

**A phenomenographic research project
looking at HE Lecturers' views on the
plagiarism detection system *Turnitin***

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Abstract

This research employs a phenomenographic methodology to explore the variation in the views of a group of lecturers to the plagiarism detection system, Turnitin. The system was being considered as a mandatory route for all written assignments at the time of the research and the purpose of the enquiry was to uncover some of the ways in which Turnitin was viewed, experienced and had meaning to those expected to use it. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data, and the results of the analysis highlighted the focus of these lecturers as being largely student centered. The lecturers largely appeared to be advocates of the system; they did recognise that Widening Participation and internationalisation had altered the student demographic, and that some issues may arise with a new cohort perhaps less familiar with academic integrity. In addition there was some concern over the way that management viewed the system, and the dangers of it being used for quantitative monitoring rather than qualitative feedback.

Introduction

This paper explores the views of Higher Education Lecturers in relation to the plagiarism detection system, Turnitin. This research was conducted in a UK HE in FE ¹ institution and was conducted over a two-week period including interviews with five lecturers from different Schools within the institution.

In recognition that this paper is focused on the development of the author's awareness, and use of, research methodology the sections on phenomenography are significant, and the discussion of the results and analysis makes regular links to the processes and methodology employed to reflect this focus.

Two research questions were formed at the outset, following a peer-reviewed proposal. The research questions were:

1. What are the views of staff to the plagiarism detection system, Turnitin?
2. Do staff consider that the increased use of the internet and web based research have had an affect on academic integrity, and if so, how?

Background

The issue of plagiarism in Higher Education has become a significant concern in the 21st Century, with much of the discussion centred on the prevalence for

¹ A Higher Education institute attached to a Further Education College

a 'copy & paste culture' (Thompsett & Ahluwalia: 2010: p13) and the increased opportunities for inappropriate, intentional, and non-intentional, sourcing of web based materials. While plagiarism itself has been an issue in students' work for over a century (Thompsett & Ahluwalia: 2010: p1) the focus has become more pronounced since the use of world wide web resources, and global influences on what constitutes plagiarism and authenticity (Sutherland-Smith: 2010; *Policy Works: HEA: 2011*).

In response, the institutions delivering Higher education in the UK seem to have independently agreed on a particular solution, that of Turnitin, an American owned, online plagiarism detection system. Since the system became available under license in the UK in 2002/3, over 95% of Higher Education institutions (Barrie cited in Badge & Scott: 2009: online) now claim to use the system. The UK system is operated through a separate organisation, Submit.ac.uk, though the name *Turnitin* is routinely used. Turnitin uses web-based searches to scan across all previously submitted papers, Internet resources, journals and online books to find matches with submitted papers. It includes *Grademark* and *PeerMark* functions that allow for tutor to students, and student-to-student feedback, though perhaps the most commonly used function is the originality report that highlights where a submitted paper has been previously cited. The system produces a report that indicates the percentage total of work that is from other sources, cited or not, alongside student name and assignment title. If the Lecturers/ teaching staff use the Grademark feature to mark online, the grade too is shown on the front page of the system.

Turnitin cannot differentiate between citations made legitimately and referenced correctly and unreferenced inclusions considered to be plagiarised.

In part the introduction of electronic plagiarism detection systems has been welcomed as a tool that enhances how teaching and learning is designed with the aim of removing the propensity for plagiarism (Rees M: 2009; Higher Education Academy/ JISC: 2011). The emphasis on plagiarism has been seen to impact in two ways; firstly through means of considered teaching strategies (DeVoss & Rosati: 2002) and secondly, through greater institutional strategic planning (HEA JISC: 2011). Recognising these dual issues in relation to the prevention of, and reaction to, plagiarism will allow for a framing of the discussion to highlight the influences of strategic policy (institutional), and the personal/ professional (lecturer), concerns.

