulations governing plagiarism, or whether they are guided by other discourses.

2.2.1 The legal origins of plagiarism

The legal tone of plagiarism was originally closely aligned with Copyright Law, which holds that words and ideas can be owned, where plagiarism cases are routinely dealt with in courts of law today (Mallon, 1989). This dates back to the seventeenth century, where what is known as ‘possessive individualism’ became popular. Possessive individualism “is a belief that individuals are entitled to protect themselves and the products of their labours” (Sutherland-Smith, 2008, p. 38). By promoting possession and ownership of products, work created through writing and speech become the property of the authors. Writing, according to this ideology, requires recognition of an individual author as the sole creator of a work or a “solitary genius writing in isolation” (DeVoss & Rosati, 2002, p. 200), where this thinking often ignores the many influences from sources outside the writer’s own intellect, viz. the social, cultural, economic, technological, and political environments that all influence the way in which any text is brought to life. What might be considered the capitalist thinking behind this ideology is that there is limited access to knowledge and that knowledge production norms may be violated in pursuit of capital gains. These works were regarded as intellectual property, legally protected by Copyright Law under proprietary rights. This history of the link between copyright and plagiarism, and the legal rather than educational framing thereof is discussed in some detail by Sutherland-Smith (2016b).

The first recorded person to defend his right to his own writing was Alexander Pope in 1741, who demanded legal rights over his letters in court, as well as those of Jonathan Swift (the person to whom he was corresponding), where the court ruled that rights only belong to the original writer. At that time, plagiarism was still not distinctive as a term, but was defined under copyrights until its first definition in 1944 (Mallon, 1989). These two concepts are in fact distinct, in the sense that copyright is governed by law, and in South Africa specifically, refers to rights given to the creator

of the work in terms of Section 20 of the South African Copyright Act, which states: "the right to claim authorship of the work" (Act 98 20(1), 1978, p. 23), whereas plagiarism is not a legal matter. Plagiarism is not a law, but a concept.

The types of transgression in terms of plagiarism are broader, in the sense that if one copies material that is not copyrighted, he/she might have committed plagiarism, but not infringed the law. In addition, copying a small amount of text without due reference or copying from very old material without reference may still constitute plagiarism, but is not in violation of Copyright Law (Buranen & Roy, 1999). This notwithstanding, some authors still conflate plagiarism and copyright (Cvetkovic & Anderson, 2010; Yeo, 2007). Since the law has historically played a major role in shaping the thinking behind plagiarism, this study explores the extent to which approaches to plagiarism replicate the punitive path followed in criminal law penalties, as well as what implications this might have for our practice as academics.

Apart from the everyday dictionary definitions offered above, considerable attempts have been made to define plagiarism in the literature, which repeatedly acknowledge the complexity entailed and the challenge of developing a definition with sufficient nuance (Price, 2002). The complications, according to Powell (2012), emanate among others from the diverse nature of students and their different learning experiences they bring with them to institutions from their previous backgrounds – which means there may not be shared understandings of plagiarism or shared levels of intent in its perpetration. (The relevance of students' diversified educational, cultural and social backgrounds to deliberations about plagiarism are discussed more in Sections 2.6 and 2.7). As a result, the definition of plagiarism needs to be centered around shared meaning (Sutherland-Smith, 2005).

In trying to explain what plagiarism really is, several authors cite a number of activities that manifest as plagiarism. For instance, Park (2003) in particular, presents a comprehensive list of the activities that emerged during the review of UK's literature on plagiarism. Using Park's (2003) strategy as reference, the following section reviews the South African literature on the definition of plagiarism and the practices associated with it.

From a South African perspective, scholars are also of the view that plagiarism is not a concept to be defined with ease and there is no overarching definition available. In the absence of a universal definition of plagiarism, we can only rely on its "features and manifestations" associated to attempt to define it (Lamula, 2017, p. 13). Across the South African literature, plagiarism activities are categorised into two: either as 'minor' and 'serious' plagiarism (McKay, 2014, p. 1316), or as 'minor' and 'major' plagiarism, (Chrysler-Fox & Thomas, 2017, p. 13), or as 'intentional' and 'unintentional' plagiarism as framed by both Lamula (2017, p. 13) and Sentleng and King (2012). In this study, I will use the terms intentional and unintentional plagiarism to indicate the two categories but, following Sutherland-Smith (2008), I reference these along a continuum. Authors agree that what is mainly plagiarised are writings, conversations, and songs ideas (Ocholla & Ocholla, 2016). These authors mention the following activities as plagiarism:

- Submitting assignments from past students and copying the assignments/work of peers.
- Copying of texts from sources in other languages.
- Submitting someone's work without their permission.
- Invented or altered data.
- Writing an assignment for a friend.
- Using quotation marks without proper acknowledgement.
- Invented references or bibliography.
- Submitting work as an individual while written by a group.
- Paraphrasing without acknowledging the source.
- Summarising a text without acknowledgement.
- Incorrect or incomplete reference lists.
- Accidental omission of some citations.

Though their views differ as to which practices are intentional or unintentional, lack of referencing skills is commonly singled out as a cause of unintentional practice (Chrysler-Fox & Thomas, 2017; McKay, 2014; Sentleng & King, 2017), while intentional plagiarism happens when someone

knowingly does some or all of the above activities (Sentleng & King, 2012). All of the above activities, whether committed intentionally or unintentional, are framed as plagiarism. When the act of plagiarism is defined or identified without recognition of the unintentional nature of much of it, then it potentially excludes socio-cultural issues (Lamula, 2017; Sutherland-Smith, 2000), and it constrains the possibilities of academic writing development (Angélil-Carter, 2000). Furthermore, much of the literature, in common with the everyday dictionary definitions, fails to identify the ways in which a moralistic perspective has the potential to identify plagiarism as only an academic misconduct or dishonesty practice. In this thesis, I draw on an academic literacies perspective (discussed in Section 3.4 in more detail) to trouble some of the assumptions that *all* plagiarism is intentional, that plagiarism is a legal concept, and that all forms of plagiarism require a punitive response. Academic dishonesty as a concept refers to prohibited, unethical and even evil behaviours (Mwamwenda & Monyooe, 2000), while this thesis argues that a more theorised deliberation on the nature and causes of plagiarism is required if we are to tackle this serious problem.

Even though many South African researchers acknowledge that plagiarism is different from other forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating (Davids & Carroll, 2009; de Jager & Brown, 2010; Mwamwenda, 2006; Singh & Remenyi, 2016), referring to the list of plagiarism manifestations above, many of the activities represent other forms of breaches of academic integrity, beyond plagiarism. Singh and Remenyi (2016) are amongst the few who separate plagiarism from cheating, and specify it as a violation of academic integrity. Internationally, there has been a move to conceptualise plagiarism within the broader category of issues pertaining to academic integrity, a discussion to which I now turn.

2.3 Framing plagiarism within the broader concept of academic integrity

The previous section highlighted the way in which plagiarism has historically been viewed as always constituting a dishonest practice, predominantly committed by choice. For a long time, students' plagiarism has usually been viewed in the most negative way (Shashikiran, 2014). More recently, researchers have argued for the interrogation of the approaches towards reducing plagiarism through the principles and values of academic integrity (Bretag, 2005, 2016b, 2018).

Plagiarism is increasingly conceptualised within the broader notion of academic integrity (as a breach of academic integrity), as a way of endeavouring to overcome plagiarism in the long-term.

Issues of academic integrity have long been around and addressed in education without necessarily being framed as such and so, as a concept, academic integrity is considered quite new in academia, in the sense that it was not at first considered in terms of what it constitutes, but rather in terms of how it is violated. Hence, cheating and plagiarism have long received notable attention, as though they are the only focus of academic integrity (Gilmore, Maher, & Feldon, 2016, p. 731). Nevertheless, in essence, the concept of academic integrity is multifaceted, as apparent in its definition. Attempts have been made to fine-tune its definition over the years, which was mostly pioneered from the Australian context within the Exemplary Academic Integrity Project (EAIP)[13], which extended the earlier definition the Australian Centre for Academic Integrity in 1999 (Bretag, 2016b).

> Academic integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in learning, teaching and research. It is important for students, teachers, researchers and professional staff to act in an honest way, be responsible for their actions, and show fairness in every part of their work. All students and staff should be an example to others of how to act with integrity in their study and work. Academic integrity is important for an individual's and a school's reputation (http: www.unisa.edu.au/EAIP).

The focus in the above definition is on fostering a particular educational culture, rather than simply on structural means of identifying and punishing breaches. This is not to say that the academic integrity approach would be 'soft' on breaches. A breach of academic integrity is defined as "any behaviour which undermines the values, norms and practices of academic integrity" (Bretag, 2018, p. 4).

[13] Exemplary Academic Integrity Project (EAIP**)** is an initiative from the University of South Australia, which primarily aimed at facilitating issues of academic integrity in Australia, particularly the implementation of an academic integrity policy across the broader higher education sector, within both public universities and private institutions; as well as to provide support through developing resources for students who might be identified as needing support (EAIP, 2013).

Some examples of academic integrity breaches are listed by Bretag (2018) and Mwamwenda (2006) as:

- Plagiarism;
- cheating in exams or assignments;
- impersonation in exams;
- collusion;
- theft of another student's work;
- sabotage of another student's learning/assessment;
- paying a third party for assignments ('contract cheating');
- downloading whole or parts of assignments from the Internet;
- falsification of data;
- misrepresentation of records;
- fraudulent research and publishing practices.

Broadly, the move from a narrow focus on plagiarism as always intentional and synonymous with cheating, to the use of academic integrity as a broader frame, allows for the deliberation of plagiarism within the concept of the values of the academy. Instead of limiting academic integrity issues to misconduct and devising the means to prevent this misconduct (Fishman, 2014), recent international research proposes the development of educational frameworks (Howard & Watson, 2010) or consideration of literacy frameworks (Valentine, 2006) that will revolve around how to help students learn, rather than just how to stop them from cheating (Gallant, 2008).

Extensive research has been undertaken disputing the effectiveness of one-sided punitive approaches to academic integrity breaches (e.g. Cinali, 2016; Salleh, Idzwan, Alias, Hamid, & Yusoff, 2013). Punitive responses include deterrence, where students are penalised and given warnings (Saddiqui, 2016), whereas some developmental approaches include a lengthy process involving integrating information literacy "cross-functionally" and having "interdisciplinary" cooperation among different faculty stakeholders (Cinali, 2016, p. 130). Fishman (2016) argues

that a response to plagiarism does not necessarily have to be punitive, but can range from developmental to punitive, or can be a combination of the two. Because taking a purely punitive route according to Thomas and Scott "is not constructive in the long term" (2016, p. 14), as punishment alone can become an obstacle to the ability to accommodate students' diverse learning needs and educational cultures, among others.

While positioning plagiarism within the broader concept of academic integrity, and breaches thereof, is a relatively recent phenomenon in the literature, there is a particular approach towards academic integrity that has long been practiced in the USA, in the form of American honour codes[14], used in particular groups of colleges. These codes explicate the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in learning, teaching and research, many of which appear in the definition of academic integrity above (Fishman, 2013). The aim of honour codes is to instil in students and staff the above-mentioned values. Students take a pledge to uphold these values (McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). These honour codes are not easily translated into other contexts outside United States of America,[15] where they align to their pre-existing culture of pledging allegiance and so on. But, it has been reported that they have been effective in reducing cheating rates in institutions that use them (McCabe, 2001).

There are debates as to whether 'academic integrity' or 'educational integrity' may be the more suitable term, where the Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity (APFEI)[16] accounted for the preference of 'educational' over 'academic' in this manner:

[14] In the United States of America, most universities have policies and procedures on academic integrity known as 'honour codes' (Rogerson & Basanta, 2016).

[15] Honour codes were attempted in the United Kingdom (UK) but were not workable due to the diversified, internationalised nature of the United Kingdoms' Higher Education system (Clarke & Aiello, 2006; Yakvchuk, Badge, & Scott, 2011).

[16] APFEI is an Australian initiative established to create greater awareness amongst scholars of academic integrity research, since most of them at that time failed to differentiate plagiarism with other academic integrity breaches in their research. APFEI continues to organise biennial conferences in Australia (Newcastle 2005, Adelaide 2007, Wollongong 2009, Perth 2011, Sydney 2013), and each conference developed a more sophisticated appreciation of the complexity of such issues (Bretag, 2016b, p. 27).

> Educational integrity is multi-dimensional and is enabled by all those in the educational enterprise, from students to teachers, librarians, advisors, research colleagues and administrators. It is for this reason that APFEI prefaces 'integrity' with 'educational' rather than just the more conventional 'academic' (http://www.apfei.edu.au/#integrity).

Academic integrity as a concept portrays the complex nature of being honest and behaving in a way that serves broader morality in education, and thus it is not only concerned with students cheating or plagiarising texts, but includes a concern for just approaches to various practices within the academy ranging from "assessment validity, to pedagogical practices, institutional processes, campus norms, administrative staff conduct", as well as many others (Fishman, 2016, p. 50). Bretag (2018) recently added that the ways in which the institution is marketed and how students are recruited and oriented into the academy are also implicated in debates about integrity.

The ways in which students are taught has a strongly ethical dimension. For instance, teaching students etiquettes of communication, and how they are supposed to use language, has something to do with how they are supposed to conduct their lives (Berlin, 1984). All of these contribute to the climate of integrity in a given institution, which makes its definition a discussion requiring continuous fine-tuning (Bretag, 2016b), and therefore a joint effort from all stakeholders to successfully cultivate a culture of academic integrity is needed (Fishman, 2016). Understanding plagiarism from the point of view of academic integrity, not only allows broad and holistic approaches to the concept (Sutherland-Smith, 2008), but may also encourage its being addressed through effective approaches.

The way in which academic integrity is conceptualised differs from one country to another. However, one common characteristic is the focus on malpractices and different ways to prevent them (Bretag, 2016b). According to Fishman, in the United States, academic integrity has been framed by "moralistic, legalistic or disease-based discourse focused largely on discouraging, preventing, detecting, and addressing undesirable behaviours" (2016, p. 15). The drive towards academic integrity in India is focused largely on paying careful attention to anti-plagiarism practices (Chea, 2016). Correspondingly, in China, academic misconduct and academic corruption are used interchangeably, with a strongly pejorative way of constructing academic integrity (Chen & Macfarlane, 2016). Similarly, in the Nigerian education system, research has centred on students' examination malpractices (Orim, 2016).

In the Australian context, however, several academic projects were launched over a period of two decades to raise awareness and encourage a shift among researchers to a more theorised understanding of this complex phenomenon. Those projects include The Academic Integrity Standards Project, Exemplary Academic Integrity Project (EAIP) and others (Bretag, 2006b). Initially this was in response to most researchers writing about plagiarism as if it was similar to other academic integrity breaches, such as cheating, with a narrow focus on student cheating (Bretag, 2016b).

I now turn to look in more detail at how these issues are discussed in the research literature emanating from the country where this study is set, South Africa.

2.4 Academic integrity and plagiarism in South African literature

In South Africa, effort has been expended mainly on plagiarism practices and cheating, and there has been very little exploration of academic integrity as a broader concept, as will be discussed in detail throughout this study. Moreover, unlike the large-scale Australian initiatives, most of the research has been conducted on a smaller scale; at the most only one institution of higher learning has been investigated in each South African study. This research is an attempt at starting a larger-scale research endeavour and developing a national level conversation.

A number of researchers draw attention to plagiarism, with a few focusing on other academic misconduct practices such as cheating in tests and examinations (Mwamwenda, 2006; Theart & Smith, 2012). The concept of ghost writing, or contract cheating is not yet widely debated in the South African context, though Singh and Remenyi (2016) attempt to provide an overview of what ghost-writing is and how it differs from plagiarism. They call for creative ways of promoting learning without suggesting that there is an easy way of combating such practices (Singh & Remenyi, 2016).

The South African scholars raise the concern that plagiarism is prevalent in South African universities (e.g. Sentleng & King, 2012). Most focus on students' plagiarism – with some on undergraduates only (e.g. Sentleng & King, 2012); a few on postgraduates (e.g. Crysler-Fox & Thomas, 2017); and others studying both postgraduates and undergraduates (e.g. Lamula, 2017). Each one of them provide a particular perspective on the issues. For instance, Beute, Van Aswegen

and Winberg (2008) in particular, argue that student plagiarism cannot be addressed through a one-size-fits-all approach considering the diversity of students, while de Jager and Brown (2010, p. 8) reflect that there are educators who strongly advocate for stern punitive measures. Thomas and de Bruin (2015) move away from the dominant focus on plagiarism by students, by looking at plagiarism by academic staff in journal articles.

South African research on plagiarism has also raised concerns about the absence of plagiarism policies (Coetzee & Breytenbach, 2006) and/or the mismatch between policy and practice (de Jager & Brown, 2010; Magaisa, 2013). For instance, Magaisa (2013) conducted research by reviewing a plagiarism policy in one South African university and realised that not only are there some gaps between policy and implementation, but there are often big differences in what lecturers perceive as their responsibility in addressing plagiarism. Coetzee and Breytenbach (2006) conducted research that focused on lecturers' input concerning the prevalence of plagiarism in one South African university. Though plagiarism was viewed as problematic, unfortunately, there were no proper policy guidelines for students or lecturers as to how to manage it, moreover, they found that 59 percent of the respondents did not know if a plagiarism policy existed, and plagiarism cases were addressed intuitively. Coetzee and Breytenbach's study (2006) also demonstrated that current training interventions are ineffective. De Jager and Brown (2010, p. 16) report that even where policies and processes exist, academics are reluctant to use them and prefer to address plagiarism in their own way, as they regard policy as lacking the "sensitivity of individual interpretation".

With the rising popularity of the Internet and text-matching software, some South African studies have started to engage in debates about the role technology and the Internet play in the prevalence of plagiarism (Ocholla & Ocholla, 2016), and how students can be assisted to avoid plagiarism using such technology (Lehobye, 2010). Some authors started to explore perceptions of academics and students on the use of such software, mainly Turnitin, and their effectiveness in 'detecting' plagiarism (Mphahlele, Simelane, & Selepe, 2010; Stoltenkamp & Kabase, 2014).

Though much of the South African literature still views plagiarism as predominantly a misconduct practice or academic dishonesty issue (Finchilescu & Cooper, 2018), it is seen by others as potentially relating to both issues of academic literacy and academic dishonesty (Louw, 2017) and calls for training in writing skills are evident (de Jager & Brown, 2010). Thus Ellery's (2008) study

conceptualised plagiarism as emanating not only from issues of intent, but also from a lack of understanding of technical issues such as correct referencing requirements and writing norms, as well as through a misunderstanding of knowledge production matters and how to develop an authorial voice.

In a significant piece of work entitled *Stolen Language: Plagiarism in academic writing,* Angélil-Carter (2000) avoids a simplistic moralist approach and argues that plagiarism is not always an academic dishonesty issue, but is often related to the incomplete acquisition of academic literacies. She argues for a scaffolder development of academic literacies that addresses issues of developing authorial voice and helps students understand the role of referencing in knowledge production (Angélil-Carter, 1995, 2000). This book presented a thought-provoking argument, which sadly has had little uptake. While such literature positions the issue of plagiarism as complex, this study will show that these nuances have not generally made their way from the research into university practices.

There are three key issues emerging from this brief review of the South African literature which I shall return to throughout the thesis: (i) there is a gap between the theorised insights provided in the literature and changes in institutional policy and practice; (ii) the research has been undertaken on a small-scale; and (iii) the South African literature has not yet positioned the concept of plagiarism within the broader concept of academic integrity to any great extent. I end this section with a short explication of each of these three.

There is a real concern that Scholarship of Teaching and Learning research can be well theorised and provide significant insights (such as this South African literature on plagiarism) but that it does not necessarily translate into changes in actual practice (Boughey & Mckenna, 2016; Niven, 2012). Studies such as this one that link the theory directly to actual context (in the form of institutional policies) may thus perform an important task in demonstrating how the literature can help us make sense of institutional practices.

Angélil-Carter's (2000) influential study, as with the other studies reported on here, was undertaken in a single South African university and there is a need for a sector-wide discussion on this issue. Analysis of policy and plagiarism management in universities on a larger scale has been undertaken in countries elsewhere, as mentioned in Section 1.1 (see, for example, works of Grigg

(2010); Mahmud, Bretag, & Foltýnek (2018); Sutherland-Smith (2011, 2014) from the Australian context and Glendinning (2014) and others from the European context). However, in the South African context, there is limited literature that moves beyond a single institutional context.

Generally, the issue of academic integrity as a concept is missing in the South African literature. However, Theart and Smith (2012) in their article attempted to open the conversation by unpacking its meaning, though they arguably still focused too narrowly on issues of student cheating (Bretag, 2016b).

Having looked briefly at the South African literature on plagiarism in this section (which is also embedded in the discussion throughout), I now turn to a key concept underpinning this study, that of academic literacies.

2.5 Academic literacies

Plagiarism as a breach of academic integrity is a complex, unstable issue to be considered from a variety of viewpoints and at a variety of sites (East, 2008); significant to such a consideration is the understanding that not all plagiarism is intentional. Academic literacies provide us with a lens to understand that the principal aspects underpinning those *un*intentional acts of plagiarism are more complex issues situated within students' development (Howard, 2016).

The idea of academic literacies was birthed within the field called 'New Literacy Studies' (Barton, 1994; Baynham, 1995; Street, 1984), which points to a social perspective of literacy. The concept of academic literacies can be simply defined as the "academic writing conventions and practices with which students are expected to engage" (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 14). It not only refers to literacies within different subjects and disciplines but incorporates genres and conventions of academic discourse as a whole. Academic literacies are seen to incorporate more than just the ability to read and write but pay equal attention to the acceptable customs of the university and the discipline (Lea & Street, 2006). It also includes issues of identity, institutional relationships and power, authority and the diverse writing practices students bring into academia (Lea & Street, 1998, 2006). Since diverse aspects contribute towards students' writing, it is significant to this study to investigate how institutions engage students in academic literacies practices in a way that help them write according to the norms of the academy. Viewing literacies from a cultural and

social perspective may provide insight into how student writing develops, rather than evaluating writing from a viewpoint of 'good and bad writing' (Lea & Street, 1998).

The issue of some forms of plagiarism being partly a problem of underdeveloped academic literacies, is detailed by Shirley Angélil-Carter *(*2000), where she lucidly demonstrates the process a student undertakes to learn to write academically. Students first imitate other authors, prior to finding their feet in the writing discourse of the specific discipline. Angélil-Carter metaphorically compares a new writer to a novice dancer who is learning new steps: "All her energy goes into learning and just remembering what to do next"; therefore, at this stage the level of creativity is very low, what she is concerned about is getting the steps right first, after which she will begin to feel more in control to become creative (Angélil-Carter, 2000, p. 89). Different authors use different terms for this practice: Howard has named it 'patchwriting' defined as "copying text from a source and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures or plugging in one-for-one synonym-substitutes" (1999, p. xvii); Gee calls it "mushfaking" (1990, p. 159); Brown and Murphy (1989, p. 1) term this "unconscious plagiarism or cryptomnesia"; and Pecorari (2003, p. 318) refers to it as "unintentional, non-prototypical plagiarism". Putting on new shoes for a dancer is as difficult as using new words for the first time, and the new students might feel the urge to copy very closely, word for word (Angélil-Carter, 2000). Mimicking other authors in this regard is seen as a practice that helps students to learn the social practices of the discipline.

Student writing and use of language in the literacies frame is understood to be so much more than grammar and spelling, as it entails a host of issues pertaining to identity and how knowledge is produced within each discipline. Writing and language use is not simply the instrument to acquire technical skills (Hendricks & Quinn, 2000). This view focuses on how academic writing conventions are challenging to master, resulting in students often finding themselves unintentionally plagiarising (Howard & Davies, 2009). Students might sometimes lack the universities' understanding of knowledge production or the techniques to use sources correctly, which, according to academic literacies research, is not a moral wrong as it has little to do with intentional cheating but is rather a problem of novice writing (Marshall & Garry, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005). Within this literacies conception of academic reading and writing, it is important to this study to find out how students who plagiarise unintentionally are conceptualised by the

institutions, and whether there is a distinction made between students who plagiarise because of them being novice writers or whether they are all categorised generally as 'plagiarising students'.

2.5.1 The autonomous model of literacies

As highlighted above, academic literacies are not seen to be a set of neutral and generic skills that can be acquired separately from the mainstream context. The skills approach to literacy is seen to be a problematic 'autonomous' approach that fails to consider the socially situated nature of learning. This model is underpinned by the misunderstanding that literacy is neutral and universal without considering different cultural understandings that emerge in specific disciplines (Larson, 1996; Street, 1984, 1993, 2003, 2006). The autonomous model further posits that the purpose of language is to encode and decode the meaning, which happens separately (Street, 2006). Therefore, reading and writing is all about producing grammatically correct text through the correct encoding process (Christie, 1985). This misunderstanding indicates that meaning construction is mainly premised on language proficiency, and the expectation is that students interpret text the same way in which the author intended, as long as they share proficiency in the medium of instruction, as though the meaning was neutrally contained in the text waiting for decoding (McKenna, 2004a).

Gramsci calls a focus on technical skills a 'common-sense' approach, arguing that it is an "uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become common in any given epoch" (1971, p. 322). While Gramsci was primarily concerned with the hegemonic construction of broad social systems through a set of unquestioned assumptions, he points out that these manifest in multiple contexts, including in education. Common-sense approaches in education are understood to sustain the idea that knowledge is natural and obvious, rather than cultural and political (Boughey & McKenna, 2016; McKenna, 2004b; Moyo, 2018). In this regard, common sense approaches to teaching and learning focus on the instrumental acquisition of the canon, which is held to be beyond critique. Gooding-Brown calls for a disruption of such ideas through "a critical dismantling of the concept of structures" which inform social and cultural practices (2000, p. 36). Disruption brings a "sense of uncovering and dismantling, in order to question the structures and systems through which people are constructed" (Quinn, 2012a, p. 122).

Common-sense beliefs about language are hugely powerful in the academy. There is a dominant belief that language is merely a conduit for meaning unrelated to the norms of the discipline (Christie, 1993). In such understandings, language is seen to be a unitary phenomenon, centred around proficiency and the perfection of grammar.

In contrast to the understanding of student reading and writing as related to autonomous skills, New Literacies Studies argues that we need to take on an ideological model.

2.5.2 The ideological model of literacies

As indicated, the alternative to the autonomous model is the ideological model of literacies, which acknowledges that literacy practices vary from one context to the next and that literacy is a social practice; therefore, reading and writing are socially embedded, and are very much informed by the context in which they exist. Thus, it is acknowledged that there are many varying ways of engaging with the production of text (Street, 1984, 1995, 2003).

Literacy understood as an ideological, social practice (Street, 2005) suggests that it is not valid; that "it can be given neutrally and then its 'social' effects only experienced afterwards" (Street, 2006, p. 2). It means that the manner in which reading and writing is undertaken is imbedded in perceptions of knowledge, identity and being. Both teachers and students hold particular perceptions of what constitutes appropriate knowledge, identity and being and this may affect the way learning takes place, and the nature of literacies learned. Reading and writing always concerns social practices related to particular contexts and the kind of learning that takes place will always be dependent on those contexts. Therefore, literacy is always contested, both in meaning and in practice. Consequently, it is always 'ideological' (Street, 2006) and imbued with power.

Literacy, according to the ideological model, does not have a relatively fixed influence on social practices, as is perceived by the autonomous model. Due to the powerful influence of those controlling what forms of literacies are deemed legitimate, there is a vested interest in ensuring that an autonomous account remains dominant (Reder & Davila, 2005).

Gee (1990) argues that there are literacies that are embedded in particular worldviews, where there is often a desire for that view to dominate and marginalise others. Writing, in particular, according

to Collins and Blot (2003), is associated with power. Power relations "create the shape of everyday life that in turn determines how individuals are educated, how each of us fits into society, and how we are able to define our identities" (Reder & Davila, 2005, p. 9). For this reason and many others, the autonomous model of literacy is contested by the ideological model. There is a challenge to the understanding that writing is a matter of language proficiency and instead the ideological nature of how we construct knowledge in the academy is foregrounded. Learning to read and write in the academy, in the ideological understanding of literacies, is seen to be deeply tied to taking on the disciplinary norms of what 'counts' as knowledge, how such knowledge can be presented, what kinds of claims can be made about the knowledge and by whom, and what constitutes acceptable evidence for such knowledge. This is about taking on a disciplinary identity and gaining access to the knowledge-making norms and values far more than it is about spelling and grammar.

When academic writing is perceived in an instrumentalist way as being about autonomous language skills, then referencing becomes just another technical skill employed to avoid plagiarism. In the ideological understanding underpinning academic literacies research however, referencing is understood as entailing a host of aspects pertaining to identity and how specific disciplines produce knowledge (Hendricks & Quinn, 2000). If the very notion of referencing is understood as a means of knowledge production and as entwined with developing a voice, then the understanding of and approaches to managing plagiarism will be very different.

2.5.3 The discourse of intention and the plagiarism continuum model

While the autonomous and ideological models explain contradicting views of academic writing, the plagiarism continuum model indicates that a conception of plagiarism affects how literacies within institutions are approached and intersects these views with both autonomous and ideological conceptions; this means that which model of literacies is used will impact the way in which plagiarism is conceptualised.

Arriving at a conclusion as to whether plagiarism happened intentionally or unintentionally is a tricky and obscure practice. How does the assessor ascertain what was in the writer's mind when they used text without due recognition? Nevertheless, it is a significant matter, because intention is indicated in the literature to be a key to determining the appropriate response to instances of

plagiarism (Clegg & Flint, 2006; Howard, 1999; Randall, 2001). While the existence or non-existence of plagiarism may lie in an analysis of the text, determining the response to it ought to lie within an analysis of the intention of the writer. In the case of student plagiarism, academics are those who determine whether plagiarism took place, and further decide on the intention that led to it.

One of the issues affecting decisions about intention is the understanding of writing practices that dominates within an institution. If the common-sense autonomous model dominates, then plagiarism will be understood to be the lack of implementation of technical processes, but if an ideological account is brought to bear, plagiarism could be seen to emerge as anything from a lack of awareness of the disciplinary norms, a partially developed disciplinary identity, an oversight or, indeed, through to intentional misconduct. This relationship between how literacies are understood and how plagiarism might be conceptualised can be extended to consider how teaching might occur.

The relationship between the intention to plagiarise and teaching practice is illustrated by the Sutherland-Smith's (2008) plagiarism continuum model. The model draws from legal studies, cultural studies, literacy theories, and other educational theories. By seeking multiple dimensions, the model suggests that plagiarism is viewed differently across different conceptions of teaching, and fundamentally focuses on perceptions around issues of intentional and unintentional plagiarism. While the precise nature of any specific case would determine which form of plagiarism is at play, Sutherland-Smith (2008) argues that approaches to teaching may enable or enhance academics and students to understand the full scope of forms of plagiarism. Different understandings of how teaching and learning occur and how knowledge is produced are thus seen to potentially narrow the scope of possible conceptions of plagiarism.

