Academic Integrity from the Perspective of Textual Identity: Insights from Pre-service EFL Teachers

Sibel Söğüt [a*]

a. Assistant Prof. Dr., Sinop University, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3395-7445 *ssogut@sinop.edu.tr

Abstract

Adapting the lens of author identity and the development of textual ownership on academic integrity, the objective of this study, which utilizes a convergent mixed-method design, is to investigate how pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers view authorship and to uncover the factors they believe lead to plagiarism. A total of 46 first-year pre-service EFL teachers participated in the study. To collect both quantitative and qualitative data, a questionnaire was used and responses to scenarios were elicited. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, whereas the qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis. This study revealed that learners had a basic understanding of plagiarism. They emphasized time constraints, heavy workload, and lack of knowledge, fear of failure, motivation, and self-confidence as reasons for violating academic integrity principles. Learners reported having a sufficient understanding of producing their own written work, providing references, and the responsibility of being an author. However, they struggled to express their ideas effectively in written form, which hindered the development of an appropriate authorial identity. This study provides pedagogical implications for enhancing their understanding of authorial identity and preventing plagiarism in tertiary-level language education. Based on these findings, a re-conceptualization of academic integrity discourse, focusing on the developmental perspective and negotiation of identities and values, is suggested.

Keywords: Academic integrity, pre-service English language teachers, authorial identity, textual ownership

Yazar Kimliği Açısından Akademik Dürüstlük: İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Görüşleri Üzerine bir Araştırma

Öz

Akademik dürüstlüğü, ikinci dil ediniminde yazar duruşu ve metin sahipliği gelişimi bağlamında inceleyen bu araştırma yakınsayan karma desenle tasarlanmıştır ve İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının akademik dürüstlüğe dair görüşlerini incelemeyi; akademik dürüstlük ilkelerinin ihlal edilmesindeki olası nedenlere dair bakış açılarını ayrıntılamayı amaçlamıştır. Çalışmanın katılımcıları İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümü birinci sınıfta öğrenim gören 46 öğretmen adayından oluşmaktadır. Sormaca yoluyla toplanan nicel veriler betimsel istatistiklerle, katılımcıların senaryolara verdikleri yanıtlarla toplanan nitel veriler ise içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın sonucunda öğrencilerin yazar duruşu ve akademik dürüstlüğün bağdaştırılması konusunda temel düzeyde bir bakış açılarının olduğu saptanmıştır. Öğrencilerin akademik dürüstlük ilkelerine uymama konusundaki sıraladıkları nedenler arasında ağır iş yükü, ödevlerin tamamlanması için verilen kısıtlı süre, hata yapma korkusu, bilgi, motivasyon ve özgüven eksikliği olduğu bulunmuştur. Öğrencilerin yanıtlarından yola çıkarak yazma süreçlerinde kendi görüşlerini açıklama konusundaki yeterliliklerinin az olmasının bir yazar duruşu oluşturmada engel olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bu bulgulardan yola çıkarak öğretmen adaylarının akademik dürüstlük ilkelerine bağlı kalarak yazar duruşunu anlamalarını sağlama ve yazar duruşu konusundaki bakış açılarını zenginleştirme konusunda öğretim önerileri açıklanmıştır. Bu bulgular ve tartışma noktaları ışığında, akademik dürüstlük konusundaki söylem kalıplarının ve özelliklerinin yazmanın sosyal bir eylem, kimliklerin sunulması ve değerlerin açıklanması olarak düşünülmesi yoluyla yeniden kavramsallaştırılması önerilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Akademik dürüstlük, yazar duruşu, İngilizce öğretmen adayları, metin sahipliği

INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity has been a crucial concept that holds both global and local significance within the context of higher education. It has become a matter of profound public concern (McCabe & Pavela, 2000), triggering contemporary discussions and challenges across several disciplines and institutions (Razı & Şahan, 2021). The rise in instances of academic integrity threatens the very essence of education's value (Çelik & Lancaster, 2021) and clashes with the fundamental goals of higher education (Romanowski, 2021).

In the literature, different dimensions of violating academic integrity have been critically acknowledged. To address learners' violations of academic integrity principles, a variety of terms and types have been suggested such as inappropriate text borrowing, falsification, academic dis/honesty, falsification behaviors, cheating, and academic misconduct. Other instances encompass the invention and distortion of research results, mismanagement and inadequate documentation of data, misrepresentation of information, creation of fraudulent data, and failure to attribute contributions (Claxton, 2005). Among these, the concept of academic integrity takes a developmental stance emphasizing the internalization of moral values like honesty and integrity (Smith, 2022, p. 2). This study adopts academic integrity as a foundational concept and contextualizes plagiarism within the framework of development (Kaposi & Dell, 2012). Building upon this foundational framework, this paper aligns with the notions of the intersection between academic integrity and authorial identity.

The violation of academic integrity has been conceptualized as intentional and intentional. Intentional plagiarism refers to copying or paraphrasing information without citing the original source (Strangfeld, 2019). Unintentional plagiarism pertains to learners' unfamiliarity with citation practices and their indecisiveness of whether an idea belongs to them or is taken from another source (Strangfeld, 2019). Previous research documented grounds and connections between academic integrity and underpinning reasons behind the violations of it. Underlying reasons are reported to be time restriction, lack of language proficiency, overemphasis on assignments, peer pressure (Strangfeld, 2019), the pressure of heavy workloads (Pennycook, 1996), source attribution confusion (Breen & Maassen, 2005), and the complexity of assignments (Schrimsher et al., 2011).