In the institution that hosts this research, the introduction of Turnitin is not new; it has been in place since September 2007. However, latest figures of use show that less than 10% of University Centre staff actively used the system, and that of the 1800 submissions made through the system since 2007, 1300 had been through a single lecturer. The focus of this research follows the introduction of the revised institutional strategy related to academic integrity, based on the Higher Education Academy/ JISC recommendations in *Policy Works- Recommendations for reviewing policy to manage unacceptable academic practice in higher education (HEA: March 2011)*. Based on these HEA recommendations, it is proposed that the institution will

make Turnitin submissions mandatory for all text based work in the next academic year.

The HEA JISC (2011) recommendations suggest the need for an integrated, regularly reviewed and strategically significant policy that utilises a plagiarism detection system (Turnitin is the sole named example) as well as comprehensive student awareness programmes and specific staff training.

To date, the University Centre in this research has announced the proposed mandatory use of Turnitin, created an updated Reference Guide and placed resources for academic writing on the VLE. There have been staff development sessions on the use of Turnitin, with a focus on the technical approach to placing this on the VLE and accessing the reports once generated. Further plans for video tutorials are in place, alongside the development of case studies to highlight best practice and issues that may be faced with the uses of the system. Turnitin currently operates alongside a hard copy barcode system, where submissions are barcoded and referenced against the student ID, as the method students and lecturers use to confirm receipt of assignment submissions. This research will provide a practical, teaching staff focused approach to how current users find the system and what issues and benefits are currently experienced, and help inform the researcher's role as VLE Assessment Champion in the organisation.

Aim

The aim of this research is to look at the ways in which lecturing, and general teaching staff, are experiencing the uses of Turnitin. This has a practical basis as the information found will help to form the training and development approach that follow in the lead up to the mandatory introduction of Turnitin from September 2011. It is expected that data collection will look to a variation of staff with teaching duties that have experiences from beginners with recent introduction to Turnitin to established users that have familiarity with the system.

Phenomenography as the Methodology

The research employs phenomenographic methodology to reveal variance and to best explore the personal views of a range of participants. Five interviews were conducted and these were selected based on the diversity of subject sector, from Education, Law, Business and Computing. Experience of using Turnitin was also considered, with experienced and new users included in the cohort. The interviews followed an iterative analytical process looking to select recurrence of ideas/ themes/ conceptions (Marton:2005) that allows variation to be presented that cover the range of views from the staff involved. The interviews were semi structured, and relied on a phenomenographic interview style that encouraged reflective commentary based on experiences of Turnitin.

The choice of phenomenography as a method was made as a reflection of the benefits this approach had in operating from a basis of neutrality, that is working from a principle that the respondents views would be represented from their experiences as they reported them with no leading questions or pre-determined themes.

In recognition of the criticism of phenomenography as inherently reflexive (Webb: 1997), It is contended that any researcher attempt at establishing '*philosophically absolute 'presuppositionlessness'*' (Ashworth & Lucas: 2000: 297) is impossible when the research has a predefined focus, and therefore will require responses related to this focus. The interviews were introduced in relation to Turnitin, and as such the content of responses will clearly be guided to that as the central focus of discussion. From the point of the research perspective, what respondents then discussed was left to them and no further attempts were made to suggest themes, patterns or potential areas of interest.

The methodological assumption of phenomenography is that there is a limited number of qualitatively distinct ways in which people experience phenomena (Marton: 1981). By focusing on the empirical data generated through interviews the intention here was to reveal what lecturers considered significant in their own practices of using Turnitin.

The '*driving force*' (Marton, 2007. p111) of phenomenography is that by looking for the variance in how different individuals *experience* the world, and particular phenomenon within it, it then becomes clearer to appreciate that there will be variance in the ways that different people will *act*.

Phenomenography then allows a clearer idea of what is actually experienced in the uses of the system than would a more targeted, prescriptive ideal of what topics should be covered based on sector-wide discourse. Although the limited number of respondents means that generalisability becomes problematic, it is considered that phenomenography operates from the premise that it is, '*..research which aims at description, analysis, and understanding of experiences; that is, research which is directed towards experiential description*' (Marton, 1981. p185). As such, it is argued that looking at the individual experiences of Turnitin is useful in offering an insight into what lecturers are *actually* experiencing across a dimension of variation, even if these are not entirely aligned with more theoretical concerns of what *could* be experienced.