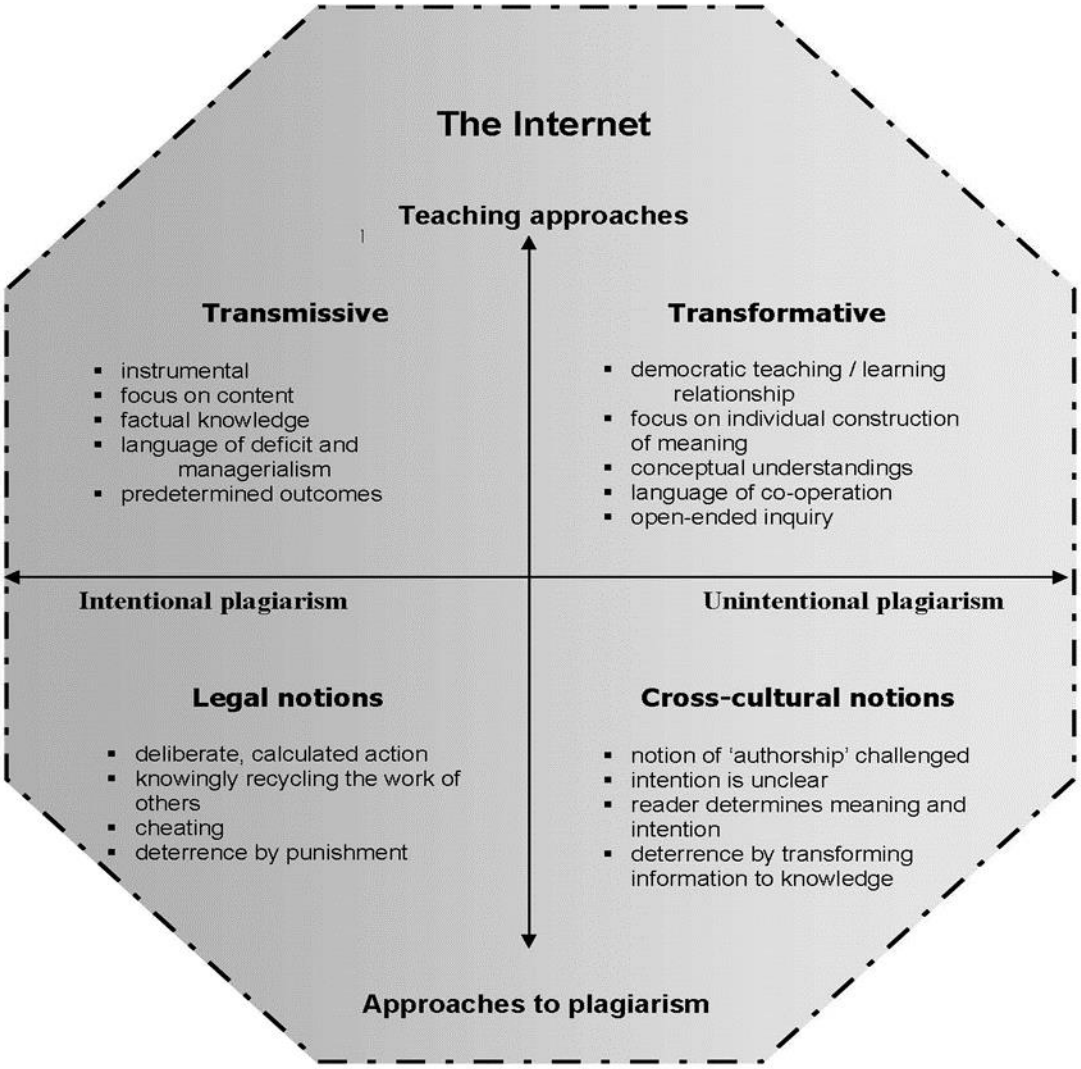


Figure 2.1: The plagiarism continuum model (Sutherland-Smith, 2008, p. 29)

Intentional plagiarism is associated with deliberately taking calculated decisions to cheat readers by presenting them with text stolen from others. According to Sutherland-Smith (2008), this perception is more associated with legal notions of knowledge production. If plagiarism is perceived only as cheating or infringement of the law, the implication is that it is seen as always being intentional, and therefore the response becomes punitive (Hunt, 2004). Such a perception not only influences universities' management of plagiarising students, but also impacts greatly on

their approach to pedagogy. Academics who embrace such views, according to the plagiarism continuum model, tend to adopt a 'transmissive' approach to teaching and learning, which is characterised by teacher-centeredness, where students are deemed to be consumers of knowledge, and their assessments require them to replicate what was taught in class (Sutherland-Smith, 2008). These approaches to teaching appear to be untheorised and based on a superficial acquisition of the norms of the discipline. Language is understood to be a conveyor of the message, neutrally separate from cultural and social contexts.

On the other end of this continuum exists the possibility that some instances of plagiarism may take place unintentionally. Here, notions of 'authorship' may be challenged, and knowledge production in the academy is understood to be a practice emerging from a particular historical view (Street, 1984). This view emerges from a large body of research showing that the socio-cultural writing practices in the academy are complex. According to the plagiarism continuum model, this view represents a 'transformative' approach to teaching that foregrounds how the student comes to construct knowledge within the discipline. Language here is understood to be political and its use in different disciplines is seen to emerge from the values and norms of that field (Angélil-Carter, 2000; Sutherland-Smith, 2008). The 'transformative' approach arises as a contrast to 'transmissive' and 'autonomous' approaches to literacy, which understand texts as separate from their context; instead, the transformative supports the ideological model that perceives literacies as a set of social practices, which cannot be separated from the people who use them (Street, 1996).

The plagiarism continuum model highlights that plagiarism exists on a spectrum, and in our attempts to explain the one end of the plagiarism continuum where 'copying' takes the form of intentional 'cut-and-paste' or even buying of essays, we must not forget the other side of the continuum, where students copy because of not having internalised the appropriate literacy practices.

I briefly explored this issue of intentionality in an article written with one of my supervisors for the online publication *The Conversation* (McKenna & Mphahlele, 2015). The responses in the form of emails, tweets and a radio interview and phone-in session on Cape Talk/702 (a local radio station) conducted on 14 August 2015, all indicate that this is a topic of great interest to South African academics. There is a resistance to the notion of a continuum of forms of plagiarism from

intentional to unintentional as it is indeed simpler to conceptualise of issues in black and white, however New Literacies Studies shows how closely tied the taking on of literacy practices are, to issues of knowledge production and identity.

2.6 Plagiarism as affecting epistemological access and identity

Thus far, this chapter has grappled with the key debates in the literature around conceptualisations of literacy practices in the academy, and how this affects how plagiarism is understood. It is important however, for me to step back and debate some significant structures that are seen to intersect with student access to the practices of the university.

Since academic literacies require students to take on particular ways of reading, writing, speaking and listening, ways of seeing the world, and ways of behaving in it, academic literacy can be seen to construct its own cultural community. The idea of culture here suggests that engagement and immersion are integral to the process of becoming part of that culture. Students have to acquire an understanding of how the culture works if they wish to become member. Bartholomae (1985, p. 4) describes this process thus:

> The students have to appropriate (or be appropriated by) a specialised discourse, and they have to do this as though they were members of the academy, or historians or anthropologists or economists; they have to invent the university by assembling and mimicking its language. … They must learn to speak our language.

In this way, students seek access to the ways of knowing of that community. This is what is meant by the concept of 'epistemological access' (Morrow, 1993). Epistemological access is described as access to knowledge and ways of knowing (Morrow, 1993), and is not just access to the premises of higher education institutions. For students to attain epistemological access and become successful in higher education, they not only need access to the content of disciplines, but also need to understand how such content is generated. Morrow argues that for them to be actively involved, they first need to have self-knowledge in terms of how they relate to the discourse. Ivanič (1998) talks about individuals taking on an identity in relation to the communities into which they enter. For students to acquire such a "social identity" (Archer, 2003, p. 103), that is to become active participants in a discourse, takes time, and it depends on how closely the values and practices of the community are related to those that students bring with them. This is all the more so the case

in learning how knowledge is produced through various disciplinary norms and values (epistemology), so students are expected to become particular kinds of knowers with particular forms of knowing (ontology).

Gee defines discourse as "an interactive identity-based communication using language" (2014, p. 24), and distinguishes between two kinds of discourses, discourse with small 'd' and Discourse with a capital 'D'. The former refers to how we use language in everyday communication, while the latter refers to "interactive, identity-based communication using both language and everything else at human disposal" (Gee, 2014, p. 24) such as "actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognisable identity" (Gee, 1999, p. 34). Students, through their higher education journeys, are expected to take on various target Discourses, with all the identity implications this brings. On their journey to becoming fully 'socialised' into the Discourse of the university, students are often tempted to imitate some aspects of the Discourse until they become confident to integrate them into their own way of doing things. In this way, as the saying goes, they 'fake it 'till they make it'.

Gee (1999) further claims that power relations often play a role in how this happens, where the dominant discourses of the elite are privileged, which puts students with identities not closely related to the Discourse of the particular disciplines and specific universities at a distinct disadvantage. In the midst of transitioning, the student's identity can be severely challenged (De Kadt & Mathonsi, 2003), and a lasting sense of alienation can result. This issue of students feeling alienated by the practices of the university has been sharpened in recent news through the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall[17]protests (Badat, 2016). This is not to say that powerful knowledges available in the academy should be set aside in order to ensure everyone feels

[17] #RhodesMustFall was a metaphor used by students during the protests to capture their discontent on a number of institutional tertiary education issues, related to the 'decolonisation of the university', and the highly skewed social composition of the academic workforce – especially the professoriate that sees a pervasive dearth of black South African scholars, and other deleterious aspects of the institutional culture of local universities (Badat, 2016, p. 12). The #RhodesMustFall protest followed and overlapped the national #FeesMustFall protests of 2015 and 2016 that brought the national higher education sector to a standstill and brought about significant funding adjustments.

comfortable, but these concerns nonetheless raise substantive social justice concerns (Badat, 2016), which have a lot to do with academic literacy practices, and "the mastery of a 'way of being' required of students as they engage with higher education" (Boughey & McKenna, 2016, p. 1). The literature explains that finding a voice is like attaining membership in a community (Howard, 1995; MacDonald & Carroll, 2006; Price, 2002). There are increasing concerns that the community of higher education privileges only one way of knowing, and one set of knowledges and that this too has implications for the acquisition of academic literacies (Mamdani, 2008; Mbembe, 2015).

Plagiarism is sometimes seen as a gate-keeper, denying students entry into the academic discourse (Scollon, 1995). Student success in academic discourse will be determined by their demonstration of the required norms. Such norms are not evenly accessible considering the history of our country, and the increasingly diversified demographics with students coming from different socio-cultural backgrounds, diverse basic educational experiences, and varying language backgrounds (Angélil-Carter, 2000; McKenna, 2004a). In South Africa, after more than 25 years of democracy, the country has experienced a remarkable increase in the applications for admission to universities. Increased access to higher education, with the majority of students from poorer communities within South Africa and from other African countries, characterises a student body with different knowledges and varied approaches to the literacy practices they encounter in the university. The student body has doubled in size in the two decades since the end of apartheid and with it has come multiple forms of diversity.

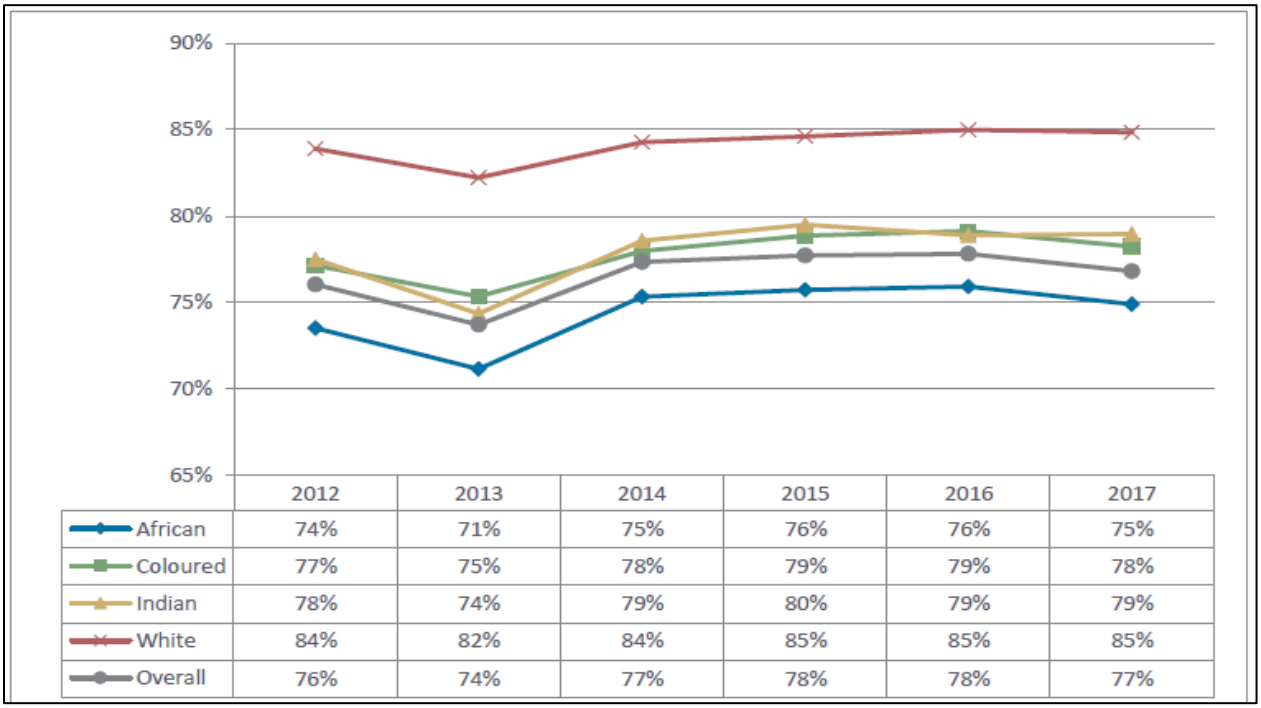
Thus, the literature suggests that instead of considering students who 'patch-write' as being plagiarists, it might be worthwhile to appreciate them as students on their learning path attempting to use the language of the community to join the knowledge conversation (Howard, 2009) and to consider the importance of educational processes that can assist them in this process.

2.7 The significance of social class in higher education

Across the world, access and success in higher education are closely related to socio-economic status (Bathmaker, Ingram, Abrahams, Hoare, Waller, & Bradley, 2016; Reay & Vincent, 2016). Access to university means a great deal, as it becomes an investment for both the individual and the country. However, it is not always possible for everyone who aspires to enter university to do

so without encountering hurdles. A key gate-keeping force to entering and succeeding in university is seen to be social class. The concept of social class in the South African context carries a slightly different interpretation compared to the industrial Western countries where it originates. This is especially the case due to the dire economic conditions in which many South African citizens live. Statistics show that 55.5% of SA citizens' earnings are below their level of needs, while a shocking 25.2% of the 55.5% fail to meet basic needs such as a balanced diet, sanitation and housing (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Consequently, the Western classification of social class should not be blindly adopted in the South African context. Hence, Case et al., (2018) suggest that the term 'working class' is a misnomer, as the majority are unemployed and are side-lined in important social processes.

Social class is of course not neutral, and it intersects with other social issues, such as race and gender (Cooper, 2015). The SAHE system has been notably characterised by social inequalities based on race since 1988. A considerable shift has since been seen, but by 2012 the system still exhibited "serious student 'race-class' social inequality" (Cooper, 2015, p. 238). Southall (2016) argues that the racial divide considered on its own in South Africa blurs issues of class, especially within the middle class. He further notes that irrespective of the post-apartheid strategies to create conditions for growth, for black middle-class citizens in the post-apartheid era, the standards will always be skewed, as the white middle class are seen to have the advantage of inter-generational transmissions of economical capital created through colonial and apartheid policies (Southall, 2016).



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African	74%	71%	75%	76%	76%	75%
Coloured	77%	75%	78%	79%	79%	78%
Indian	78%	74%	79%	80%	79%	79%
White	84%	82%	84%	85%	85%	85%
Overall	76%	74%	77%	78%	78%	77%

Figure 2.2: Course success rates by race from 2012 to 2017 (CHE, 2019, p. 12)

The inequalities in class create skewed physical access to higher education, mostly favouring middle class students who are able to attend better schools and are more likely to attain the required entrance marks and to have access to funds to pay fees. This injustice stirred the #FeesMustFall protests among SA university students between 2015 and 2016, who complained about the unaffordable fees charged for university studies, which only economically secure families could afford (Badat, 2016).

Significantly, the racial disparities at the point of access are then exacerbated by racially differentiated graduation rates in every programme in the country (CHE, 2018). While Southall (2016) has cautioned a simplistic equating of race and class, the legacy of apartheid inequalities means that there is still a significant correlation between race group and social class in South Africa.

A narrative study conducted between 2016 and 2017 amongst 73 SA students suggests that social class was a constraint that affected students' experiences of accessing and succeeding in higher education, and getting employment thereafter (Case et al., 2018). Students from poor rural

societies, predominantly black, are more negatively affected than urban middle-class students (Czerniewicz & Brown, 2014). Figure 2.2 above displays the skewed success rate of university students according to race. Black students, even though they form the majority of the total enrolment (see Table 1.4), have the lowest success rate at 75%, while the success rate of white students is at 85% (CHE, 2019).

Apart from economic support, the home context is also key in providing 'cultural capital'[18] in helping students to navigate the expectations embedded in the norms and values of the university. Such cultural capital plays a significant role in providing support structures depending on whether family members have been exposed to higher education experiences (Case et al., 2018). Families that are better off economically have the ability to offer some sort of support to their children, which is not only money related, but also consists of exposing these young people to certain social mores substantive to succeeding in a university context (Case et al., 2018).

Students whose home language differs from the medium of instruction do indeed often experience difficulties when engaging with learning in higher education (Janks, 2004). These are often working-class black students, who have neither English nor Afrikaans as their first language. Most universities in the country are English medium, and a few remain Afrikaans medium, although both languages are used as a medium of instruction in certain universities. Because most students are from notably disadvantaged backgrounds, where English and Afrikaans are additional languages, it cannot be underestimated that epistemological access to university is made more challenging through the language used as a medium of instruction. Most students during their primary education were less exposed to the English language, as rural villages are characterised by communities speaking indigenous languages (Janks, 2004), and teachers often use mother tongue and many teachers are themselves not fluent in the medium of instruction (Janks, 2004). By the time these students enter university, they have trouble in adjusting to the language demands (Case et al., 2018). These students may have excelled in their communities academically and

[18] Bourdieu (1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1994) speaks of 'cultural capital' to indicate different resources possessed by individuals by virtue of their social background.

otherwise, but within the higher education community, they are found wanting because of in part what Bourdieu (1991) calls a lack of 'linguistic capital'. Their indigenous languages become 'illegitimate' in the university context and English appears to be promoted as a powerful language (Case et al., 2018). This not only undermines the significance of their mother tongue, but also affects their identities, creating a fundamental tension when it comes to the issue of access (Janks, 2004).

Language has always long been held to be an explanation for the differentiated success rates in SAHE, though this ongoing explanation is regularly critiqued in the literature (see, for example, Boughey, 2002; 2012; Janks, 2004; McKenna, 2010; 2012), because it fails to take into account how language alone is not the only hurdle; taking on academic literacy practices are central to higher education success, but these are not readily accessible to all. While no student comes to university adept in the literacy practices expected of them, some will find them more accessible than others dependent on social class (Case et al., 2018). It is anathema to most academics that higher education privileges particular social classes over others, and the autonomous account of literacy allows an avoidance of the implications this brings. In response to concerns about the extent that higher education inadvertently replicates social injustices, many academics who have come to understand the ideological model of literacy practices attempt to teach in ways that make such practices explicit (Jacobs, 2007).

Teaching in ways that make the socio-cultural norms of disciplinary literacy practices explicit then raises the issue of the 'access paradox'. The 'access paradox' is a term coined by Lodge (1997), which was further explored by Janks (2004), to explain the tension created when teaching is done in such a way as to provide students with explicit access to the dominant Discourse (as enacted through disciplinary literacy practices), while by doing so, the dominance of that Discourse is reinstated. The decolonial scholars of the #FeesMustFall movement have raised concerns that our institutions constantly re-inscribe privileged practices from the Global North (Badat, 2016). Most academics working with an understanding of the ideological nature of our literacy practices would not like to be seen to be unwittingly reinforcing them. On the other hand, if access is denied to the dominant Discourse, through teaching as if our practices are neutral and language is autonomous

of context, students are marginalised and lose the opportunity to access the knowledge of the academy.

2.8 The question of cultural conceptualisations of literacies

Very closely intersecting with language is the concept of culture, which is both complex and complicated, and has many different meanings in various settings. For the sake of this section, culture is referred to from a behavioural and anthropological sciences perspective, defined as "the shared set of (implicit and explicit) values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behaviour that allow a social group to function and perpetuate itself" (Hudelson, 2004, p. 1). These cultural attributes are deemed to have been learnt over the ages (Beldo, 2010).

As far as issues of academic integrity are concerned, tension often exists between Eastern and Western cultures. This becomes a very controversial enquiry that often raises emotions, issues of racial discrimination and 'otherness' (Bloch, 2007). Eastern cultures include geographical areas such as Asia, The Middle East, and parts of Africa (Buranen & Roy, 1999), while Western cultures are roughly constituted by people from North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand (Bloch, 2007).

Since the early nineties, there have been reports by researchers of a tendency to plagiarise by students from Eastern cultures, in part attributed to insufficient preparedness of these students for Western tertiary education (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991; Bretag, 2001). Until recently, there have been on-going debates around the world about whether a relationship exists between culture and plagiarism. Some scholars vehemently assert the existence of culturally grounded elements, especially in student plagiarism (Li & Casanave, 2012; Ouellette, 2008; Plakans & Gebril, 2012), while others just as adamantly contest such claims (Martin, 2012; Pecorari & Petrić, 2014; Weigle & Parker, 2012).

Maxwell, Curtis and Vardanega (2006) conducted research comparing a group of international Asian students to a group of local Australians, and unexpectedly discovered that the local students plagiarised more than the international students did. The results were expected to be the other way around, because international students, owing to language constraints and other cultural issues, are thought to have trouble in grasping the concept of plagiarism, and therefore are often at risk of

committing it. It might be true that expecting more plagiarism from an Asian group merely evidences stereotypic thinking about plagiarism as a cultural phenomenon. Nevertheless, counter research persists that students from Eastern societies tend to plagiarise more than their Western counterparts; a phenomenon which may be attributable to the unique traditions of how literacy is perceived in these societies, which is different from that of Western cultures.

The question remains as to why opposing reports emerge on this issue. Some blame problematic research methodologies. But Bloch (2007) sees this as a cultural rhetoric, that while critical differences between how plagiarism is viewed might exist, until the differences and maybe similarities of how each cultural group perceives plagiarism are understood, none can confidently draw any conclusion. Moreover, this is often more complex than is thought. He further argues that, a different view of plagiarism does not mean there is no view of plagiarism at all (Bloch, 2007). For instance, according to researchers who argue that there are distinct cultural differences, it is argued that the Chinese tend to associate plagiarism more with morals, perhaps owing to its moralistic roots historically being pinned to it. Additionally, in Chinese culture, memorisation and imitation have tended to be core to their learning due in part to the nature of the written language, which requires the memorisation of tens of thousands of characters, taking up the full period of primary and secondary education (Berlin, 1988). Therefore, when students memorise and imitate, according to their understanding, they exhibit good morals, and venerate cultural norms. Many Chinese believe that through imitation and memorisation, new knowledge can be created (Berlin, 1988). Unfortunately, this approach may be seen by Westerners as lacking independent logical enquiry, more so because, when Chinese students present their arguments, they often refrain from using the Western coterie of phrases such as ‘in my view’; and will rather, for example, use the expression ‘I transmit’ than ‘I create’ (Bloch, 2007). Scollon (1995) has argued that what is evidenced is not a lack of the ability to analyse text critically, but is rather an adherence to a different constellation of inculcated cultural norms. There are also distinctions between many countries and cultures in terms of the norms of attribution. What the Chinese regard as a classic text requires no citation, where origin is taken as known or understood, hence, they may have difficulties in citing other people’s work according to Western academic norms (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991).

Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that the tension between these two cultural groups is exacerbated by power relations. Eastern societies, in their view, desire to be accepted in the Western community, so that they can gain access to their institutions, get the opportunity to publish in their journals, and engage one another in knowledge sharing. Pennycook (1996) says however, that there is resistance to taking on literacy practices of Western society, which are seen to be culturally inappropriate to the production of knowledge, and so incidents of plagiarism can emerge as forms of resistance. In all of this discussion is also a problematic clumping together of entire countries and cultures as if all people from the "East" or "Global North" or wherever share educational backgrounds, cultural values and literacy norms.

Multiculturalism in higher education is of course especially pertinent to the South African context, considering the country's highly fractured post-apartheid society. And the relevance of multiculturalism is even stronger because of the remarkable growth of international student numbers over the past two decades, and the vision the country has for 2030, of increasing "cross border movement of students and staff; research collaboration; inclusion of international, interracial and global dimensions in university curricular" (South Africa. DHET, 2013b, p. 39). These issues provide multiple challenges to universities and the ways in which they conceive of and address plagiarism locally.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter addressed key concepts that were relevant to this research. It was important to begin with the definitions and origins of plagiarism to understand how plagiarism has been understood over the years, and the impact of that conceptualisation in today's setting. The chapter continued to show how an attempt to move plagiarism from its historic legal origins into the notion of academic integrity is an ongoing project to provide a more nuanced understanding of the practice.

The issue of intention appears to be core to deciding whether or not punishment is required or whether the plagiarism reflects insufficient educational approaches. By using the plagiarism continuum model, it has been shown how the consideration of plagiarism on a continuum, from intentional to unintentional, impacts on the approaches to teaching and learning. In this section, the complexities of plagiarism were highlighted with a focus on the unintentional, and it was

argued that this form of plagiarism results from an under achieved level of acquisition of academic literacies. The causes of plagiarism in this regard are multifarious, and include cultural context and social class. It was also argued that if these sources are not well understood, then plagiarism becomes a gatekeeper in education. Students without the right 'cultural capital' will continue to be marginalised and alienated from the academy. While this chapter provided an introduction to the key concepts and how these are framed in the literature, these do not sufficiently frame the theoretical approach I have taken. It is to the larger metatheory that I now turn in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

All research is underpinned by philosophical assumptions, which not only guide the kinds of arguments one can make in a scientific enquiry, but also directly affect the methodologies used in a given study (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Therefore, in order to conduct and evaluate any research effectively, one needs to understand the paradigms and meta-theories[19] underpinning a study, because as Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) have observed, researchers use the lens of a metatheory to look at the world within which a social phenomenon exists, in order to devise the methodologies that will be used in a given research study, and importantly, to determine how data will be interpreted. Therefore, paradigms or meta-theories have fundamental implications for every decision taken throughout the research process that include data collection techniques as well as data analysis methods. Though the terms, metatheory, paradigm and ontological position are often used interchangeably, in this research, the term metatheory is used to refer to the philosophy behind the study.

In the social sciences, there are different metatheories that argue for different philosophical views (Scotland, 2012), where these views reflect their methodologies and methods (Crotty, 1989). Some of the dominant metatheories include positivism, interpretivism or constructivism, relativism, post-modernism and critical or transformative theories, to mention but a few, with overlaps between many of them.

[19] The term 'paradigm' was first used in 1962 and overlaps with the term 'metatheory'. "Metatheory can be seen as the philosophy behind the theory, the fundamental set of ideas about how phenomena of interest in a particular field should be thought about and researched" (Bates, 2005, p. 2), which was given its modern understanding in science by Kuhn (1996), to refer to a philosophical way of thinking. Thus, a paradigm according to Bates (2005) carries a broader meaning than does metatheory. A metatheory is undeniably core to any paradigm. In the social sciences, paradigms and meta-theories are used to explain the researchers' 'world views'.

This research takes a critical realist (CR) approach as the metatheory underpinning the philosophical assumptions made in the study. I will start by discussing the ontology and epistemology of CR prior to discussing the relation to the methodology applied in this study in the chapter that follows.

3.2 The ontology and epistemology of critical realism

Ontology and epistemology constitute components of metatheories alongside methodologies and methods of research (Danermark, Ekström, Jacobson, & Karlsson, 2002; Scotland, 2012). While some researchers add axiology and other components (Finnis, 1980; Musa, 2013), in this section I will focus only on the ontology and epistemology. First, I will provide a brief explanation of these terms as a foundation, before I embark on specific ontological and epistemological concepts pertinent to critical realism.

Ontology in research concerns the nature of the world (Danermark, et al., 2002). While Bhaskar (1978) further uses the word to explain what the nature of reality must be like for science to be 'doable', Scotland (2012, p. 1) sees ontology as a position taken by researchers regarding their "perception of how things really are and how things really work". Therefore, ontology entails the assumptions concerning what constitutes reality that guides a researcher while thinking about the research problem and determinations of its significance, as well as the best possible strategies to approach the research problem in order to contribute towards its resolution (Scotland, 2012).

While ontology concerns itself with the nature of reality, epistemology explains what counts as knowledge within the world, or how we come to know something (Cooksey & McDonald, 2011). It focuses on the nature of human knowledges, how these knowledges can be acquired, and how they can be communicated to other human beings (Cooksey & McDonald, 2011, p. 2). In shaping epistemology in research, there are particular questions to be asked related to knowledge, such as whether it can be acquired or whether it has to be experienced, and questions related to the relationship between the researcher and what is already known. These questions are significant, because they position a researcher to discover what is new or given, what is already known and established, as well as the faith a researcher invests in the data she gathers (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). To try to address these issues, Slavin (1984) developed four sources of epistemological

knowledge, which are intuitive knowledge, authoritative knowledge, logical knowledge, and empirical knowledge. Intuitive knowledge describes knowledge derived from sources such as beliefs, faith, and intuition. An epistemology that is grounded on authoritative knowledge relies on data gathered from people, books, leaders in organisations, etc. Rationalist epistemology or logical knowledge emphasises reason as the definite way of arriving at the truth. In addition, those who understand knowledge as best derived from senses and experiences are more likely to adopt an empirical epistemology approach (Slavin, 1984). The significance of these different types of knowledge is that they inform how knowledge is pursued by a study. Critical realism is sceptical of some of the knowledges pursued in social research (Danermark et al., 2002); thus, as a metatheory it positions itself uniquely in relation to other theories, in the manner discussed below.

Sociologies of knowledge have been caught up in what Maton and Moore call an "epistemological dilemma", which is an assumption that the only choice to study reality that can be made is between "constructivist relativism and positivist absolutism" (2010, p. 1). Relativists are of the view that knowledge is local and contextual, in other words, that truth is the product of human thinking that evolves over time, and that conclusions reached are always provisional. On the other hand, positivists argue that what we observe is the ultimate truth.

It is in response to the extremes of relativism on the one hand and positivism on the other that critical realism emerges. Critical realism refutes that the methods we use to obtain knowledge are not always so provisional and temporary that no claims can be made and that our knowledge of the world cannot be reduced to the observation of events; and that reality cannot be limited to a series of events whereby one merely follows on from the other sequentially.