Violations of academic integrity have been viewed as a significant indicator of writing development (Pecorari & Petrić, 2014). The most commonly reported issues in writing include the challenge of effectively conveying learners' ideas in their own words, creating a compelling authorial identity, mastering paraphrasing, and ensuring proper citation (Abasi et al., 2006; Ellery, 2008). This case pertains to textual plagiarism, which is "an issue of authorial identity in terms of students' perceptions of who they are as writers" (Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006, p. 114). This standpoint argues the need to treat plagiarism as a matter of "learning and development rather than as moral transgression" (Pittam et al., 2009, p. 154). This line of thought proposes a shift towards a discourse of the development of authorial practices like rhetorical intertextuality, which should be taught as an ongoing process that "needs to be nourished and contextualized" (Howard & Jamieson, 2021, p. 401). In the landscape of authorial identity, plagiarism is widely recognized as often unintentional (Pittam et al., 2009). Building on this perspective, writing encompasses the reflection of the writer's identity and self-understanding (Kang, 2017). In this case, writers establish their credibility by presenting an identity that exudes authority and conviction in their evaluations (Hyland, 2002). Relatedly, an authorial writer is considered to value writing, have confidence in writing, take ownership of the text, embrace author identity, and have rhetorical writing objectives (Cheung et al., 2018).

Embracing the developmental view of academic integrity, which encompasses "intent, interpretation, and the nature of the academic community" (Kaposi & Dell, 2012, p. 822), this study employs an inter-textual approach, viewing writing as a social practice. This approach offers insights into misconceptions, attitudes, and perceived motivations underlying violations of academic integrity (Howard & Jamieson, 2021). This study integrates the perspective of authorial identity into academic integrity because the exploration of authorial identity directly engages with the educational practices central to upholding principles of academic honesty (Pittam et al., 2009). Academic integrity as a central concern in tertiary-level language education has attracted substantial scrutiny within the Turkish educational context. (Akbulut et al., 2008; Eret & Ok, 2014; Güzel & Razı, 2018; Kaçar & Işık-Güler, 2021; Razı, 2015; Razı & Şahan, 2021; Yıldırım & Razı, 2018). Among these, one line of research documented factors influencing the tendencies of pre-service teachers to plagiarize online and the causes of plagiarism (Eret & Ok, 2014). They documented that time restrictions, workload, and perceived difficulty of assignments are reasons triggering plagiarism incidences. Institutional policies, peer pressure and individual factors which include psychological and social factors were found to be causes of internet-triggered academic dishonesty (Akbulut et al., 2008).

Recently, Çelik and Razı (2023) examined the impact of writing instruction which aims to train students to enhance technical, moral, and rhetorical intertextuality skills to eliminate plagiarism cases among Turkish secondary school students. They noted that this instruction was useful in alleviating plagiarism incidents and facilitating writing practices such as delivery of the content, style, and organization. Prior studies also documented potential causes of academic dishonesty in higher education. For example, Neumann, Leu and McDonough (2019) investigated challenges faced by L2 learners while using sources in their writing. Examining essays and interviews, they documented that plagiarism stems from the lack of comprehension of the target texts, failure to refine sources, and incorporating them into their writing through proper paraphrasing and citation. In their review article, Pecorari and Petric (2014) noted that a growing body of research focuses on terminological discrepancies, opinions regarding the significance of textual plagiarism in language acquisition, different understanding, and disciplinary variations in the perception of plagiarism. Given the diverse perspectives within the literature, there arises a need to examine L2 learners' awareness and understanding of academic integrity, particularly at the intersection of academic integrity and the development of authorial identity.

Significance of the Study

In tertiary-level language education, ensuring academic integrity continues to be a significant and contemporary aspect, and violations of academic integrity are widespread across different programs. Specifically, understanding plagiarism among pre-service teachers is significant since they become the "gatekeepers of academic honesty in their future roles as teachers" (Romanowski, 2021, p. 2). To address this emerging need, it is necessary to gain insight into their perspectives on authorship and to provide guidance on improving their authorial identity and promoting their knowledge to ensure academic integrity in written works.

Previous research has focused on authorial identity as s theoretical framework, which was formed by analyzing learner viewpoints (Abasi et al., 2006; Pittam et al., 2009), and serves as the foundation for the elimination of plagiarism. To address academic integrity and provide suggestions to prevent violations of its principles, we need to decipher learners' perceived reasons along with influential factors. According to Howard and Jamieson (2021), providing training to learners to enable the establishment of authorial identities yields long-lasting outcomes in eliminating plagiarism practices. Thus, adopting a perspective at the intersection of authorial identity and academic integrity could provide insights into the role of textual ownership development from a developmental perspective. Accordingly, the present study would provide insights into the learners' understanding of the grounds and connections between academic integrity and textual ownership.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore pre-service EFL teachers' stances towards the intersection of textual authorship and academic integrity and examine their perceived reasons for violating the principles of academic integrity at the tertiary level. Addressing the viewpoints regarding the multi-faceted nature of academic integrity, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How do pre-service EFL teachers perceive the concepts of authorship and textual ownership that surround the landscape of academic integrity?
2. What are their perceived reasons for violating principles of academic integrity?

METHOD

Research Design

Drawing on the mixed methods paradigm, this exploratory study addresses a convergent mixed-method design to decipher a composite picture of the participants' understanding of academic integrity in higher education. This type of design enabled the collection of quantitative and qualitative data in parallel and their analysis separately. After the data collection stage, the results were merged to reveal a composite picture of the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the Student Authorship Questionnaire (SAQ) developed by Pittam et al., (2009), which formed the quantitative data of the study, was used to elicit responses from pre-service English language teachers about their understanding and perspectives of academic integrity. For the qualitative data, Avoiding Plagiarism Scenarios (2015) was used to gather their evaluation of the scenarios by focusing on assessing the severity of the behavior and whether a particular action constitutes academic misconduct. The

rationale behind using both forms of data collection tools is to provide a complementary and composite picture of the intersection between their conceptualization of authorship and academic integrity. This intersection could establish grounds for and connections between how they perceive textual authorship in the landscape of academic integrity. To support this source of data, the participants were asked to reflect on the reasons of plagiarism incidents and whether they read the writing skills course policy about plagiarism.

