INTERTEXTUALITY AND SOURCE USE IN ACADEMIC WRITING: THE CASE OF ARAB POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study explores the use of source texts in academic writing by postgraduate students from Arab backgrounds in three UK universities. The specific focus of the study is to develop an understanding of how Arab students in the UK use sources, how they adapt to UK academic expectations, as well as how their educational backgrounds may affect their source use and adaptation to UK academic expectations.

The participants in this research included a group of 22 Arab postgraduate students from three UK universities. To respond to the research aims, the data generated included 40 (already assessed by their tutors) text-based assignments collected from the participants. The analysis used Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) typology as a starting point to explore the forms of intertextuality evident in the Arab students’ writing. A second source of data was interviews with seven students from the same group of participants. The analysis made use of the MAXQDA data analysis software, including facilitating the textual analysis of intertextuality in the student texts and the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts.

The findings suggest that unconventional use of sources does occur among this group of students, including over-reliance on sources, patchwriting, frequent use of direct quotation, and forms of paraphrasing that rely on synonym substitution. The study further suggests that unconventional use of sources may be explained by the students’ past educational experiences in their Arab home contexts. This includes a lack of written culture, low readership in the region, culture of orality, acceptability of violations of copyright, and ‘traditional’ teaching practices in the educational systems of the region. The study also shows how the students’ educational backgrounds created transition challenges for students when arriving in the academic setting in the UK. Finally, the study presents various strategies used by this group of students to adapt to the UK academic environment.

The study contributes by presenting a four level framework of intertextuality, developed from the data in this study and extending on Pecorari and Shaw’s typology. This includes intertextuality on the word, sentence, paragraph, and structure levels of the students’ academic writing. This expanded view of intertextuality, including a level-based framework, enhances understanding of the forms of intertextuality prevalent in these students’ texts, and highlights the specific challenges these Arab students have faced in their transition to become academic writers in the UK context. The thesis also concludes with what are the lessons, as evident from this study, for UK Universities in supporting Arab students.
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Dedication

To my Father,

Mother,

And my late brother Magd
Acknowledgement

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Chapter One: Introduction

This study explores how postgraduate students from Arab backgrounds incorporate information taken from different academic sources in their postgraduate academic writing projects in three UK universities. Through looking at students’ texts and their Arab educational backgrounds, the goal is to develop an understanding of intertextuality (Kristeva, 1980) in their writing, as well as the influence that their Arab educational background may have on their use of sources in their writing. In doing this, intertextuality in a broader sense will be explored through incorporating aspects of genre. Also issues around plagiarism will be explored. However, the goal is not to expose students’ plagiarism. Rather, the central concern is to investigate how students from Arab backgrounds employ source texts in their writing. Factors found to be influencing source use in academic writing have been explored in numerous previous studies (Pecorari, 2013; Shi, 2004; Howard, 1993; Pennycook, 1996). However, there is a lack of studies that focus on students from Arab backgrounds and how their background may or may not have an influence on their use of sources in writing. With the recent growth of students studying in the UK from Arab backgrounds (HESA, 2011), and especially students coming from Saudi Arabia since they have seen the largest increase between 2008-2010, there may be concerns over our lack of knowledge of the challenges these students face. Therefore, this study will investigate not only how students employ sources in their academic writing, but also investigate educational and cultural aspect of the Arab world that may have an influence on students’ performance in this respect.

1.1 Source Use in Academic Writing

Writing academic papers in university is one of the essential skills for students entering tertiary level and more particularly for postgraduate study. Postgraduate study involves writing in a more sophisticated style, and it involves many sub-skills that students are expected to have developed by the time they start their studies. The ability to incorporate source texts in written projects is one of these sub-skills, and thus, it should be one of the aspects that academic writing tutors
pay attention to (Spack, 1988). Using sources in writing requires analytical and critical thinking skills in addition to a full understanding of the conventions of using sources and the ability to reference them. These skills that postgraduate students are expected to have include responding critically to what is read in sources and heard in class discussions. Students are also expected to challenge the views they encounter, and have the ability to structure arguments and counter arguments either in written or spoken form. Thus, with regards to using sources to develop a written project, careful evaluation of the source and the ability to incorporate what is relevant to the argument is vital (Bazerman, 1995). In short, being critical in the learning process is one of the bases of the educational system of many western universities (Durkin, 2008) but this may not be the case in other parts of the world.

In the Arab world, there is a general view that learning is based on memorisation and knowledge tends to be conveyed in a teacher-centred style, where students have a less active role in the learning process (AHDR, 2003). Students are taught in lecture-like sessions and this is the case in schools as well as universities (Rugh, 2002). This makes it challenging for Arab students to pursue a postgraduate degree in western universities. In addition to the difficulty of getting integrated into a new academic context different from their home context, writing is perhaps one of the most challenging experiences students face in academia. The challenge, according to Swales (1990), stems from the view that the development of writing skills is based and depends on previous knowledge, something which is true for both native speakers and non-native speakers of English. Hoey (2001) also supported this idea and claimed that students who compose in a different culture from their own, bring their home ‘models’ of writing into their new composition context, and this may create confusion between two different perspectives; the perspectives of the Arab student writers and the perspectives of the assessors.

Not fully understanding how to incorporate source texts in writing may lead to accusations of plagiarism, which is a significant issue in academia. Universities vary in how they communicate the meaning of plagiarism in their policies. Many universities regard academic plagiarism as a serious offence and, depending on how severe it is, there usually is a range of penalties. These range from expulsion
from university as the most severe penalty, to the least harsh one of reducing the mark set for the assignment. There is also a difference in how plagiarism policies are communicated across Universities. Some place plagiarism policies within their learning and teaching regulations, while the majority place it within regulations of academic misconduct. The latter seems to communicate a stronger deterrent (Sutherland-Smith, 2011), while the former tends to see plagiarism as something that should be addressed through pedagogy.

In order to understand what may be an appropriate response to plagiarism, Park (2004) has stressed the value of the notion of academic integrity. Park suggests that plagiarism should be considered ‘a breach of academic integrity’ rather than academic misconduct. This position is closer to placing plagiarism policies within learning and teaching regulations. However, Macdonald and Carroll (2006) have criticised Park’s framework approach as providing insufficient concrete advice for how it can operate on an institutional level. They also discuss the way institutions in the UK have reacted to plagiarism, and that the most common way was using electronic detection systems to decrease the problem. This, according to the authors, portrays the issue as a student’s liability, and an institution’s responsibility is to provide a deterrent.

Clearly, plagiarism is a complex issue and prevention measures can take different forms. However, in the academic literature there has been a shift, from treating plagiarism as misconduct indicative of dishonesty or lack of integrity, to looking at exploring why, how and when published source are used in students’ assignments. Scholars like Howard (2000) and Pecorari (2003, 2008, 2013) are among many who have focussed on students’ composition to examine why, how and when sources are used.

In academic work, the incorporation of source texts in student writing has been researched using the notion of ‘intertextuality’. This term refers to the occurrence of aspects of a text which have their origin in a preceding text (Kristeva, 1980). To detect source use, software may be used to detect intertextual similarities through comparisons of the input text to other preceding texts to check originality. In spite of this, tutors still depend on their own judgment in assessing originality reports of such ‘plagiarism’ software, as issues like coincidence, software faults,
and formulaic language may occur (Pecorari, 2013). The present study will also use the notion of intertextuality, but will present an expanded notion of intertextuality to make sense of a wider range of Arab postgraduate students’ source use (see section 2.1.3).

1.2 Motivation and Interest in the Topic

My personal experience as a second language learner and later as a teacher of academic writing has prompted this research. After I obtained my BA degree in English language and literature from Cairo University in Egypt, I went to Canada to pursue a master’s degree in second language teaching. Apart from the challenges I faced to get integrated into the new academic context, writing academic papers was one of the most difficult challenges I faced as an overseas student. Other challenges included critical thinking activities, presentations, and discussions in class, all of which were new skills for me that I had to develop to be able to meet the academic requirements and to be engaged in the new academic context. I had noticed that my approach to learning was different from that of my colleagues who were more familiar with the context. I may have been making the same effort as my peers. However, the way I viewed learning was influenced by my culture and the education system I was familiar with in my home country, which is Yemen, and later Egypt from where I obtained my BA degree.

Writing was the most difficult part of my academic program at that time and getting to know the issue of plagiarism for the first time made it even more challenging. The support and training about referencing and conventions in writing was very minimal. As students, we were expected to be responsible for that type of learning on our own and this created an extra burden specifically on students who came from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Tutors directed all students to the American Psychological Association (APA) manual (which was the referencing system used by the social sciences there) in the library. The idea of referencing and writing conventions was not quite comprehended, neither by me nor by my colleagues who came from similar backgrounds as me. Many of us were struggling in that academic context and made extra efforts to be able to succeed. At the time, when other postgraduate students were focussing on more subtle aspects of research, many of us were still
learning and developing the basic necessary skills to start an academic program that was completely different from our previous experiences.

After the two-year master program that I completed in Canada, my career started in teaching EFL in Jordan and specifically teaching academic writing classes in an English department at a private university. Through teaching these classes, I was determined to transfer what I had learned about writing conventions to my students. Then later I realised that my ambition to do so was driving me in the wrong direction, because what works in one context may not necessary work in another. In 2008, when many universities in developed countries had already set up their policies about academic dishonesty, we started formulating policies that were relevant to plagiarism in our university. Being part of the quality assurance committee that was setting such policies, it seemed that those policies were not necessarily implemented or adhered to but the focus was to have them well formed for reasons such as ratings or higher education quality assurance annual checks.

My interest in issues around plagiarism started to develop more through composition courses in the same Jordanian university, and going over research projects that were assigned to my students at the end of every course. Almost all papers had no reference list and contained many copied parts that I was able to detect through the presence of sophisticated language which I recognised as not my students’ level, as well as detecting the copied parts through the Google search engine. There was no software used by the university to detect plagiarism. With my own students I took various steps. I first decided to confront my students and gave them a session on academic integrity and correct use of sources. I designated a whole lecture to talking about integrity and transparency in using source texts in writing and how acknowledging their sources is something essential in their academic life. After this session, I decided to be more lenient and gave another chance for a second submission of the assignments. The shock for me was that the second submission included the exact same problems, and all the things that I tried to communicate to my students seemed to have been useless. Thus, I realised that what I had lectured about academic writing conventions had not been understood at all. And having talked to colleagues in different departments, it seemed that the issue was tolerated in most programs and I was discouraged to act
in anyway other than the norm. Having found it difficult to respond effectively to this problem every teaching semester, my interest in researching it and exploring why it happens in our culture grew.

1.3 Research Aims and Questions

The general aim of the study is to explore the use of source texts in written projects undertaken by students from Arab backgrounds. The study has three specific objectives:

1. Firstly to investigate the forms of intertextuality evident in the writing of students from Arab backgrounds. This aims at examining whether the forms of intertextuality in the students’ texts are conventional or unconventional. Conventionality (Western norms) refers to whether there is acceptable use or non-acceptable use (unconventional) of sources as defined by academic norms. This use of intertextuality in the analysis of student writing will make use of an expanded notion of intertextuality, incorporating features of genre (see section 2.1.3).

2. Secondly, by investigating forms of intertextuality in the students’ texts, the goal is to understand if the students’ ways of using sources in their writing is shaped or influenced by their background.

3. The third objective focuses on what strategies students employ in writing that help them to adapt and to meet their UK university expectations. That is, understanding how this group of students, influenced by their background, manage to adapt to the academic context in the UK including writing their papers from sources.

The research questions that will be addressed in this study are as follows:

Research Question One: What forms of intertextuality are prevalent in the academic writing of a group of first year Arab postgraduate students?
Research Question Two: What are the students’ past experiences of academic literacy and academic writing?

Research Question Three: How do first year Arab postgraduate students adapt to the UK academic environment, specifically in relation to academic writing and source use?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This first chapter has introduced the study and presented a general overview of the topic, including a brief review of the kind of literature covered in the thesis. Furthermore, in this chapter the research aims and objectives have been explained as well as the research questions.

The second and third chapters situate the study in relation to the relevant previous literature. I organised these two chapters in relation to the three main topics of the research. The first overriding topic is academic writing. This includes a review of the literature on intertextuality, including an initial synthesis of the expanded notion of intertextuality to be used by the thesis. The second topic is plagiarism. Finally, the third topic is concerned with the Arab world as the contextual background of the students. The first chapter of the literature review comprises the first and second topics, while the second chapter of the literature review discusses issues that are related to the Arab world, including education and any other relevant aspects such as culture and history.

The fourth chapter focuses on the research design and methods used to conduct the study. Sections in this chapter include the procedures of the research in terms of data collection, selecting the participants and ethical procedures. Also in this section, I explain the details of the data which includes the students’ texts and the interviews as well as an explanation of the participants. The last part of the methods chapter includes an introduction of the analysis used to respond to the research questions of the study.
The fifth chapter responds to the first research question. It presents the framework of analysis used to look at the forms of intertextuality in the students’ texts. The chapter is organised into three sections which present the three forms of intertextuality identified by the research; indirect, conventional and unconventional intertextuality. The last section of this chapter presents the results of this analysis of the texts, along with discussion of the significance of these results.

The sixth chapter reports on the findings of the first and second series of interviews to address Research Question Two. The analysis in this section makes use of interview data, with extracts from the interviews accompanied with my own interpretations of what the students say. Also in this chapter, contextual information about the Arab world is presented in an attempt to provide a contextualised understanding of what the students say. The discussion also refers to the relevant literature to aid interpretation.

The seventh chapter responds to Research Question Three, and the analysis here again makes use of interview data. In this chapter I again base my interpretations of what the students said in the interviews using contextual information that is relevant to the different aspects of students adaptation to the UK academic environment. That is, the chapter will present insights into the students’ understandings of how they use sources in their writing in their programs in the UK, and provide insights into how they adapt to their new academic environment.

The eighth chapter presents the main findings that were drawn from this investigation. Five main findings are discussed, including how these findings contribute to the knowledge of the field. There is also a section on the implications this study has for universities in the UK that have students from Arab backgrounds. Finally, there is a section making recommendations for future research.
Chapter Two: Intertextuality in Academic Writing

This chapter presents a literature review on intertextuality in academic writing. First, I look at intertextuality in academic writing in a more general sense, and how this is an essential feature of academic writing. This includes a section on genre, and an outline of an expanded notion of intertextuality that incorporates some features of genre. Next, I look at originality, which is key in academic writing. Then, I look at the tactics of academic writing, which are the conventions used to flag and deal with intertextuality. Finally, I look at the issue of plagiarism which is often a concern related to intertextuality in academic writing.

2.1 Intertextuality

2.1.1 Introducing Intertextuality

Intertextuality has attracted a continuous interest in literary as well as non-literary studies. According to many scholars in this regard, text for postmodernists is dependent on other texts in order to create meaning. Thus, reading and writing becomes a process of networking between different texts and developing ‘textual relationships’ (Allen, 2000). Intertextuality is a term first introduced by Julia Kristeva, who was influenced by the Russian scholar Mikhail Bakhtin and the first to bring his ideas about textual relationships to a Western audience (Moi, 1986). The ideas of intertextual relationships between texts claims that one text cannot be detached from others preceding it. That is, text cannot exist in isolation and will remain part of other previous texts. This observation underlies the Bakhtinian ideas of *dialogism* and *heteroglossia*, which suggest that utterances or words do not belong to anyone and that they are contextual in nature. The production of text, therefore, involves engagement with other texts, which results in an interaction that contributes to the formation of the new text. This gives rise to what Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) refer to as multiple voiced writers. They suggest that,
‘[Bakhtin’s] notion of heteroglossia, the idea that all language-in-use is made up of bits and pieces in effect borrowed from other language users and infused with their intentions (to put it oversimply), has suggested to some composition scholars that a writer’s voice is inevitably multiple and intertextual’ (p.50).

Finally, Howard (2007) argues that this view challenges the notion of a separate ‘author-reader-text’ and he asserts that the intertextual nature of writing means that writing is, in fact, a collaboration between writers.

Intertextuality as a theory has been mostly applied in literary studies (Porter, 1986). However, in academic writing intertextuality is unavoidable and is governed by certain rules that should be followed (Crocker and Shaw, 2002). The process of using sources in academic writing involves transferring language and meanings from one text to another, thereby creating a network of relationships between the source and the new academic text. This relationship between texts is manifested through quoting, citing, borrowing, and referring to other texts in various ways (D’Angelo, 2010). In addition, later I will suggest that the relationship may be even broader than this (see section 2.1.3).

Pecorari and Shaw (2012) proposed a typology of intertextuality based on tutors responses to examples of intertextuality in student writing. Pecorari and Shaw interviewed eight Swedish university teachers about students’ academic texts. They used five pairs of texts taken from thesis drafts of L2 English biology students, collected in a previous study by the first author. The pairs of texts included a part from the students’ introduction and a part from the students’ literature review. The teachers had access, also, to the students’ reference list. Three of Pecorari and Shaw’s interviews were conducted in English and the remaining five teachers were interviewed in Swedish. Although the tutors’ judgment and explanations of students’ intertextuality were varied, the responses led to a typology of intertextuality. The first type is ‘indirect intertextuality’, which includes the use of formulaic language and other sets of phrases that may or not be signalled by the writer and which may be unnoticeable by the reader. ‘Conventional intertextuality’ refers to a clear relationship to earlier sources which includes proper referencing and legitimate uses of sources as an academic
practice. The third type is ‘unconventional intertextuality’ which refers to inappropriate use of earlier sources by lack of attribution. This may be unintentional. The fourth type is ‘deceptive intertextuality’, which refers to a direct relationship to earlier texts, but with no proper attribution and with the intention to deceive the reader.

This thesis will make use of Pecorari and Shaw’s typology of intertextuality as a starting point. However, the analysis of intertextuality used to understand how sources are used in students’ texts does not consider intention. Therefore, the last category - deceptive intertextuality - is not used. Additionally, the notion of indirect intertextuality motivates a closer look types of intertextuality that may not have been explored before. That is, the notion of intertextuality will be expanded to include aspects of genre. The following section, then, focusses on genre before returning to a discussion of an expanded notion of intertextuality.

2.1.2 Genre
Genre is a key concept that has been developed in a number of fields (e.g. literary studies, folklore, and linguistic studies), and was brought into second language writing through John Swales’ research in the 1980s (Paltridge, 2014). Swales (1990) used genre to describe certain characteristics that are shared by members of a discourse community, and genre analysis explores the textual characteristics of a written text and how these relate to the discourse community in which it was produced (Swales, 2009). He explained that these textual characteristics, including ‘patterns of similarity in the terms of structure, style, content, and intended audience’ (p. 58) may establish expectations in the discourse community to which it belongs. In other words, writers may be expected to use rhetorical features that are acceptable in the discipline they write for. In this respect, a genre approach is useful for understanding higher-level literacy demands across different disciplines (Bazerman et al. 2009).

Hyland, (2008) also advocates genre as a way that not only contributes to the form and processes of writing, but also establishes texts as being socially constructed. This, in turn, assists teachers by giving them guidelines for how to identify students’ needs, and helps them plan their teaching objectives to enable students to communicate effectively in their discipline. He comments that,
'It [genre] helps us to see that texts don’t exist in isolation but are part of the communicative routines of social communities. This means not only that genres are related to other genres and the texts we read are connected to the texts we write, but that language is intimately related to the different epistemological frameworks of the disciplines and inseparable from how they understand the world’ (Hyland, 2013 p. 59).

Writing for academic purposes requires language choices, persuasion, evidentiary support, and choices acceptable to that particular discipline’s assumptions, knowledge base, and methods (Hyland, 2015). Although Hyland’s work on lexical bundles suggests that these bundles indicate membership of a particular academic community, he advises that teachers should go beyond the teaching of common vocabulary or structure particular to specific disciplines, and calls for a better understanding of the decisions that writers make when communicating in their disciplines. This is because writing is a form of social interaction between people that gives language and words meaning, and therefore, writing consist not only of isolated words learned through memorisation.

Canagarajah (2002) has written about the contribution of genre studies, as part of EAP and ESP research, in developing an understanding of communication in academic communities. Such research has developed knowledge of the features that signal meaning in academic communities, and as a result has helped teachers to develop pedagogical tactics to assist their students to communicate in their academic community more effectively. However, Canagarajah cautions against treating students who go against the ‘normative attitude’ of the discourse community as somehow incompetent, and has called for more appreciation of what students, particularly multilingual ones, bring to a discourse community. Borg (2003) also supports this view and argues that there are issues around discourse community that are not yet well defined and highlights also the question of the stability of discourse community genres.

2.1.3 The Expanded Notion of Intertextuality
There is potential overlap between genre and intertextuality. What constitutes genre in a certain discipline overlaps with elements of intertextuality in the sense that a text written within a broad academic genre or discourse community will have more intertextual features in common with other texts in this genre or discourse community, than it will have with texts from non-academic genres or discourse communities. Conversely, intertextuality is manifested in academic writing through the dependence on previous academic texts, and this is an outcome of writers following shared conventions in the academic discourse community.

The possible overlap between intertextuality and genre may be understood using the different levels within the category of indirect intertextuality (Pecorari and Shaw, 2012). The first overlap is in terms of ‘lexis’. Specific words and terminology may be shared within a discourse community (Swales, 1990), and in an analysis this lexis may overlap with lexis which, from an intertextuality perspective, creates similarity between a student text and a source text - especially when the two texts share the same field, topic or discipline (Pecorari and Shaw, 2012). The second overlap between genre and intertextuality is in terms of discourse patterns in academic writing. That is, the genre of academic writing consists of a pattern that is expected of writers, and accepted as the form of communication in a certain discipline or field. For example, the written format of a paragraph, which consist of topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. That is, a paragraph level intertextual relationship between a student text and a source text is a result of the student following the discourse pattern of previous texts within the same field. The third overlap that connects genre and intertextuality is more extended patterns in texts. Such more extended patterns may likewise adhere to an expected structure and format of texts in a certain discipline. Although there are numerous varieties of academic writing genres, there still are some standardised patterns for academic texts that are shared by most disciplines (Thonney, 2011; Bennett, 2009). An example of this is the standard feature of introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. This, then, is also an intertextual relationship between texts, one that shapes not only the meaning of a text, but the form as well. Although such relationship is not signaled by the writer, it still exists through the manipulation of genre conventions, and this then may again connect the notions of genre and intertextuality.
Genre in this sense guides the constructions of texts through conventions and expectations of the field within which the text is written. The notion of intertextuality, in comparison, is used to show the effect of source texts on the ‘production and reception’ of other texts within the cultures they are produced (Hoey, 2001). So, both genre and intertextuality contributes to our understanding of how a text is written by a writer and how it is read by a reader.

In sum, although lexis, paragraph and discourse level regularities are conventions that are normally studied by genre analysis, they are features of intertextuality as well. They cohere with Kristeva’s (1990) definition of intertextuality as describing aspects of texts which have their origins in preceding texts. This kind of expanded view of intertextuality, incorporating features of genre has not been used by previous studies of intertextuality in students’ writing. Rather, previous research has focused more narrowly on citing and quoting, so limiting themselves to overt ‘clause or sentence size’ ‘use of sources’. Including these genre features will give a broader view of intertext used by students in their writing, and a more holistic understanding of their use of sources.

2.2 Academic writing

2.2.1 Intertextuality in Second Language Writing

Intertextuality is a prominent characteristic in academic writing, and thus it is inevitable in academic writing (Pecorari, 2012). As a result, understanding this concept is necessary for guiding students on what is appropriate and inappropriate use of sources in their academic writing. Using sources and incorporating them in writing is a challenging process that entails complicated rules (Pecorari, 2013). Writers in all genres refer and depend on previous texts in their critical process of writing as no single idea is created in isolation. This critical process, according to Bazerman (2009, p. 92), creates a ‘new framework of relevance and interpretation’ that contributes to the literature of a given topic/area.

Chandrasoma, et al. (2004, p. 175) looked at intertextuality in students’ papers as
not only the textual relationship between texts but also as three modes of intertextuality used to negotiate meaning in ‘sociohistorical’ and ‘political discourse’:

Conceptual intertextuality introduces various concepts within a text by appropriating concepts from other texts. Complementary intertextuality complements the theme or themes of a text while reinforcing the writer’s points of view. This mainly comprises examples, allusions, and generic features (e.g., composition formats that are crucial for maintaining a sustained argument in any academic text). Linguistic resources (e.g., specific terminologies, stance markers) used in a text constitute metalinguistic intertextuality.

Hoey (2001, p. 50) highlighted the necessity in some cases to teach ‘intertextual expectations’ in the language class for students who come from different cultures where such concepts are not necessarily common. However, intertextuality and the way sources are used may vary from one discipline to another. Social sciences for example make reference to literature more than hard sciences do (Becher, 1989) and this is due to the tendency of hard sciences to solve problems/issues with a new approach different from how it was solved in the past while in the social sciences citing other people is a way to support one’s own claims. Therefore, disciplinary differences are important factors in understanding intertextuality.

Intertext can then be measured in terms of the similarities between one text and the other. That is, how many words or phrases are repeated from the source, and the more language is present in the new text that is taken from the older one, the more chance that the text is based on the source. This quantitative approach has been used in plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin. However, this quantitative approach can be questioned because there is not necessarily a clear 'threshold' to use in such an analysis of intertextuality (Pecorari, 2013, p. 19). In addition, there may be disagreement in some cases of whether the repeated words/phrases are due to coincidence. The quantitative approach, then, must be combined with a human assessor’s judgment about various factors such as e.g. the concept of common knowledge and formulaic phrases.
Originality according to the Oxford dictionary is: ‘the ability to think independently and creatively’. Pennycook (1996) has traced the Western conceptualisation of originality, including how it has developed and how it has changed how text and authorship is understood. He has discussed the pre-modern conceptualisation where they viewed meaning as reproduction of a divine power which belongs to God. In other words, creativity was not a human quality. By contrast, in the modern era (after the enlightenment) human beings were viewed to be the producers of imagination and meaning and this transformation was taken further to develop the notion of the author as the creator of meaning, and from this, notions of originality and ownership were developed. Later, the postmodernists came to question creativity and as a result, notions like the circulation of ideas and originality became vaguer again.

Atkinson (2003) argued that the demand on originality and independent thought in academic writing came about as a result of ownership and copyright laws, and the implementation of such legal ideas in relation to academia was through citation and referencing conventions. However, some scholars had opposing views on the focus on originality over learning and developing knowledge base: ‘we ignore the tradition of the academy that encourages performance over substance’ (Haviland and Mullin, 2009, p.165).

However, Allen (2000) has discussed the position that being original is no longer valid due to the concept of intertextuality. That is, any piece of art is based on an existing one and is interconnected to its previous ones in different ways. The issue of originality is being questioned particularly in our modern life as digital sharing has become the norm and the Internet has facilitated information retrieval; everything becomes a ‘remix’ and reuse of ideas from the past. Peters and Frankoff (2014) explored this digital dimension in academic writing, looking at the ‘digital-scrapbooking’ of Chinese third year Business English students at a Chinese University. They found that students writing habits were changed by the affordances of online sources, but that students lacked effective strategies for
making sense of the wealth of digital information available to them. Moreover, tutors tended to neglect this dimension of the students writing activity, focusing instead on traditional teaching of referencing skills, and offering warnings against plagiarism. This digital dimension potentially exacerbates the problem of intellectual/copy right violation and creates a challenge for students who become overloaded with information and rules on top of their academic engagement (Eisner and Vicinus, 2008). Even for policies that regulate plagiarism and copyright, the internet poses a threat because such policies are ironically plagiarised and reused from one university website to another. As Pennycook points out, ‘even if there once were clearly defined lines between the borrowed and the original, they are starting to fade in a new era of electronic intertextuality’ (1996, p. 212).

2.2.3 Conventions

In University level writing, students are expected to use sources and refer to previous knowledge in a way that is acceptable in the academic discourse community. This ‘acceptable’ way is connected with a set of rules created to acknowledge the work of others. This set of rules is created, in part, to give credit to writers. It also functions to help students find their own ‘voice’ (Neville, 2010), and to aid them to interact and respond to the sources they use. It can also provide a back up to the argument the student wants to assert and to demonstrate different points of view on a given issue (Pecorari, 2013). Conventions are designed to help writers organise referencing within the text (in-text citation) or in a reference list. According to Swales (1990), in-text citation can be either ‘integral’ or ‘non-integral’. Integral citation is where the writer places the name of the source author within the actual sentence as a part of what is being (e.g. when presenting the source’s findings), while non-integral citation is where the author’s name is placed between parentheses (typically at the end of the sentence).

Conventions of referencing govern the act of citation in academic writing and thus are designed to help the readers of a written piece to become aware of the way a source informed the text in hand. According to (Pecorari, 2006), citing allows writers to provide their audience with detailed information about their sources
which in a way assures the audience that the sources were used in an appropriate way, and will be recognised by the discourse community for which its written for. In addition, it is an act of transparency of the work and views of others.

There are a number of referencing systems used across universities worldwide, such as the Harvard System, APA (American Psychological Association) and MLA (Modern Language Association of America). However, a central idea is the importance of transparency and consistency (Becher, 1989, p. 86). The Harvard System is one that is generally used in many UK universities. According to Cambridge University guide for referencing conventions, the Harvard system is also a common style used in academic journals. However, most of the guidance given to students about referencing conventions suggests that students should be aware of which style is preferred in their discipline, and by their course tutor. Here is an example of one of the referencing guidelines given to students of one UK University:

This is a guide to the Harvard system but you should always check your course handbook and/or module outline for any further guidance, as your lecturers may prefer a different style of referencing. It is always advisable to check which system you are expected to use and to what extent it may vary from this guide. (De Montfort University, p.3)

2.3 Variations in Expectations

2.3.1 Disciplinary Variation

The differences across the disciplines include how each discipline produce knowledge, generate evidence, discuss results and present arguments. How social sciences look at knowledge is different from how natural sciences do. Each discipline deals with different knowledge and, as a result, look at things differently. Physicists study matter and nature, biologists study organisms, historians study past events and sociology involves the study of human social behaviours (Bazerman, 1995). These differences are reflected in the procedures
followed, concepts used and ways of generating and interpreting knowledge. In his guidelines for writing an interpretation of a creative work and an essay in the observational sciences, Bazerman identified procedures that may be followed to develop a suitable essay for each of the referred disciplines. Each of the essays should follow a procedure different from the other starting from planning to writing the essay itself. For example, in writing an essay in observational sciences (studies that observe events as they happen rather than conducting experiments) the writer should record the data and present it as objectively as possible, without reference to one’s own feelings and interpretations. However, in writing an interpretive essay on a literary work, for example, the writer should use their own experiences to respond to the work studied and choose necessary details to support their interpretations, and so the writing is more subjective. This view is supported by Hyland (2002), who points out that not all disciplines are uniformly impersonal. Furthermore, Hyland maps out the ‘options of identity’ in academic writing, showing how, depending on the disciplinary expectations the writer can be more or less present in a text.

Disciplinary differences also appear in the presentation of the writing. For organising and presenting an interpretive essay, flexibility is important. Whereas in an essay in economics, for example, presenting and organising information in the essay should follow the ‘standard research format’ that is advisable or expected in one’s own discipline, unless there is solid reasons to organise the essay in a different way (Bazerman, 1995). Samraj (2004) describes structure-level differences across disciplines in more detail, describing the use of the problem-solution pattern (see Hoey 2001) and comparing this to chronological and theme-by-theme patterns of academic writing.

Finally, Hyland (2008) explores variation in formulaic language, which he call lexical bundles, across different academic writing disciplines. He explored 4-word bundles in a 3.5 million word corpus, made up of research articles, doctoral theses and masters dissertations spanning four disciplines, and found that each discipline varied in terms of which bundles were more common. Specifically, ‘less than half of the top 50 bundles in each list [each discipline] occurring in any other list [discipline] (p.20). That is, disciplinary variation spans all levels of writing, from the word level all the way up the overall structure of texts.
2.3.2 Cultural Variations

Tracing the culture behind writing has been a focus of many scholars. For example, Kaplan (1967) believes that a student writing in a second language brings in rhetorical structures and ways of thinking from their L1 and their home culture. Stylistic differences in academic writing exist in different cultures. Kaplan (1966, p.3) draws attention to the linearity of writing and thought in the English language, something which developed from the cultural patterns of the Anglo-Europeans. ‘The expected sequence of thought is…Aristotelian’ (p.3) which is linear in development. For example, an expository text in English may start with a topic sentence, then this is elaborated and developed through examples in idea units that support the main statement (Kaplan, 1966). However, this notion of linearity has been criticised by many scholars and some argue that Kaplan’s views are not necessarily accurate. For example, Braddock (1974) has argued that English text has varied forms and organisational patterns in terms of paragraph development and that the idea of the topic sentence at the beginning of an expository paragraph is not a valid one. Braddock also cautions textbooks and writing tutors against teaching students a specific organisation of a paragraph, and suggests ‘assist[ing] students in identifying the kinds of delayed-completion and implicit topic statements which outnumber simple topic sentences in expository paragraphs’ (p. 301).

More broadly, the field of contrastive rhetoric is designed to provide insights into the problems encountered by students in L2 writing and how similar or different languages, cultures, contexts are in terms of writing. Ulla Connor suggests that contrastive rhetoric ‘contributes to knowledge about preferred patterns of writing in many English for specific purposes situations… [and] the understanding of cultural differences in writing, and it has had, and will continue to have, an effect on the teaching of ESL and EFL writing’ (Connor, 2002, p.493). However, contrastive rhetoric has been widely debated. For instance, Kubota (1999) points out that contrastive rhetoric creates a ‘cultural dichotomy’ and promotes a sense of superiority of the West. She also suggests that it feeds the construction of the ‘Other’, a term used in colonial discourse which creates cultural labelling (p.11).
Connor (2002), by contrast, highlights the benefit of the perspective, and points out how ‘researchers and others working in the current contrastive rhetoric paradigm have adhered to the position that cultural differences need to be explicitly taught in order to acculturate EFL writers to the target discourse community’ (p. 505). She gave the example of Finish individuals’ writing EU research grants and the importance of learning the expected norms as EU grant writing tends to follow the ‘Anglo-American scientific’ discourse pattern. By contrast, if these Finish individuals were writing grants for a Finish context, the expected norm would be based on Finish discourse patterns.

Recent contrastive rhetoric is also about more than only discourse patterns. For example, the concept of acculturation in contrastive research, extended from genre studies that focus on knowledge associated with genres rather than textual comparison, provides a possible framework for understanding the learning process of L2 students in their adaptation in the discourse community of their discipline (Connor, 1996). Moreover, culture, as researchers in contrastive rhetoric have argued, is only one factor of many that have a role in discussions of difference between writing across languages. Other factors include: ‘L1, national culture, L1 educational background, disciplinary culture, genre characteristics, and mismatched expectations between readers and writers’ (Connor, 2002, p. 504).

There are also a number of contrastive rhetoric studies of potential relevance to the present thesis. Abu Rass (2011) examined the English writing of 18 Arab trainees in a teacher training program in an Israeli college, and how their L1 and Muslim culture influenced their L2 writing. Abu Rass found that the Arab students in her study used exaggerated language, repetition, and what she called ‘bi-polarity’ in their writing. She commented that ‘the words all, best and ideal show the bi-polarity in the writing of the Arab students. They demonstrate the students' belief that there is one right way; there is a single answer; there is black and white and no shades of grey’ (p.210). She added that this stems from the Islamic culture of truth and knowledge transmission, where there is only one truth and unity of belief is the norm. The Arab writers in her study failed to consider the expectations of their audience (or the L2 readers) and this, in a way, shows a gap between writer/reader expectations and beliefs. Elachechi (2015) examined the academic writing of 16 EFL students in the English department in an Algerian
university, focusing on linguistic, rhetorical and communication features through the lens of contrastive rhetoric. The author observed problems in writing due to linguistic differences between English and Arabic such as in syntax and morphology. Elachechi noted that developing ideas logically (as in sequentially or linearly) is one of the difficulties faced by Arab EFL writers, and this is due to cultural factors. For example, there was an excessive use of coordination to structure writing, as opposed to the use of subordination in English. In addition, the use of repetition and elaboration as a means of persuasion was observed in the students’ papers. The students’ writing also included metaphoric styles as opposed to a direct style of writing, and ‘this contrasts with the expectations of Western readers who regard these patterns as clichés, and with Western teachers of writing who encourage students to write in their own voice using their own words’ (p.134). A final study, by Al-Zubaidi (2012), examined Arab postgraduate students’ English academic writing in a Malaysian university context. Al-Zubaidi suggested that the academic literacy of these students should be considered given that it differed from what was expected in the new academic context. The author highlighted challenges centred on citation and referencing, as well as the skill of ‘proactive learning’, which the Arab students were not familiar with as they had less individual responsibility for learning in their home contexts. Al-Zubaidi also observed that the Arab students had ‘negative attitudes’ to their academic writing and that this may have been caused by the students fearing being criticised and struggling with adapting to the new academic culture.

Hence, despite the ways that contrastive rhetoric may promote superiority of the West and feed the construction of the ‘Other’, there are some potentially valuable insights that comes out of it. Of particular value may be the idea that that students come with different background experiences, and have different previous ‘discourse schemata’ from their L1 (Leki, 1991). Hoey (2001, p. 12) claims that ‘when writers compose their texts, they draw upon models that have become normal within their culture; when readers process these texts, they do the same’. For L2 learners, writing becomes a challenging area, particularly for those who come from an academic setting different from what they encounter in a western university setting. Students may be unaware of the exact differences, and may therefore draw on some of their previous experience and some of the skills learned in their home degree in the writing they do. Thus, if students move
between cultures, there may be discrepancies between what students believe is correct and acceptable in writing and what their assessors believe to be acceptable. The present study is not aimed at changing this, and hence the thesis does not try to challenge the field of contrastive rhetoric; rather, the present study is trying to understand the challenge for Arab postgraduate students in UK higher education.

2.4 International Students in UK Higher Education

Over the past years, the number of overseas (other than EU) students has increased noticeably in Higher education institutions in the UK (HESA, 2011) and it is estimated that the presence of such international students adds to the UK economy by seven billion pounds (Universities UK, 2014). Unsurprisingly, there is debate, then, about how higher education institutions should accommodate international students. Teaching, learning and assessment in UK higher education institutions are based on the academic norms that have emerged over time in the UK context (Trahar and Hyland, 2011). This means that international students, who come from a different background and who bring with them their own beliefs and expectations, may struggle in the UK academic context. McLean and Ransom (2005) point out that,

‘Approaches to learning are inherently culturally bound with educational values, behaviours and skills taught from birth and honed through the formative years without much conscious awareness. Students, therefore, are often unaware that their academic skills and behaviours may not match those expected [in a new academic context] by their teachers and vice versa’ (p.46).