Critical realism emerges as one of the most powerful and growing metatheories and has been taken up in both the natural and the social sciences, providing a significant alternative to positivism and post-modernism, while at the same time, rejecting some of the views forwarded by relativism and constructivism (Danermark et al., 2000). Critical realism is a philosophy developed by Roy Bhaskar, providing a sophisticated depth ontology (Bhaskar, 1978), which posits that reality is more than what we see and experience. Contrary to what positivists and constructivists conceive, CR argues that reality is derived from underlying causal mechanisms, other than from senses, experiences, and observable events. Thus, CR proponents argue identifying the causal mechanisms

that produce a given phenomenon to be the fundamental task of doing research. Bhaskar averred that conceptualising reality as only deriving from empirical observable events reduces ontology to epistemology, and leads to a research error called 'epistemic fallacy' (Bhaskar, 1978). Mutch has put it that the "epistemic fallacy is to confuse our knowledge of the world with what is the real world" (2004, p. 6). Our understanding of the world becomes constrained when we reduce what we know, experience, and observe, to be the complete and ultimate truth, and assume there is nothing more to be known than what is evident to our senses (Danermark et al., 2002; Mingers, 2004). Sayer further cautions that if we continue to conflate ontology and epistemology by holding that our understanding of the world is everything there is to know, then there is no need to conduct research, because there will be nothing worth finding out (Sayer, 2000).

It is against this milieu of the rejection of empirical epistemology that the application of CR as a methodology not only helps to guard against committing the epistemic fallacy, but is also of great significance as it provides practical methodological approaches to understanding the basis of knowledge in the form of generative mechanisms. This in turn enables and/or constrains the manner in which a phenomenon such as plagiarism is viewed in the South African Higher Education system. Again, while doing so, CR demands that we avoid premature conclusions by assuming that what we observe from our data, in this case my analysis of documents and policies and interview data, defines the parameters of reality.

3.2.1 Epistemic relativism and judgemental rationality

It is important to highlight that even though CR rejects some of the thinking behind relativism, it accepts the relativists' notion that all knowledge is socially produced. At the same time, it disputes the arguments of the postmodernists that all knowledges are equally valuable (Danermark et al, 2002). Thus, critical realism's ideas of 'epistemic relativism' and 'judgemental rationality' are conceived. Epistemic relativism maintains that the production of knowledge is the work of humans, and could be fallible, because it is transitive. As such, it is subject to change with the discovery of new knowledge because it is a product of social activity (Danermark et al, 2002). Judgemental relativism, on the other hand, posits that, though all knowledge of this world is transitive and fallible, all knowledge is not equally fallible. There is some knowledge that gives a better explanation of reality than others do. Therefore, we are allowed to adopt a truth that better

describes the world (Danermark et al., 2002). While epistemological relativism indicates the role of the human in knowledge production, and therefore its potential fallibility, the idea of judgemental rationality saves us from a post-modern quagmire where any explanation needs to be deemed equally pertinent. While CR acknowledges human fallibility in the production of knowledge – that is, epistemological relativism – it argues for ontological realism in an understanding of truth. Thus, it is important for the research design to be explicitly stated so the reader can make sense of the epistemology; that is, the researcher's relationship to knowledge production. Given that it is humans who make knowledge, this process is relativist. Critical realism as a metatheory enabled me as a researcher to move beyond describing the phenomenon under study, and to seek out the possible mechanisms from which the phenomenon of plagiarism emerges, based as it is on the notion of a layered reality.

3.2.2 Layered reality

To further sustain the argument that reality is not accessible by mere experiences and observations, CR presents a deep or layered ontology (Steinmetz, 1998). It explains reality as stratified in different levels/domains that are also overlapping, from the level of the empirical, to the level of the actual, up to the real level. This ontological depth philosophy aims to identify mechanisms at play at the domain of the real, which enables or constrains events at the actual domain, which might be experienced at the domain of the empirical (Bhaskar, 2008). The three layers of reality are illustrated in Figure 3.1 below.

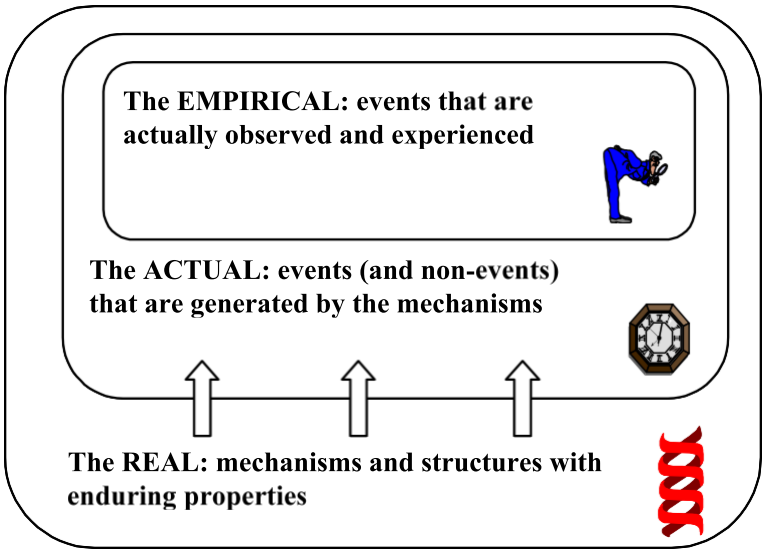


Figure 3.1: The three domains of the real (Mingers, 2004, p. 94)

3.2.2.1 The empirical domain

Events are observed and experienced at this level, but, due to the overlapping nature of these layers, sometimes underlying structures or mechanisms can be observed or measured here too (Jessop, 2005, p. 41). However, only a limited portion of these occurrences might be explicitly seen (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson, & Norrie, 2013). Knowledge at this level is considered highly fallible, because judgement of its value depends on human interpretations (Mingers, 2004). Additionally, due to the multiple experiences of the world that individuals possess, it is possible for data that emerges at this level to be contaminated by varied understandings and experiences.

In this study, I examined different understandings of plagiarism, which include how institutions discursively construct plagiarism. I collected these experiences through an analysis of the discourses in policies and other related documents to see how plagiarism is conceptualised and addressed in different units of the university. I interviewed a few people to undertake a check of some of my understandings. In all this, I took into consideration that attempting to describe and analyse this data will be insufficient, because there is more to any phenomenon than the multiple experiences to which it might give rise. The depth ontology of critical realism insists that researchers move beyond the empirical domain, and consider the other two domains of the real

and the actual. According to this view, the empirical domain of experiences is subsumed by the domain of the actual.

3.2.2.2 The actual domain

In this domain, some of the events experienced in the empirical domain are produced (Bhaskar, 2013). It includes all of the experiences in the empirical layer and all activities that occur in a given social world, some of which might have occurred unexperienced. For this study, this means that all that can be observed in plagiarism policies, related documents and information from participants, are in the domains of the actual and empirical. Whether we observe these events or not, they can still occur (Mingers, 2006). Similarly to the empirical domain, things are always changing in this domain, which makes reality at this level equally unreliable and insufficient; hence, the demand to dig deeper to the domain of the real, where a relatively unchanging reality exists (Mingers, 2004).

Though events are observed or experienced at this level, due to the overlapping nature of these layers, sometimes underlying structures or mechanisms can be observed or measured from here (Jessop, 2005). However, only a limited portion of these occurrences might be explicitly seen (Archer et al., 2013). Knowledge at this level is considered highly fallible, because judgement of its value depends on human interpretations (Mingers, 2004). Additionally, due to the multiple experiences of the world that individuals possess, it is possible for data that emerges at this level to be contaminated by varied understandings and experiences.

3.2.2.3 The real domain

Mechanisms in the domain of the real are understood to interact with each other (Mingers, 2006). These are power-generating mechanisms, which through their interplay may give emergence to new mechanisms as well as to the emergence of events, which are manifest in the actual domain (Mingers, 2004) and experiences, which manifest in the empirical domain. These mechanisms, whether they are active or not, i.e. whether they produce events that can be experienced or not, exist and can influence human behaviour (Sayer, 1992). When these events are experienced, they become empirical and they exist within the domain of the empirical, thus making the real layer even more complicated than the other layers. It is active mechanisms in this domain that

researchers seek to identify in order to reach a deep understanding of social phenomena (Danermark et al., 2002).

In this regard, referring to CR as an ontology, researchers are able to ask questions such as: 'What must the world be like for certain things to occur?' These types of questions help researchers to come to possible conclusions about particular phenomena in social science. Thus, my intention in this study was to look at different ways in which plagiarism is managed in various universities, in order to formulate from these events an understanding of how universities conceptualise plagiarism and how in turn, these understandings then act as mechanisms that impact on approaches to plagiarism, teaching and learning in the higher education system. By using CR, and other substantive theories, the purpose was to expose the interaction of a myriad of mechanisms in the real domain, tentatively responsible for the conceptions of plagiarism and its manifestation. The mechanisms at the level of the real are 'intransitive'; that is, they exist regardless of whether there is human knowledge of them or not. Attempts to identify those mechanisms at play in the emergence of events and experiences thus require a careful methodology.

The three arrows in Figure 3.1 above show that the interaction of mechanisms at the level of the real has an enabling or constraining effect on the events at the level of the actual and experiences at the level of the empirical. Also, while events and experiences are constantly changing, mechanisms at the real domain are relatively enduring.

3.2.3 Critical realism methodology

The issues raised in this study emanate from the concerns observed in the actual and empirical domains, where plagiarism practices are experienced. This section discusses the practical methods CR offers to extract the causal tendencies of mechanisms from which these events emerge. Through the concept of inference which refers to "a way of reasoning towards an answer" (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 79), for which CR advocates, researchers are able to tentatively identify causal mechanisms. Critical realist research mentions four types of inference modes, which are: deduction; abduction; induction and retroduction (Danermark et al., 2002). These are thought to complement each other, but according to Sayer (1992), retroduction is the mode that best aligns to the ontology of critical realism. Retroduction is a "mode of inference in which events are explained

by identifying mechanisms that are capable of producing them" (Sayer, 1992, p. 107). This entails making some hypothesis about an unexplained phenomenon and suggesting what characteristics must exist for that phenomenon to emerge in that way. According to Mingers (2006), we move from experiencing that phenomenon in the empirical domain, to looking for the mechanisms at play in the real domain, which might be responsible for such kind of manifestation. Retroduction enables researchers to see those connections and structures, which are not easily detectable in the empirical domain, by working back and asking questions such as, 'What must be true in order to make this event possible?' and 'What properties should exist for something to happen?' These questions are related to what constitutes the structures and the relations to a phenomenon under study (Danermark et al., 2002).

In this research, in order to answer critical realist questions about the understanding of plagiarism in SAHE, I used retroduction, working from concerns observed at the level of the empirical and actual, where plagiarism is understood and managed in a particular way in the form of plagiarism policies and plagiarism committees. The study then attempted to delve into the domain of the real with the aim of analysing the generative mechanisms and causal powers that are not readily observable in the empirical and the actual domains. The aim was to identify possible mechanisms enabling or constraining the current conceptualisations and responses to plagiarism, thus espousing a critical realist's retroduction question concerning "What properties must exist for plagiarism to be understood and handled in a particular way?"

3.2.4 The open systems concept

In order to identify the mechanisms that exist for plagiarism to be understood and handled in a particular way, I needed to have a strong sense of the nature of reality in which the study was taking place. As already indicated, CR allowed me to see that experiences and events emerge from mechanisms at the level of the real, but it was the concept of the world as an open system that was most useful in understanding how complex this emergence was. In some forms of natural science research, there is an attempt to generate a closed system whereby variables are controlled in a laboratory so that direct causes can be observed and measured. However, in the social sciences, the world is an open system, where the researcher is not able to intervene and control matters.

An ‘open system’ is a system which has “generative mechanisms operating in combination with each other” (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 206). As these mechanisms increase, the system becomes more complex, and impossible to predict (Steinmetz, 1998). Social science research is different to some forms of natural science research, which attempts to operate in a ‘closed system’ “where generative mechanisms operate under conditions which keep them isolated and independent of other mechanisms” (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 206). Unlike open systems, predictions can be made in closed systems, which characterises the natural sciences, where during an experiment certain events are produced by manipulating and keeping generative mechanisms under control (Danermark et al., 2002).

In social systems, however, generative mechanisms might have several causal structures operating at the same time, making it difficult to accurately determine which mechanism or structure has caused a particular effect (Sayer, 2000). Realist studies are limited due to this complexity, which is why critical realism stresses understanding mechanisms as having causal tendencies, rather than direct cause-and-effect relationships (Bhaskar, 1997). Social reality is complex, because social structures are maintained and perpetuated by people, meaning they are activity dependent (Bhaskar, 1998), which is not the case with the natural sciences.

Social structures are further reproduced or transformed based on beliefs, values, and ideas held by people who are not only constantly reflexive, but are also continually creative and capable of implementing their creativity (Archer, 1998). Therefore, to understand or explain how students and academics may conceive of a social phenomenon such as plagiarism cannot be done with experiments conducted in a laboratory as it is done in the natural sciences, because the aim is for the understanding of causes, rather than whether different actions will have the expected results (Danermark et al., 2002). Instead of anticipating situations, I have rather attempted to identify mechanisms (processes in a system) with causal tendencies that lead institutions to understand plagiarism in the way that they do and act upon it in the way that they do (Mingers, 2006). The concept of an open system is useful in the sense that it not only guided my research towards appropriate research procedures and methods, but also helped me to be cautious when presenting my findings not to uphold any sense of the absolute nature of causal mechanisms, due to the unpredictable nature of social reality.

3.3 Social realism

Critical realism acts as a metatheory in this study, providing a strong sense of what constitutes reality and guiding me to move beyond describing experiences and events so as to identify the mechanisms from which they emerge. However, CR did not provide me with a specific sense of how society works, and how people make their way in the world, which is key to the investigation of social phenomena such as plagiarism. For an understanding of the social world, I drew on the work of Margaret Archer, who provides a way to come to an understanding of the social world as manifested through social structures, cultural systems, and agency. She maintains that the shape of society is changed through social relations over time (Archer, 1995). Therefore, by analysing the interplay of social relations within the domains of structure, culture, and agency, one can detect what constrains or enables certain conditions within the social world. Archer thus argues that in order to identify the mechanisms at play at the level of the real in the emergence of events and experiences, researchers need to understand the workings of the domains of structure, culture and agency. Structure and culture are collectively called 'the parts', while agency is 'the people' (Archer, 1995).

3.3.1 Structure

According to Archer (2000), structure relates to material systems, institutions and resources, which include race, social class, gender, marriage, and education, among others. Structures have emergent properties (Archer, 1995). These properties have the power to shape the context in which agents operate, and impact on whether agents will pursue their goals with ease or not. Structures thus not only precede agency, but can also condition agency to the extent that people are constrained or enabled by them (Porpora, 2013).

The university itself and its role in society is a key relevant structure in this study, including components such as different institutional types: traditional universities, comprehensives, and universities of technology (UoTs); and different institutional histories (advantaged and disadvantaged universities) as discussed in Chapter One. At a more micro level, structures within the university included different organisations such as disciplinary committees, committees handling plagiarism issues, different units within the university that play a role in the management

of phenomena such as the Academic Development Centres and the Library, and policies and manuals around the issue of plagiarism.

These structures possess properties and powers (Carter & New, 2004) that can enable or constrain how the higher education system responds to plagiarism. Some broader structures that inform higher education policy, which I touched upon in Chapter One, include the government, the impact of globalisation, massification, and the knowledge economy, all of which seem to be active mechanisms enabling and constraining events in contemporary societies (Castells, 1997; Stehr, 1994). These structures have a compelling influence and may be generative mechanisms driving students to plagiarise more or to minimise plagiarism.

3.3.2 Culture

Archer's explanation of the 'parts' that together with the 'people' interact to form the social world is not only made up of structures as explained above; the 'parts' are also cultural aspects which like structures, have emergent properties and the powers to constrain or enable what emerges in the world. Culture, in Archer's explanation, comprises ideologies which people reflect upon and the beliefs, values and attitudes that society holds (Archer, 1995).

The views and values available to people (and often expressed in the form of discourses) have power to enable or constrain the ways in which we perceive the world, and in turn, the manner in which we engage with it. For instance, a university that is not explicit about its academic integrity and values, might give an impression that plagiarism is of less importance, and the lack of such explicit values may become a structural and cultural constraint to academics who are called to manage plagiarism issues. Similarly, certain negative discourses about students in a particular university, for example that they are lazy, or manipulative, and so on, might act as causal tendencies in the way in which acts of plagiarism are understood. Cultural issues in this study may also be reflected in the way institutions understand plagiarism, whether this may be as an always intentional act, as existing on a continuum from intentional to unintentional, or as non-existent. This in turn can be mirrored in the procedures followed to manage plagiarism that are stated in structural phenomena such as plagiarism policies, teaching and learning policies, student codes of conduct, and other related policies and documents.

When people act, they do so in response to the structurally and culturally generated options which pre-exist them (Archer, 2000). Therefore, structure and culture are relatively enduring, and they both shape society (Mutch, 2004).

> Structures and culture impinge upon us without our compliance, consent or complicity. The structures into which we are born and the cultures which we inherit mean that we are involuntarily situated beings. We have become English speakers before we can decide what language we would like to speak, and no other can then become our mother-tongue (Archer, 2000, p. 262).

Because of their relative endurance, structures and cultures create the conditions into which people are involuntarily placed (Archer, 1995). Structure can be said to form the objective parts of society, while culture is the subjective part and indicate the cultural underpinnings of all structures (Porpora, 2013), and together they are called the 'parts' of the society in relation to the 'people'. However, though structure and culture are essentially constitutive properties of the society and they condition the society, they are not hydraulics (Archer 1995, 2003). This means that for both of them to be effective in shaping the society, they do so in relation to actions and intentions of the agents. Culture in particular, is regarded as the prime power that enables agents to maintain or change the world (Carter & New, 2004); and in this way, culture acts as the link between structure and agency, because it is the people who interact with systems (Archer, 1995).

3.3.3 Agency

When people interact with structural and cultural systems, they are exercising what Margaret Archer has termed 'agency' (Archer, 2003). Carter and New (2004, p. 10) define agency as *"*the power to maintain or modify the world". Agency is in the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices about how they wish to live and to act upon those choices (Pym & Kapp, 2013); though these choices are constrained by structures and cultures around them.

Agents[20] are categorised into three groups as primary agents, corporate agents, and social actors. As primary agents, people are involuntarily placed (Mutch, 2004).[21] Primary agents hold little social power and find themselves greatly constrained in their personal projects by the structures and cultures around them. These individuals, however, may organise themselves and become 'corporate agents', namely "self-conscious interest groups who organise themselves to undertake a collective action to attain a particular goal or impact a particular situation" (Luckett, 2012, p. 15), to collectively effect changes on the structural and cultural systems in which they are placed. One example of corporate agency is the student protests that took place across South African university campuses between 2015 and 2016. Students came together and used the power and influence of their corporate agency to interact with fees structures and university structures that were believed to be the result of colonised campuses.

While corporate actors act as a collective, social actors are those individuals that can become influential because of the positions they occupy. These individuals may interrogate the way in which things are done around them, and if they are not satisfied, they might propose or even pioneer projects to modify the prevailing circumstances (Archer, 2000; Case, 2013). For instance, students who take up positions in a Student Representative Council can exercise coordinated action

[20] Archer stratified the emergence of human properties and powers as selves, persons, agents and actors, in relation to how they interact with society (Archer, 2000). People as 'selves' possess no personal powers that can make a difference (Archer, 2000). A "'self' does not amount to much" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 15), because it is shaped by historical developments and only receives, without the power to resist anything. Therefore, it takes self-consciousness for individuals to know who they are, and to determine what they need and how to get it. To attain self-consciousness, one needs to have internal conversations to determine who they are and what they stand for- that is, moving into a state of being a 'person' (Archer, 1995). A 'person' in social realism is an individual human being who is characterised by continuous self-consciousness. Persons assume the identity of 'agents' when they have reached a state where they can identify themselves with others and as a collective they become able to interact with the 'parts'.

[21] The involuntary placement, positions persons within particular groups or collectives. For instance, they are grouped by either gender as males or females, or by social class as upper, middle, or lower class, and so on. These collectives share similar life chances in the form of privileges or a lack of them. For this reason, people as agents become 'social beings' and they are always referred to in the plural (Archer, 1995; 2003; Mutch, 2004). Students arrive and enrol at university as individuals. At the time they enrol, they are identified as university students and share similar experiences with other students. Therefore, there are issues that will inevitably affect all students not as individuals but as a collective.

to influence a situation. As Archer puts it, their roles possess powers, and not their individual persons.

> These can be demonstrated by the pre-existence of roles, their greater durability over time, a capacity to endure despite considerable changes in the personal features of their successive holders, and the relatively autonomous powers of constraint and enablement which are lodged in the role, not the occupant, and can be lost (or shed) with loss of occupancy (Archer, 2000, p. 283).

While a role such as the Chairperson of the Plagiarism Committee has power, the individual who takes on this role as a social actor can do so in very different ways. Archer's stratification of the social world into structure, culture and agency, provides an understanding that people possess powers and have various objectives depending on how they are positioned, either as primary agents with limited powers, as collectives with more power and influence, or as social actors occupying particularly influential roles in society. This helped me to analyse different stakeholders' actions in this study, to see how they applied or did not apply their agency to interact with the structures and cultures conditioning plagiarism management, and also to define the nature of some of these structural and cultural emergent properties, showing the extent to which they were modified or reproduced.

To analyse how these social structures and cultural systems are reproduced and transformed by agents over time, Archer offers various analytical tools; the researcher needs to make an informed choice as to which are appropriate for the study. These tools comprise the Morphogenetic Model, analytical dualism and situational logics. The Morphogenetic Model traces the interactions of structure, culture and agency over a period of time to investigate the emergent changes. The Morphogenetic Model is not used in this study with its confinements of time-based cycles, because the use of Morphogenetic requires a long-term study allowing for the analysis of change over a fairly significant period of time and this study is not of that nature. However, both analytical dualism and situational logics are used and are described in some detail in the next chapter as the mode of data analysis.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the metatheoretical philosophies that underpin the study were discussed. It has been explained in particular how these philosophies guide a researcher to find possible solutions to research problems, by providing guidance on the choice of methodologies and other relevant tools needed in a study. Critical realism was introduced as the overarching theoretical framework informing the scientific research practices of the study. Critical realism's layered, depth ontology has framed this study, which regards social reality as operating within an open system with particular implications on the choice of methodologies. Building on critical realism, social realism pertains both as a substantive theory, and an operative analytical framework of the research. The next chapter discusses the methodologies used in the study, which speak to the depth ontology of critical realism.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological steps taken in the study, and how they relate to the philosophical underpinnings of critical realism and social realism discussed in the previous chapter and the study objectives as described in Chapter One. The chapter explains the procedures taken to navigate CR's different layers of reality and how possible causal mechanisms were identified from the deepest layer of reality, that lead to plagiarism being understood and acted upon in a particular way in the SAHE sector.

I start the chapter by explaining the research design used and why it is suitable for this study, before I embark on the type of data collected and how the analytical frameworks were applied to make sense of the data. A section that reflects on ethical clearance issues related to data collection is also presented. This section specifically highlights the challenges of researching an emotionally charged phenomenon such as plagiarism, and how this was navigated. The chapter concludes with two brief sections, one on validity and reliability of the study, and the other on ethical considerations.

4.2 Research design

The research design involved a qualitative approach that links to CR's depth ontology, which can provide one with a nuanced understanding of the events and experiences around a phenomenon; the researcher can then use an analytical frame to identify the mechanisms from which they emerged. The aim in using this approach was to explore the underlying mechanisms generating the events and processes around plagiarism. The field of study is higher education. The research question, as indicated in Chapter One, was:

How do South African Higher Education institutions conceptualise and respond to plagiarism?

Twenty-six public universities, which form the entire higher education public sector in South Africa, formed the population of this study (please refer to Chapter One for their types and

categories). However, data from only 25 universities was included in this study. One very newly formed university was excluded because no information relating to plagiarism could be located on its website, or be gleaned from the university itself. The universities included are numerically named in the data in no particular order from University 1 to University 25. The benefit of using multiple sites (25 universities) instead of just one, is that evidence from many different cases is considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more vigorous. In addition, the analytical benefits are substantial (Yin, 2014).

A small-scale study with one or two universities considered, would undoubtedly allow more deliberation as to unique elements characterising each university discussed in Chapter One, however, it would not allow an overview of the sector as a whole or the identification of more macro level mechanisms. The South African Higher education landscape is complex and highly differentiated, which makes generalisation from a single case to the sector unrealistic (Morrow, 2008), and so collecting data from across the whole sector allows for much more robust conclusions.

Additionally, a large-scale study was encouraged by a report published by the National Research Foundation (NRF), which also financed this study. This large-scale study was conducted in response to concerns about the prevalence of small-scale studies that fail to provide insight into systemic issues. The 2009 NRF report (Deacon, Osman, & Buchler, 2009) found that 99% of education studies it had funded between 1996 and 2006 were small-scale or case studies. While such studies are powerful in their own right, and provide rich pictures of specific contexts, they have not led to system-wide understandings of phenomena.

This research forms part of a larger project funded by the NRF (NRF grant 87646), that brought together seven PhD scholars and six supervisors. Each scholar investigated a particular teaching and learning aspect on a wide-scale across the South African higher education sector, with a common objective of understanding the relationship between a selected phenomenon and institutional differentiation in the sector. For instance, one scholar investigated the use of the Teaching Development Grant and how it enhances teaching and student success (Moyo, 2018), and another scholar looked at the production of research (Muthama, 2019). This study contributes

to the broader project aims of collectively making sense of differentiation, and how a phenomenon – in the case of this study, plagiarism – plays out across this complex and uneven sector.

4.3 Data collection

As is common in a qualitative enquiry, the data in this study was primarily collected from documents and interviews. These methods complement the type of deeper mechanisms that critical realism seeks to uncover. The methods were preferred over quantitative methods such as surveys, which are unlikely to provide an understanding of a deeper reality. Plagiarism policies were the primary document sources, with the hope that they would offer a better understanding. This approach was made following the views of Bretag, Mahmud, East, Green and James (2011), who maintain that the ways in which universities define and describe issues of academic integrity in policy, affects how it is understood and implemented.

Policies that were exclusively related to the identification and management of plagiarism were found in 19 of the 25 universities in the study. While such policies had slightly different names, the use of the term 'plagiarism' occurred in all 19 policy titles. Other documents that were collected across all 25 universities related in some way to some or other aspect of plagiarism, such as: plagiarism manuals which explain plagiarism in detail; research policies; disciplinary codes; student assessment policies; and so on (see Table 4.1). The documents containing the general university rules were also analysed, and these were especially important for those universities that did not have plagiarism policies, which included the newly formed universities. Each document included in the data collection referred in some way to the issue of plagiarism; some detailed, and others only by way of brief mention. Multiple documents were used with the aim of obtaining an understanding of the sector as a whole, and the different views and approaches within it, rather than evaluating each institution case by case. Documents of one form or another that referred in some way to plagiarism were collected from all 25 universities in the study (see Table 4.1). Some of these were in the public domain and others were provided to me by institutional gate-keepers as indicated in the previous section, the 26th public university in South Africa was excluded as it did not yet have any policies or processes in place with regards to plagiarism. It was only newly formed at the time of data collection.

The types of documents were numerically named as per Table 4.1 below, from Policy 1 to Policy 4 and Document 1. Data quotes from such documents are referenced to indicate the type of document and the university (e.g. Policy 3, University 7).

Table 4.1: Different documents used in the data

Policy Number	Policy Name	No. of Documents Collected
Policy 1	Plagiarism policies	19
Policy 2	Teaching and learning and assessment policies	2
Policy 3	Student disciplinary code policies / University rules and regulations	2
Policy 4	Research / Higher Degrees policies	3
D1	Student manuals on plagiarism and referencing / websites/ other documents	10

Table 4.2: Institution documents in the public domain and their URLs

Institution	Document Type	URL (active as at August 2019)
UNISA	P1	https://www.unisa.ac.za/static/corporate_web/Content/Apply%20for%20admission/Documents/Policy_copyright_infringement_plagiarism_16November2005.pdf
DUT	P1	http://raps.dut.ac.za/moodle/pluginfile.php/1717/mod_resource/content/1/DUT%20Plagiarism%20Policy.pdf
CPUT	D1	http://www.cput.ac.za/forms/guides/BEd-Hons-Ed-Man.pdf
RHODES	P1	https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/institutionalplanning/documents/Plagiarism.pdf
NWU	P1	http://www.nwu.ac.za/sites/www.nwu.ac.za/files/files/i-information-technology/documents/gov-man/antipiracy/2P_2.4.3.2_plagiarism_and_dishonesty_e.pdf
SU	P1	https://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/education/Documents/plagiaat_nov2010_eng.pdf

UFH	D1	https://ufh.za.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=3168417
UJ	P1	https://www.uj.ac.za/about/corporate-governance%E2%80%8B/Documents/Policy%20-%20Student%20Plagiarism.pdf
UKZN	P1	http://ssse.ukzn.ac.za/Libraries/Documents/UKZN_Plagiarism_Policy.sflb.ashx
UL	P1	https://www.ul.ac.za/application/downloads/PLAGIARISM%20%20POLICY%2017%20Octo%20%20to%20Senate%20%20%2014%20November%202014.pdf
UP	P1	http://www.ais.up.ac.za/plagiarism/policy_2010.pdf
UWC	P4	http://www.tto.uwc.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/UWC-Research-Policy.pdf
UNIZULU	D1	http://www.unizulu.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/RI-P5.pdf
WITS	P1	https://libguides.wits.ac.za/ld.php?content_id=22376233
WSU	P4	http://www.wsu.ac.za/waltersisulu/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WSU-Research-Ethics-Policy-2014.doc
MUT	D1	https://www.mut.ac.za/downloads/publications/MUT-ANNUAL-REPORT-2017.pdf
UCT	P1	https://www.cs.uct.ac.za/teaching/forms/Department%20Plagiarism%20Policy.doc
SMU	P1	http://196.38.94.114/documents/research/plagiarism_policy.
UNIVEN	D1	http://www.univen.ac.za/docs/library_manuals/PLAGIARISM%20GUIDE.docx
	D1	http://www.univen.ac.za/docs/REFERENCING%20GUIDE.pdf
	P4	http://www.univen.ac.za/docs/rpc_policy.pdf
VUT	D1	https://www.vut.ac.za/library/plagiarism/
	D1	https://www.vut.ac.za/referencing-guidelines/
	P3	https://www.vut.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/vut-teaching-and-learning-policy.pdf
UFS	D1	http://learning.ufs.ac.za/ANT214_ON/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/ANT214_ON/Resources/2.%20ASSIGNMENT%20INFORMATION/1.%20Plagiarism%20-

		%20Plagiaat/UFS%20Plagiarism%20Policy/UFS%20Plagiarism%20Policy.pdf &action=default
NMMU	D1	https://ebeit.mandela.ac.za/ebeit/media/Store/documents/Research%20Guidelines/Plagiarism%20and%20Terminology/plagiarism2.pdf
	D1	https://www.ufs.ac.za/library/ufs-libraries/neville-alexander-library-(south-campus)-home/training/copyright-and-plagiarism
	D1	http://construction.mandela.ac.za/construction/media/Store/documents/Plagiarism/Plagiarism-and-Referencing-Orientation-2011.pdf
CUT	P3	https://www.cut.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Student-Assessment-Manual-2014.pdf

The above table lists only those documents that are in the public domain. All other documents were received via institutional gatekeepers from multiple institutions and are quoted without revealing the institutional identity.