Participants

This study was conducted in an EFL context at a Turkish state university. Convenient sampling was used to recruit participants. A total of 46 first-year pre-service EFL teachers voluntarily participated in the study after completing writing skills course delivered by the researcher. The writing skills course, which adopts a process-genre-based approach, was delivered during the spring semester of 2022. In the course syllabus, they were provided with an academic integrity policy statement, including the definition of plagiarism and the types of academic integrity violations. At the beginning of the semester, they were also provided with a sample demonstration of similarity detection on Turnitin, which is similarity detection software. Upon completion of the course, a questionnaire and evaluation of scenarios were shared with 62 students. As part of the ethical principles, participants were informed about the confidentiality and purpose of the study through a consent form.

Data Collection and Analysis

The Student Authorship Questionnaire (SAQ) developed by Pittam et al. (2009) was administered to the participants voluntarily. This data collection instrument contained 17 items with a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The items focused on eliciting participants' understanding of authorship, authorial identity, and approaches to writing. More specifically, the questionnaire items address "aspects of authorial identity (confidence in writing-items 5, 6, 12, 15, 16; understanding authorship-items 1, 2; and knowledge to avoid plagiarism-items 3, 4, 8), and reflect approaches to writing (pragmatic-items 10, 11, 17, 18; top-down-items 7, 14, and bottom-up-items 9, 13)" (Pittam et al., 2009, p. 162). The reliability of the original questionnaire was "0.69 for confidence in writing, 0.62 for knowledge to avoid plagiarism, and 0.46 for pragmatic approach to writing" (Pittam et al., 2009, p. 163). Additionally, selected scenarios (from the Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College) were used to elicit their understanding of plagiarism in a concrete way and provide a complementary picture of the topic. The participants were provided with four scenarios (Appendix B) and were asked to identify whether a case is plagiarism and to rate the seriousness of the instances of plagiarism with the elaboration of their perspectives about the underlying reasons. Complete data were included in the analysis and incomplete responses were eliminated.

The data were analyzed in two phases. Initially, the quantitative data revealed from the participants' responses to the questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the mean scores and standard deviations. According to Pittam et al. (2009), higher scores indicate more authorial responses to the items in the confidence in the writing section of the questionnaire, which includes the concepts of understanding authorship, knowledge to avoid plagiarism, and a top-down approach to writing. On the other hand, higher scores denote fewer authorial responses for the items in pragmatic and bottom-up approaches to writing. After the quantitative analysis, the qualitative data revealed from their responses to the scenarios were analyzed. The qualitative data analysis stages suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018) were followed to elicit the emerging codes and themes. Accordingly, a data-driven strategy was used to develop a list of significant statements, identify the meaning units in learner responses, label emerging ideas through specific codes, and cluster and organize them into broader themes. A peer debriefing technique was used to ensure the credibility of the elicited codes and themes. After the analyses of the qualitative and quantitative data, the results were merged and presented in line with each question. To validate the findings revealed from the qualitative data, a peer debriefing protocol was organized with another researcher to further discuss the interpretations of scenarios and conclusions drawn from them. In the findings section, codes and themes were elaborated, and related excerpts of participants' responses were presented without making any changes in linguistic accuracy and clarification.

Research Ethics

This study followed the guidelines containing the principles and codes of conduct suggested by the American Psychological Association (APA). The required stages set by the institutional ethics committee were followed. To ensure the confidentiality of the study, the responses to the questionnaire and cases in the scenarios were anonymous to avoid collecting any potential information that might have provided identifying information in relation to the respondents' identities. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the Institutional Human Sciences Ethics Committee (Approval number: 2022/151).

FINDINGS

Students' Understanding of Authorship and Authorial Identity

The first set of questions examined pre-service EFL teachers' understanding of authorship and their perception of authorial identity. These findings were derived from the participants' responses to the questionnaire items. Analysis of the initial question showed that 51.7% of the pre-service teachers read the course policy about plagiarism, whereas 48.3% did not read or remember the policy. Building on this initial insight, the analysis of the questionnaire results revealed that their definition of plagiarism centered on a conceptualization of the term as stealing, knowledge theft, stealing topics, using/copying someone else's work, unethical concepts, inappropriate, self-deception, violating rights, having bad consequences, and not giving credit to the owner. Further responses to the questionnaire items were classified into related categories based on Pittam et al.'s (2009) categorization of factors in the questionnaire. Confidence in writing (items 5, 6, 12, 15, 16) was about expressing concepts in their own words, enjoying writing in their own words, not finding it difficult to express topic-specific concepts, being confident, and not afraid of the impressiveness of their writing. The findings showed that participants mostly reported positive opinions about their confidence in writing. More specifically, they reported enjoying writing in their own words (M = 4.09, SD = 1.24), knowing what it means to express concepts and ideas in their own words (M = 4.20, SD = .757), and feeling confident about the impressiveness of their essay (M = 3.38, SD = .984).

The pragmatic approach to writing, specifically items 10, 11, 14, and 17, involves strategies for obtaining better grades such as using sources instead of relying solely on their own words, coping with time constraints by incorporating pre-existing material, and including a larger proportion of material from various sources in their assignments. The results indicated that participants reported getting better marks when they used materials from a variety of sources (M = 3.02, SD = 1.215) when getting higher marks by writing an essay with their own words (M = 3.71, SD = .843), and they considered writing an essay as a way of making arguments based on their thoughts about the topic (M = 3.24, SD = 1.069).

