Embracing community-building in online classes to promote academic integrity

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Abstract

Given that universities have transitioned to emergency remote teaching, academic integrity becomes a subject of ongoing inquiry. Students taking an English Preparatory Program (EPP) in universities aim to gain sufficient proficiency in English to continue with their courses in their departments. In an online teaching context, coping with requirements of the EFL (English as a foreign language) curriculum becomes a challenge for the students as students are deprived of their communities where they collaborate, interact and learn from each other. In this sense, teachers need to refocus not only on subject matter, but also ethical mores of academe and it is often simple day-to-day practices that build the community and establish a climate of integrity. While academic integrity has been researched extensively, more research is still needed about developing a learning community in online classes as a way to promote academic integrity. This investigation seeks to explore daily teaching practices towards community-building and analyse elements of the curriculum that work in favour of academic integrity in the context of emergency remote teaching. Six teachers and eighty EFL students (*N*=86) in an EPP of a state university in Turkey participated in the study. This case study drew upon an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach. The triangulation of the findings was carried out through a combination of various data sources. Qualitative data were collected through content analysis of course syllabi, assignment documents and policy statements, classroom self-observations; and focus groups with teachers and students. Quantitative data were gathered through a short survey with questions specifically designed for this context. Another aim of using the survey was to promote awareness on academic integrity among students. The results from multiple sources revealed that community-building not only facilitates positive collaboration in online classes, but also creates room for mutual trust and reduces chances of academic misconduct. Exploring results from the research can help faculty design measures to prevent academic dishonesty and eventually shape institutional policies. The positive implications for classroom practices of community-building towards academic integrity are discussed.

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Introduction

The changing winds in education due to the Covid-19 pandemic have caused dynamic and challenging scenarios for all educational institutions. There is a need to maintain quality in education while designing teaching and learning activities via the Internet and delivering through platforms like Moodle, or tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams as modes of formal learning (Sá & Serpa, 2020). Academic integrity means acting courageously towards responsibility, honesty, respect, trust and fairness in all aspects of academic work (International Center for Academic Integrity, 2021). This becomes a prerequisite for institutions striving for quality in their teaching and learning processes (Bertram Gallant, 2016).

Issues of academic integrity in higher education have been in the spotlight for decades highlighted by research conducted throughout the world (Bretag, 2016; Bretag et al., 2014; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Buranen, 1999; McCabe 2005; McCabe & Bowers, 1994; Macfarlane et al., 2014; Marsden et al., 2005; TEQSA, 2017; Trevin˜o et al., 2012) and are even more so with the current changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In an online education context, breaches of academic integrity, such as cheating in exams, collision, plagiarism, patchwriting, downloading assignments from the internet, become a common practice and support tools to detect plagiarism often fail to be successful in detecting or deterring such breaches (Foltýnek et al., 2020). Policies on academic integrity differ in various countries and universities including differences in their responses to plagiarism (Glendinning 2013, 2014). It is evident that there is no simple solution to preventing breaches of academic integrity especially in this new online context and, to make it more sustainable, policies should be accompanied with action plans and clearly distributed tasks (Bjelobaba, 2018).

The current localized study makes a case for institutions that wish to instil and foster academic integrity by drawing on the work of East (2009) for an alignment of policies along with the teaching and learning practices and Morris and Carroll (2016) for the necessity to adopt a holistic approach involving all stakeholders for a shared understanding. This case study provides a contextualized setting by hearing voices of instructors and students aligned with content from curriculum documents addressing the issue of academic integrity.

Communities of learning in online education

Traditional classrooms are venues that allow for teacher-learner and learner-learner relationships to thrive and a strong sense of community to develop. However, the idea that communities can exist only in face-to-face teaching was challenged by Rovai (2002) who suggested that communities can be built and sustained in online teaching contexts as well and they are consisted of four dimensions: spirit, trust, interaction and commonality of expectation and goals. He developed a 'Classroom Community Scale' to explore in more depth the sense of community and used to it to find out how online communities of learners are similar to and different from learners in traditional learning context (Rovai, 2003). There is also a considerable amount of research on how to build and maintain an online community of learners (Garrison & Akyol, 2013). Processes of inquiry among teachers and learners, in online environments in particular, have been analysed by the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison et al, 2000), a widely used social constructivist model. Social presence, teaching presence and cognitive presence are three core elements in the CoI and learning occurs within the community through the interaction of these elements (Garrison et al., 2000). There is a significant amount of research that adopts CoI, for example to assess teacher presence, understand and facilitate cognitive presence, develop a community of inquiry over time in an online context (Anderson et al., 2001; Akyol & Garrison, 2011; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005) to name a few. It is evident that there is a convincing bond between a sense of community and cognitive presence in that community that altogether can facilitate quality learning outcomes (Akyol & Garrison, 2011; Rovai, 2002).

Academic Integrity in EFL/ESL Teaching

In the EFL/ESL (English either as a foreign or second language) context, students have challenges in meeting requirements of their English programs and therefore plagiarism becomes a concern (Pecorari, 2003; Vieyra et al., 2013). One of the unusual characteristics of Academic Integrity is that it is often defined by what it is not and borrowing other's words without referencing is not a desired habit of writers with integrity. However, language learning could be viewed as a process of borrowing from other's words (Pennycook, 1996) and by this making it difficult for teachers to

distinguish between intertextuality and plagiarism. The academic misconduct among EFL learners in various cultures is revealed in numerous studies, from cheating in exams and plagiarism in the Iranian language learning context (Ahmadi, 2012, 2014) to inappropriate textual borrowing in the Chinese EFL Academic setting (Liao & Tseng, 2010). Cultural perceptions of textual borrowing differ in various EFL/ESL contexts thus challenging non-native writers in conceptualizing plagiarism (Deckert, 1993; Pecorari, 2001; Yamada, 2003; Sherman, 1992).