4.3.1 Interviews

Given the mass of document data available for this study, I initially considered undertaking a desk-top analysis only. However, I decided that it would strengthen the validity if I could check some of my understandings by interviewing those involved in policy implementation in a few of the institutions. For this reason, I undertook a limited number of interviews.

Interview data was gathered using in-depth semi-structured questions. The purpose of the interviews was to add the voice of experience regarding how issues of plagiarism are understood and addressed in the sector. Seven participants from six institutions volunteered to participate. The participants represented the spread of institutional types found in the public higher education sector in South Africa: traditional universities, comprehensives, and universities of technology.

To recruit these participants, I went via the office that granted ethical clearance and was also guided by policy information to identify available relevant structures per institution. Some universities forwarded my request to the relevant participants, which fast-tracked the responses, and others provided contact details for me to make arrangements. In other instances, it was clear from the ethical clearance letter that it was the responsibility of the researcher to locate participants.

Most of the participants hold dual responsibilities as academics and as members of committees tasked to deal with plagiarism cases, except for one Head of Department (HOD), who did not belong to such a committee. She was included because as the HOD, she is currently handling these issues in an ad-hoc manner while arrangements are being made to formulate an institutional committee. Some had participated in the formulation of the relevant policy, and they also had experience of implementing the policy as lecturers. The names of these committees ranged from 'plagiarism committees', 'senate standing committees' (these two-handle plagiarism related issues only), to 'disciplinary committees', which also handle other cases of misconduct alongside plagiarism. Table 4.3 provides a list of these participants, named in a numerical form, from 'Participant 1 to 7'.

This number of participants was sufficient, as the purpose was to obtain personal accounts from people with experience in policy formulation and implementation, to gain an additional perspective in order to analyse the mass of document data. The interviews were thus conducted after the document analysis and served to allow me to interrogate issues that were unclear. Some interviews were done face-to-face, and others via Skype. To make sure that transparency and honesty was observed, consent in the form of a written research protocol was given to each participant to sign. In addition, I shared the interview transcripts with the participants to confirm the authenticity of the recorded data.

Table 4.3: List of participants interviewed

Participant	Date of interview	Role	University Type
Participant 1	30 May 2016	Former Chairperson of Plagiarism Committee/ Current member	Comprehensive
Participant 2	09 July 2016	Member of Plagiarism Committee	Comprehensive
Participant 3	09 July 2016	Chairperson of Plagiarism Committee	Traditional
Participant 4	16 September 2016	Chairperson of Plagiarism Committee	UOT

Participant 5	29 June 2017	Member of the plagiarism committee.	Comprehensive
Participant 6	27 July 2017	Chairperson of Plagiarism Committee	Traditional
Participant 7	31 October 2017	Head of Department	UOT

4.4 Reflections on ethical clearance issues and other challenges related to the data collection process

Given that plagiarism is a sensitive issue with some reputational risks attached to it, it is important to highlight the levels of risk aversion some universities exhibited in terms of requests for research about themselves. This and other challenges that affected the data collection process are reflected upon in this section.

Some universities were quicker to respond to ethical clearance requests than others. Equally, some were more welcoming and helpful in the process than others. On average, it took a minimum of five exchanges over both email and the telephone, for a university to either grant permission or reject the request. The delay was largely attributed to the difficulty in locating the relevant structures within universities responsible for ethical clearance. These structures vary from university to university, including: Students' Administration, Office of the Registrar/Deputy Registrar, Institutional Planning Evaluation and Monitoring, Academic Affairs and Research Office, to name a few. Though I tried to find more information on each university's website, it was not always obvious which office was responsible for considering requests for ethical clearance for data collection at each institution. Therefore, I mostly depended on universities' help desks for referrals. Via this process, I noticed that some of the administration staff were not familiar with these structures. Having established the ethical clearance process at each individual university, I completed the required documentation and included the ethical clearance letter I had already obtained from the institution where this study is registered, viz. Rhodes University.

I noticed that the bureaucratic nature of the ethical clearance process was more severe in certain universities than it was in others, with gate-keeping related to applications for ethical clearance continually increasing as universities were becoming more concerned about protecting the rights of staff and students and potentially also becoming risk-averse in a competitive era. In some instances, knowledge-making initiatives in higher education seem to have been negatively impacted by such trends, as some studies require empirical data to generate knowledge but there is a concern about placing the institution's reputation at risk.

Perhaps the ethical clearance hurdles I experienced are unsurprising, given the degree of sensitivity over the issue of plagiarism, and the potential implications it has for institutional reputation. Indeed, five institutions did not respond to repeated requests for such ethical clearance. Three further institutions were newly formed and indicated that they did not yet have relevant structures in place to provide me with ethical clearance for data collection. In one comprehensive university, the process of obtaining ethical clearance had been discontinued. This comprehensive university, even after my application went through the Research Ethics Committee twice, on the third occasion demanded a major overhaul in the study focus to suit the requirements of the institution in question.

Another comprehensive university initially rejected my request on the grounds that they do not allow 'outsiders' to undertake any research in the university. After writing an email to the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research's office, bringing to their attention that one of the scholars in the same project (studying a different topic) was granted permission, permission was extended to this study. In one University of Technology, the request was rejected without receiving any reason, except to say that it was within the rights of the university not to provide the reason, and they clearly stated the name of the university should not be implicated in any way in the final thesis.

In total, 16 of the 25 universities I approached granted ethical clearance for additional data collection. Due to all these challenges, the data collection process that was scheduled for a period of six months, lasted for more than 19 months. In cases where I was unable to attain ethical clearance to access additional data, I had to restrict the study to those documents available in the public domain. In this way, as indicated previously, I managed to include data from all 25 public higher education institutions with only the 26th public university being excluded, as it had not put in place any policies or structures pertaining to plagiarism in its brief existence.

To locate interviewees, only one university provided the contact details of the members of the plagiarism committee and the others indicated that I should locate the respondents myself. In the latter situation, information from policies about the name of the offices was to a certain extent helpful, however in other instances, I discovered that committee structures mentioned in the policy were not yet formulated. Before I could establish this, on many occasions I was sent to different support services staff, dealing mainly with technical aspects such as the administration of text-matching software.

A further challenge to data collection was that at the time of data collection for this study, student protests were disrupting South African Higher education. Early in 2015, #RhodesMustFall protests called for the decolonisation of South African campuses with a particular focus on the curriculum. Later in the same year, and continuing into 2016, the sector further experienced protests under the moniker #FeesMustFall, mobilising the gains of the previous Fallist iteration against the issue of ever-increasing students' fees. At this time, many universities were shut down as a result of protests during which it was difficult to locate staff, and some of my interview appointments were cancelled. When the situation stabilised towards the end of 2016, I was informed by some that the academics needed to make up for lost time, and therefore my data collection could only resume the following year.

4.5 Analytical framework

In order to establish how South African higher education institutions conceptualise and respond to plagiarism, I sought to identify mechanisms that enable or constrain the conceptualisations of plagiarism. To identify these mechanisms using Archer, I had to analyse the interplay between structure, culture and agency. I have already indicated in the previous chapter that 'the parts' and 'the people' have independent generative mechanisms. To be able to analyse these mechanisms separately in order to identify the role each one of them played in conceptualising plagiarism, social realism provides a tool called analytical dualism.

4.5.1 Analytical dualism

Analytical dualism is a methodological process that recognises the interdependence of structure, culture and agency over time, at the same time advocating for the possibility of examining each

separately (Spicer & James, 2010). In research where analytical dualism is not observed, conflation of the people and parts would occur. Archer (1995) argues that this should be avoided. She fervently critiques most social science research that attaches too much power to a given domain (i.e., the people or the parts), where this ignores the existence of the other emergent properties.

Archer argues that, though structure and culture precondition agents, this does not mean that people are slaves to such structures and cultures or, conversely, that they have complete control over their environments. She identifies three types of conflations, viz.: upward, central, and downward conflations (Archer, 1995; 2003). Where the social world is solely or primarily regarded as the result of the actions of agents, it means power is bestowed upon agency, disregarding the enabling and constraining properties of the parts. This is a research error known as upwards conflation (Spicer & James, 2010). Where agents are considered to be slaves to the constraints of the structures and cultures within which they find themselves, this is considered an error of downward conflation. Central conflation is committed when structure and agency are seen to be intertwined and equally influencing one another (Vandenberghe, 2005) in ways that do not acknowledge the separate emergent properties of each. Therefore, in this research, analysis of the separate properties of structure, culture and agents has been undertaken with the understanding that each of these emergent properties have relative autonomy.

4.5.2 Situational logics

While analytical dualism is helpful to identify and separate the people from the parts for analytical purposes, the situational logics model was used to analyse the relations of the 'second order' emergent properties, and the situational logics that resulted from them. Archer explains that when agency interacts with structure and culture, four types of second-order emergent properties are generated. These are called second-order, because they are "emergent from the 'results of the results of' – that is, the relations of the relations between earlier interactions" (Archer, 2013, p. 10). In this research, situational logics were used to analyse the logics of properties that emerged from analytical dualism. These are the structural, cultural, and agential mechanisms that either contradict or complement each other as outlined below.

Where mechanisms contradict each other, it means they are working in opposition to each other, where they are complementary, it means they are aligned. Archer (1995) further distinguishes relationships between mechanisms as being necessary or contingent. Where the mechanisms are necessary, it means that you cannot have one without the other as they co-exist and emerge simultaneously. These necessary (that is always co-existing) relationships may still be complementary or contradictory. Where they are contingent, it means they can come into and out of existence separately, though they currently co-exist (in complementary or contradictory ways), they do not of necessity have to do so. Through this series of relationships, situational logics flow. These logics are not straightforward relationships of cause and effect, as there are always many mechanisms at play, where some might be complementary, and others contradictory, but they do suggest the likely effects to emerge as the 'situational logic' of that particular relationship.

Table 4.4: Summary of cultural and structural morphogenesis/ morphostasis

	Contradictions		**Complementarities**	
	Necessary	**Contingent**	**Necessary**	**Contingent**
Situational logic	correction	elimination	protection	opportunism

(adapted from Luckett, 2012, p. 341)

Archer uses a range of terms such as cleavage, integration, polarisation, differentiation etc., to suggest the likely situational logic that might emerge. These differ slightly across the cultural system, the socio-cultural and the structural systems. However, for the purposes of this study, I draw on Luckett (2012) for the overarching likely logic to emerge from the four kinds of interplay: namely, necessary contradiction; contingent contradiction; necessary complementarity; and contingent complementarity (see Table 4.4 above). The relationships that I draw on in the analysis of this study can thus be loosely seen to suggest a situational logic of correction, elimination, protection and opportunism.

A relation of necessary contradictions means there are new mechanisms that are introduced, which contradict the internal systemic elements; therefore, some changes need to occur to accommodate these new mechanisms. This interplay is necessary because both external and internal mechanisms

require one another in order to function properly. In this case, some modifications are necessary in order to create an enabling environment. The structural and cultural morphogenesis that results from necessary contradictions is not highly disruptive, hence, a situational logic of *correction* becomes a possible outcome (Archer, 1995).

Conversely, contingent contradictions emerge when the social system is permeated with new structures or cultures, which contradict the existing ones, but in this case the one is not dependent (or necessary) for the other to occur. This is the scenario where the existing structures and ideas within a social system are challenged by the intervening structures or cultures meant to disrupt such social systems. Because some elements cannot co-exist, some eradication is likely to take place, and the situational logic that may result is that of *elimination*.

While the above two relations of necessary and contingent contradictions explain the causal mechanisms that bring changes in a social setup explained as morphogenesis, those of necessary and contingent complementarities generally maintain the status quo (morphostasis) in a given social system. A relation of necessary complementarities usually bears situational logics of *protection*. Necessary complementarities mark the existence of internal structures that support one another within a social system, therefore, promoting system stability in an institution as they work towards serving one another. Archer (1995) exemplified the necessary complementarities that existed in ancient societies in India to explain this relationship. She explains that these societies exhibited social connection in their social class system, religion, economy, education, and kingship. These systems complemented one another, thereby upholding social consistency throughout the society. In such a system, according to Archer (1995), although there was negative feedback from the section of the society that was dissatisfied with the status quo, and who were being discriminated against, the kinship systems constrained any actions to alter the societal context. As a result, morphostasis characterised the societal system in the form of *protection* from change.

On the other hand, contingent complementarities necessitate a situational logic of *opportunism*, enhancing the prevailing social setting (Archer, 1995). The system can be extended in some way but this is in line with the prevailing set of structures and cultures.

For this study, the situational logics discussed above, provided the explanatory tools with which to interpret the relationship between emergent properties at the structural, cultural and social levels that govern the plagiarism system in SAHE. With a social realist perspective, it was possible to arrive at the likely implicated situational logics, which further enabled me to explain the implications of those logics to teaching and learning approaches in the sector.

4.6 Data analysis

All five different data sources were loaded on AtlasTi: plagiarism policies; teaching and learning policies; student assessment policies; research/higher degrees policies; student manuals on plagiarism and/referencing; and interview data. Interview data was initially transcribed using an external transcriber, who signed a transcription confidentiality form, clearly indicating the conditions of the contract. This served to ensure the security of the respondents' information, as they took part in the research on condition that their responses would be kept confidential.

The analysis was done in three stages: firstly, was a relatively exploratory stage, using an everyday understanding of reality to extract meaning out of the data, before applying the lenses of theory (Danermark et al., 2002). The dangers of introducing analytical frameworks at an early stage is that they may pre-determine what is observed in the data. Therefore, to familiarise myself with the data, I first used what Maton and Chen (2015, p. 26) refer to as a 'soft eyes' analysis, writing the analysis while "always ready to erase and rewrite it and leaving open the possibility one's judgement may be wrong". Rudestam and Newton (2015) call this process coding, where data is deconstructed by identifying and assigning labels to the concepts and constructs that clearly show in present in data.

In the process, I began noting themes that were emerging while using the AtlasTi software to create different nodes – applying what Danermark et al. (2002) term substantive coding (as opposed to theoretical coding). Examples of the early nodes/themes for documents and interviews are recorded in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 below respectively. It should be noted that some of the nodes/themes emerged with sub-nodes, which were not included in this table, to minimise the length of the table. The meaning of the nodes is also provided.

Table 4.5: Nodes/early themes and their descriptions: Policies and documents

Names of nodes/ early themes	Description
Name	Describes the name of the policy/document.
Scope	Describes whether the policy/document is for staff, students, or both.
Review date	The review period of the policy.
Definitions	Describes the definitions of plagiarism and other core concepts.
Training	Describes the type of training offered for plagiarism.
The trainers	Describes the people responsible for plagiarism trainings.
Procedures	Describes procedures followed to manage plagiarism.
Stakeholders	Describes people involved in the management of plagiarism.
The role of students	Describes the responses and expectations of students in the process of dealing with plagiarism.
The role of academics	Describes the responses and expectations of students in the process of dealing with plagiarism.
The role of support staff	Describes the responses and expectations of students in the process of dealing with plagiarism.
The role of the university	Describes the perceptions about what the university is for – its purpose and aims.
Language	Describes the type of language and terminology used in policies.
The culprit's identity	Describes how the person who plagiarises is termed.
Other perceptions of plagiarism	Describes other perceptions on plagiarism not included above.
Unintentional plagiarism	Describes expressions used to explain unintentional plagiarism.
Other	Describes other areas not fitting in the above nodes but seemingly relevant to the study or requiring further consideration for more detailed classification.

After this initial stage of document analysis, I collected interview data. Analysing document data before starting with interviews, and continuing while the interviews were proceeding, not only helped me locate the relevant department for the interviewees, but also equipped me with prior knowledge that enabled me to make more "believable, small encouraging noises during the 'conversation' of the interview" (Sobh & Perry, 2006, p. 9). I was able to ask probing questions following up on information from the documents. However, I was conscious not to be biased towards the interviewees' comments based on the knowledge that had already emerged from the policy. This was because, under such circumstances, researchers may be tempted to reflect their own perception of reality, thus diluting the participant's version of reality (Sobh & Perry, 2006). Of profound significance is the fact that the understanding and knowledge about the nature of reality that the researcher brings in can be false, and therefore it is very important to always keep an open mind when conducting research. Critical realism's ontology warns against the fallibility of our knowledge of reality, that is epistemic relativism. However, judgmental rationality, as indicated in the previous chapter, means that just because humans construct knowledge in a fallible way, does not mean it is all equally valid. Therefore, it is the role of the researcher to provide the best explanation that is available at the point in time. For this reason, there are some theories that provide guidelines in research to minimise such kinds of errors (Danermark et al., 2002).

Moving from the first stage of analysis, I continued to use the 'soft eyes' approach, but at this stage, I kept in mind the research question, which is about how institutions conceptualise and respond to plagiarism. In the process, as Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest, I brought in the analytical framework, while at the same interrogating the data with fundamental questions such as who; when; where; what; how; how much; and why? They argue that approaching data in this way during coding opens it up to enable the reconsideration of possible categories and their properties. At this stage, that is where the analytical frameworks were applied to categorise the nodes from both documents and interviews simultaneously. Firstly, analytical dualism was of significant assistance to identify and separately analyse whether the mechanisms at play above emerged from structural, cultural or agential domains.

Table 4.6: Notes/early themes and their descriptions: Interviews

Node/early themes	Descriptions of Nodes/early themes
Name of committee	Describes the name of the committee handling plagiarism issues within a university that the participant belongs to.
Role of the participant	Describes the role of the participant within the committee and within the university.
Plagiarism cases	Describes the type of plagiarism cases handled/experienced by participants as individuals and/or within the committees.
Decision maker on the existence of plagiarism	Describes the person/structure that decides whether a student is guilty of plagiarism.
Experiences of handling plagiarism cases	Describes participants' experiences of dealing with plagiarism cases.
Feelings	Describes the feelings of participants when they realised a student has plagiarised and other emotions plagiarism evokes in them.
Students' reactions	Describes students' reactions to the allegations of plagiarism.
Guidance from policy	Describes how policy is guiding participants in dealing with plagiarism
National policy guidelines	Describes the kind of policy regulating plagiarism at national level, which participants might have drawn from.
Other influential structures	Describes structures perceived by participants that have influence on how plagiarism is managed in the institution.
Intentional plagiarism	Describes how participants understand and manage intentional plagiarism.
Unintentional plagiarism	Describes how participants understand and manage unintentional plagiarism.
The role played by institution type	Describes the views of participants whether their university type has a role in the manner in which plagiarism is understood and handled.
Perception of plagiarism	Describes participants' general perception and understanding of plagiarism.
Other	

To understand relationships between mechanisms and the results of these relationships, the relationships were further abstracted from the same initial data-abstraction, which in critical realist's terms "is a process that enable(s) the researcher to isolate features that best characterise a social phenomenon in order to gain knowledge about the causal powers" (Danermark et al., 2002,

p. 170). The phenomenological abstracts are isolated and analysed in order to find the properties constituting the essence of the phenomenon. The essence is found in the relationships of which it is made up, the mechanisms it possesses and the positions it contains (Danermark et al., 2002). To analyse these relationships, Archer's situational logics model was especially useful. The interplay of the structural, cultural, and agential properties was further analysed to determine possible relations (emergent properties) that emerged between and within mechanisms, and the results of the emergence (situational logics). As previously mentioned, socio-cultural interactions generate mechanisms or emergent properties in the form of complementarities and contradictions, which could be either necessary or contingent (see Table 4.7). The significance here is that when one understands the relationship between these emergent properties, one can then infer the type of situational logics or the likely consequences of that relationship. For instance, where the relationship is complementary, it is likely that harmony will prevail within a social system, but where there are contradictions, it means an external force has been introduced which potentially threatens the sustenance of the systemic structures and cultures, and under such circumstances, disruptions could be anticipated.

The third stage involves formation of main/final themes the concepts of Sutherland-Smith's Plagiarism Continuum Model (2008) (discussed in Chapter Two), to identify data that speaks to different understandings of plagiarism. In conjunction with other conceptual models discussed in Chapter Two (ideological and autonomous models and academic literacies theories) (See Table 4.7 below). The analysis was further extended to determine the potential impact the conceptualisations of plagiarism have on the approach to teaching and learning discussed in Section 2.4.3. It should be noted that stage two and three were iterative and constantly overlapping during this process.

Table 4.7: Categorisation of nodes/ early themes into substantive themes and sub-themes, plotted against theory

Literature: (Autonomous, ideological models, academic literacies and plagiarism continuum model)	Analytical dualism: (Identification of primary domain at play)	Situational logics: (Identification of the relations between and the likely logics that prevail)
Categories/Sub-themes		
Theme 1: Plagiarism as an intentional act: The legal system		
Plagiarism is illegal and immoral.	CULTURE	COMPLEMENTARITY
Plagiarism is responded to with severe punishment	STRUCTURE	COMPLEMENTARITY
Student identity as a criminal	CULTURE	COMPLEMENTARITY
Usage of legal terms	STRUCTURE	COMPLEMENTARITY
Students as legal risks	CULTURE	CONTRADICTION
Theme 2: Plagiarism as an intentional act: Implications for teaching and learning		
Superficial understanding	CULTURE	COMPLEMENTARITY
Oversimplification of the complexities of plagiarism and authorship	CULTURE	COMPLEMENTARITY
How plagiarism is understood by staff	AGENCY	BOTH
Theme 3: Plagiarism on a continuum		
Academic Plagiarism as a violation of academic integrity values	CULTURE	
Dual approach to plagiarism management	CULTURE	
Plagiarism as a result of inexperience	CULTURE	
Academics as facilitators	AGENCY	

In the context of this study, necessary and contingent complementarities and contradictions of the higher education sector's understanding of plagiarism were studied. This was done, firstly, to assess possible internal and necessary structures that contradict each other, and to see which mechanisms are eliminated in the process, and to what extent the elimination of particular properties affects the conditioning of the higher education system; secondly, to discover if any external structures that have been adopted in the management of plagiarism, have the capacity to cause disruption in how plagiarism is understood and handled, since contingent contradictions emerge when society is permeated with new structures in conflict with the existing ones; thirdly, to investigate if any necessary complementarities emerged which were mutually reinforcing and possessed powers to maintain stability in the way plagiarism is handled; fourthly, to explore whether there were any external structures that had been introduced, that might be compatible with the existing dominant plagiarism systems, and if because of their compatibilities with how institutions think about issues of plagiarism and teaching and learning, the cultural and structural conditioning was maintained.

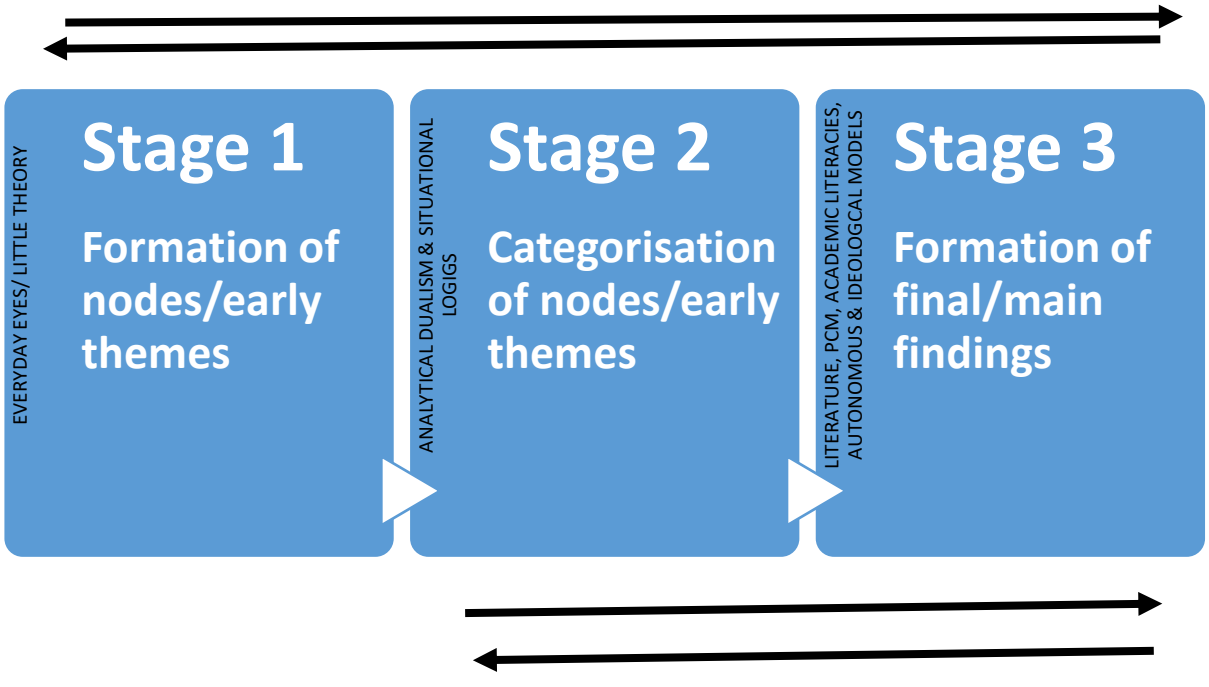


Figure 4.1: A summary of the data analysis process

This figure summarises Tables 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5, to illustrate how data was analysed. Stage 1 represents the formation of nodes/early themes from documents initially and then interview data without applying particular theoretical lenses. Stage 2 marks the categorisation of these nodes, applying the analytical frameworks of situational logics and analytical dualism and the final stage is the formation of final findings. The two sets of arrows explain that this process was not simple and straightforward because I had to go through the stages repeatedly for verifications with changes effected every now and then. In addition, the application of theory in Stages 2 and 3 were constantly overlapping.

4.7 Validity and reliability

It is important that any research be conducted in a manner which ensures that it produces reliable research results. Validity in qualitative research can be increased in various ways. Maxwell (1992) suggests a descriptive validity in research, which covers the factual accuracy of reported data. To ensure appropriate collection of data and accuracy in reporting it, an audio-recorder was used during the interviews, and some notes were taken in certain instances during my meetings with participants. In this manner, the accuracy of my quotes can be assured as a reflection of authentic responses of the participants. Furthermore, I used member checking by providing participants with the interview transcriptions for verification.

The validity of this thesis also relies significantly on how thoroughly or successfully I have applied my metatheoretical frameworks to guide my choice and applications of other substantive theories, data collection, and analytical tools. I attempted to do so by being open about my philosophical assumptions based on the ontology and epistemology of critical realism. I have also indicated how Archer's theory of social realism through analytical dualism and situational logics guided my analysis of data. Having mapped out and demonstrated the degree of rigour in both the theories and methodologies of this study, the findings and conclusions from this study are presented here as valid and reliable. However, given that this is a social study and deals with the varied experiences and events from which I need to establish what mechanisms are at play, I cannot claim to present an ultimate truth, in a positivist sense. Instead, by making the research design and decision explicit and by providing data evidence of the claims I make in the subsequent chapters, I have aimed to maximise validity and reliability.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues ought to be addressed right from the beginning of a research project up to the end. Before I could contact any of my participants, ethical clearance was obtained from Rhodes University, under whose auspices this study was done, and later from those universities whose participants contributed to the study, including those that provided me with internal institutional documents. I have already discussed some of the many challenges in this regard. However, ethics is not only related to the administrative processes of achieving ethical clearance and thus I reflect here on a few other pertinent ethical issues in this study that emanated from the fact that I used a qualitative research approach that includes human beings as participants. These participants took part in my study on the basis that their identities would remain anonymous, and that I would not attach data that they provided to their particular institutions. Informed consent was signed by all participants, who also consented for our conversations to be recorded.

As much as this was not an evaluative study, where the identity of individual institutions is not required, there were cases where obscuring individual institutional identities was partial. As indicated earlier, many documents in this study came from the public domain, where data quotes from such documents could not be afforded anonymity. However, other documents not in the public domain, as well as data from interviews, were anonymised. The interview data was analysed in such a way that it does not link participants to their respective universities. In some cases, I decided not to use particular data quotes, even though they provided relevant information which would have substantiated some of the findings of the study, because it was impossible to anonymise such data. In other cases, I used the data but I had to edit it (as indicated by the use of ellipses), in order to ensure that the identity of participants and institutions remained concealed.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated the way in which the research was designed and how data was collected and analysed. This chapter further explained how data analysis was undertaken using the plagiarism continuum model and models of literacies, parallel to the two social realism analytical frameworks (analytical dualism and situational logics). The methodological framework section demonstrated how the research was designed, and how the data was collected, coded and analysed.

A section reflecting on the ethical issues concerning data analysis was also included to indicate how challenging it can be to research a sensitive issue such as plagiarism, which is thought to greatly impact on an institution's image. The chapter concluded with two brief sections, one reflecting on the validity and reliability of my data findings and conclusions, and the other showing how ethical clearance issues were addressed in the study.

In Chapters Five, Six and Seven that follow, I present the findings from my analysis and discussions, and their possible implications for teaching and learning.

CHAPTER FIVE: COMPLEMENTARITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS OF LEGAL LANGUAGE IN UNIVERSITY SYSTEMS

5.1 Introduction

The key findings discussed in this chapter concern structures and cultures that primarily situate plagiarism within a legal framework throughout the data. In Chapter Four, social realism was noted to be the first line of analysis to identify structure, culture, and agency, as analytically distinct from each other, because each one of the domains has exclusive emergent properties. These emergent properties exhibit a particular logical relation, which either complements or contradicts. Therefore, this chapter demonstrates how structural and cultural complementarities and contradictions between the higher education system and the legal system emerged in the data. The relations between the two systems come with significant implications for universities as teaching and learning institutions, as some of the structural and cultural systems enable, and others constrain universities' management of plagiarism and their conceptions of literacy practices.

5.2 Plagiarism as an illegal and immoral act

It has been highlighted in Chapter Two that the understanding of plagiarism as always illegal and immoral implies that it is regarded as an intentional act. In policies from 13 universities, plagiarism is explicitly positioned as an intentional act, while in others such positioning is by implication, as will be discussed in this chapter. The data across this study suggested that plagiarism is mostly considered as both a legal and moral offence, with some universities being more explicit than others and only a few avoiding such polarised accounts; these will be considered in more depth in Chapter Seven.

Some institutions explain plagiarism as "academic dishonesty" (eight universities), "academic misconduct" (four universities), "an immoral act" (10 universities), and "illegal" (10 universities), while 10 other universities implied such positioning through the procedures followed to manage plagiarism. In all such instances, punishment is the primary response.

Plagiarism is generally defined in policy as:

> …a form of academic dishonesty and means the failure to acknowledge, whether intentionally or negligently, that one has made use of someone else's work in producing what one has submitted as one's own work (Policy 1, University 8).

Some universities unequivocally situate plagiarism being both a moral and legal issue by referring to it as:

> …a form of academic misconduct that deserves specific attention due to the serious legal and/or moral consequences associated with it (Policy 1, University 6).

> …an illegal, unethical and an immoral act constituting a punishable offence (Policy 1, University 10).

> Plagiarism poses a considerable problem for academic institutions worldwide as many students and/or researchers do not realise that it is a serious form of academic misconduct, which can lead to expulsion from an institution such as a university, civil claims, and even criminal charges (Policy 1, University 12).

As discussed in Chapter Two, the understanding of plagiarism as always being an immoral and illegal act is a reproduction of the conceptualisations of plagiarism during the nineties – a cultural complementarity of these perceptions, which were deeply rooted in the discourses of the legal fraternity (Mallon, 1989), where plagiarism was still seen as "moral weakness and wilful misconduct" (Fishman, 2016, p. 47). Chapter Three provided a detailed synopsis of these origins and this framing dominated across the data.