In the category of understanding authorship (items 2, 3), the pre-service teachers reported knowing the meaning (M = 4.07, SD = .809) and responsibilities (M = 3.98, SD = .812) of being an author. As for their knowledge to avoid plagiarism (items 1, 2, 4, 5, 8), they reported knowing how to provide references in their written texts (M = 3.78, SD = .876) and agreed that they would never be accused of plagiarism (M = 4.18, SD = .806) because they know how to refer to which parts of their written texts are not written by them (M = 3.69, SD = 1.083). A comparison between using a top-down approach to writing (item 7) and a bottom-up approach to writing (9, 11, 13) revealed that they reported considering what to express and searching for related evidence (M = 4.13, SD = .894), while they looked for available material and thought about the ways to put them together (M = 3. 96, SD = .852). Their responses to the other items in this category showed that they reported employing bottom-up processes less in their written products.

Students' Perceived Reasons for Violating Academic Integrity

The findings addressed in the second research question were derived from the responses to the scenarios. Overall, these findings revealed the pre-service EFL teachers' perceived reasons for plagiarism. Analysis of the responses revealed three emerging themes: (a) understanding authorship, (b) knowledge to avoid plagiarism, (c) confidence in writing. Their responses to the scenarios revealed that they provided justifications or rationalization the principles of academic integrity. Their concerns regarding their competencies and affective factors were more widespread. Specifically, they referred to underpinning factors such as fear of making mistakes, lack of self-esteem, motivation, self-confidence, and patience. They also reported concerns about their competencies, such as having a lack of creative thinking skills, no sense of achievement in life, lack of knowledge about the topics in writing, and lack of language expressions to convey their messages. Their reported reasons for violating the principles and rules of academic integrity are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Pre-service Teachers' Perspectives about the Potential Reasons for Violating Academic Integrity

Time management	heavy workload, loaded assignments
	time constraints for assignments
	no willingness to spend time on the assignments

Competencies	laziness
	lack of creative thinking
	lack of knowledge
	having no idea about the subject
	having no sense of achievement in life
	lack of information to express themselves
Affective factors	fear of failure
	feeling demotivated
	low self-confidence
	lack of self-esteem
	lack of moral values
	lack of patience
Pragmatic justifications	an easier and faster way to complete a written work
	providing a better understanding of the content
	difficulty of producing an original work
	getting a good grade
	nature of the topics

Regarding the pre-service teachers' responses to open-ended questions in the scenarios, the first scenario elicited reflections about using an automated translation program on the internet. Of the respondents who indicated that this case was a violation of academic integrity, 50 % of them considered it to be serious or moderately serious academic dishonesty. One prominent finding was that 50% of the respondents did not report this case as a crucial violation of academic integrity. As for their reasons, the pre-service teachers considered this case as plagiarism and they were found to provide longer and more elaborated explanations and justifications. The respondents who considered this case as academic dishonesty indicated that using an automatic translation program is unfair, the software creates the sentences by hindering the original work and diversity of ideas, by violating the responsibilities of the writer, and by hindering learning and expression of thoughts, as exemplified below:

The student in the example is avoiding the work they need to put into their assignment by plagiarizing a online translator. Translating online is not inherently bad, translating certain words or lexical chunks might actually help you, but using the translator to try and rearrange the word orders by putting the entire sentence in and presenting that as your work is plagiarism because a software wrote that sentence, not you. (Student 5)

All language has a particular set of expressing thoughts. Thinking in one way then translating it with software would mean someone else would express that idea for you, and I believe that is not honest. (Student 16)

The participants who considered this case as an appropriate writing pattern pointed out that such software programs can make the essay better, help put the work together, provide accurate language use, and enhance the effectiveness of expressions. They also highlighted that the programs are publicly available and that it is not copying a person's work or stealing a piece of information. Some of the respondents referred particularly to the intention of the students in the scenarios as shown below:

I think that it is not plagiarism because the student does not steal the knowledge of other people, they solely use a program to express their knowledge in an easier way. (Student 23)

They also implied a lack of understanding about textual ownership and a weak sense of ownership of written work through their responses. Some learners referred to the violation of academic dishonesty as being committed by a human agent and considered other sources as an acceptable way of forming their written texts. Further, it was revealed that they considered writing a text as a product rather than a process to be completed through multiple stages, as exemplified below:

It's not plagiarism because you write your own ideas and knowledge. The internet helps you to put them together. (Student 41)

I think that it is not plagiarism because the student does not steal the knowledge of other people, they solely use a program to express their knowledge in an easier way. (Student 18)

Scenario two addressed the similarity of work that emerged as a result of the pair work and collaboration on an assignment. The majority of them (57.1 %) did not acknowledge this as academic dishonesty and 91.7 % of the participants considered this case as moderately serious or not serious at all. The majority of the respondents highlighted that this case cannot be treated as plagiarism because it is collaboration, inspiring and scaffolding each other, interacting, and exchanging ideas. They also put a specific emphasis on the course instructor's guidance to work together and on the nature of group work by legitimizing a proportion of their work, as illustrated below:

I think this is not plagiarism. Because most of work belongs to me and it is allowed to discuss the problem so I think this is natural to offer some identical portions. (Student 10)

In line with this finding, some of them considered the nature of collaboration as a reason and result of plagiarism, as exemplified below:

Having been given instructions for group work beforehand makes it quite natural for such situations to occur (Student 22).

Afterall there is an aim of encouraging collaboration, so it doesn't count as plagiarism. Except the scenarios where the assignment should be done by individuals (Student 13).

The participants who considered this case as plagiarism emphasized the unequal distribution of work and the need to submit their own original work. They also highlighted the necessity of fair and equal contribution of the pairs and the differences in the expression of ideas and structuring of the style.