The perspectives towards plagiarism differ and the debate over what is plagiarism in an EFL/ESL context involves cultural aspects and how they shape ways of perceiving textual borrowing, as apparent in numerous studies (Buranen, 1999; Dryden, 1999; Sherman, 1992). The writing of EFL/ESL learners sometimes inhibits their voice, a characteristic of original writing remaining a challenge that these learners have due to their limited vocabulary causing borrowings from various sources (Ange´lil-Carter, 2000 & Pennycook, 1996). Other than cultural explanations, other studies prove that certain types of plagiarism also occur among learners who are well aware of the Anglophone academic discourse community (Ange´lil-Carter, 2000, Hull & Rose, 1989; Hyland, 2001). The advancement of educational technologies is simultaneously changing the writing habits of EFL/ESL students and blurring the line between plagiarism and original writing (Peters & Cadieux, 2019).

Pedagogy for Deterring Cheating

A positive institutional approach to dealing with plagiarism places an emphasis on the role of appropriate pedagogy in promoting academic integrity and is aided by procedures that provide guidance on detecting and punishing plagiarism (Park, 2004). Designing a good pedagogy in this sense requires a shift from high-stakes assessment towards low-stakes assessment, promoting learners' openness to their limitations (Knight, 2001) in meaningful assignments that are followed by feedback. Higher rates of plagiarism among students are consistently associated with learning contexts that promote high-stakes assessment (Park, 2003). Low-stakes assessment becomes particularly important when accommodating learners' needs in emergency remote teaching and in avoiding the negative impact of assessment on learners' behaviour. This type of assessment offers learners room for further learning and development of skills that would enable them to avoid plagiarism (Macdonald & Carroll, 2006). Assessment

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for students is associated with comparison of their own work to others', resulting in undesired effects on the self-esteem of learners and only by abandoning this habit and focusing on the learning itself (Carless, 2005; Kirton et al., 2007; Webb & Jones, 2009) can learners further develop their sense of integrity.

Previous remote teaching models in an EFL/ESL context strive to promote learner autonomy and progress towards language-learning goals through appropriate assignment, feedback and multimedia tools (Bañados, 2006). Multimodality proves to be beneficial for language development when applied moderately in learning tasks (Dzekoe, 2017; Vandommele et al., 2017) and when embedded meaningfully, along with topics that evoke learners' personal interests and experiences, then opportunities to plagiarise will be diminished. While assignments in face to face contexts are mostly carried out in written form, in emergency remote teaching various modes work in favour of each other and to students' interests. Incorporating all modes and multimedia in assignments encourages creativity as well as critical thinking skills and enables learners to produce original work that is meaningful to them. Meaningfulness is a key feature of assignments that distances students from cheating (Cole & Kiss, 2000) and in a remote teaching context this needs to be the prerogative with pedagogically sound tactics helping to discourage plagiarism.

Central to good pedagogy is, above all, the teacher applying an effective approach and becoming a role model. If the teacher creates excitement for the subject along with admiration and respect, all these factors make it less likely for students to cheat (Cole & Kiss, 2000). The teacher role is crucial in applying appropriate pedagogy that deters plagiarism, i.e. when giving feedback, when providing choice for students, allowing students in-class time to prepare for assignments, etc. According to Thomas and Sassi (2011), talking about academic integrity in the digital age is no easy work for teachers and the role of teacher talk is crucial, especially when engaging in conversations with students on plagiarism and academic integrity. Teachers should create opportunities for students to "question and discuss plagiarism" (Price, 2002, p. 105) before inviting them to make use of their digital literacy potential in producing original work that incorporates various multimedia sources. Other fundamental strategies that teachers could employ are setting expectations about academic integrity,

building a relationship with students and helping students apply appropriate behaviour in the online context (Fishman, 2014 as cited in Kelly, 2014). According to Fishman, teachers building a community of students that are supported, inspired and allowed to explore their interests, give no reasons for their students to cheat. Involving effective measures in and out of the classroom and through various tools and documents, i.e. from assignments to policy documents, from similarity check reports to meaningful creative tasks, from teachers' support to students' rapport with their teachers; all these are essential to the holistic approach in promoting academic integrity (Bertram Gallant 2009; Macdonald & Carroll 2006; Sutherland-Smith 2008).

While there is an absence of research literature in general about the relationship between online community-building and academic integrity, the potential to support practices that promote academic integrity through a Community of Inquiry for learning in an EFL context is powerful. For example, there is evidence that motivated students that have common expectations to learn can contribute to academic integrity (McAllister & Watkins, 2012) and a sense of community to develop, which in turn creates a climate for bonding and sharing of ideas amongst the participants. As a result of these complementary benefits, we need to study how community-building pedagogical practices in particular can be applied in an EFL online context for purposes of promoting academic integrity.

Method

This study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) of a state university in Turkey in 2020 to investigate the following research questions:

1. What evidence is there that a learning community has been established within the SFL during the shift to online learning for Covid-19?

2. How has the learning community in the SFL contributed to maintaining a culture of academic integrity among this group of learners?