One view on the challenge of international students in UK higher education is the internationalisation perspective. Internationalisation in UK Universities tends to focus on quantifications of international students, in total and from how many countries they are drawn. Moreover, this perspective tends to focus on supporting international students with additional language lessons, and perhaps additional academic support for understanding academic processes and conventions. The role of academic staff in helping international students’ transition is telling in this
regard. According to Trahar and Hyland (2011), the academic staff play a particularly important role in enabling success among international students in UK institutions. However, these academics lack the institutional support needed to effectively help international students. Academic staff could be encouraged to focus on intercultural awareness, and on home students benefitting from the varied perspectives that international students bring. Instead, academic staff more often see themselves as teachers of subject matter, and focus on international students satisfying the academic expectations of the home context. This is a view that fails to engage with the challenge faced by international students, and scholars, such as Stier (2006), criticises the ‘idealistic view’ of internationalisation in higher education on the bases that it promotes ‘western cultural imperialism and claims of global hegemony’ (p.4). According to Stier, the internationalisation agenda encourages looking at the ‘other’ as less competent, someone who has less to offer, and privileges a one-way learning process with international students simply adjusting to the context they are transitioning into.

The ‘transition’ literature offers another view on the experience of international students in UK higher education. This literature mainly addresses the issue of transition into higher education for home students; i.e. students transitioning from high school/college contexts into higher education. Many scholars (Tait and Godfrey, 2001; Barron and D’Annunzio-Green, 2009) recognise the importance of a smooth transition into higher education. Tait and Godfrey (2001) noted that high schools and colleges struggle to prepare their students adequately for this transition due to time limitations and lack of knowledge of the requirements of higher education. Christie et al. (2006) investigated the experience of a group of UK students entering university after a college setting. It was noted that participants had fears of the kind of experience they would have in university compared to college (where they expressed having had positive experiences). The most common fear they expressed was what might be the expectations they needed to satisfy in the university setting. Such fears, according to Christie et al., stem from students’ being used to a high level of support in the high school and college teaching and learning environment. Another common concern was whether they had the needed abilities to succeed in the type of academic tasks expected of them in higher education. Other concerns focused on assessment and on social aspects, such as how they might get along with other students/peers in
higher education.

The transition challenge will be slightly different for international students, whose most common transition is from an undergraduate programme context in another country to a UK postgraduate programme context. On one level, these students may face similar fears and concerns, focused on expectations, their ability, assessment and social dynamics. However, international students arguably face a wider set of cultural, linguistic and academic challenges (Ryan, 2005), including also homesickness and adaptation (Furnham, 1997). Language is a central concern that affects both academic and social aspects. Wu and Hammond (2011), for example, found that one of the problems international students faced in pre-sessional language course (which many take in order to improve their language level to what is expected of the University) was the wealth of new concepts and terminology they were expected to know. In terms of social transition, most students in Wu and Hammond’s study varied in their ability to engage with people of the ‘host culture’, but were helped by the shared experience, among international students, of having a different background. Thus, the experience of the students Wu and Hammond worked with was one of ‘widespread use of English; participation of students from a range of national backgrounds; and a focus on achieving academic success’ (435).

In a recent investigation of Chinese students in UK higher education, Iannelli and Huang (2014) found that there is a pattern of low achievement in higher education among Chinese students. However, Chinese students who had completed A-levels were more successful as compared to those who had other (internationally equivalent) qualifications. The authors noted that this might be because A-level study (including teaching and learning techniques and content) helped prepare this sub-group of Chinese students for the UK higher education experience. That is, despite evidence that home students face transition challenges, the fact that international students come from a different educational system may amplify the transition challenge. In addition, in the case of postgraduate level study, which this thesis focuses on, the transition may be even more challenging. Postgraduate students may require more time in their integration to academic life than either undergraduate home or international students need (Macrea 1997).
2.5 Becoming an Academic Writer

2.5.1 The Challenge for Novice Academic Writers

The transition from secondary education to tertiary level can be a demanding and complex transition. In regards to writing, expectations increase for postgraduate level as postgraduate students are expected to write in a more critical way and use sources appropriately. Students in university are expected to use sources in their writing to show their skills and abilities in analysing, evaluating and supporting their claims.

The challenge for novice writers gets more complicated as the writer needs to question the content of the source in terms of who is writing and why, as well as what the impact of that source is on the rest of the literature. This rigorous procedure requires the writer to be more critical about the source, including how and why it is incorporated in the written text. Without such criticality, the writing might ‘deteriorate into a pointless string of quotations that leaves your readers wondering what you are trying to communicate’ (Bazerman, 1995, p. 346). Therefore, such incorporation needs careful judgment of how it is serving the purpose of the writer, so to establish a link to the literature that suits and adds to the argument.

Often, novice writers over-rely on quoting in order to avoid presenting a weak statement or to avoid explaining difficult concepts through paraphrasing. Yet, this might not be efficient in cases where the original source only implicitly refers to an idea that the novice academic writer wishes to include (Bazerman, 1995). What is required, then, is a careful examination of the source and to use it in a way that creates a coherent paraphrase that includes the relevant ideas. This by itself is a very daunting task for novice writers, especially as paraphrasing needs to link to the information represented in the original source in a manner that does not misrepresent it.

2.5.2 The Particular Challenge for L2 Academic Writers
This section looks more closely at the particular challenge for L2 academic writers. In addition to the challenges that all academic writers face, they are also struggling with the L2, as well as the possible transition between academic cultures.

Pecorari (2013) discussed the difficulty of this process and how novice students in their early academic years may develop misconceptions about source use. Such misconceptions may include ‘patchwriting’ (Howard, 1993) which is a process that involves some changes and alterations of a copied text from a source such as using synonyms and slightly changing structures. Although patchwriting may be considered a type of plagiarism, there is also the view that this is an initial step, especially for L2 writers, to gain access to an academic voice (Pecorari 2013).

Shi (2004) explored word use from sources of 39 undergraduate native speakers of English from an American university and another group of 48 third year EFL Chinese students in a Chinese university. The Chinese students were following a programme taught through the English language. She asked them to perform two writing tasks: a summary and an opinion writing task. She then traced their textual borrowing from sources. Her study showed that the EFL students used more words from the source texts for both tasks without making clear reference to the authors. The native speaker group also used words from the source but less so, and when they did use words from sources there was more explicit reference to the sources. Shi suggested that the EFL students’ textual borrowing was a strategy with no intention to deceive. Rather, it was a way to work out unfamiliar texts for the L2 learner and this should be recognised as an initial step of L2 academic writing development before being able to move to a more acceptable way of using sources.

Paraphrasing is another challenge for inacademic writers. D’Angelo, (1979) has suggested that paraphrasing is one of the most useful skills in the composition class, and that this needs attention and training. D’Angelo (p.256) suggests that ‘the paraphraser must have a fine eye for detail and for being able to discern levels and nuances of meaning’. Such a skill is not easy to master and a lot of L2 academic writers paraphrase inappropriately (Pecorari, 2003; Shi, 2004).
More generally, L2 academic writers may end up heavily relying on sources for reasons of vocabulary, structures, organisation, and information. In a study by (Leki and Carson 1997), L2 writers stated that while writing from a source in an EFL writing class helped them in terms of ideas, vocabulary, and structure, they expressed difficulties in using sources in a content class:

Students mentioned that the problem with using a source text was that they regarded certain words, sentence structures, organizational patterns, or even ideas as used up once the [source] text employed them, making them unavailable for use by the students themselves. They worried about the need to use their own (i.e., different) words when they perceived themselves as having no other words besides those used in the text (Leki and Carson, 1997, p. 51).

Campbell (1990) explored the difficulties of synthesising information from sources by 30 native and non-native speakers of English who are enrolled in various writing classes in a UK university. His study shows that the source use can vary across different parts of students’ writing. In his study, the non-native speakers relied more on the source texts in the introductory paragraphs than the native speakers did. However, for the body and the concluding paragraphs, both groups incorporated information from the source as well as their ideas in similar proportions. Campbell’s study also shows that both the native and non-native writers found it difficult to produce a quality paper using sources, and that relying on sources was perceived as being more academic and hence desirable.

Eisterhold (1990) suggests that writing at tertiary level is closely connected to reading, since reading provides ‘models’ to learn how academic writing is structured, organised, and styled. This is an additional challenge, then, for L2 academic writers as these students will be developing their academic reading skills alongside their academic writing. Stotsky (1983, cited by Eisterhold 1990, p.88) suggests the following correlations between reading and writing:

1. Better writers tend to be better readers.
2. Better writers read more than poorer writers.
3. Better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers.

Writing in university contexts is also connected with issues of intellectual property and copyright issues, and almost all universities set strict policies regarding the use of work of others. McDonnell (2003) has discussed that when non-native speakers students enter American universities they are faced with many rules that they should follow in order to be able to survive in such setting. Whether these students are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to do so is not clear.

There is some confusion and misunderstanding among EFL students of what plagiarism is and what entails plagiarism. Howard et al. (2010) studied 18 papers of students (mixed students of L1 and L2), who made use of sources, and found that when students tried to incorporate specific detail from a source, and working on the sentence level, this led to inappropriate use of the source and occasionally resulted in plagiarism incidents.

Another difficulty that students face is writing from sources is dealing with technical information that might be difficult to paraphrase or alter. An example of this is what Howard et al. (2010) found in their study that participants struggled when reporting technical information and as a result to this they rely on patchwriting as a way of working out unfamiliar meaning. This was done in a writing class, yet, the case may be different if the writing happened within the students’ discipline as students may be familiar with the technical vocabulary specific to their field of study.

2.6 Plagiarism

2.6.1 Definition of Plagiarism

The word plagiarism, which is ‘plagium’ in Latin, was first introduced in relation to property and intellectual theft in the 16th and 17th centuries along with the
emergence of property laws (Bloch 2012). Long before this, guides for intellectual property as any other integrity concept were introduced in Holy Books. The Bible conjunction of ‘thou shalt not steal’ (Green, 2002 cited in Bolch, 2012) and a similar one in the Islamic Shari’a (moral code and religious law) give guidance against stealing other people’s property, be it materialistic or intellectual property. The interpretation of these Holy Books advice has linked plagiarism to a notion of theft and piracy (Bloch 2012) which is connected to getting profit from selling books.

Plagiarism is defined as ‘the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own’ (Oxford Dictionary Online). However, there is a consensus among many scholars that how plagiarism is defined and viewed is not clear and is based on how each institution views it (Howard, 2000, Pecorari, 2013, Sutherland-Smith, 2008). For example, how plagiarism is defined in academic institutions has been discussed in a number of studies such as that of Pecorari (2013), who surveyed the definition of plagiarism in different universities regulations and also commented on how challenging it is for tutors when it comes to specific unique cases. She identified four criteria that were clear or implied in these regulations:

1. Relationship of similarity between two texts.
2. The similarity exists because the later work (Text B) was based on the earlier one (Text A).
3. The intertextual relationship is not appropriate.

The first criterion is pertains to the relationship which in this case what two texts share in terms of language or ideas. According to Pecorari, the fourth criterion is problematic and contradictory with the third criterion. That is, the third criterion focuses on inappropriate intertextuality without any reference to whether a student intended to deceive or not. Hence, some universities tend to ignore the fourth criterion in their policies.
2.6.2 University Plagiarism Policies

Universities in the UK, and in most countries around the world, have formulated policies as a response to the issue of plagiarism. Most of these policies are not consistent across universities (Sutherland-Smith, 2008) and differ in the degree of penalties. Some universities impose very harsh penalties when it comes to plagiarism, while others may have similar policies but implementing these policies may vary depending on how serious the offence is, and some Universities may in some cases become lenient in their reaction. However, as Sutherland-Smith (2008) suggests, all universities do share the view that plagiarism is a kind of ‘fraud’.

How plagiarism has been dealt with has evolved through stages. In the American setting, for example (see Hafernik et al., 2002), more particularly in regards to ESL university professionals, initially plagiarism was considered as cheating and it was condemned and considered a violation. The second stage was somewhat different where university teachers still considered it as a violation but there was some kind of awareness of the cultural factors that were involved and may have caused this offence, particularly in regards to ESL students. A later and third stage was that tutors started to question the way they responded and reacted to it and there was some realisation of the importance of adaptation for professionals, particularly where English is a second or foreign language.

Larkham and Manns (2002) surveyed how plagiarism is treated in higher education institutions in the UK. Although their survey was a small scale one, and had a low rate of responses to further follow-up questions, it provided interesting insights into how universities and colleges respond to the issue of plagiarism. The refusals to respond by Universities were based on the confidentiality of policies regarding plagiarism (sharing these policies with the researchers was rejected) as well as the confidentiality of cases of plagiarism that had happened in the universities. Eight of the nine responses the researchers did get, show that plagiarism has increased (slightly) between the mid-1990s and 2000s. Only one University respondent out of the nine said that there was no increase, but also noting that there was no decrease of plagiarism incidents. It was also noted that policies in the 1990s were somewhat lenient in regards to plagiarism penalties,
and this only began to change after the alarming rise observed in the data, at which time many universities started to review their policies:

There is some evidence that this may have begun changing during the late 1990s, as several universities have reported that they have reviewed procedures and penalties in the light of increasing incidences of plagiarism. Our own institution, for example, had increased the standard penalty for any form of proven plagiarism to the loss of 60 credits, virtually a year’s work for a part-time postgraduate, which includes the credits which could have been gained for the plagiarised work (p. 343).

However, reviewing policies (as Larkham and Manns note), and imposing harsher policies in response to plagiarism, did not seem to work well for some universities in response to the increase in plagiarism cases. A study that was done by Wilson and Ippolito (2008) at Brunel University in the UK shows that severe penalties were not successful as a deterrent against plagiarism. They found that although a policy of ‘zero tolerance’ was enforced at Brunel University, plagiarism cases were rising steadily between the years of 2002 and 2005. For example, in the 2002-2003 academic year 24 cases of plagiarism were dealt with by the disciplinary board of the university. This increased to 45 cases in the 2004-2005 academic year. In the 2002-2003 academic year, there were two plagiarism related expulsions from the university. This increased to more than 35 cases in the academic year of 2004-2005. This increase seemed alarming to Wilson and Ippolito, and therefore the authors introduced a pilot programme which taught students about plagiarism and how to avoid it. It included undergraduate and postgraduate home and international (EFL) students. The programme included information about what plagiarism means, why is it unacceptable, and how to avoid it through different activities carefully planned by experienced staff and tutors. It was not mentioned how this pilot study would be successful or not in responding to plagiarism; however, it seems to be an alternative response to this complex issue in academia.

Carroll (2002) argues that plagiarism punishment cannot be predetermined due to the particularity of each case. She suggests a list of elements that should be looked into before deciding on the type and severity of the penalty imposed on students.
The first element that should be taken into consideration is the degree of plagiarism, in which the length, similarity, and the importance of the copied parts are to be focused on to determine the extent of misconduct. The second element concerns intention; that is, if a student admits having plagiarized intentionally, the penalty may need to reflect this as well. However, additional elements will affect the decision, and these include the student’s academic stage, whether there were previous offences, and whether the student is from a different educational background where the academic conventions and expectations are different from those of UK higher education. The discipline which the student belongs to is also an element needing consideration due to differences of conventions across disciplines. The last element to consider is the effect of the penalty on the students, and specifically if this penalty will have a detrimental effect on the student’s progression or graduation.

2.6.3 Referencing

Referencing in academic writing is the practice used to acknowledge and document where the ideas and information come from in a written piece. The genre of source-based writing is based on drawing on knowledge from existing literature in order to support arguments, and hence referencing the sources properly is a requirement. Bazerman (1995, p.345) defines referencing as ‘the art of mentioning other writers’ words, ideas, or information in the course of your own argument’.

Neville (2010) has shown how referencing was developed in the nineteenth century, after many UK and US universities initiated assessing students through engagement and analysis of sources of knowledge through essays. However, he has also argued that not all countries regard referencing in the same way, particularly countries that have a different societal and ideological nature; for instance societies that are collectivists as opposed to individualist such as Britain.

Referencing in Britain, has to be seen, not just in an academic, but also in a social and political context. It is part of a societal value system that vigorously supports the idea of the intellectual property rights of others. It is this support for intellectual property that is a
significant driving force in Britain to tackle what is seen as a growing problem of plagiarism in education (Neville, 2010, p.4).

Hyland (1999) considers academic attribution and referring to the literature on a particular topic is a way for a writer to show ‘allegiance to a particular community or orientation, create a rhetorical gap for his or her research and establish a credible writer ethos’ (p. 342). Through citation and referring to previous work on a topic, writers situate their topic in relation to the ‘larger narrative’ within a community, an element that is expected in an academic paper. This should be done explicitly through citations, quotations, and references to previous work to establish persuasive grounds for the argument. Pecorari (2013) asserts the importance of transparency in establishing these grounds. This transparency includes making it clear to readers which sources were consulted, and how the source was used to inform the written text. Referencing in this respect is essential, and referencing conventions provide the mechanics that clarify this relationship between the source and a text. However, there are differences between disciplines in terms of referencing conventions. In other words, what is appropriate in one discipline may not be the same in another. An example is the differences of acknowledgment between humanities and science (see 2.3.1). Shi (2012), accordingly, highlights the importance of understanding what is expected and appropriate within the discipline a student is writing.

The possible difference in this respect, between the UK and the Arab world, will be discussed in the next chapter that looks at education in the Arab world and how the emphasis on knowledge has changed through history.

2.6.4 Plagiarism Detection Software: Turnitin

As discussed above, plagiarism is a phenomenon that many universities seek to prevent. One of the most used web based software packages used for this purpose across many universities worldwide is Turnitin. This software was developed as a detection tool for originality. Turnitin works by comparing an uploaded assignment with the text of an extensive database including academic journal articles, periodicals, digital books, and previously uploaded student assignments. According to Stapleton, (2012), the number of countries that have licensed the
software (126 worldwide as claimed by the software developers) and having it in 10 languages makes it one of the most widely used originality detection tools.

The way the software works is that when the text uploaded, the system highlights copied parts and links these parts to the sources that they appear in. With this data it then shows an originality report which informs the instructor or student how much and which parts of the assignment is original and how much and which parts is copied.

According to Jenson and Castell (2010), Turnitin’s popularity within many universities worldwide is due to its convenience, simplicity, and the time saving aspect of the service, thereby providing universities with a quick and easy detection service to combat plagiarism. Many authors who analysed the efficiency of Turnitin (Locke, 2002; Bensal et al 2014) agree that time-saving is one benefit for tutors who use it to check students’ papers with a press of a button. The online search that Turnitin does, within minutes, is invaluable compared to the time to be spent in searching for those matches manually.

However, Turnitin has certain limitations which still makes it dependent on instructors. The simple and quick to use aspect of Turnitin is one of the qualities that has been questioned by a number of studies. For instance, Peakcock et al (Year, cited in Davis and Carroll, 2009) argue that the interpretation of the originality report generated by Turnitin is not an easy task. Davis and Carroll (2009) also discussed concerns among educators that introducing Turnitin to students may encourage learning skills to avoid Turnitin detection, which may contradict the purpose of project. Additionally, the software detects words/text that is the same in a submitted assignment and its database of sources. However, this does not satisfy any of the four criteria for plagiarism outlined by Pecorari, (2013; see section 2.6.1). Overlapping words/text does not say anything about the ‘relationship of similarity’ between the two texts, (particularly in relation to the similarity of ideas), it does not prove that ‘the similarity exists because the later work was based on the earlier work’, it does not say anything about whether ‘the intertextual relationship’ is appropriate or not, and it does not prove ‘intention’ of any sort. So, it is an instructors’ or writers’ job to interpret the meaning of the originality report. This may involve an instructor going over the matches case by
case to make their own professional interpretations. Finally, some scholars have
discussed the possibility of coincidental similarities (Batane, 2010), which might
occur when two writers research similar topics, and thus creating the possibility of
similarity between phrases, ideas, and references used. Therefore, Turnitin is not
effective in this respect.

There are also legal concerns about plagiarism software services. Because
Turnitin, and other services like it, keeps all submitted assignments in its archive,
there is the question of intellectual property and copyright. That is, students (or
their University) may have copyright of submitted assignments, but even so these
plagiarism detection services keep these texts in their archives and this contributes
to their own profit (Jenson and Castell, 2010). However, Jones (2008) argues that
in the UK, for example, students give consent upon enrolment to their universities
to be the controllers of data given from students, whether that is their personal
data or texts that they produce in the form of assignments.
Chapter Three: The Arab World

This chapter presents a literature review on the Arab world that pertains to the themes relevant to this research study. The literature on education in Arab states is generally sparse; most of what can be been found are reports written by UN organisations that are concerned with education and development, and some articles (academic journals/website articles/newspapers) that discuss education-related topics that focus on the Arab world. This chapter brings together this literature to provide contextual information that is relevant to the understanding of the educational and cultural contexts from which the participants of this study originate. The discussion in this chapter will make mention of the Golden Age of Islam. This part of Arab history is not directly contributing to the argument of this thesis. However, it is included here to counter any perceptions that Arab nations do not have a literary and academic history. Moreover, discussion of the Golden Age of Islam serves to remind and motivate both the myself (as the researcher) and the reader that there are no inherent cultural reasons preventing Arab students to succeed as academic writers, despite the challenges they currently may face.

The population of the Arab world as of 2013 is 369.8 million according to the World Bank (no date), including countries in both Asia and Africa. What I mean here by ‘Arab’ is any state within the Arab League, a group of countries which researchers treat as a homogenous group. Additionally, since World War II, the Cultural Treaty of the Arab League, adopted in 1946, resulting in later cooperation agreements in educational development, promoted the similarity of educational systems in most Arab countries, with minor variations in some countries (Qubain, 1979).

Musallam, (1983) suggests that the identity of Arabs is based on two ‘pillars’. These are a) the Arabic language and culture, and b) Islam. In this chapter, I will review the literature about education in the Arab world, focussing on historical accounts of educational philosophy before and during the Islamic era. The Islamic era, especially, has had a fundamental effect on education in the region. Many concepts and thoughts on education nowadays have their roots in Islamic thought,
but, as will be seen in the chapter, some of these thoughts have changed over time and there is some variation across countries.

3.1 Education in the Arab World

3.1.1 A historical overview

The pre-Islamic Arabian society, being a largely nomadic one, passed its history, traditions, stories and poetry orally from one generation to the next (Lichtenstadter, 1945). Tribes moving from one place to another preserved their roots in this way, depending on their memory. The Arabs nomadic life developed the habit of memorisation through transmitting knowledge from one generation to another orally (Yusuf, 2010). Such knowledge included history and news about tribes, wars, social life, and literature. The composition of poetry in the pre-Islamic era was oral (Denny, 1989; Schwartz, 2009) and thus, this notion of the transmission of knowledge through orality is historically rooted in the region. Poetry was memorised by heart, and the ability to recite poetry orally was regarded a sign of the character trait of a poet, and so these poets were appreciated and recognised in Arabian culture. Although the Arabic language is at least 1,500 years old, the printed word did not become common place until the 20th century. Writing was only developed with the rise of Islam in the 7th century, when the Quran promoted interest in the philology and semantics of the Arabic language (Lichtenstadter, 1945).

In Islam, there is a strong emphasis on seeking knowledge. Seeking knowledge is in some ways given the same reward as worshipping (Kadi 2006; Majali, 1976). Nakosteen (1964) argues that the Islamic centuries associated with the time of the Arab conquests, led to a close contact with great world civilisations, and many leaders, during the Abbassid era in particular, showed appreciation for other ancient intellectual traditions and knowledge. This refutes the idea, argued by some, that Muslims do not tolerate sciences and creativity apart from what is in the Quran and the Hadith. This appreciation of knowledge seems to be one of the reasons why many mosques in the 10th century adopted a knowledge based curriculum where students were taught about a variety of different subjects and
Mosque schools were free to determine their own curricula. This can be contrasted with religious studies only, which was embraced at the beginning of Islamic era. The freedom of knowledge system depended on different circles (halqa حلقه) in mosques that were headed by a master or scholar who taught different sciences like geology, algebra, literature, arts and more. Teachers and students enjoyed freedom to choose what they wanted to teach and learn (Majali, 1976). Moreover, learning in the mosque was often multi-disciplinary, with students who were learning medicine, for example, also being able to study other different fields such as e.g. arts. Later, during the Fatimid reign in the 11th century, for example, this emphasis on knowledge developed research and libraries. This included handwritten manuscripts that were considered treasures of knowledge free for all, and which were available for students to use and copy (Majali 1976). Hence, there used to be a culture of autonomy in learning, and this is evident in many studies on the history of education in Islamic schools. Nakosteen (1964), for example, has talked about how students seeking knowledge would travel from one city to another, enduring travel difficulties along the way, to join particular teachers’ lectures.

3.1.2 One Step Forward in History

Education in medieval Muslim thought had slightly different priorities and methods of teaching and learning compared to its preceding time. However, there seems to be a consensus around the issue that teaching of the Quran was the basis of education and that it should be used as a guide to teaching and learning. The first teacher’s handbook, according to Gunther (2006) was written by Ibn Sahnun (817-70), a jurist. This focused on fundamental elements in Islamic education of which Quranic memorisation was recognised as having an important role. Religiously oriented schooling was believed to boost the memorisation of the Quran, and this was one of the fundamental purposes of education. Although this handbook encouraged teachers to use the Holy Book as their starting point when teaching reading, writing, manners and sciences, there seems to have been some encouragement to create activities where students learned cooperatively, and used their creative reasoning (Gunther, 2006).
According to Gunther’s (2006) review of medieval Muslim thought on education, there were other thoughts on education besides those of Ibn Sahnun. Other philosophers who wrote on philosophy of education, such as Ibn Sina (known as Avicenna), Al-Farabi, and Al-Jahiz, proposed more student-centered instruction methods where the teacher should be a facilitator in the education process. They did not oppose the memorisation of the Quran, but were in favor of spirituality and instilling faith in school children in addition to children just memorising verses. Most of these scholars also mentioned the importance of developing analytical reasoning, as well as using the verses within the Holy Book to stimulate reasoning and develop cognitive abilities in school children (Gunther, 2006).

3.1.3 Memory and Education

The Quran is the Holy Book which Muslims believe was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through an angelic voice. According to Islamic belief, Quranic revelation was received by Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) aurally, and then only later it was transferred to a written text. In the beginning the Quranic verses relied on memorisation and repeated practice by the prophet – it is believed among Muslims that he was not able to read or write. Thus, memorising the Quran, has always been one of the realities of the Islamic faith and as a result, memory as a way of transmitting knowledge plays a significant role in educational philosophy and intellectual tradition of the Islamic nation (Nasr, 1992).

The major reason why memorising the Quran is essential is because it is a major part of the Islamic prayers, or (الصلاة) 'as-salah'. Each verse should be memorised accurately and precisely. Moreover, the Prophet's tradition 'Hadith', which is the sayings of the prophet after the revelation, is sacred for the majority of Islamic sects and was likewise originally transmitted word for word through memorisation. The memorisation of the Quran and Hadith are to this day school subjects that students get tested on at the end of each academic year, and this applies to all countries in the Arab region. In fact, there are many specialist schools for the memorisation and recitation of the Quran in all Arab countries. These specialist schools are called ‘tahfiz’ (literally memorisation), and they train...
students in memorising the Quran part by part until it is all memorised by heart. Having memorised it all is a great accomplishment, which also brings the memoriser or ‘hafiz’ a high status in society that is celebrated. Boyle (2006) suggests that many parents still get their children to enrol in such schools as a result of the belief that memorising the Quran at a very young age instills moral values, develops spirituality, and that this as a result enhances their attainment in school. Therefore, memorizing the Quran is, for many, an important pre-school stage. Besides enhancing the children’s development, many parents believe it engraves the Quran in their children’s minds and hearts, and thereby gives them an upbringing that will lead them to become good Muslim citizens.

To be able to master religious sciences, the path was to memorise the Quran accurately (Eickelman, 1978). Among many texts of the Prophet’s tradition (Hadith) there are major ones that should be accurately memorised. According to Eickelman’s (1978) key texts that were part of the religious study of Islamic education in Morocco, for example, were written in a rhymed manner in order to facilitate this memorisation. Nakosteen (1964) suggest in addition that the principle of mastering what is learned in the Islamic educational institution was not only memorisation and repetition, but also then reflecting on what was learned as well as its application.

3.1.4 The Golden Age of Islamic/Arab Science

In the golden centuries of Islam, religion encouraged freedom of inquiry. Scholarship and intellectual excellence were regarded most highly. Students were encouraged to debate their views with their teachers. Libraries, both public and private, even the courts of the caliphs and the palaces of kings, were centers of open and free inquiry by scholars, who often received financial aid to pursue their interests (Nakosteen, 1964, p. 57).

The flourishing of sciences and culture that was spread in many Islamic/Arab regions is referred to as the Golden Age of Islam between the eighth and thirteenth century (Nakosteen, 1964). This age started with extensive work of research and of translating books and texts on science, philosophy and various other fields from Greek and many other languages into Arabic. Within this time,
many well-known scholars and philosophers emerged and played an important role in history of science and philosophy, such as Ibn Sina, Al-Faraabi, and Ibn-Al-Nafis, to name a few. Then in the eleventh and twelfth century, a large number of books were translated from Arabic into Latin, and as Hogendijk and Sabra (2003) suggest, ‘these translations were crucial for the rise of the ‘renaissance of the twelfth century’ in Europe and they later played an important part in the development of the exact sciences during the Renaissance of the sixteenth century’ (2003, p. vii).

In addition, Falagas et al. (2006) discusses the enormous development of biomedical science that occurred in the region during this period and which was influenced by Islamic beliefs and encouragement for learning and research through verses in the Quran and Hadith. Falagas et al. discuss many Arab pioneers in the field of medicine and medical education, indicating the importance of the contribution of these Arab/Muslim scholars. However, after explaining the impact of these scholars in the scientific field, Falagas et al. followed this with an analysis of more recent contributions of Arab scholars and this shows a different picture from the past. They show for example that between 1994 and 2004, only 30 articles came from Arab countries in the fifty top clinical medical journals. This shows a very low productivity as compared to the contribution of other regions to medical science. The authors claim that this decline of contribution is due to the political and economic situation in the Arab region: ‘political, social and economic problems have hampered scientists in Arab countries, making it difficult to optimize their capacity in research productivity in most scientific fields’ (Falagas et al. 2006, p. 1586).

Finally, in the era of the European Renaissance and Industrial Revolution, the Ottomans, who dominated the Arab region at the time, modernised the higher education system to mimic the European system. Herrera (2007) suggests that this modernisation was a result of European and Russian power and excellence that had appeared at the time, and education was one of the reforms that were sought out to achieve similar power, as well as economic and scientific advancement for the Ottomans. Therefore, the university replaced the madrasa as the higher institution in the Islamic and Arab region.
3.1.5 Types of Educational Institutions

The *kuttab* (literally meaning place of writing) is the type of institution that was providing education for the primary stage in the early Muslim history until before the establishment of schools. This type of education was normally based in the mosque, specifically in a part of it or attached to it. Students of different ages would gather around a master/teacher who taught them different types of knowledge. The subjects that were taught in the *kuttab* were primarily Quranic recitation and memorisation, Hadith, and other Islamic sciences (e.g. تفسير ‘tafsir’ ‘interpretation of Quran’), as well as writing and reading (Kadi, 2006). One of the usual events in the *kuttab* was to test students’ ability to memorise the Quran, and this was done by the teacher who put students in pairs, individually or in group to check and correct their recitation and accuracy of memorisation.

The *madrasa* (place of learning/ school) system was formed in the tenth century in response to the scholarly and social need for further elements of education (Shalaby, 1954). Since the formation of *madrasa*, education moved away from the mosque, as there was a realisation that mosques are places of worship and having an increasing number of students studying there distracted from this purpose. This new type of education took the role of college/university. However, according to Kaddi (2006), the *madrasa* did not differ much from the mosque schooling in terms of its religious orientation.

Later in history came the formal transformation of *madrasa* into the highest level, the *university* which was part of education in the Islamic Golden era, as they were the centre of research and knowledge preservation and transmission (Nakosteen, 1964). In the early thirteenth century, many universities in the Islamic world were highly advanced and were according to Nakosteen’s claim, comparable with great universities in the west such as Oxford. The curriculum in these universities was not merely religious, but varied between theology, literature, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and much more. However, the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century brought an end to many such universities, great libraries, and mosques in Baghdad, which was a leading city of advancement. Since that time, the educational system in many cities started to deteriorate gradually with the end
of the Golden Age, particularly with the weakness of the late period of the Abbaside Empire, the independence of many Muslim states, and the fall of Cordoba in 1236 (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

3.1.6 Reading

Reading in the Arab region developed greatly during the Abbasid period (AD 750-1258), where the number of booksellers and ‘copyists’ (scribes) increased. There were also ‘men of letters’ who travelled to collect rare manuscripts for there was an appreciation of such pieces at that time. Hundreds of bookshops and many libraries were established with free access in all Islamic regions, starting from important cities such as Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordoba (Nakosteen, 1964). These bookshops had an essential role in developing scholarship as according to Shalaby (1954) they were not just places for book dealing. Many events took place in these bookshops, such as ‘literary salons’ where discussions, intellectual exchanges and debates about a variety of subjects took place. Many fields were tackled in such exchanges such as poetry, philosophy, and theology. In addition to that, topics that may be considered ‘taboo’ nowadays were freely discussed at that time, particularly debates about certain issues in Islamic beliefs.

Access to these bookshops was free and many scholars used to spend hours reading, learning and copying from these books for their own knowledge and in order to provide the public these treasures for a cheap price (Shalaby, 1954). Scholars such as Al-Jahiz used to pay in order to be locked at night in the bookshop to read and copy from books and to pursue his research journey covering a wide range of intellectual domains. It is this culture of knowledge pursuit, that was the norm during that time, which led to an intellectual revolution and consequently to the Golden Age of Arab science. Interestingly, Al-Jahiz is considered (Zirkle, 1941) to have formulated an early theory of the evolution of living creatures almost 1000 year before this theory was developed in the West.

Because books were very much revered, libraries were places of great importance and became centres of education and scholarship. Many academies and colleges were originally libraries, such as Bait al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom, AD 830) in
Baghdad, Iraq. However, with the end of the Golden Age, many libraries were demolished and thousands of manuscripts were destroyed. This destruction, among other reasons, resulted in a deterioration of the reading culture that has continued since then.

In the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR), Al-Biss (2003) noted that there has recently been a visible decrease of public libraries and the quality of what is available has been one of the problems that resulted in a noticeable decrease in readership in the Arab world. This ‘book crisis’, as Al-Biss calls it (2003, p.79), is due to several reasons:

1. Censorship and the recession of democracy and freedom of expression.
2. Low readership.
4. Intellectual property rights violations.

In his explanation of the small size of the publication industry and for the low levels of readership in the present Arab world, Al-Biss suggests that many publishers are avoiding books that may contribute to advances in knowledge, and that they instead focus on books that are more ‘ephemeral’. This is due to the above reasons, specifically censorship by the state, which in nearly all Arabic speaking countries keeps an eye on intellectual production before publication. Thus, any book needs to be approved by the state before publication, and this consequently prevents creativity and freedom of expression. Another reason that contributes to the book crisis is low readership. The factors that contribute to that according to the report are related to educational institutions, which do not encourage reading/research and are based on rote learning. Additionally, cultural development plans to encourage free reading are nonexistent and the economic position of the citizens, who are mostly concerned with covering basic living costs, contributes to the problem as well. Finally, the mass media plays a role in exacerbating the problem by being a less expensive source of information, and thus citizens rely on it.

The third reason for the book crisis, listed above, is the restricted distribution of books. This is evident by the lack of specialist book distributors, the limited
number of bookshops, and the clustering of the small number of bookshops that
do exist in major cities. Many of these bookshops face financial hardships and
therefore depend on selling other products to compensate for that. The fourth and
last reason mentioned in the report relates to violations of intellectual property in
many countries in the region, and this is due to the absence of laws protecting
authors and publishers. Although in some countries there are laws that are
concerned with intellectual property and copyright, such laws are not enforced or
implemented. However, the issue of intellectual rights infringement has been
given more attention in recent years, and calls for actually enforcing policies and
laws have grown. In her analysis of intellectual property and copyright in the Arab
world, Boghossian (2010) examined the issue in relation to protective laws in the
region. She stated that many Arab countries are part of the Berne Convention for
the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (first adopted in 1886), which is
historically the first of its kind for providing this type of intellectual rights
protection. She further listed the type of punishment and amount of fines in
different countries in the Arab region. However, she argues that much more needs
to be implemented to make the application of the laws effective, stating that ‘one
can say that some of these fines are quite significant and can be a deterrent.
However, for them to be effective, the courts need to impose fines at the higher
end of the range, which is not often the case (2010, p.12).

Despite the increasing attention to intellectual property and copyright in the Arab
region, many forms of infringement continue to take place. There are some
individual efforts to take a stand to expose such violations, particularly in relation
to academic violations. These stands seem to be individual efforts that belong to
either academic personnel or people who are part of the publishing industry. An
example of this is a growing Twitter hash tag, which originated in Saudi Arabia
around 2012, about different types of infringements such as academic plagiarism
in universities, copyright violations, fake certificates and more. Social media,
including Twitter, is claimed to have had a big impact on political communication
and mobilisation in the Middle East over the past few years (Shirazi 2013),
although its effect does depend on the amount of government filtering (Wagner
and Gainous 2013). Taking the case of Egypt, Eaton (2013) argues that social
media has helped to challenge narratives of authority and to make these
alternative narrative visible not both within Egypt and to the outside world. In
terms of making available information about copyright available, the Twitter-based fight against copyright infringement is not only focused on Saudi Arabia, but also on cases from the Arab world in general. Many cases that were found in other Arab countries have been revealed by the above mentioned Twitter campaign, and this has the effect of raising the awareness of people and of pushing for the actual implementation of laws.

More generally, many cases have been publicised in the Arab world show that there seems to have been some kind of negligence towards copyright in academia and publications. These cases detail violations by academics and authors more than students’ plagiarism at tertiary level. Forms of violation cases refer to publishing articles that were already published by other authors in different journals, publishing articles/books that were translated from other languages, and plagiarising or using intellectual works without referring to the original authors. A number of these cases have faced legal action, while in other cases the violators were sacked from their positions, refused some of the financial profits or had their academic rank reduced. The AHDR (2003, p. 157) warns of tolerance towards copyright in the Arab world and considers it part of the development that should be focussed on more closely by the region, saying that: ‘if Arab countries are to realise an economic, cultural and social renaissance, those that have not drafted national legislation on copyright – the most fundamental instrument for protecting and stimulating knowledge production – must do so’.

3.1.7 Writing

Writing was not something unknown in the pre-Islamic Arab world. However, as we have seen, being nomadic in nature made the spoken word much more important and powerful for Arab tribes (Musallam, 1983). Even in the pre-Islamic Arabia, the yearly fairs that were run (e.g. Ukaz, the most well-known of all) were not only events for commercial gatherings but also used for intellectual exchange through debates, poetry, literary speeches and discussions (Shalaby, 1954). Many intellectuals, poets, and spokesmen would come from different parts of Arabia to participate orally in such yearly events. This cultural characteristic partly explains why writing was not developed until later in the ninth century.
When we talk about literacy and writing in the Arabi world, it is important to bear in mind that the Arabic language actually has three varieties, each of which has a functional importance. One variety is informal and the other two are formal. The language that is used in everyday communication are the local dialects, and this depends on the part of the region the speakers are located. Dialects of colloquial spoken Arabic can be so diverse that mutual intelligibility is not always assured. Next, modern standard Arabic (MSA) is the language used for news, formal communications, and literary works. MSA is learned in schools while the dialect is known by the native Arabic speaker naturally (Ayari, 1996). Recent sociolinguistic studies have focused on the difference between MSA and local spoken varieties. For instance, Jabbari (2012, 2013) has documented significant differences between MSA and local Egyptian and Iraqi spoken varieties of Arabic. This has led to a debate about what variety of Arabic is more appropriate to use in the educational system, and whether to ‘update’ MSA to reflect contemporary spoken varieties (Cote 2009). The third type is classical Arabic, which is the language of the Quran, the holy book. The difference between MSA and classical Arabic is mainly one of vocabulary and meaning, reflecting the great amount of time and development since the original Arabic literary texts were written in the 7th through 9th centuries, and especially the increased contact with the West and the rest of the world in the past century (Abdulaziz 1986).