Since the legal and education systems are different, and each exists to serve a particular purpose, the accommodation of the legal structure by the education system according to Archer's situational logics, means the education system as the 'host system' has to be either overhauled – that is, driven away from its core purpose, or modified to create what she calls 'system stability'. In doing that, it will be allowing the legal structures to operate with less resistance (Archer, 1998). In this study, few disruptions or contradictions were noted in the education system, where instead, a great many complementarities emerged, where the legal framework was seen to be maintained and strengthened through various structures throughout the data. In the following sections, I will

discuss some of these structures, starting with the data related to the criteria used to address plagiarism offences.

5.3 Criteria for plagiarism penalties

Generally, data from policies in all universities indicated that the criteria for plagiarism penalties closely resemble those applied in criminal law and common law. I have developed Table 5.1 below to illustrate similarities between plagiarism policies' sanctions and Section 51 of the South African Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1997. This table further illustrates both the structural and cultural complementarities between the two systems. The sentences/sanctions in Column A are passed to criminals who have committed either robbery, arson, kidnapping, rape, murder, and other 'serious crimes'. Column A represents Section 51 from the Act, which addresses discretionary minimum sentences for certain serious offences, and Column B is a summary of data from South African public universities' plagiarism policies, identified as 'Policy 1' in Chapter Four. The numbers in parenthesis in Column B represent universities as explained in Chapter Four. The two columns compare the type of sentences or sanctions given to criminals, against those given to plagiarising students.

Table 5.1: The comparison of plagiarism penalties and criminal sanctions

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
SA Criminal Law Amendment Act 105 of 1997 (51) (Part 1 of Schedule 2) **Discretionary minimum sentences for certain serious offences**[22]	**South African Public Universities Plagiarism Policies**
A first offender (2)(a)(i) to imprisonment for a period not less than 15 years.	**1.1. Category 1/Level 1** [23]– **Minor**, 1st year, 1st offence. **Sanctions**: counselling (14); verbal warning (5,19); written warning (1,2,9); recorded (1,2); mark of zero/deduction (2,4,5,8,9,10,12,14,15,17,19) resubmission (4,9,12,14,15,19); suspension (3)
A second offender: (2)(a) (ii) to imprisonment for a period not less than 20 years.	**1.2. Category 2/level 2** [24]– **Less serious (moderate)** offences 1st year, repeated offence. **Sanctions:** written warning (1,5,12); a mark deduction (1,2,5,14,17); compulsory attendance of awareness course/s (1,12); resubmission (1,4,12); entered into the offender's record/plagiarists record (1,14); partial exclusion (4); expulsion (3,5)

[22] Serious offences according to the Act include: robbery; arson; kidnapping; rape; murder; etc.

[23] Cases in this category are generally characterised by misunderstanding. Some of these infringements are related to referencing such as incomplete or inconsistent referencing (Policy 1, University 2), paraphrasing of sentences, and are largely committed by first years and / new students of the university irrespective of level. A record of the incident is retained until the student graduates. In addition, as long as the student is within the university they have a disciplinary record against their name (Policy 1, University 2). Warning letters are issued to students to alert them that if a second transgression happens, the case will be escalated to a higher authority.

[24] This level commonly relates to repeated offences which are minor, or to fairly petty transgressions committed by senior students other than first years, or to first time offences which are more serious. The cause is attributed to inconsistent or insufficient citations. If no evidence of a deliberate attempt to deceive was found, the case is closed (Policy 1, University14). However, if this level 2 infringement is confirmed, the matter is referred to the higher committees mentioned above.

A third or subsequent offender (2) (a) (iii) to imprisonment for a period not less than 25 years. Imprisonment for life. *(Adapted from SA Criminal Law amendment act 105 of 1997)*	**1.3. Category 3/ level 3** [25]– **Blatant (serious)** offences (18) repeated undergrads & postgraduates **Sanctions:** mark of zero (1,12,14); suspension (1,18); Cancellation of module (1); withdrawal of qualification (1,8,10,14,19); permanent exclusion (1, 4, 18); Expulsion (1,8,18); Blacklisting (3, 10, 19) *(Adapted from SA Universities Plagiarism policies)*

The overarching similarities that the table demonstrates are the structural categorisation of three levels of misdemeanour. Very few universities have a Level 4, which mainly addresses research projects, dissertations and theses (Policy 1, University 9). Ten universities use level three in the table above for postgraduate transgressions. Few hold that someone who commits an offence at all levels has to be punished deservedly, considering a number of criteria. For universities, the severity of the offence, the frequency of the offence, as well as the academic level of a student, constitute some of the criteria, while in criminal law, both severity and frequency of the offence also apply, and severity indicates the seriousness of the case; whether this constitutes murder, rape, arson, or other serious offences.

In addition, the purpose behind the administration of punishment seems to be common between both systems. From a legal perspective, criminologists have identified specialised strategies called "the aims of punishment" (Muthaphuli, 2009, p. 201). These strategies include retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, and rehabilitation. Correspondingly, some of these criminal correctional strategies emerged from university policies and interview data. Retribution as one of the criminal correction strategies holds that, "the offender gets what he or she deserves, and people are punished for the crimes that they have committed and the punishment that they get is somehow believed to be fit for their crimes" (Walker, 1991, p. 67). Carlson, Hess and Orthmann (1999, p.

[25] At this level, offences are related to severe breaches. At this stage, there is clear evidence that there was high level of deception.

15) link this strategy to the Old Testament justification of punishment in Deuteronomy 19 v 21. Some universities' policies also hold that guilty students and staff must be punished 'commensurate' to the level of the misconduct.

> Where the student/staff member is found guilty of plagiarism, academic dishonesty or misconduct by the disciplinary committee a commensurate punishment is imposed (Policy 1, University 3).

Participants in this study also agree that 'wrong is wrong' and 'rules are rules', therefore students deserve to be punished if they plagiarise.

> I mean wrong is wrong. And I think we need to be clear as to wrong is wrong. … So, I'd like to have zero plagiarism in the school (Participant 3).

> It doesn't mean I believe in corporal punishment; but, I think they are adults you know, and rules are rules, and you keep to the rules or you're penalised (Participant 2).

Deterrence explains that if a person knows the consequences they will suffer when doing other things, they will be deterred from doing them (Muthaphuli, 2009). Additionally, if the punishment is "more certain, swift and severe for the criminal act", it will not only punish the offender, but will also scare others not to commit the same crime in future (Farabee, 2005, p. 58). The term 'to deter' is frequently used in university policies with a similar assumption that students and staff will stop committing plagiarism if they know the kind of punishment attached to it. It was evident in the policies that the element of punishment is not only seen to be able to regulate the behaviour of offenders, but also of those not yet engaged in the act:

> …to regulate that person's behaviour and the behaviour of the University community generally, and to deter the person and others from engaging in such conduct in future (Policy 1, University 14).

> The purpose of this policy is to define plagiarism so that it is known and understood similarly and consistently throughout the University. It attempts to clarify [this university's] position on plagiarism. It aims to raise awareness of and to help in deterring, preventing and discouraging [the university's] staff and students from committing plagiarism and similar acts (Policy 1, University 4).

> The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework (consisting of a policy and guideline documents) for deterring, detecting and dealing with plagiarism consistently across all faculties of [this university] (Policy 1, University 4).

Incapacitation is used as a way of protecting the community from habitual offenders. In this process, "all that are guilty of criminal activities are locked up in a sense that some of their freedoms are taken away, and in that way community protection is guaranteed" (Quinn, 2003, p. 11). It is believed that during the period of detention, the offender will be unable to commit any crime. Both the legal and the university systems are shown in Table 5.1 above to acknowledge that someone who commits an offence at level three is not fit to be accommodated in the community. A criminal is given a life sentence, while a student is excluded from the academic community, either temporarily through partial exclusion or permanently by permanent exclusion or expulsion. Some institutions go to the extent of 'blacklisting' students to completely remove them from the community of higher education, where no other institution of higher learning will thus be likely to admit them.

While all this indicates a strong conviction from the universities' side to fight plagiarism, there seems to be a complementarity with managerialism which is then used to control incidents of plagiarism in the higher education system. The legal system is a separate structure from academic practices, its 'perpetual reproduction', to use Archerian language, is complemented by the fact that universities are currently becoming more similar to the business sector where students are recognised as customers to be competed for (Giroux, 2005; Shore & Wright, 2000). Thus, every university strives to maintain an impressive 'corporate image' to sell to these students and other stakeholders (Salleh, Ghazali, Awang & Sapiai, 2012). Since plagiarism is implicated as one of the main concerns in damaging a university's reputation and negatively affecting its competitive advantage[26] (Salleh et al., 2012), universities seek stern measures sufficient to cause students to shy away from plagiarising, and convincing enough not to be seen as lenient towards plagiarism.

[26] A competitive advantage entails unique characteristics of individual universities that are strategically communicated in an effective and consistent way to all stakeholders (Sellah et al., 2012).

The legal approach to the phenomenon of plagiarism appears to be complementary to this conception of the university.

The argument in this section is not that intentional plagiarism ought not be disciplined accordingly, but it is rather to show how very closely disciplinary measures resemble those imposed on criminals, and that this similarity comes with implications. A university system is different in context and intention from a legal system. Therefore, punishment in some instances might not be effective, because a university is intended to be a learning space. Research argues that to attend to learning problems, some nuanced initiation into the complex academic practices is necessary (Boughey & McKenna, 2016). While punishment is seemingly a quick fix, learning is not; it is instead a lengthy process of 'becoming' that occurs through purposeful activity in a cultural and societal context (Luckett & Luckett, 2009).

5.4 Framing the student's identity as a criminal in a cultural complementarity to the legal system

Where both legal and educational systems share the same understanding of the role of punishment, the identity of a student is also framed in legal terms. The words most often used to describe a person against whom plagiarism is alleged is "offender" (eight universities) and "plagiarists" (two universities). Some use the term "accused" (three universities):

> The University maintains a Plagiarism Register to enable the monitoring of offenders and ensure the consistent application of penalties (Policy 1, University 12).

> The University will keep a central register of plagiarists as a monitoring record and to ensure consistent penalisation (Policy 1, University 23).

As Sutherland-Smith points out, the words "accused" and "offender" are legal terms describing a person charged with a criminal act (2011). They are specifically located within the legal discourse of criminal law and strongly imply connotations of unlawful behaviour (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1977).

The culture of framing students as criminals, often makes the task of educating them a difficult one. In such cases, teachers often find themselves "playing an adversarial role as 'plagiarism

police' instead of a coaching role as educators" (Straumsheim, 2015, p. 1). Moreover, since this identity is linked to issues of morality, which are more related to the nature of an individual (Sutherland-Smith, 2013b), it becomes difficult to correct such cases. Psychologists and criminologists acknowledge that what drives a person to criminal behaviour is complex and involves many complicated mechanisms, some of which are related to personal morality (Muthaphuli, 2009). Therefore, combatting criminal behaviour requires specialised forms of intervention, which universities might not have the capacity to offer.

The notion that those who plagiarise have the identity of a criminal works against those students who plagiarise unintentionally, because they can be punished for not being legitimate (the right kind of students). Their opportunities to learn academic literacies are foreclosed when their improper citation is understood as deception, rather than an indication of a novice attempting to acquire a new discourse. Acquiring a discourse as explained in Chapter Two, is acquiring a particular sort of identity that enables the taking up of a particular social role (Valentine, 2006). Acquiring the label of a 'criminal' or a 'dishonest person' could have a substantial effect on the manner in which people feel about themselves, and also affect their expectations of how to be treated in their environments (Moore, Stuewig, & Tranrey, 2016).

By further drawing on criminal and psychological theories, it is argued that labelling students as criminals would attach a particular 'stigma' on them as it does on criminals. Psychologists have shown that being labelled as a stigmatised individual can interfere with their participation in the community and can lead to maladaptive behaviours and poor mental health (Inzlicht, Tullett, & Gutsell, 2012). Stigmatisation not only causes people to withdraw from the community, but can even lead individuals to conform to the deviant identity they feel is being placed upon them. Thus, identifying students as criminals might cause the fight against plagiarism to be less effective.

University students' ages range mostly from 18 to 24 years of age, which is a crucial stage where adulthood is emerging and this is characterised by exploration of many aspects of identity. These young people come into the academy as the 'other' seeking acceptance into the academic community and they develop their academic identity from those communities they encounter (McKenna, 2004c). Therefore, the use of terminology in framing students is very important. Lack of clarity on who a student really is can create confusion, insecurities and self-doubt (Blum, 216).

This is because identity is related to meanings that individuals attach to themselves (Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010). The focus of identity development focus is on members' understanding of who they are, and the ways in which this is influenced by what they do at work, and it is central to learning. Therefore, attaching a negative form of identity to those who fail to comply can be problematic (Leask, 2006). Research in organisational studies has shown that positive identities are linked with favourable outcomes, and lead individuals to cope better with challenges, where they foster creativity and promote adaptation to new settings. Positive identities also "motivate individuals to take actions that promote positive outcomes in organisations" (Dutton et al., 2010, p. 3).

5.5 The use of legal terms complements the system

5.5.1 The rule of natural justice

The rules of natural justice are structural mechanisms rooted in common law, which evolved from among others, the Roman-Dutch law from which South African Statute law has emerged (Colyn, 2009). The principle of natural justice applies "whenever an administrative act is quasi-judicial. An administrative act is considered to be quasi-judicial if it affects the rights, liberties (and perhaps, the privileges) of an individual" (Sahu, 2015, p. 1). Data from three universities indicated the considerations of the principle of natural justice when decisions about penalties are made:

> The rules of natural justice, which are embodied in Section 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, stipulate that any administrative act must be lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. A finding about plagiarism is an administrative decision or a decision taken by an administrative tribunal after following a fair procedure (Policy 1, Universities 4 & 14: identical wording[27]).

> Punitive measures [must be] in compliance with the principles of natural justice, punitive action must be uniform, consistent, impartial and equitable in their application (Policy 1, University 14).

[27] Some universities have similarly-worded policies.

In the beginning of this chapter, I indicated that some legal 'parts' seem to enable, while others constrain effective management of plagiarism in universities. The principle of natural justice, though it has its origin in common law, seem to make it an enabling structure, with the focus on justice being aligned to the act. The rules of natural justice emphasise the need to become procedurally fair in handling plagiarism cases so as to avoid legal 'hiccups'. As Sutherland-Smith (2010) has indicated, this is important because certain penalties may have detrimental effects on some students but with different effects on others. Carroll provides a good example of effects of this rule in executing penalties:

> Suppose one student received a zero which had the knock-on effect of invalidating his visa and therefore sending him to his home country, whereas another, given the same zero mark, was able to progress without undue difficulty. In such a situation, it might nevertheless be justifiable to fail the first student, regardless of the impact, but only after consideration of natural justice constraints (2016, p. 214).

As discussed in Chapter Two, a university is accountable to multiple stakeholders, one of which is the government, as the Constitution of a country often affects higher education policy. In this regard, the basic rights of people are taken into consideration when deciding on procedures and disciplinary measures within higher education. The rules of natural justice reinforce fairness in the administration of penalties. Archer says that a complementarity is necessary if structures tend to reinforce one another in a given society and form the context (the parts) of the society, and these structures work towards serving one another (1995). In this study, procedural fairness and the rule of natural justice are seen to complement each other, because it is necessary for universities to become procedurally fair in managing plagiarism cases. However, if the rules of natural justice are misappropriated, a dispute might arise.

Therefore, the possibility of a flaw in procedural fairness subsequently necessitates the right to appeals from the students. Appeal is another common legal framework term that has structured our university systems generally, not only when it comes to the management of plagiarism, but also for almost every process and every policy in the university including assessments, promotions and many others.

‘The right to appeal’ is granted by most universities to query against findings or penalties imposed at a lower level of authority. Eleven universities stated in their policies that students are allowed to appeal to the next higher authority if they are not satisfied about the process and outcomes of the disciplinary hearings concerning their plagiarism cases. Perhaps to ensure procedural fairness, appeals are mostly introduced at different levels in different universities. At departmental level, they can appeal to the responsible committee at faculty level, failing which their appeal could be directed to the highest university authority, typically the Senate Panel (Policy 1, Universities 4, 14 & 7: identical wording). These committees differ according to universities.

> …an appeal against a finding or penalty imposed by the Student Disciplinary Committee is through the usual channels for appeals against decisions of the Student Disciplinary Committee.… An appeal against a finding of reportable plagiarism or associated response by a Faculty Plagiarism Committee is in writing to the Executive Dean of the Faculty, who shall treat it as an appeal against an academic decision.… An appeal against a finding of non-reportable plagiarism or associated response by a Department is in writing to the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty, who may take advice from the Faculty Plagiarism Committee, as s/he sees fit (Policy 1, University 8).

> Appeal against the decision of the Department/Faculty committee can be submitted to the Dean who will act as an arbitrator. The Dean will call for all relevant documentation and will interview both the student and the HOD and lecturer of the submitting department. The Dean’s decision is final. All students have a final right of appeal to the Registrar of the University at level 5 & 6 of the above process (Policy 1, University 22).

Similarly, criminal courts regulate appeals lodged by the accused in almost the same way. Criminals may appeal against the decisions made by a lower court to a higher court of appeal:

> Subject to section 84 of the Child Justice Act, 2008 (Act 75 of 2008), any accused, other than a person referred to in the first proviso to section 309 (1) (a), who wishes to note an appeal against any conviction or against any resultant sentence or order of a lower court, must apply to that court for leave to appeal against that conviction, sentence or order (309B Application for leave to appeal) (SA Criminal Act 75 of 2008, 309B (1) (a).

As mentioned already, appeals are common in the general university’s dispute management; however, with regards to the manner in which they are handled as plagiarism, they are not just normal structures to resolve disputes, but are understood as legal entitlements. This is also evident in the types of structures involved during appeal hearings.

Some universities permit or even recommend that students bring legal representatives:

> …students are by law entitled to a process of appeal (Policy 1, University 22).

> 'The right to a legal representation'. A student who is charged may be assisted by another student, or by a staff member, or by a legal practitioner (Policy 1, University 14).

It makes sense and seems necessary for universities to have a sound legal coverage in their policies, because students have been granted permission to challenge plagiarism allegations not only through appeals but via external legal representatives as well. These structural and cultural complementarities make avoiding the legal route increasingly difficult, and push universities deeper into the legal framework. Seemingly, it is becoming difficult for universities to integrate fewer of these structures, or else, more potential legal loopholes might be created. For this reason, more legal structures emerged in the data, of which clemency is one.

5.5.2 Amnesty for plagiarising students? The element of clemency in plagiarism

Closely related to the principle of natural justice is clemency. While the former is a right, the latter is a privilege. At least two universities are explicit about clemency and others address it by implication:

> A student who has been found to have committed plagiarism in Category C, or who has had his or her review from a decision of a Departmental Plagiarism Committee turned down by a Senate Review Panel, has the right to appeal to the Vice-Chancellor for clemency. Such an appeal must be made in writing to the Vice-Chancellor within five (5) working days of having received the written reasons referred to above. The Vice Chancellor, after considering the written submission of the student, the findings of the Senate Plagiarism Tribunal and the respective views of the relevant Dean and Head of Department, should make a decision in terms of the ordinary principles applicable to cases of clemency (Policies 1, Universities 4 & 14: identical wording).

Clemency, under the criminal justice system, "is a power given to a public official, such as a governor or the president, to in some way lower or moderate the harshness of punishment imposed upon a prisoner" (legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary, n.d).

Clemency is explained as an act of grace, also linked to leniency or mercy. It is the power vested in a superior official such as the president, the governor etc., to lower the severity of punishment

imposed upon a prisoner. It is founded on principles of fairness, justice, and forgiveness. For someone to be given clemency does not mean that the crime is cancelled, rather, it is only an act of grace of exemption from penalty. In this case, most universities in Category B and sometimes C offences might not impose a penalty, but the offence is kept in the 'plagiarism register' as a record. Clemency in both criminal law and plagiarism raises certain questions and concerns. In countries that have death penalties, questions have arisen as to whether a prisoner sentenced to death is entitled to clemency proceedings, and a conclusion is reached after a great many reviews and deliberations:

> Clemency must often be requested by application or petition before it is granted. In most jurisdictions, these applications must first be filed with a reviewing agency such as the state board of pardon and parole before being seen by the appropriate government head (Criminal law advice, n.d.)

While leniency seems to be acknowledged, some universities caution its potential long lasting negative results with regard to a student's development.

> Plagiarism can most effectively be eliminated at the outset of a student's academic career, and the consequences of early leniency can be severe later. Although the level of the student may be taken into account in considering the appropriate response, it is only one among other factors. Thus, the level of a student is not necessarily a defence against any given response, and all responses are in principle available at all levels (Policy 1, University 8).

Research affirms that leniency is sometimes reviewed by academics as compromising their professionalism (Sutherland-Smith, 2010). The more that disciplinary committees clear plagiarism allegations through clemency, the more academics lose faith in the formal procedures of the university. It can also become emotional for academics when considering the tedious procedures and attempts that have to be made up to a point where enough evidence has been gathered, and then no penalty is imposed. It could be regarded not only as a waste of time, but they also may feel stripped of the authority to maintain "professional standards or ethical behaviour" (Sutherland-Smith, 2010, p. 191). This approach does not help to combat plagiarism, as students may have the impression that plagiarism is not taken seriously (Shu, Gino, & Bazerman, 2011). However, as mentioned earlier, leniency is sometimes necessary in areas where not enough has been done to make students aware of the necessary conventions (Cinali, 2016). Seemingly, this is the case in

some of the universities in this study, where leniency applies as a result of failure from the side of the educators to perform their duties to support students in becoming aware of where, why and how to reference. Duties in this regard, according to the universities, include making students aware of plagiarism, where they further maintain that failure of staff to prove that they executed their duties should not be an excuse not to apply sanctions where plagiarism has taken place. Even in these cases, universities warn that caution ought to be taken to ensure that these circumstances do not provide excuses for plagiarism.

> The duties in this section are owed to the University and are not intended as defences to allegations of plagiarism. It remains open to a committee to be lenient on a student where instruction has been clearly inadequate (since [this section] includes any relevant circumstances) but the mere failure of a staff member to show that they have discharged their duties under [this section] is not enough to constitute a defence against plagiarism on its own. It would be wrong and counterproductive for students to automatically benefit from any inability of staff to supply convincing evidence that they have fulfilled these duties (Policy 1, University 8).

For the reasons mentioned above, clemency, like the principle of natural justice, might give the impression that plagiarism is not taken seriously, especially when a penalty could not be executed due to insufficient student exposure to plagiarism education, even though plagiarism happened. This situation would be exacerbated if the case gets cancelled without recommending some developmental interventions for those students. The explanation for the plagiarism, viz. that students have been insufficiently educated in this regard, is thus not attended to after clemency is awarded. And so, the problem continues.

5.5.3 Solemn declaration of originality: Oath

Reproduction of the legal system is further evidenced in the data where students are required to sign a compulsory ‘solemn declaration form’ in which they affirm that the work submitted is their own ‘intellectual property’, that they have properly acknowledged all sources, and they know and understand what plagiarism is.

A typical declaration statement reads:

> I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard. I declare that this (e.g. essay, report, project, assignment, dissertation, thesis, etc.) is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work (Policy 1, University 12).

In some universities, students further need to acknowledge that they understand that plagiarism is not tolerated and is a punishable offence:

> Plagiarism is taking and presenting a person's ideas or works as my own; plagiarism is using another person's ideas without acknowledgement; translating another person's ideas or work and presenting them as my own constitutes plagiarism; reproduction of ideas or sentences without quotation marks and acknowledgement of sources is plagiarism; plagiarism is not tolerable and acceptable at [this university]; plagiarism is a punishable offence; rules and conventions of presenting academic work must be followed; no other person has been allowed or will be allowed to submit this work as her or his own work; the content of this assignment / paper / thesis / dissertation / mini dissertation / essay titled […] is my own original work; I may not be awarded marks for plagiarised work / assignment / paper (Policy 1, University 10).

This is similar to an affirmation in lieu of an oath to which suspects or witnesses are subjected, and also resembles a sworn affidavit. In criminal law, an accused or a witness is required to swear that whatever they will be saying is true by declaring this statement or similar: "I solemnly affirm that the evidence that I shall give, shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1997 163(b)). These forms naturally position students who plagiarise after signing them as both unethical and untruthful. If plagiarism is detected in the work, it implies that the student lied under oath, and therefore punishment follows. The same applies to someone who lies in court under oath who can then be convicted of perjury (Criminal Procedure Act 51, 1997 28(1)).

The predominant legalistic approach of declaration forms regards plagiarism as an offence by making the student accept complete liability. Although declaration forms may indicate that universities harbour a strong stance against plagiarism, assigning total responsibility to students

might be perceived as being risk-averse rather than encouraging pedagogical or ethical development (Grigg, 2010). Universities are able to point to such documents to distance themselves from responsibility when cases of plagiarism are identified. Again, the literature on increased managerialism in universities suggests that blame attribution is a key function of a number of bureaucratic processes (Newfield, 2016).

5.5.4 Conflating copyrights with plagiarism

The data showed that while some universities acknowledge that plagiarism and copyright are not the same, others put them under the same umbrella. The concept of copyright as separate from plagiarism is discussed in Chapter Two. Four universities combined copyright and plagiarism in one policy, which is the plagiarism policy; in such cases, it is very confusing as it appears as though copyright is another form of plagiarism.

> The aim of the policy is to … reproduce or transmit in any form or manner, whether electronically or mechanically (including photocopying and faxing), any study guide, book, thesis, dissertation, article, examination paper, lecture, printed tutorial matter or any other study aids in respect of which copyright exists, unless such reproduction or transmission is done in a manner authorised in terms of the Copyright Act, 1978 (as amended), and unless the copyright owner's permission for the reproduction or transmission is obtained; … contravenes the provisions of the Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism Policy of the University as it relates to plagiarism (Policy 1, University 11).

Though the two terms appear as if distinct in the policy, it is clear from the aim of the policy that plagiarism is to some extent used interchangeably with copyright, which creates confusion when it comes to definitions. All the acts listed in the above paragraph are the aims of a plagiarism policy, but they describe copyright infringements more than they do plagiarism per se. However, the last statement in the paragraph indicates that they all contravene both plagiarism and copyright, which implies that plagiarism is regarded as an equal infringement of Copyright Law.

In some cases, though the term copyright is not used, the language of copyright is still prevalent throughout their policies, which also creates some confusion. For example, knowledge is still regarded as an intellectual property. This means knowledge can be owned, and the owner is entitled to some economic benefits if someone wants to use that knowledge:

> But the reality is that plagiarism is an act of fraud that involves both stealing (another's intellectual property) and lying (implying that the work is one's own) (Policy 1, University 12).
>
> Plagiarism is the theft and use of the ideas, material and other intellectual property of others that are passed off as one's own (Policy 1, University 5).

Authorship, according to copyright legislation, has an economic benefit as implied in a policy of one of the universities: "Citation is a form of respect for the relevant author's proprietary rights. … Fair use is a form of respect for the author's economic rights" (Policy 1, University 11). These rights, which are exclusively given to authors, enable them to recover their fixed and opportunity costs, therefore it is justified because people are entitled to "own the fruits of their labour" (Frye, 2016, p. 150). Believing that copyright and plagiarism have the same norms justifies an understanding of knowledge as having some economic value attached to it and implies that knowledge can be owned, which is a stance argued against by many academics. As Frye argues, "Scholarly work is not produced to generate royalties for authors, but to advance the frontiers of human knowledge" (2016, p. 150).

If plagiarism is copyright infringement, this means it is a crime. But extant literature contests that there is no available legislation regarding plagiarism specifically, which is an academic issue related to how we construct knowledge, rather than a mere legal matter. Copyright infringement is indeed a legal issue, and to make a case, the owner should prove that the defendant copied some original elements from their work and should highlight similar portions. This is more or less the same procedure that would be taken when investigating plagiarism. Even though plagiarism is not a legal wrong, it can in some cases nevertheless be punished even more severely than the legal sanctions associated with copyright infringement (Frye, 2016).

So far, this chapter has highlighted the structural and cultural complementarities that enable the reproduction of the legal discourse in the conceptualisations of plagiarism in SAHE, which have resulted in a situational logic of protection of the legal system within universities. These complementarities are seen to align with the general development of risk-aversion in a managerialist age in universities. These complementarities help to explain how plagiarism is regularly conceptualised as a criminal act, committed intentionally.

However, in a few instances, a relation of contradictions between the two systems was evident, which contingently bred some discomfort and challenges. This can be seen to have resulted in a situational logic of correction and elimination of certain structures. The next section therefore discusses data characterised by challenges posed by the legal discourse, which emerged from contradictions arising between the systems.

5.6 System disruptions: Cultural and structural contradictions

In policy, plagiarising students are described as being a 'legal risk' to universities, and for this reason, much effort and energy is diverted towards developing legally defensible policies and procedures, to enable universities to fight such cases when they arise.

> The Policy provides a framework for making decisions about plagiarism, for achieving broad consistency in these decisions, and for defending them against possible legal challenge. … This part of the Policy is especially intended to be useful for arriving at legally defensible decisions. A written decision to impose a response would be legally defensible if it made reference to the factors set out in [this section] and then either imposed the response identified in [this section] or reasonably recommended a different response. It is thus reasonably straightforward to construct legally defensible response decisions in terms of this section of the Policy (Policy 1, University 8).

> Category 3 – Blatant (serious) offences: These offences refer to cases where the academic work, information sources, literary works, artistic works or multimedia products of another person have been intentionally and deliberately plagiarised. It includes cases of suspected collusion and/or deliberate dishonesty with the intention to plagiarise. In addition, these offences may pose a significant legal risk to the University as an institution (Policy 1, University 6).

To deal with such cases, universities have dedicated some time to deliberating on policy and developing it in such a way that it covers all legal loopholes. This, it could be argued, happens at the expense of developing educational interventions. The contradictory roles of the two systems is marked by lack of capacity by universities to attend to legal issues in the same way as legal courts. Universities have a developmental role to play in students' lives and educators are the role players in facilitating this development, which in many ways contradicts the role of policing. Lack of expertise in handling legal matters by academics, propels some institutions to involve the same external structures used to investigate criminal cases such as the South African Police services, forensic investigators, legal experts and so on, to investigate plagiarism cases.

> The action taken by [this traditional university] will depend on the nature of the allegation of plagiarism. The matters raised may be referred to any academic Manager for action or further referrals; Forensic investigators for detailed investigation; or any other relevant external authorities (e.g., Professional bodies or South African Police Services) (Policy 1, University 9).

Some of these experts' primary duties according to the website of one university, revolves around "legal advice and support services; the vetting of commercial contracts; Legal risk management; and Litigation management" (Document 1, University 5). The staff profiles are also aligned accordingly. Besides most having legal qualifications, they also have previous legal experience, ranging from attorneys, to legal advisors or police detectives (Policy 1, University 5). The services of these divisions are highly valuable to a university; however, when it comes to teaching and learning issues, if they have to develop a plagiarism policy or teach about plagiarism, it might only be from a legal perspective, with little or no pedagogy at all. These structures contradict the purpose of a university, mentioned above.