Participants and Setting

Teacher Participants

Teacher participants were chosen on a voluntary basis. The researchers explained the research objectives and data collection tools to teachers and students through phone calls. Data were gathered from a total of 6 classes of EPP students (*n*= 80) in the SFL of a state university in Turkey and 6 of their total 12 teachers. All study participants' confidentiality was assured. After receiving the initial approval through phone calls, researchers sent an e-mail to the teacher participants about the research including the self-observation protocols and the online student surveys and by this means teachers were asked to invite their students to respond to the survey.

Student Participants

Student survey participants were invited by a call from their teachers posted on their WhatsApp groups. All students enrolled to the classes were listed on WhatsApp class groups formed by their teachers, however not all of them actively participated to the group messaging. The response rate initially was very low, requiring follow-ups either through reminders in synchronous lessons or through a subsequent message on their groups. This approach was deemed to be necessary as students did not check their messages regularly or needed further explanations about the research objectives. Eventually, the response rate to the surveys reached 53.3% (*n*=80) of the total student population (150) that received the survey.

In summary, there were 80 student questionnaire responses, with 13 student volunteers from the 80 contributing to 2 focus groups (6 and 7 students respectively), that were facilitated by Researcher 1; 6 teachers undertook self-observation and contributed to one focus group, facilitated jointly by Researcher 1 and Researcher 2.

School of Foreign Languages (SFL) as a Case

The current study is conducted in a relatively new public university founded in 2010, in a highly industrial western province of Turkey. The academic preparatory class is a part of the SFL and offers an intensive EPP for students studying in departments with a 30% English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) context. The EPP levels of proficiency are described according to illustrative descriptor scales presented in The Common European of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by Council of Europe, (2020) and range from A2 (lowest), to B2 (highest). Even though the EPP class is not

compulsory for most of the students, the majority of the newly enrolled students at this university take this program every year. This proves that many of the SFL students are motivated learners that want to learn English even though it is not compulsory for their departmental studies. On the other hand, while the number of students enrolled on the EPP increases by 10% every year, student attrition is another common feature and after the first term student numbers decrease by 10%. This shows that not all students enrolled at SFL remain determined to finish their English courses. Researchers set the boundaries of this case study within this particular SFL with a clear focus on academic integrity during remote emergency teaching similar to the bound system as depicted by Yin (2014), Merriam (1998) and Stake (1995).

Data Collection Instruments

This case study draws upon an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach. The data were collected and analysed in a sequence of phases, i.e. qualitative - quantitative - qualitative (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In the initial phase researchers analysed the documents related to the institutional academic integrity policy. Next, teachers were asked to respond to two reflection prompts based on self-observations, and the results of the analysis of their responses served as critical food for thought before developing research questions for the next phase, the survey. Analysis of results, both from reflections and the survey, helped the researchers identify questions for the teacher and student focus groups. Finally, integration of results from all the separate strands provided a deep and comprehensive understanding from the perspectives of different participants.

Copies of Course Syllabi, Assignment Documents, Policy Statements

These documents provided the researchers the opportunity to grasp the importance of including certain guidelines to promote academic integrity as well as the assessment design in terms of preventing academic misconduct in emergency remote teaching. The data also helped the researchers to reframe questions regarding learners' ways of coping with curricular demands.

Online Teaching Self-observation Protocol

For online classroom observations the researchers adopted the Interactional Analysis (Lemke,1985), which embraces a social perspective and enables the

researcher to document and interpret how teachers and students build relationships in an EFL context. The coding schemes are based on simple checklists and tallies of behaviours (Nunan, 1989). The online lessons were recorded regularly and lesson observations in various forms were a part of the institutional work culture. Teachers were invited to self-observe their recording(s) and focus on community building by keeping a tally of the specific teaching practices**.** A final element of the self-observation was reflection based on two open-ended prompts on teacher participants' views on academic misconduct in emergency remote teaching and their experiences with promoting academic integrity highlighted on the document through the checklist making thus the reflective practice data-driven (Farrell, 2008; Farrell & Ives 2014).

Online Questionnaire and Piloting

The survey included one open-ended question and three self-assessment items. Item 3 asked participants an indirect question about their opinions on what their peers might do in a certain scenario regarding academic misconduct. This type of questioning was based on the assumption that students' thoughts about the particular issue will be projected rather than implicating them personally (Fisher, 1993). The indirect questioning in this case has a potential of revealing insights not only about participants' opinions, but also what similar individuals may be thinking. The survey was prepared initially as a pilot Google form in Turkish and was sent to experts in the field for content validation. Additional information about the confidentiality was added to the introduction part of the survey as one of the experts suggested that students may be discouraged from providing honest responses on this delicate matter unless they read convincing statements guaranteeing confidentiality. As suggested by another expert, academic integrity is not a term discussed on daily basis and for this reason it posed a threat to not understanding the first question fully. Item one investigated students' awareness of guidelines deterring academic misconduct therefore another suggestion was to define academic misconduct and provide a common example at the beginning of item one. After all changes were made experts completed the amended pilot survey as potential student participants and finally the survey was ready to be delivered.

Focus Group with Teachers

The purpose of using a focus group as a data collection tool in this study is twofold: to deepen the responses gathered after the self-observation protocol and to serve as an opportunity for teachers' personal and professional development. The researchers opted for focus groups as opposed to individual interviews and the reason behind this choice was due to the elements of interaction and sharing, allowing for dialogue among teachers which could potentially contribute towards community learning. This is because focus groups in this study provide the opportunity for teacher participants to work collaboratively with researchers (Gibbs, 1997) and interact with other teacher participants.

Focus Groups with Students

Focus groups with students were scheduled after the data gathering and analysis of the questionnaire in order to strengthen the student data. The role of the focus group was to initiate spontaneous interaction (Bertrand, Brown & Ward, 1992) and the role of the moderator in leading them was crucial due to the sensitivity of the topic. There was consensus between researchers that the local researcher was to be the only facilitator in the meeting with the students, to ensure they felt able to be honest and open in their answers.