Results and Analysis

The process

The interview process began with the selection of participants through an email request based on a targeted cohort of eleven lecturers. Eight replied, and five were selected based on their school/ subject area, so that I only had one lecturer from each. In order to best replicate the bracketing out of the researcher, I attempted to operate with no fixed questions. I provided each interviewee with a brief outline of the research, and then allowed them to begin to discuss their own experiences from that point. I had the research questions and shared these with the participants, stressing that these were not questions to them, but off the research as a whole. Such prompts were hoped to allow for as objective a development of experiences as possible.

The idea behind what it [Turnitin] is for is obviously a good one, a useful and well-considered one. It just seems (pause) Clunky, if Clunky isn't (pause) too vague (laughs). I mean clunky in that it takes time to add comments, that is, it takes me time to add the comments I want to, not those it has pre-determined that I may want to. Clunky, intuitive, yes it is intuitive largely, but it is slow, intuitive but slow is what ultimately leads to the feeling of being clunky. It is seemingly offering a lot, but it is rudimentary, compared to other programmes we can mark with, Word or PDFs or somesuch thing.

(Lecturer: Law)

In representation of the experiences faced in the use of the system there is no sense of anxiety when considering the technical aspects of the software. The description of the system as 'clunky' is supported with a critical analysis that compares to other systems and evaluative commentary indicates familiarity and awareness of the system's benefits and failings in the context of a broader technological landscape. In phenomenographic terms it is the referential aspect, the meaning that is described, that could be considered the 'surface' here. The experience of the Law lecturer creates a referent that is developed from his experiences, and while variant to other respondents the disclosure of technical aptitude was a common thread between all lecturers interviewed.

'Discernment of new features and new relations demands that once taken-for-granted is questioned' (Booth: 2008: p451)

Discernment in a phenomenographic sense relates to the analytical process in which conceptions are formed, which in turn forms the outcome spaces in relation to variation around a theme. It is contended that discernment always 'presupposes variation' (Marton & Yan Pong: 2005: p336) and it is this discerning of features that allow for contrast with other variables that creates the internal structure of a conception (P336) and helps to define the two components of the conception as *referential* and *structural*. In addition, the focus is presenting an opportunity to examine the '*taken-for-granted*' and explore how the ways lecturers attend to actual use of the system is experienced. Phenomenographic methodology has more commonly used this approach to reveal the depth of students' experiences of learning rather than a general research focus on teaching and learning methods (Akerlind: 2008:

p634), and seems applicable here as the lecturers are in the role of learner as they approach the use of this system in a developmental stage of their practice.

The referential describes the ways that the experience is described, in the ways the different lecturers through their own experiences of Turnitin give it meaning. The *structural* follows by analysing how this first, referential meaning is shaped and formed in relation to other aspects related to that element. It is then a category of description that has variation *within* it,

‘...structure is not between conceptions but within conceptions. It is simply their internal structure.’
(Marton & Y Pong: 2005: p336).

It is the focus on structure that perhaps best describes the phenomenographic definition of the outcome space, and the movement away from the personal voices as having intrinsic meaning that reflects any individual voice has;

Marton & Booth (2007ed) consider that

‘individual voices are not heard. Moreover, it is a stripped description in which the structure and essential meaning of categories are retained while the specific flavours, the scents and the colours of the worlds of the individuals have been abandoned’.

The Lecturer in Education also expressed her experience of the Grademark system in terms of its *slowness* and also makes comparison to other forms of marking students’ work. However, when applying the analysis that leads to categories of description, in the stripping down of the description to reveal structure alongside the referential, the focus is on how the lecturer sees their own skills rather than the suitability of the Turnitin software.