For this reason, some universities have come to realise that external legal elements do not only constrain and undermine the academic judgement of staff, but also create 'further legal loop holes', and that, a policy that is too prescriptive in its procedures and penalties constrains academic judgement. Some policies in this regard were amended with an attempt to match them with the educational structures and cultures of a higher education system.

> The document presented here is a complete revision of the current Plagiarism Policy, which was approved by Senate in 2008. The need for revision arose from experience with cases of plagiarism during the past few years, where it became apparent that the Policy was not explicit enough to allow cases of plagiarism to be adequately prosecuted in student disciplinary processes. ... An initial approach with repeated iterations sought to make more explicit levels of infringement and possible penalties, but it became apparent that further legal loopholes would continue to emerge. As a result, the decision was taken to follow a different approach, one based on principles and relying on the academic judgement of academic staff (Policy 1, University 8).

In the previous version of this university's policy, the procedures were such that they attempted to secure the university legally, but they were actually not addressing the students' plagiarism problems adequately, and this brought the realisation that no matter how hard they tried to cover the university legally, there would always be some ambiguities. This perhaps supports what Bailey

(2013) argues, that irrespective of the fairness of procedures, there will always be students who are not happy with the outcomes of their cases. And, as long as students are exposed to and encouraged to follow legal procedures such as legal rights, right to appeal and so on, students will use the opportunity and even drag universities to courts of law if they can (Bailey, 2013). This could potentially drive universities deeper into the legal framework in an attempt to protect themselves. For this reason, Bailey suggests that a line should be drawn between legal issues and academic matters, as has taken place in the United Kingdom, for example. The United Kingdom courts decided that the decision of "what is and is not plagiarism should be put in the hands of experts that know best" (Bailey, 2013, p. 1). Certainly, these experts cannot be judges and magistrates as they might have limited knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism, which is not an issue inscribed in law.

In the above policy, cultural elaborations were introduced during the policy review in which there was the elimination of some legal procedures in favour of the "academic judgement of academic staff", and which now appear in the recent policy document. The other reason for the elimination was that they were not able to "allow cases of plagiarism to be adequately prosecuted in student disciplinary processes" (Policy 1, University 8).

In the previous section, I showed that the inclusion of copyright issues in a policy on plagiarism was complementary, given the incursion of legal framing of university activities in a more managerialist era. However, the confusion between copyright and plagiarism played out as a contradiction in some other cases. Three universities indicated that they no longer use copyright policy to address plagiarism issues because they have noticed they are two different concepts.

> The University developed the Copyright and Plagiarism Policy, which was approved by the university Council in 2011. The implementation of this policy presented some problems. Plagiarism information seems obscured by copyright information, as some users complain of the unavailability of a plagiarism policy. Some complain of the scant plagiarism information covered in the policy and lack of guidelines in addressing plagiarism cases. Combining copyright and plagiarism in one policy also seems to exacerbate the problem of distinguishing between the two concepts (Policy 1, University 10).

> So previously, we used to use the copyright policy and we found it wanting (Participant 4).

> Plagiarism is not the same as copyright infringement, even though both processes may apply to a particular act (Policy 1, University 6).

Whereas the inclusion of copyright issues in plagiarism was complementary in those institutions noted in the previous section, possibly because of the extent to which the legal framework was embedded in the institutional culture, in these examples above, there was a contradiction that led to the elimination of references to copyright in their institutional plagiarism policy.

Another contradiction is apparent, namely that as much as they wish to be procedurally fair by allowing appeals, universities do not seem to encourage students to take that step. It seems to be the case that appeals appear in policy in order to indemnify the university, or perhaps to mitigate against the discomfort of contradictions within the legal system, discussed elsewhere in this chapter. In the case of the university below, if a student appeals, the case will be attended to, but there would be possibilities of more severe sanctions if plagiarism is found to have been committed:

> The student should be informed that the Committee will hear the matter afresh, and is entitled, in the event of finding that plagiarism has been committed, to impose its own penalty, which may be more onerous than that imposed by the lecturer (Policy 1, University 7).

Secondly, data showed that five universities allow students to bring along legal experts, at their own expense, to the disciplinary appeals and hearings.

> Upon receiving a recommendation from a Faculty Plagiarism Committee, the Student Disciplinary Committee shall administer the case as a disciplinary matter in accordance with its procedures, including where appropriate a hearing with a right to legal representation (Policy 1, University 8).

> A staff member, researcher or graduate/diplomat may be assisted by another staff member or by a legal practitioner. If a legal practitioner acts for the person charged, this will be at that person's own expense (Policy 1, University 14).

> The student charged with having committed plagiarism, as well as the member of staff in the department that discovered the plagiarism (or the Head of Department, in cases of plagiarism in these universities) should be invited to attend the hearing. The student may be assisted by another student, or by a staff member or by a legal practitioner. If a legal

> practitioner acts for the student, this will be at the student's own expense (Policy 1, Universities 4 &7: Identical wording).

The mention of including legal representation increases the stakes and makes it clear to students that an appeal can be considered a legal action with all that this entails. Knowing how expensive legal representation can become, not many students could afford this, therefore the probability of students being discouraged to take their cases further is very high. Additionally, the tedious nature of appeal procedures, which consume much of academics' valuable time, might have the same effect on students, who may eventually drop their cases. It is clear that these procedures are a huge challenge for the academics due to the factor of time:

> Ah, they're terribly – you know when I see a student plagiarising I am so upset, because I know it's going to take me so … long to, excuse me, it's going to take me so long because I'm going to have to explain exactly why the student's plagiarised, have to write it out in exact detail. And then I have to call the student in. Then the student has to sign. Oh, I can't bear it and in fact, I think that's why I hate plagiarism the most because it takes up so much of my time (Participant 2).

> …to start managing each student it becomes so labour intensive to monitor; we don't have the time and we don't make time, we are also as academics at fault; we, I will be honest with you, sometimes I just hope and pray that one day they will get that understanding of not plagiarism and they will get it right and they will attend the workshops we organise and we give them time to attend (Participant 1).

The above examples illustrate the constraining conditions academics are placed in by plagiarism being framed largely as a legal system. Under such circumstances, Sutherland-Smith (2008) argues that a tendency of not reporting plagiarism cases is very common. Archer (1995) says that through involuntary placement, agency is introduced into pre-existing structures and culture that can be both enabling and constraining. The above academics find themselves in a constraining environment that emerges from the integration of legal procedures into the university sector. Their internal conversations as they reflect on the impact these procedures have on the higher education system, indicate a deep level of frustration. One could almost infer that if they had an opportunity, they would use a different approach to bring about change within the system, because as academics, they lack capacity to function as 'detectives', and universities cannot function like courts of law. Bailey (2012) gave a good example that the evidence that is presented during disciplinary hearings might be acceptable in an academic setting but would not be of sufficient

standard for a court of law. Therefore, drafting policies and procedures that would adequately address legal cases as opposed to academic matters, is even more challenging.

5.7 Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, I presented my findings regarding how closely the South African Higher Education system complements the legal system in regulating matters related to plagiarism. These complementarities reproduced the legal systems in many ways. Firstly, the ideological understanding of plagiarism as a form of misconduct complements the legal connotation of crime, and this conceptualisation regards plagiarism as an intentional act committed by choice. I also argued that the criteria for breaches, structurally resemble the ones applied in criminal law to regulate criminal behaviour. This was followed by the discussion of other legal structures adopted in policy, such as describing plagiarism as an administrative act through clemency, a practice which has its roots in common law and the principle of natural justice adopted from the South African Constitution. I drew on the data and Sutherland-Smith's work in particular, to demonstrate how both concepts are necessary complementary to the higher education system's notion of procedural fairness when administering penalties to plagiarism cases. Both the students' right to appeal and to have legal representation during disciplinary hearings, were identified as possible additional external mechanisms that entrenched the status quo within the higher education system. The conflation of plagiarism and copyright was shown to reduce plagiarism to a crime, thus compromising the attempts to approach it pedagogically. Framing students' identity as that of criminals, I argued from a psychological perspective, can cause them to feel alienated or even to exacerbate plagiarism.

The second section demonstrated how in a few instances, the relations of contradictions resulted in different situational logics; where some were more disruptive than others, to the conditioning of the higher education system. The contradictions were evident, firstly, in the form of discomforts created by Category C plagiarism cases, regarded as legal risks. Secondly, the tendency of putting a great deal of effort into closing legal loopholes regarding these cases signifies the fear and discomposure created. Spending much time and effort constructing such measures, I argued, may compromise opportunities for developing beneficial educational activities as demonstrated by agency. Finally, the disruption of the university system was characterised by the situational logics

of ‘elimination’ of reference to the Copyright Law by some universities and substituting it with a policy that only attends to plagiarism issues.

All these disruptions indicate that universities as structures are different from legal structures, and that therefore, the integration of legal elements in a social university environment is likely to disrupt the social setup either through a situational logic of ‘compromise’ or ‘elimination’, where the nature of the university had to be modified and some elements eliminated, to stabilise the internal social set up. These disruptions need to be considered in the light of larger mechanisms of managerialism, which may lead to increased risk aversion in institutions.

CHAPTER SIX: THE COMMON-SENSE UNDERSTANDING OF PLAGIARISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

6.1 Introduction

Sutherland-Smith (2008) argues that plagiarism arises along a spectrum from intentional to unintentional. It is important, she argues, that attempts to raise awareness about plagiarism and respond to it take this into account. While researchers of plagiarism agree that it is a pernicious problem that needs to be rigorously attended to (Bretag, 2016a), they also agree that not all incidents of plagiarism can be characterised as a moral transgression warranting punitive responses (Bretag & Mahmud, 2011). Novice writers often plagiarise because they are not yet aware of disciplinary norms (Angélil-Carter, 2000). The research reported in the previous chapter, however, indicated limited evidence of an understanding of unintentional plagiarism, with its various implications for teaching and learning. This issue is explored in more depth in this chapter.

It is first worth noting that some of the policies had not been reviewed or revised for a significant period of time. University 4 last reviewed its policy in 2008, while University 3's policy was last reviewed in 2011. Some policies were developed before the institutional mergers that occurred in 2005 and were never revisited (Policy 1, University 11), despite such mergers often resulting in new institutional types and names, with implications for knowledge production (and therefore for relationships to literature and referencing) as discussed in Chapter One. One institution indicated in their Teaching and Learning Policy: "Policy on Academic Integrity - to be drafted" (Policy 2, University 2).

6.2 Superficial understanding: A cultural complementarity

Almost all references to plagiarism in the policies analysed indicated an understanding that it was always intentional and required clear punishment. While there were some references to educational rather than punitive responses to plagiarism, these generally took the form of awareness raising and warnings to students, rather than developmental interventions. There was ample reference to

the availability of warnings with regard to plagiarism. Documents about plagiarism are published on departments' websites and in study guides and other public areas such as in the library or through pamphlets (Policy 1, University 22). There was the recommendation by some universities that "reference to plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarism appear on all relevant assessment criteria/rubrics/marking guides" (Policy 1, University 7).

> The Student Handbook and the General Rules Book should in future include general information about the nature of plagiarism and about the University's policy with respect to plagiarism and should indicate that plagiarism is considered a serious offence (Policy 1, University 15).
>
> All module outlines must carry a reminder clause on plagiarism, cheating, academic dishonesty or misconduct and copyright protection (Policy 1, University 3).
>
> A pop-up message with links to the [university] webpage on plagiarism that warns against plagiarism appear whenever a student visits the [university] website. An online tutorial including guidelines on plagiarism on the [university] webpage (Policy 1, University 10).

In interviews, there was reference to such measures being educational in nature, but in essence, all these measures approach plagiarism from the common-sense perspective – that it is always an intentional act perpetrated by not implementing technical referencing rules.

Students are left to infer what might be required in order to make claims in academia based on prior research, as there was scant deliberation on this issue across the data. When students are left to figure out on their own how to deal with complex disciplinary norms in academic writing, they are likely to approach it using their own experiences and theories, due to lack of sufficient guidance, or what Vosniadou (2007) calls 'instruction-induced conceptual knowledge'. Acquiring the knowledge production processes of academia normally takes many years (Angélil-Carter, 2000). Policies, study guides, flyers and other forms of communication media alone may not be enough to help students sufficiently; especially as they warn against plagiarising without engaging with why and when to reference. These initiatives may help to address technical issues related to writing, but they neglect the students' need to acquire academic norms of writing to produce knowledge. However, it was evident from my research that universities assume that this kind of exposure is adequate, and therefore claims of ignorance about the issue of plagiarism are not accepted. Such references cautioning against plagiarism are then used to build a case against those

students caught in acts of plagiarism. It is assumed that the information alone should prevent unintentional plagiarism, making any incidents of plagiarism intentional, and thereby requiring punitive responses. This is a discourse of punishment being necessary (in the domain of culture), complementing the discourse that plagiarism is always intentional.

Thirteen of the universities in this study require that students sign a declaration form at the beginning of the year, indicating that they have now been informed of what plagiarism is and that it will not be tolerated. In many of the universities, there was also the requirement that all assessments had to be accompanied by a statement that the work is the student's own, though it was not clear whether this was consistently applied across departments.

There was some mention in documents from 18 of the 25 universities in the study, that the institution offers some form of training related to plagiarism, which thus goes a step beyond simple awareness-raising and cautioning about plagiarism. However, in six of the seven interviews, it was clear that there was a common-sense understanding of referencing as a generic technical skill, rather than a discipline-specific social practice emerging from knowledge-making norms, and that such training approaches the issue of referencing in this manner.

> No, what I must first explain is that at the beginning whenever I start teaching and this, we're all meant to do and I presume the other lecturers do it too, we actually have a presentation of what plagiarism is. We also explain it so for example, this term with the third years I didn't do it in as much detail because I know they've heard it so many times. But with the second years, I did a whole tutorial only on plagiarism and … I would copy bits of their work onto a PowerPoint display and as a class, I would say, "Okay, where's the incorrect referencing here? Where is the incorrect punctuation?" So, the students have absolutely no excuse, because I show them exactly what plagiarism is (Participant 2).

In essence, many of the interventions served to equip students with some technical procedural skills. It is necessary that students understand and acquire referencing, summarising and paraphrasing skills, but if they miss the relationship between these technical concepts and the norms of knowledge construction, they are likely to continue engaging in plagiarism. This is particularly the case because a lack of authorial identity in itself is regarded as another form of plagiarism (Lankamp, 2009). Developing students' sense of authorial identity alongside teaching the students' academic writing practices, is considered to be the key to reducing plagiarism (Elander, 2015; Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, & Payne, 2010). Until students are in a position to

understand the ways in which prior texts are used within their particular discipline – from mapping a field, to positioning their contribution, to substantiating their writing, and so on – they will be unlikely to successfully implement the technical requirements of a referencing style (Boughey, 2014). Such processes are acquired over time, and require regular opportunities for practice and feedback (Angélil-Carter, 2000).

Unfortunately, where there were examples of 'training' regarding plagiarism, this was offered over a very short period (often a single seminar) and it was undertaken in a generic form externally from the curriculum and the discipline, in which students would need to engage with referencing practices.

> So every course, every student receives a module guide and in there is the Plagiarism Policy obviously abbreviated, which they're supposed to read. Lecturers should be drawing students' attention to that as well and then at Orientation, have an Orientation week at the beginning of the year. During this, we talk about the Plagiarism Policy (Participant 5).

> …creation of awareness of the intolerability of plagiarism at [university] during orientation and induction of new students and staff (Policy 1, University 10 & 19: identical wording).

The notion of plagiarism training as a short exposure to generic referencing skills, shows a lack of understanding of how students achieve access to the practices of the discipline. Literacy is context specific, it cannot be "considered a unitary skill that can be transferred with ease from context to context" (Lea, 2017, p. 147). Furthermore, writing in the discipline, as with any other academic practice, requires an extensive period of induction, practice, and mentoring to develop use of the practices (Angélil-Carter, 2000). Thus, where training interventions are provided once, and to first year students only, it might not be enough. Furthermore, because students enter and exit the university at various levels, it cannot be taken for granted that such students will have received the equivalent training from their previous institutions.

In some universities, such training courses are developed and taught by the support units within universities outside of formal academic programmes.

> …all first-year students go through information literacy training that includes plagiarism, referencing and referencing techniques, and copyright, offered by [this university's Library Information Services] staff (Policy 1, University 10).
>
> The Centre for Teaching and Learning can assist you with training where required. The University's Library and Information Service also provides information literacy sessions that address plagiarism (Policy 1, University 5).
>
> The plagiarism module should ideally be presented by experts from Legal Services and/or the Directorate of Teaching and Learning with Technology. Course content should include the principles, identification, avoidance and consequences of plagiarism, as well as training in plagiarism-detection software (e.g. Turnitin) (Policy 1, University 6).

Most of the people offering the training are thus not engaged in academic knowledge-making themselves. This was commented on by one of the participants in relation to the proliferation of courses that have come to be known as 'Academic Literacy Courses', focused on generic skills such as information literacy, time management and plagiarism:

> Academic Literacy Courses [are perceived to be] the easiest thing to do in the world and I believe that academics and universities shirk their responsibilities by putting those courses in. It's a 'quick fix'. It doesn't work, but look across the country, it's everywhere. And people teaching those courses plagiarise ... please, they plagiarise me. I review the journal articles, I've been plagiarised, and I think, 'Oh my goodness, and this person is setting themselves up as the expert on Academic Literacy?' (Participant 6).

A study in South Africa that looked at academic staff development initiatives in eight universities, revealed that academics are rarely inducted into knowledge of the field of higher education, in order to enable them to design courses and pedagogical processes that will provide epistemological access for a diverse student body (CHE, 2017). The study suggested that there is a need for collaboration between academics and those offering various staff and student development interventions, "as well as between academics across disciplines and institutions" (CHE, 2017, p. 81). Failing this, such initiatives, like so many add-on generic teaching and learning initiatives, may be seen to provide evidence that institutions are addressing the problem while, in fact, they are unlikely to have any effect (Quinn, 2012b).

The approach to plagiarism awareness raising, as being a once-off consideration of technical referencing skills, is in contradiction to learning and development theories, marked by the

approach to knowledge-making which is more *procedural* than *conceptual*. Procedural knowledge is knowing 'how', while *conceptual* knowledge explains knowing 'what'. Procedural knowledge can take the form of rote learning (Star & Stylianides, 2012). As much as a procedural approach to learning is significant in teaching and learning, it needs to be complemented by conceptual knowledge. It is not enough to know where to put a comma or period or italics i.e., to master the skill of referencing, outside its rightful purpose. It is arguably more important and certainly more complex to understand how referencing is used as the means to provide evidence for claims and build academic knowledge in various disciplines than to learn how to apply referencing styles. Yet it seems some universities understand plagiarism as something that can be addressed by teaching the rules of referencing as this participant indicates:

> Most of the stuff that's taught about plagiarism is taught in a very superficial way. Students are taught how to reference. The referencing is easy. The referencing is a low level cognitive activity, do I do italics? Do I underline, where do I put the date? It's low level stuff and an editor could fix that up, much more difficult is understanding the value (Participant 6).

The "value" referred to by the participant above is the value of referencing, which is all about knowledge-making. Academic knowledge is made by 'pieces' of knowledge built over time by various people. These pieces of knowledge consist of claims that build up into a more overall position or statement about the case. These claims are substantiated by evidence, which comes from empirical data or the work of others; to do this is not an easy task (Boughey, 2014), and it is undertaken differently across disciplines. This whole process is contingent on critical thinking and the evaluation of texts, which is a proficiency that one acquires over a period of time, with much repetition. And it requires a nuanced, carefully thought out type of intervention to be achieved. This speaks to what is referred to as conceptually induced knowledge, which is contrary to spontaneous conceptual knowledge. Spontaneous *conceptual* knowledge acquisition takes place naturally with development and learning in the context of lay culture. *Instruction induced conceptual* knowledge acquisition requires systematic, top-down intentional learning mechanisms to be achieved and normally takes many years (Vosniadou, 2007), whereas the spontaneous one is bottom-up, made of experiences and theories students formulate out of their personal experiences.

Therefore, in cases where the relationship between plagiarism and referencing is understood as merely the acquisition of technical knowledge, students might have unrealistic conclusions that knowledge construction has nothing to do with the two concepts of plagiarism and referencing (Vosniadou, 2007). To avoid such misconceptions, the planned, top-up approach is recommended, which many universities disregard because it is easier to give handouts on plagiarism and assume students will understand the contents, while it takes extensive time and effort to develop academic literacies. The former, which is the *top-down/instruction induced conceptual approach,* resonates with the academic literacies scholar's perception that it takes some time, and considerable effort, to master the academic conventions of writing and knowledge construction, but that this is required if we are truly to afford our students epistemological access. The *spontaneous conceptual change* approach also echoes Sutherland-Smith's (2008) transmissive approach to teaching and learning mentioned above, where there is less communication between the lecturer, as the disciplinary knower, and the student, as the disciplinary novice. Across the data, students are referred to policy, study guides and flyers to teach themselves about issues of plagiarism; lecturers are therefore positioned to assume that students have enough information and have no excuse of claiming ignorance; and if they plagiarise it is deliberate, and they should appear before the disciplinary committees for judgement.

6.3 Text-matching tools are used as structures to detect plagiarism

The issues raised in the literature about the use of so-called 'plagiarism software', which was discussed in depth in Section 1.2.7 of this thesis, emerged repeatedly in the study data. Turnitin is the most widely used text-matching software in South African Higher Education. Of the 19 institutional policies that are specifically related to plagiarism, 13 referred directly to Turnitin, a further three were not specific but recommended the use of some kind of software: "All lecturers must be able to use and apply programmes used to detect plagiarism" (Policy 1, Universities 4, 7 & 14: identical wording). The remaining three policies were silent about text-matching tools.

In one policy, Turnitin was described as "an electronic plagiarism detection software/tool which is used by hundreds of international and national higher education institutions to detect plagiarism" (Policy 1, University 12). It was evident across much of the data that most South African universities have institutionalised the use of Turnitin. Turnitin was not only widely endorsed but

it was primarily or exclusively regarded as a "plagiarism detection tool" by 11 of the 13 universities that referred to it by name.

> Postgraduate students must make use of electronic plagiarism detection software (e.g. Turnitin) before they submit their treatises/dissertations/theses for assessment (Policy 1, University 23).
>
> Turnitin plagiarism detection programme is licensed to [this traditional University] (Policy 1, University 22).
>
> SENEX approved the use of Turnitin as the University's electronic plagiarism detection Software/tool (Policy 1, University 20).
>
> [This university] uses the Turnitin plagiarism detection software to detect and discourage plagiarism (Policy 1, University 10)

As indicated in Chapter One, it is important to distinguish between the idea of plagiarism detection software, and the reality of text-matching software. Turnitin and similar software packages cannot detect plagiarism as such, but rather, they identify and highlight chunks of text that match that of other sources. At present, there is no software able to detect when it is ideas that have been taken from elsewhere and cast as the author's own. Furthermore, as the literature reviewed in Chapter One indicated, is important to note that, in cases where the originality report comes match-free, it does not necessarily guarantee that text is plagiarism free. Because the software can only match wording and not concepts, the ability to paraphrase texts ensures that such forms of plagiarism remain undetected by the software. As McKeever (2006, p. 155) has argued, "any form of online detection service can only act as a mere diagnostic tool to highlight possible cases of plagiarism, and human judgement will always be needed to establish whether or not an offence has been committed". It requires a careful consideration of these annotated matches by a person to determine which, if any, constitute plagiarism.

This study found that the misunderstanding that Turnitin is plagiarism software has led to a number of practices with perverse consequences. Some universities were found to indicate a percentage on the similarity score as the means by which penalties for plagiarism were determined. For instance, a minor case is described as "less than 10%", a moderate case is "more than 10% but less than 20% of text lifted" and a serious offence is "more than 20% of text" (Policy 1, University 12). This

gives the impression that a similarity index percentage always indicates the level of plagiarism. There was a repeated understanding in the data that a higher percentage of necessity constituted 'worse' levels of plagiarism than lower percentages; though this is often not the case (Bretag & Mahmud, 2009). Perhaps of much greater concern is that stipulating such percentages on the similarity report can suggest to students that there is some acceptable level of plagiarism.

It is not only academics who misidentify Turnitin as 'plagiarism detection software', rather than text-matching software; this error even occurs in the literature on academic integrity (for example, Ewing, Anast, & Roehling, 2016; Levine & Pazdernik, 2018). While Ewing et al. indicate an awareness that careful analysis of the full Turnitin report is needed to establish whether there has been plagiarism, they later seem to contradict this by indicating that a similarity index percentage can be regarded as a "threshold that would trigger the collectively agreed upon process of documenting offences and requiring remediation" (2016, p. 578).

The study data showed that it was common practice to encourage students to use the Turnitin report to identify where to paraphrase in their assignments so that the plagiarism could not be identified by the software and therefore the similarity percentage would be reduced.

> I give them two opportunities to submit, so they can see what the initial similarity report is … and they can adjust it from there (Participant 1).

> It is recommended that every student – undergraduate and postgraduate – be required to submit her/his work to the Turnitin system and get an Originality Report. This will give her/him an opportunity to investigate and determine if her/his citing, paraphrasing, summarising or quoting needs to be improved upon (Policy 1, University 1).

The use of the cover sheet and Turnitin text-matching score on its own, submitted with the assignment, rather than a careful interrogation of the full report, led to students quickly learning that they could adjust the Turnitin settings to exclude certain sources.

> They put their projects through Turnitin but they know how to manipulate it and we actually had incidents where we had to call students in where they have changed the parameters which ultimately changed the Turnitin report (Participant 1).

In this case, the very same structure meant to reduce plagiarism turns out to be used in a way that changes students' behaviour in an undesirable direction towards it (Heather, 2010), where they become 'sophisticated plagiarists' (Warn, 2006).

Importantly, such processes suggest that the emphasis in learning referencing norms is on avoiding plagiarism, rather than acquiring the academic practices of drawing from and building on the ideas of others. In this way, students can be given an impression that we turn the judgment of their writing over to a software programme (Williams, 2007, p. 252). Under such circumstances, an "adversarial relationship between teacher and student" might develop which could be constraining to learning (Bretag, 2016b, p. 29). Therefore, it is important to explain to students why it is necessary to put papers through text-matching software and to discuss what such software can show us about developing our academic writing practices.

6.4 The use of the similarity index in a 'detect and punish' culture

The implementation of Turnitin as a plagiarism detection technology was found to be complementary to the culture of 'detect and punish', where more emphasis is put on punishment of plagiarism than on prevention *through the development of academic writing*. This complementarity allows Turnitin to be considered a 'straightforward' means of addressing plagiarism and obviates the need for more complex pedagogical interventions (Sutherland-Smith, 2011). Three universities indicated the requirement of an acceptable similarity threshold when evaluating students work.

> The student and supervisor should concur that the Turnitin or similar report is acceptable [University] Policy Section 9.3] before the thesis is submitted for examination. The supervisor determines in consultation with the postgraduate coordinator, taking the context of the student's work into account, a reasonable threshold for the similarity index (D1, University 5).

Some institutions described the objective of their plagiarism policies as identifying those who plagiarise with the purpose of punishing them:

> The primary foci of the policy are the following: …to establish procedures to detect plagiarism and deal with transgressors (Policy 1, University 6).

> The emphasis is primarily upon teaching and the evaluation of students' learning (i.e. deterrence and assessment through informative, educative and preventative mechanisms), and secondly on detecting plagiarism and dealing with transgressors (i.e. policing) (Policy 1, University 12).

> Therefore, it is the policy of [the university] that no form of academic dishonesty shall be tolerated, and if any of such conduct is reported or detected, the perpetrator upon being found guilty should be punishable in terms of the University's disciplinary policies, rules and procedures (Policy 1, University 3).

The universities' sanctions ranged from lenient, such as: "counselling" (Policy 1, University 14), "written warnings" (Policy 1, University 1), "mark deductions" (Policy 1, University 4) to severe sanctions, including "expulsion from the university" (Policy 1, University 18) and "blacklisting" (Policy 1, University 3). This range of responses was not typically related to the extent to which students had been inducted into knowledge-making norms, which is key to ensuring the development of strong academic writing that is free of plagiarism (Mphahlele & McKenna, 2018). Nor was the range of possible responses tied to consideration of issues of intent. Rather, they were allocated in the policy on the basis of the level of study (first year versus final year). This could be seen to relate to the extent of time in which the student could justifiably have been inducted into knowledge-making norms, or on whether this was a first or second offence, which again could justifiably allow opportunities for the student to acquire appropriate practices. In some cases, the implementation of degrees of punishment was related to the extent of the plagiarism, which seems to reiterate the notion that plagiarism is acceptable if kept to minimal levels.

Across most policies, plagiarism was discussed in terms of something that needs to be detected and decisively dealt with, and generally the act was conceptualised in isolation of teaching and learning issues. Addressing plagiarism as a moral transgression that needs to be detected and punished "risks diverting time and attention from more necessary and useful educative activities" (Fishman, 2016, p. 16).

Regarding plagiarism as *always* being an intentional practice, is a view critically challenged by scholars such as Angélil-Carter (2000), Macdonald and Carroll (2006), and Sutherland-Smith (2008). As indicated throughout this study, these scholars and others argue that plagiarism has to be understood along a continuum, where on the one side of the continuum are acts of intentional

plagiarism, and on the other end, unintentional plagiarism – which happens when students are novice to the academic writing conventions related to the taking on of academic literacies. Without such an understanding, the issue of plagiarism will not be addressed. Academic literacy practices include "academic writing conventions and practices with which students are expected to engage" (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 14) and these are closely tied to the relationship the student is expected to have with the literature detailing prior research. Academic writing, and its use of various referencing practices, is understood to be a peculiar, discipline-specific, sociocultural practice and therefore requires careful scaffolding and ongoing development. These differing referencing practices are not a matter of different referencing styles, so much as disciplinary differences in the ways in which prior knowledge is used in the building of new contributions to knowledge and differences in the ways in which authorial voice is established. Students do not enter the academy with such understandings and require significant opportunities of practice and feedback to acquire them (Angélil-Carter, 2000). Issues of intention are thus key to determining appropriate responses to incidents of plagiarism.

6.5 Oversimplification of the complexities of plagiarism and authorship

Plagiarism policies cited here made plagiarism seem like a very simple concept to grasp and to identify, which it is not (Youmans, 2011). In all 19 Plagiarism Policies, procedures for punishing incidents of plagiarism were far more detailed than educational responses related to inducting students into academic writing and knowledge production processes. Reference to the development of academic writing practices (which would help students to avoid plagiarism), were almost non-existent in institutional policies, including in those policies specifically related to teaching and learning.

In some universities, the procedures for responding to cases of plagiarism detailed in the Plagiarism Policies were between four to eight pages long, whereas reference to educational means of addressing incidents of unintentional plagiarism were non-existent in three of the universities and in the other policies was only a paragraph long. Among those universities mentioning educational interventions in policy, were five traditional universities, one comprehensive university and one UOT.

Such ‘educational approaches’ included: an opportunity for students to correct and resubmit the work (Policy 1, University 4); capping the mark for that assignment at a certain level, e.g. 50% or giving the student a zero (Policy 1, University 8); and issuing a written warning (Policy 1, University 9). One university clarifies why the above responses are understood to be educational:

> Note that educational responses may include capping or prescribing marks. They are educational because they are primarily intended to educate the student, and because they do not affect the formal academic records relating to the student (no entry on the Plagiarism Register) (Policy 1, University 8).