It is plagiarism because in group works everyone should do some work. Everyone should be equal. When I use my group members' findings or vice versa, this is stealing (Student 8).

I think collaboration is important but until a certain point. Students must do equal work (Student 16).

Scenario three examined pre-service teachers' perspectives about the acceptability of submitting work completed from another class. This scenario required them to consider whether submitting a paper assignment is similar to the one submitted in another class violates the principles of academic integrity or not. Their responses showed that 17.9 % of them did not consider it plagiarism, 14.3 % are not sure and 67.9 % thought that it was plagiarism. In terms of the severity of its seriousness, 44 % considered it a very serious action whereas 32 % considered as moderately serious, 24 % considered it not serious at all. Considering their reasons for considering it as not plagiarism they thought that anyone has the right to do everything with their work, it is not similar to submitting someone else's work, the background information and cognitive effort and processes belong to the same person. A number of misconceptions about textual ownership were uncovered through their responses as shown in the examples below:

This is not plagiarism as everything belong to me. even if I change the sentences, they are written by me and I think I can use them everywhere as long as sentences are belonging to me (Student 44).

Because it's not someone else's work. It's mine and I should be allowed to use my own work however i see fit. And if the subject is the same for both classes, it's just unnecessary to write another paper. Also, if you realize both your papers are similar, it's hard to change your own verbalization to make them look different and it's very unnecessary and is just time consuming. (Student 6).

The pre-service teachers considering this act as plagiarism pointed out that it is not ethical and fair, it is stealing your own work and self-plagiarism, it is recycling the work without citing, and there is a necessity to change the verbalization of the original work. They also highlighted the need to present an original work as exemplified below:

It is complete plagiarism. First, no allowance is given to use my work. Secondly, there is no citing either referring. Besides, I think this is disrespectful (Student 3).

Even though I will be able to use my own work, it can still be count as a plagiarism. It is same as using someone else's work and changing its cover and a few sentences. Just because it is written by me doesn't mean I can plagiarize myself (Student 24).

The most surprising result emerging from this study was the responses to scenario four, which addressed whether making a friend edit their work by developing new arguments, clarifying their written products, and providing major contributions to make the essay more persuasive violates academic honesty or not. Overall, 42.9 % did not consider this case as a violation of the principles of academic integrity whereas 32.1 % considered it as academic dishonesty. They further elaborated that this case refers to a reciprocal collaboration that enables them to learn and get inspiration and feedback from each other. They also noted that it is not similar to providing identical products, rather it is accepting help from a voluntary friend, as shown in the following responses:

I think this is not plagiarism because she re-writes sentences and she is volunteer about it. (Student 41)

Those sentences and the content belong to me. Needless to say, I didn't get anybody else's work. I don't think it is bad that if one of my friends help me out looking over my paper or correcting some places in it. My friend can help me out on the condition that he/she won't write it over again with their own ideas, only then it would be plagiarism. (Student 12)

The pre-service teachers considering this case as academic dishonesty were found to provide further justification and the necessity of providing original work. They also referred to the need to provide references and give credit to the original work as shown below:

It is a plagiarism since this is the same situation as using someone else's sentences and work without giving them credits and expressing them as source (Student 45).

It is plagiarism because in addition to our own work, there are also the sentences of our friend. It would be more appropriate for our friend to share his suggestions with us instead of rewriting and for us to blend and write according to our own style (Student 21).

Different from these responses, some respondents referred to the writer's intention in providing and getting help with their assignments. The following response indicates the moral values of helping each other without providing major contributions.

If she only gave advice on what and how should i change the crooked parts, it wouldn't be plagiarism because that would be an actually good chance to learn and develop myself which is the moral aim of the assignments. But writing some parts of my homework by his own and even adding some extra arguments is little too much to be considered as innocent. (Student 32)

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study explored pre-service English language teachers' reflections on the grounds and connections of textual authorship in the context of academic integrity and their insights into reasons for violating academic integrity. The results showed that while more than half of the participants reported reading course policy statements for academic integrity, the others did not. Pre-service teachers shared their responses, indicating a foundational understanding of academic integrity. They noted that they were comfortable with their writing and that they prioritized obtaining better scores using a variety of sources.

To gain further insight into the participants' reflections on the causes of academic integrity violations, their responses to avoiding plagiarism scenarios were examined. Three themes emerged: (a) an understanding of authorship, (b) knowledge to prevent copying, and (c) self-confidence in writing. They expressed their views centered on a balance between top-down and bottom-up writing processes and indicated an understanding of plagiarism elimination techniques. Their responses indicated a preference for considering the content and searching for evidence over focusing on material integration. While sharing their positive attitudes towards expressing concepts in their own words, they highlighted concerns regarding affective factors, such as fear of making mistakes, low self-esteem, lack of willingness, and confidence in writing.

Another prominent finding was their differing perspectives on the use of automated translation software for writing. While some participants reported benefits such as improving linguistic correctness and efficacy, others considered them unethical ways of completing written work. They were found to legitimize the use of these tools as a way to provide accurate language use, to enhance the effectiveness of their expressions. Surprisingly, some learners referred to the violation of academic dishonesty through human agency; nevertheless, they considered using other sources as an acceptable way to form their written texts. Since learners face persistent challenges in understanding, selecting, and integrating source information (Neumann et al., 2019), providing training on automated paraphrasing tools and enhancing their detection is needed (Roe & Perkins, 2022). Further programs designed to enhance academic writing skills could potentially eliminate plagiarism (Perkins et al., 2018).

