

Cultures in Contact in Academic Writing: Students' Perceptions of Plagiarism

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This paper reports findings from an investigation of a group of Singaporean students' understanding of plagiarism. The investigation sought to discover if the students were able to recognise as plagiarism unacknowledged borrowing from sources in two forms: quotation and paraphrase. It further sought to determine if they perceived these forms of unacknowledged borrowing as dishonest. The findings reveal that while verbatim quotation was regarded as wrong and dishonest, unacknowledged paraphrase was not. The disparity between the students' understanding of plagiarism and that of the Western academic community points to a need to teach the discourse functions of citation in the context of teaching academic writing as a rhetorical act.