When students enter school they usually start learning a new form of language (MSA) that should be developed and acquired like any new language. According to the AHDR (2003) this has created a crisis for the Arabic language as MSA is not well-supported in schools because of poorly designed curricula. The problem, according to the AHDR report, stems from ‘concentration on the superficial aspects of teaching grammar and morphology, rather than on the core concepts of texts and their respective holistic structures; inattention to semantics and meaning; [and] neglecting the functional aspects of language use, such as improving linguistic skills in everyday use’ (p.125). Consequently, students in schools get very limited opportunities to develop the standardised form (MSA) of their own mother tongue. Indeed, creative and innovative use of the language to facilitate sophisticated exchange is uncommon in school curricula.
Another important phenomenon is the lack of freedom of expression in the writing class in most schools/universities in the Arab world. In schools, the class in which students write and develop their writing skills is called ‘ta’bir’ (literally ‘lesson of expression’). A typical ta’bir class is formed around a topic that is given to students at the beginning of the session. The teacher leads a brief discussion of the topic, then students are allocated a time to complete an essay about the topic. Most of these topics are pre-determined by the curriculum and students are not given choices. It may be true that students are given opportunities to express their opinions on each topic, but given that the topics are pre-determined by the curriculum, and this curriculum conforms to standards set by educational authorities, the kinds of opinions expressed are limited and the quality of the product coming out of this class is questionable. There is a careful control, according to the AHDR (2004), on Arab people’s freedom of expression. This is achieved through many means, including the educational curriculum.

3.1.8 Teaching methods

As mentioned above, education circles called halqas were the main feature of the initial educational methods in Islamic Arabia, where teachers would normally be seated and students seated before them. This represents a lecture-like method that still prevails until this day in educational institutions in many Arab countries. However, there is a significant difference between the methods of lecturing in the early Islamic period and the lectures held in Arab educational institutions of today. According to Nakosteen (1964), in the early Islamic period, providing information and explanation was the responsibility of the teacher as well encouraging students to inquire and question what was said during the lecture. If students’ opinions differed from their teacher’s, they were encouraged to use reasoning and evidence to support their claims. Although memorisation of the Quran was a major part of education in the Golden Age of Islam, the culture of enquiry, debate and logical reasoning was the norm. Students were inspired to experiment, learn on their own, and pursue intellectual enlightenment. Moreover, ideas of enquiry and observations were adapted from Greek and Hellenistic philosophy. This changes after the Islamic Golden Age, as detailed by Nakosteen.
The curriculum, which was in the early centuries balanced between sectarian and secular studies, became in the later centuries scholastic, making all or particularly all secular studies subject to religious and theological approval. The curriculum became formal, fixed, traditional, religious, dogmatic, backward-looking. It encouraged static minds and conformity. It became authoritarian and essentialist. Nakosteen (1964, p. 62)

That is, the end of the Golden Age witnessed a change in the methods of teaching and learning in the region. Teaching methods shifted, and even in kindergarten and primary schools the focus turned to teaching children how to read and write, without paying attention to developing other essential skills. This situation seems to have persisted to the present day. The AHDR (2003) has listed a number of elements that should be available for children to develop a wider set of skills, including creating educational materials that stimulate children’s imagination and their creativity. Providing the school with well-educated teachers is another element in creating quality education. A third element is to provide children with a healthy environment of learning which comprises physical space in the classroom as well as outdoor areas for children to play, express themselves, learn how to make their own decisions, interact with peers and teachers and develop their self-confidence. The AHDR report suggests that these elements are absent in many countries in the region. Teachers in many Arab countries are not well-qualified, as low salaries do not attract qualified educators. Classes in most schools are overly crowded and this limits students’ interaction, and as a result teachers resort to lecture-like teaching. Students’ ability to be creative is not developed and critical thinking and analytical skills as a result are not skills that educators strive to develop. ‘Communication in education is didactic, supported by set books containing indisputable texts in which knowledge is objectified so as to hold incontestable facts, and by an examination process that only tests memorisation and factual recall’ (AHDR 2003, p.54).

The AHDR also suggests that whilst the curricula may not differ from what many countries adopt, these differ in the way that content is controlled by the authorities. Materials and topics covered are carefully assessed by the authorities to make sure they do not touch on religious topics, or to make sure that content
does not contradict with the country’s Islamic orientation. There is a sense in which the authorities maintain control to ensure control over its citizens, to enhance their loyalty to the regime, and ultimately to create obedient citizens. For instance, school books in many Arab countries may show the picture of the present ‘ruler’ in books on topics, such as mathematics or science, where such images are irrelevant. This suggests something about how the ruling authorities’ attempt to instil submissiveness and compliance in their populations (AHDR, 2003). The picture in higher education is no different. More specifically, Universities in most Arab countries seem controlled and manipulated by the political ideology of whatever the current regime is, and so university staff are not autonomous in terms of deciding on curricula, policies, or philosophies (AHDR, 2003).

3.2 The Status of Teachers

Although there was a great appreciation of books in the golden age of Islam, and there seemed to be a culture of autonomy in learning as illustrated e.g. by the efforts of individuals travelling to seek knowledge, teachers were an important source for knowledge seekers. Shalaby (1954, p.115) has compiled a number of historical quotes focusing on the importance of teachers. For instance, he cites Muhyi al-Din b.al-Arabi as saying: ‘People speak the best of what they have learnt, learn the best of what they have written and write the best of what they have heard, therefore, if you are seeking knowledge, take it from the man’s lips and thus you will receive selected learning’. Shalaby has also examined teachers’ appointment documents from the Golden era, and these indicate the significant role of teachers as the source of nourishing and enlightening students’ minds as well as offering them ‘salvation from the bewilderment of doubts’ (p. 119). ‘Every teacher was a guide. This was the ideal of Muslim educational theorists, such as Avicenna and al-Ghazzali. Particularly was this true of precollege education and in the choice of a career’ (Nakosteen, 1964, p. 57).

Although respect of teachers depends on the level and place they teach, generally speaking there is a great reverence for teachers still in the present day Arab world. The present situation, however, seems to have been more influenced by the
Islamic faith. During the Prophet’s life, teachers who taught the Quran were well respected, starting from the Prophet himself up to the captives of wars (particularly ones who could read and write) who were freed on return to teach people how to read and write. During that time, the norm was that whoever teaches the Quran (and later applied to other kinds of knowledge) should not gain any financial reward as sharing knowledge provides the person with a divine reward. Thus, many were teaching free of charge, and viewed teaching as a reward. This contributed to instil the idea of sharing knowledge as a good deed that brought God’s reward in life as well as in the afterlife. According to Shalaby (1954), many scholars of the Quran and Hadith retained this attitude to teaching, including scholars such as Ahmad Bin Hanbal and those of Hanafi.

Apart from teachers of religious studies, during the Golden Age, scholars of other fields also embraced this attitude of serving the intellectual history of the nation by not gaining any profits from their intellectual production. An example of this is the first Arabic dictionary and the first Arabic prosody and notation of Arabic music, both of which were produced by Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad. Al-Khalil was believed to have lived in extreme poverty and refused to seek profit out of his productions. With these qualities, respect for educators remain until this day, and students, families and society retain a respect towards their teachers as a means of appreciation and gratitude.

### 3.3 The Arab Student Challenge

#### 3.3.1 Studying abroad

A number authors have explored the challenges of Arab students travelling to undertake studies in English-speaking contexts, such as the UK, US and other countries. Meleis (1982) has discussed the difficulties and problems faced by Arab students who enrol in American universities. Among these problems is the belief of the educator’s wisdom and that of published material. ‘The faculty member to them is the epitome of wisdom inculcated by years of teaching, researching, plain living’ (Meleis, 1982, p.444). Aldoukalee (2014) has explored the challenges of Libyan PhD students in the UK, focusing on a broader set of
social and cultural factors. Aldoukalee found that these Libyan students faced challenges focused on English language, passing various preparation courses (mandated by the conditions of their acceptance onto PhD programmes), concerns about the progress of the PhD studies, and issues focused on their family.

Of more direct interest, to the present study, is the challenges Arab students face in their academic writing in English. A number of studies addressing this more specific issue were reviewed in an earlier section (see section 2.3.2). It may be that all international students, whose first language is other than English, face the same challenges in their academic writing. However, Khuwaileh and Shoumali (2000) compared the writing of 150 Arabic students’ writing in English and Arabic on the same academic topic in a Jordanian University context, and found a strong correlation between weaknesses in the students’ L1 and L2 academic writing. Hence, the challenges of Arab postgraduate students coming to the UK for postgraduate study may be one not only of being non-native writers of English, but there may in addition be a problem with literacy education in their Arab L1 education in the context they come from.

Not much has been written previously on the transition from an educational context with less focus on critical and academic literacy skills, to a context were critical writing and thinking is encouraged. In western academic settings that are student-centred, students are expected to make their own decisions about their learning and work independently. This will be particularly challenging for students from Arab backgrounds. Students in western universities are also expected to analyse and make their own judgments about published materials. The respect accorded to published materials in the Arab world, and the belief that what is published is wise and of high authority, increases the challenge further for Arab students. Meleis (1982) claimed that Arab students depend on the wisdom they believe published materials provide. This belief that one’s ideas depend on and evolve from the wisdom of the educator/authority/publisher is difficult to change. Thus, Arab students may be less able or willing to challenge the texts they read, and then more likely to use the exact wording that is used by sources. As a result, problems like plagiarism occur.
The AHDR (2004) stated that the environment that students have in many Arab world educational institutions develop submissive citizens through the combination of curricula, teaching methods, and the authoritarianism that is practised there. This educational system’s ‘societal function is the reproduction of control in Arab societies’ (p.17). This as a result weakens students’ ability to develop critical thinking, opposing viewpoints or to develop ways to think ‘out of the box’. Deficiencies in such skills may create a great challenge for students who enrol in universities other than in their home countries. That is, students enrolling in western universities are expected to have developed critical thinking skills. In addition, the AHDR report points to specific weaknesses in Arab students’ preparation, such as e.g. business administration programs, which are argued to be structured by didactic teaching methods, ineffective ‘graduation projects’, and no attention to critical thinking modes. Coming from this background, many Arab students experience difficulty in the transition from their academic environment to totally different one.

Being used to lecture-like lessons in their home country, many students find it difficult to adapt to the type of lessons they get in different academic cultures such as that found in the UK. Students are more acquainted with knowledge dictation, where they receive information but do not interact or respond to the input, and this is a feature that is part of the curriculum in many Arab countries. This passive orientation of the Arab student is not conducive to developing the ability to create one’s own opinion about the world (Shahrour, 2004), and thus students’ creative and intellectual potential is not developed.

3.3.2 Language differences

The L2 writer’s challenge stems from a number of factors that affect the writing process. The differences between English and other languages and cultures, in this case Arabic, may create a significant challenge for English L2 writers. ESL teachers sometimes ask students to think in English while writing. However, with the interference of their cultural and linguistic background, which affects their way of thinking, doing so is not an easy task. The issue becomes more complicated when students transfer deficient L1 writing strategies to their L2
writing. That is, lack of training in L1 writing, and the associated lack of critical thinking skills, may compromise a student’s ability to engage in L2 academic writing (Mohan and Lo 1985). Moreover, Raimes (1983, p. 262) has observed that a lot of teachers in US L2 composition classes give students grammatical rules, structures and models of paragraphs, something which teaches L2 writers to imitate. Raimes warns that ‘we must realise that we are teaching them editing and imitating. We’re not teaching composing’.

Arabic rhetorical studies were based on the Quran and it is likely still the case currently as the Holy book may be one of the best representations of the richness and sophistication of the Arab language. Some scholars such as Kaplan (1966) based their contrastive rhetorical studies of the Arabic language on the Quran. According to Kaplan (1966), who analysed six hundred essays of students from different linguistic backgrounds, an Arabic speaking writer tends to imitate the Quranic style which is rich in parallel structures. Such parallel structures are uncommon in English writing; English writing relies more on subordination structures as these are believed to add elegance to the writing style. Kaplan also traced another difference between English and Arabic by noting the indirectness of the Arabic speaking writer. Indirectness is not encouraged in English writing. Instead, English writing values direct and purposeful styles. Although Kaplan’s work had a great influence on the field of contrastive rhetoric, critics have questioned his work and many considered it as more ‘intuitive than scientific’ (Leki, 1991). These critics have suggested that studies based on the Quranic version of Arabic fail to acknowledge the different varieties of the Arabic language (Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and local Arabic dialects). In fact, the Quranic version of Arabic is probably the most complicated, and is less used in contemporary society than MSA. That is, MSA is the version of Arabic that is taught in school for written communication.

Returning to the differences between English and Arabic writing, another difference is argumentative writing. Hatim (1997, p.44) compared English and Arabic (MSA) argumentative styles from translational perspective studies, noted that while argumentative texts in English are generally based on presenting an
opposition and then countering it in a balanced way, the case is different in Arabic argumentative writing. Arabic arguments tend to prefer to either support or condemn: ‘thesis-substantiation-conclusion’, whereas the English tends to adopt ‘the balance thesis-opposition-substantiation-conclusion’. This according to Hatim is not a feature of the language itself but is something that is influenced by a number of factors such as socio-political effects on the speakers of the language which is supported by finding such balanced types of arguments within the writings of Arabic speakers who are educated in the west.

3.3.3 Assessment

Due to cooperation agreements within the Arab league in educational development, written exams are the most common way of assessment in schools as well as universities. According to the UNDP (2006), which examined universities in 13 Arab countries, one of the shared problems between all the 13 countries is the issue of over-reliance on exams. The UNDP suggests that this overreliance on exams is a result of the Ministries of Higher Education needing a way of testing students’ achievement, and needing to publish the results of exams of large numbers of students within a tight time scale. According to the UNDP, this over-reliance on written exams is one of the factors that hinder improving the standards of education of universities.

University entrance in many Arab countries is based on secondary level exam results. According to Lamine (2010), students’ secondary results may not necessarily reflect their achievement in school, but rather their coaching lessons which they depend on for passing their exams. Taking Egypt as an example, he argues that because some universities require high scores for certain disciplines, students resort to private coaching, which typically train students on short answers of questions that may come in the exam.

This practice shows that education has deviated from a process of acquiring knowledge, developing analyzing aptitudes and critical thinking to a meaningless race for grades, where memorizing and spoon-feeding prevail (i.e. teachers give typical answers to questions
that could be asked in exams and students learn them by heart) (Lamine, 2010, P. 84).

Coming from this background, where students are trained to memorise a lot of material to pass the exam, and where other methods of assessment are not available, students who study abroad may face challenges in adapting to types of assessment that are looking for more critical academic skills. Through the above discussion of the types of methods and learning orientations that Arab students are familiar with, it is suggested that high level skills such as critical thinking and analytical skills may have been unsupported in their previous education and this results in lower levels of achievement in a new academic context such as a western university.
Chapter Four: Research Design and Methods

This part of the thesis describes the methods used to investigate the intertextuality and source use in the academic writing of Arab students in the UK. The design of methods was chosen to reflect the nature of the investigation, which focuses on the forms of intertextuality in the academic writing of first year Arab postgraduate students, how their past educational experiences may have shaped this, and how they have adapted to the UK academic environment.

The chapter is organised into four sections. The first section describes comments on the multi-method research approach used, and reiterates the research questions and their relationship to the overall design of data collection methods used. The next section discusses the participants, including the sampling, their backgrounds, and ethical issues. The third section discusses the collection of texts from the participants, including also piloting, the use of Turnitin, as well as the analytical steps used in exploring intertextuality in the students’ texts. The final section discusses the interview data that was generated with the participants, along with information on the procedures for transcription and analysis.

4.1 Research Design

The study makes use of different types of data and analysis. To respond to the first research question, samples of postgraduate students’ academic writing was collected. Postgraduate student participants were recruited from three UK universities (see Section 4.2), and these participants provided already assessed assignments as raw data for analysis (see Section 4.4). Piloting the text analysis methods was essential (see Section 4.4.2). All texts were examined and analysed after being collected from the participants (see Section 4.4.5). The analysis included comparing the texts to published sources using Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) typology of intertextuality as a starting point, but including also the expanded notion of intertextuality developed in this study (see Section 4.4.6). Following the text analysis, thirteen of the texts that were examined were chosen for further examination through interviews with their seven writers (that is, some participants submitted more than a single text). Two interviews were conducted with each of the seven interview participants. The first interview focused on the participants’ past educational experiences. The follow-up interview primarily
focused on the participants’ texts, previously analysed, using stimulated recall (see Section 4.5 for details on the interview methodology). This interview data was used to respond to the second and third research questions.

Presented below is mapping of the methods onto the research questions for the study.

Figure 1: Mapping of the Methods onto the Research Questions

4.2 Ethical Considerations

Two related ethical issues arose in this study. The first is the fact that investigating intertextuality in academic writing, and more specifically the use of sources in writing, is a somewhat sensitive topic. That is, in tackling source use in academic writing, the concept of plagiarism might come to the surface. Plagiarism, if exposed, may result in stigmatising and incriminating participants, and hence has important ethical implications because it deals with ‘areas which are private, stressful or sacred’ (Lee 1993, p.4). The second is that through the study, there is an ethical issue that may arise due to the examining of students’
assessed assignments and thus, participants may fear having their work under additional scrutiny.

Ethical issues would arise not only in collecting assignment texts from the participants. One would arise in the interviews as well. One of the interviews, the stimulated recall interview (see section 4.6.3) focuses specifically on source use. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) point out that focusing on situations that evoke stressful moments, such as specific source use through stimulated recall, raises ethical concerns.

In order to address these ethical issues in the study, different measures had to be taken. First, I have asserted confidentiality and anonymity to the participants in two ways: in writing and orally. Written assertion of confidentiality was clearly confirmed in an information sheet that the participants received (see appendix 2). The information sheet also stressed the idea of voluntarism so as to provide participants with full freedom of participating or withdrawing at any stage of the project. Oral assertion was used at the start of the interviews to ease the participants’ concerns about the issue. Informing the participants of the entire procedure of the interview and the principle of confidentiality is one of the most important ethical information that should be communicated in interviews (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Another step that I took was to openly and clearly discuss the real purpose of the study with the participants in the invitation email (see invitation email in appendix 1) and then again at the beginning of the interviews. Participants were informed that the purpose of looking at their assignment was not to put them under the spotlight, but to explore their ways of using sources in their academic writing. The consent forms as well as oral consent for recording, therefore, were to confirm this had happened and participants felt comfortable to share their assignments as well as their backgrounds during the interviews.

Another set of measures relate to the use of Turnitin. Turnitin was used in the initial analysis of texts to help identify the similarities between the original sources and the participants’ texts, and originality reports were generated for this purpose. I decided against flagging the use of Turnitin in the informed consent materials or showing the participants’ the reports generated by Turnitin. Foregrounding the use of Turnitin in such a way would, I believe, have given the
wrong impression about the aims of the research. *Turnitin* is commonly known as ‘plagiarism software’, but this common association does not apply in my research. I used *Turnitin* as a tool for a specific stage of my data analysis, and I had no intention of trying to discover plagiarism. Instead, during the stimulated recall interviews (see section 4.6.3) I showed the participants an annotated copy of their text. The annotated texts showed specific examples numbered and linked to the questions they were asked during the interview. There were two cases where students asked whether I used a software to detect those similarities, and I was honest and told them I did use a software tool along with the Google search engine, but also pointed out that this was an initial step of analysing their papers and a very small part of the procedure compared to the other stages of analysis and the other range of tools and resources (see section 4.4).

Finally, there was the possibility that I might discover plagiarism in the texts collected for analysis. However, this was somewhat controlled for through the procedure followed in selecting texts to include in the study (see detailed discussion in section 4.4).

### 4.3 The Participants

In order to gain access to participants, the first strategy was to use social media. The online community I explored was the Manchester Arab Society, which was formed recently on campus. This society has a Facebook account in which their events are posted. I used this Facebook account to post an advertisement about my study and I also joined one of their meetings to recruit participants. I was expecting to get emails from volunteers who wanted to participate, and I then planned to reply to them with full details about the study (see invitation email in appendix 1). However, this first strategy was not very successful; only one participant was identified through this social media strategy.

The second way of recruiting participants was through ‘snowball’ sampling (Cohen *et al*. 2011). I used my contacts in the University (other Arab students that I know) to put me in touch with potential participants. These others, in turn, might then identify further participants. This led to the identification of a further eight participants. I also used my personal and professional contacts in the University to
identify specific courses and course units with many Arab students. Through a personal contact, I was able to identify a visiting lecturer from an Arab background, who provided me with a list of students from Arab background by email. He sent an email to a list of students he knew in different universities, advertising my study. Through his help, I received 10 emails from students who volunteered to participate, some asked to participate only with their written work, but specified not being able to participate in the interviews.

Finally, whilst the initial goal was to recruit students from the Manchester area, in order to increase the number of participants, the study was later opened to all UK universities. I again relied on my personal contacts to identify students at other universities. This helped me identify a further four students; however, all were from the Greater Manchester area.

The final number of potential participants was 23. The participants came from three different universities, and they were all students on taught postgraduate programs within the humanities, business and social science disciplines. Their areas of study included Education, Business, Translation as well as Development Policy and Management (IDPM). Figure 2 provides an overview of the areas of study.

![Number of Participants](image)
The final number of participants was 22, as one decided to withdraw (saying that he had a reconsider and changed his mind). They came from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Yemen, Oman, and Emirates. That is, they were all international postgraduate students from Arab backgrounds. Each participant was engaged in academic writing, or had already done some assessed writing, for their course units. They also all had a first degree from their home country, and some had masters degrees from their home countries. Table 1 provides information of all participants in this study, showing their country of origin, area of study, their previous degrees and types of high school. Further information about the seven interview participants will be presented in Chapter Six.

Table 1: Backgrounds of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Area of Study</th>
<th>Previous Degree</th>
<th>Type of High School</th>
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<td>Public</td>
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<td>Business</td>
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<td>Public</td>
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<td>Private</td>
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<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>TESOL</td>
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<td>Public</td>
</tr>
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<td>TESOL</td>
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<td>Oman</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>International Development</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Saudi</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Saudi</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Saudi</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Saudi</td>
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<td>Public</td>
</tr>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collection started after identifying potential participants by sending an invitation for participation and an information sheet explaining the study in detail and what was expected from the participants (see appendix 1, 2 and 3). After obtaining the consent form from each student participant, the assignment(s) were received along with name(s) of the course unit tutor(s) who assessed the
assignments. The following step was to send an invitation to the tutor(s) along with an information sheet similar to that of the student, and a consent form (see appendix 4, 5 and 6). The tutors’ consent form was important so as to confirm whether the student’s assignment has been submitted to Turnitin software in order to avoid any ethical issues such as revealing plagiarism. The tutors’ consent form had to include information about the student, name, number and name of the course unit from which the assignment was taken.

4.4 The Textual Data

The textual analysis, responding to research question 1 of the study, focused on forms of intertextuality in the academic writing of the Arab postgraduate students. The texts that were chosen for this study were assignment papers of postgraduate students. They were all a minimum of 2000 words in length. This criterion permitted the data within each text to be extensive enough to show any patterns of intertext. Each text had to have a reference list to be able to examine the references and to analyse how the sources were used in the texts.

Another criterion for the texts was that they had to come from postgraduate students who, at the time, were engaged in writing academically for their modules or courses. Because of this active engagement in writing, later steps of the research (interviews) would be facilitated, as the participants would be able to reflect on the experience during the interviews. As taught master courses are intensive (one year programs), the students were likely to remember their experience of writing the assignments.

Choosing texts from postgraduate taught students was suitable as students in such programs write extensively to meet their course requirements. Thus, most students who study in these courses would have some texts that had already been assessed while they were engaging with other assignments. Therefore, the possibility to get assessed texts was more likely than with other postgraduate students, such as postgraduate research programme students.
Finally, the texts that were chosen were all from students within Humanities. This was done as the academic writing of students in these disciplines usually has a ‘discursive’ quality. Furthermore, This type of writing usually includes elements of evaluation, an analytical dimension, and critical thinking which would allow the researcher to examine how sources were used to develop the text.

A few of the texts received were of a kind that did not require sources or included only a few sources. Although such texts did not help to establish how students use sources, these were used in examining other forms of intertextuality, such as e.g. ‘indirect intertextuality’ (Pecorari and Shaw 2012; see analysis in section 5.2).

The total number of papers that were received from students was forty seven. However, several papers were not included in the analysis for two reasons:

1. Failing to obtain a consent form from the course tutor (either the tutor did not respond or had already left the institution).
2. The tutor could not confirm if the paper had been run through Turnitin.

The above two points illustrate additional ethical measures (see discussion of ethics in Section 4.3) that I used. The first recognises that the tutors of course units do have some ownership of the texts even if the texts have been written by the students (see letters to tutors in appendix 4,5,6). The second was to minimise the chances of discovering cases of overt plagiarism. That is, if an assignment had been submitted online, and if the assignment had been scanned already by Turnitin, and finally if the assignment had already been marked by a tutor, then the chances of discovering overt plagiarism would be minimised. It is important to emphasise here that the purpose of my study was to understand intertextuality and the use of sources, not plagiarism. Using already marked assignments also helped to minimise participants’ fears, as analysing their texts could have no effect on their marks.

As a result of these two additional measures, the total actual number of papers that were analysed was 40. In the following sections, an overview of the disciplines/fields from where each paper comes from will be presented.
4.5 Analysing Source Use in the Textual Data

This section has a number of sub-sections, including a section on the use of *Turnitin* as an initial step of the analysis, on the inter-coder checks I performed, on three sections on the actual analysis of intertextuality.

4.5.1 Initial Analysis using Turnitin

The initial step undertaken to look at intertextuality was through exploring the different ways of looking at the concept of intertext, and specifically the similarities between the participants’ texts and their sources. I started with the use of a software tool called SafeAssign. This software was accessible free of charge and is one of the software products that performs comparisons of texts to sources that are available online. Access to *SafeAssign* was through my own personal login with the CourseSites platform of *Blackboard*. I started by uploading the papers as ‘drafts’ in the CourseSites unit created for this purpose. The reason why the papers were submitted as drafts was to avoid adding them to the text repository of *SafeAssign*, thereby avoid privacy and anonymity issues. *SafeAssign* identified some intertextuality in the papers submitted, but it turned that *SafeAssign* as a software tool still has limited databases compared to *Turnitin*, which seemed to be more effective in this respect. Thus, after ensuring ethical considerations were met for *Turnitin* use (see discussion in section 4.4), I started using it for my initial analysis.

As discussed in Chapter Two, *Turnitin* is a software product that is used by most universities across the UK for the purpose of checking students’ assignments for originality. *Turnitin* can detect any copied text in students’ assignments and this happens through comparing the student’s text to hundreds of databases, websites, and previously submitted student papers. The advantage of *Turnitin* against other software tools is that its text repository, against which it uses to compare submitted texts, is very large.

Therefore, *Turnitin* was chosen over *SafeAssign* for comparing students’ texts. A folder in one of my supervisor’s existing courses in *Blackboard* 9 was created for the purpose of submitting papers to *Turnitin*. Only my supervisor was the tutor for
that course so as to avoid the data being available to any other staff members. Under his supervision, the Turnitin options were sorted so as to avoid adding any of the assignments to the permanent Turnitin text repository. Therefore, the papers were submitted as ‘drafts’. Close attention was also paid to the ‘advanced options’ of the software, where the user can control the settings of how an assignment is compared to sources. The following list shows the options and features selected for generating the originality reports in Turnitin.

1. Quotes were not excluded from the originality report so to permit the analyse of the amount and nature of quotations available in each text. This helped to determine how much a writer relies on a certain source.

2. The ‘small matches’ option was set to a count word of ‘3 words’ and over. Although a 3 word match may not be something that instructors consider as problematic, for the purposes of my research small matches sometimes provides me with indications of how intertext language was used. The insertion of synonyms in between two or more 3 or 4 word chunks of copied text, for example, was a feature that was prevalent in the data as will be seen in Chapter 5.

Bibliographic material was also included in the originality report in order to look at ‘reference list matches’. This was found to be helpful for understanding papers that included structure level intertextuality (see Section 5.4.4).

The percentage overlap of the originality reports was not of great interest. Rather, the originality report provided an overview of overlap between the students’ writing and sources, an effective means to retrieving these matches, and a listing of sources that the students seemed to have used. This, then, provided a starting point for further exploration of the similarities between the sources and the texts. Thus, Turnitin was used as a tool only to facilitate later analysis.

4.5.2 Manual Exploration of Turnitin Results

Although the use of Turnitin facilitated an initial stage of analysis, manual investigation of the sources was the main way of exploring how a student used a
source. In tracking the sources manually, the focus was not on tracing the relationship to discover the similarity (which may be part of what was done) as much as it was to discover the ways in which the students made use of the sources and incorporated the information in their papers. For example, if a case included a part that had an intertextual relationship with a source, it would go through few stages to determine whether this relationship was conventional or unconventional (see section 4.5.3). This included looking at whether the source used was mentioned accurately with details of the author and the year of publication, and if there were quotes, whether the page number was mentioned. It also included looking at whether there was different changes to the source text, such as appropriate paraphrase, synonyms use, sentence change, or structure change. Finally, I looked at how the information from the source was used in the student paper. For example, the question: ‘was the source used extensively, or relied on for the whole argument?’ was asked. The following is a full list of the steps taken during this process.

1. Checking whether the text had accurately referenced the sources.
2. Checking if the sources marked by the originality report matched the ones in the student’s reference list or not.
3. Acquiring the sources used and manually examining them.
4. Checking any textual relationship that was marked by Turnitin but not attributed to any source by the student, acquiring these and manually examining them.
5. Initial open coding of the use of a source, including categories such as paraphrasing, synonym substitution, quoting, and copying without accurate attribution.
6. Assessing the use of sources, including the overall reliance on sources and the types of attribution that was prevalent in a text (e.g. secondary citation).

The above process then led to creating sets of notes for each text and consequently generated questions for the further analytical steps which involved the use of MAXQDA. These questions also led to schedules for the stimulated recall follow-
up interviews that focussed on specific examples of intertextuality from the texts (see section 4.6.3).

4.5.3 Analysis of Intertextuality

The analysis of intertextuality made use of Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) distinctions between indirect, conventional and unconventional intertextuality. This includes ‘indirect intertextuality’, which includes the use of formulaic language and other sets of phrases that may or not be signalled by the writer and which may be unnoticeable by the reader. The Turnitin originality reports were helpful in identifying this intertextuality. ‘Conventional intertextuality’ refers to common ways of using sources in academic writing, including proper referencing of these sources. Again, Turnitin was helpful to identify this, but the additional manual investigation (see section 4.5.2) was helpful also. The third type is ‘unconventional intertextuality’ which refers to inappropriate use of earlier sources by lack of attribution. This relied on the additional manual exploration of which sources the participants had actually cited or not.

Pecorari and Shaw also have a category they call ‘deceptive intertextuality’, which refers to a direct relationship to earlier texts, but with no proper attribution and with the intention to deceive the reader. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this study does not consider intention and therefore the deceptive intertextuality category was not used.

After some time trying to fit data with Pecorari and Shaw’s typology of intertextuality, it seemed that the different categories of intertextuality occurred on different levels of the participants’ texts. This led to an adjustment of the analytic frame to account for this observation. In addition to the above types of intertextuality, I discovered that the relationship between source texts and students’ texts could be understood on four levels of writing: word/phrase, sentence, paragraph and structure level.

I now looked at each case/instance in every text and gave it more thought as to which part of the framework it could fit into, either indirect, conventional, or unconventional intertextuality, as well as word/phrase, sentence, paragraph and
structure level. Through linking each example to this adapted typology, I developed the final analytical framework for the study, which includes Pecorari and Shaw’s typology as well as the levels of intertextuality that emerged from my data and which represents the expanded view on intertextuality developed by the study. This framework of analysis will be shown and explained later in Chapter Five.

4.5.4 Inter-Coder Reliability Check

Examining the intertextuality in the participants’ texts was based on the framework of analysis (see Chapter 5) adapted from Pecorari and Shaw (2012). It was necessary to see how others would decide whether the cases focussed on were conventional, unconventional, or indirect forms of intertextuality. To do this, I developed an Inter-Coder Reliability (ICR) check to try to enhance the reliability of what in part were subjective decisions. The ICR check (see appendix 7) included the typology used for making the decisions, which corresponds to Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) typology. This included checking on conventional, unconventional and indirect intertextuality. However, the ICR check did not cover the levels of intertextuality as presented in the framework of analysis.

The ICR check was in the form of a document presented to four other coders. The four inter-coders included my two supervisors, a tutor from a UK university, as well as a fellow PhD student. The document explained the different categories of intertextuality and also, where appropriate, included a few examples. For example, to explain indirect intertextuality the document included a few examples of the form of formulaic phrases that could be considered examples of generic language, such as: it can be seen that/it should be noted that/play an important role in. For the other two categories, no examples were included as this would need more space. However, the categories were explained in a detailed and precise way.

Twelve examples of intertextuality from the data, which were previously analysed by myself, were included in the ICR check. The examples showed both the student’s text and the source text. The matching language between the student and source text was underlined to show the similarity between the two texts. This was
done to make the task easier as the process already needed quite some time for the coder. Then the coder’s task was to look at the degree of similarity along with the other non-matching co-text to be able to analyse how the student used the source and to decide to which category the example belonged - either conventional, unconventional or indirect intertextuality.

A comment box was provided under each example to give the coder a space to explain, if needed, on what basis the decision was made and to comment on any difficulty encountered in the judgment or any other elements that were taken into consideration when deciding. Also, the box served as a space to give the coder an opportunity to add thoughts unique to each example. For me, as a researcher, the comments provided me with insights into the analytical process and it helped me develop new understanding and new perspectives. One coder actually accessed a couple of the source texts and based her decisions on this. Having her explain her thoughts about the examples with reference to the source texts helped me, as a researcher, to understand the issue of paraphrasing better. That is, I looked again at these sources and developed a better perspective on how central the issue of paraphrasing is in relation to source use and the ways it might be assessed.

The degree to which each coder had a full understanding of the way sources were used was somehow limited as having a short extract of the text probably did not fully reflect how the source was used. This limitation was due to the problem of length of the texts. Having long texts would take longer for the inter-coders to analyse and so would make the process too time consuming. If the excerpts included longer paragraphs, the analysis might have been more thorough, and thus some of the inter-coder decisions might have been different. This may have been done through looking at different clues and examples from the full text to get a fuller picture. For example, in example 19 discussed later in the RQ1 analysis (see Chapter Five, section 5.4.4), two coders categorise this as ‘indirect intertextuality’, commenting that the words and phrases taken from the source are formulaic phrases such as ‘to conclude this discussion’ and there was only one non-formulaic term in the source use - is the word ‘rendition’. A third coder coded it as unconventional, yet was not sure of the decision, as it also seemed indirect due to the formulaic phrases used. Although the participant writer had used clear conventions to refer to the source and the topic of the source seemed to be
different, the way one single source was used in that specific paper might be considered inappropriate and so could have been categorised as unconventional structure intertextuality. But again, the different levels of intertextuality discovered in this study was not part of the ICR checks.

Going back to the assignment texts in light of the ICR results (see appendix 8), the main new insight concerned paraphrasing. That is, a different way of looking at the ‘paraphrase’ code was developed, which added a more precise way of analysing the particularity of each case. This was done in light of the study of Keck (2006). Keck analysed 165 summaries of L1 and L2 academic writers to investigate paraphrasing, in an attempt to expand understanding of paraphrasing strategies of academic writers. She investigated paraphrases by coding them into two types - unique and general paraphrases - based on the distinction between unique and general links. What Keck meant by ‘unique links’ is that single words/phrases which are taken from the source and used in the paraphrase are only taken from a specific part of the source text and not from anywhere else in the original source, so they are unique to a single paragraph. ‘General links’, on the other hand, are words that are used in the paraphrase which are used more generally in the source text.

These paraphrasing strategies were then classified into four categories: ‘Near Copy, Minimal Revision, Moderate Revision, and Substantial Revision’. Keck focussed on comparing paraphrasing strategies between L1 and L2 summary writing and found that L2 writers used more ‘Near Copy’ paraphrases than L1 writers who tended to use more ‘Moderate and Substantial Revision’ paraphrases. ‘Near Copy’ was a paraphrase attempt that included 50% or more of the words found in the original excerpt (unique links) with an average of five words long chunks copied from the original excerpt. ‘Minimal Revision’ was a type where the paraphrase contained less than 50% of the ‘unique links’ (average of 20-49%) and less than five words from the original excerpt so the writers used their more of their own words to explain the idea. ‘Moderate Revision’ pertained to attempted paraphrases that included at least one ‘unique link’ but unlike the other types of paraphrase it included one ‘general link’. Unlike the previous types of paraphrase, this type included textual borrowings from the original excerpts that were individual and two word phrases. ‘Substantial Revision’ was a type of paraphrase.
that did not include any ‘unique links’ and most of the wording (above 85%) was
dependent on the original excerpt in the source. Reporting phrases were not
counted as part of paraphrased language and words and phrases that were copied
and put in quotation marks were also not part of what Keck calls ‘unique links’.

It was then important for me to go over the texts focussing on how paraphrasing
was used by the students in my study, this time informed by the taxonomy of
paraphrasing developed by Keck (2006).

Paraphrasing is part of Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) typology, and motivated by
this framework I had previously coded synonyms and alterations as sub-
components of paraphrasing. However, looking back at the data from the lenses of
Keck (2006) resulted in an understanding the importance of differentiating
between paraphrasing that includes unique links and paraphrasing that includes
general links, including also how this helps to show something about the
strategies the students used in their textual borrowing. When looking at the data
again, it seemed logical to me to keep synonyms and alterations as separate codes,
distinct from paraphrasing. This led to the following memos to describe the
resulting codes:

- ‘Paraphrase’ sub-code: “Here, I will code a total paraphrase that is very
  independent from the source and which may also be a synthesized
  paragraph in the student's text that was taken from different parts of the
  source text.”
- ‘Alterations’ sub-code: “Here I will code any parts that have alterations
  e.g. change to the order of information, changing/adding words as
  compared to the source from where the information is taken.”
- ‘Synonyms’ sub-code: “Here I will highlight any synonyms or substitute
  words that stand for the same meanings as a word in the source.

Having these memos in mind when coding again, the paraphrase sub-code became
less frequent, and the ‘synonyms’ and ‘alterations’ sub-codes were more common
in the texts. There were 9 instances of paraphrase in the texts, while 35 instances
of synonyms were found and 38 of alterations. It seems clearer now that what I
now code as ‘paraphrase’ is similar to what Keck refers to as ‘general links’ and synonyms and alterations are informed by Keck’s notion of ‘unique links’.