This study shown that they provided their perceived reasons for violating the principles of academic integrity in relation to several factors of time management, competencies, affective factors, and pragmatic justifications. This study provides evidence in relation to the reasons for violating the principles of academic integrity. These practices were found to be motivated by helping friends, social norms governing this behavior, time pressure, peer pressure, increasing course grades, fear of failure, laziness, lack of deterrence, and competitiveness (Devlin, 2003; Franklyn-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Noah & Eckstein, 2001; Park, 2003). Learners are expected to fulfill multilayered requirements of writing due to the need to establish a stance towards their propositions, get behind their words, and adopt an authorial stance (Hyland, 2002). This may pose a stumbling block in the learners' construction of an authorial identity unless they are provided with ways and strategies to achieve these goals and meet the requirements. Examining learners' construction of authorial voice through citations, Sun et al. (2022) revealed that the underlying elements influencing these practices include are language proficiency, reading skills, subject knowledge, commitment, and time constraints in writing, knowledge construction, and self-beliefs. Enhancing these practices and considering the underlying elements could help

strengthen the connection between adopting an appropriate authorial identity and ensuring academic integrity in writing. To overcome the aforementioned challenges, previous research proposed the integration of positive ethics framework (Gregory, 2021; Howard & Jamieson, 2021) and suggested a shift from asking "Is this good enough?" to "Is this the best it can be?" (Pecorari & Sutherland-Smith, 2021, p. 308).

Regarding reflections on textual ownership, the participants reported a preference for employing a top-down approach, involving contemplating ideas and seeking relevant evidence. There was less emphasis on employing a bottom-up approach that pertains to working with available materials. In previous research, learners' lack of knowledge about writing a specific genre (Rocha-Erkaya, 2009), and their lack of language proficiency to express their viewpoints (Pecorari & Petríc, 2014) were reported to be potential reasons for their violations. Another intriguing finding was the differing perspectives of peer-collaborated academic dishonesty. While some participants reported getting a significant contribution from a friend in the written work is a violation of academic integrity due to a lack of originality, others viewed it as collaborative work. Challenging these entrenched fallacies, providing genre exposure, and enhancing critical thinking skills could make major contribution to authorial identity development (Yeh, 2021).

The learners' lack of awareness of the types of violating academic integrity strengthens the idea that awareness-raising activities on the forms of plagiarism and representation of an authorial stance in writing are crucial components in higher education. Higher education institutions mainly use deterrent interventions and penalties to overcome violations of academic integrity although there is no consensus on the correct behavior (Gregory, 2021). Nevertheless, punishment may not be a useful strategy for changing learners' perceptions of academic dishonesty, because those who did not encounter negative consequences for academic dishonesty did not have higher rates of academic dishonesty than those who did not (Ives, 2017). Discussions surrounding preventive actions should be reconceptualized. In this regard, adopting an intertextuality-oriented writing pedagogy could help eliminate plagiarism incidents (Çelik & Razı, 2023). Proposed by Howard and Jamieson (2021), this approach supports rhetorical intertextuality by teaching learners to "write from sources rhetorically, in a dialogue that involves themselves, their sources, and their audience" (p. 397). This perspective suggests positive ethics and prioritizes engagement of students in interaction with texts and their sources (Howard & Jamieson, 2021). Another effective policy could be considering learners as members of the academic community (McNeill, 2022).

In higher education institutions, guidelines have been proposed to cultivate the conventions of paraphrasing, quoting, and summarizing to ensure honesty and integrity in writing. Further, higher education institutions could develop strategies to cultivate a deeper understanding of authorship, highlighting the importance of original work, and offering advice on ethical writing techniques. Adopting a developmental perspective on academic integrity could also lead to long-lasting effects. Specifically, to eliminate breaches of academic integrity, learners should be viewed as authors rather than violators of principles and moral values (Howard & Jamieson, 2021). Although the intentional and unintentional dichotomy provides insights into academic dishonesty, it mirrors outcomes of entrenched inequalities grown across K-12 educational histories (Strangfeld, 2019). Thus, we need the dissemination of clear guidelines, course policies, and appropriate practices across different grade levels. Further, fostering learners' academic literacy skills can be facilitated through the employment of academic integrity policies and enhancing the development of textual ownership. Notably, we need a reconceptualization of the discourse of academic integrity with a particular focus on the role of academic literacies as a social practice (Thacker, 2022) and negotiation of identities.

As a further study, the educational philosophies of the institutions and the previous academic experiences of the learners may be the subject of future studies. Future research could investigate how cultural differences and contextual factors affect how academic integrity is perceived and examine the efficacy of initiatives to encourage ethical writing among pre-service EFL teachers. Teachers' challenges in their classes and learners' difficulties stemming from their language proficiency and background knowledge of a topic remain to be elucidated.

Statements of Publication Ethics: The researcher followed the ethical guidelines and principles by ensuring the anonymity of participant responses throughout all phases of the study. The participants were involved in the study on a voluntary basis after the completion of the semester to avoid the potential impact of the course instructor and course-related concerns. The study was approved by Sinop University Ethics Committee of Human Research with a decision number 2022/151 on 15.09.2022.

Conflict of Interest: None

REFERENCES

Abasi, A. R., N. Akbari, and B. Graves. (2006). Discourse appropriation, construction of identities, and the complex issue of plagiarism: ESL students writing in graduate school. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 15*, 102-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2006.05.001

Avoiding Plagiarism: Scenarios (2015). Leland speed library, Mississippi College: Clinton, MS. http://mc.libguides.com/plagiarism/scenarios

Akbulut, Y., Şendağ, S., Birinci, G., Kiliçer, K., Şahim, M. C., & Odabaşi, H. F. (2008). Exploring the types and reasons of internet-triggered academic dishonesty among Turkish undergraduate students: Development of the Internet Triggered Academic Dishonesty Scale (ITADS). *Computers & Education, 51*(1), 463-473. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2007.06.003

Breen, L. & Maassen, M. (2005). Reducing the incidence of plagiarism in an undergraduate course: The role of education. *Issues in Educational Research, 15*(1), 1-16.