It is clever, very clever; my problems come from having to learn it all from new, replacing something with (pause) something else. It's maybe too clever, too much for me to learn from scratch although I do like using it and the students love it, I will have to get used to it, I know that, get used to it become good with it, then it will be a lot easier for me then'
(Lecturer: Education).

In forming categories of description this was aligned with the Computer Science Lecturer's description of a,

'new way, that is the best way I am sure, but it isn't my way, not yet. I have marked the same way for a long time, you know, all the time in this role I have marked using the normal way, the pen and the paper approach. I like this because it is quick, it will be quicker for the students to get feedback, to see my comments, so it will be good when I get my head round it'
(Lecturer: Computer Science).

In other research approaches, such as phenomenology, the concern here could be in analysing the reasons for these different approaches to the same element of the system. In this phenomenographic analysis issues related to learner experience and the potential for confidence or background are not included in the analysis because they were not part of the description offered. In this way, demographic patterns from elsewhere that indicate generalisability in regard to age, gender or curriculum area do not play a part. It is the identification of those conceptions that are described that have led to the creation of the outcome space, and those categories of description, and dimensions of variation that construct it. The graphical representation here (Figure 1) is an attempt to represent these structures.

Findings

In keeping with the focus on the *collective mind* (Marton:1981) Figure 1 highlights the outcome spaces established following the iterative analytical approach to all interview responses. These were formed through the identification of the variance in interview responses, and highlight how the circular outcome spaces are built up from categories of description below, linked through lines in the diagram. These boxes are themselves the result of a parsimonious collation of the data collected in interview, and established into a hierarchical structure through close reading of the transcribed interviews.

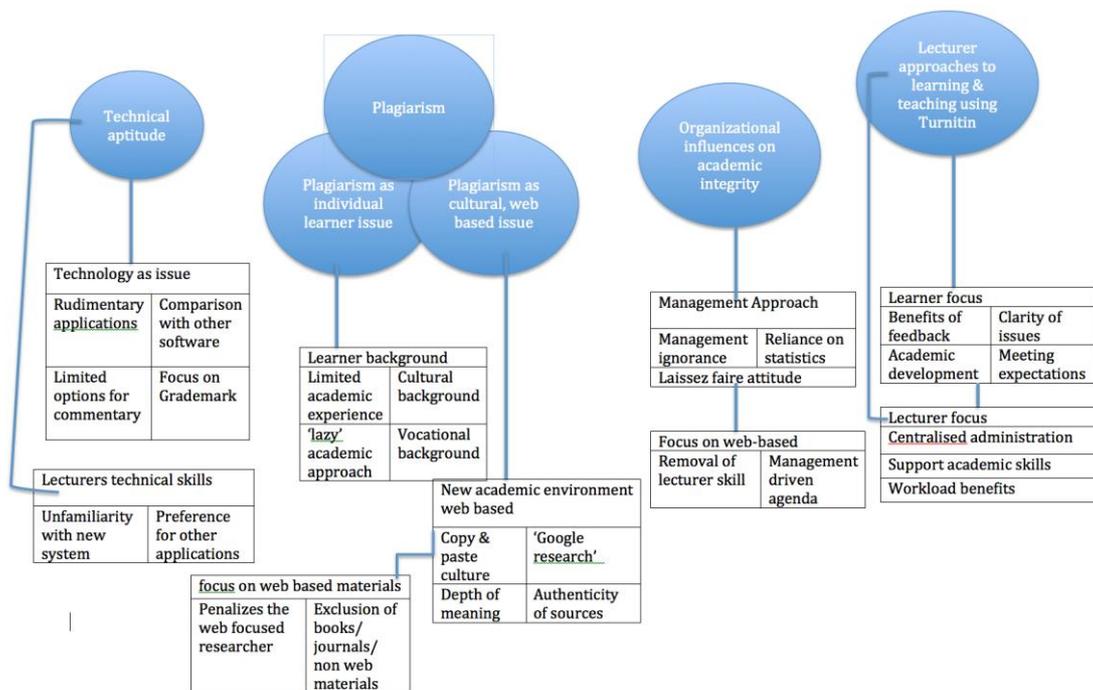


Figure 1: A graphical representation of the outcome space following research into lecturers' experiences in using Turnitin

The outcome space here follows Akerlind's (2005) description that the outcome space,

'provides a way of looking at collective human experience of phenomena holistically despite the fact that such phenomena

may be perceived differently by different people and under different circumstances' (Akerlind;2005;p323).