Procedures of Data Collection

The current research study was conducted between September and December 2020-2021 Academic Year. Prior to the data collection process, formal and ethical approvals were obtained from the university Research Ethics Board and participants were asked to give written consent to participate in the study. Teachers were sent the self-observation protocol in the form of a Word document via email and after completing they sent it back to the researchers. Teachers were asked to provide demographic information such as experience in teaching, the course they are teaching and platforms they use for their online teaching. Two weeks later teachers participated in a focus group and were asked to discuss academic integrity in online teaching and how they promoted it in their classes.

Students' questionnaires were completed online through Google forms. Completion of the questionnaires required students to provide demographic

information such as gender, age, department of their studies and the level of the English course they were enrolled in. Responding to the questionnaire took about 5 minutes and participants were guaranteed confidentiality. A week after the deadline for surveys, two focus groups were held with students (n=6 and n=7, respectively). Students were asked to discuss their views on academic integrity in online classes and how it was promoted in their schools.

Document searches were conducted by the local researcher, using the institutional Learning Management System (LMS) profile established by the University, to scan the documents that contained any information addressing academic integrity both directly as well as indirectly. Other than these documents, data were extracted also from the institutional website by scanning the Distance Education Guide for students available in Turkish, which was translated into English. Finally, all these pieces of evidence were coded.

Content Analysis and Coding

Coding was used to analyse the content in course documents, open-ended survey question, reflection prompts by teachers and two rounds of focus groups with teachers and students. The data from both rounds of focus groups were transcribed after each session and then transcripts were broken down into manageable codes. The coded notes were analysed inductively by noticing the emerging themes accordingly (Bertrand et al., 1992; Mackey & Gass, 2005). The data from student focus groups were translated and then back translated by an expert for validation. The review of various elements of the curriculum was done through data extraction restricted to information addressing academic integrity. The documents included assignment templates, information available on the Learning Management System, syllabi, course description, school website and these allowed patterns of language addressing the academic integrity policy to be identified.

Descriptive Statistics

The data gathered from participants' responses to the online questionnaire were analysed by using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 25) through

descriptive statistics, which allowed a simple summary of the data and revealed the most apparent features.

Findings

Findings from data sources were compiled as data extracted from documents, focus group transcripts and the results of the quantitative data analysis were presented in tabular form. In addition, responses to the open-ended question from the survey were analysed including a categorization of positive and negative themes. In this study most of the statistical data presented derived from the survey.

Data collected throughout qualitative phases of the study indicate that a strong sense of online community has been established and there are indicators of teacher presence, social presence and cognitive presence that contribute towards learning in this community (Table 1).

Table 1: Online Community Themes and Comments from Teacher and Student Focus Groups.

Themes	Focus group comments (n=12)
1. Teaching Presence Give prompt, detailed feedback Role model good participation	When she sees our mistakes she says "the more errors I see the more I am convinced this is your work, and this is a good thing" (Student 8)
	I think giving feedback is very important ….. and I love their creativity and I always say things like: "I love the way you are doing it, this point is the best part that I liked about your work" like I am commenting individually as well as to the groups. (Teacher 3)
	Teachers who put a lot of effort into their lessons, they prepare a lot of materials and they contribute a lot to our knowledge, they care for us so I kind of say to myself – just do the same. (Student 13)
2. Social Presence Beginning with introductions Ask/share something different, i.e. your personal life Encourage peer interaction	I am mother of two children so actually I behave the same in the class as I do at home. I say "Did you get your breakfast? Did you do your homework? Don't forget to look at your application? … Is everything okay at home?" lots of questions okay? (Teacher 5)
	So, for example when I see a student has answered all discussion prompts every day then this something I praise. (Teacher 7)
	I am trying to refer to their previous work, I want them to feel that they are good, that they are creative and that they can do it. (Teacher 3)
	So the majority of their [students'] expectations is not about education but about the social part. (Teacher 2)
3. Cognitive Presence Learning activities: collaborative speaking activities, self-checks, multimodal	When we do collaborative speaking on Padlet or when we prepare presentations she says prepare your own sentences based on what you learnt today and don't simply read from sources you found on the internet. She consistently warns us about this and I think it's very effective. (Student 6)
	Because they always have something to do before and after synchronous lessons and this encourages them to study in online practices. (Teacher 4)
	Of course there are certain things we can look up from the internet in the lessons. But then we look them up and we add our experiences and our

assignments, low-stakes assessment	knowledge to it and we tell our teachers that we checked first and so that's not wrong. (Student 4)
	If they had the video homework they learnt how to shoot and how to edit it by using online resources and also if they have technical problems, I tried to help them as much as I could and that helped build trust with my students cause they knew if they had a problem they knew they could reach me at any time.. it was okay for them to call me to text me.. (Teacher 2)
	A lot of things affect our grades: the forum, participation in the synchronous lessons, homework in the application, assignments (video, listening, etc.). We learn as we do these and the more we learn, there is no need to copy. (Student 9)

Of the 29 documents that were used for the content analysis, we identified students and teachers as the target audience in all of them, while the Distance Education Guide, including information about ethical digital citizenship, was available for the general public on the school's website as well as a subheading in the student section about specific disciplinary action regarding breaches of academic integrity. Information presented in course descriptions, syllabi and assignment templates was the same across all levels. Due to the emphasis on the academic skills, B2 Level assignments were higher in number and therefore the approach to presenting information addressing use of Turnitin was different with asynchronous materials presented on the LMS. These materials were not included in the data extraction used for the content analysis. Table 2 shows the distribution of themes identified in the documents, i.e. course descriptions, syllabi, student guides, assignment templates etc. across the curricula of all four levels. It is clear that the school had transparent guidelines that addressed academic integrity by defining plagiarism, listing punitive measures, clarifying protection of copyright and providing a self-assessment checklist and rubric in advance, for the transparency of the grading system.