4.5.5 The use of MAXQDA Software

The analysis in this study was facilitated by the use of the software MAXQDA. Both the textual analysis of the participants’ texts as well as the thematic coding of the interviews (see section 4.7.2) were done in the software.

For the textual analysis, the coding in MAXQDA was informed by the Turnitin initial analysis, including the originality reports (see section 4.5.2), my manual analysis of the participants texts’ relationship to the sources, including the notes from this process, the adapted typology from Pecorari and Shaw, including indirect, conventional and unconventional intertextuality and various sub-codes (see section 5.1), including also my levels of intertextuality and the new way of coding synonyms, alterations and paraphrase (see section 4.5.4).

The principle behind using qualitative data analysis software (MAXQDA in this case) as a tool was to facilitate the organisation of the data, which amounted to over 130 thousand words of student writing plus the interview transcripts. The tool helped to integrate the exploration and coding of the data in a single electronic environment, and it helped to link the interview data with the texts of the interviewees, thereby allowing an exploration of the views of their source use as informed by their texts. See 4.7.2 for more about the use of MAXQDA.

Each participant’s text was entered in the software and coded according to the final coding framework (see table in section 5.1). As I coded, each code and sub code received a memo to describe it. The following figure shows an example of a memo in this process.
Using MAXQDA also helped in looking for formulaic phrases or ‘indirect intertextuality’ as explained by Pecorari and Shaw (2012). The corpus of student assignments that I had collected was 130,925 words long, and this was searched for common academic phrases as identified by Hyland (2008; see appendix 14). For example, Hyland’s 3 and 4 word bundles frequently used in academic writing were explored in the corpus to determine how frequent these formulaic phrases were in my participants’ academic writing. The Dictionary tool of MAXQDA facilitated these analyses. All lists of Hyland were separately fed into the dictionary tool. Hyland’s bundles were put under categories and sub-categories that represented the number of words in a bundle (3, 4, or 5 word bundles).

4.6 Interview Data

According to Creswell (2008), interviews are suitable for eliciting information from participants who cannot be ‘directly observed’. Thus interviews are suitable in this case to elicit thorough information from participants about their reflections, opinions, and thoughts about their writing, as well as to obtain information of their past experiences to determine whether this plays a role in their adaptation to the UK academic setting. There were two interviews with each participant, as follows:
• Interview 1: Exploring the participants’ educational background (see section 4.6.2).
• Interview 2: Stimulated recall used to get students’ to discuss their own use of sources in their academic writing (see section 4.6.3).

4.6.1 Interview Participants

One of the difficulties in this research was to recruit participants for interviews. Most students who were enrolled in taught master courses were under the pressure of completing a dissertation at the end of their program. So many of them were already struggling with managing their workload within the period of time they got for their studies.

My sample size for the interviews was not meant to be representative of all Arab postgraduate students in Manchester or in the UK. Rather, the interviews were aimed at showing the experiences of this group of students whose papers I analysed and who I interviewed in order to be able to understand some of their backgrounds, perceptions and decisions they make during their writing. My intention was to select assignment texts and student participants which captured or ‘represented’ a range of different sorts of intertextuality (texts) and backgrounds (participants).

Choosing which samples to further explore in the interviews was based on the participants who showed an interest in further participating in the research, and these were often the ones who seemed to be managing their time well in terms of completing their dissertations. Most of the participants who agreed to be interviewed were from Saudi Arabia. Although the number of Saudi students in UK universities exceeds any other Arab student group, I had intended that the interview selection would capture more of the different kinds of students I had worked with. Even so, it was unlikely that students from all Arab countries would have identical backgrounds. Although there is a belief that Arabs are a homogeneous group, each country can still be said to have its own contextual characteristics that are unique to it. Therefore, I had to make an effort to recruit students from other Arab countries.
Moreover, the decision about who to contact also depended on the forms of intertextuality in their writing. The text they shared with me should have varied forms of intertextuality, including both conventional and unconventional forms, so to make the interviews as informative as possible. I also considered more unique patterns of intertextuality when approaching interview participants. For example, if a participant’s text included a notable use of synonyms, but fewer alterations, this raised a range of questions about why this was the case.

Table 3 below shows the seven participants who took part in the interview. Further details about them will be presented in Chapter Six.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Area of Study</th>
<th>Previous Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>English Language</td>
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<td>Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>English Language</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yemen</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yemen</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehad</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>Intl. Development</td>
<td>Law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6.2 *Interview Focused on Educational Background*

According to Cohen *et al.* (2011), semi-structured interviews have a wide-spread popularity in naturalistic enquiry. For the purposes of my study, this technique was used in the interviews as it enables the interviewer to prepare an interview schedule to keep the interaction focused and at the same time, it provides some flexibility for the interviewer and the respondent as well.

Designing the interviews was based on the questions that should be addressed and the nature of the study. The first interview aimed at eliciting from the participants’ information about their academic backgrounds (discussed in this section), while the follow-up interview was focused around the participants’ papers (see section 4.6.3). Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.
The interview schedule for the first interview was the same for all participants (see appendix 9). It started by creating a rapport with the interviewee and asking questions about their background in terms of which country they came from, their current field of study in the UK and in their home country if any, and then moving to more detailed information about their current writing and reading habits in their UK university, referencing, managing their projects, and then reflecting on the same areas in their previous education in university and/or school in their home country. Information was also elicited on their previous experiences in their home education in terms of reading and writing, and assessment types they had in their past educational experiences. Then the last part of the interview was meant to tackle the topic of copyright issues in their country, and to elicit responses about cultural beliefs in relation to copyright and knowledge sharing. The order of the different sections of the interview schedule was not followed strictly. That is, if the conversation led to talking about the past before this was intended by the interview schedule, then the questions were adjusted according to what was already said (see appendix 10 for a transcribed interview one sample).

Maintaining a professional setting for the interview was important to avoid any cultural misunderstanding. This was particularly important for male participants, who were the majority of the participating students. This awareness of the culturally accepted behaviour came from being part of the group I am researching. The interviews took place in group study rooms in the library that was booked each time in advance for this purpose. This setting was the most suitable place for the interviews as it is on the one hand a quiet room and, on the other hand, has transparent overlays walls in order to avoid any cultural sensitivity.

After each interview, writing down the impressions I had about the interview was important as these helped in understanding the emotions the interviewees went through during the interview. Creating rapport with the participants and confirming anonymity and confidentiality was an essential part of the first interview. I repeated the information that I had sent in my invitation email (see appendix 1 and 2), and I asked if it was okay to audio-record the interview. It is worth noting that talking about ones’ own educational and cultural backgrounds did not seem to create any uneasiness for the interviewees.
Each interview lasted between 40 to 50 minutes depending on how forthcoming the interviewee was and how much probing was done. Some participants added anecdotes during the interview, which lengthened the time, and others were somewhat brief in their narrative and only responded to questions and probes.

The second interview was based on the students’ written papers, so many pauses were involved in the interview. It was important in the second interview to set the recording device in a place where it was not affected by the movement of the papers, as this movement would have created noise or interrupted the recording. The second interview seemed to have caused some uneasiness for most participants especially when asked about specific examples from their papers. A small number expressed surprise that I was able to obtain their sources and some seemed anxious about the fact that I was matching their papers to the sources and asked questions about how this was done. To my surprise, two participants asked if I had used Turnitin for this purpose. I was honest and replied that I did but I explained that it is only a small and initial part of the analysis and that it would not affect their initial submission by their tutor. These particular participants were familiar with Turnitin because they were allowed to use it previously by their universities. Different anxiety symptoms were evident in a few participants such as one tapping their fingers on the table; another avoiding responding directly to the questions/probing and at one point took the interview questions and started reading them and answering each question briefly. And another revealed some anxiety by taking long pauses.

4.6.3 Stimulated Recall

The follow-up interview was different and unique to each participant. This was due to the fact that each interview was based on the examples of intertextuality of each participant’s text. Thus, the questions had to be modified for each participant. The first part of the interview dealt with information about the text, such as its purpose, the time and effort it needed, and the sources used. The second part of the interview dealt with the writing of the text, including referencing, synthesising information, note taking, and editing. The final part dealt
with questions about specific examples in the texts (see sample stimulated recall interview schedule in appendix 11).

Confirming anonymity and confidentiality, once again, was very important at the start of the second interview, because focusing on the participants’ own texts could create anxiety during the interview. In addition to the beginning of the second interview, another confirmation of confidentiality was made before starting to ask specific questions about the participant’s texts. I also confirmed to the interviewee that making judgments about his/her text was not the purpose, but rather that the purpose was to explore their strategies and thoughts when they use sources in academic writing (see appendix 12 for a transcribed interview sample). Even so, discussing the participants’ writing, and how they used text sources in their writing, seemed to create some signs of uneasiness (see ethical considerations in section 4.3). This was evident in the stimulated recall interviews in different ways such as participants tapping their fingers on the table or avoiding certain questions.

Each question in the second interview, particularly the ones that dealt with the participants’ texts, was labelled also in the text itself. For example, when asking about a specific example of intertextuality that was found in the text, the number of the question in the schedule was also labelled on the text to help me to link between the interview question and the text as the interview progressed. If there was a question that in addition required a link to a source text, then this was also brought along to the interview and the same label was available on it. In addition, annotated parts of the participant’s text, especially those that dealt with similarities, were highlighted in the text as well as the source (in the case of journal articles) and underlined with pencil in the case of books.

Eliciting the participants’ reflections on their own writing was facilitated by the procedure of stimulated recall. This is a procedure that is used to reactivate learners’ memories of past events, allowing them to express their opinions and thoughts about a task they carried out (Gass and Mackey, 2000). It is a procedure that is widely used in qualitative research for educational purposes to explore learning processes and decision making after completing a task. So, stimulated recall is a cognitive activity that stimulates the person’s memory of a certain task.
in order to facilitate verbal expression of the cognitive performance during that task (Lyle, 2003).

An important part of the second interview was to explore the strategies that students employed when they write using sources in order to meet university expectations in the UK. This part of the second interview also investigated how these strategies were influenced by their educational backgrounds. Thus, it was necessary to re-activate the participants’ memories of their educational background, originally focused on in the first interview. I aimed at probing their thoughts and opinions about why these instances happened, and what the process involved at the time of writing. In doing this, I also aimed at eliciting whether these decisions made about source use while writing were influenced by their backgrounds.

The protocol for the stimulated recall interviews was based on three points. The first one was to explain to the participant the purpose of the study briefly and the structure of the procedure in detail so as to inform the interviewee of what would happen during the stimulated recall process. The second was to prepare the elements which would be used for stimulating the participant’s memory, in this case the student’s paper(s) and in some cases source texts and organising them in a clear order so as not to create confusion about the task. The third was to maintain interaction and probing while the participant responded to the questions about each point in their text, and probe further if needed while the participant was recalling the experience or expressing his/her thoughts. Despite all this, some of the details of their writing experience might have been forgotten or lost, as the assignment texts concerned were completed ones and in some cases as much as a year old.

### 4.7 Analysing the Interview Data

This section has two parts, including a shorter description of the initial listening and transcription of the interview data, and a longer section discussing the coding of the data and how I started to interpret themes in the data.
4.7.1 Initial Listening and Transcription

Starting to analyse the data right after collection helps in familiarising one with it and facilitating the process of initial understanding. Initially, I decided to go over the first interviews of three participants in order to start getting a feel of what had been elicited from them and to help in identifying the themes that might emerge from the data. I started by listening to the interviews, as they were audiotaped, and transcribing only the parts that seemed related to past educational experiences of the participants. The reason why I started by listening was to get an impression of any extra features in the audio recordings such as pauses, laughs, repetition or anything that I might have missed and therefore not noted during the face to face interview. For example, sometimes a response might be a ‘no’ with an assertive tone, which could indicate that the interviewee was asserting something. After doing that for the first 3 interviews, which were completed around the same time, I started comparing the bits from each interview and noted the themes that were repeated in each one.

A second step was to transcribe the interviews verbatim, and choosing a consistent and reliable way of transcribing. Fully transcribing the audio into text was important to be able to enter it into the MAXQDA software, and thereby prepare the data for the coding. To transcribe the interviews, I thought about the mode to use in transcribing, and this was led by language considerations, as the spoken language in the interviews not being standard one. The interviews included many pauses, switching to Arabic language sometimes, and looking at the assignment texts with the participants, which resulted in delays. I used my own symbols to help me capture the spoken discourse in the interviews and to facilitate my transcription and the later step of analysis. The following is a sample of the form of transcription that was used.

Sahar: there are few instances in the paper where you changed some of the words and put synonyms, and then you wrote the rest of the sentence as it is, what do you think of these specific examples here, for example in page, here in page 8, you’ve used...(reading sentences from paper) and then you used extent for example instead of degree, and here, to which suits instead of fits, I mean so many synonyms you’ve used, what is the reason for that?

Mehad: because..at this..at that stage when I was, this is my first assignment, this is my way of paraphrasing, this was my way, now I get to know maybe I could
combine 2 sentences and put it in a very different way, but at this stage it was my way, yeah.

Sahar: and how did you get these synonyms? From where? what did you use?

Mehad: I use the website called ‘thees’..‘therus’, hmm..(long pause)

Sahar: do you mean thesaurus?

Mehad: that’s the one, I put the word it gives me the whole synonyms, I pick one (laugh)

Sahar: How do you know if that word is suitable in meaning?

Mehad: sounds..sounds..how it sounds..

Sahar: Ok, alright, so, why did you use synonyms?

Mehad: to avoid the ..being accused for plagiarism, that’s what my understanding, yeah, so when you put synonyms, it is you who write the sentence, but if you don’t use it then you should use, you should just copy paste otherwise it become like a quotation not a sentence.

The above sample transcription shows how I represented emphasis, pitch and tone using brackets, so that I would not lose the observed meanings that were embedded in the spoken interaction (for the full transcription symbols see appendix 13). Some of the excerpts from the transcripts included non-standard forms of English but this is my best attempt to reflect what they said regardless of the forms they used.

Going over the first few interview transcriptions helped in identifying the broad themes that emerged from each interview. I started by reading the transcriptions of the first three interviews, which were conducted within a close period of time. The process of identifying some of the themes had already started while transcribing these first interviews. For example, some of the themes found in the first interview reoccurred in the second interview. Ezzy (2002) suggests that transcribing the first two/three interviews is beneficial because this enables a researcher to re-evaluate their techniques in the interview, provide them with tips and advice for the following interviews, as well as the value of developing an initial analysis. That is, each interview shared some of the themes with the others,
but each interview also added new themes to the list. The initial three interviews also provided me with a long list of initial; more detailed codes.

4.7.2 Coding and Interpreting the Interview Data

Analysing interviews in qualitative enquiry depends largely on coding, and this by itself is a process that needs thorough thinking and linking back to the research questions. ‘Coding is never a mechanistic activity…we need to decide, for example, not only what aspects of the data to tag with codes but also what levels of generality or detail to go into’ (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 37). As explained here by Coffey and Atkinson, it is a process that depends on the researcher asking herself about what counts as a code and why it is identified, named and selected. These questions should always be asked during the process of coding to be able to make sense of what informs the codes and how they could be tools for data analysis. Gordon (1998) suggests that storing interview responses in a way that makes them accessible and easy to use facilitates coding, and coding, in turn, is a way of keeping interview analysis organised and easy to retrieve, without having to go over the tape recordings or the whole transcripts again and again.

I started with an initial coding system where I read the transcription of the first three interviews once again and jotted down the themes that emerged from each interview. Thematic codes, according to Bernard and Ryan (2010), are an index which shows the researcher the occurrence of the themes in the data. Writing down the themes that emerged from the first interviews was done inductively, or as Graham and Gibbs (1985) call it ‘data-driven coding’, which is having an ‘open minded’ approach when looking at the data and extracting what it says rather than fitting it with preconceptions. According to Boyatzis (1998), a ‘good code’ is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon. Coding the information organises the data and develops themes from the data. Boyatzis defines a theme as ‘a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon’ (1998, p. 161). Through re-reading the transcriptions and noticing common themes that reoccurred, I then identified the general themes, refined and then added codes to them that were related to these general themes. Initially, I used simple Microsoft Word coloured highlighting to label each theme in order to code the transcripts of
the interview and to facilitate preparation for the analysis. The following figure shows the initial manual coding of the data.

![Figure 4: Initial Manual Coding of the Data](image)

MAXQDA was also used to analyse the interviews. The transcriptions were entered in the software and the codes that emerged from the first few interviews were the starting point for the MAXQDA coding. Each transcription was labelled with a number and the transcription was analysed using codes entered in the software. If any sub-codes emerged in other following interviews, they would be linked to one of the general codes. If this was not possible, then a new code would be added to the list. If a code only had one instance, it would be looked at individually whether it added to the depth of understanding or not. However, the codes that were common in most interviews were regarded as major ones, and reviewing the codes and changing them was an on-going process through the analysis. Each code was described in a memo in the software to make clear what kind of aspect the code captured.

Although the coding process was a way of on-going analytical process through observing, reflecting, summarising, and memo writing, moving from codes and themes to interpret the data involved different stages. First, I started by retrieving the themes and the extracts under each theme and link it to other themes/codes and concepts in order to look for connections. For example, take the theme of
‘memorisation’ that reoccurred frequently in the interview data. This specific theme was linked to other ones such as the codes about assessment, in the way that students in schools/universities had to memorise to be able to pass the exams. Also other codes like: respecting the published works and the belief that whatever is printed in books is right. All these were re-arranged according to the connections and links between them, which helped in establishing thematic connections for interpreting the data. Each theme was also described in a memo in the software to capture what kind of pattern that theme described.

One of the main benefits of using MAXQDA in my study was that it enabled quick, easy, and organised retrieval of coded segments during analysis and facilitated visual observations to look for patterns. A screen shot of an example of my coding in MAXQDA is shown below.

![Figure 5: MAXQDA Coding of Interviews](image)

At the beginning of coding, I had created a different list of themes for interview one and another list for the follow up interview in order to respond to the second and third research questions. However, then it seemed like responding to each of these research questions separately was too systematic. That is, it did not help me to link what was said in interview one and interview two, and I felt that these two interviews were intertwined in the sense that the participants’ backgrounds played a role in their source use during their academic writing. Moreover, the interviews seemed to focus on two main phases of the students’ academic life, one being before their academic degree in UK and the other being after completing their
academic papers during their UK degree. Therefore, the analysis focused on two major themes: Previous Educational Experience and Adapting to UK academic environment. Then under each of these two overall themes came codes that were associated under each one, regardless of whether the data was located in interview one or two. This helped in creating more connections between what was said about the participants’ educational backgrounds and the stimulated recall data making sense of what the participants thought and did during their writing.

A further step towards interpretation of the data was to contextualise it. This contextualising stage involved linking the coded data to contextualised experiences of the participants. For example, linking coded data focused on the participants’ past experiences with contextual information about their Arab home countries. Taking the theme of ‘memorisation’ again as an example, I looked at the contexts in relation to assessments in schools/universities in most Arab countries. To do this, I used international and local evaluation documents about the region, such as UN development reports on the Arab World. Such documents evaluate the educational systems and institutions by country as well as on a regional level. Looking at these contextual backgrounds also led to looking at the historic orientation that may have an influence on the participants’ experiences. For example, the influence of memorising the Quran and the concept of this in the Arab culture was identified as helping to move to an explanatory stage for the theme of memorisation.
Chapter Five: Intertextuality in Academic Writing

This chapter presents the findings that pertain to the first research question:

1. What forms of intertextuality are prevalent in the academic writing of a group of first year Arab postgraduate students?

I will start by presenting the findings based on the framework of analysis for the study, and then I will discuss these findings insofar as they help me answer this question.

As discussed in the methods’ chapter, students’ papers were run through Turnitin so as to help to identify the similarity of the sources to the student papers as well as helping to identify the sources used which may or may not have been listed in the reference lists of the student papers. This step was useful as an initial step to identify the degree of similarity; however, manual investigation of the sources was ultimately the main way of exploring how a student used a source (see Section 4.5.2 in Chapter 4).

5.1 Framework of Analysis

The examination of intertextuality has been undertaken on four several levels: word, phrase/sentence, paragraph, and structure levels. This was motivated by establishing the overlap between intertextuality and genre and this was expanded through looking at generic features indirectly used in students’ texts. The examples below show the forms of intertextuality found in students’ texts and this has been carried out according to a framework adapted from Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) typology of intertextuality, which categorised intertextuality on the basis of ‘indirect’, ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’. Pecorari and Shaw have also identified a category called ‘deceptive’ intertextuality, but this was not used as this study is not concerned with intention to deceive (see section 4.5.3) and measures were taken to not get exposed to plagiarised texts (see section 4.4). The exact definition, of each category from Pecorari and Shaw (2012) is as follows:
Indirect intertextuality: ‘is the relationship that arises between texts which have commonalities in areas such as topic, purpose, or readership, creating structural and phraseological similarities’ (p.157).

Conventional intertextuality: involve[s] direct reference to another scholar’s work, presented as quotation or paraphrase (p.158).

Unconventional intertextuality: involves a direct relationship with a given source text, and is not adequately signaled by the writer and in that sense is not legitimate (p.159).

That is, indirect intertextuality is the similarity between two texts in terms of lexis, purpose, or readership which may arise from having a shared topic, field, or discipline. Conventional intertextuality is appropriate attribution to a source of a text by writing conventions of referencing and citation. However, according to Pecorari and Shaw, conventionality sometimes depends on the audience and the individual reader’s perceptions. They give the example of ‘allusion’ in writing, in which case it depends on the readers to consider it conventional or not. Unconventional intertextuality is using source texts without proper attribution to the source or by not being clear about it, yet with no assumption that there is an intention to deceive the reader.

The following table represents the framework of analysis. It includes the forms of intertextuality reviewed just above, from Pecorari and Shaw (2012), as well as the levels that were developed out of the data. Pecorari and Shaw did not focus on levels of intertextuality in their study. Their purpose was to explore, through interviewing, tutors attitudes, judgments and responses to students’ source use. They did this by showing the tutors extracts from students’ texts. That is, their typology of intertextuality was developed according to the tutors responses, and this did not include looking into different levels of intertextuality. In my study, different levels were looked at in the students’ text data. These levels were developed throughout the data by looking first at the typology provided by Pecorari and Shaw, the review of overlap between the notions of intertextuality and genre (see section 2.1.3), and finally through going over each instance of intertextuality identified in the corpus of student writing.
The analysis in the next sections looks at indirect intertextuality, followed by sections on conventional and unconventional intertextuality.

5.2. Indirect Intertextuality

Indirect intertextuality, according to Pecorari and Shaw (2012), is generic phrases that creates the relationship between texts on the basis of shared topics, readership, or purposes. Such generic language is not usually cited or referenced, creating embedded intertext relationships which increases the textual similarity between two texts that share the same topic, content, register, or area indirectly. This embedded intertextual relationship is stretched further by connecting it to the notion of genre, which includes patterns of academic discourse forming intertextual connections between texts. This section begins by looking at indirect intertextuality at the word level, and then moves to the paragraph and structure levels. There were no instances of sentence level indirect intertextuality. Sentence level use of sources was always conventional (with proper attribution) or unconventional (without proper attribution).
Except for the section on indirect word level intertextuality, the analysis in this section does not provide overall frequencies of the different forms of intertextuality. Instead, the focus is on illustrating the different forms of intertextuality and how they occurred in the corpus of Arab students’ academic writing. Later in the chapter, Section 5.5.1 provides this kind of overview of frequency of the different forms of intertextuality.

5.2.1 Indirect Word level Intertextuality

One way of looking at indirect intertextuality in my data was to look at some of these generic phrases, words, or bundles of words which, based on literature in this area (Hyland 2008), are common in academic writing. Through the MAXQDA dictionary tool (see section 4.5.5), I was able to trace common academic words and formulaic phrases in the texts, and looked at how frequently they are used by calculating the percentage of their use over the whole word count of my corpus (students’ texts), which is 130,925 words.

Hyland (2008) explored the frequency of 3, 4, and 5 word bundles in academic writing in four different disciplines (see appendix 14 for a list of these bundles). These words, according to Hyland, are believed to contribute to the meaning and coherence of academic text. In examining a 3.5 million word corpus of published research articles, masters dissertations and PhD thesis, he listed the most frequent word bundles that occurred in the corpus. Hyland found that the 3 word bundles were more common than the 4 and 5 word bundles, while the ‘of-phrase’ bundle, with its many variations, comprises a quarter of all bundles in his corpus. Also, he found ‘on the other hand’ to be the most frequent bundle in business and applied linguistic disciplines. The function of these formulaic bundles in soft fields, such as the Humanities disciplines explored in the present study, was mainly to create links between arguments.
Figure 6 above shows the most frequent 3 word bundles in my corpus as a percentage of all the words used (percentage of 130,925 words), as well as the same percentage calculation in Hyland’s (2008) 3.5 million word of academic corpus. Table 5 compares my 10 most common bundles with the ranking of the same bundles in Hyland’s corpus.

Table 4: Ranking of 3 Word Bundles in My Corpus and Hyland’s Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank in my Corpus</th>
<th>Bundle</th>
<th>Rank in Hyland’s Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In order to</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>One of the</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>As well as</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>There is a</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The use of</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In terms of</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A number of</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>As a result</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>According to the</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The fact that</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The differences between how frequent these 3 word bundles were used in the two corpora are expected because my corpus is quite small compared to Hyland’s. Moreover, Hyland (2008) has found that there is disciplinary variation in the use of word bundles. However, there is some overlap between the ranks in table 5 above. Most importantly, all the 10 most common bundles in my corpus are on Hyland’s list of the 25 most common bundles in his corpus, showing that there is a word level similarity between the academic writing of the Arab postgraduate students and the more general corpus of Hyland. It is not clear whether my participants already knew these kinds of bundles, or were taught such phrases during their English language courses. However, this does represent a form of intertextuality in the Arab students writing.

Figures 7 and 8 and the corresponding tables 6 and 7 show the broad correspondence for 4 and 5 word bundles across my corpus and Hyland’s corpus. The comparison for these 4 and 5 word bundles shows a similar patterns as the 3 word bundles. The only exception is the higher frequency of a few particular 5 word bundles in Hyland’s corpus as compared to my corpus.

Figure 7: Ranking of 4 Word Bundles in My Corpus and Hyland’s Corpus (2008)
Table 5: Ranking of 4 Word Bundles in My Corpus and Hyland’s Corpus (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank in my Corpus</th>
<th>Bundle</th>
<th>Rank in Hyland’s Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>On the other hand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>As a result of</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In the case of</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Is one of the</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>In relation to the</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In the context of</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>As well as the</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>At the same time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>In terms of the</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The relationship between the</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph showing the ranking of 5 word bundles in the present study and Hyland's study.](image)

Figure 8: Ranking of 5 Word Bundles in My Corpus and Hyland’s Corpus (2008)

Table 6: Ranking of 5 Word Bundles in My Corpus and Hyland’s Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank in my Corpus</th>
<th>Bundle</th>
<th>Rank in Hyland’s Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>On the other hand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>As a result of</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In the case of</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Is one of the</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>In relation to the</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The relationship between the</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Hyland (2008), most of the word bundles shown above are ‘text-oriented’. That is, they are mainly used to organise the text and the argument enabling the writer to direct the reader to different parts of the argument as well as boosting the writers’ confidence in showing competency and control of the academic discourse. More broadly, and accepting both disciplinary variation and variation between my corpus and that of Hyland, such bundles are a common feature in academic genres and are reoccurring in academic texts, thus used by writers to show membership of the discourse community to which they belong to (Thonney, 2011). The fact that students use such formulaic language to get access to academic discourse increases the intertextual relationship between their texts and previous ones. This shows an overlap between intertextuality and genres, indicating similarity of purpose in regards to both notions. The intertextual relationship then occurs in students’ texts due to the writer following a familiar pattern of academic writing in their discipline. Many scholars have studied word bundles and their functions/use in academic writing (Hyland, 2008; Biber and Barbieri, 2007; Cortes, 2004). However, looking at word bundles within an intertextual approach has not yet been done. The only exception that I am aware of is Pecorari and Shaw (2012), who mentioned the occurrence of formulaic language in academic writing as a case of indirect intertextuality, but without looking at word bundles in particular.

Finally, and again, although the above numerical finding in this study might have a limited value in terms of quantitatively looking at this ‘text-oriented’ language
in my participants’ academic writing, it was worth looking at how frequent this feature was in the data and whether it is noticeable compared to other data in this area. More generally, the argument here is not that Arab postgraduate students’ writing includes more or less of this kind of indirect intertextuality as compared to other student groups. Rather, the comparisons with Hyland’s bundles shows that these formulaic academic bundles are used by the Arab post-graduate students in my study, and hence this may represent evidence of intertextuality in their academic writing.

5.2.2 Indirect Paragraph Level Intertextuality

Indirect paragraph level intertextuality pertains to the standard format of writing paragraphs in academic writing. Most of the guidelines for academic writing suggest a standard that should be followed. The typical pattern of organisation of a paragraph is the topic sentence (or thesis statement), supporting sentences, then, in some cases a concluding sentence at the end of the paragraph. The following example is from one of the texts of student ID 13, who wrote a paper on linguistic approaches to translation, analysing the work of Nida (1964) and Catford (1965). The following paragraph tackles one problem of Nida’s theory of translation which pertains to dynamic equivalence. The topic sentence presented the main focus of the paragraph (my paraphrase: ‘one problem of the theory is related to the translators understanding of a text’), followed by explaining why it may be a problem in translation, and finally concluding with the effect of this problem on the translator’s reliability.

Student Text:

Another problem related to Nida’s dynamic equivalence seems to be the translator's proper understanding of the source text. Since the dynamic equivalence is primarily concerned with transferring the message of ST, it is the responsibility of the translator to understand the ST properly and to be able to convey the message. Consequently, these various understandings may lead to various translations for the same text. Therefore, this diversity may affect the reliability and fidelity of the translators themselves.
Another example is from student ID 22, who wrote a paper on universal design and disabilities, focussing on whether distance learning facilitates accessibility of education for people with disabilities in Kuwait. In this paragraph, the topic sentence of the paragraph states the focus, that simple design means that complex interfaces may be replaced (my paraphrase). The paragraph then moves to review research that backs up the argument against complex interfaces, then ending the paragraph with a concluding statement that complex interface has negative effect on accessibility for people with disabilities.

Student Text:

Simple design can mean moving away from rich interfaces that include complex functions, multiple buttons and even inappropriate colours. Grynszpan, Martin and Nadel (2008) conducted a study to determine whether individuals with high functioning autism would perform better on a training game for teaching social skills when using a rich, powerful interface with many features, or a simple interface with fewer features. The researchers found that participants failed to explore all the features available on the rich interface, and 154 participants performed worse than they did with simpler interfaces. As a result, the richness of the interface can affect accessibility for people with cognitive and learning difficulties (Fryia et al., 2009).

This indirect paragraph level intertextuality is perhaps not something that students get from specific sources. This means that I am unable to show source texts on which this indirect paragraph level intertextuality is based. However, just as with indirect word level intertextuality, this form of indirect intertextuality again represents a form of intertextuality in the Arab postgraduate students’ writing. This view of paragraph level intertextuality resembles genre analysis because it focuses on how paragraphs sometimes have a set pattern in academic writing, something that seems to prevail despite the various disciplinary differences between more specific academic genres. Finally, this paragraph level observation does not suggest that Arab students’ writing makes more use of this particular paragraph pattern than other student groups, nor does it suggest that this is the only paragraph level pattern possible (see discussion in section 2.3.2). It only
establishes that the writing of the Arab postgraduate students in this study includes this form of intertextuality.

5.2.3 *Indirect Structure level Intertextuality*

Structure level intertextuality pertains to general whole-text conventions for academic writing. This may include standard features such as the common order of: introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion and references. Students are often asked to follow these kinds of whole-text conventions as part of their integration into academic writing. However, there are some variations in structure according to either the school, the unit or course into which the academic writing fits into, or resulting from the particular requirements of the assignments.

For example, in my corpus, one of the course units that some of my participants completed, required them to discuss the literature on a specific topic of their choice in education, as part of an MSc in Education. This assignment used a standard way of introducing the aim of the review at the beginning of the essay in a short two-three sentence abstract:

Example 1: Student ID 4

Abstract: In this literature review I will talk about Digital Literacy, by presenting different definitions and concepts under the light of the three dimensions of literacy. Then I will talk about the reasons Digital literacy is hard to understand and the challenges facing developments in this area.

Example 2: Student ID 11

Abstract: This review of literature gives a clear definition of Article 42 in the UNCRC and shows how some countries have implemented this Article.

Example 3: Student ID 7

Abstract: The aim of this literature review is to provide a clear definition of the concept of gender stereotyping and to explore the impact of gender-role stereotypes on an organisation’s decisions such as selection and evaluation, as well as on women managers’ performance.
Although I did not have access to information on the requirements for the assignment for the course unit, this pattern seems to be a requirement of the course unit (or perhaps the tutor). Each paper starts with such an abstract, providing an introduction, the aim of the review, and sometimes questions that would be answered, then background information that introduces the reader to the context of the assignment. The review itself was then presented following the structure of academic writing conventions, starting with a general introduction (setting the context and objectives), then proceeding to the more specific part which comprised of body paragraphs, and then ending with (a) general concluding paragraph(s). A reference list was presented at the end, and in this case this was an extensive one because of the literature review nature of assignment.

In other types of assignments, for example Business courses, the norm seemed to follow a similar structure. In Business course assignments, providing a straightforward aim, and a set of objectives designed to achieve the aims at the beginning of the paper, seemed to be a requirement. The components of presenting the argument were consistent with a typical expository essay, which seemed to be responding to the requirement to investigate an issue and evaluate evidence about it. The reference list might not be as extensive as a paper that is focussed on presenting a literature review about an issue. For these Business course unit assignments a reference list of maximum 10 references was added.

The following 2 examples came from papers for a Business course unit on the research methods of project management. The first example (Example 4) includes the aim of the paper as well as the objectives, which seem to look rather more like sub-aims than objectives. It seems that there is confusion between the aim and the objectives, and students try to follow a standard requirement without quite understanding the function of such standard. Having this aim and sub-aims (in the way of objectives) seemed to require more work than what seems to be possible in a 2000 word paper. The other example (Example 5) shows a clearer list of objectives that reveal the steps that will be undertaken to achieve the general aim of the paper. Although there seems to be some uncertainty of their practice, what is noticeable here is the students’ effort to meet the requirements of their academic discipline, in this case the particular requirements of an assignment.
Example 4: Student ID 2

Title: The management of the design process in a construction project.

Aim:

The aim of this project is to investigate how design management can improve and control the design process in a construction project.

Objectives:

- To investigate how construction projects are driven.
- To investigate the importance of quality in the design process.
- To examine and compare different methods for solving design process problems.
- To investigate the importance of the design process in determining the level of construction quality.

Example 5: Student ID 1

The Role of Social Media in Managing Virtual Teams

Aim:

The aim of this project is to study the role of external social media tools in managing global teams, and then examine their potential application in organisations through a case study.

Objectives:

1. To provide a review of how the virtual teams approach has attracted organisations.
2. To analyse the advantages of converting co-located team projects to virtual team projects.
3. To discuss how social media could be used by project managers and team members to achieve project’s success.
4. To examine the strength of using social media to manage projects through existing case studies.

This aspect of academic writing genre, of how an academic paper is organised and what it consists of (depending on the discipline), represents a shared understanding of how to communicate in this particular academic situation. The textual patterns shown in the above examples resembles the ‘moves’ in research article introductions as explained by Swales (1990). Establishing the ‘niche’ is a step to situate academic writing by choosing a territory, creating the importance of what is to be argued, and narrowing the purpose. Hence, this analysis draws on genre, and helps to provide an understanding of yet another kind of intertextuality.
used by students. This type of source use indicates an indirect intertextual relationship in the Arab postgraduate students’ writing. This indirect intertextuality cannot be signalled, yet it still produces a relationship between the students’ texts and previous texts.

### 5.3 Conventional Intertextuality

Conventional intertextuality, according to Pecorari and Shaw (2012), is appropriate attribution to a source of a text by writing conventions of referencing and citation. This section begins by looking at conventional intertextuality at the word level, and then moves to the sentence and paragraph levels. There were no instances of structure level conventional intertextuality. Structure level intertextuality was either more indirect (see previous section) or unconventional by a participant inappropriately imitating a source (see Section 5.4).

The analysis in this section does not provide overall frequencies of the different forms of intertextuality. Instead, the focus is on illustrating the different forms of intertextuality and how they occurred in the corpus of Arab students’ academic writing. Later in the chapter, Section 5.5.1 provides this kind of overview of frequency of the different forms of intertextuality.

#### 5.3.1 Conventional Word level Intertextuality

This level of intertextuality is concerned with words or phrases/bundles of words taken from a source and incorporated into the student paper. This could be done in different ways, either by directly copying a word, substituting the word with a synonym, changing the word order or where it appears in a sentence or the text, or also by changing the word’s grammatical form. In the example below (Example 6), the similarity between the student's paper is not apparent in terms of the number of words (excluding words between quotations). However, there are alterations of words that are introduced in the source, such as ‘distinguished’ for 'distinguishes' and 'one's roots' for 'one's genes'. The other alteration that the student made was changing the position of some words from the source and changing how the sentence is created. For example, ‘distinguished from others
according their culture, which is basically learned’, which is using a relative clause, while in the source, as shown below, ‘which is basically learned’ comes in a main clause. Also, parts of the copied words/phrases that were taken from Hofstede’s definition of culture were used without quotation marks. The student added a few words to the sentence and kept others, which seems his own way of paraphrasing from the source. This seems to show that this specific student has made an effort to keep the meaning of the source, but at the same time has attempted to change some words, and change the order of words and structures of the paragraph.

Example 6

Student text: Student ID 16

Hofstede (2005:4) defines culture in national terms as a "collective programming of the mind" which drives our patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. In his view, individuals of one group can be distinguished from others according their culture, which is basically learned and acquired from the social environment, rather than being inherited from one's roots.

Source: Hofstede (2005, p. 4)

Culture is always a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. Culture is learned, not innate. It derives from one's social environment rather than from one's genes. Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from individual's personality on the other.

Example 6 is conventional in the sense that there is appropriate attribution to the source used through conventions of referencing and citation. In other words, the student writer mentioned the author, date of publication and page number, as there was a quotation of terms taken directly from the original source (collective programming of the mind). In addition to that, there are alterations of the source text using synonyms, as well as changing the word order and the structure of sentences.

5.3.2 Conventional Sentence level Intertextuality
Conventional sentence level intertextuality is the use of source text sentences with appropriate attribution; that is, indicating the author, date of publication and page reference next to the parts taken from the source which are paraphrased or quoted. A paraphrase may also include key terms that may be central to the meaning, yet appropriately cited such as the example below (Example 7).

Example 7

Student text: Student ID 16 (Paper 1)

Additionally, Miroshnik (2002) believes that in the divergent process, there would be greater chances for improving problem-solving skills, enhancing flexibility and adapting new marketing ideas.

Source: Miroshnik (2002, p. 528)

We can observe, whereas cultural diversity causes most problems in convergent processes, it leads to the most advantages in divergent processes... Thus, advantages include enhanced creativity, flexibility and problem solving skills especially on complex problems involving large numbers of quantitative factors...