Four distinct outcome spaces have been identified; these are *Technical Aptitude; Plagiarism; Organisational influences on academic integrity; Lecturer approaches to teaching & learning using Turnitin.*

A. *Technical Aptitude*

Of the four outcome spaces this is perhaps the most fundamental in terms of an experience related to application. It responds to the ways in which the lecturers are able to use the system and the variation on how they perceive it as a piece of technology that can be utilised in their own practice. The research questions had expected discussion related to the variation attributed to plagiarism, and also for an automated system linked to academic integrity; the categories of description here included contributions from all five interviewees and created a significant outcome space that was not anticipated, yet is clearly significant.

Two categories of description were noted, *Technology as Issue* and *Lecturers technical skills*. In interpreting the responses it was noted that the technology had two distinct descriptions, and although these were not immediately defined as belonging to any one lecturer, detailed analysis allowed for these conceptions to become identified as the location of problems within the software itself, and secondly as the problems of the lecturer's technical skills in dealing with the software.

The 'clunky' description from the law lecturer establishes the conception of a proficient user able to evaluate the programme and take a position of

informed confidence. This was the most common thread amongst all respondents, even the education lecturer who expressed more concern over their own skills. In several examples the technology was compared with non-technology solutions, such as pen and paper.

'There is something unusual, or at least not commonplace for me, using technology to mark is different than being in the class, or wherever it is, marking using a pen...it's different, it's more sometimes, I can be more spontaneous, it feels more natural to me'
(Lecturer: Education)

Although this makes a comparison to traditional marking using hard copy and pen, it is similar in descriptive evaluation to the 'clunky' commentary of the law lecturer. As such, it becomes part of the dimensions of variation within the *Technology as Issue Category of Description* rather than *Lecturers' Technical Skills*.

Key phrases were found that highlighted the sense of the software as being evaluated with some issue, although the overall experience seemed to be that it is a positive introduction as a aid to learning and teaching. These phrases included '*rudimentary; basic tools; useful but slow*' (Lecturer: Law); '*nothing beyond the basic expectations; limited tools*'; (Lecturer: Business); '*minimal compared to Word; only a comment box facility*' (Lecturer: Engineering). It was clear that all the lecturers interviewed had considered the technical aspects in relation to Grademark, the feature on Turnitin that allows lecturers to mark submitted work on the system, and return comments and grades through Turnitin.

No comments were made in relation to the technical skills required for the Originality Report, the function on Turnitin that checks for plagiarism, despite the clear focus on the detection system, and the research questions in this research, to plagiarism and academic integrity. Such an outcome space can be seen as a result of the detailed analysis employed in phenomenography where the initial identification of meaning from individuals is then reassigned across variation in the collective mind to find *overall meaning* (Marton & Y Pong: 2005: 337). The descriptive focus on technology, it is understood, could also be seen in links to other conceptions, perhaps linked to the concentration on learner experience as all comments related to technology were made in relation to Grademark, and the feedback to students that this entails. However, by focusing purely on the ways in which the phrases were aligned with the technology, and not lending researcher inference to what this means, the evidence supports the outcome space of technical aptitude as a significant outcome space.

B. Plagiarism

The outcome space defined as *plagiarism* has been represented as two separate concerns, which are *plagiarism as individual learner issue* and *plagiarism as cultural web based issue*. It has been recognised that as the questions for the research were presented to the lecturers the conception of plagiarism would be highlighted in description. This was considered unavoidable, though closer to the *ideal* phenomenographic approach where the researcher may '*wish to be tentative about the phenomenon under consideration*' (Ashworth & Lucas: 2000: p301) rather than assigning firm

notions of the areas to be explored. That plagiarism occurs is perhaps an obvious though unavoidable consequence.