Cheung, K. Y. F., Elander, J., Stupple, E. J. N., & Flay, M. (2018). Academics' understandings of the authorial academic writer: A qualitative analysis of authorial identity. *Studies in Higher Education*, *43*(8), 1468-1483. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2016.1264382

Chien, S. C. (2014). Cultural constructions of plagiarism in student writing: Teachers' perceptions and responses. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 120-140.

Claxton, L. D. (2005). Scientific authorship: Part 1. A window into scientific fraud?. *Mutation Research/Reviews in Mutation Research*, *589*(1), 17-30.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage publications.

Curtin University. (2010). Referencing. Retrieved April 9, 2022, from https://libguides.library.curtin.edu.au/uniskills/referencing.

Çelik, Ö., & Lancaster, T. (2021). Violations of and threats to academic integrity in online English language teaching. *The Literacy Trek, 7*(1), 34-54. https://doi.org/10.47216/literacytrek.932316

Çelik, Ö., & Razı, S. (2023). From transgressors to authors promoting EFL writing through academic integrity integrated instruction. *System*, 103101. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103101

Devlin, M. (2003). The problem with plagiarism. *Campus Review, 12,* 4-5.

Eret, E., & Ok, A. (2014). Internet plagiarism in higher education: tendencies, triggering factors and reasons among teacher candidates. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 39*(8), 1002-1016. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2014.880776

Franklyn-Stokes, A., & Newstead, S. E. (1995). Undergraduate cheating: who does what and why?. *Studies in Higher Education*, *20*(2), 159-172.

Gregory, J. L. (2021). Plagiarism as a social contract, a new way to approach plagiarism. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *19*(3), 407-424. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-021-09409-1

Güzel, S., & Razı, S. (2018). ELT academics' perceptions of plagiarism: Cross-cultural investigation of degrees. Paper presented at the 4th Plagiarism across Europe and Beyond Conference, Fostering academic integrity through consistent and transparent approaches, 9-11 May, Ephesus, Turkey.

Howard, R. M., & Jamieson, S. (2021). The ethics of teaching rhetorical intertextuality. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *19*(3), 385-405.

Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and invisibility: Authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics, 34*(8), 1091-1112. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(02)00035-8

Ives, B., Alama, M., Mosora, L. C., Mosora, M., Grosu-Radulescu, L., Clinciu, A. I., ... & Dutu, A. (2017). Patterns and predictors of academic dishonesty in Romanian university students. *Higher Education*, *74*, 815-831. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-016-0079-8

Kaçar, I. G., & Işık-Güler, H. (2021). Internet-based text-matching software and EFL preservice teachers' awareness of academic integrity: A case study in the Turkish context. In *Redefining the Role of Language in a Globalized World* (pp. 243-305). IGI Global.

Kang, J. (2017). Epistemic stance construction in L1 and L2 undergraduate argumentative writing. *SNU Working Papers in English Linguistics and Language, 15*, 53-67.

Kaposi, D., & Dell, P. (2012). Discourses of plagiarism: moralist, proceduralist, developmental and inter-textual approaches. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 33*(6), 813-830. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2012.686897

McCabe, D. & Pavela, G. (2000). Some good news about academic integrity. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 32*(5), 32-38. https://doi.org/10.1080/00091380009605738

McNeill, L. (2022). Changing "hearts" and minds: Pedagogical and institutional practices to foster academic integrity. In S. E. Eaton & J. Christensen Hughes (Eds.), Academic integrity in Canada: An enduring and essential challenge (pp. 487-503). Springer.

Neumann, H., Leu, S., & McDonough, K. (2019). L2 writers' use of outside sources and the related challenges. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *38*, 106-120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.02.002

Noah, H., & Eckstein, M. (2001). *Fraud and education: The worm in the apple.* Rowman & Littlefield.

Park, C. (2003). In other (people's) words: Plagiarism by university students-literature and lessons. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 28*(5), 471-488.

Pecorari, D., & Petric, B. (2014). Plagiarism in second-language writing. *Language Teaching, 47*(3), 269-302.

Pecorari, D., & Sutherland-Smith, W. (2021). Perspectives on positive academic ethics: An introduction. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *19*, 305-308. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-021-09439-9

Perkins, M., Gezgin, U. B., & Roe, J. (2018). Understanding the relationship between language ability and plagiarism in non-native English speaking business students. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *16*, 317-328. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-018-9311-8

Pennycook, A. (1996). Borrowing others' words. *TESOL Quarterly, 30*(2), 201-230. https://doi:10.1017/S0261444814000056

Pittam, G., Elander, J., Lusher, J., Fox, P., & Payne, N. (2009). Student beliefs and attitudes about authorial identity in academic writing. *Studies in Higher Education, 34*(2), 153-170. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070802528270

Razı, S. (2015). *Development of a rubric to assess academic writing incorporating plagiarism detectors.* SAGE Open.

Razı, S, Şahan, Ö. (2021). Emergency online language education and academic integrity. *The Literacy Trek, 7*(1), 1-4.

Rocha-Erkaya, O. (2009). Plagiarism by Turkish students: Causes and solutions. *Asian EFL Journal, 11*(2), 86-103.

Roe, J., & Perkins, M. (2022). What are Automated Paraphrasing Tools and how do we address them? A review of a growing threat to academic integrity. *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, *18*(1), 15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40979-022-00109-w

Romanowski, M. H. (2021). Preservice teachers' perception of plagiarism: a case from a college of education. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *20*(3), 289-309.

Schrimsher, R. H., Northrup, L. A., & Alverson, S. P. (2011). A survey of Samford University students regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 7*(1), 3-17. https://doi.org/10.21913/IJEI.v7i1.740

Smith, M. P. (2022). Dialogic problematization of academic integrity education. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 1-26.