Table 2: Distribution of Themes Addressing Academic Integrity in the Curricula

Themes	Level	Location
Warning about plagiarism	A2, B1, B1+, B2	Course Description (LMS), Syllabi, Introduction lesson PPT
Protection of copyright	A2, B1, B1+, B2	Syllabi (LMS)
Ethical digital citizenship	All levels	DE Student Guide (LMS and the website), Public
Use of Turnitin	B2	Course Description
Punitive measures	All levels	Website, public

| Self-assessment checklists | A2, B1, B1+ | Assignment Templates (LMS) |

Note. Written information provided in the various documents across all levels of the EPP.

Of the 150 students that received the survey, 80 completed it (53.3%). The average age of students in this sample of 80 was 18.77 (*SD* = 1.04). Of the 80 students, 55 (68.8%) studied at Level 2 (B1 Level); 19 students (23.8%) studied at Level 3 (B1+ Level) and 6 students (7.5%) at Level 4 (B2 Level). The male population of students is slightly higher at this University, however to this survey 41 participants (51.2%) that responded were female. Only 18.8 % of student participants in this survey were from EMI departments, which indicates that the majority of students (81.2%) enrolled to this online course despite its non-obligatory nature.

The first item of the survey canvased students' awareness of the institutional approaches that discouraged academic misconduct. Participants gave an indication of their fairly positive attitudes towards academic integrity. Codes and themes regarding the understanding of institutional approaches (Table 3) revealed a predominantly positive understanding among students (79%), while 19 codes revealed a lack of awareness among the students about the existence of these measures. Of 80 students who completed the survey, 77 responded to the open-ended question and 61 positive codes (79%) were grouped under subthemes and finally four main themes were identified.

Table 3: Distribution of Codes (n=61) in Students' Responses (n=77) According to Themes that Discourage Academic Misconduct

Themes	Subthemes	Codes	Number of responses
Assessment	Authentic assessment	Not dull, questions discourage cheating, students' comments required, authentic assignments, unique speaking section, multimodal assignments	9
	Meaningful assessment	Assessment for learning, a good system, low-stakes assessment, multimodal assignments	5
Policing	Compulsory exam requirements	ID requirement, camera requirement, microphone requirement, use of Zoom, two devices needed, efficient and effective tool	12
	Tight exam time	Short, realistic, proportional, reasonable but tight, no time for cheating	12
	Use of Turnitin	A program that detects plagiarism, accepting that assignments are original	4

		work when submitting, system that detects copy and paste, requirement to provide sources	
	Prohibition of backtracking	Inability to go back to completed questions	3
Pedagogy	Teacher role	Teacher reminds students, teacher warns students, teacher addresses it in lessons, teacher support, teacher skills, kind and nice people	8
	Trust	Teachers trust students, University trusts students	5
Moral Anchors	Personal values	Cheating is harming /not useful, honesty	3
General Total			61

Note. A list of positive themes identified in the open-ended question of the student survey.

The student responses (*n*=80) to survey questions 2 and 3 (Figure 1), where they were asked to self-report the type of help they ask for and receive when facing a difficulty with an assignment or an exam, were largely positive. A number of the responses indicated the references to the use of translation tools (*n*=2) and the use of Internet to look up the answers (*n*=36) and this is not to be overlooked.
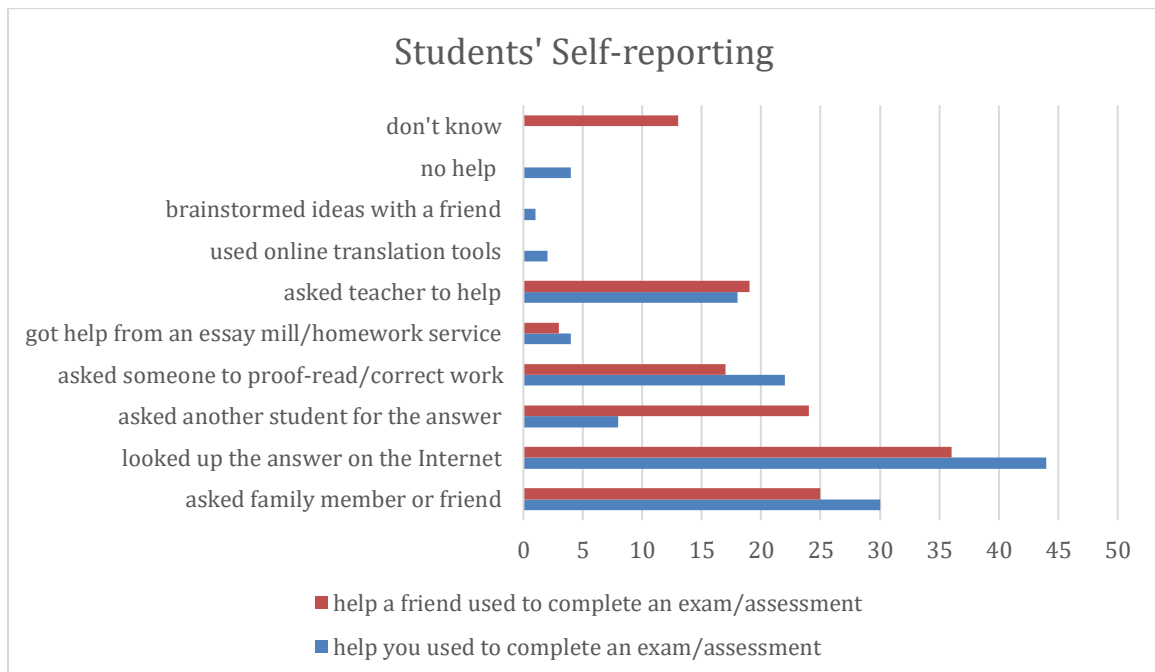

Figure 1. A comparison of students' self-reporting (n=80) of the help they or their friends get while completing an exam or an assignment.