These educational responses say very little of the university’s responsibility for inducting students into the writing norms of the academy, whereby reference to prior texts is a key means of substantiating claims and building arguments.

Despite the limits to educational interventions detailed in the policies, it could be argued that individual academics might nonetheless implement academic initiatives aimed at a more educational response to plagiarism in novice knowers. The data collected from interviews was limited in this study, as the interviews served simply to verify various understandings of conceptualisations and processes detailed in the policies and I am thus unable to reach broad sector level conclusions on the basis of the interview data alone. Nonetheless, there was a notable sense of agency in this regard demonstrated by the two interviews with academics from traditional universities.

In Chapter Three it was explained that agency signifies the way in which people have the ability to exercise some sort of influence over their structural and cultural systems pertaining to their social roles or as Archer indicated, their ability to activate their ‘personal emergent properties and powers’ on those systems. While these systems prescribe the conditions in which people operate, their agency if activated, has potential to affect the social context. This section therefore focuses on the agency of academics and how they interact with these institutional structures and cultures.

The two participants from traditional universities, by virtue of their roles as both members of the plagiarism committee and their experience in teaching, emerged as social actors, who expressed their discontent with how students’ academic literacy development is approached.

> From next year, we're going to run a course on [the manual], which will run throughout the whole of the first semester. … It's not one course. It would be somebody who is teaching Economics and they teach a module on, I don't know, inflation. They might come along and say, 'I want to do something around writing, what can I do?' So we'll put an intervention in that course in relation to the teaching of inflation. So, we will embed support for writing, which would of course, be about a writer developing a voice and using other texts as evidence for what she wanted to say in that course of Economics. It's much more difficult to do than an Academic Literacy Course. … I think most courses on Academic Literacy, they misappropriate the understanding of Academic Literacy … so I feel very critical of the so-called developmental work of academic literacy in this country (Participant 6).

Participant 3 expressed her understanding of disciplinary context as vital to developing students' writing ability and her actions are focused on curriculating writing norms.

> So, what we did was we obviously have English for Law students, which they do in their first year, but then, we've now also got what we call, Legal Writing in second year, and then we've got Advanced Legal Writing in fourth year. So, what we tried to do was cascade the implementation of Academic Writing so that the students throughout their degree encounter this not only as doing assignments, but actual courses around writing. … It was something that was commended, but it was also said that we should possibly try and have the students even develop a research proposal in Advanced Legal Writing in the final year programme. We tried that this semester, but because of the strikes we didn't get to finish. … So, they could hand in a topic and then we'd make comments and then they would revise it and then they would hand in a first draft and then we would revise it and then they'd hand in a final draft. So that's the second year that we're doing that. … So those are the types of interventions that we've implemented (Participant 3).

In both of these cases, the participants provided a clearly articulated understanding of the relationship between disciplinary knowledge production, academic writing norms and referencing. Archer (2007) deliberates on the kind of agency required to effect change, and how such agency will need to be complemented by structures and cultures, because if these are contradictory, the agency will be constrained. Participants 3 and 6 above are social actors who "personify a social role in a distinct manner" (Archer, 2007, p. 17). They not only question the approach to knowledge development initiatives, but have also taken action to focus their internal conversations around changing the superficial way in which student literacies are dealt with and to formulate projects in relation to that. Participant 6's understanding and approach is focused on nuanced knowledge-making conventions. She has also developed a manual that helps students to understand the purpose of writing in the university and provides steps to follow in developing knowledge. She

expresses her concerns on how academic literacies are misunderstood, and following this, the actions she pioneered towards changing the situation are outlined. Participant 3 has introduced discipline specific writing modules with opportunities for students to get feedback and re-work their disciplinary texts.

Social realism acknowledges that agency is often enabled or constrained because of the pre-existing structural and cultural conditions in which people find themselves. These conditions sometimes create uneven ways in which resources might have been distributed, based on socio-cultural and historical circumstances. Due to the different histories and mandates that different South African universities have inherited, as discussed in Chapter One, plagiarism and literacy can be seen to be experienced differently within these universities. Both above-mentioned participants are from traditional universities, as indicated above, claims made on the basis of two interviews are problematic, but it should be noted that traditional universities are also more likely to acknowledge in policy that instances of plagiarism occur along a continuum, and they are more likely to call for a range of educational interventions. The literature on institutional histories suggest that there are considerable effects on structure and culture which can constrain or enable the agency of individuals (for more discussion on this, see Bozalek & Boughey, 2012; Bunting, 2006; McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Muthama & McKenna, 2017; White, Carvalho, & Riordan, 2011). Perhaps, due to such issues of institutional differentiation discussed in this literature and detailed in Chapter One, the history of certain universities made them more hierarchical and managerial, and this has had effects on the agency of academics to impact on the ways in which the policies conceptualise plagiarism and the possibilities of implementing more integrated and extended educational responses.

6.6 Conclusion

The chapter highlighted that plagiarism was often understood in the data to be always an intentional act, rather than existing along a spectrum of plagiarism events, some of which might be unintentional. Furthermore, referencing was understood to be a technical writing skill, rather than as emerging from the knowledge production norms of a specific discipline. This understanding meant that plagiarism was understood as the lack of application of technical referencing requirements. The study found that most of the universities understood their

educational role as involving awareness-raising about plagiarism, and that such awareness raising was generally offered in a generic fashion that failed to take discipline-specific knowledge-making norms into account. Furthermore, the awareness took the form of a once-off initiative offered outside of the curriculum.

The mechanism whereby this approach to reducing plagiarism emerged, is at least in part due to the understanding of teaching and learning, including viewing the development of academic writing practices as neutral and a-cultural. A social understanding of teaching and learning would, as has been argued, lead to more engaging activities or (better 'experiences' and 'events', in critical realist terms) for novice writers. These are activities that provide opportunities to acquire the knowledge-making norms of the discipline, including coming to terms with its relationship to prior knowledge in the form of referencing.

The study found that text-matching software was largely misunderstood to be plagiarism software, where the similarity index was perceived to be a direct measure of plagiarism. This led to an understanding that students needed to paraphrase texts in order to avoid detection by the programme. The focus of the university was on detecting and punishing plagiarism, rather than on developing students' academic writing practices.

The agency of academics was seen to be enabled or constrained by the structures and cultures of the institution. In institutions with strongly hierarchical cultures and managerialist structures, it is arguably more difficult for academics to use their own agency to implement more integrated and extended educational responses.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PLAGIARISM ON A CONTINUUM

7.1 Introduction

Understanding plagiarism as always being an intentional act means understanding that it is committed by choice. The first chapter of data analysis brought this to light by presenting how plagiarism is conceptualised in ways closely aligned with the legal framework, and how some structures and cultures of the framework greatly constrain an educational approach to the issue. The second analysis chapter considered the effects of this view on students' acquisition of literacies, and was seen to limit students' chances of proper literacy development. In this final analysis chapter, the argument that plagiarism exists on a continuum is continued, and I argue for the acknowledgement of a multi-faceted nature of plagiarism, which were marked in very few instances throughout the data.

While analysing the interaction of the emergent properties, Archer (1995) suggests we separate one from the other through analytical dualism. Therefore, this chapter engages with structural, cultural and agential mechanisms that potentially enable or constrain the conceptualisation of plagiarism as a phenomenon that exists on a continuum, coupled with the implications of this view for the development of students' literacies.

7.2 A culture of academic integrity

The concept of academic integrity is mentioned by three universities in this study, but only two of the three universities demonstrated a fair understanding of plagiarism as more of a breach of academic integrity values, rather than an academic misconduct issue.

> The University is responsible for developing and promoting academic integrity and improving trust in scholarly work, and for preventing plagiarism in educational and research material. Plagiarism constitutes a breach of academic integrity and compromises and undermines the values and processes by which knowledge is created, shared and evaluated (Policy 1, University 6).

> Plagiarism violates our values of trust and academic integrity. (Academic integrity, a cornerstone of scholarship, may be a new concept to them. It is defined as respecting the work of other scholars in return for their respect for your work) (Policy 1, University 12).

The difference between the two concepts, and why the culture of academic integrity has taken hold internationally as a significant ideology was discussed in Chapter Two, where emphasis was placed on academic integrity, as neither a conduct issue (Gallant, 2016), nor as a negative issue (Morris, 2016), but as a teaching and learning matter, more concerned with among other issues, how to improve the teaching of writing with integrity, how to plan more authentic assessments (Gallant, 2016), and the need to consider institutional processes and campus norms (Fishman, 2016, p. 16). All these constitute more positive attempts to support institutional integrity.

Both university policies (University 6 & 12, quoted above), see plagiarism as a violation of academic integrity values. The implications of seeing plagiarism as a breach of academic integrity is that it becomes a possibility, provided there is an enabling cultural complementarity to develop a more holistic approach to plagiarism, such as acknowledging the reality of blatant plagiarism while at the same time considering the fact that "not every student is a 'cheater'" (Bretag, 2018:6). However, as indicated by one of the universities, the 'newness' of the concept in academia suggests that it is not yet fully understood, and that this might create a problematic connection between plagiarism and the values of academic integrity; thus, this could affect successful integration of the culture of academic integrity within institutions. This adds to the difficulties of placing plagiarism on a continuum. Under such circumstances, as mentioned earlier, universities are likely to align themselves with the strategies of the more straightforward side of the continuum, which is that of intentional plagiarism.

One other fundamental point raised by academic integrity scholars, is the need to distinguish plagiarism from other academic integrity breaches, to avoid associating it with other diverse misconduct practices, such as bringing notes to an exam room, buying papers from paper mills, and many other breaches stated in Chapter Two. Ideologies that suggest such blurred understandings have emerged from a few policies.

> One can identify instances of plagiarism as being: A pre-meditated act of presenting another person's work or property without reference or acknowledgement to the rightful owner. …However, the state of mind of the student will be highly significant in determining how to deal with the case as far as taking remedial action or imposing a penalty is concerned. …Although the above definition could be construed to include the buying and submitting of essays prepared by a senior student or an outsider to the University, it may be more appropriate to deal with such cases as disciplinary offences of fraud in terms of the Student Disciplinary Code (Policy 1, University 4).

Concerns about such blurring were explicitly stated in one policy:

> Please note that other fraudulent, deceptive, or cheating activities are dealt with separately under the Disciplinary code: Students (Policy 1, University 12).

These policies imply that not all plagiarism happens at the level of misconduct and that misconduct practices are extreme cases. Extreme practices are done by choice, with the intention of avoiding intellectual engagement and deserving of suitable punishment, which is not always the case for all breaches from an academic integrity viewpoint. Furthermore, even the structures that handle both intentional and unintentional incidents of plagiarism are different. While some structures offer remedial services, others impose discipline accordingly. Different structures that handle plagiarism issues are mentioned in Chapter Five.

Cheating involves actions that demonstrate "there is no desire to engage at all with the subject or unit being studied" (Sutherland-Smith, 2008, p. 30). It is often classified under general misconduct identified by policy as examination cheating, buying and submission of papers, and so on. These are typical examples of wilful misbehaviour or intentional offences. Nevertheless, plagiarism may also include simple errors, such as faulty referencing, which do not qualify to be disciplinary offences, because they are not classified as cheating. Universities with this view adopt a dual responsibility towards the management of plagiarism.

7.3 Assuming a culture of dual approach to plagiarism management

Where the existence of plagiarism is considered on a continuum, universities' policies often stated the purpose of their plagiarism policy as being both developmental, for addressing unintentional practices, and disciplinary, for cases of intentional misconduct.

> The University therefore has both an educational, social and a disciplinary responsibility (Policy 1, University 1).
>
> The Policy refers to two phases in the management of Plagiarism: Prevention and Education Identification and Discipline (Policy 1, University 22).
>
> Plagiarism in all its forms should be dealt with developmentally first, at school and individual academic level but … it is important that repeated or serious plagiarism be handled as a disciplinary offence (Policy 1, University 15).

As indicated earlier, little detail was provided as to the form of response needed to address unintentional incidents, but it must be acknowledged that these three policies demonstrated an understanding of the continuum requiring different responses.

7.3.1 Lack of consensus about the difference between 'misuse' and 'misconduct'

Assuming a dual responsibility is a culture that not only enables the differentiation between intentional and unintentional plagiarism, but also explains plagiarism as a phenomenon that exists in various forms, and as an outcome of the interplay of numerous mechanisms. While intentional plagiarism is mostly understood as misconduct, unintentional plagiarism is mainly a misuse of other peoples' words or works. Generally, data in this research indicated that a line between misuse and misconduct is crossed when there is evidence of a high level of duplicity in significant parts of students' work, and/or evidence of repeated offences (See Table 5.1 in Chapter Five).

But in essence, the level at which misuse of others' words becomes misconduct is highly debatable. Some scholars say that it depends on the amount of 'chunks' of text that have not been attributed properly. While there is no absolute threshold to determine the severity, it is recommended that a decision might be guided by whether the estimated copied text has a lower percentage than a properly attributed text, and also by the methods of deception used. For instance, if within the copied material the student attempted to obscure the link between the sources and the copied material, then that could become serious misconduct (Carroll, 2016).

Arriving at such conclusions can be a very difficult exercise and often a consensus amongst responsible stakeholders is hard to reach. Lack of consensus among policy developers in this study, emerged as another cultural mechanism constraining the effective conceptualisation of plagiarism

on a spectrum by agency. A participant explained the nature of the dispute she and two other policy developers engaged in:

> We all actually discuss it [the plagiarism policy]. So, it was sent around. [Developer A] drafted it, then we had a staff meeting and we discussed it. But there is [no consensus between [Developer B] and [Developer A], and you know, when I wrote to [Developer B] now about a student who hadn't referenced [and] hadn't used the right format and I explained it, [Developer B] he said, "you know don't be too hard here. At least the student has handed in his work." But the other case, the example I gave to you, [Developer B] said, "Oh no, that is definitely unacceptable" (Participant 2).

'The other case' referred to by this participant is described below:

> …she'd copied it word for word from the paper. She had mentioned the authors of the paper, but there was no page, a reference; and so you know, we're very, very strict here that if you are quoting someone, you have to put the quotation marks, you have to put the page numbers. And some lecturers will even penalise the person if the quotation marks aren't there. You know, even if they put the page numbers, because it's just not the correct format.

The difficulty of differentiating between intentional and unintentional plagiarism and consensus on what constitutes plagiarism is also discussed in the literature. Lack of consensus not only happens amongst academics in the same discipline, but also across institutions and countries (Glendinning, 2016). Lack of consensus is a constraint as the proper handling of plagiarism might be compromised, as seems to be the case with one of the academics above, who tries to convince his colleagues not to escalate their disagreement about whether the student has plagiarised, because, "at least the student has handed in his work", suggesting that the plagiarism can be ignored. Ignoring either intentional or unintentional plagiarism "has implications on academic standards" (Glendinning, 2016, p. 65). For instance, if unintentional plagiarism is not highlighted as problematic, students who lack academic writing and research practices may not be given appropriate support to improve their academic practice. Equally, those who plagiarise deliberately might get away with it, with consequences for academic standards.

7.3.2 The culture of 'zero tolerance'

The challenges accompanying the complexities of drawing a line between misuse and misconduct, and successfully handling such cases differently, was seen to manifest in some universities in a declaration of 'zero tolerance' on plagiarism.

> The intention and spirit of this policy is to support the promotion of a culture of awareness of plagiarism and to confirm that [this university] fosters a culture of zero tolerance of plagiarism in all its manifestations (Policy 1, University 9).

> …ensure that [this university's] community is intolerable of plagiarism and cheating (Policy 1, University 10).

> …no form of academic dishonesty shall be tolerated (Policy 1, University 10).

Generally, as Carroll (2016) has observed, the nature of 'zero tolerance' disregards both the possibility of offences happening unintentionally or ranging in seriousness. Again, 'zero tolerance' limits the availability of different penalty options, by suggesting only a single option, which in most cases is severe. Though this approach seems to save time, it is problematic. The data from this study particularly suggests that the culture of 'zero tolerance' often fails to match the penalty to the offence, as it is mainly characterised by severe punishment.

> …but because we don't have a plagiarism committee, if it goes to Students Services and Judiciary Committee, the sentencing on students is extremely harsh. ... The sentencing that they are imposing on students … especially in fourth, BTech or Honours level, I do not [know], but it scares me (Participant 5).

Harsh penalties might tempt academics to ignore cases of plagiarism when they identify them during assessment (McCabe, 2005). Ignoring plagiarism might, in turn, send the wrong perceptions about the seriousness with which plagiarism cases are taken. Additionally, to students, plagiarism might seem to be such a dangerous offence that they become mostly driven by a fear of avoiding it, rather than by a desire to acquire academic writing practices (Sutherland-Smith, 2010).

The culture of a dual approach to plagiarism emerged as an enablement to separate practices of misuse from misconduct in order to manage plagiarism on a continuum. However, other internal cultural mechanisms that emerged from data such as the inability to reach consensus amongst

academics as to what constitutes misuse or misconduct, and the culture of 'zero tolerance', which is characterised by the one system penalty, appear to constrain the effective conceptualisation of the existence of plagiarism on a continuum. All this highlights the complexity of the nature of plagiarism itself. Despite this evidence of complexity and its constraining effects on management of plagiarism, most universities indicated that plagiarism was a straightforward concept, as discussed earlier.

All of the discussions above in these chapters imply that plagiarism is a complex issue. Specifically, in this section, there were some policies that explicitly acknowledge these complexities, attributable to both challenges of managing 'low-level' or unintentional plagiarism, and developing discipline-specific approaches:

> Plagiarism is a complex issue so it is important to have a standard University wide policy which informs a consistent and comprehensive approach to plagiarism, appropriate to each discipline. The complexity of the issue lies in: the differences between academic disciplines, ranging from text to creative input/output, the prevalence of intentional and unintentional plagiarism, the need to provide developmental guidelines to ensure that staff and students understand the purpose of appropriate referencing and are able to apply their particular discipline's academic conventions in their own work (Policy 1, University 2).

> The correct response to low-level plagiarism is a complex matter with case- and discipline-specific elements, and thus not a matter for regulation by University Policy. It is a matter for Departments, possibly aided by supplementary guidance notes (Policy 1, University 8).

These universities acknowledge that disciplines are different, thus the importance of induction into the writing norms of the discipline as the basis on which students come to understand the role of referencing in knowledge production in the academy is acknowledged. University 2 further highlights that to achieve such a level of student development requires the university to go beyond merely stating educational guidelines in policy documents. It is a matter requiring nuanced responses by institutional structures. Therefore, the university in this regard assumes a developmental role. This is discussed in the following section.

7.3.3 The role of the university

The need to differentiate between misuse and misconduct has been highlighted in the data as a means to allow cases that require pedagogic attention to be accommodated, without suggesting that intentional plagiarism is permitted. Usually, an indication that both intentional and unintentional plagiarism cases are given equal attention is linked with developmental responses for the latter, and punishment for the former, as was the case with the two policies outlined below:

> …self-discipline should take precedence over imposing discipline upon another and a formative or corrective approach to remedial action should always be considered in the first instance. Punitive action should normally be reserved for serious and/or repeated violations (Policy 1, University 14).

> The University's policy approach is based on a developmental or awareness-creating dimension, particularly in the case of students and with due observance of the University's Policy on Learning and Teaching. This does not mean that the University is lenient in its handling of plagiarism; on the contrary, it creates a basis for the firm, consistent and tenable handling of cases of plagiarism (Policy 1, University 5).

Pedagogical interventions, according to the policy below, seem to be very significant as they resonate with one of the core purposes of a university to be a learning environment, as discussed in Chapter One.

> A nuanced developmental approach should be adopted in formulating remedial action and it must at all times be borne in mind that in a learning environment space should be made to accommodate mistakes and/or breaches of rules (Policy 1, University 1).

According to the above policy, the university is understood to be a learning space where priority is seen to be given to the development of students, while being firm on issues of academic dishonesty. Punishment in this regard comes as a last resort, and is only applied based on carefully considered criteria. This might be an indication that students are accepted as novice writers, who often commit unintentional writing mistakes such as 'patch writing' (Howard, 2009). In these cases, if such mistakes are spotted, they might be tolerated, and if proper developmental initiatives are applied, it might be assumed that students would be in a good position to be well initiated into the conventions of the academy. After all, it might well be argued that it is the responsibility of a university as a teaching and learning entity to provide such support. As Jacobs (2007) notes,

"Institutional discourses regarding the concept of academic literacies play a powerful role in shaping both individual and collective understandings". The data showed how the institutional culture greatly enables or constrains developmental approaches.

Beyond the domain of culture, there are external structural mechanisms that emerged in the data as constraints preventing universities from implementing the above-mentioned developmental responsibilities. The data suggests that sometimes, universities respond to misconduct practices in a harsh manner as a risk aversion strategy. The literature indicates that it is common that for fear of acquiring a bad image, universities may respond punitively to plagiarism cases, especially when they have attracted the media's attention (Leo, 2014). As discussed in Chapter One, universities are under pressure to be answerable to multiple stakeholders. Having to respond to these multiple stakeholders in a competitive environment has made universities more risk averse. Badat (2009, p. 4) has a view that in some instances, the roles that institutions play in society are not only shaped by the universities themselves, but also by "the purposes and goals that have come to be defined for them by society". Therefore, the universities' practices are enabled and constrained by societal structures in various ways. These societal systems come with diverse demands, which might sometimes compel universities to divert from their core purposes in the quest to maintain good relationships with key stakeholders.

The two universities cited below recognise plagiarism as a punishable offence. Without distinguishing which kind of plagiarism is referred to here, it might be assumed that both intentional and unintentional plagiarism are implicated. The universities are clear that plagiarism is punished because it poses a risk of them losing "donors", "potential employers of students", "global and local rankings" and other related benefits as stated in these policies. The image of a university becomes a major concern when responding to plagiarism issues, considering the negativity with which plagiarism is viewed:

> [This university] regards plagiarism as an erosion of values and the quality, integrity, and credibility of its programmes and qualifications adversely affecting its reputation and undermining its chances of beneficial relations with prospective donors and potential employers of its graduates, impeding and hindering it from achieving its mission of becoming a leading African university a hindrance in its quest to epitomise excellence and global Competitiveness, … constituting a punishable offence (Policy 1 Universities 10 & 19 identical wording).

> No person is authorised to supply any information with regard to allegations of plagiarism by an individual to the media without the express permission of the Vice-Chancellor and the knowledge of those accused (Policy 1, University 9).

Carroll (2016, p. 214) argues that punishment is a necessary part of the response to plagiarism as it upholds the academic link that offences are against regulations and helps maintain the "value of academic credit" and that the university "needs to protect and manage the integrity of its academic awards and qualifications". However, it becomes problematic when punishment is emphasised over educational initiatives, because not all plagiarism practices emanate from the intention to cheat. Some occur because students are not familiar with the academic discourse. Hence, the next section discusses data that speaks to cases of plagiarism as not always intentional, but instead caused by students' lack of knowledge of the vagaries of academic discourse.

7.3.4 Lack of understanding

Data from six universities suggested ignorance as one of the sources of unintentional plagiarism.

> Acts of plagiarism include but are not limited to the following: copying, presenting or using of words, ideas, opinions, sentences or paragraphs from work(s) of another person(s) without adequate attribution of sources. Copying and presenting tables, formulae, diagrams, graphics, maps, pictures, illustrations, figures, statistics, drawings, images, models computer codes and musical notation without acknowledgement of the source. Paraphrasing or summarising ideas or works of others and presenting them as one's own. … Plagiarising unintentionally i.e., doing any of the abovementioned without realising or knowing it (Policy 1, University 10).

In the data, such lack of understanding was tied to a lack of experience of the university setting. In the data, the culture of ignorance was associated with first year students, who are considered to have the lowest level of preparedness to participate in academic practices, and who quite likely have never been exposed to the concept of plagiarism before in their primary education:

> If I have to veer out of research and remember the time when I was a Head of Department, yes, when the students enter the programme, yes, you find them unprepared for university generally (Participant 1).

First year students are generally considered vulnerable and academically immature, until they move to the next level. Moreover, due to such inexperience, they often find it difficult to position

themselves as authors in academic writing (Sutherland-Smith, 2008). Infringements by such students tend to be regarded as minor and are dealt with educationally. Table 5.1 illustrates the types of penalties related to minor infringements.

> A minor offence is a first-time offence committed by a first-year student. This type includes: Non-acknowledgement of sources which may be due to: negligence or inaccuracy in citing sources; ignorance or poor/lack of understanding of plagiarism; unattributed quotations; inappropriate paraphrasing; wrong citations (Policy 1, University 10).

> It is assumed that most first-year students may not be fully informed about the intricacies of plagiarism and need time to be educated in this regard (Policy 1, University 23).

While some policies and some interviews referred to a lack of understanding as a cause of unintentional plagiarism, there was no explicit linking of this lack of understanding to a need for more explicit induction into knowledge-making norms and literacy practices of the discipline. Instead, lack of understanding was mentioned in terms of students needing to be taught about the perils of plagiarism and the technical processes needing to be implemented to avoid it. The exceptions to this in the data were in interviews with Participants 5 and 6, who both drew on the understanding that a lack of understanding about plagiarism requires a focus on literacy development.

7.4 Plagiarism as partly caused by inexperience with academic discourse: Culture

While not in the majority, some data in this study suggest that incidents of plagiarism may be caused by students' inexperience with the academic discourse. The level of unfamiliarity in this regard is linked to lack of understanding, misunderstanding and negligence. Lack of understanding relates to an ignorance as to the literacy practices of the academy, and in particular, being unfamiliar with the construction of knowledge. Misunderstanding indicates that though understanding has been acquired, it is inadequate to be successfully applied in knowledge production. On the other hand, negligence is generally associated with technical mistakes that are committed by students because of recklessness or human error, and not because they were not well informed. While most of the data spoke to intentional cases of plagiarism, there was some evidence

that plagiarism can be conceptualised as occurring due to lack of understanding, misunderstanding and negligence.

> Minor infringements which are corrected educationally include: negligence; ignorance or lack of understanding of plagiarism; small amount of unattributed quotations (Policy 1, Universities 10 & 19: identical wording).

7.4.1 Misunderstanding of the requirements of academic writing norms

While lack of understanding as an explanation of unintentional plagiarism was seen in data to assume students are 'blank' (Grigg, 2010), 'misunderstanding' emerged as an explanation whereby knowledge about plagiarism was seen to be insufficiently acquired. This is a cultural emergent property shared by 11 university polices:

> …and/or if it is apparent that the student has committed such plagiarism because of a lack of understanding of what is required (Policy 1, Universities 4 & 7: identical wording).

> This may be a situation where the plagiarism is not intentional, but may have occurred because of a lack of understanding of how to write and use quotations correctly (Policy 1, Universities 4 & 7: identical wording).

> Plagiarism does not incorporate poor or incomplete referencing – these are issues of convention (each referencing style requires very different amount of information from the user) and they are discipline related (Policy 1, University 15).

The acknowledgement that plagiarism can arise from a misunderstanding highlights the fact that it is an unfamiliar concept to many students. The data suggest that there is some expectation that schools are meant to prepare students for academic referencing practices:

> This is partly the result of a lack of proper training in referencing techniques at secondary school level. While the outcomes-based curriculum requires learners to deal with vast amounts of information, scant regard is given to the correct referencing of such resources, with the result that learners do not appreciate the seriousness of appropriating someone else's work (Policy 1, University 12).

> An educational reality is that many of the current generation of students are not familiar with the academic conventions that lecturers expect of the work that students submit for assessment. This includes presentation conventions, referencing conventions and the duty not to plagiarise the works of others (Policy 1, Universities 4 & 7: identical wording).

This is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, only a very small percentage of young South Africans go into HE – about 20% of the 18 to 23-year-old age group (CHE, 2016) – and so preparing scholars for university writing norms is hardly a core function of the schooling system. Secondly, it is problematic because referencing is not a generic skill, but rather is embedded in an understanding of disciplinary knowledge production. Thus, schools can simply introduce their students to the broad idea of referencing and some of the technical aspects but they cannot teach the ways in which referencing is used in different disciplines in order to build knowledge. There are various new practices to learn when acknowledging others' work, other than simply adhering to citation rules of a specific referencing system. Bailey (2013) argues that novice academic writers are often challenged to find or use authoritative sources. They also often do not know how to be explicit as to which ideas are one's own and which originate in the texts they read (Carroll, 2016:206).

Students' backgrounds and home language were often cited as constraints on students' understanding of higher education expectations.

> …I mean I have some students who have a very poor command of the English language. Does that mean that they are not understanding when I explain to them what plagiarism is? You know, so I have to consider them differently from a kid who's come from [a particular private school] or something, because I know that kid from [a particular private school] can understand exactly what I'm saying. And so yes, I have to be, I have to be cognisant of the student's background, educational background and language competency [Participant 2).

> The under-preparedness of students (both in the conventions and also in issues of language) for academe conducted in English further complicates the ability of students to make sense of what plagiarism is (Policy 1, University 15).

> Other incidents reflect the lack of understanding of the need to attribute source (as a result of poor schooling or poor induction to tertiary study) and require attention to the teaching and learning practices of the University (Policy 1, University 15).

Language, here, is understood according to what Christie (1985) terms an 'instrument for communication', as discussed in Chapter Two, viz. where language is simply a means of transferring communicated meaning. In this context, emphasis is on language proficiency and being grammatically correct. This is powerful, because it would seem that it has a huge impact on

the success or failure of students and those who have a good command of language seem to meet lecturers' expectations, as Participant 3 indicated. Such accounts, however, fail to acknowledge that literacy practices are historical and social and require far more than proficiency in the medium of instruction (Angélil-Carter, 2000; Street, 2006).

As explained in Chapter Two, every discipline has its own knowledge structure (Maton, Hood, & Shay, 2013), therefore language is used in specific ways that complement the structure of the target discipline. The interrelationship of text, which is a dominant characteristic of academic discourse, calls for high level skills in reading, interpretation and re-wording, such as paraphrasing of complex texts. Undoubtedly, the challenge of acquiring these skills are greater for speakers of other languages, who are still in the process of acquiring advanced competence in English as the medium of instruction. The fact that "at all levels of language learning, chunks of language are learned and reproduced word for word" (Angélil-Carter, 2000, p. 45), means that students who are using English as an alternate language, such as the ones described by Participant 3 as having "a very poor command of English Language", will still be found replicating text from other sources.

However, the relationship is more complex than simply not having an appropriate language proficiency. The emphasis on surface level correctness and the understanding of referencing as a technical skill both assume that language is simply a conduit for meaning (Christie, 1985), rather than that language practices are central to the meaning-making process. This is much the same as the autonomous model (Street, 2006), where language is seen to be separate from the social context in which it is used. It is not difficult to see how such understandings in the domain of culture would be complementary to the idea, that simple structural initiatives such as orientation workshops and declaration forms would be sufficient to address plagiarism.

The link between social class and higher education success is extremely strong around the world, as discussed in Chapter Two (see also, Bathmaker et al., 2016; Case et al., 2018; Reay & Vincent, 2016), but is very rarely referred to, no doubt in part because to do so would be to acknowledge the role higher education plays in maintaining the status quo. Furthermore, if students' difficulties include challenges to reference correctly, or can be accounted for as misunderstanding or negligence as in the cause of this study's data, then it is easier to justify adding on simple solutions,

rather than having to take on the implications for staff development (Jacobs, 2007) and teaching and learning (McKenna & Boughey, 2014).