Strangfeld, J. A. (2019). I just don't want to be judged: Cultural capital's impact on student plagiarism. *SAGE Open*, *9*(1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018822382

Sun, Q., Kuzborska, I., & Soden, B. (2022). Learning to construct authorial voice through citations: A longitudinal case study of L2 postgraduate novice writers. *System*, *106*, 102765. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102765

Thacker, E. J. (2022). Assessment brokering and collaboration: Ghostwriter and student academic literacies. In *Contract Cheating in Higher Education: Global Perspectives on Theory, Practice, and Policy* (pp. 287-302). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Yeh, E. (2021). Intentional plagiarism? Strategies for teaching language learners academic integrity. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, *57*(3), 132-137.

Yıldırım, B., & Razı, S. (2018). English language teaching students' attitudes towards plagiarism and their locus of control. In S. Razı and I. Glendinning (Eds.). *Towards Consistency and Transparency in Academic Integrity*, (pp. 1-16). Peter Lang.

APPENDIX

Appendix A. Student Authorship Questionnaire (Pittam, Elander, Lusher, Fox & Payne, 2009)

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
1	I know how to provide references for citations and quotations in my written work.	2.2	6.7	17.8	57.8	15.6	3.78	.876
2	I know what it means to be the author of a piece of written work.	0	6.7	8.9	55.6	28.9	4.07	.809
3	I know what the responsibilities of an author are	0	6.7	13.3	55.6	24.4	3.98	.812
4	I would never be accused of plagiarism	0	2.2	17.8	40	40	4.18	.806
5	I enjoy writing in my own words	8.9	2.2	11.1	26.7	51.1	4.09	1.240
6	I find it difficult to express topic-specific concepts in my own words	4.4	31.1	37.8	11.1	15.6	2.98	1.076
7	When writing an essay I begin by thinking about what I want to say, and then look for evidence relating to that.	2.2	4.4	6.7	51.1	35.6	4.13	.894
8	I know how to show which parts of my essay were not written by me.	2.2	17.8	17.8	37.8	24.4	3.69	1.083
9	Doing an assignment is all about finding material in books, journals and the Internet and arranging it in the form of an essay	17.8	22.2	35.6	17.8	6.7	2.73	1.156
10	I just don't have time to put everything in my own words when writing an essay.	24.4	31.1	20	20	4.4	2.49	1.199
11	I get better marks when I use more material taken directly from books, journals or the Internet in my essays.	13.3	22.2	22.2	33.3	8.9	3.02	1.215
12	I know what it means to express a concept or idea in my own words.	0	2.2	13.3	46.7	37.8	4.20	.757
13	When writing an essay I begin by looking for material I can include and then think about how I can put it together.	0	13.3	4.4	60	22.2	3.96	.852
14	Writing an essay is all about making an argument based on my own thoughts about the subject.	4.4	22.2	28.9	33.3	11.1	3.24	1.069
15	I am confident that when I write an essay it will look impressive.	2.2	13.3	44.4	24.4	15.6	3.38	.984
16	I am afraid that what I write myself about a topic in my essay will look weak and unimpressive.	8.9	28.9	31.1	20	11.1	2.96	1.147
17	I get higher marks by writing more of my essay in my own words.	2.2	4.4	26.7	53.3	13.3	3.71	.843

Appendix B. (Avoiding Plagiarism Scenarios, 2015)

Scenario 1: You are in an advanced language class and are stumped trying to write a composition so you write some sentences in English and use an automatic translation program on the Internet to help you out. This is okay, since it's like using a dictionary, and the professor said dictionaries were allowed. Is that academically honest?

Yes

No

Not Sure

a) Why is this or is not plagiarism?

b) If you consider this plagiarism, how serious do you think this is?

Not Serious at all

Moderately Serious

Very Serious

Yes: 44.8%	Not Serious at all : 50%
No: 31%	Moderately Serious: 37.5%
Not sure: 24.1%	Very Serious: 12.5%

Scenario 2: Your professor allows collaboration on homework assignments and encourages study groups but still expects you to do your own work. You and two friends discuss the problem and work through it together. Portions of your final work are identical, but that should be okay, since most of the work is your own. Can you be charged with academic dishonesty?

Yes

No

Not Sure

a) Why is this or is not plagiarism?

b) If you consider this plagiarism, how serious do you think this is?

Not Serious at all

Moderately Serious

Very Serious

Yes: 32.1%	Not Serious at all: 37.5%
No: 57.1%	Moderately Serious: 54.2%
Not sure: 10.7%	Very Serious: 8.3%

Scenario 3: You notice that a paper assignment in your class is just like one you wrote for another class. You change the cover sheet and a few sentences in the introduction and turn it in. This is okay because it is your own work, right?

Yes

No

Not Sure

a) Why is this or is not plagiarism?

b) If you consider this plagiarism, how serious do you think this is?

Not Serious at all

Moderately Serious

Very Serious

Yes: 17.9%	Not Serious at all: 24%
No: 67.9%	Moderately Serious: 32%
Not sure: 14.3%	Very Serious: 44%

Scenario 4: You ask a friend, who is a good writer, to look over your paper. She is happy to help and finds many awkward phrases and ambiguous assertions, which she re-writes for you. She even develops a few new arguments to help support your thesis. You are happy because she was able to express clearly and persuasively what you had been trying to say all along. Is this academic dishonesty?

Yes

No

Not Sure

a) Why is this or is not plagiarism?

b) If you consider this plagiarism, how serious do you think this is?

Not Serious at all

Moderately Serious

Very Serious

Yes: 32.1%	Not Serious at all: 42.3%
No: 42.9%	Moderately Serious: 26.9%
Not sure: 25%	Very Serious: 30.8%