The students reported that teachers involved in this study (*n*=6) offered help when students asked for it, gave feedback on the learning process (*n*=53) and provided detailed feedback on the students' assignments (*n*=51); these were the most frequently reported types of help from teachers (Figure 2) in the student survey. Student responses about teachers giving explicit correction for students' work (*n*=37), those giving advice on technical problems (*n*=32) and those checking drafts of their work (*n*=29) illustrate the self-reported data that were present in their teachers' practices.
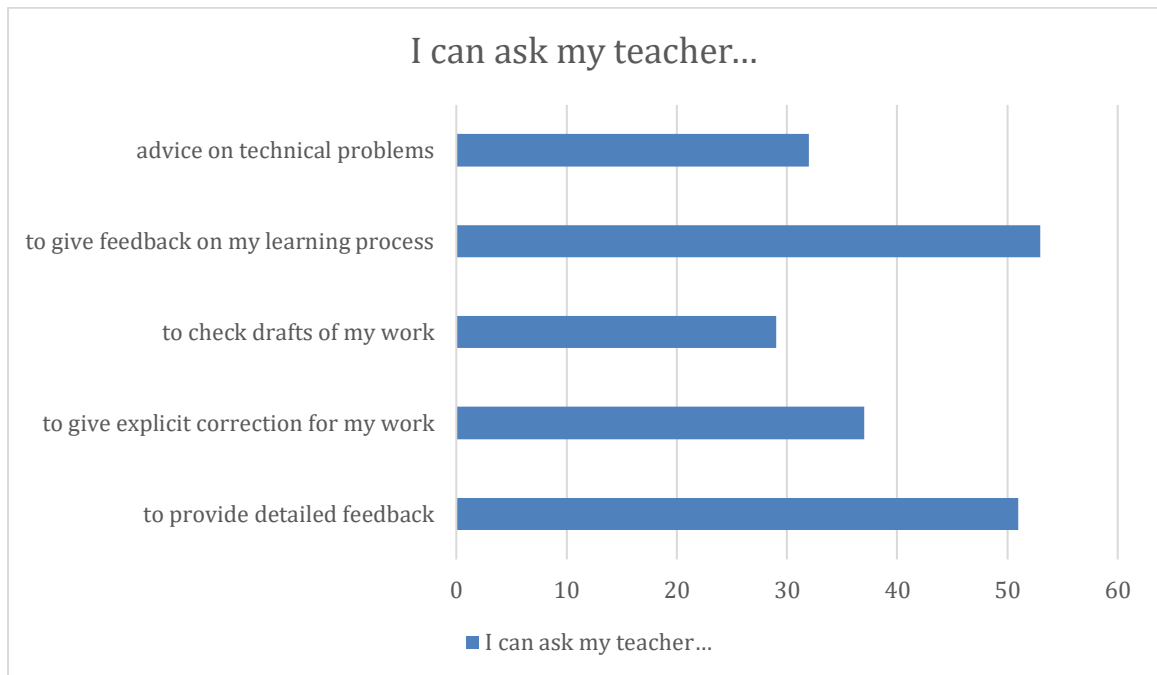

Figure 2. Students' self-reporting (n=80) of the various types of help they ask their teachers.

As data analysis continued during transcription and coding of focus groups, patterns and recurring themes became more evident. Important themes emerged, including both reasons for academic misconduct and ways of deterring misconduct, which are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Prevailing Themes and Subthemes from Two Rounds of Focus Groups with Teachers (n=6) and Students (n=13) and Teacher Reflection Prompts.

Themes	Contribution towards AI	Subthemes	
		Teachers	Students
Opportunity	Against	Online, extensive use of Internet	Online, extensive use of Internet
		Lack of monitoring	Easy to share
		Lack of control	Difficult to control
		Easy to get help	Easy to get help

		Easy to do	Social networking as a tool for sharing
		Easy to use online dictionaries	Easy to check vocabulary during exams
			Easy to sit exams for others
Attitude	Against	Lack of responsibility by students	Laziness
			Procrastination
			Poor study skills
			To guarantee success
			Bad parenting
	For	Students learning from each other	Fear of failure
		More autonomous, more	Motivated to learn
		knowledgeable, more digital skills	
Awareness and Understanding	Against	Lack of awareness about integrity	Stealing ideas
		Lack of evidence about breaches	Copy paste
		Lack of communication	Stealing other's effort
		Lack of understanding of intellectual property rights	Cheating
		Lack of skills to manage and promote integrity	Knowledge theft
		Need for training on academic misconduct	
	For		Need for punitive measures
Moral anchors	Against	Trying their luck	Trying their luck
			Self-justifying the decision
	For	Moral values	Wrong not to put an effort in synchronous lessons.
		New type of academic misconduct: are students there?	Left to students' conscience
			Showing respect when referencing
			Feeling empathy
Pedagogy	For	Meaningful assessment	Digital tools accelerate learning and easier to show resources.
		Inclusive pedagogy	Motivating through praise
		Use of collaborative digital tools	Boosting student confidence
		Promoting autonomous learning	Promoting use of own language
		Reminding students of their responsibilities	Being fair towards students
		Providing explicit instructions	Punitive measures deter cheating
			Lack of explicit instructions