Example 7 shows an acceptable way of incorporating information from a source, by paraphrasing and attributing the source appropriately. Although there are matches between the source and the student’s paper which were not put between quotation marks, they are still acceptable. The source text by Miroshnik (2002), above, shows elipsis in the middle of the paragraph which indicates that there is some text in between which the student, for some reason, chose not to use. Additionally, the omitted text is not necessary as what the student writer did is combining two sentences into a single sentence. The missing source text (two short paragraphs of six sentences) elaborates on the benefits of cultural diversity within an organisation, and the student writer then used the first sentence and the final sentence in this paragraph together in one sentence.

Example 8 also shows conventional intertextuality at the sentence level. In this case, the key terms taken from the source are put in quotation marks, and the source is mentioned, but the rest of the sentence is paraphrased. There are some words that are taken without any alterations - ‘core values’ and ‘majority’ - but
this does not seem significant and may not reach the level of unconventional intertextuality.

Example 8:

Student text: Student ID 16 (Paper 1)

Smith and Kleiner (1987) believe that there is always a "dominant culture" that reflects the overall interests and the core values of the majority.

Source: Smith and Kleiner (1987, p. 11)

There is usually a dominant culture which expresses core values that are shared by a majority of the organisation’s members.

5.3.3 Conventional Paragraph level Intertextuality

This form of conventional paragraph level intertextuality relates to paraphrasing paragraphs or taking from a source a long quotation of information needed to enhance the argument in an academically acceptable way. This usually means putting the long quotes between quotation marks. Long quotes according to standard conventions should be presented as an indented block of text, and this block of text may or may not be put between quotation marks. Most of the texts analysed included quotations, but not necessarily using block quotation as short quotes from sources were used more often than longer ones. Example 9 shows a longer block quote. The example shows that the student followed the convention related to block quotes by mentioning the author of the source, the year of publication and page number.

Example 9: Student ID 13 (Paper 3)

Rey (1995:77) discusses the concept of neologisms and proposes the following definition:

"a unit of the lexicon, a word, a word element or a phrase, whose meaning or whose signifier-signified relationship, presupposing an effective function in a specific model of communication, was not previously materialized as a linguistic form in the immediately preceding stage of lexicon of the language. This novelty, which is observed in relation to precise and empirical definition of the lexicon, corresponds normally to a specific feeling in speakers."
According to the model of the lexicon chosen, the neologism will be perceived as belong to the language in general or only to one of its special usages; or as belonging to a subject-specific usage which may be specialized or general."

Another example from student ID 10 (Example 10), illustrates paragraph level intertextuality made up of shorter quotes. In these three paragraphs, five direct short quotes were used with appropriate attribution. Each quote is either preceded or followed with the information about the author, the date of publication, and the page number from which the quote was taken. This is paragraph level intertextuality because there is a combination of a paraphrase of the sources as well as quotes taken from the sources in each paragraph presented, while the conventions of appropriate attribution were followed as seen below:

Example 10: Student ID 10 (paper 1)

The world lives in a competitive environment. Each company has a strategy, which is usually concerned with the future: “Strategy is about creating and delivering the future” (Williams, 2009:5). With this noted, it is further highlighted by Hambrick & Fredrickson (2001:48) that, “After more than 30 years of hard thinking about strategy, consultants and scholars have provided an abundance of frameworks for analysing strategic situations”.

In the view of Bracker (1980:221), “Strategic management entails the analysis of internal and external environments of a firm to maximise the utilization of resources in relation to objectives”, and goes on to the further state that the significant major of strategic management provides organisations with a framework in terms of improving the abilities for anticipating and dealing with change, which also helps to improve the abilities that are managing to cope with uncertain futures through establishing the procedures in regards to accomplish goals (Bracker, 1980).

On the other hand contrast, however, Mintzberg (1987) holds a different point of view on establishing the definition of strategic management, and states that there is no single definition on which to rely. Thus, he provides five determines for strategy as a plan, pattern, ploy, position, and perspective. Strategy as a plan is described as being “some sort of consciously intended course of action, a guide line to deal with a situation” (Mintzberg, 1987:11). He further adds that, “strategy as a pattern specifically a pattern in a stream of actions” (Mintzberg, 1987:12).
5.4 Unconventional Intertextuality

Unconventional intertextuality, according to Pecorari and Shaw (2012), is inappropriate use of earlier source texts by lack of attribution. This may be unintentionally. This section looks at unconventional intertextuality at the word, sentence, paragraph and structure levels. The word and sentence levels have been combined into a single section.

The analysis in this section does not provide overall frequencies of the different forms of intertextuality. Instead, the focus is on illustrating the different forms of intertextuality and how they occurred in the corpus of Arab students’ academic writing. Later in the chapter, Section 5.5.1 provides this kind of overview of frequency of the different forms of intertextuality.

5.4.1 Unconventional Word and Sentence level Intertextuality

Unconventional word level intertextuality relates to using words or phrases from a source without proper attribution. Even if the extent of copied words or phrases is not excessive, incorrect or lack of attribution makes the intertextuality unconventional. In the data in this study, unconventional word level intertextuality is related closely to unconventional sentence level intertextuality. What is meant by unconventional sentence level intertextuality is copying entire sentence(s) from the source with only a few lexical substitutions or wrong attribution. Alteration of the source language is very minimal in this form of intertextuality and/or attribution is not appropriate.

Example10 shows this interaction between unconventional intertextuality at the word and sentence levels. The example shows how a student copied a sentence from a published source, keeping some key words/phrases and substituting others (both forms of word level intertextuality), but overall keeping the same structure and order of words of the original source (sentence level intertextuality) and also providing no reference to the original source.

Example 10

Student text: Student ID 4 (Paper 2)
In the past few years, education technology has been combined into teaching and learning in many educational institutions all around the world.

Source: Marwan and Sweeney (2010, p. 463)

In recent years, educational technology has been widely incorporated into teaching and learning in many educational institutions across the globe.

Example 11 is another case where the student made different alterations of words. In the first sentence of the paragraph, instead of using 'successful integration' she used 'success of integrating', and instead of 'technologies' (plural) she used 'technology' (singular). More importantly, she seems to have copied the ‘Moyle (2006)’ reference from the source she consulted, and this is unconventional because the secondary source should also have been provided (e.g. Moyle, 2006 cited in Marwan and Sweeney, 2010, p. 466). The second half of the paragraph is also unconventional. The quotation is in fact taken from Marwan and Sweeney (2010), but the attribution does not make it clear that this is actually Marwan and Sweeney’s paraphrase of Fullan (2002), as shown at the end of the sentence in the source. Such instances do not come across as plagiarism in Turnitin or similar software tools. However, manual investigation of the intertextuality shows an inappropriate attribution that undermines the clarity and transparency of source use in the students’ academic writing.

Example 11

Student text: Student ID 4 (Paper 2)

(Moyle 2006) said that leadership is a major factor in the success of integrating educational technologies in an institution. It is divided into Leadership, "effective leaders are those who can identify potential obstacles when introducing a change to the organization and employ appropriate strategies" (Marwan and Sweeney 2010, p 466).

Source: Marwan and Sweeney (2010, p. 466)

Moyle (2006) maintains that leadership is a major factor determining the successful integration of educational technology. The integration process can only be achieved if there is effective leadership in the institution. Effective leaders are those who can identify potential obstacles when
introducing a change to the organization and employ appropriate strategies to deal with these obstacles (Fullan, 2002).

Example 12 is a third case of using the source text’s language with few alterations, and it seems intertextual on a sentence level. The example shows that longer sentences are taken from the source and used with some alterations. Alterations included synonyms: 'combined' instead of 'incorporated', 'all around' instead of 'across' and 'world' instead of 'globe'. Other alterations include omitting/adding the words 'widely' and 'past few'. As is clear from the excerpts from the student and the original source, the similarity is quite great, plus the source has not been attributed, and thus this is unconventional intertextuality. This happened in the introductory section, something which was not uncommon in the students’ papers.

Example 12
Student text: Student ID 4 (Paper 2)

Professional development, (Mainka 2007) suggest this factor is important since it allows teachers to have continuous learning in order to increase their skills and knowledge.

Source: Marwan and Sweeney (2010, p. 466)

According to Mainka (2007), this factor is very important as it allows teachers to engage in continuous learning in order to keep advancing their skills and to ensure that students can always be provided with quality learning conditions.

The student in example 12 changed the manner in which a source was cited. Instead of ‘according to + source’ the student used the author’s name as the subject and then added the word ‘suggest’ thereby placing this source as the subject of the sentence. The use of parenthesis around the subject’s name in the sentence - (Manika 2007) - shows a lack of accurate knowledge of reference conventions. It seems that the student writer wanted to acknowledge the original author, but failed to make a conventional attribution. The student then goes on to present the same information as the actual source consulted, but added synonyms as alterations. It is evident that the student writer relied on the source of Marwan
Sweeney (2010) to write about Manika (2007), and this is evident through the similarities of structure, wording and order of information. The student writer copied the entire sentence except some substitutions of synonyms such as ‘as/since’, ‘engage/have’ and ‘keep advancing/increase’. The inappropriate attribution and the minimal alteration of the source text makes the intertextuality unconventional. There is some effort from the student to change the way the sentence is constructed. Instead of using word for word synonyms, for example, the last part of the sentence - 'that students can always be provided with quality learning conditions' is replaced with the word 'knowledge' instead. However, this is not sufficient to make the intertextuality conventional.

Example 13 again shows a student wrongly attributing a source. The intertext here seems to be sentence level and not the copied text is also not attributed appropriately as there is a verbatim copying without quotation marks to acknowledge this. Very few alterations are made such as substituting synonyms, but apart from that, a long chunk of language has been taken from the source. There is an inappropriate attribution to Boulter (2011) while it is in fact from Scholz (2012). However, this might have happened by mistake as Scholz (2012) was used several times in the student’s paper and specifically cited right after this paragraph.

Example 13
Student text: Student ID 9 (Paper 1)

Moreover, GRI designed to ensure firms report precise and expose right information to their stakeholder, provide a framework for measuring more than just the financial performance of organizations and looking to the entirety of the organization’s impact (Boulter, 2011).

Source: Scholz (2012)

GRI started in 1997 as a joint initiative between CERES and UNEP to provide a framework for measuring more than just the financial performance of organizations, looking to the entirety of the organization’s impact.

5.4.2 Unconventional Paragraph level Intertextuality
Unconventional paragraph level intertextuality is when longer chunks of language are taken from the source in large chunks that are close to each other or using a similar argument and points as the original source but using different language. This form of intertextuality seems unconventional as it shows little effort from the student to understand the source and use it appropriately. This may lead to sometimes copying whole paragraphs and making very few changes, or using paragraph-long quotations from the source (but if attributed then this would be conventional intertextuality). In the example below (Example 14), the student reports on the challenges and opportunities of the LA Fitness Company, and much of the first section focused on general information about the LA Fitness Company has been copied from the company’s website with very few changes.

Example 14

Student text: Student ID 9 (Paper 2)

The main objective of the LA fitness is eager to sustain the same commitment to customers as day one, LA fitness joined with MidOcean Partners in 2005. Since then LA fitness continuing building on 20 years’ experience in the fitness industry, joining with other groups like Dragon gyms to help bring our unique, affordable and fun brand of fitness closer to your doorstep (LA fitness, 2013).

Source: LA Fitness website (2013, no page number)

Keen to maintain the same commitment to customers as day one, LA fitness joined with MidOcean Partners in 2005. Since then, we’ve been building on 20 years’ experience in the fitness industry, joining with other groups like Dragon gyms to help bring our unique, affordable and fun brand of fitness closer to your doorstep.

As seen above, only very few synonyms have been introduced, including ‘eager’ instead of ‘keen’ and ‘sustain’ instead of ‘maintain’. In addition, the writer had made some alterations to make it suitable for reporting, such as changing ‘we’ve’ to ‘LA fitness’, yet the student did not do the same with ‘our’ and ‘your’. The student has cited the LA Fitness website, but the extensive quotation without correct use of quotation marks makes this unconventional paragraph level intertextuality.
Looking at Example 15, which is the initial part of the same student’s paper, some parts seem to have some mistakes except for the ones that were copied from LA website. There were no other sources that the student cited in these sections. The section was a discussion of the challenges facing the company. The student text ‘in regards recreation is working’ seems grammatically mistaken, while the rest of the paragraph, mostly copied from the website, is fine.

Example 15

Student text: Student ID 9 (Paper 2)

LA fitness, in regards recreation is working to get to know people and find out what inspires them, so it can assist them to achieve their goals. The success of LA fitness continued into 2011 when voted the ‘UK’s No.1 Health and Fitness brand’ by the Fitness Industry Association (LA fitness, 2013).

Source: LA Fitness website (2013, no page number)

At LA fitness, we like to get to know you and find out what inspires you, so we can help you achieve your goals.....

The success of LA fitness continued into 2011, when we were voted the ‘UK’s No.1 Health and Fitness brand’ by the Fitness Industry Association, making us the established brand we are today.

Example 16 is again from the same student. As shown here, the argument in this paragraph does not include any sources from which the ideas were taken. The ideas and the phrases seem to be complex and the language is advanced compared to some other parts of the paper, which raises doubts about whether this is the student’s own writing because of the change in style. Note for example the middle part of this extract: ‘During a recession, consumer confidence is relatively, unemployment is high especially among the youth, and rate at which people lose jobs is also high’. This part contains problematic language, such as ‘consumer confidence is relatively’ and ‘and rate at which people lose jobs’.

Example 16: Student ID 9 (Paper 2)

The main challenge for LA fitness leisure is fluctuations in discretionary spending because of the fluctuating economic cycles. Spending on leisure activities is considered to be discretionary and it is usually the first to be hit when the economic outlook is not good or during a recession. During a
recession, consumer confidence is relatively low especially among the youth, and rate at which people lose jobs is also high. This situation effectively leads to low levels of disposable income and reduces LA fitness’s revenues in a recession. Currently, Britain is at a risk of a double dip recession and it faces a threat of losing its AAA credit rating. The uncertainty surrounding such threats increasingly reduces consumer confidence in the economy.

In another extract from this same paper - ‘The main objective of the LA fitness is eager to sustain the same commitment to customers as day one’ - we see similar grammatical problems appearing. The sentence does not seem grammatical, especially with the insertion of certain words that do not fit correctly in the sentence such as ‘the main objective of LA fitness is eager’.

In another example (Example 17) from the writing of the same student, but from another paper, a different form of unconventional paragraph level intertextuality is prevalent.

Example 17

Student text: Student ID 9 (Paper 3)

Lee and Park (2009) found that there was positive relationship between CSR activities and firm value for hotels while no relationship in the context of casinos was found. Still, the authors did not differentiate between the positive and negative impacts of CSR. Garcia and Armas (2007) provided evidence of a positive impact of CSR activities on company return on assets (ROA). However, the measurement of CSR activities was based on managers’ opinions, and therefore the observations might have been biased (Garcia and Armas, 2007).

Source: Kang et al. (2010, p. 73-74)

In a recent study, García and Armas (2007) found a positive relationship between hotel companies’ CSR activities and return on assets (ROA). However, in measuring CSR activities, they collected data based on managers’ opinions, which might be biased, reflecting lower construct validity.

Another study (Lee and Park, 2009) measured impacts of CSR activities separately for hotel and casino companies in terms of profitability (ROE and ROA) and firm value (AMV: average market value). Lee and Park found a different relationship between CSR activities and profitability (and
firm value) for hotel companies (positive relationship) and casino companies (no relationship). However, their study measured CSR as one aggregate variable that combines positive and negative CSR activities together, thereby commingling the possible individual impact of two such different (i.e., positive and negative) activities.

The above section is similar to the same section of Kang et al. (2010) where the studies of Lee and Park (2009) and Garcia and Armas (2007) were cited. The student cited the same studies, used similar language (mostly word level intertextuality), but the order of the points is slightly different. For example, the study of Lee and Park was mentioned after Garcia and Armas in Kang et al.’s article. In one way, this is very advanced paragraph level paraphrasing. However, because Kang et al. (2010) was not cited, and because the Lee and Park (2009) and Garcia and Armas (2007) were copied from Kang et al. (2010), this is unconventional intertextuality.

Another interesting example of unconventional paragraph level intertextuality is Example 18. This uses a different type of source - Wikipedia - that some authorities considered ‘unreliable’ for academic research. The Harvard Guide to Using Sources (no date), for example, advises writers to be cautious in using Wikipedia for academic research for several reasons. They explain that contributors of posts on Wikipedia, or other wikis that serve similar functions, are not evaluated in terms of expertise and the chance that such contributors may post false or out-dated information has undermined Wikipedia’s reliability. Yet, the Harvard guide also suggests that Wikipedia is a valuable source for quick information and references, as well as a good source for basic understanding of concepts.

Example 18 shows a paragraph that contains sentences copied from Wikipedia on the topic of ‘virtual world language learning’. In my effort to look for the source that was mentioned, which was Jeffery and Collins (2008), I was not successful as the article is from an American journal, and was not available as free access through the University to which the student belonged. Instead, a paid subscription to the journal was required for access. It may be possible that the student had access to it by some other means, or through an ‘interlibrary loan’. But it is possible that the student copied parts of Wikipedia and had put the same reference
without looking at the original source. This possibility was supported by comparing the parts from which the section was taken, which shows many matches and some synonyms and alterations that were made as compared to the Wikipedia page. Students sometimes use wikis as a source in their research even though their tutors might actively discourage this. This issue will be addressed in following chapters where students talk about their use and opinions about Wikipedia (see Chapter 7, section 7.2.3). Although the student writer incorporated information in the same manner with copying language as well as ideas from this specific section, and although the Wikipedia entry included a lot of references, only one reference was listed by the student - Jeffery and Collins (2008).

Example 18

Student text: Student ID 18 (Paper 1)

In short, SL is used for the immersive, collaborative and task-based game opportunities it offers to English language learners. The facility to be surrounded by a particular environment that can stimulate language learning leads to immersive experiences (Jeffery and Collins, 2008). As an experience, 3D virtual spaces are, as you would expect, places where language learners can participate in a more sociable environment. A creative opportunity, a less-developed approach to language-learning in virtual worlds, is one of building objects as part of a learning activity.


Some language schools offer a complete language learning environment through a virtual world, e.g. LanguageLab.com and Avatar Languages. Virtual worlds such as Second Life are used for the immersive, collaborative and task-based, game-like opportunities they offer language learners. As such, virtual world language learning can be considered to offer distinct (although combinable) learning experiences.

- **Immersive:** Immersive experiences draw on the ability to be surrounded by a certain (real or fictitious) environment that can stimulate language learning.
- **Social:** Almost all 3D virtual spaces are inherently social environments where language learners can meet others, either to informally practice a language or to participate in more formal classes.
- **Creative:** A less-developed approach to language learning in virtual worlds is that of constructing objects as part of a language learning activity.
There are more than ten instances in students’ papers where the form of intertextuality is different from the forms discussed above, as it concerns ideational intertextuality in which the student uses the source to develop ideas or build the structure of the paper in a logical way. Structure level intertextuality in this study indicates how students seem to use the same structure of one or more other sources. This intertextuality may also include similar sources and/or similar headings, as well as similar arguments. Depending on the source, this intertextuality may not be picked up by Turnitin as the source is mentioned and consulted works are appropriately cited. It was only by looking at the sources manually that this kind of intertextuality was discovered. In the first of the following examples, it seems that the student (ID 4) was utilising the way of organising and order of information as that of Marwan and Sweeney (2010). This also including citing similar references, which supports the idea that this did not happen by chance, such as e.g. because both papers discuss the same issue the intertextuality being accidental. Instead, it seems that Marwan and Sweeney (2010) was a model or example to construct the student’s argument.

In another student paper (ID 4, Paper 1), the argument and information was very similar to Bawden (2008). The references were similar as well, and the type of ideas used to develop the argument was similar. In yet another instance, the same student (ID 4, Paper 2) adopted similar headings for sections as a published source and this led to the ideas being developed in the same way. The student’s paper discussed the factors affecting technology use in an educational institution in Saudi Arabia, while the source discussed teacher’s perceptions of technology use in an Indonesian institution. Both texts tackle the literature regarding the integration of technology in educational settings. For example, the student had 3 headings for her literature review section, as follows: ‘The individual factor’, ‘The ICT implementation process’ and ‘Organizational context’. The published source had the following sections: ‘Factors related to individuals’, ‘Factors related to the process of implementation’ and ‘Factors related to organizational context’. In the published source the literature was followed by discussing the methods of the study, while the student followed this with a section related to the research aims.
Another example of structure level intertextuality was two papers written by another participant (ID 21, Papers 1 and 2). In paper 2, the student’s main purpose was to discuss the relationship between leadership and management in a school context in Saudi Arabia, exploring the possibility of head teachers (principals) in schools taking both roles as leaders and/or managers. In this he also explored whether there is a distinction between both roles. Bush (2007) discusses the effectiveness of models used in educational leadership in an extensive literature review linking back to a previous work of his (Bush 2003), in which he created a typology for management and leadership. Unlike ID 4 (Paper 2), where the writer applied similar headings and presented the literature review in the same way as the published source, this student used the same order and same references as the source, but did not use the same headings. He embraced the type of development of ideas in the literature review as in Bush’s article, and as a result of this language use from the article was high resulting in a combination of unconventional word, sentence, and paragraph level intertextuality. In the other paper (Paper 1), the whole paper was properly referenced except for the ‘analysis’ part where the student adapted the ideas, development, and language (with synonyms alterations) from a master dissertation ‘conclusion’ on the same topic.

A final example, in which the student seemed to use a source as a kind of example or model for developing their ideas, sources and language, all adapted for their own assignment, is the one by ID 13 (Paper 3). The student in this paper discusses neologism, which is the emergence of new words in a language, in this case Arabic, and how such words may be translated into English and used in media contexts. She focused on political neologism in the recent Arab ‘uprising’. She used some language from different parts of a previous masters dissertation (Alawneh, 2007), which discussed translation of neologism in the Palestinian ‘intifada’. The student includes, among other, the following sections: ‘Types of neologisms’, ‘Translating neologisms’ and ‘Analysis of the translation of ‘Arab Spring’ neologisms’. She then focused on two neologisms of the Arab spring and analysed them. The similarity of the student paper and the source may seem reasonable or understandable as both papers discuss similar topics so using the same sources from the literature may seem of a logical element to happen. For example, both papers shared the same criteria for identifying neologism set by Cabre (1999), the same definitions of the term proposed by Newmark (1988)
(although the dissertation had a mistake in a date of publication in this specific section), Rey (1995) and Choi (2006). However, these sources appeared in a different order as compared to the source (the dissertation of Alawneh, 2007). In other parts, similar literature sources were used in the same way and in the same order as the source. For example, the student assignment and the masters dissertation by Alawneh (2007) both discussed Newmark’s suggestions about criteria for creating new neologism by a translator, and then both followed this with a section on Niska’s (1998) strategies for the translator in translating neologism. Both these parts include the same quotations, yet in different orders in the student assignment as compared to the dissertation. This may indicate that the student is using this source as a kind of model or example that may be helpful for identifying major literature sources that may apply to Syria, as both papers discuss neologism in Arabic language in a similar political contexts: the Palestinian ‘Intifada’ (the Palestinian uprising) and the ‘Arab Spring’ uprising. The following example (Example 19) shows how the students used some of the language from the dissertation source, with a few alterations such as adding words and substituting the context of ‘Palestine’ in the source, with ‘Syria’ in the student paper. However, the student’s writing is, even so, quite advanced, and overall it is difficult then to determine how unconventional this intertextuality is.

Example 19

Student text: Studnet ID 13 (Paper 3)

To conclude this discussion, unlike ‘ghosts’, ‘gunmen known as shabiha’ and ‘pro-regime militia’ which give an inadequate meaning of the neologism shabiha, a phrase such as ‘pro-Assad militiamen, known as shabiha or "ghosts"’ could be more readable, accurate and the closest to the reality of the situation in Syria. Thus, an acceptable rendition of shabiha would be by transferring it into the TL, with further explanation that preserves the cultural impact of the term.

Source: Alawneh (2007, p. 49)

To tell the truth, this rendition could be more accurate and closer to the reality of the situation in Palestine because the process of tasfiyah is committed by the occupiers without any consideration of others’ rights. In addition, ‘elimination’ is frequently used by the occupier. Unlike ‘elimination’, the other meanings of ‘liquidation’, in the same dictionary, include reference to commerce or business from which the term tasfiyah has developed.
To conclude this discussion, elimination gives an inaccurate rendering of the neologism tasfiyah as far as the resistance members are concerned.

Overall, the above examples suggest that finding a source that is closely related to the student’s own topic may have an influence on the ideas, structure and language the student uses in writing, and in some cases this may lead to over-reliance on the source. In the above examples, this may have been the case with some of them; on the other hand, it is possible that some of the textual correspondence we have seen occurred unconsciously.

5.5 Results and Discussion

This section begins with a sub-section giving some idea of the frequency of the different forms of intertextuality, analysed in the previous three sections. This is followed by discussion of the main findings of the analysis in this chapter, focusing on the use of quotations, citation, secondary citation and use of structure from sources.

5.5.1 Overview of the Forms of Intertextuality

Table 7: Overview of the Forms of Intertextuality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Paragraph</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>See analysis</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Present in most student texts</td>
<td>Common in all student texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in section 5.2.1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>Common in all student texts</td>
<td>Common in most student texts</td>
<td>Present in some student texts</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconventional</td>
<td>Present in some student texts</td>
<td>Present in some student texts</td>
<td>Present in a few student texts</td>
<td>Present in a few student texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Present* indicates it can be identified but maybe not occurring several times in a single student text. *Common* indicates it occurred several times in a single student text.

The above table shows the kind of frequencies of the forms of intertextuality in my corpus. The table avoids providing precise measures of frequencies; the aim of
this study was to describe the forms of intertextuality present in the Arab postgraduate students writing (research question 1) – getting at exact frequencies, or comparing frequencies with other groups of writers was not an aim of the research.

The various forms of intertextuality in the corpus indicate a combination of indirect, conventional and unconventional use of intertextuality in the Arab postgraduate students’ academic writing. That is, most of the postgraduate Arab students who participated in this study use sources in a variety of ways, which indicates that they make an effort, on different levels, to meet the expectations of academic writing in the UK higher education context.

The analysis has also shown that the postgraduate Arab students in this study rely on phrases and bundles of words in their academic writing that are similar to the findings of other studies in the literature (e.g. Hyland, 2008, see 5.2.1). This indirect form of word level intertextuality, then, is another feature in the corpus, and this may indicate that students acquire such words/phrases to gain confidence and access to the academic discourse in their area of study. This may then contribute to facilitating communication between the writer and the audience of readers through the familiarity of these phrases in the academic community. This may also explain the features of paragraph and structure level intertextuality since these two pertain to a standard form of academic paragraph and structure. It is normal that students tend to follow this standard form in academic writing given their previous training whether in the UK or prior to that. Although, as shown in table 7, structure level intertextuality was a common feature in all students’ data, paragraph level intertextuality was less common. Being novice writers may be one of the reasons why some of my participants’ assignments showed less standard paragraph form. Another reason may well relate to the fact that not all texts had the same purpose. For example, some assignment texts were answering a question, and others focussed on analysing an issue. Thus, not all texts have similar academic purposes, and therefore the similarity of paragraph level format is not necessarily present.

Conventional word and sentence level intertextuality seems to be a common feature in most of the student texts as shown in table 7. Using sources and
appropriate attribution on word and sentence levels seems to be an expected feature, particularly at the postgraduate level of study. The analysis also shows that many students used synonyms, changed words, and made alterations to the sources used, on the word and sentence levels. Although there are cases where the use of the source language was somewhat unacceptable, the instances were not significant enough to reach an unconventional level. The case seems to be different on a paragraph level, where higher level academic writing skills may be needed. In other words, students need advanced paraphrasing skills, something that is later shown (see Section 7.3, Chapter 7) to be one of the major problems Arab students face in academic writing. Conventional paragraph level of intertextuality was a feature that was present only in some of the student texts.

Unconventional word and sentence level intertextuality, as shown in Section 5.4.1, are closely related, with interaction between these levels in the participants’ academic writing. This form of intertextuality was present in some student texts, and this indicates that some students may have relied too much on their sources. In addition, they may either have faced difficulty with using the source, and/or were confused about what is acceptable and what is not in using sources. Both reasons seem to be closely related to students’ past experiences as will be shown in later chapters.

Unconventional paragraph level and structure level of intertextuality was present in a few of the student texts, with paragraph-length text sometimes taken from sources without appropriate attribution or with minimal change, or with the adoption of structure from a source. Again these cases may largely stem from the writers’ previous educational and cultural experiences. However, there were fewer cases of these two forms of intertextuality as compared to the unconventional word and sentence level. That is, the number of instances where word and sentence level intertextuality was present was a surprising finding in the corpus, and this may indicate an over-reliance on the sources for a few students.

5.5.2 Use of quotations

The use of quotations for support and to provide evidence in writing is one way of using sources to create an argument. There may also be differences within
disciplines in terms of the amount of quotes that are typically used in written work. Pecorari (2008), for example, argues that social sciences texts tend to use more quotes than hard science texts. Adding quotations also follows certain rules that should be properly adhered to when citing written work.

Going over the data shows a noticeable amount of direct quotes in the students’ papers. Although I do not know of any standard for academic writing for how much direct quotation is appropriate, except that it may vary across hard and social sciences, it was noticeable in the sense that there was more than I expected. This was especially so when compared to the amount of paraphrasing. The use of quotations in the assignments might not be inappropriate. However, the question is: why is there such a noticeable amount of quotation? First, engaging with a source and choosing to quote a source instead of paraphrasing it may be a result of the writer experiencing certain difficulties with meaning. So, the degree of difficulty of meaning of a passage, especially when there is complex vocabulary, may be one of the reasons why students choose to quote instead of paraphrase. Second, some of the paragraphs in a source may include important terms that could not be easily changed or written in a different way, and may sometimes provide a different meaning if changed. This, in turn, might contribute to the fact that students tend to quote the source text rather than paraphrasing, and thus may end up with more quoted language than expected. Third, the time constraint that students with short assignment deadlines have may also contribute to this, as quoting needs less time than paraphrasing or summarizing an extract, and by quoting they will reach the required word count for an assignment more easily (Booth et al., 2003).

5.5.3 Citation

Buckingham and Neville (1997) view citation as a ‘colloquy’, where using sources creates an interaction between not only the writer and the cited authors, but also the audience and future readers of a written piece. This concept takes citation and source use to a higher level than merely referencing conventions. The process in handling the assigned work in most of the student papers in the data shows that this interaction between student writers and the sources seems somewhat limited. Student writers read a given source, pick and choose parts that
fit with their purposes, and often end up depending on the source extensively. In many cases, they may not fully understand the source. Hence, when extracting the content that could add to their argument, students’ papers are likely to lose their voice in their own writing, leaving a sense of attachment to the source content, language, or structure. This was evident through the number of papers that seemed to over-rely on their sources either through similarities shown by structure, or language.

Figure 9 shows the most frequently used reporting verbs in the corpus. The reason this is of interest in this investigation is that it shows the intertextual understanding of the student writer and how they make decisions in presenting previous literature. The analysis, here, draws on Thompson and Ye’s attempt “to give an idea of the complexity of the way in which verbs in reporting structures in academic papers actually operate” (1991, p.380). Just as in Thompson and Ye’s original analysis, and following the descriptive focus of research question 1 focused on what forms of intertextuality is evident in the postgraduate Arab students’ writing, there is no attempt to compare frequencies of reporting verbs used by these Arab writers with that of other groups of academic writers.
Figure 9 shows that students use reporting verbs which are less evaluative in nature. The verb ‘state’, and the other reporting verbs in figure 9, are part of what Thompson and Ye (1991) call ‘denotation’, which means that the writer is only referring to the literature with a minimal evaluative stance. On the other hand, when a writer takes more responsibility, whether by comparing or theorising, the verbs show greater effort on the part of the writer to offer an evaluative stance on the information presented. For example, ‘anticipate’, ‘account for’ and ‘exemplifies’ offer such an evaluative stance, but these were rarely used by the student writers in my data; ‘anticipate’ and ‘account for’ were used once, while ‘exemplified’ was used three times in the whole corpus. However, when using the simpler reporting verbs shown in figure 9, Thompson and Ye noted that the writers may not be entirely passive because even such reporting of the literature needs choice and evaluation of the argument found in the literature, and decisions about whether the argument fits with the writer’s purpose or not.

5.5.4 Secondary Citation

Using secondary citation in academic writing is an acceptable way of referring to a source when that source was not consulted directly. Indicating this contributes to the transparency of source use (Pecorari, 2008) and it also indicates good understanding of referencing conventions. However, while it is commonly used in many of the students papers in my data, as will be explained below, it may imply that students do not make the effort to consult the primary source. This type of citation protects also students from being accused of plagiarism, but there is no clear generally accepted threshold for how much secondary citation is accepted in academic writing at this level.

In the data of the 40 papers in the student corpus used in this study, there were 72 instances of acknowledged (by acknowledge I mean explicitly mentioned using the words ‘cited in’) secondary citation. In one case this reached 8 instances in a 4000 word text (ID 11, Paper 3). There are cases where secondary citation was not acknowledged, and these cases were discussed in some of the above examples under unconventional intertextuality, where the student writer did not use explicit conventions to signal the secondary citation. Take Example 17 above (see section 5.4.3), where the student writer must have read Kang et al. (2010), and cited the
references and used these sources in a similar way as this source, without acknowledgment to Kang et al. Moreover, the student writer used Kang et al.’s paraphrase of Lee and Park (2007) and Garcia and Armas (2007) without appropriate attribution. This kind of intertextuality is what Pecorari (2006) calls an ‘occluded feature’ where the academic text includes features that are not visible to the reader. These kinds of features are not always straightforward to identify in student writing, but Turnitin or similar tools can offer clues and further manual examination of sources the student writer used may establish it more conclusively.

Pecorari’s (2006) corpus shows different findings as compared to this study, with only 17 acknowledged secondary citation out of 858 citations in her full corpus. Whereas in this study, 72 acknowledged secondary citations were identified among 1795 citations in the corpus. Having had a mix of social sciences and hard sciences texts in Pecorari’s (2006) corpus, she noted that only one engineering paper included secondary citation, while no secondary citations were found in biology papers. This suggests that hard sciences use fewer secondary citations than social sciences. However, she explained that more parts of her corpus included secondary references without attribution (occluded features), which may also be the case in my study. It seems that in my data, a number of student writers made an effort to meet the conventions of academic writing regarding references, but resorted to the overuse of secondary sources and ignoring the importance of seeking out the primary source.
As shown in figure 10 above, secondary citation seems to be prominent feature in my corpus. These instances of intertextuality were analysed in MAXQDA per paragraph, so when the percentage was calculated, the number of secondary citations were divided by the number of paragraphs in the whole text data, which was 2,334 paragraphs. Thus these instances were counted per paragraph.

5.5.5 Making use of Source Structure

Structure level intertextuality in my corpus occurred when student writers used similar section headings, and thus development of argument, or used a similar way of presenting ideas and similar evidence to support the ideas. This comparison was carried out by using Turnitin to direct the search for the source which seemed to have been used in this way, and then comparing the students’ text with the given source. In 13 papers out of 40 in the corpus, a similarity of structure between the student papers and a source was found, but in each case with different degrees. Having sources with the same topic as a student’s assignment, there may be some inevitable similarity. As an example, there is a similarity in headings and points in discussion between a source and a student paper (Student ID 19), but this is because both articles discuss similar topics as the source article, entitled: ‘Assistive technology for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing’. The student’s paper discusses ‘Assistive technologies for people
who are deaf or hard of hearing’. This article was cited as from the ‘WI Department of Public Instruction’, while through investigating the source, it appears that Heckendorf (2003) is the author of the article. This author was not mentioned in the student’s paper. Here the student’s headings, as well as the student’s ideas, in one part of the paper were developed in the same way as the source. In cases such as this, it may be challenging for L2 academic writers to become independent from the sources that they use.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the different forms of intertextuality in the corpus of Arab postgraduate student writing which I collected. The analysis used Pecorari and Shaw’s (2007) taxonomy of intertextuality as the starting point, and expanded on this starting point with my own levels of intertextuality, including word, sentence, paragraph and structure levels. Through intertextuality, the relationship between texts is manifested through referring to source texts, used by the Arab postgraduate students, in different ways via quoting, citing, or borrowing. The analysis seems to have shown a continuum of intertextuality, both across indirect, conventional and unconventional, and across levels of text, and it is therefore difficult to provide black-white divisions about the different forms of intertextuality. There were cases that seemed to be very conventional, and this then places the intertextuality at one end of the continuum. Other cases showed a combination of conventional and unconventional features, and the decision of how to categorise the intertextuality was difficult. By focusing, in addition, on the word, paragraph and structure levels, in part motivated by the field of genre analysis, has expanded the understanding of intertextuality, and in turn the analysis provides a more holistic understanding of the relationship between the Arab postgraduate students’ writing, sources they have used, as well as writing more broadly in the academic discourse community they are part of.
Chapter Six: Students’ Past Experiences

This chapter responds to research question two:

RQ2: What are the students’ past experience of academic literacy and academic writing?

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, seven participants were interviewed twice, which makes a total of fourteen interviews. In this chapter, I will present the findings that relate to research question two and which emerged from analysing both of the interviews. Although interview two was intended to focus mainly on the students’ academic writing, through stimulated recall, there were numerous overlapping and interrelated themes that emerged between the analysis of the two interviews. Specifically, the participants’ responses in both interviews provided me with insights and understanding about their educational/cultural background.

In this chapter, I will first briefly introduce each university in which the students were enrolled. Then, each student who participated in the interviews will be briefly introduced using information elicited during the interviews. Next, the themes that emerged from the interviews will be discussed and excerpts from the interviews will be added under each theme. Discussion of each theme will also include contextual information, which describe particularities of the Arab contexts the participants are from, specifically in relation to historical, religious, and cultural elements.

6.1 The Interview Participants

The students who participated in this research were enrolled in three different UK universities. The three Universities can be described as follows:
University A is a large redbrick Russell Group university in the North West of England (four of the interview participants were from this university).

University B: is a post 1992 metropolitan (formerly polytechnic) university in the North West of England (two of the interview participants were from this university).

University C: is a North West of England university, which historically was a technical institution, then gained university status in 1967 (one of the interview participants was from this university).

The students who participated in the interviews were from the following four countries: Iraq, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the UAE (United Arab Emirates). The interviews were all conducted in English. However, the participants were told to switch to Arabic whenever they wanted to, and therefore sometimes they did this to explain certain ideas or words. I will introduce each one of the participants in this section. In this introduction, I refer to institutions they attended in their home countries as either public or private. By ‘public’ I mean the government-funded institutions which are free for the public or which charge a minimal fee. Private institutions, on the other hand, are privately-owned and usually charge fees which vary depending on the standard of the school. All the names used are pseudonymous.

Hadi is a student from Iraq. He was enrolled in a master programme in TESOL in University A. His first degree was from a public university in Iraq where he got a BA in English. He also attended a public high school before that. After his BA degree he worked as an English language teacher in an Iraqi school, as well as an English/Arabic interpreter before he came to UK to pursue postgraduate masters studies.