To better reflect the ways in which Categories of Description were described the decision was made to identify these two clear conception routes; the first, focusing on learner background, was described in terms of learners that could have been apparent in any era or historical age. Three of the five lecturers made explicit reference to historic patterns of plagiarism, with links to the previous experience of learners from non-academic backgrounds, such as vocationally based access routes, or learners from Further Education with little grounding in principles of academic integrity. Both the Law and Business lecturers made reference to their own academic experiences as students in the 1970s, surprisingly similar in their use of this as a benchmark for distinct academic practice following lines of academic apprenticeships.

'University built on, as it were, the foundations of the A level system, not as a set of skills per se, though skills in writing, in reading, they were skills that were then able to support our progression into academia, they prepared us, maybe not fully prepared, but we were ready for the bedrock of academia, the notion of literature, of the importance of the book. I think less of this exists when learners come without an academic grounding, the vocationally gifted may never have read the ways we expect them to read...plagiarism is then a failure to understand the landscape, not cheating, not deception, merely failing to appreciate the world in which they now inhabit'

(Lecturer: Law)

A similar theme from the Business Lecturer helped to define the conception in formation; again the description included a discussion on a university experience from the 1970s, after which he considered that,

'...not like then, differing backgrounds mean that people not used to the university, the very notion of the university, do

not look to the importance of referencing. From a widening participation cohort that we encourage, from this comes a change in how people think. If they don't respect the notion of integrity and intellectual copyright, then they will not consider the issue of plagiarism. They have not served their apprenticeship, that's the way I can describe it, expected to do the important things, but without the basis of their apprenticeship.'

(Lecturer: Business)

From all five there was some inclusion of the notion of learner background that was quite distinct from their discussion of web-based culture and the influence this may have. In describing the conceptions as they defined the outcome space, it was also clear that some of the issues that contemporary literature identify (Sutherland Smith: & Carr: 2005; Sutherland Smith: 2008; Thompsett & Ahluwalia: 2010) were absent in this learner background discussion. Concerns of international students, the western philosophical ideals inherent in notions of plagiarism, and the exclusion of second language students, were not raised.

In the second outcome space as defined here, the focus is on a contemporary view of research and plagiarism in light of increased web-based research and academic study. This was developed through identification of two categories of description, *Focus on web-based materials* and *new web-based academic environment*. It is important as a phenomenographic researcher to identify the descriptions as they are made, and to recognize within which context they are made. Marton's earlier work considers that

'A conception exists in the real world only in terms of a mental act and it is exhibited by someone who does something in a certain setting.'

(Marton: 1981).

In attempting to represent these independent foci, to keep the meaning as it

was made, the shift from individual to cultural plagiarism appeared valid.

It is conceded that both the additional outcome spaces of *learner focus* and *web-based culture* may have been represented in the singular outcome space *plagiarism* but argued that the inclusion as two separate outcome spaces within this graphical representation (Figure 1) better illustrates the ways in which plagiarism was described.

The web-based culture aspect was evident in three interviews containing reference to *Google* as a specific term related to research (Lecturers: Business, Law & Engineering), and the alignment of this with *copy & paste culture*, (Lecturers: Law, Education) '*dubious sources, especially blogs*' (Lecturer: Computer Science). *These seemed to highlight lecturers' concerns with the ways in which the web culture had created an environment that was problematising notions of academic integrity and plagiarism within that. Using Marton's (personal communication: May 14; 2011) guidelines to creating hierarchy, this was less significant than the learner background, though perhaps more pertinent to the aims of the research. By making links again to learner preferences, to the ways in which student research was conducted and the authenticity and suitability of the resources students selected, the structural resonance indicates a personal, experience led perspective from respondents in all cases. In such an analysis, it is significant that the macro concerns of web-culture are not discussed in any broader sense than in the reflections of personal experience.*

One area of support for a wider appreciation of issues, though still based on the individual lecturers recent experiences, was the identification of Turnitin as

being primarily an internet focused tool, that only highlighted issues from content tracked online. Hierarchically, such features were the least discerned in terms of explicit description, but were significant in that they highlighted a conception of materials as being differentiated by type, internet/ web as opposed to printed books and journals. In one comment the Engineering lecturer considered Turnitin would be,

'...only looking for the web-based material, not the materials they can get from here, from our notes or their lecturer's books'
(Lecturer: Engineering).