		Being fair towards students	Education as entertainment during pandemic
		Emphasis on the process not grades	
		Monitoring student progress, giving feedback	
		Lack of explicit instructions related to academic integrity by teachers	
			Synchronous lessons need not be compulsory
	Against		
Community Building	For	Showing care for students	Teachers care for students
		Checking student wellbeing	Students expect to learn
		Teacher as learner	Respect for teacher's effort
		Acting like a mother, showing care and support for students	Showing empathy
			Teacher as role-model
		Continuous interaction with students	Students respect students
		Being available for students through mails, messaging and phone calls	Showing trust but also trust is not enough
			Social networking as a way of socializing and interacting
		Open and honest communication	

Opportunity, attitude, awareness and understanding, moral anchors, pedagogy and community building were the prevailing themes from two rounds of focus groups with teachers (n=6) and students (n=13) and teacher reflection prompts (Table 4). Data indicated that the switch to online learning affects the opportunity for academic misconduct during assessment as it is much easier for students to get help in various ways. Teaching practices embracing community-building were recognized both by students and teachers as contributing purely in favour of academic integrity. Other themes such as attitude, awareness and understanding, moral anchors and certain aspects of pedagogy worked both in favour and against academic integrity.

Discussion

The sudden transition to online teaching due to the pandemic presented many challenges for institutions, teachers and students. The present study had two key research aims. First it explored views of teachers and students on academic integrity in online teaching and whether students report on any breaches of academic integrity.

Second it sought to provide evidence for the relationship between community building and academic integrity in online teaching. The study was designed to answer two research questions

1. What evidence is there that a learning community has been established within the SFL during the shift to online learning for Covid-19?

2. How has the learning community in the SFL contributed to maintaining a culture of academic integrity among this group of learners?

The discussion below demonstrates that the aims of the study have been achieved. In addition, evidence is presented here to answer each of the research questions.

Focus groups offered a chance for the researchers to hear spontaneous and honest views of teachers as well as students and with a relatively high response rate to the survey (53.3%) it was clear that regardless of the sensitivity of the issue, participants responded quite positively. All four dimensions of the sense of community as described by Rovai (2002), trust, interaction, spirit, common expectations to learn, are present and demonstrated by common expectations to learn English and through low-stakes assessment tasks that promote interaction, by strong feelings of trust and the bonding that has been created between students as well as their teachers contributing towards the spirit of the community. There is evidence of a Community of Inquiry with clear indicators of teaching presence, social presence and cognitive presence that contribute towards learning (Garrison et al, 2000). All the evidence suggests that a strong sense of community has been established within the SFL despite the shift to online learning. The survey was canvasing students' awareness of the various types of institutional measures that deter academic misconduct, which altogether prove an alignment in policies and practices towards academic integrity. Even though the documentation content analysis proves there are clear guidelines deterring plagiarism, it is still disputable whether students fully understand what is expected of them in this respect.

During the discussion of academic integrity, students participating in the focus group displayed a tendency to list negative behaviours that contradict the values of academic integrity, such as taking advantage of someone else's ideas without

permission, copy-pasting from sources without proper annotations etc. The values that students hold that impact on their approach to learning and integrity become evident during focus groups and in their responses to the questionnaire. These values are often described as moral anchors. It is noteworthy that both teachers and students think that in an online context academic conduct is left mostly to the student's conscience. While respect, fairness and empathy are some of the values mentioned that will shield academic integrity, sadly the belief by some participants was that most students will still "*try their luck*" (Student 8, Teacher 2, Teacher 4) when given the opportunity. Both teacher and student participants believe that with the extensive use of the Internet, including social networking and digital tools, there are more opportunities for academic misconduct when studying online. This explains the high self-reporting of the students on using the Internet during exams and/or assignments or asking friends for help or for the answer.

The very low prevalence of serious academic misconduct as self-reported by the students can be explained by situational factors, or to be more specific by the motivation to enrol in this online course (McAllister & Watkins, 2012) and which are aligned with their expectations to learn (Rovai, 2002). This could be viewed as a strong dimension of this community that works in favour of academic integrity which answers our second research question. Students' views that they are "*doing something with love, attending lessons with interest, listening to learn all these deter academic misconduct*" (Student 7) explain the motivation of the students and their expectations to improve their English. On the other hand, the compulsory attendance to synchronous lessons triggers a new type of academic misconduct, the so-called "*invisible students in online lessons*" (Student 3, Teacher 4). It becomes even more concerning when these students that seem online but are not really there, score higher grades in the assignments than those who contribute to synchronous lessons regularly as it is reported both by teacher and student participants.