Ali also comes from Iraq, and he was a student in University B doing a MSc in Accounting and Finance, with the Business School. His previous degree was a Bachelor in Law from a public Iraqi university. Then he came to the UK and switched fields from Law to Business. Ali went to a public high school in Iraq.

Eisa is a third participant from Iraq. He completed both his high school and undergraduate studies in public institutions in Iraq. His BA degree was in English
Language and then after graduating he worked as an English language teacher in secondary schools for four years. He then came to the UK and enrolled in a masters programme in TESOL in University A.

Shatha is a student in University B, doing her MSc in Business Management. She comes from Yemen and has had her previous education in Yemen. Before starting her master degree in the UK she had to take intensive English training for a year to get the required IELTS score for her degree. She went to a public university in her home country, and attended a public high school.

Karim is a Yemeni student who was doing a masters in Procurement Logistics and Supply Chain Management, which is a business degree in University C. His previous degree is from a Canadian university where he got a degree in Business Management, and where he studied English as well. He attended a private high school where English was taught from as early as first grade, unlike public schools where English lessons start from grade six.

Amira is a Saudi student who was doing a MSc in Educational Research in University A. She intended to pursue a PhD in the same area after her masters degree. Amira attended a private high school which she described as being revolutionary at the time for having a ‘modern’ kind of system that was different from the traditional schooling that was the norm in her country. Then she attended a public university where she enrolled in a computer science degree. She then came to the UK for her MA degree in the same field before enrolling in her MSc.

Mehad comes from the UAE and he was a student in a masters programme in Development Policy and Management in University A, where he specialised in international development. For his undergraduate studies, he completed a BA in Law, which included a double major from the Law and Police Colleges. This degree was obtained in a UAE public university, where he achieved the highest mark amongst 180 students. He went to a public high school where he obtained the highest grades in his years of study.

6.2 Previous Educational Experience
This section will explore the participants’ previous educational experiences. The chapter is organised according to themes identified in the interview data (see section 4.7.1 and 4.7.2). This includes sub-sections on their experience of writing in Arabic, experience with referencing in their previous education, the reliance on exams for assessment in their Arab home contexts, the focus on memorisation in Arab educational contexts, their reading experiences in Arabic, and their experiences of asking questions in their previous education. The exploration of the participants’ experience within these themes was enabled by the more detailed coding of the data (see section 4.7.2). The codes are not overtly visible in this chapter – rather, the codes were used to retrieve extracts of data for the exploration and discussion in this chapter.

6.2.1 L1 Writing

As seen in the literature review, writing in L1, which is Arabic in this case, is a skill that seems to be neglected in schools and universities in the countries from which these participants came. When asked about their writing experience in school, participants explained that the only writing experience they had in school was a class called ‘hessat ta’bir’ (حصة تعبير), which literally means ‘lesson of expression’. This kind of class is similar to an essay writing class, where the teacher starts the class by writing down a topic that is chosen beforehand in the curriculum. After having a brief discussion of the topic to activate it in the students’ minds, students are given time (usually about a third of the class time) to write a short essay on the topic under discussion. This kind of class was the one referred to by most participants as their L1 writing class during school days. Extract 1 shows what Mehad says about his L1 writing experiences back at school.

Extract 1: Mehad

No, no writing, oh yeah, in the Arabic class there was like ‘ta’bir’ (تعبير) you know, I remember this ‘ta’bir’ (تعبير), but nothing else, in the science it’s just like books, read your book, you will be alright.

A similar experience in L1 writing was also mentioned by another student, Ali, who comes from Iraq, and an account of this is given in Extract 2 below. Although the context might impose differences in the content of this writing class
(lesson of expression), the concept seems to be the same. In Iraq, for example, according to Ali, the topics of the ‘lesson of expression’ used to be directed more towards politics as at that time during the Saddam Hussein era, there was a focus on controlling the school curriculum to keep control in the hands of the Ba’th political party. Notably, he uses the word ‘creative’ in his explanation of the writing class; however, the nature of the class did not include creative activities. Thus, he might have used the word ‘creative’ as a translation of the word ‘expression’ (تعبير) into English, but it is not a correct equivalent of the word. Unlike the previous extract in which Mehad (who comes from the UAE) talked about the writing class in a general sense, this student talked about the same class but noted that the topics were about the ‘army’ and the ‘government’. What is relevant here is to note that the same concept of writing was experienced in both countries in a similar way: a single writing class experience with ready-made topics.

Extract 2: Ali

It was one course they call it creative ta’bir (تعبير), but mostly about, in my generation, it was just write about the government or about the army, or so.

Most schools and universities in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) countries are state owned, according to The World Bank (2008), which may give governments more power and authority over education, educators, and the content of the curriculum. This domination of education creates control over schools and universities (Rugh, 2002; Herrera and Torres, 2006), one which reflects the political reality of the state and gives less power to the citizens and hinders freedom. Thus, Education ministries control what and how subjects and topics are introduced and focused on and what the structure of the curriculum and instruction should be like. Even for leadership positions, which have voice and power in higher education institutions, the appointments are often made by the ruling elite which, as a result, leaves less power for either teachers or students and ‘emphasizes authoritarian modes of decision making’ (Mazawi, 2011, p. 12). This in turn serves most autocratic regimes in the region (Whitaker, 2009) in the way that it supports submissiveness and discourages freedom of thought and criticism and develops obedient and passive citizens. Investment in education
through reforms has always been an important political priority. However, this control and the previous ways of instruction remains the same. According to the World Bank report (cited above), the kinds of reforms since the 1960s to the present time suggest that the reforms have been quantitative but not qualitative; quantitative in the sense that more schools have been establishes which has increased the numbers of children in schools, but the quality of education remains questionable.

Another participant from Yemen (Shatha, Extract 3), talking about her L1 writing experience (lesson of expression), described her difficulty learning to write and having to develop a strategy to survive in this class by memorising a set introductions and conclusions. Having difficulty in achieving writing flow and having ‘writing block’ much of the time forced her to memorise these set introduction/conclusion paragraphs and fill in the body of the writing according to the topic provided. She explained that all topics seemed to go along with her memorised set, and she only made minimal changes in the wording in accordance with the theme of the topic. This, as she explained, was a strategy she kept and used here in the UK for the writing section of the IELTS test, for which she received a score of 5 for (which is slightly lower that required for UK University entrance). The following extract shows her talking about her L1 writing experience.

Extract 3: Shatha

We had a class called ta’bir (تعبير), I don’t know in English what it’s called, but it’s writing in Arabic and I hate this class, I’m not good in writing in Arabic, maybe in English also [laugh], I used to memorise introduction and conclusion and use them for all topics but change some words to suit the topic and I pass. Even here in my IELTS test I did the same thing in writing section and I passed, I got 5.

For Shatha, having an IELTS score of 5 is equivalent to passing the test because, as she said, with this mark she was able to enter a pre-sessional course. However, this mark is a low mark compared to the required mark for most masters programs in the UK. The usual mark to get into a UK university starts from 5.5. For a masters program, it is usually between 6.0 and 7.0 to be accepted. For instance,
students may be required to get 6 in all 4 sections of the test (Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking), and having failed this would require in some programs/universities retaking the test or entry onto a pre-sessional course to compensate for the low mark. Thus, although she seemed to be satisfied with the mark she obtained in the IELTS examination, it was not high enough for the program she wanted to get into. She continued to make use of her strategies from her L1 class, which was memorising a standard introduction and conclusion, but it seems that those strategies did not seem to be as effective in the L2 writing experience as she thought they were.

This valuing of memorisation of set paragraphs is still influencing some Arab students in terms of their strategies to cope with L2 written tasks. A lot of students also resort to memorising formulaic phrases to use them in their writing, something that was discussed earlier in Chapter 5, where it was referred to as a conventional form of intertextuality. Finding this to be a prominent feature in almost all students’ papers may reflect shows the influence of the belief of memory as a tool for learning to write.

Mehad (Extract 4) admitted facing difficulties in a new initiative in his home university programme that required writing a research paper at the end of the programme. This programme, which the student took during his undergraduate years in his home country, was a combined degree with the major part provided by a Law School and a minor part provided by a Police College, where they take different course units and do some practical police training. So the qualification that the student obtained was a Bachelor in Law. Thus, according to him, having a written project as a new way of developing the programme was a notable change in the programme, something that students were not in favour of although it was a ‘light’ one according to him. He also mentioned that he graduated with the highest mark in the programme among 180 students, which may raise questions of what difficulties may have been faced by other students who were not such high achievers.

Extract 4: Mehad

Well we’ve done the last year they ask us as a new initiative for change
the teaching style in police college, they ask us to do some research, but it was a very light one. It taken like two days three days we went to the internet we did some research and then we write it down in Arabic. I was, this was the hardest part among us as students.

6.2.2 Referencing

With respect to how the topic of referencing was covered in their previous universities, participants varied in their accounts. Some of them had ‘some’ kind of introduction to referencing but it was the type that according to them was not that helpful. For example, one participant (Mehad, Extract 5 below) explained that although they had a session that introduced referencing to them in university in his home country, the session was neither informative nor very organised. It seemed to be more of a way to compliment a course unit as a way to improve the curriculum in the Police College, which is what this particular participant attended as part of his undergraduate degree (see the end of the previous section).

Extract 5: Mehad

In the referencing part we studied in the research that I’ve done, the one I told you about. They gave us a special course for how to reference but, the same way, they just put books and say just do it this way, that’s why ... they don’t tell us why we should do it this way or what is this way called because when I got the other books I thought oh they did wrong, because they didn’t follow my way of referencing, or the way taught me to, so they didn’t explain the big picture, so we like always kind of lost, so they should explain like there are many kinds of referencing and this way called for example Harvard system lets say.

In the same way, another participant (Hadi, Extract 6) points out how he and his colleagues received only limited information during his undergraduate years in his home country about referencing and citation. It was introduced as part of a ‘small’ research project that they had to complete. As shown in the extract from the interview, the participant linked this limited introduction to referencing skills to the fact that they were not researchers and, as a result, this may be the reason for why there was such limited attention given to providing them with these kinds of skills.
Extract 6: Hadi

Sahar: Ok, let’s talk a bit about referencing and managing information. Did you learn how to manage information and reference in university in Iraq?

Hadi: We had in year 2 and year 4 a ‘kind’ of research but it is very very basic one. The tutor gave us little bit information, and didn’t explain what meant by plagiarism or how to reference, yeah it is just basic ones because we are teachers, we are not researchers, I think that’s why…the reason they don’t dig in deep in this area.

Karim who completed his undergraduate degree in a Canadian university mentioned a similar experience. Although in his Canadian university they had to do many academic essays and reports for their business degree, they did not have training in how to do this task. It seemed to be a skill that students were expected to have and they were also expected to properly reference their sources in their assignments. This type of referencing was according to the participant a ‘simple’ one that did not include detailed information about the source, but more of a numbered list of sources used in an assignment.

Extract 7: Karim

Karim: in terms of referencing we did not, like they did not really teach us a proper way of how to do a reference style, but the only one that we used to do is just the information that we take, like number it and put the site, like the bibliography thing, not the APA style where you have to write everything.

Sahar: So was it just some kind of a brief way of managing the references? Were you following a specific system?

Karim: Not a...a system or an academic style.

Sahar: But did you use a formal referencing style like Harvard for example back then?

Karim: We used APA I remember.

Sahar: Ok, did you learn referencing systems and how to do it by yourself then?

Karim: Well, I guess I was expected to do that by myself because they required all the assignments to be referenced, but they did not actually
give us like proper lessons or inductions on how to use a referencing system.

6.2.3 Reliance on Exams for Assessment

Students who attended university and high school in their home countries noted having exams as the way of assessment, usually twice in the academic year typically consisting of a mid-term and a final exam. Accordingly, passing those exams seemed to be vital in school and university. As discussed in the literature, one of the reasons that this kind of system is implemented could be due to overly crowded schools and universities, which makes varying the types of assessment a very daunting task for educators. Although in private schools there is a greater tendency to train students on different analytical skills, the schools have to abide by the rules of assessments that are set by the Ministry of Education in the country, and the Ministry typically prescribes exams for testing students’ competence. Because students are mostly focused on one goal, which is passing the exams either in school or higher education, analytical skills become less developed.

All participants who were interviewed noted that exams were the major way of assessing students in schools as well as universities. Exams were usually directed towards testing students’ memory of information that was presented in class or in books. Eisa, in the following extract (Extract 8), talked about how students were expected to memorise information to be able to pass the exams, which seemed the basis for assessment in both school and university level.

Extract 8: Eisa

In fact the educational system, let me say something, the assessment for the units in Iraq is absolutely different from here. In fact in Iraq the assessment is kind of exams and the students will memorise certain chapters, books, about specific field and then they give them a chance to do an exam for 2 hours, something like this. Indeed the educational system in the university is kind of duplicating from the school.
Another participant who also came from Iraq (Ali) commented on the same experience of having to do exams in university and also made a comparison between assessment here in the UK and his previous education back in his country. He noted that having more options here in the UK, with different types of assessment, are ‘huge opportunities’ for him and something that was not available in his home country. The word ‘lack’ in a number of the interviews I conducted was present when students explained their previous educational background in their home countries. This indicates that they have this notion of comparing what they are experiencing in UK education, which is something that seems to be more positive compared to what they have experienced in their home country, which they mostly described in negative terms. This may not be the case for all Arab students, but according to the group of Arab students that I interviewed there seems to be a gloomy picture in the students’ minds about their previous educational experiences.

Extract 9: Ali

In university we don’t do lots of writing, we mostly focus on written exams so they don’t give a huge opportunity like here to do assignment and course work, and I think that is the lack of Iraq education system

6.2.4 Memorisation

In the literature review, I explained that historically the type of schooling that was spread in the Arab region was known as ‘Kuttab’ (كتاب), where students mainly recited and memorised the Quran (the holy book) and learn some basic writing and maths skills (Bahgat, 1999). It was only in the 19th century that many Arab countries, including Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the UAE opened modern schools. There is some variability in the region, however, for countries like Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq, modern schools were already in operation before that date (in 1829, 1835 and 1898 respectively) Qazzat (no date). Perhaps one of the reasons that the influence of this traditional way of education has persisted until now is because it is associated with religious practices. Memorising the Quran, as discussed earlier in the literature review, has always been one of the realities of
the Islamic faith so memory is a way of knowledge transmission and thus, plays a
significant role in the philosophy of education and intellectual tradition of the
Islamic nation (Nasr, 1992). As explained in the literature review, students get
tested on Quran and Hadith memorisation in schools at the end of each academic
year, and this applies to all the countries which my participants come from.
Although many countries in the Arab region have adopted more modern types of
schooling for education, a number of countries still embrace the traditional
Quranic class or ‘tahfiz’ (تحفيظ) where children learn how to recite and memorise
the Quran. Countries like Saudi Arabia and Yemen for example, developed
Quranic institutes, which are the successors of the traditional Islamic Kuttab.

Hence, memorisation is encouraged for many students in school and university in
many Arab countries as a way of transmitting information so as to be able to pass
examinations. As discussed in both the literature review and in an earlier section
of this chapter, most schools and many universities in almost all Arab countries
depend on examinations for assessment and, as a result, students are encouraged
to study and memorise factual information from textbooks, lesson/lecture notes,
and other learning materials to be able to pass these exams. It is an approach that
is widely practised, not only for religious reasons; it is more generally culturally
and traditionally a way of transmitting information.

In the following extract (Extract 10), Eisa explained the approach of learning in
university and how memorisation is part of the learning structure.

Extract 10: Eisa

No, just to listen and the end of semester for example 12 weeks or
something like this, the students they have to cover or to memorise a
certain materials specific to that different subject, and the teacher or
the tutor will prepare for certain questions during the exam and then
give the chance to answer certain question on the form of writing
something.
Another participant (Hadi) also mentioned how students focused on memorising from the book in order to pass the exams. He explained that writing for the exam is what is meant by writing for him and this was the kind of writing experience he had in school as well as university (see Extract 11).

Extract 11: Hadi

We depend on the exams, so we don’t have to write essays or an assignments like here in the UK, so mostly we have to memorise .. all the assessment as a test .. for example we have 2 chapters in the exam, we have to read them and memorise the most important things then we answer the questions, that’s the writing, not an academic writing.

Extract 12 below shows how another student described how the types of writing in his L2 class in his previous education was based on memorisation.

Extract 12: Mehad

Sahar: Tell me about writing in school, what kind of writing were you doing during school, like do remember the kinds of writing, projects or research.

Mehad: I can’t no, it was most of the assessment based on the exam, I remembered even in the English class, we used to have this kind of writing type so even the writing part, they gave us three or four paragraphs and they told us that one of them will come in the exam. You imagine, this is the secondary school, the highschool, the last, so, we just, what we have to do is just to memorise the four paragraphs, and when it comes in the exam, we just write it down as it is and we got like the full mark. If you write it as it is, you will get the full mark.

6.2.5 Reading Experiences

Another important aspect of the Arab postgraduate students’ educational background was their experiences of reading in school and university. The connection between reading and writing has been discussed in the literature review (see section 2.5.2, Chapter 2. Eisterhold (1990) is one of the scholars who
believe that writers view texts that they read as ‘models’ and acquire the styles, organisation and structure of these models through their academic reading. Therefore, having these kinds of limiting reading opportunities may be a factor that affects the development of their academic writing skills. All participants noted the idea of limited reading and having only textbook assigned reading as their source of learning in schools. All participants said that they hardly ever read anything other than the assigned reading during school or university. This very limited reading experience that students had during their previous education does not appear to be conducive for preparation for the academic community in UK universities, where students are expected to make regular visits to the library, do extra reading besides that of any assigned textbook, and throughout are expected to be active readers and note-takers.

Looking at the publishing industry in the Arab world, there seems to be lack of accurate figures about readership and publications across countries in the region. In looking for statistical figures about this, there seems to be an organisation (the Arab Publishers Association) that comprises 25 local publishers in the region. The Association’s aims are to develop the publishing industry in the Arab world, as well as to defend freedom of expression, publishing and readership and intellectual property rights. However, on their website there was no statistical or other information available describing the state of the publishing industry in the Arab region. According to the organisers of the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, which is a leading event across the region, this lack of accurate information may be due to reasons related to improper assigning of ISBNs and the absence of a central recording office for books.

The publishing industry in the Arab world faces many challenges including piracy of books, low consumption, and censorship. According to Rana Idriss (2013), director of the Dar Al-Adab, one of the main publishing houses in the Arab world, the ‘Arab spring’ revolutions that took place in few countries in the region has created a serious crisis for publishers in the region. This is due to many markets closing down such the Syrian market, which was one of the main markets, and the events in Egypt and Yemen have also had a significant effect in this regard. The Lebanese and Egyptian book markets which were another two main markets are going through problems of low consumption (Lebanon) and high cost (Egypt).
The Gulf area countries seem to grow in terms of book markets for publishers. However, censorship still keeps many books out of these new markets. Idris suggests that the low readership in the Arab region should be dealt with in collaboration between families, educators, civil institutions and governments.

Apart from the consequences of the Arab Spring, the crisis in the Arab world in this regard may have arisen partly as a result of the lack of reading among people. This is the view of Mohamed Hashem, the director of ‘Merit’, another leading publishing house in Cairo. Hashem (2013) argues that the problem is not in the publishing industry but rather in the audience itself, which according to statistics, is the least active reading audience in the world. So if there is no readership demands, then the publishing industry decreases. Taking Egypt as an example, he explains that 1000 copies is the average print number per new book in a nation that has 90 million people, and 30-40 per-cent of new publications stay on shelves without being sold out.

This lack of interest in reading was evident in the Arab post-graduate students in my study. Extract 13 shows how Hadi has limited experience of reading books apart from the ones assigned by the tutor. He said he does not like going to the library, neither in his home country nor in the UK. This lack of interest in reading seems to have an influence on how students familiarise themselves in academic settings and influences the availability of input and knowledge for them.

**Extract 13: Hadi**

I don’t like to visit the library, even here in UK we just read what the teacher ask us to read.

Another student (Karim, Extract 14) responded to a question about his reading habits during school by saying that having a library in school was not something he remembers. This may be taken as further evidence that reading was not encouraged during school.
Extract 14: Karim

No, I don’t remember if we had a library in school [smiles]. The readings basically we had the books that they give us in the beginning of the year and we were expected to use it, to study from it, or write any exercises, sometimes they give us exercises but anything was in the book and within the book.

That is, all the participants mentioned that the reading that was done whether in school or university was assigned by the tutor. It seems that, in many cases, if not most, students tend to focus on what is assigned because this indicates that the sections/chapters will be included in the examinations. As discussed above, focussing on passing the exam may be one of the reasons why students may not have an interest in reading material that is not an explicit part of the curriculum. The following is another extract (Extract 15) that shows the participants’ experience with reading during school or university.

Extract 15: Eisa

Yeah reading normally, it’s the tutor ask the students to read a couple of pages for example from different things and then the tutor will be the fountain of knowledge

Another student (Amira, Extract 16) also mentioned that whatever was assigned for reading was from the curriculum. The student also noted that being limited to what was assigned by the tutor limits the possibility and opportunity of reading and exploring other interests. This may in turn create restrictions on students’ imagination and curiosity, and may result in a low motivation to read more or develop a critical response to texts.

Extract 16: Amira
The reading it was mainly the curriculum, that what you’re asked to read, like, you have this book, I’m gonna read this book to memorise things in it and that’s it, I didn’t, and they used to assign the books that you have to buy from the library, you know so, you’re not a free reader, like go and explore, when I came to the UK, it was my first experience of go and, you know go and look for articles, look for books.

It seems therefore, based on this small number of interviews, the general picture is one in which neither schools nor universities in the Arab world provide their students with opportunities to read beyond what is assigned by the curriculum. Since reading is necessary to develop skills such as analytical thinking and reflectivity, these skills may not be properly developed for students who come from these Arab backgrounds. Nevertheless, despite this experience and background, some students admitted enjoying this privilege when arriving in the UK, and now being able to have this ‘freedom’ to explore and discover the world themselves.

Kennedy (1985) stated that poorly skilled readers lack the skills needed to use sources in their academic writing. That is, academic writing requires the reader to pre-read, get an overview of the source, plan, question, reread, take notes, and then start writing. Poor readers tend to start writing right after reading the source, and skipping the various reading steps may lead to getting overly attached to the source when writing. As will be seen in Chapter 7, Amira was surprised at the number of quotations she had in her papers and she also explained finding it difficult to incorporate information by paraphrasing. This may be due to her not spending enough time reading the way Kennedy (1985) suggests, and instead starting to write too soon, becoming overly attached to the sources she used, and leading her to not only copy quotes more regularly, but also to finding it difficult to paraphrase what she read.

Hence, reading involves making judgments, identifying counter arguments, and synthesising information from different sources to be able to develop an argument. This may not be easy for students who come from a culture where reading is not a process of interaction with the text. Rather, for Arab students reading seems more like a process of memorising for the ultimate goal which is
exams. To read in order to memorise is different from reading to develop thinking and criticality, and does not develop any conversation between the source and the reader’s mind. This is not to minimise the skill of memorisation, which is a powerful human skill which many people have valued and sought out to acquire. However, this is to say that students who come from cultures where memory is valued over critical thinking and creativity, will face challenges when coming to the UK for university study. This challenge is particularly strong when students are expected to use their own understanding and interpretations to communicate through academic writing.

6.2.6 Asking Questions in the Classroom

One of the dominant features of school and university classrooms in most Arab countries is lecture-like lessons, where tutors give the intended lesson as a lecture and thus discussions or student reflection may not occur very often. In particular, asking questions does not seem to be encouraged in Arab classrooms because questions may challenge the teacher who is the centre of the attention, and may imply that what the teacher is presenting is not clear or properly articulated. According to Ikuenobe (2001), this may create a defensive response by the teacher who, culturally, is regarded as being a high authority in the classroom. Ikuenobe also argues that questioning is one way of developing critical thinking. Therefore, asking questions will affect academic writing. If students are not encouraged to ask their teacher questions, then they are less likely to ask questions of the material in books they read. Instead, students may, indirectly, be encouraged to use sources as models from which they can get structures, arguments, and language for their own writing. It has been seen in Chapter 5 that over-reliance on sources was one feature that was prominent in many of the Arab post-graduate participants’ papers, and this was evident on different levels: word/phrase, sentence, paragraph, and structure level.

When asked about asking questions in classes, all the participants described similar experiences, yet with somewhat different reasons for why they think this usually does not happen. In the extract below (Extract 17), Hadi, comparing the learning approaches typical of Iraq with those of the UK, commented that asking
questions in Iraq is actually discouraged and students fear to be ridiculed if they do so.

Extract 17: Hadi

Teaching and learning in UK is totally different from Iraq, because in Iraq we can’t express ourselves or opinions with the teacher, that is not possible, because what the teacher says, that’s the right, but here it’s different, some teachers in Iraq doesn’t allow any student to ask a question, you suppose not to ask me a question, and sometimes if we have a question, we can’t say that to teacher, he might say that’s a stupid question.

The case seems to be similar for another participant who came from Yemen (Karim, Extract 18). Although he studied in a private school where one might expect teaching/learning to be ideally better, he mentioned not being used to ask questions in class or participating in class discussions. He believed that although some teachers would ask students at the end of a lesson if they had any questions, that act of the teacher was more of a ‘routine’ rather than any real intention to invite the students ‘questions. He also talked about the lack of confidence students had in asking questions.

Extract 18: Karim

Karim: In high school when the teacher covers the topic, he asks a question in the end of a chapter if someone has any question, but I guess that’s just a formality and not too many people actually start asking any questions.

Sahar: Why do you think that students wouldn’t ask any questions at the end?

Karim: Well basically I think you’ll be in the centre of the attention of all the class members and I think the reason that people, or let me rephrase that, I think the person who is responsible for that is the teacher because they never encourage the students to go up and ask a question because they never open up any discussion in class, so the students feel or lack the confidence to go up and speak up.
The fear of being put on the spot by asking a question was something that appears a number of times in the interviews with my Arab post-graduate participants. Thus as asking questions or opening discussions are not encouraged in classrooms neither in schools nor in higher education institutions, students might be less confident about having the skills to discuss their ideas and opinions freely either orally or in writing. Their opinions are not valued compared to other western education systems where students may normally be encouraged to ask questions, discuss issues, and express their ideas and opinions freely. Furthermore, with normally over-crowded classes by UK standards, interaction between students and teachers in Arab education is very limited. As a result, students may doubt their capabilities to express ideas, and this may affect their writing as well.

This view, that asking questions in class is not encouraged because the questioner may be ridiculed or become the centre of attention, may have developed over years through the cultural beliefs of respecting educators. Looking at the word education in the Arabic language, there are three possible meanings of this word. Education in Arabic means knowledge, good manners, as well as maturity and growth (Halstead, 2004). Moreover, ‘good manners’ are emphasised more in the Arabic/Islamic cultures than ‘knowledge’. This is shown in the common reference to education in all Arab countries which is ‘attarbiya wa-atta’lim’ (التربية والتعليم). This literally translates as ‘good manners and education’. So, ‘good manners’ is emphasised by being mentioned separately in this phrase, and also ‘good manners’ is placed before education so as to give it more importance. The Ministry of Education in Arab countries is also commonly called وزارة التربية و التعليم (wizarat attarbiya wa-atta’lim’ ‘Ministry of Good Manners and Education’, and this Ministry usually pays great attention to the culturally grounded disciplines of respecting authoritative powers, including teachers, school head teachers, and other authorities. Thus, this sense of authoritative hierarchy gets instilled in students.

So the respect goes from student to teacher, teacher to head-teacher, head-teacher to ministry, and so on. It may also go from female to male. For a female participant in my research, who comes from Saudi Arabia (Amira, Extract 19), noted that having a question to ask during a university lecture in her Saudi
experience depended on whether the class was taught by a male or a female. Although she said asking questions is not the norm in class, having a male teacher complicated the situation for her. The culture of male/female segregation in Saudi Arabia still exists in all schools and most universities as well as in social life. Yet, since there is a shortage of female lecturers in certain fields, the Ministry of Education assigns male teachers to teach female students, but insists that lectures are broadcast by video from the male campus to female campus. This type of approach, to my own knowledge, is exclusive to Saudi Arabia. However, it might also be a characteristic in different areas where male and females are educated together and females may be hesitant to ask questions in front of men for cultural reasons.

Extract 19: Amira

Well, other courses were taught by males, since it’s different campus so we used to be taught by television so they broadcast the lecture by TV to the girls section, so, and we used to have a phone, so when you have a question you have to go from your place, ring, and the male teacher will answer and you say your question, so it wasn’t easy to discuss. You don’t communicate with the male teacher unless you have a really nagging question that you really need to ask.

A saying that is widespread in the Arab world, although it has no Islamic origin, is: ‘من علمني حرفًا صرت له عبداً’ which literally translates as ‘whoever taught me a letter, I become his/her servant). This saying captures the amount of appreciation there is to the people who transmit knowledge. It is not surprising to see this quote hanging on walls in almost all schools in many Arab countries. This is crystallised in class through the respect paid to teachers who are the ‘agents’ of knowledge transmission and thus, posing questions to the teacher would be challenging this saying and therefore could be seen to mean disrespect.

One of the results of having only lecture-like lessons, either in school or university, is that it may not create opportunities for students to develop analytical and critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is an approach that is still not introduced in many public universities in the Arab region as this approach may
require a fundamental change in teaching practices, which might not be easily introduced given the long tradition of the nature of teaching and learning in the region. With overly crowded classes, students may not have chances to experience open discussions or may not be encouraged to ask questions as discussed above. However, one cannot claim that critical thinking does not exist in Arab society.

A lot of Muslim/Arab scholars made a great impact on science, philosophy and culture in the Islamic golden age, including scholars like scientist/philosopher Al-Faraabi, and physician Ibn-Al-Nafis. However, after that golden age the scientific and philosophical traditions started to decline as political regimes and conservative clergy wanted to control people and critical thinking and freedom of speech was restricted in public. These days, it is mainly due to political reasons that people fear speaking their minds in public; despite this, however, many people do think for themselves. Although Islam is based on orality and memorisation as discussed above, being critical and using the ‘intellect’ is encouraged and is repeated in different ways more than 49 times in the Quran (Endut and Abdullah, no date). For example, many verses in the Quran demand of people to use their mind and brain to question and reflect on life.

So being critical is not against the Holy Book. Rather, the Quran is a Book of interpretations and questioning. Even so, this tradition of questioning and interpreting may be seen as a threat and challenge to political regimes and established clergy, and they therefore develop submissiveness in educational institutions to be able to control the citizens. All the participants who I interviewed talked about their L1 written class in school (class of expression), and how this class does not enable them to express their own creative ideas. Rather, it encourages them to write about topics that are previously chosen through the curriculum. Being in this kind of writing class did not provide any opportunity for students to do their own creative thinking or to write critically about topics. It seems that students were following a ‘line’ of standard writing that may or may not have been of interest to them, especially political topics such as e.g. in the case of Iraq (see Extract 2). Therefore, there seem to be limited opportunities for students to think in ways needed to construct their own arguments. This seems to be the reason why one of my participants, Mehad, stated having problems in writing a research paper even in his L1 which he had to when his university
introduced a final research project to improve their academic program (see Extract 4). The kind of difficulties that students have in being critical and constructing an argument may then be transferred to their L2 writing in the UK. This may seem to be one of the reasons, combined with others discussed in this chapter, why students may depend heavily on their sources.

A priority of educational reform recommendations for the Arab region is to develop cognitive skills among university students (UNDP, 2006). However, this seems challenging at this stage (university) as such cognitive skills are expected to be developed among students in schools before university. Such skills develop over time and with practice. The skills are activated and generated through activities that engage students and encourage them to be autonomous, which is not a feature of education in many Arab schools. It may still be possible to develop such skills at university level, as the literature suggests, through explicit teaching of critical thinking skills in courses designed for this may be needed. This is an approach adopted in some North American universities (Halpern, 1999).

6.3 Understanding of Intellectual Property and Copyright

The idea of intellectual property and copyright in a number of Arab countries is an issue that has attracted recent attention. Although many Arab countries have historically signed the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, which was the first provider of copyright protection worldwide, there is still a lack of implementation in the Arab countries who are part of it. The intention by each country has been to protect intellectual rights, and a number of local and regional conventions have been created for the purpose, including the Arab Convention for Copyright Protection, 1981 (Boghossian, 2010). However, in reality piracy, in many forms, it is still a common problem. In this section, I will present the views of the Arab post-graduate students participants regarding the issue of intellectual property and copyright, what they believe is the situation in their countries, and what experiences and anecdotes they have in this respect.
All the participants commented on the issue of copyright as being something that does not receive much attention in their countries. Violations of copyright is something that is widespread and is not regulated or protected by policies or authorities according to the interviewees. None of the interviewees mentioned that there are any conventions or local policies that regulate intellectual property and copyright. This indicates that the policies that do exist are not implemented. Extract 20 shows what Karim thought about intellectual property and copyright policies in his country and explains the lack of legal enforcement for the protection of copyright. He explained that ideas are taken, used and reconstituted, and that there is no policy to regulate this. He may have been unaware that Yemen is one of the countries that signed the Arab Convention for Copyright Protection 1981. However, he is aware of the lack of legal enforcement on such issues.

Extract 20: Karim

Hmm, to be honest, I don’t think [smiles] the word copyright exists in Yemen because lots of people are using anyone’s ideas without referencing. So it doesn’t mean anything, anyone who wants to use someone else’s ideas they can just go ahead and write it because no one is gonna ask them why did you do that and there is no punishment for it.

Another participant from Iraq (Hadi, Extract 21) mentioned that whether something is legal or not in relation to copyright does not matter, and that ownership may be something that is recognised by law but not necessarily adhered to. As a tutor in a school, he mentioned having copied books without authors’ permission and used them in the curriculum. Not only in school but also, according to him, it is common to see copied books in university, and this is a bit surprising since universities do have policies on intellectual property and copyright as part of university quality assurance procedures.

Extract 21: Hadi

In Iraq you can do whatever you like [laugh] no copyrights, in law
there is, but in practical life no, real life no, because you can’t change the world, the country, which is a kind of cultural, it is uncontrolled, you can’t control it … we use to copy books for our courses and it is illegal but, in university, well everywhere, I think that affect copyright

In the following extract (Extract 22), Eisa suggests that the issue of copyright may be affected by power. Eisa explains that there are scholars in Iraq who contribute to different fields, but they maybe affected by people who have power. These powerful people, which the participant described as ‘golden coin’, are using their power to serve their own interest and this may include the unlawful use of others ideas and intellectual property. Eisa seems to suggest that these ‘powerful’ people can steal and disseminate other people’s ideas, and use them as their own without any caution, as they cannot be faced or questioned.

Extract 22: Eisa

There is some prominent people they have certain contribution to specific fields in Iraq but there is some people like golden coin. You can’t face them and say look this is my idea, but yes to certain levels, now the people are probably some people they like to say that this is our own ideas but in fact after couple of years you check it on different places and you find like no, this is not your ideas this is somebody’s but you try to take it. So to certain level people share their ideas but most of the time they try to fabricate the situations and say it’s ours or something like that.

A few additional participants narrated anecdotes about the issue to illustrate how copyright violations may occur in their societies with very limited attention to these cases. Ali (Extract 23) recounted an experience of a friend, showing how copyright violations can cross borders in the Arab region.

Extract 23: Ali

One of my friend, he shocked when he found his dissertation one of Iraqis just removed his name and put his name instead, and he published in Beirut Lebanon, and he was studying in Beirut, he’s lucky and found it, same, and he went to the Lebanese university and explain that copy is related to him not that other Iraqi guy, so it happens but now in Iraq start electronic like UK to stop the plagiarism
Amira (Extract 24) told the story of a Saudi cleric, who was accused of plagiarism, and who attracted a great deal of publicity in Saudi Arabia and the whole region. Extract 24 provides part of the story. From what Amira told me later in the interview, it seems that the publicity this case received was due to the fact that the original writer was determined enough to take it to court, and to the fact that the accused was a prominent religious figure. The case was solved in January 2012, a year after the allegations, with an $8000 fine paid by the cleric. The case was discussed on social media by the cleric’s followers throughout the Arab world, and many people did not feel that the cleric had done anything wrong. The cleric himself mentioned the well-known Ibn Tayimia, a famous theologian who according to the cleric had copied pages from different books in his work without referencing these (Abdallah, 2012).

Extract 24: Amira

Amira: I heard in Saudi there was a very famous scholar called ‘Aith Al Garny’ has a very famous book called ‘la tahzan’ (don’t be sad) and I heard that one of his students, that he took a lot of his student’s work, and put it under his book.

Sahar: How do you think people reacted to that?

Amira: His student was, she was a female, wrote an article called ‘la tasreq’ (don’t steal) instead of ‘la tahzan’, and she wrote the phrases that he stole from her work, and she highlighted certain things from his book that he took from other books and put under his name, so, umm, it affected me, but I don’t know about other people, I’m sure they don’t agree but of course they’re not really serious, they’re not.

Sahar: Do you think it was a big story when it happened in Saudi?

Amira: I think so, because he’s very famous and he’s supposed to be very religious and for him stealing, I don’t know if other people if they see it stealing or not, but I don’t know.

Another anecdote, from Mehad (Extract 25), who initially hesitated telling the story but then narrated it, was about his shock when visiting the library to get an idea about the most recent books on his field in Arabic. He was faced by a clear case of copyright violation in a translated book from his field, a book that he already read in English during his study in UK. According to the Mehad, the
mentioned book is an Arabic translation of an English book which failed to acknowledge the original author, and what was more shocking to the participant is that it was available in a library in the UAE.

Extract 25: Mehad

Mehad: Yeah, actually I found a very interesting thing last time when I was in Emirates I’m not sure if I can say this in a, but I will say it, I found Arabic books written by Arabic people and these books are copy paste from English books

Sahar: Do you mean is it like translation or what?

Mehad: Absolutely translation from English to Arabic and they put their name on it. Without saying that this is... it was amazing, I should have reported it in some point but I didn’t find the manager that day, which was my last day in my country before I came back here, but I’m planning to do something about it.

Sahar: Why do you think this has happened? And you found these books in a book store?

Mehad: In library.

Sahar: Is there like any control over infringement? (جهة مراقبة للمخالفات) ‘Jihat muraqaba lilmukhalafat’?

Mehad: I’m not sure, they should have some kind of; but maybe there are lack of experience and because of the Arabic translation, they couldn’t find a match between them, but for me I just, even the structure was the same as a book I read here.

What Mehad says about how difficult it may be to for a library to check whether books have been copied, because the original will have been in a different language, highlights an additional challenge for intellectual property and copyright in the Arab region. Another similar story about translated books was recounted by Ali (Extract 26).

Extract 26: Ali

Do you know before couple of days, I met someone from Libya and he finished his PhD in law, international law, he explained to me, he said I shocked when I found most of Iraqi lecturers in Libya, professors in
Libya, they just, they translate books and relate it to them, they don’t do any effort to rewrite it or reference it.

It seems that this is something, then, that needs more attention. *Turnitin* have recently added libraries of translated versions of books, covering many European languages (iParadigms, 2012), thereby potentially allowing the detection of copying from such translated publications. However, this does not completely solve the problem, and also this function has not covered Arabic language translations. Recently, there seems to be a new software tool has appeared (Iqtebas 1.0) that has been developed by Jadalla and Elnagar, (2012) to check plagiarism in Arab written texts. However, this software is not as developed as *Turnitin* for example. This lack of technical means to check for copying in Arabic writing may contribute to violations in this area. Thus, the only way these cases may be detected is through the individual efforts of readers who are bilingual, and this is only going to lead to discovery of such cases by coincidence.