As this literature suggests, not only is language as a medium of instruction implicated in incidents of plagiarism, but social class can also be seen to be a significant emergent cultural property playing a role in the success of students. An understanding of the relationship between social class and the acquisition of academic literacy practices was not much in evidence in the policies – with a few exceptions where acquisition of literacy practices were seen to be a gradual process. While nobody comes to academia with the literacy practices (related to referencing and so much more), access to such practices are more readily available to some than to others; students, particularly from middle-class backgrounds who can afford to attend well-resourced schools, are more likely to possess particular literacy practices that have more overlap with those valued in the higher education classroom, which leads them to have increased chances of success in academia. While academic literacy practices are discipline-specific, and peculiar to higher education, those for whom the literacy practices are extremely different to those they have encountered before, will be especially vulnerable to unintentional plagiarism.

7.4.2 Negligence

The data indicate that four universities consider that students may plagiarise unintentionally due to negligence of the necessary writing techniques. While inexperience of the academic discourse discussed above is closely tied to a lack of knowledge of the requirements of the discourse, negligence implies that students have previous experiences and knowledge, but they still make mistakes due to human error. Perceptions about student negligence emerged as connected to carelessness in citations and referencing:

> Minor offences that can be regarded as resulting from ignorance, negligence or inaccuracy in working with and acknowledging sources (Policy 1, University 5).

> A minor offence is a first time offence committed by a first year student. This type includes: Non-acknowledgement of sources which may be due to: negligence or inaccuracy in citing sources, ignorance or poor/lack of understanding of plagiarism (Policy 1, University 10).

These students were deemed to have been sufficiently exposed to the technical skills of referencing but were seen to still commit some minor mistakes, which are not considered to be intentional. "Students hurrying to complete written assignments can be careless in their note taking, their integration of source material, and their citations" (Nelms, 2015, p. 4). These mistakes may include: "omission of quotation marks (or using single instead of double quotation marks)" (Stapleton, 2012, p. 2), improper paraphrasing (Walker, 2010), and so on. While it is undoubtable that errors of negligence in the form of technical faults are evident in all written works (including, no doubt, despite my checking, in this thesis), this plagiarism as emerging from negligence needs to be critiqued. The data seems to indicate that this negligence was experienced *in spite of awareness initiatives.* There was thus an assumption that the short-term awareness process should be sufficient to ensure students avoid plagiarism and that evidence of plagiarism thereafter can be considered negligent or intentional.

7.5 Agency of academics as facilitators

Agency is crucial in initiating changes in a social context, because it is the agents who activate the parts (Archer, 1996). The extent to which agents can exercise their agency mainly depends on the nature of the structures and cultural aspects in the environment, and how enabling or constraining those parts are. As indicated in the previous chapter, in some cases, the institutional histories play a role in the extent of autonomy academics have to exercise their agency. Some structures and cultures in this study allowed academics to view and manage plagiarism on a continuum, whereas others constrained such an understanding with consequences for how plagiarism is addressed.

Six policies and documents of universities made some kind of reference to plagiarism existing on a continuum, and thereby allowed the possibility of plagiarism emerging both from intent or from a lack of understanding, misunderstanding or negligence. In such cases, the lecturers were designated as being responsible for facilitating the response process firstly, by interviewing the students to establish intent, and secondly, through facilitating educational interventions. Some universities further consider that because plagiarism is not necessarily intentional, to determine intention, the student is supposed to be involved.

> In this case, the staff member who detected the alleged plagiarism (or to whom it was reported) must arrange a discussion with the student, in the presence of the appropriate [staff member's line manager]. The student must be informed of the fact that a conclusion of plagiarism has been drawn in respect of the work submitted by him/her and be asked to explain his/her conduct. The explanation may lead to the conclusion that in fact no transgression was committed and then the matter would end there (Policy 1, University 23).

> The student should be given an opportunity to clarify the incident in the interview. The interview should enable the lecturer to Close the case; or Warn the student (Policy 1 University 3).

The significance of discussing alleged plagiarism issues with students before passing judgement shows that these universities acknowledge the multifaceted reasons for the occurrence of plagiarism. The purpose of the consultation is to establish the intention of the student, which could either be deceptive or an innocent misunderstanding. While the existence or non-existence of plagiarism may lie in an analysis of the text, determining the response should lie within an analysis of the intention of the writer (Clegg & Flint, 2006; Howard, 1999; Randall, 2001). In the case of student plagiarism, academics are the ones to determine whether or not plagiarism took place. In addition, as explained in Chapter Two, this challenges issues of authorship because the reader, rather than the writer, constructs meaning out of written text. Thus, if the teacher alone makes a judgement and draws a conclusion without giving the student an opportunity to explain, chances are that the extent of the intention might be wrongly determined. This is more so the case because there are power relations that might create partiality of judgement if academics as examiners of the text fail to examine other external issues in conjunction with the life experiences of the writers in terms of language, educational backgrounds, and other related factors (Sutherland-Smith, 2008). It is not always possible that academics get to know students as individuals in a classroom, considering the 'large class' challenge characterising most SAHE institutions, as discussed in Chapter One. Therefore, allowing academics to have interviews with students might provide an opportunity to establish a true reflection of their literacy level, which in turn could afford an appropriate remedial intervention. This thinking complements a transformational approach to teaching and learning, where students' interests are central to any educational practice (See Chapter Two for a discussion on transformational approaches to teaching and learning).

In addition, it is acknowledged that most students are novices when coming to academic writing conventions, where in addition to establishing intention, academics are responsible for familiarising or orientating these students into the acquisition of academic discourse. Sutherland Smith (2008) uses the term 'apprentices' to frame students who are novices in academic conventions and academics as 'facilitators' who help students gain experience into the conventions. Yet, as teachers should lead the facilitation process, they are expected, together with institutions and students, to undertake a joint responsibility for understanding and attending to instances of plagiarism.

> Departments need to acknowledge the importance of their own role in students' acquisition of academic discourse and are responsible for taking active steps to provide students with an explanation as to why, as well as how, sources may be used and cited in building academic knowledge (Policy 1, University 4& 7: identical wording).

> … and it is thus absolutely vital that each academic in each discipline takes full responsibility for engaging students in the discourse of their discipline. Without this engagement, the conventions may or may not be adopted, but their relevance and value will definitely not be appreciated, and thus they are unlikely to be transferred to other elements of academic writing. There is concurrence that [this traditional university] has an educative developmental responsibility to induct students into these conventions and their underlying principles (Policy 1, University 15).

There was a strong understanding in two of the universities policies that attending to plagiarism requires engagement in literacy development. To enable the process of developing students' writing, some universities propose a shared responsibility or 'trilateral' approach to teaching and learning, which according to Napier et al. (2018), has the potential to help students overcome writing challenges, because it calls for a joint effort of all institutional stakeholders (librarians, writing centre staff etc.), 'academics' and 'students', to jointly decide on the best ways to develop and roll out educative measures. Jacobs (2007) similarly argues that if academics are to teach in ways that make the literacy practices explicit and attainable, they will need support from experts in the field of literacy. Boughey (2013) cautions that working with people outside of the discipline needs to be navigated carefully, so that the 'student problem' is not simply 'palmed off' on these people to 'fix'. In many cases, writing centres, for example, have become places to send students for writing correction, even though those working in such centres may not be literate in the disciplines in question:

> It sees the idea of holding academic administrators, academic staff members, supervisors, co-supervisors and students accountable for engaging in or encouraging plagiarism in a developmental approach […] (Policy 1, University 16).

> The leadership of the University, staff members and students must individually and collectively take responsibility for advancing ethical academic practices [...] Academic staff must ensure that they are well-versed in, and consistently apply, the rules and procedures relating to plagiarism in their own work (Policy 1 University 23).

In orientating students into the academic discourse, educators are also expected to take the responsibility to develop and manage assessments in a way that gives constructive feedback to students and does not encourage them to plagiarise.

> As part of cultivating good communication and writing skills, they should educate their students about the conventions of referencing in their discipline. The formulation of assignments, and the design of the assessment thereof, must be done in a way that would discourage plagiarism and accord with best practice (Policy 1, University 23).

> The most valuable way of preventing plagiarism is for staff to set creative, innovative and original assessment tasks that are not repeated from year-to-year, and/or which are likely to be replicated at other universities (Policy 1, Universities 4 & 7: identical wording).

The data in the above cases shows that creativity and innovation are encouraged while common simple assessments ought to be avoided, as they could be easily replicated by other universities. Many creative and innovative assessment strategies have been suggested in literature. For example, environments that use high-stakes infrequent assessments are shown to encourage students to plagiarise more than low-stakes frequent assessments (Lang, 2013). The personalisation approach is also widely recommended, where essentially each student gets a different exercise. This approach can only work in cases where there are relevant technologies (Manoharan, 2017). Because of this, and the nature of feedback required by this form of assessment, they might be challenging to implement in the SAHE system. The systemic structures and cultures characterised by deteriorating staff to student ratios, and large classes, as discussed in Chapter One, might also constrain the agential power of academics to induct students into the conventions in this way. Also, the literature on academic literacy shows that simply changing the assessments to ones that reduce the likelihood of plagiarism might not be sufficient unless accompanied by pedagogies that induct students into the writing norms required of them –

including that of referencing, to show how the field builds knowledge through conversation with prior research.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined those cases where unintentional plagiarism was acknowledged and understood to potentially emerge from a lack of understanding, misunderstanding and negligence. While acknowledging that the plagiarism continuum is critical to developing fair responses to incidents of plagiarism, overall, where unintentional plagiarism was acknowledged in the data, this was mainly as a technical oversight, rather than as a result of a lack of access to the nuanced values of knowledge-making in the academy. There were exceptions to this in the data, where literacy development was seen to be a complex and lengthy process, that was fundamental to issues of epistemological access.

A fair understanding of plagiarism as a potential bridge to inculcating values of academic integrity, which goes beyond the perception of plagiarism as always being a calculated moral wrong, was demonstrated in very few instances. This indicates that academic integrity as a concept is not familiar in the SAHE context; a fact which has serious implications for teaching and learning.

Generally, the cultural, structural and agential emergent properties discussed in this chapter resonate with the views of Sutherland-Smith (2008) and other researchers who claim that plagiarism exists on a continuum, and such understandings could lead to a more transformational approach to teaching and learning. However, as argued elsewhere in this study, generally, the educational development remains at 'skills' level. In principle, when one closely interrogates the initiatives taken to address unintentional plagiarism, there is an impression that institutions are not yet in a position to fully implement appropriate pedagogic interventions. These measures, if correctly implemented, could truly address writing conventions, and would rightfully grant students access to the norm of knowledge-making, and go a long way to address their difficulties with unintentional plagiarism.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

8.1. Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate how plagiarism is understood and managed in the South African Higher Education sector. For decades, plagiarism has been a cause for concern in higher education. Besides my personal experience of the problematic nature of plagiarism, which prompted my interest in this enquiry, research also affirms that plagiarism is a phenomenon requiring urgent attention because of the negative effects it has on the credibility of education. My intention was therefore to examine emergent properties that enable or constrain the manner in which plagiarism is conceptualised, by addressing the following research question:

How do South African Higher Education institutions conceptualise and respond to plagiarism?

To address the question, the study used wide scale qualitative data from 25 public South African universities. The extensive scope of the study allowed a broader investigation of the issue beyond a particular department or institutional context.

Using critical realism and social realism entailed considering the experiences of participants and the events of plagiarism at the level of the empirical and actual, and not conflating these with 'truth'. While critical realism allows the understanding that events and experiences emerge from the interplay of causal mechanisms, it is not a straightforward causal relationship, and therefore it is important for a researcher to move beyond the description of the events and experiences, and begin to tentatively identify the mechanisms. Archer's SR argues that this entails identifying both the parts (structure and culture) and people (agents), discussed in Chapter Three; how they emerged in the data is briefly explained in the next section.

8.2. The key findings and recommendations

8.2.1 Plagiarism is seen to be an intentional practice

In this study, a key cultural mechanism was found to be the dominant notion of plagiarism as always being intentional, where punishment is the common response to cases of plagiarism. In the era of managerialism, where high competition exists between universities for students, funding and other resources, universities are becoming more risk averse in approaching teaching and learning practices, especially plagiarism. The desire to portray a good image of the institution to the public often leads to responding to plagiarism in a singularly punitive manner. The literature indicated that sometimes universities respond to plagiarism in such a manner, as a risk aversion strategy, to assure their stakeholders that plagiarism is taken seriously.

The above argument should not be seen as a disapproval of discipline for plagiarism, but should be understood in the context that current global discussions are centred on repositioning academic integrity out of a focus on acts of dishonesty, and rather embedding it within teaching and learning policies, while still being conscious of its different forms (Pecorari & Shaw, 2012).

8.2.2 A legal framework dominates the sector

The key mechanism in the structural domain that further entrenched the dominant understanding in the domain of culture of plagiarism as always intentional, was the use of language and processes akin to the legal system. A legal framework was found to dominate the management of plagiarism, evident in the language used in policy, procedures observed, and the management of plagiarism that was complementary to common law, criminal law, and other legal structures.

The shortcomings of using legalistic structures within the academic community emerged from the data in which plagiarism was viewed as a potential threat that not only evoked punitive responses, but as a structure that largely affected the identity of institutions and their agency. Students were frequently framed as potential criminals, and educators were thus positioned to play an adversarial role in policing the plagiarising students, rather than a developmental role of inducting students into knowledge-making. It has been argued that linking students to a criminal identity implies that they are morally corrupt, and issues of morality are linked to the nature of an individual (rather

than to practices), which can then make it difficult to correct (Sutherland-Smith, 2013b). Therefore, the task of educating such students can become very difficult, because criminologists acknowledge that criminal behaviour is complicated and can only be addressed through specialised interventions, which universities might not possess.

It was also found that, although the legal discourse is dominant throughout the sector, it creates discomfort in its implementation in some areas because it contradicts core educational practices. For instance, the concept of copyright being equated with plagiarism not only seemed to complicate the understanding of plagiarism, but it also contravened the traditional understanding of knowledge production in a university. Universities that fell into the trap of conflating plagiarism and copyright regard knowledge as intellectual property, meaning that knowledge is perceived as a commodity that can be owned and have an economic benefit, which conflicts with some of the norms of scholarly knowledge production as being for the public good. This perception inevitably declares plagiarism as a legal issue, where infringement results in punishment.

Overall, the legal conceptualisation of plagiarism was seen to be a constraint; however, there were a few aspects of the legal structures that were found to be enablements within the education system. The principle of natural justice, for instance, though it originates in common law, was identified as one of the structural mechanisms that enabled fair administration of penalties during disciplinary hearings. The same applies to the notion of leniency, which was mostly termed 'clemency' in the policy documents. Clemency enables justice to be served to students who are accused of plagiarism when they were insufficiently exposed to educational development.

8.2.3 Superficial developmental interventions

There was a strong complementarity between the development of structures to reduce plagiarism (such as the nature of training offered and the administration of text-matching tools) and the cultures being drawn on (that plagiarism is always intentional misconduct). Training structures were largely about awareness creation, and they mainly took place over a short period. The notion of plagiarism training as comprising a short exposure to generic referencing, paraphrasing and summarising skills, showed that there is a lack of understanding of academic literacy practices, as well as a lack of understanding of how students achieve access to the practices of the discipline.

While it is necessary that students understand and acquire technical skills for citing texts, if they do so without understanding the relationship between these technical concepts and the norms of knowledge construction, they are likely to continue engaging in plagiarism, because a lack of authorial identity can result in a form of plagiarism (Lankamp, 2009).

Furthermore, academic literacies literature argues that acquiring the knowledge production processes of academia normally takes many years (Angélil-Carter, 2000), that writing in the discipline, as with any other academic practice, requires an extensive period of induction, practice, and mentoring to develop the practices (Angélil-Carter, 2000). I have argued that where training interventions are provided once-off, and only to first year students, these are not sufficient and are fundamentally flawed. Furthermore, because students enter and exit the university at various levels, it cannot be taken for granted that such students were oriented to the issue in their previous institutions. The management of plagiarism and induction into academic writing as if it was a generic activity, was further demonstrated through observing the usage of identical wording across a number of policies, irrespective of very different contexts and institutional types.

I argue that plagiarism interventions in the form of 'awareness', where warnings were communicated through study guides, flyers and other forms of communication media, are insufficient to address instances of plagiarism; especially as they only warn against plagiarising without engaging with 'why' and 'when' to reference in academic writing. Though these initiatives may attend to technical issues related to the specifics of referencing, they do not attend to the students' need to acquire the specific norms of writing to produce disciplinary knowledge. Nevertheless, it was evident that universities assume that this kind of exposure is adequate, and therefore claims of ignorance about the issue of plagiarism are by and large not accepted. It is assumed that the information alone should prevent unintentional plagiarism, making any incidents of plagiarism intentional, and thereby requiring punitive responses.

Moreover, most of the people offering the training were found not to be engaged with academic knowledge production themselves, and so would lack the knowledge of what academic literacy entails within specific disciplines. These were mostly support staff who offer generic development workshops. In such cases, the training might not be effective, as Lea (2017, p. 147) argues that

literacy is context-specific in research, and it cannot be "considered a unitary skill that can be transferred with ease from context to context."

8.2.4 Misunderstanding of text-matching tools

The study found that the manner in which text-matching tools are used complement the culture of plagiarism as an intentional practice. Besides Turnitin being constructed as a 'plagiarism detection tool', the similarity score is used in many institutions as the means by which penalties for plagiarism are determined. While it appears to be a time-saving method for the system to instantly calculate a similarity percentage, which could thereby help to accord a penalty, it is highly problematic in various ways. Without closely examining the text, the percentage does little to indicate the degree of plagiarism. In addition, the system is unable to detect paraphrased plagiarism. Perhaps of greatest concern is that the setting of similarity index limits for students' work actually encourages plagiarism, as students are being emboldened to manipulate the system by revising and resubmitting until they get the required score.

8.2.5 Few universities acknowledge plagiarism as existing on a continuum

While plagiarism was largely seen in the data as intentional, and as a moral sin, there were a few cases where plagiarism was acknowledged as existing on a continuum; that unintentional plagiarism is a reality; and that it often emerges from a lack of understanding or negligence. A continuum allows fair responses to cases of plagiarism. While negligence entails technical oversight, misunderstanding is explained as lack of access to the nuanced values of knowledge development of the academy. In addition, there was a strong understanding in institutions that acknowledged this continuum, that addressing plagiarism resulting from inexperience with academic discourse requires engagement with literacy development, rather than punishment. In this regard, students were considered novices of academic writing conventions, and as a result, academics were tasked to facilitate the learning process, and the orientation of students into the academic discourse, which was seen as a shared responsibility, including academics, administrators, and students themselves. This trilateral approach to a certain extent is an enablement, as it challenges the autonomous approach of teaching academic writing as a neutral skill, separated from disciplines.

8.3. Recommendations

Each of the key findings briefly summarised above leads to specific recommendations, which I touch on now.

8.3.1 Responding to intentional plagiarism

Since current arguments revolve around repositioning academic integrity as discussed earlier, the aim therefore would be to encourage the generation of effective disciplinary measures, informed by constructive teaching and learning frameworks. Furthermore, as Sutherland-Smith (2013b) has observed, presently there are (limited) educational developments for unintentional plagiarism, but none for intentional plagiarism except punishment. The desire, therefore, would be to encourage universities to come up with learning frameworks that deal with cheating and deception that are student centred, rather than focused primarily on punitive and legally driven efforts. This will require interventions at staff development level that are not necessarily focused on plagiarism, per se, but on the broader concepts of academic literacy and the means of fostering epistemological access throughout pedagogies and assessment and feedback practices.

8.3.2 Addressing the dominance of the legal framework

Considering the dominating legal procedures in the sector, it is recommended that the positioning and framing of plagiarism policies within a university is very important, as it allows members of the academy to construct meaning in relation to that policy. The construction of plagiarism in policy within legal language situates it within the academic misconduct regulations. For plagiarism to be addressed effectively educationally, it needs to be reconstructed in educational terms, and be located within teaching and learning policies and regulations (Sutherland-Smith, 2011). In this way, it might not be perceived purely as an aberrant behavioural phenomenon, but rather as a learning and teaching issue, with disciplinary implications only in instances of intentional plagiarism; and it would then only be such instances which are dealt with as misconduct issues. When policy portrays students as occupying the role of offenders, regardless of whether they plagiarise intentionally or unintentionally, and universities are seen as enforcers of rules, this can prevent a positive conception of academic knowledge creation (and its attendant referencing norms) by students (Nayak, Richards, Homewood, & Saddiqui, 2015). In such situations,

plagiarism education is seen as an administrative consideration, concerned with procedures, rules and penalties, rather than learning (Saddiqui, 2016).

Thomas and Scott (2016) emphasise the importance of positioning plagiarism within the broad concept of academic integrity, stating that this is beneficial to its management, as it not only allows academics to develop authentic assessments that can prevent plagiarism, but also may enable them to separate plagiarism from other academic integrity breaches, such as cheating. One way of achieving this is through finding ways to constructively embed academic integrity into the curriculum (Saddiqui, 2016). Additionally, Briggs (2003) suggests that if contemplating embedding academic integrity with a particular discipline, as a starting point, academic integrity concepts should be included as part of the learning outcomes within that discipline, and then it can be determined how other sections of the discipline could be brought in to contribute to the achievement of those outcomes.

Given that the positioning of plagiarism conceptualisations within legal structural frameworks has emerged through a complex interplay of mechanisms, it would be insufficient to simply raise awareness of notions of academic integrity, though this could be a meaningful start. We would also need to reflect deeply on the ways in which the mechanisms of risk aversion in a managerialist institution enable the legal framing.

8.3.3 Theorised developmental interventions

A recommendation that policy developers could benefit from for successful management of plagiarism, is to ensure that the development of academic literacies (and in particular the ways in which prior research is used to construct arguments in the discipline), is explicitly taught within the specific disciplines. To achieve this, empowering the agency of academic developers is the first step to take, as academic development in SAHE has been positioned as practitioners who assist both students and staff, to ensure efficiency in their teaching and learning practices. However, what emerged in this study, and what has also been criticised in the literature (see Quinn & Vorster, 2016), is that the services offered by some academic development centres tend to be generic, and are often under-theorised.

It is therefore recommended that educational interventions that develop a student's sense of authorial identity within the teaching of academic writing practices be considered, since they have been observed as key to reducing plagiarism (Elander, 2015). Until students are in a position to understand the ways in which prior texts are used in their discipline, they will be unlikely to successfully implement the technical requirements of a referencing style (Boughey, 2014).

8.3.4 Develop an understanding of text-matching tools

Important considerations for policy developers is that if structures to reduce plagiarism, such as Turnitin and other text-matching tools, are to be used, policy should be clear about its capabilities as both a tool to flag possible duplications in text-based projects and a teaching and learning tool to develop authorial voice. To create a shift from the perception of Turnitin as primarily a plagiarism detection tool, various authors have suggested some practical strategies. Morris (2016) proposed that institutional policies need to include guidelines relating to how Turnitin can add value educationally, such as how it can be used for formative development purposes, how it can be used to draft assignments, and so on. Davids and Carroll (2009) reported positive results, where Turnitin was used for students to submit a first draft and then tutors used the draft's originality report to give feedback to students, which also gave students the opportunity to engage in discussions on how they could improve their academic writing. These are a few of the recommendations that academics and policy developers can benefit from, to promote pedagogic uses of text-matching software for students.

In conclusion, the key findings summed up above, highlight that the main cultural mechanism that emerged from the data conceptualised plagiarism as always intentional, complemented by several structures and sub-cultures from the data; with only a few cases considering the complex nature of plagiarism. Across the large data set, the dominant position indicated a fairly superficial understanding of plagiarism and a lack of understanding of academic literacies and knowledge-making processes. Considering all this, nuanced, theorised pedagogic interventions have been recommended in this study, as a means of addressing plagiarism effectively. It is only through the interactions of agents that structural and cultural conditions are reinforced or changed. Therefore, it is key in this conclusion to look at the roles of agents and the potential roles that they could play in addressing the problem of plagiarism.

8.3.5 The role of agency in recommendations

Students are usually considered primary agents, with little influence to condition existing structures and cultures. But this does not mean they are without personal projects, which they will navigate through the people and parts to achieve. Central to the personal project of most students is to achieve success in their studies (Case et al., 2018) and this entails being able to achieve epistemological access, and take on the literacy practices of the field. While some students may have a personal project that makes plagiarism desirable, for most students, the acquisition of practices that will lead to legitimate success is desirable.

In much of the literature, academics are also considered primary agents with little influence at an institutional level, but academics are arguably social actors in their roles in the classroom, given their powers to determine what and how content gets taught and assessed. Though the extent of their agency may be constrained by institutional cultures, as discussed in Chapter One, it is generally, to a greater or lesser extent, within academics' control to ensure that students get multiple opportunities to practice taking on the literacy practices of the discipline, and that students are given feedback, which would make such practices explicit for both acquisition and critique.

This is not necessarily something that comes easily to academics, who may themselves be steeped in the autonomous model of texts (Street, 1984, 1993, 2003, 2006) and who may not have been exposed to the kinds of pedagogical approaches that would make access to the literacy practices more likely. This may require academic development support from those who may not be experts in the specific field, but who can help academics to understand what the practices in their particular disciplines are, and how to teach in ways that make them explicit (Jacobs, 2007, 2013). Unfortunately, many approaches to teaching and learning are based on common-sense understandings in which the content is transmitted and teaching well is a simple matter of 'best practice' (Moyo, 2018).

Those academics who have been able to examine how to teach in ways that scaffold students' acquisition of the knowledge structures and literacy practices of the field, might not have the institutional power of social actors to make such practices widespread; yet, they would no doubt have some influence with colleagues, and thus they have a significant role to play. For instance, in

this study, two participants in traditional universities emerged as social actors who not only expressed their dissatisfaction with how student development is handled, but also initiated projects in the form of a range of educational interventions to address the deficiencies. Such exercise of agency can be seen as an enabling mechanism to construct educational interventions that address academic writing practices. It is also important to note that academic writing takes different forms in different institutional types and different disciplines, so generic 'academic writing' courses are not seen to be an appropriate response.

Other social actors in the institution who have the potential to drive the policies, processes and practices of the university, such as Committee Chairs and Directors of Teaching and Learning, have a particular responsibility with regard to how plagiarism is conceptualised and acted upon. It is their leadership in this regard that is most likely to impact on the structures and cultures of the institution. National initiatives to drive a more theorised conceptualisation of plagiarism and to foster a conversation about academic integrity, may well be best placed beginning with these social actors.

8.4. Contribution of this research to knowledge

This research contributes to the field of higher education, particularly in the literature of academic integrity and academic literacies, firstly to confirm that plagiarism is a challenge in the South African Higher Education sector, and further to point out potential mechanisms within Higher Education's management of plagiarism that are problematic. Attending to these in terms of an understanding of the nature of academic literacies could effectively contribute to the decrease in plagiarism. For instance, ideological principles of how students acquire knowledge-making norms, if well understood, could influence the nature of training development and dissemination, which was found generally to be of an autonomous nature, treating academic writing and referencing as technical skills.

Significantly, this is a sector-wide study, and such wide-scaled research is a rare approach in SAHE. The NRF Report (Deacon et al., 2009) showed that very little sector-wide education research is undertaken in South Africa, with the result that findings are often confined to very specific contexts. This study is positioned firmly within the principle of academic integrity, and I

observe this to be is a significant area for further development in the country. As indicated, the policies dealing with issues of plagiarism were entitled "Plagiarism Policy" and did not frame the issue as part of a broader concern with the integrity of academic endeavour and academic conduct. While there have been some very notable and highly cited publications about the extent of plagiarism in South Africa, (for example Thomas & de Bruin, 2015, and the work by Angélil-Carter, 1995, 2000), there has not been a study of this nature which provides a sector-wide look at how plagiarism is both understood and attended to within the range of universities. For this reason, this study not only provides a comparative overview of how plagiarism is conceptualised in individual universities but might also provide insights for academic integrity policy developers at a national level.

8.5. Limitations of the study

A major limitation of this study is that though the research is sector wide, including 25 of the 26 South African public universities, most of the data was extracted from documents, with only a few interview participants. As much as the interviews were spread across the sector with each university type being represented with a minimum of two participants per university type, the SAHE sector is diversified beyond institutional type. The geographic and historical differentiations of the system, together with other contextual issues discussed in Chapter One, limit generalisation of the outcomes of the interview data in this study. As indicated in Chapter Four, the interviews were used as a second-level verification check, rather than as a primary source of data, as it was not deemed possible to undertake interviews as a major data collection process given the wealth of documentation I needed to analyse and the pragmatic limitations of a PhD study. However, while the documentation provided clear explanations of both the conceptualisations and the planned responses to plagiarism, further interviews would have allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the extent to which the documents are implemented as stated.

Another issue related to limitations is that those universities that granted me ethical clearance to conduct research referred me to other internal information and documentation that were of value to my study. This raises the concern about those universities that denied me access, as discussed in Chapter Four, as important information that could have strengthened some of the arguments in the study may have been excluded. Nevertheless, the documents accessed from the public domain,

which were mainly policies on plagiarism, can be seen to have provided a sufficiently clear picture of how these institutions construct plagiarism.

Another issue, which would make for a useful extension of this study, is that of the student experience and views on the issue of plagiarism. As a future study, one could investigate how students perceive plagiarism and how they make sense of all the interventions stated in policy by universities to address issues related to plagiarism. Such studies have not been undertaken at a large-scale level in South Africa. Other possible further studies include looking at other forms of breach of academic integrity such as contract cheating and the use of paper mills.

8.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to emphasise that coming to an in-depth understanding of the problem of plagiarism, as this thesis set out to do, is not to suggest that plagiarism is unproblematic, or that instances of it should be excused; rather, that intention needs to be considered in determining responses. Furthermore, drawing on literacy theory, this thesis argues that the central approach to reducing plagiarism is not through responses to its emergence, but rather through the lengthy and careful pedagogic practice of making literacy practices of the discipline explicit. The role of the university in developing critical graduates capable of contributing knowledge to society means that we have to see the issue of academic integrity as of the utmost importance. It is our responsibility to ensure that our collective conceptualisation of problematic issues such as plagiarism are based on well theorised understandings, and that our institutional responses work against its occurrence, towards the optimal extension of the academic project in broader social terms.

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Appendices

Appendix 1- Interview questions

1. What is the name of the committee dealing with plagiarism?

2. How was the committee formed?

3. What kind of plagiarism cases are reported to the committee?

4. What are your experiences of handling student plagiarism cases?

5. Who decides whether a student is guilty of plagiarism?

6. Where students are found “guilty’’ of plagiarising how do you feel?

7. How do students react to such kind of allegations?

8. What are your views on plagiarism in your institution?

9. How is policy guiding you in dealing with these plagiarism cases?

10. When dealing with plagiarism cases are there any national guidelines that you refer from?

11. Do you think the manner in which plagiarism is understood and dealt with in the institution is influenced by other structures or forces outside the institutions? Please elaborate.

12. How does the university intervene in cases whereby a student seem not to understand how to avoid plagiarism?

13. Do you think the history of the institutions, type of your institution and/geographical location of the institution has an influence on how plagiarism is viewed? Please elaborate.