Opportunity and attitudes were two of the most prevalent themes that are noteworthy in terms of comparing and contrasting teachers' and students' views and these findings reiterate analysis from previous international studies on reasons why students opt for academic misconduct (Glendinning, in press). A striking difference is that opportunity was the top reason in this study that students give for cheating, whereas

in previous studies carried out in normal teaching circumstances it was not as prevalent (Glendinning, in press). Attitude was a stronger theme in students' responses, particularly because laziness was mentioned frequently as a perhaps cultural trait and attitude working against academic integrity, however it was not mentioned at all by teachers. Content analysis of the discussions proved that, to some extent, students lacked awareness and understanding about academic integrity, particularly when the stakes were considered to be low. To the student participants the term academic integrity often connoted the opposite meaning, breaches of academic integrity, while the teachers were clearly aware of this deficit and the need for students to have explicit training on academic integrity. Another striking difference is that teachers believed academic misconduct arises from students lacking responsibility, but also from the fact that they can learn easily from each other. Students however explained that laziness, procrastination, poor study skills, bad parenting and fear of failure are major factors that cause academic misconduct among students. Some students recognized motivation and their expectations to learn as a favourable trait among themselves in their online courses and understood that expectations to learn and motivation work in favour of academic integrity. This was not identified by teachers as a reason why (some) students do not cheat.

An essential characteristic of the student participants is that they have enrolled on this course in very unusual circumstances created by the global pandemic. Teacher participants were very helpful to their students and this is an overarching finding in this study revealed both in self-observation protocols of teachers and reporting of the students; there is evidence for this both in quantitative and qualitative data. Through their daily practices, teachers demonstrated their pedagogical skills during their online lessons, which contributed to the building of trust and created almost a parental relationship rich with interaction, which eventually translated into community building.

Building a community in an online context is crucial, even when there is an alignment between policies, guidelines, expectations and practice from students regarding academic integrity. This alignment is evidenced in this study by triangulating various sources of data used. Although it exists, clearly it does not fully deter academic misconduct. In this study there is an unusual affinity between teachers and students,

mainly due to the small classroom sizes (average n=18) despite being online. A community where individuals trust each other is likely to show more integrity (Fishman, 2009) and even though students feel their teachers care, as a student participant stated "*it might deter cheating a bit, but it is not enough*". With all the opportunity that has been created with this sudden transition to online teaching and combined with the student's intention to cheat, then all the effort to build trust and show love and care might go in vain, because:

> *I love you but I am going to cheat – would be the only thing to say.* (Student 4)

Limitations of the study

There are limitations inherent in studying a sample of Turkish participants and the survey respondents are all Turkish students studying in Turkey, from various parts of the country holding similar beliefs and cultural backgrounds and do not represent the characteristics associated with diverse populations of international EFL learners. This homogeneity of sampling is due to the absence of international students during the sampling as the pandemic affected their dates of enrolment to the studies. Given the fact that this study aimed to explore the role of community building, researchers carefully selected a representative group of teachers and their student groups thus convenient sampling was chosen. The number of participants in this study (N=86) and the potential for self-selection bias of student respondents requires consideration when results are interpreted. However, this limitation was managed by a further in-depth exploration of students' opinions in the focus groups. Last but not least, while one of the researchers was external and had no prior involvement in educating the students involved in the study, the local researcher acknowledges possible researcher bias stemming from her active teaching role and her relationship with students as well as her proactive role in the design of subject curricula. The researchers may overlook the affordances of emergency remote teaching in an EFL classroom and the impact of technological problems on students' work on their assignments, all these possibly working against the favour of academic integrity.

Conclusions

The pandemic moved higher education rapidly to online platforms, allowing little time to prepare and switch to the right mind-set. Teachers worked hard to adapt

their pedagogy, acquire new skills and create the best teaching conditions possible by offering care and support for their students to uphold their hopes and motivation. The purpose of this research was to relate community building in online classes to promotion of academic integrity along with an alignment of guidelines, assessment and teaching practices. We found out that we can build trust and strong connections in online classes by being consistent through appropriate pedagogy. Regardless of whether or not there is evidence of cheating, teachers should not assume that students will not cheat. Especially when surrounded by a strong sense of community, a crucial skill for teachers is balancing the need for caring and supporting students against applying objectivity and firmness at the right times.

EFL students are often not aware of the thin line between being inspired through various sources and using sources in inappropriate ways. The critical missing element appears to be explicitly addressing the issue with students and this can take place through the teaching of appropriate skills and an open discussion. This direct approach is vital in helping students succeed without resorting to cheating or plagiarism. Students are aware of the additional opportunities for cheating created through online learning and inevitably some of them will take advantage of these opportunities, even if they are not aware that this is misconduct. Direct conversations with students addressing clear expectations towards standards of academic integrity provide an important way to direct them along the right path.

Online learning has transformed EFL learners into more independent users of digital tools, with ability to absorb input and create output very rapidly. Students are becoming increasingly autonomous and this is generally a positive development. More importantly, teachers serving as role models of integrity is a good way to promote integrity among our students. Finally, the current study rests its case about the need to promote academic integrity through an alignment of policy, assessment and teaching pedagogy that embrace trust and community building. Higher education institutions investing in the building of communities of students, respecting each other as well as their teachers, can and should involve their students in discussions of academic integrity as a way to promote positive values.

With a sudden change of direction towards emergency remote teaching as the prevalent mode of instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic, an urgent need exists to address the presence and understanding of academic integrity among teachers and students. The results from this study help to inform guidance for academic staff on pedagogy, but also how to design curricula to address the emerging situation. Practical opportunities arose for the researchers to explore the relationship between students' attitudes towards group messaging and academic misconduct. The opportunities that group messaging and the use of technology have created for students cannot be ignored. The study demonstrates the need for well-considered open dialogues among teachers and students to address expectations about ethical conduct under remote study conditions. The paper has showcased considerations for one specific institution and the particular courses under study that emerged from this study for building communities that work with integrity despite new opportunities for students to engage in academic misconduct. It is anticipated that the lessons learnt here may serve as an inspiration to people in similar contexts.

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