It was interesting to see also that one participant, Ali (Extract 27), believed that the practice of plagiarism was widespread everywhere; not only in his country and the Middle East, but also in the UK. He noted having read in the *Telegraph* that violations of copyright happen in 80% of UK Universities as well. This shows that he believed it is not something that is only occurring in his own country, but also in places where copyright protection laws are supposedly implemented. I should note that it is not clear whether this percentage he mentioned was accurate, or what it means exactly. I have not been able to find the Telegraph article that he refers to.

Extract 27: Ali

It is happened in Iraq and in the Middle East also and if you read the *Telegraph*, I read about plagiarism in Telegraph, and the Telegraph said 80% universities in UK could be they do plagiarism and they do copyrights problems and they will follow others, it is not restricted about special people or from country to country, I think so it is spread in all countries.

My participants not only talked about copying books and ideas and then changing the name of the author. Some described other violations, such as Amira (Extract
28), who explained how in her country - Saudi Arabia - having illegal copies of books and other materials is very common. Whether there is a policy or not to regulate this kind of illegal copying seems not important for her as she said ‘it is there’, suggesting that whether policies are there or not does not matter. It seems that also in Saudi Arabia, which is a signee of international conventions of copyrights mentioned previously, implementation is questionable.

Extract 28: Amira

Sahar: In terms of policies, are there any policies in Saudi Arabia regarding this?

Amira: I don’t know but mainly Saudi Arabia is not very strict, like, we have copied CDs, movies, games bla bla bla.

Sahar: Is it legal there?

Amira: It’s not legal but it’s there.

Amira went further to give another anecdotal example of how students face trouble in relation to copyright issues when they travel abroad for education. Being unaware of the copyright laws and the consequences of intellectual property violations may result in unexpected trouble.

Extract 29: Amira

Definitely they’re not strict as UK and the States, and you find like a lot of students, Saudi students when they go to study in United States or in UK, they become victims of these things, a lot .. I had a relative he went to study in the States and he knew this musician, the singer although he’s not famous or anything, he started to do, he’s writing a new song, so my relative wrote in twitter, ‘oh this is a new song, bla bla bla’ and he just wrote a sentence from the song and then the singer he sued the boy and now he got into a really big trouble .. because of this copyright and when to publish and when not to publish, so it is tricky because we’re not used to these things in our country.

From what my participants have told me about their experiences related to intellectual property and copyright in their countries, there seems to be a significant difference between the beliefs Arab students bring with them from
their home context and what they face in a new academic community like UK universities. These beliefs may affect how students use sources in their academic writing in the UK. In the following chapter, I will focus on how my Arab postgraduate student participants adapted to the academic environment in the UK. The focus will be on their use of sources in academic writing in the UK, and I will discuss how they negotiate this adaptation, including also how their beliefs, previous education and cultural background affected their experience of coming to the UK and becoming academic writers here.
Chapter Seven: Adaption to the UK Academic Environment

Following from Chapter 6, which responded to Research Question 2, this chapter responds to Research Question 3. As mentioned in the beginning of Chapter 6, numerous shared themes emerged in both sets of interviews, which respond to both Research Questions 2 and 3. Specifically, the participants’ combined responses to the two interviews provided me with insights into relationships between their educational and cultural background and how they understand source use in their writing. It was these kinds of useful relationships between their past educational experiences and their current ones, which were embedded in both interviews, that led to the decision to combine the data from the two sets of interviews. Hence, this chapter, perhaps more than the previous chapter, draws on data from both interviews.

This chapter will present insights into the students’ understandings of how sources are used in writing in the UK academic setting, which then provides insights into how they adapt to their new academic environment. Research Question 3 is as follows:

How do first year Arab postgraduate students adapt to UK academic environment, specifically in relation to academic writing and source use?

This chapter will present my own interpretation based on what the students said about their own decisions, opinions, and thoughts during their academic writing, and further refer to some of their educational background which was extensively discussed in Chapter 6. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with their understanding of different sources helpful for academic writing and how they use them. The second part focuses on specific challenges experienced by the Arab participants when trying to incorporate text and ideas from sources in their academic writing. In addition to presenting extracts from the interviews, retrieved from the MaxQDA files with the help of the coding system (see section 4.7.2), both sections will present images of the texts used during the stimulated recall interviews with the participants.
7.1 Using Sources of Information

This section looks at the Arab post-graduate participants’ experiences, when arriving in the UK as post-graduate students, of learning to reference sources, of using lecture notes, and of their use and perceptions of Wikipedia.

7.1.1 Referencing

Referencing in academic writing in all UK universities, as in most universities in other parts of the world, is something that is required of students. When asked about their knowledge about referencing and in-text citation, almost all students responded that they are expected to know the conventions on their own. They expressed that it was something challenging for them at the beginning of their studies in the UK, but eventually they were able to learn referencing conventions because they feared being accused of plagiarism.

It seems that most universities have a kind of warning tone in the sections related to plagiarism, in programme handbooks, as well as in student orientation sessions in some universities. The three UK universities from which the interview participants in this research came from (see Section 6.1), for example, include a section on plagiarism and academic misconduct in their handbooks for postgraduate programs. The section on academic misconduct contains words that have negative and warning connotations, such as ‘investigated’, ‘reported’, ‘penalties’, ‘serious academic offence’, ‘breach’, ‘exclusion’, etc. The list goes on in the same way for almost all UK university postgraduate study handbooks. This may catch the attention of international students, especially as they may be unaware of how serious it is and how serious the penalties might be at the start of their studies in the UK. The anxiety that this tone creates seems to push students to learn the conventions in relation to referencing just to prevent the penalties rather than to learn how to use sources in their writing. This, however, does not mean that students may not be motivated by a wish to be transparent when using sources. Instead, they tend to have an anxious feeling about it rather than considering it as part of their learning experience in the new academic community. The following extract (Extract 1) is part of what Hadi said about his
concerns of the limited training in his UK university about referencing skills.

Extract 1: Hadi

Sahar: Did you learn it [referencing] here in the UK?

Hadi: yes, but nobody told me how to do it, just they say you can download the Harvard referencing and use it.

Below is another extract from another participant (Extract 2: Mehad). I asked him if he finds any difficulties in doing in-text citation or referencing. He expressed having difficulty in in-text citation. It is clear from the extract that this was Mehad’s first experience of this kind of referencing and source use, and it is implicit in his description of his experience that there was very little support for how to deal with this aspect of academic writing. Moreover, the fear of being accused of plagiarism seemed to be one of his motives for paraphrasing and to make his writing different from the source. Elsewhere in the interview he also expressed his careful process of keeping track of all the sources he used, which also shows his intention to be transparent. Despite doing all this, he said that he only started to get more confident about his source use after getting a strong mark for his first assignment.

Extract 2: Mehad

Sahar: ok do you find any difficulties in doing in-text citation or listing references?

Mehad: It was very challenging for me.

Sahar: Why?

Mehad: Because I never done it before, honestly I never done it, I was so cautious not to be accused for plagiarism or whatever so I was so so cautious about it so every sentence I just keep writing, keep paraphrasing change the sentence all the time and I wasn’t so confident about my writing until I got the result of this [meaning paper 2] when I get like 63/64 so then I just gain some confidence but otherwise I was so afraid of it because for others they have made it before but for me as an Arabic student it was my absolute first time.

In examining the assignment papers of Mehad, the instances of source use lean more towards conventional types of intertextuality. His source use seemed transparent in the way he changed the structure of the sentences from the source, used synonyms to
Mehad’s Text:

Hofstede (2005:4) defines culture in national terms as a "collective programming of the mind" which drives our patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. In his view, individuals of one group can be distinguished from others according to their culture, which is basically learned and acquired from the social environment, rather than being inherited from one's roots.

Source: Hofstede (2005, p. 4)

Culture is always a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. Culture is learned, not innate. It derives from one's social environment rather than from one's genes. Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from individual's personality on the other.

In this example, Mehad accurately attributed his source, that is, mentioned the author, date of publication and page number, as there was a quotation of terms taken directly from the original source: ‘collective programming of the mind’. This particular example also shows some kind of ‘patchwriting’ (Howard, 1993) in the sense that Mehad added a few words to the sentence, kept others, changed the position of some words and changed how the sentence is created. In this sense, his use of this source is conventional. Having this type of conventional intertextuality indicates something about the effort made by the student to comply with the conventional use of sources. He also showed an interest in learning particularities of referencing such as secondary referencing, using square brackets in quotes and using ‘ibid’. This was not only to improve his referencing skills, but also to impress and display proficiency. See the below images (Images 1 through 3) showing how he used ‘ibid’ (circled in the images) in his paper.
A case study of a French multinational firm (Muratbekova-Touran, 2008) has shown that when the company doubled its size and its geographical activities by the acquisition of two Anglo-Saxon MNCs, the ethnocentric model was no longer effective when French bosses were appointed to head the foreign subsidiaries. This was explained by reference to the clash between French culture and Anglo-Saxon values. The study characterized French culture as marked by a high respect for authority, high context, feminine and particularistic. Therefore, a change of organizational culture was required to reinforce standardization and regulate practices such as leadership development and universal recruitment, which accordingly led to a need to adapt a geocentric approach (ibid).

Image 1: Mehad’s use of Ibid.

which may apply in other parts of the world, such as different languages, cultural sensitivities, legislation, labour regulations and political systems (ibid). Our focus here is on cultural sensitivities. In order to understand the cultural role in negotiation, it is easier to look at the processes of negotiation. A model has been proposed according to which negotiation consists of four stages: non-task sounding, task-related exchange of

Image 2: Mehad’s use of Ibid.

factor; rather it is “a form of productive knowledge about marketing relationships, about which there is always something new to learn” (ibid, pp. 568).

Image 3: Mehad’s use of Ibid.

Extract 3: Mehad

Actually I put this kind of referencing, it was my first assignment, so I
was, intending to learn every kind of referencing skills or this kinds, and also to show the supervisor that come on I know, I am Arabic, but I know [laugh].

Some of the Arab participants in this research showed this kind of determination to prove their ability to properly acknowledge their references and to refute the widespread ideas that international students are prone to accusations of plagiarism. This seems to originate from their effort to fit in the new academic culture where they are expected to learn such skills on their own. Students seem to recognise these features as being relevant to tertiary level in Western universities, and therefore, make deliberate efforts to be integrated into this culture and create a good impression.

Another participant (Shatha), when asked about citation and referencing, expressed similar fears of being accused of plagiarism. She mentioned a story of a friend of hers who was accused of plagiarism and lost the mark for the course unit as a result. This incident created anxiety for her and made her conscious of the importance of adhering to accepted practice in the way she uses sources in her papers. What was helpful for her is the fact that her university (University B) allows students to submit their papers to Turnitin as drafts more than once before the final submission. She used this access to see what was flagged as being similar to the sources she had consulted, and then to change it either through synonym substitution or restructuring of the sentences. Despite doing this, she still lacked confidence in the Turnitin originality report in the final submission as she recalled her friend having done the same but still faced accusations of plagiarism. Shown below is what she said about the experience.

Extract 4: Shatha

I am very afraid about plagiarism because my friend hmm, I told you about my friend, and, so I try to change, I change a lot of word and when I put the assignment in Turnitin I see the red and change it, but I’m not sure still because the same happened to my friend and she put her assignment in Turnitin and she said it is fine but she has many problems and she failed at the end.

It seems that this plagiarism anxiety is shared by many students who were interviewed and this may in a way contribute to the attention that students pay to acquiring the skills of referencing and using sources appropriately. Becoming aware of the strict rules about academic misconduct and the penalties regarding it, students become more
informed of how fundamental it is to avoid it. Encountering these predominant rules in academia in the new academic culture and coming from a background where this is not the case, students develop some kind of anxiety. This shift from one academic culture to another, and the anxiety that accompanies it, may contribute to their learning journey and the ability to adapt to the new academic community.

For Ali, citation and referencing was not something that was challenging for him and he seemed to be confident in talking about this issue, or perhaps he felt he did not need to give it much attention. He expressed the view that it was not difficult for him and even found it quite easy to prepare the reference list using an online Harvard website.

Extract 5: Ali

Do you know it’s not hard if you use Harvard, and for the references there I used Harvard system generator, automatically they do it for me, just I put the name, I put the information and the generator it is divided or classified to 5 or 6 sections the electronic just I Google it.

Later I interviewed Ali and showed him particular examples from his papers (see following images) of his referencing, such as the lack of quotation marks around verbatim copied text, lack of page numbers after quotes (see Image 4 for an example), wrong attribution (see Image 5 for an example, and Image 6 for the relevant source) and inconsistencies in his reference list for paper 2 (see Image 7 for an example).
(GRI) set up the Sustainability Reporting Framework that represents a comprehensive sustainability reporting guidance obtainable and this report developed to third generation (Boulter, 2011). Moreover, GRI designed to ensure firms report precise and expose right information to their stakeholder, provide a framework for measuring more than just the financial performance of organizations and looking to the whole of the organization’s impact (Boulter, 2011).

Additionally, Scholz, (2012) stated organisations should be producing a professional corporate social report therefore companies must concentrates on material issues that relate to the economic, environmental and social impacts of corporate activities. In addition, using materiality matrix template would improving transparency and accountability in

**Image 5: Wrong Attribution in Ali’s Paper 1**

While many groups collect CSR reports, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is recognized as the standard for sustainability reporting. **GRI started in 1997 as a joint initiative between CERES and UNEP to provide a framework for measuring more than just the financial performance of organizations, looking to the entirety of the organization’s impact.** GRI guidelines ensure organizations report accurate and meaningful information to their stakeholders. GRI is currently updating their guidelines, having recently closed the first public comment period on the draft for G4.

In order to provide a professional CSR report, organizations must focus on topics material to their industry and stakeholders. The first step in assessing and reporting on CSR activities requires identification of both internal and external stakeholders through a materiality analysis. Stakeholders include groups who may affect, or be affected by, the organization’s actions. The current GRI guidelines, G3, define material issues as those relating to the economic, environmental and social impacts of corporate activities.

**Image 6: Source used by Ali (Scholz, 2012, no page number, Internet source)**
When confronted with these examples, Ali responded by blaming his university for not providing sufficient help to students with referencing.

Extract 6: Ali

[interrupting] These things we talking about, about research, they, we expect from university that we can get help, see for example when we go for help from them, from assistant in the department, but we cannot find that help, you know, sometimes we cannot find a huge help from them, although university say we give hand, we,we,we but in reality it is not, in practice...even if we have training, they give it one hour and not practice, just theory and speak speedily la la la and they go. See there should be, before I hand that to my lecturer, there should be a department that look after student, one time I went to the assistant, she said ok very good, oh very good very nice, its ok, then I go, so that’s what they explain, next time I don’t go.

It may be, then, that the help that is provided is not up to the students’ expectations, and also it may not reflect the standards of support that the university seeks to attain. As seen in Chapter 6, students come from a background where they have been less actively involved in their own learning. In their past educational experiences they have been closely directed by their tutors in matters such as these. Their past
experience is as the recipients of knowledge and so taking an active role in educating themselves is not something practiced previously. Thus, having learned that serious rules apply regarding academic misconduct, and given the fact that students aim to perform well in the UK university, they have to develop a more active role in learning in order to adjust to the norms of the new academic culture.

Ali’s assignments had more problematic examples of source use than any other papers in the corpus. Many of the cases that I coded as unconventional came from his three papers (see examples 12-16 in Chapter 5). For this particular participant, it seems that he was not taking issues around plagiarism as seriously as the other Arab students in my research, who seemed more cautious when incorporating source material in their writing. When asked about some of the problematic issues in his papers, such as using the Kang et al. source (see Images 8, 9, 10), he responded in a way that was different from the other participants. Apart from asking to see interview schedule I had brought (my list of questions to bring up with him) and read it himself, all his answers appeared to be delivered in a rather tense tone of voice. His answers were mainly short, and included a tone of justification, although I had made it clear before I started the stimulated recall part of the interview that I was not judging his papers, but that I was only interested in knowing how things happened and what his thoughts were about his use of sources. His answers were mostly arguing that mistakes happen (although I did not suggest that the examples of referencing I showed him were mistakes) because he is not a professional writer and that they happened unintentionally. It was his own interpretation of my questions that the highlighted parts were ‘mistakes’.

Images 8 through 10 and Extract 7, illustrates a typical exchange between me and Ali during the Stimulated recall part of the interview with him. Images 8 and 9 show the text from his assignment I wanted to ask him about, Image 10 shows the source that I believed he had used, and Extract 7 represents my question and Ali’s response.
provided mixed results in the field. Lee and Park (2009) found that there was positive relationship between CSR activities and firm value for hotels while no relationship in the context of casinos was found. Still, the authors did not differentiate between the positive and negative impacts of CSR. Garcia and Armas (2007) provided evidence of a positive impact of CSR activities on company return on assets (ROA). However, the measurement of CSR activities was

based on managers’ opinions, and therefore the observations might have been biased (Garcia and Armas, 2007). Kang et al. (2010) addressed some of the limitations of previous works.

The investigation of the relationship between CSR and firm performance was conducted for two dimensions (Kang et al., 2010). Return on assets and return on equity were measured as dependent variables to estimate short-term financial performance. After that Tobin’s Q and price-

focused only on the environmental issue, and did not attempt to specifically relate hotels’ actual environmental activities to their financial performances. In a recent study, García and Armas (2007) found a positive relationship between hotel companies’ CSR activities and return on assets (ROA). However, in measuring CSR activities, they collected data based on managers’ opinions, which might be biased, reflecting lower construct validity. Nicolau (2008) employed an event study that examined abnormal returns (ARs) of two Spanish hotels with 26 CSR-related announcements during the 1996–2006 period. The study found positive ARs and concluded that CSR is considered value-added to hotel firms. Another study (Lee and Park, 2009) measured impacts of CRS activities separately for hotel and casino companies in terms of profitability (ROE and

Image 8: Ali’s Text Referred to in Stimulated Recall (Paper 3) (Part 1)

Image 9: Ali’s Text Referred to in Stimulated Recall (Paper 3) (Part 2)

Image 10: Source Used by Ali when Writing Paper 3 (Kang et al., 2010, p.73)
Extract 7: Ali

Sahar: In page 2 you used similar language to Kang et al (p. 2) talking about Garcia and Armas 2007. What do you think of this specific example?

Ali: Maybe I wasn’t sure or something like that, and I did some mistakes, I’m not professional writer, if I was professional writer I will do the best.

Ali’s way of understanding his use of sources in his papers seems to be influenced by his belief that he is not a professional writer. He assessed his abilities as being less competent and he seemed to be satisfied with explaining some of the issues I probed a little further about with this notion of being less competent and not being used to the writing conventions in the UK. For him, it seemed normal to make these kinds of ‘mistakes’ as he called them. Many of the other participants in my research also told me that this was their first experience of writing assignments with careful attribution of sources. However, they seemed a bit more determined to challenge themselves and become familiar with what they considered were new practices for them. Here are two extracts (Extracts 8 and 9) from interviews that show this:

Extract 8: Eisa

That way makes me confident at the end of my MA course to write a piece of writing, yes it is a dissertation about 15 thousand words, but it is really really a journey to me to produce certain things I have never ever come across it.

Extract 9: Shatha

It’s my first time writing, like full research, in UK … it’s very hard for me, but I have to succeed, so I used books, learn everything and ask friends about everything.

Amira, another one of my participants, talked about how she faced a different understanding of certain particularities in relation to research here compared to what she had experienced in her country. She admitted having a different understanding of
how research is done. In the past, when in her home country of Saudi Arabia, research meant to answer questions or complete the objective of the research no matter what sources were used, or whether the sources were properly used or not. This belief is something she adopted as well when she worked as a tutor in her Home context, as illustrated by Extract 10.

Extract 10: Amira

Amira: The first time I encounter referencing was here in the university, even when I used to be a teacher, cause I taught.....even when I used to give them [students] projects and I ask them to go and do search, and go to websites and do search and so on, I didn’t enforce writing references.

Sahar: Why do you think?

Amira: Because it wasn’t there, it wasn’t part of academic life...I’m not aware of its importance, the importance was searching for the information, searching for the relevant information but paraphrasing and putting, if you put something as it is, and copy and pasting and, as long as you’re answering the questions it doesn’t matter, but, of course when I came here I was, no it’s different it’s a very serious thing.

In Extract 10, Amira also compares the differences between writing in UK institutions and that in her home country, Saudi Arabia. Amira’s comparison suggests that Arab students do think about these differences when arriving in the UK, and perhaps that they do think of how to manage adjusting to the new culture in the UK. Being able to identify these differences may contribute to their adaptation. In fact, for Amira, complying to the rules and meeting expectations was a main goal that she focused on in her academic life in the UK.

Coming from a different academic system is challenging, and how each student responds to this challenge differs according to each one’s personality. This may be shown in how each student who participated in the interviews describe their experiences of how they understood the differences between the two academic cultures. Thus, the degree and quality of adaptation undertaken by each student may be different if we compare the responses of the seven participants. As evident from the responses to questions, depending on how each one views the issues discussed, the characteristics of each student varies on how they manage adapting to the new academic culture.
Amira went on to explain how things changed when she arrived in the UK, when she became aware of the importance of using sources in research in a proper way. She even described wanting to instill this in her children who are currently in secondary school in the UK (see Extract 11). She wants them to be aware of the proper way of using sources in a written project and explained to them how important it is. However, she was surprised to hear from her children that this was not required in high school, even here in the UK. For Amira to choose to share this with me, it seems that this particular issue holds a certain importance in her mind.

Extract 11: Amira

I can see I change now because my boys are in high school and they are asked to do research so I always encourage them ‘mama you have to’ ‘write it by your own words’ if you want to copy and paste you have to put it in this way, and I always encourage them to do referencing, but what’s interesting is that, when I encourage them to do referencing, my son came and said mama I don’t want to do this any more, I would never do the referencing again, but why? He said cause the teacher knew that you helped me and she told me is your mother in university, cause these things they do it in university, not in school, so I thought ok maybe they’re not encouraging it in schools even here.

It seems that Amira perceived a kind of incapability that she and students from similar background as her have, and that this may be a barrier to success in their studies in the UK. The idea that she wants to pass this knowledge to her children to help them at an early stage to learn how to properly reference their sources in writing, illustrates the importance that Amira attributed to referencing. Amira might have expected that these skills are learned in schools in the UK, but in fact in Western countries, these types of skills are learned only in university. However, unlike most schools in her home country, having an active role in learning and engaging in creative activities are skills that students develop in schools in the UK. It would be fair to assume that coming from this background foster students' ability to adjust to university culture quicker than students who come from backgrounds where students have a less active role in learning.

Karim, who had obtained a degree from a Canadian university, described his experience of learning how to reference in his assignments in Canada as being less informed. In Extract 12, below, he said that students in his former Canadian context were expected to reference the sources they used in their writing, but to do so in a less
formal way. That is, they were not expected to follow any particular referencing system.

Extract 12: Karim

In terms of referencing we did not, like they did not really teach us a proper way of how to do a reference style, but the only one that we used to do is just the information that we take like number it and put the site, like the bibliography thing, not the APA style where you have to write everything … well I guess I was expected to do that by myself because they required all the assignments to be referenced, but they did not actually give us like proper lessons or inductions on how to use a referencing system.

In sum, it seems that many universities expect students to have some degree of awareness of how to reference and relate to other people’s work in an appropriate way, and thereby to give credit to everyone’s own work. However, some students who come from a non-western backgrounds, including the Arab postgraduate student participants in my research, may not fully understand the importance of referencing and copyright until after they begin their studies in the western/UK academic setting.

7.1.2 Lecture Notes

Some aspects of referencing, such as how to deal with lecture notes and sharing ideas, have no clearly defined conventions. Some universities (e.g. Leicester University, University of Bedfordshire, University of Leeds) have clear guidelines for how to reference lecture notes and blackboard material as sources in academic writing. It is expected that students cite lecture notes and blackboard material in the same way as other sources. The following example is taken from the University of Leeds library skills manual, showing the information that should be included in the reference list for lecture notes used in students’ papers:

Family name, INITIAL(S) (of the lecturer). Year. Lecture title. MODULE CODE Title of module. Date, teaching organisation.

The above example is taken from a section of the University of Leeds library skills manual that addresses information and materials taken from modules or course units. The section also points out that ‘not all lecturers are happy for you to cite directly from lectures, so it is good practice to check this with your tutor’. So, although a
recommended convention is provided to cite lecture notes, there is still a possibility that individual lecturers are unhappy with students citing lecture notes. This adds to the sense of lecture notes as a ‘grey’ area about which there is no clear expectations.

Extract 13 indicates that Hadi thought that using lecture notes to help his writing was something acceptable. Yet, he did not feel that the lecture notes (actually, notes he made based on the recording of tutorials) needed to be referenced. The extracts also suggests that his lecturer drew on published books, and this may have contributed to his decision not to reference the lecture notes. This may again reveals the importance of lecturer’s setting clear expectations about what should be referenced and what should not be referenced.

Extract 13: Hadi

Sahar :What kind of sources did you use for this paper, did you use any books, articles...

Hadi: I used chapters from books , it is digitalised chapters. I used them from the tutorials with the tutor, I record for her, and when I go back I listen to the recordings, then I write my notes, in order to analyse that but I don’t reference for that one, just for written text, books, articles.

Sahar: So for this particular paper [paper in front of him], did you have to put any reference list or bibliography?

Hadi: They should not referenced, I used the notes in order to understand the topic or to, how to make an outline not as referencing.

Although he was not sure whether he used any of his lecture notes in his assignments, Extract 14 shows that Karim had a similar view to that of Hadi about lecture notes. He pointed out that lecture notes are spoken language and therefore are not necessarily referenced.

Extract 14: Karim

I don’t remember using my lecture notes here [meaning in his 2 papers] but if, even if I did, I don’t think I should reference them, I mean, what will you put down in the reference list? My tutor 2012 [smiles] I’ve never seen something like that in the referencing style. I think it’s an open source, even the tutor will not reference when he speaks, why should I? You know.

It appears, then, that since the lecture notes are not published, the Arab postgraduate
student participants in my research assume that these notes may be ‘open source’, as Karim said and thus it is not necessary to reference these when writing. So, transparency of source use may depend sometimes on how the students view the source. Coming from an Arab educational background, where teachers are commonly transmitters of knowledge, it seems normal to consider that knowledge provided by lecturers is publicly owned, or ‘open source’.

7.1.3 Wikipedia

Using sources in academic writing requires careful choice of sources and a certain knowledge of the reliability of the sources. This can be done by looking at reading lists provided through the University course units or by seeking recommendations from tutors. However, students will on occasion have to decide on their own if a source is reliable or not. According to Booth et al. (2003), in order to use a source as evidence to support one’s own claims it should have one or more of the following characteristics: a) being peer reviewed, b) be published by a well-known publishing house/source/journal, c) be written by a well-known author, or d) being recent. However, Booth et al. also warn that these characteristics may not guarantee reliability, and it is a recommended practice that writers themselves examine a source by reading it with a critical eye. Critically examining sources is not easy for students, as critical reading is a skill that is developed over time and may not be easily learned. In addition, students are sometimes under pressure to complete writing to particular deadlines. Finally, students may lack the necessary critical skills because they come from an educational system which has not required them to do any critical reading.

There are various views about using Wikipedia as a source in academia. Some consider it acceptable while others only accept it as a way of directing students to which sources they should look at, and expecting then that students move on to consult the primary sources (Tardy, 2010) (this has been discussed earlier in Chapter 5). Extract 15 shows Mehad talking about his developing awareness about academic writing after arriving in the UK. In this Extract he mentions Wikipedia, and how learning that Wikipedia was not acceptable as a reliable
source was a surprise. He had considered Wikipedia a valuable resource because it was ‘straightforward’ and provided the ‘right answer’.

Extract 15: Mehad

The first thing I learned when I came to the UK that the Wikipedia is not a reliable one, so I was kind of disappointed [laughing] because I thought it’s one of the best because usually it gives you the right answer, straightforward in a simple way and whatever, so they say no you can’t, you can’t do it.

It may be that Wikipedia is another grey area, just like lecture notes, and hence this is another area which may create confusion for students, such as my Arab participants, who are struggling to understand citation and referencing for their assignments. In Mehad’s case, his ideas about Wikipedia may be influenced by how this source is used in his Arab home context. Mehad mentioned that many students in his former home university used Wikipedia as a source in their graduation project writing.

Mehad was the only participant to mention Wikipedia, but I still felt it was worthwhile looking at how Wikipedia is viewed in some academic institutions in the Arab world. In a newspaper article, Al-Khalifa, (2009) surveyed Arab university academics as well as students from different Arab countries about Wikipedia as a source of information in academic writing, and found that academics consider Wikipedia a major source compared to other available internet sources and many of them use it as a source in their own academic research. Both academics and students also showed a preference for the English version of Wikipedia over the Arabic one, claiming that the reliability of the information in the English version is higher than that of the Arabic one. However, most of the Arab academics that were surveyed agreed that reliability is problematic in Wikipedia. In contrast, students who were surveyed by Al-Khalifa’s study not only showed a preference for Wikipedia as a source for their academic writing, but between 70 and 90% across different groups of students also trusted the information provided by Wikipedia. An interesting observation was that many of the Arab students that were surveyed did not know that Wikipedia can be edited by the public. This may explain why a lot of these Arab students consider it as a reliable source. The Arab students in this study also stated that tutors do not seem
to reject the idea of using Wikipedia as a source in their writing, something which may contribute further to the students view of Wikipedia as a reliable source.

### 7.2 Academic Writing

Becoming an academic writer is one of the challenges students face in their transition to tertiary level education. This is true whether they are native or non-native speakers. Writing, therefore, is a skill that involves and activates the use of previous knowledge and abilities that the writer uses in the process of producing a written piece (Swales, 1990). This challenge seems to be intensified when it comes to second language writers who need the necessary linguistic knowledge as well as the writing skills to perform effectively in their writing. One of these skills is incorporating source information in students’ papers, which requires not only an understanding of the source, but also knowing how to use the source for one’s own purposes and how to make that use transparent and identifiable for the reader. That is, an academic writer needs to make the reader understand when and where the source information is added, as well as what is the writer's own interpretation, analysis and response. This is a challenging task for novice writers, it is an extra challenge for second language writers, and it is very big challenge indeed for Arab students who, in addition to being second language writers, come from educational backgrounds which do not emphasise critical writing skills.

In Extract 16, Eisa talks about the challenges that he encountered in his UK university in terms of writing. One of the initial difficulties for him was synthesising different arguments made by published authors and incorporating these in his own academic writing. He talked about what one of his tutor said about this, and how he himself now interpreted it as linked to being critical (which he referred to as being ‘more judgmental’).

Extract 16: Eisa

My first question for my tutor in the MA course was how to synthesise the ideas of the people, the tutor said to me it is not a matter to be learned, it is a matter to be realised by the people whether to agree or disagree with someone, this kind of mentality or mental process that the people know how to synthesise ideas, agree or
disagree with certain things and that would make your discussion in the paper more judgmental.

The remainder of this section looks at three areas that seemed particularly challenging for the Arab participants as they struggled to succeed as academic writers in their UK postgraduate programmes. A first sub-section looks at the participants’ use of synonyms when trying to incorporate text and ideas from sources in their own writing. The second sub-section looks at how one of the participants seems to have been influenced by the pre-sessional English language course experience. The third sub-section discusses the seeming over-reliance on sources in my participants academic writing.

7.2.1 Using Synonyms when Incorporating Text and Ideas from Sources

Extract 15, below, is from Mehad’s interview where he commented on his experience of writing in a second language. In the Extract he suggests that having ‘good English’ is helpful in easing the process of writing. He mentioned that having a rich vocabulary facilitates paraphrasing and therefore helps to avoid plagiarism. His understanding of paraphrasing seems to be focussed on vocabulary and synonym substitution, and this was evident in the amount of synonyms used in his writing. Earlier in chapter 5, when responding to RQ1, I included examples showing the forms of synonym substitutes that my participants used as part of their paraphrasing.

Extract 18: Mehad

Because I haven’t done any research, my first research, real research it was here, during my master degree, but the English language and how you are good at it is very critical point because if you have a good English, you have a lot of basic vocabulary then you can rephrase very easily, while if you haven’t these kind of, you just put the sentence as it is then it looks like plagiarism.

Although the focus of the interview was not on plagiarism, it seems that Mehad was aware of the issue. His awareness of the focus of my research, although not directly focused on plagiarism, may have prevented him from saying what he really thought. It is possible, then, that he just wanted to tell me what I ‘wanted to hear’. However, since plagiarism came to his mind when he was asked about
synonyms substitution, it may be that plagiarism held a particular significance in his thoughts.

I showed Mehad some text from one of his assignments that included several synonym substitutions (see Image 11) as well as the corresponding text in the source that he had used (see Image 12). I then asked him about the frequent use of synonyms in his papers. As evident from Extract 19 (below), Mehad recognised that this way of using synonyms as a way of paraphrasing was an early stage in the development of his academic writing, and he mentioned the possibility of combining two sentences from a source into a single sentence as a different possible way of paraphrasing, indicating his developing awareness.

Image 11: Mehad’s Text: Paper 1

Image 12: Source: Huo, 1995, p.3:

Extract 19: Mehad

Because .. at this .. at that stage when I was, this is my first assignment, this is my way of paraphrasing, this was my way, now I get to know
maybe I could combine 2 sentences and put it in a very different way, but at this stage it was my way, yeah.

In the same interview, Mehad again returned to the issue of plagiarism, commenting that using synonyms helps him avoid plagiarism (see Extract 20). This synonym substitution strategy seemed to be common among my Arab participants. The view seems to have been that the more you utilise synonyms the more different a passage is from the source.

Extract 20: Mehad

To avoid the ... being accused for plagiarism, that’s what my understanding, yeah so when you put synonyms, it is you who write the sentence, but if you don’t use it then you should use, you should just copy paste otherwise it become like a quotation not a sentence.

Another participant who had similar thoughts about synonym substitution as a way of paraphrasing was Amira. As seen in chapter 5, ID 4 (Amira) had features of sentence level unconventional intertextuality, and this included the copying of long chunks of language without quotation marks and, except synonym substitution, with very minimal change. During the stimulated recall part of my interviews with her, I showed Amira some text from one of her papers (see Image 13) as well as the corresponding text from the source she used (see image 14). I then asked her to comment on her use of synonyms (see Extract 21). Amira responded by saying that she realised she had many quotations so she wanted to reduce that by paraphrasing the original passage. When comparing her paper to the original with me, she recognised that the modification she had made was very minimal, and that it was a poor way of paraphrasing.

In the past few years, education technology has been combined into teaching and learning in many educational institutions all around the world. My interest in the area of teachers’ perceptions and practice in integrating educational technology in the learning process arises from the experience I gained as an employer in Dar Al-

Image 13: Amira’s Text: Paper 2
The following extract is what Amira said in regards to synonym use:

Extract 21: Amira

Amira: Because I’m afraid of a lot of quotation, I was, hmm, I wanted to reduce [laughing] the quotes so I tried to paraphrase it as much as I can so, [comparing between her paper and the original] oh..it was very close..[reading] yeah..it is very close..

Sahar: Do you think this happened by mistake?

Amira: No I don’t think it’s by mistake, I’m sure I was like looking at it wow this is really makes sense it really fits, but I have a lot of quotes ..so let me try to (أممحورها شوية) ‘amahwerha shwaiya’ ‘change it a bit’. But…I did a nasty job to be honest, it’s very close, but I’m sure I was struggling like what to say.

Paraphrasing not only involves replacing words but may also involve modifying the sentence in different forms, such as changing the structure of the sentence or grammar. Thus, good paraphrasing may involve restating the substance of a passage in a completely different way, and this requires a sophisticated understanding and comprehension of a source text (Swales and Feak, 2012).

7.2.2 The Influence of Pre-Sessional Courses

Shatha (see Extract 22) suggested that using synonyms not only minimised the possibility of accusations of plagiarism, but also suggested that it was required in the IELTS exam. She further pointed out that the use of synonyms was encouraged by tutors in the pre-sessional course, which she attended before starting her postgraduate programme. Finally, Shatha suggested that synonym use was one of the criteria that examiners look when marking IELTS test scripts, and that synonym use adds to the marks of the exam taker.
Extract 22: Shatha

I use because I don’t want repetitive words, and tutors ask to use synonyms, but the word for example ‘customer satisfaction’ there is no another word for this, but other it is better to use synonyms for plagiarism, in the pre-sessional they said, they told us to use more synonyms, because in the IELTS in the writing section the correction is base on synonyms, in the, ‘waahed min al taslehaat’ (واحد من التصليحات) ‘one criteria of marking’ is to see if the student use a lot of synonyms and vocabulary, so you get high mark.

Looking at the criteria for the IELTS, along with a sample of the written section from the IELTS Cambridge website, Shatha’s claim about synonym use does not seem to be accurate. Although one of the criteria is ‘lexical resources’, and this may include synonym use, there is no reference to synonyms substitution in the criteria. Rather, it mentions ‘lexical resources’ as including the range of vocabulary that the student uses and how accurate this use is in relation to creating meaning. Even in the part that shows a sample of an examiner’s comment, there is no mention of synonym use as something to be taken into account. This, then, shows that these Arab students may have misconceptions about the IELTS test and academic writing more generally, and this may affect their approach to academic writing when starting their postgraduate studies in the UK.

A number of the ideas that the Arab participants in my research had about writing were learned through pre-sessional courses that they attended in the UK before starting their programmes of study, or other training courses for academic writing that they attended in their home countries before arriving in the UK. Pre-sessional courses are designed to improve and develop the English of non-native speakers who did not meet the English language requirement score (usually the IELTS or TOEFL test) for their programmes. These courses focus on training students on a variety of skills including academic writing, note taking, presentation skills, and other skills. In terms of using sources in academic writing, there seems to be an emphasis on paraphrasing and using synonyms. It appears that these courses play a role in bridging between where the students come from (their previous academic contexts) and where they are heading (their UK postgraduate programmes) in order to enable them to adjust to the expectations, challenges and demands of
learning in the UK. Therefore, students’ understanding of their academic writing may be shaped by not only their cultural/educational background, but also by their experience of pre-sessional language courses.

Shatha was one of those who attended a pre-sessional course in the UK before starting her postgraduate studies, and she mentioned the pre-sessional course a lot when talking about her beliefs about academic writing. Some of the misconceptions that students take from the pre-sessional courses may be because they do not fully understanding what is said by course tutors, or maybe through relating what they hear to their previous experiences. For example, Shatha mentioned learning about direct quotations in the pre-sessional (see Extract 27 later in this chapter and Image 21), but also mentioned that the tutors warned students from excessive uses of quotes. However, this coverage of direct quotation may have mixed with the valuing of authoritative texts in her own culture. This importance of published texts is influenced by the knowledge transmission model through orality in Arab culture, as well as how the Arab culture, influenced by Islam and Islamic culture, has always praised scholars (Ulamaa علماء) and their contribution to the enhancement not only of religion but also of other fields of life. This mixing of influences may then have resulted in Shatha believing that for her writing to appear formal she needs to include language from published authors through direct quotation.