The Law lecturer also commented on this, identifying that this was more likely to identify, and therefore penalise, the student using predominantly web-based materials.

No interpretation of internationalisation or concerns regarding globalised communication were made and as such, despite literature considering these key features of the current academic landscape, these do not form any part of the respondents' experiences as revealed here.

C. Organisational Influences on Academic Integrity

In forming the background of this research, the institution's management concern with academic integrity had prompted the interest in Turnitin. The design of the research had anticipated finding lecturer's views in relation to the renewed focus on institutional academic integrity, related to the application for degree awarding powers and the increased concern over contemporary academic integrity within the sector (Policy Works: 2011). In

maintaining adherence to the Phenomenographical approach, specifically that researcher preconceptions should always remain bracketed off and that,

‘it is the research participants’ experience which should be revealed, not the researcher’s expectations’
(Ashworth & Lucas: 2000: p298).

The conceptions forming this outcome space largely came from a belief in the ways that management were consistent in their promotion of Turnitin, though this was represented in two outcome spaces of management approach as being an issue in forming the concept of academic integrity, and secondly as being of an unclearly defined (by the management) move toward web based applications that become privileged above traditional marking and associated lecturer skills. In creating hierarchy this was a significant point for two lecturers (Business and Engineering), though had less directed description in others.

The category of description categorised as *Management Approach* was structured through dimensions of variation that focused on the reliance on statistical data. Here, the quantitative percentage figure of originality that the Turnitin provides is gradually being used as a measure of academic rigour across the centre. The lecturers’ responses indicated a perception that this led to a too broad approach to plagiarism, without careful and detailed analysis of how academic integrity and approaches to students’ practices were considered. Reliance on data offered an easy measurement, but lacked analysis at the detailed level of students’ performance and what issues were lying beneath the statistical data. In addition, a separate dimension of variation perceived a *laissez faire* attitude to academic integrity. Here the concern was that reliance on the statistical data lessened the institution’s

development of other approaches to plagiarism involving improvements in lecturer/ student skills in relation to citations, referencing and academic writing.

Despite being significant in only two lecturer responses, it was interesting that management involvement provided most of the occurrences in relation to the originality report. Management influence was not a theme in the positive comments in the outcome space *Lecturer Approaches to Learning and Teaching using Turnitin*. By analysing across outcome spaces it becomes clear that, where it is mentioned, management influence is seen as a negative, or ill-informed presence and that Turnitin is seen as offering, ‘a panacea to management, a way of monitoring academic enterprise rather than helping form excellence’ (Lecturer: Business). In two responses the conception of lecturer skill being challenged by reliance on Turnitin was evident. These led to a category of description as *removal of lecturer skills*, with the externalisation of the system being likened to,

‘a great big woolly mammoth that has entered the room, clumping all over our preconceptions, changing the focus of what we mean by plagiarism’ (Lecturer: Law).

Although a small sample from all five interviews, the inclusion of the management issues does allow for contrast to how the respondents view the system in different ways dependent on the focus of the discussion. It seems possible to identify across outcome spaces a variation that appears positive in relation to strategies of teaching and learning, but appears negative when discussing how these are viewed by management and in an institutional context.

D. Approaches to Learning and Teaching using Turnitin

The focus on teaching and learning was prevalent across all interviewees, and indicated a significant focus on the benefits to teaching and learning, above that of plagiarism alone.

In analysis, it seemed that there was a dual approach, one of learning benefits as applied to students, and secondly through the affordances Turnitin provided for the teacher role related to help with workload, administrative efficiencies and the support related to academic rigour. For instance, the dimensions of variation within the *learner focus* category of description include 'meeting expectations'. This occurred in two interviews explicitly, and in all cases when taken to include discussion of how Turnitin is accessible online, allows for remote access to feedback and records and stores information in a shared space. It was described as something that would be seen as a significant addition to '*modern teaching practices, what the learners expect us to do*' (Lecturer: Education).

This was included in *learner focus* Categories of Description, though could easily have been simultaneously included in the *lecturer focus* as it was seen as a practice that updated their professional approach. Comments related to student expectation, '*...offering a more transparent communication channel, it's one medium, they submit on there [Turnitin] we mark on it, they open it on there...not totally dissimilar to paper, maybe, but quicker, accessible, feels like they see the process more immediately, they are always involved in it. They are and I am, we are*' (Lecturer, Engineering).

This approach, that the process was seen as significant and developed on traditional practice, that it augmented traditional practices of pen and paper, was consistently presented in interviews. The juxtaposition with immediate

feedback and clear labeling of issues in the text, and supported with general comments, highlighted a general concern with student satisfaction even when this complicated the lecturer's own practices. For the Education Studies lecturer, this led to a space in which '*...we have to use it really, once they [students] know they can get it this way, that's how they want it all the time, so that's what I now do, even though slowly still*'. The 'clunky' description appeared to be replicated, though again it was significant that student consumption of feedback this way led to a persistence with tutor production to meet a perceived need.

The interviews all had lengthy and detailed discussion related to the ways in which the system could be used to support learner awareness of the academic integrity issues, both highlighting the problems of incorrect referencing and also through feedback using Grademark.

Alongside description that presented the originality report as a form of guidance document, rather than an accusative evidence document, the overwhelming responses in the interviews highlighted a focus on using the features for development of student skills through guidance. The Law lecturer's comments indicate how this looks in practice, with added recognition that, '*...the report can be frightening, but once they see that you can highlight where they should reference, what good referencing is, it adds to their knowledge, perhaps knowledge, or perhaps awareness, but adds to it as a clear example of how it works, referencing and the frightening aspects, how it relates to THEIR work, what THEY need to do*'. From a perspective of individual or professional responsibility, Turnitin is viewed as a positive inclusion to the learning and teaching landscape. Despite other outcome

spaces revealing a concern over learner background, this was of less significance than the discussion on learners being eager to develop and generally honest in their uses of other sources. In comparison to some anxieties over how the systematic submission through a plagiarism detection system could be manipulated by institutional management, evidence here supported a positive view of the uses in the direct teacher – student relationship.

Reflection and Conclusion

Having formed questions that would allow for the broadest response that Turnitin evoked from the lecturers, it seems clear that these do form a set of outcome spaces, and that these are individual and contextualised with limited reflection of the themes across the literature. The benefits of phenomenographic enquiry are such that the experiences presented are primarily based on the individual and as such will not necessarily tie neatly into sector-wide themes.

The notion of copy and paste culture does appear (Sutherland-Smith: 2008) and with it the idea of differing notions of depth of meaning, as presented in the dimension of variation. The focus on different learner backgrounds here seemed to exclude the potential discussion of cultural norms and the influence of internationalisation amongst the student cohort. Instead there was a more localized discussion related to students from the local area being less than prepared for academic life. The notion of conception of *learner background* was defined by the college's widening participation agenda, the nature of the students as perceived by the interviewees, the 'newness' of the University concept in the college, and the 'traditional' university backgrounds

of most of the interviewed lecturers that framed this the comparison. Overall, the focus was very much on the benefits of the system to helping learners to develop their academic approach. It would be useful to consider the research revealed positive approaches to the use of Turnitin. A dual approach would perhaps consider the ways in which lecturers could develop their own skills with the technology to offer feedback to their students while aligning these to an institution-wide concentration on embedding the academic framework. By addressing these two aspects of the system Turnitin could be allowed to serve as a valuable feedback tool while simultaneously informing lecturers, students and management approaches to academic writing at an individual and institutional level.

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