7.2.3 Over-reliance on Sources

One of the issues of source use that was evident in students’ papers was the over-use of single sources and the associated adaptation of source’s structure as well as language (see Chapter 5). Amira’s papers had a few unconventional instances of source use, some of which relied very heavily on the wording in the sources she used. When asked about why this happened, she talked about how these sources covered the main concepts of her topic, and she liked how the authors wrote about these main concepts. It seems, then, that Amira did not want to change the language she found in these sources.

Extract 23: Amira
I think because of his article, it was basically the main definitions, which was the main interest of my paper, so here... [reading from the source] so I was interested about concepts and definitions of digital literacy so maybe that’s why I found it very useful, maybe basically because he really, I really like what he was writing, and I find it very useful.

Amira may have been unaware of how much she relied on single sources, or she have not have known whether this is acceptable or not in academia, although during the interviews she did seem to think it was acceptable. I should note that that Amira might have forgotten some of the details of the writing process as the paper concerned was completed almost a year earlier than my interview with Amira. This is one of the limitations that I had to bear in mind when asking the participants about their papers. Having said that, the students did seem able to respond to my questions about their writing. Some of the participants may have given explanations only to satisfy me as the interviewer. However, the explanations they gave will still have reflected how they thought about their academic writing.

Mehad also relied heavily on one of the sources he used in one of his papers. I asked him about this in the stimulated recall part of the interviews. I showed him parts of one of his papers where he seemed to rely a lot on a source (see Image 15), and asked him to comment on this. Extract 24 shows his response. He said he did not know the real reason for using the source, but seemed quite willing to suggest that it was because this published source contained the main arguments of his topic, and the ways of talking about his topic. This, then, is similar to the reason for why Amira (see above) relied on a single source.
Because it’s the most relevant article, so sometimes you read a lot of articles but sometimes you feel that this article is, is my paper, more or less, so maybe I follow its structure I liked his opinion or maybe he was more clearer, his language because I cant remember the real reason, but if I use a source, the model here, it should be very relevant to my topic, should be very relevant, hmm, yeah.

That is, the Arab participants seemed to become affected by the relevance of some of the sources they found, and thereby did not comparing between different sources in order to develop their argument. It appears, then, that they were driven by the purpose of including relevant information about their topic in their writing. This lack of using a wider range of sources will have weakened any sense of
argument in their writing. This indicates that these Arab students lack the needed skills and practice in key aspects of academic writing.

Extensive use of quotations was another feature of intertextuality that was evident in the Arab students’ papers, and this was again associated with over-reliance on sources. Amira’s writing included this form of intertextuality, and I asked her about this. I showed her the following part of one of her papers (see Image 16), and then asked her to comment on her use of quotations. Her response appears in Extract 25 (below).

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**Extract 25: Amira**

Because I couldn’t paraphrase it, I find it difficult and I am really [assertive tone] afraid of this hmm, you know taking other people’s, sometimes I’m like ok I’m gonna go on the safe side and just I’m gonna cite [quote], because I’m really afraid if I paraphrase it because sometimes it is really, what’s said is really important so even if I took a

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The Critical dimension focuses on the awareness that all literacies are socially constructed, they include some representations and classifications- values, purposes, rules, standards, and perspectives- and exclude others. To participate effectively and productively in any literate practice, people must be socialized into it (Lankshear and Knobel 2006, p16). Similar to how Egan 1990 viewed literacy, as “...a social/ cultural/ political tradition, rather than as a set of skills...the comprehensive view is sensitive to the relationship of power and politics that are tied up with literacy” (Whitworth 2009, P 67)

**Digital literacy:**

In the literature, there are different approaches to the term digital literacy, a big collection of definitions, and other terms that are very close to it, such as computer literacy, Internet literacy and ICT literacy.

Digital literacy is relatively a new term. Bawden 2001 reviewed the concept of information, computer, network, and digital literacy in the literature from 1980 to 1999. He found the most commonly used term was information literacy that was mentioned 521 times in academic literature. The second mentioned was computer literacy at 395 times. Network literacy was mentioned 15 times, and digital literacy was mentioned only 12 times at that time (Hull et al. 2003, p 10).

The concept of digital literacy appeared around the ideas of information literacy and computer literacy. In 1997, Paul Glister introduced the term digital literacy in his book (Digital Literacy). Bawden (2008) mentioned Glister’s explanation of digital literacy as an ability to understand and to use information from a variety of digital sources. Glister added “digital literacy is about mastering ideas, not keystrokes”, his view of digital literacy is a set of cognition challenges, he says “...that require you to approach networked computers without preconceptions. Not only must you acquire the skill of finding things, you must also acquire the ability to use these things in your life” (Glister 1997, cited by Bawden 2008, p 19). Glister did not give a list of technical skills or competences that must be achieved to become digitally literate, in contrast, his book was not restricted to any particular technology, form or information, which gave it lasting value. 6
word and put instead of another word I’m afraid it will be plagiarism so just quote. I remember I was really worried cause I quoted a lot.

Extract 25 shows that Amira admitted to experiencing difficulties paraphrasing and sometimes she says this was a result of being scared of being accused of plagiarism. For Amira, using direct quotes was being ‘on safe side’ and the solution to difficulties with paraphrasing. This may again indicate that students are determined to develop strategies that allow them to succeed but also avoid plagiarism. Paraphrasing requires a thorough understanding of the given passage in a source, and making both lexical and structural changes to this. This is a complicated and time-consuming process. It is possible that the time-constraints of the postgraduate programme, and the need to use quick and practical ways to fulfil deadlines, may have been a factor also.

In Chapter 5, we have seen that a few of the Arab participants had unconventional intertextual similarities with their sources, including both lexical, meaning-based and structural similarities with the source. Examples of such similarities in lexis, meaning and structure were discussed in Chapter 5. These forms of intertextuality may indicate that the students used sources as models for their own academic writing. Using a source as a model may be due to their inability to organise a paper, or their inability to manage the information that builds up through reading and looking for sources.

During the stimulated recall part of the interviews, I asked Amira about such similarities of lexis, meaning and structure between her paper (see Image 17) and a source she had used (see Images 18, 19 and 20). Extract 26 (below) shows her answer.
However, some reviewers criticized Gliner’s book as it did not provide a clear coherent account of digital literacy, or the skills underlie it, that they saw led to confusion about the new term (Bawden 2008).

There are several authors following Gliner’s general and broad concept of digital literacy, the concept that combines computer ICT skills and competences, with “softer” skills of information evaluation and knowledge assembly, and together with set of understanding and attitudes (Bawden 2008, p. 28).

Martin (2008) explained the reason behind not providing a clear framework for DL, that it is not sensible to suggest specific model of digital literacy that will be appropriate for all people, or for one person through his life, since people change and of course technology transform and update as well. Therefore, Martin suggested three levels of Digital literacy in his article (Digital Literacy and the “Digital Society”)

1. Level 1: Digital Competence, that presents a range of skills from basic levels to more critical and evaluation skills. This level includes attitudes and awareness of different digital technologies and how individual must filter what is appropriate to their situations.

2. Level 2: Digital Usage, it presents connecting digital competences with specific professional or domain contexts. Here every individual brings his own history, capabilities and personal/professional development, it concentrates on problem solving, achieving a task within the context that the individual uses his digital competences to solve or achieve that takes place within the context or a task.

3. Level 3: Digital Transformation, this level is achieved when the other two levels of digital literacy enable the individual to be creative and innovative to make a significant change within his professional environment or context he is involved in. (Martin 2008, p 168)

What I found interesting is that every level relates to one of the three dimensions of literacy mentioned earlier by Greers.

In the following section I will connect every dimension of literacy (Operational, Cultural, Critical) with the three levels of Digital literacy presented by Martin, while filtering different definitions of digital literacy mentioned in the literature under the umbrella of these dimensions and levels.

Digital literacy in this sense is a framework for integrating various other literacies and skill-sets, though it does not need to encompass them all; as Martin (2006a) puts it, we do not need “one literacy to rule them all.” And, while it may be possible to produce lists of the components of digital literacy, and to show how they fit together, it is not sensible to try to reduce it to a finite number of linear stages. Nor is it sensible to suggest that one specific model of digital literacy will be appropriate for all people or, indeed, for one person over all their lifetime. Updating of understanding and competence will be necessary, as individual circumstances change, and as changes in the digital information environment bring the need for new fresh understanding and new competencies; as Martin (2006a) puts it, digital literacy is “a condition, not a threshold.”

With these caveats, we might set out the four generally agreed components of digital literacy, as they emerge from the authors quoted above, in this way:
As seen in Extract 26, Amira had problems with structure the ideas in her own way, and this may have contributed to her adopting the source structure and ideas.
Again, the Arab students had limited experience of conducting research projects, writing papers and incorporating information from different sources into their own argument, in their previous educational experience. This may be one reason why the Arab students become overwhelmed by the amount of information that they need to structure and organise before moving to the writing phase. There is a double dilemma that students face. On the one hand, they need to make sense of the ideas and meaning of the sources, and synthesise their own argument from multiple sources. On the other hand, they have to do this in a second language. This needs in depth effort of connecting ideas, as well as planning and making decisions about what headings or subheadings might be suitable for each part of their paper.

It may be, then, that being novice L2 and academic writers, the Arab participants got immersed in a source, especially if that one source shared the same topic as their own paper, and this resulted in a temptation to adopt the lexis, ideas and structure of this source in their own writing. Therefore, adopting a single published source as a model for their own writing seems to be one solution that these Arab students use to adapt to the type of academic writing they are require to do in the UK.

I also asked Shatha about her using a lot of direct quotes. I showed her some of her academic writing (see Image 21) and asked her about her use of direct quotes. She responded that having direct quotes in a paper makes it more ‘formal’, but she also recognised that it should not be done too much, referring here to advice she received in the pre-sessional course she attended earlier (see Extract 27).
that link intangible and tangible assets. Kaplan et al. (2011:89) also add that “the scorecard does not attempt to "value" an organisation’s intangible assets, but it does measure these assets in units other than currency”. This describes how intangible assets become combined and mobilised with intangible and tangible assets, thus creating the difference between customer value propositions and superior financial outcomes.

The balanced scorecard method is defined as “a set of measurements that gives the top managers a fast but comprehensive view of the business” (Kaplan et al., 1992:71). Thus, managing the organisation can be provided by managers with performance ability in different areas at the same time.

Furthermore, the balanced scorecard adopts four different perspectives, all of which are connected with the performance measures that show the evaluation of the performance. These questions are devised as follows:

- “How do customers view us? (customer perspective)
- At what must we excel? (internal perspective)
- Can we continue to improve and create value? (innovation and learning perspective)
- How do we view shareholders? (financial perspective”) (Kaplan et al., 1992:72).

As soon as senior management get information from each of the four different perspectives, the balanced scorecard reduces the overload data by limiting the number of measures used. Moreover, most companies suffer from having too few measures, and thus seek to add new measures through various suggestions given by consultants or employees. Accordingly, “the balanced scorecard forces managers to focus on the handful of measures that are most critical” (Kaplan et al., 1992:73).

Image 21: Shatha Using Direct Quotes

Extract 27: Shatha

To make my paper formal, we can’t just write everything paraphrase paraphrase paraphrase [repetition], our paper will look, silly [smile]. It is a formal essay, you can’t write an essay without putting quotes or
referring to the writers. In pre-sessional they told us about this but they said you can’t put a lot of quotes.

Finally, it may again be the Arab students’ educational background that shapes their over-reliance on single sources and quotation. That is, valuing published or authoritative sources may be rooted in the Islamic philosophy of education. As seen in Chapter 6, Islamic educational philosophy has had a great influence on education in the Arab region, and this influence is still present today. Thus, using and incorporating information from published sources, and doing so through direct quotes, may be a way of the Arab participants recognising the value of, and respecting, these published sources. However, there are also signs in the data that the Arab participants struggled to paraphrase well, and using direct quotes may then also be a way to compensate for their lack of paraphrasing skills.

Chapter Eight: Main Findings and Conclusions

This research has focussed on postgraduate students from Arab backgrounds and how they use sources in their academic writing in UK higher education. Building on the analyses that were presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, the main findings that can be drawn from this investigation are summarised in this chapter. Overall, the research suggests that the Arab students’ past educational experiences, as well as their eagerness to adapt to the new academic environment contributes to shape intertextuality in their academic writing in the UK. This overall finding will be developed through a series of sections, as follows:

♦ The role of students’ past experiences of literacy, including the lack of written culture, tradition of memorisation and the prevalence of teacher-centred instruction in the Arab world (section 8.1).

♦ The challenges the postgraduate Arab students encounter during their transition to the new academic setting, in this case UK universities (section 8.2).

♦ Students’ awareness of expectations in their new academic context, including their anxiety during their academic journey (section 8.3).
How all the points discussed in previous sections, including students’ educational backgrounds, the transition challenges, and the interaction of their awareness and anxiety, contribute to the strategies students develop to be able to survive academically (section 8.4).

How these strategies were demonstrated in terms of levels and forms of intertextuality in the students’ texts, and the expanded notion of intertextuality as motivated by genre studies. This also includes connections between students’ backgrounds, what they say about their source use and the intertextuality that is prevalent in their texts (section 8.5).

The penultimate section (section 8.6) reflects on what Universities should know about this group of students in particular, and students from Arab background in general, in relation to academic writing. A final section (section 8.7) suggests further research directions.

8.1 The Role of Educational Background

In this section, I will summarise the aspects of the educational background of the Arab participants who took part in this study. These aspects of their backgrounds were found to be relevant to how they use sources in their academic writing whilst in the UK. In this section, I will draw on some of the data presented previously in Chapters Five, Six and Seven to guide the reader to an understanding of the participants’ past academic literacy.

8.1.1 Lack of Written Culture

With attention directed to lecture-like approaches to education, and exams as the primary way of assessment, written activities seem to receive little attention in the Arab educational contexts that my participants come from. Students in schools in these Arab contexts appear to get less opportunity to respond to learning through writing, and thus, academic writing skills seem to be less developed. This is reinforced by the nature of the single writing class that so many participants talked about; the ‘lesson of expression’ ta’bir (تعبير). As shown in the previous
chapters, most participants in this research are aware of the limitations of this single opportunity of writing in school. Moreover, most participants expressed their dislike of this class, and an associated lack of interest in writing that may have been a result of the restriction in choices of topics to write about. That is, the ‘lesson of expression’, common in the contexts from which the participants came from, creates a strict control over what students write, and this does not enhance students’ interest in the writing experience. Having had less chance to work creatively with their L1, and given the type of writing curriculum that they experienced, the Arab students’ skills in both writing and literacy more generally are likely to have been underdeveloped.

In Arab universities, there are overcrowded classrooms and exams are the common type of assessment. The workload of university students does not include very much writing. Some university courses may include report writing, and some departments have a written ‘graduating project’ at the end of the program, where students are expected to produce a well-written product. It is questionable, however, whether these reports and projects provide sufficient opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate written skills.

Using sources and referencing as skills are an essential part of university level learning, and the ability to read academic publications critically is crucial. However, these skills do not seem to be encouraged by the academic culture in many Arab universities. There is more attention given to testing students’ achievement rather than testing students’ ability to analyse, or critically think in response to what they read and learn. With the noticeable decrease in readership and the limited intellectual production in the region, developing critical reading and writing skills is particularly difficult. Moreover, the focus on referencing as a way to protect academic integrity does not seem to be a part of the academic culture of Arab universities in the contexts which the participants are from. Where project work is introduced (such as graduation projects) in specific programmes, as mentioned by some of the participants, referencing and citation skills were introduced but not explained. That is, there seemed to be a form of acknowledgment of the conventions of writing and academic integrity, but there seemed to be no meaningful application of the conventions. For the participants in this research, this appears to have resulted in an uncritical application of the
conventions of referencing. The students might be told to use particular referencing conventions when writing their graduation project papers, but they did not seem to understand the value of this practice.

In other words, there may exist the perception that learning about the referencing conventions of writing is only necessary when students enrol in a higher levels of study such as masters or PhD level, where students are expected to produce well referenced pieces of writing. This is an unfortunate situation that may create a gap of knowledge for students who are expected be skilled in writing well-referenced research papers by the time they reach postgraduate level.

8.1.2 Assessment and Memorisation

The type of assessment that appears to be adopted in educational institutions in many parts of the Arab world, starting from primary and secondary schools and all the way to university, is exams. Students at the end of each year strive to pass those exams as they are on their pathway to move successfully from one level to another. Passing the exams depends on memorising what was taught in the classroom by the tutor and what is in the textbooks. According to the literature on educational assessment in the Arab region, the dependence on this one type of assessment, and the associated lack of consideration of students’ learning styles, is one of the problems facing education in the Arab region (UNDP, 2006). Most of the participants in my research talked about the importance of passing exams, and explained that the best way to pass the exams was to memorise the materials given in the curriculum.

Having exams as the major type of assessment seems to be congruent with the culture of memorisation that is traditionally rooted in the Arab culture. Arabs as nomadic travellers used to memorise and transmit their knowledge, poetry, history and culture orally. Thus, orality plays an essential role on the transmission of knowledge. Then after the Islamic revelation in the 7th century, memorising the Quran became and still is an essential part of Muslim faith. One of the Islamic ‘pillars’ is prayers, which completely depends on accurate recitation of the Quran, and this reinforces the emphasis on memorisation as a skill of learning.
8.1.3 Teacher-Centred Approach

According to the literature on educational systems in the Arab region, tutors usually take the lead inside the classroom and lessons are typically lecture type (AHDR, 2003; Rugh, 2002). That means that in some Arab contexts, discussions and creative thinking activities are rarely found in classes. This teacher-centred approach is consistent with the culture of authoritative hierarchy, where teachers are the authority inside the classroom. Islam and the Islamic culture has always praised scholars ‘Ulamaa’ (علماء) and their contribution in numerous fields of life. The teacher is highly respected and regarded as a knowledge transmitter, and this reinforces the status of teachers in educational settings. Because the present Arab culture continues to be influenced by Islam and Islamic culture, the hierarchical view of the teacher still exists, is being maintained as part of the culture, and there seems also to be a sense that this view of teachers should always be preserved (I have struggled to find any authoritative Arab writers that counter this view). Thus, teachers in educational settings should be admired, respected and never challenged (through questions or otherwise) in terms of their knowledge. It is worth repeating the comment by Karim, one of the participants, who called it a ‘formality’ when the teacher asked if anyone has a question at the end of a lesson (see section 6.2.6).

In sum, it seems that asking questions, which is one way of developing critical thinking and analytical skills (Ikuenobe, 2001), was not the norm in the educational contexts from which the participants in this study came from. It is possible, then, that Arab students more generally will arrive in UK higher education with under-developed critical skills.

8.1.4 Low Readership

Reading is important because it provides the input that will be used in various ways in academic writing; in other words, reading informs writing. In order to use sources in writing, the writer needs to search for relevant sources, read through them, decide what to use, and most importantly, process what is being chosen. This processing involves the integration of different skills such as understanding
what is read, analysing it, connecting it with the topic in hand, and then using it appropriately. Such tasks will require good reading skills.

The group of participants who took part in this study talked about their limited experience of reading. Almost all the participants talked about how their experience of reading in their previous Arab educational context was limited to what the tutor assigned.

The study also reveals a limited engagement with reading more generally among the participants. For instance, students were unlikely to visit libraries and were not sure if libraries existed in their schools. One reason mentioned by the participants was that visiting libraries was not necessary because the books needed for their studies were supplied to all the students at the start of the year.

By contrast, going to a library is one of the essential means of learning in UK academic settings (Antell and Engel, 2006). It is seen to contribute to students building knowledge of topics introduced in class, and as essential in identifying sources to use in academic writing. It seems that the postgraduate Arab students in my study were unaccustomed to this academic practice.

The more general literature on education and literacy in the Arab world suggests that reading in the region has been an issue of concern. The Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) (2003) has identified low readership in the region as an ongoing challenge. Many factors have been suggested for the low readership in the Arab region, including a poorly developed publication industry, censorship, and the spread of intellectual property violations (Al-Biss, 2003). Although reading and libraries were developed and appreciated during the Islamic Golden Age, many were demolished at the end of that era. Currently, the lack of libraries and the lack of readership remains a concern that affects the education of Arab students, and it may have contributed to the particular challenge the Arab postgraduate students in my study faced when coming to the UK.

8.1.5 Violations of Copyright
Another issue of concern in the Arab region is the frequent violation of intellectual property. Although most countries in the Arab region are part of the Bern Convention (1886), and almost all countries in the Arab region are part of the Arab Convention for Copyright (1981), the implementation of those laws is neither clear nor consistent. Many violations take place, and the AHDR (2003) has issued a warning against the tolerance of copyright and intellectual property infringements in the region. Most of the participants in this study talked about different forms of copyright violations in their countries, explaining through anecdotes that there is tolerance about such issues. My literature review also highlighted violations of copyright and intellectual property in Arab academia, including cases of copyright infringement by academics. As a result, copyright is an issue that students from Arab contexts may be unfamiliar with.

8.2 The Transition Challenges

In this section, I will discuss the challenges that my participants faced when starting their studies in the UK. Through referring to the data collected and analysed, as well as the literature on education in the Arab world, my intention is to contextualise the challenges that my participants have described.

8.2.1 Academic Writing

The first challenge for my group of participants is academic writing itself. This is a major challenge for the postgraduate Arab students as academic writing generates the product which determines their success (or failure) in their postgraduate course. To develop a well written academic assignment, writers typically go through a thorough process of evaluating the information gathered from sources, identifying arguments and claims, reasoning and making connections between ideas, as well as gathering appropriate amount of evidence and support for the argument. After collecting the sources needed for writing, reading them and taking notes, the writing process starts. The writing process itself also involves a number of skills students should employ to be able to write a well-written text. Students, particularly at the postgraduate level, are expected to
produce critical pieces of writing, something which my research suggests is not the norm in their Arab home contexts.

Within writing, one specific challenge that almost all participants in this research talked about is paraphrasing. The exhaustive task of paraphrasing is unlikely to be known to many L2 writers who come from educational systems that focus on receptive and copying skills more than productive and creative skills. It may be the reason why many students in this study preferred to quote, and thereby seemed to rely more on the sources than necessary.

Another specific challenge was the idea of using sources when writing assignments. My participants suggested to me that analysis without using referencing is a much easier task than analysis using sources. This is an expression of the difficulty of integrating information from sources into a paper, something all the participants expressed having difficulty with. So, the challenge for this group of Arab students in the postgraduate level of writing is not only to develop their own viewpoints in writing, but to have the ability to use previous literature and to show proper grasp of the previous arguments of scholars in the field.

8.2.2 Orality in the Culture

The Arab world, as discussed previously, is influenced by the Islamic culture of orality. As the literature suggest, the transmission of knowledge through orality is historically rooted in the region (Nasr, 1992; Denny, 1989). Writing in the Arabic language was fully developed only in the 20th century, despite the fact that the language itself is 1500 years old (Schwartz, 2009). Therefore, orality in the culture has impacted on the way education and learning is approached. That is, Arab students come from academic cultures that tend to favour orality to written forms of transmitting knowledge. As a result, their writing abilities may not be as developed as students from other cultures where writing is more central.

Linked with orality as a way of knowledge transmission is memorisation of the Quran, which has always been the path to mastering Islamic sciences (Eickelman, 1978). As Islam remains an influential aspect in the life of Muslims, prayers is a
priority for every practising Muslim and the majority of prayers are based on
verses from the Quran that should be recited by heart accurately. Thus,
memorising parts of the Quran is still a priority in the Islamic culture, as well as
the memorisation of other forms of Islamic texts that are significant parts of the
Islamic tradition.

Living in a nomadic society in the pre-Islamic Arabia, poetry, history and other
forms of knowledge has been transmitted orally from one generation to the other
(Lichtenstadter, 1945), and this has also contributed to memorisation as a
dominant approach to education in the Arab world. This is still reflected in most
educational institutions in the region, where exams are the dominant type of
assessment. Passing these exams is the ultimate goal for many students, who
depend on private tutoring, due to the competition for entering one’s choice of
major in university. Thus, little attention is given to critical and creative thinking.

Given that the participants came from this type of academic culture, critical
reading, thinking and writing was a particular challenge for the participants in this
research when moving to the academic culture in the UK. In the UK, students are
expected to think for themselves, and respond to tasks in a critical manner,
something that is very different from the type of academic culture my Arab
postgraduate participants come from.

8.2.3 The Reading Process

The reading process that happens in parallel to academic writing is a further
challenge the Arab students faced during their transition to the new academic
setting. This was, in part, evident from their over-reliance on sources in their
academic writing. Bazerman (1995, p.4) argues that ‘reading and writing go hand
in hand. The better you read, the better you write’. A number of scholars,
including Grabe and Zhang (2013), suggest that writing and reading should be
taught together for ESL students. According to Grabe and Zhang, this seems to be
a daunting task for English language tutors, but it can help students use textual
information to develop their synthesising abilities.
This pedagogic advice suggests something about the link between reading and writing skills, which in turn may provide some insights into the type of challenges students from Arab backgrounds encounter. As argued elsewhere in the thesis, students from Arab backgrounds may lack reading skills on the one hand and writing skills on the other. Although reading and acquiring knowledge from books is greatly appreciated in the Islamic tradition and culture, as well as in the history of the Islamic Golden Age, the actual skills to succeed in this task is not normally encouraged by the Arab educational systems. Rather, most students associate reading with passing exams. This was evident in my participants’ comments about their reading habits, with a number of them associating reading with what was assigned to them by their teachers. Therefore, reading strategies needed to construct meaning and to interact with information is not a practice that was activated in my Arab postgraduate student participants’ previous experiences.

8.2.4 Finding One’s Voice

Teacher-centred instruction is a feature that is prominent in many Arab educational settings. Students in schools as well as universities may not have opportunities to participate or share their opinions freely. Hence, entering the UK academic culture, where students are expected to participate and express their views openly, represents an additional challenge for Arab students when coming to the UK. Expressing views includes asking questions, and this style of classroom interaction is not welcomed in some or many Arab classrooms. This means that Arab students may not have developed the skill of reflecting on what is learned in the classroom and how to respond or pose questions.

There are different reasons for why Arab students face this challenge. This includes the total respect for the teacher in Arab education, as well as the fear of being ridiculed by others in the class when asking questions. Arab students moving to UK higher education will of course notice a difference when they encounter the new academic environment. When arriving in their new academic programme in the UK, they may be expected to participate actively in the classroom, either in open discussions or through group work participation. This challenge is particularly evident for postgraduate level classes where the pedagogy encourages autonomous learning, including seminars where a great
proportion of the class time relies on discussions and students’ participation. This approach by itself contributes to developing students’ awareness and acceptance of differences of views and opinions on issues, and more importantly helps in developing students’ ability to analyse and find their voice. Hence, it is an important part of becoming an academic writer. However, this learner-centred approach may be overwhelming for students from Arab backgrounds if they are used to relying only on the single authoritative perspective of the teacher.

Finally, whilst a significant challenge, some of the participants in my study enjoyed the new way of learning in UK higher education and became inspired by the change. However, others struggled to adapt to the new academic culture and their struggle seemed to lower their confidence.

8.3 Awareness and Anxiety

This section discusses the awareness and anxiety that the Arab post-graduate students experienced in relation to different aspects of their academic writing. This includes a sub-section on the relationship between anxiety, awareness and quotation, as well as a sub-section on plagiarism anxiety experienced by the students.

8.3.1 Quotations

A number of studies on intertextuality in student academic writing have focused on quotations. For example, Pecorari (2008, 2013) has found that social sciences and humanities students tend to use quotes more often than students in the hard sciences. My study suggests that Arab postgraduate students rely on quotations a great deal, and they seem to do this as a way to make their arguments stronger. Generally speaking, quotations are usually integrated into academic writing to add another dimension to the construction of an argument. This requires not only understanding the quote and the source, it also requires explaining what the quote means, and perhaps commenting and critiquing it to show how it adds to the argument. In other words, the use of quotations should have a purposeful function in a text. Novice students, as Bazerman (1995) suggests, may use direct quotes to
avoid explaining complex concepts, and this may lead them to less purposeful use of quotes. This may then lead to a text where the student writer’s own position is unclear and own voice is absent.

This was confirmed in my research where students used quotations extensively. Among the participants in this research, most of them talked about the difficulty of paraphrasing and so they would rely on direct quotes. Due to their inability to express the same information in their own words, they ended up with many quotes which they felt was a way to guard against any accusation of plagiarism. In fact, the use of quotations in most students’ texts, while acceptable in each case, and while probably helping them against a charge of plagiarism, overall may have been excessive as compared to what is the norm in the disciplines they were studying. In sum, the students who participated in the interviews justified their use of quotations in the following ways:

1. Not being able to paraphrase because of the complexity of the source text.
2. The wording and form of the quotation expressed the exact meaning they wanted to convey.
3. Direct quotations prevented any accusations of plagiarism because this is a clear attribution of the source (i.e. a conventional form of intertextuality).

It seems right that use of direct quotations guards against accusations of plagiarism. By quoting, students are ‘transparent’ in their signalling of the textual relationship between their writing and its source texts (Pecorari, 2003). However, the real purpose of quotations is not necessarily achieved. The Arab students in my study seem to integrate quotations due to their anxiety, and this prevents them from using quotation to deepen their own argument.

In addition to the above discussed reasons for the frequent use of quotations, this feature of the Arab postgraduate students’ academic writing may relate to their cultural beliefs and educational background. As discussed in the literature review and shown in extracts from interviews, the participants in this study shared the view that published materials should be believed and respected. It is difficult for Arab students, who come from and were educated in the Arab world, to believe
that what appears in published books is not absolute and true, and that they may in fact challenge what is published. The participants in this study also expressed the view that quotes make an assignment look ‘formal’, and hence of high value. However, the participants awareness of this does suggest that their beliefs may have shifted, and that they were becoming aware that in the UK a lot of direct quotes in an assignment may be perceived differently.

In sum, the Arab postgraduate participants held the belief, at least before they arrived in the UK, that when something is published the wording used will be accurate, and if paraphrased it may not be as strong in an assignment. This special appreciation of published books seems historically rooted in Islamic culture, where scholars traditionally were the elite in society (Nakosteen, 1964; Shalaby, 1954).

8.3.2 Plagiarism Anxiety

It may be true that students who come from Arab backgrounds may understand the idea of plagiarism in a very general sense. However, their actual encounter with this word and concept at the start of their programme of studies in the UK, whether in the student handbook or when mentioned in class, is a real concern to many of them. It was found in this research that the Arab student participants developed anxiety as a result of the warnings they received about plagiarism. They experienced confusion about what should and should not be referenced, but seemed determined to follow the conventions of referencing, so they would not be accused of plagiarism. This determination may have resulted from their awareness of their lack of experience in respect to referencing.

The way the postgraduate Arab participants seem to be thinking about their use of sources in writing in the new environment may lead them to establish their own strategies of paraphrasing and ‘changing’ sentences, and in this way making what they believe to be the necessary adjustment for the new academic context. There may be a kind of dialogue inside their minds to remind them of the expected practice in their new context and what is proper in terms of using a source texts.
The anxiety observed in this research study is consistent with observations by Ashworth et al. (1979) and Sutherland-Smith (2010) that plagiarism causes anxiety through the negative connotations it is linked to. The threatening tone that university policies adopt towards plagiarism (see examples of universities’ language used for plagiarism in Chapter Seven) may be leading students to use their own strategies, either appropriate or not, in order to prevent accusations of plagiarism. On one level, the students are aware of the conventions that should be followed in academic writing. However, being unable to fully understand the conventions and how to accurately follow them, increases their anxiety further. In sum, then, the interaction between anxiety about plagiarism and a partial awareness about referencing conventions seems to contribute to their adoption of strategies, in the case of the participants in the present study involving a lot of direct quotation, which may or may not be optimal for succeeding in their new UK university setting.

8.4 Strategies to Meet Expectations

In this section, I will discuss the strategies the participants in this study used to meet the expectations of their UK higher education environment. This group of participants who came from Arab backgrounds seemed to develop their own remedial strategies to be able to overcome the challenges related to academic writing and succeeding in the new academic setting. Arab students entering UK postgraduate study programmes face the challenge of developing their linguistic ability as well as other cognitive skills. English language writing classes, provided they attend these before their postgraduate programmes start, focus on the linguistic and discourse aspects of academic writing. This may facilitate the Arab students’ linguistic entrance into the discourse community of UK academic writing. However, it may not be sufficient for developing students’ cognitive skills needed for academic writing. Then, in facing academic writing tasks on their postgraduate programmes, and being under time pressure to complete these tasks, they may develop strategies that may or may not be acceptable at the postgraduate level of study.
8.4.1 Relying Heavily on Source Texts

Curry (1998) suggests that students new to academic writing may be prone to lifting parts from the sources they use in an attempt to cope with the challenges of meeting university expectations, without having the intention to violate university regulations. They may also depend heavily on the sources they use on the basis that the wording in the sources explains the point they wish to include effectively. That is, the way published authors explain a given point may be more powerful than what the student may be able to write. In the case of the participants in the present study, their high regard for published work seems to support their decisions to quote more than they paraphrase, or to keep some of the phrases as they are, because if they change a phrase or passage they may feel that it does not convey the meaning anymore. It is possible, then, that postgraduate students such as the participants in this research lack confidence not only in their linguistic ability, but also in their intellectual capabilities. Students seem to lack confidence in their ability to extract meaning from a given passage and in their ability to rewrite it, keeping the same amount of detail and the exact meaning. The needed skills for such work are ones that they may have been unfamiliar with given their particular experience of writing in their Arab home educational institutions. The ‘lesson of expression’, which so many of my participants spoke about, and the graduating project that a few mentioned having to complete at the end of their Arab undergraduate programmes, do not seem sufficient to develop the cognitive skills necessary for succeeding in academic writing in the UK.

In sum, in the case of the Arab postgraduate students in this study, the goal for L1 (Arabic) writing education that takes place in school and university in their previous Arab educational context, as well as any pre-sessional academic writing classes they take in the UK before starting their postgraduate studies, seems to be directed at developing the students’ linguistic ability rather than the cognitive skills needed for academic writing in the UK.

8.4.2 Patchwriting

Another strategy that Arab and other students from non-English speaking background may develop as new academic writers in the UK context is
‘patchwriting’ (Howard, 1993). The present study has found that students seem to consider this strategy as paraphrasing. It was observed that participants view synonym substitution as paraphrasing, even if they do not alter the underlying structure of the sentence.

Paraphrasing involves making different types of alterations, and synonym substitution is only one of them. D’Angelo, (1979) describes proficient paraphrasing as an art that not only restates a message, but also contributes to it in the sense of adding a further interpretation of it. As an instructor, he would praise less competent paraphrasing so to encourage the further development of paraphrasing skills. Learning how to paraphrase appropriately may then involve instruction, encouragement and practice over time. The Arab students in my study will have practiced a lot, but they may not have received the necessary instruction or encouragement to develop their paraphrasing skills.

This study, then, suggest that the skills needed to paraphrase effectively may not be developed among some or many students from Arab backgrounds. This is evidenced by paraphrasing being one of the major problems the participants in this research experienced. Many of the student texts analysed in this study relied a great deal on direct quotes from published sources. The use of direct quotes seems to be a way to prevent having to confront the challenge of paraphrasing. This strategy may then originate from limited opportunities for practicing meaningful writing and reading in these Arab students’ past educational experiences. Reading in Arab schools and universities seems to be limited to textbooks and what is assigned by tutors to be used for passing exams. Having less exposure to reading materials will limit opportunities to expand students’ abilities in synthesising information from different sources to build an argument, and as a result, students then create their own strategies to cope. The challenge is heightened when it comes to reading and processing information in L2 when arriving in the UK.

8.4.3 Over-Relying on a Single Source

One outcome that this research has observed, of the Arab students’ struggle to succeed in academic writing when in the UK, is an over-reliance on single sources used in the writing process. The participants in this study seemed to have
problems synthesising information from different sources to develop their argument. They struggled to compare different views on a given issue, and eventually faced the problem of relying on a small set of, or a single source, for information.

This struggle to synthesise information from different sources may also have contributed to the common use of secondary citation among the Arab participants in this research. This is because the information in a secondary source is already synthesised, and it may be easier to link information in a similar way to a secondary source in your own writing than to read primary sources and do your own synthesising. That is, combining information from sources in a coherent way seemed to be a challenging task for the Arab students in this study. The time constraints for completing assignments in a short postgraduate programme may have increased this challenge further.

8.4.4 Depending on Less Complicated Sources

Another strategy that the Arab students in this study seemed to turn to is using simpler sources of information, and avoiding more complex sources of information. Wikipedia and using lecture notes were two sources that were used in some students’ texts analysed in this research. Being critical about the sources used in academic writing is regarded as good practice. Wikipedia as a starting point in research is recognised by many. However, relying on it as a referenced source in assignments may not be regarded as reliable by some tutors, particularly if used as a source for fundamental information. Lectures and lecture notes are interesting, also, when considering ‘less complicated sources’. Some of the Arab participants relied on these as well, and they regarded them as an ‘open source’. That is, the students pointed to how the tutor did not reference whilst speaking, and how if they had an audio-recording of a lecture they could use this without referencing.

8.4.5 Referencing

This research shows that the Arab participants’ first hands-on experience with referencing, and learning how to write well-referenced papers, was in the UK
when they started their postgraduate studies. Almost all of the students who participated in this research talked about how their first referenced paper was written in their UK academic programme. Hence, part of adjusting to the UK academic environment was to learn how to reference using an accepted system of referencing.

Some of the participants mentioned learning the Harvard system in order to show their tutors that they were educated about referencing despite coming from an Arab country. Some of the participants were aware of their lack of knowledge regarding the issue of referencing and writing conventions, and as a result made these sorts of efforts to fill this gap of knowledge. This recognition of their background, and the awareness that Arab educational contexts do not pay much attention to copyright issues, seemed to exacerbate the Arab students’ fear and to boost their motivation to learn and then follow the conventions of referencing in academic writing. However, whether the Arab students in this study fully understand the value of referencing and proper attribution of information, even after some time in the UK, is not always clear.

Many universities seem to expect that students entering a postgraduate programme should be aware of how to use sources appropriately and how to reference their sources in line with the expected format. A few of the participants complained about having to learn how to do referencing all by themselves. That is, the participants believed there was a lack of support for learning how to reference sources appropriately, pointing out that one hour sessions on referencing was not sufficient for them to fully understand what were the expectations. Some of the participants’ responses, when asked about specific referencing problems in their written work, showed a continuing lack of understanding, thereby reinforcing the possibility that the support received in relation to referencing may have been inadequate.

8.5 Levels of Intertextuality
In this section, I present the four levels of intertextuality which were identified in this research. Looking at intertextuality within this level-based framework provided me with an understanding of the forms of intertextuality that exist in the Arab postgraduate students’ texts and confirms the challenges that these students face when it comes to using sources in academic writing.

Previous studies of intertextuality in academic writing have focused separately on word, sentence and paragraph level intertextuality, but without recognising the levels as I have done in my research. Word level intertextuality has been explored by previous studies and it has been defined in similar ways to how I defined it; as single word or formulaic language intertext (Pecorari & Shaw, 2012). Paragraph level intertextuality has been addressed by studies on quotation and citation in academic writing (Buckingham & Neville, 1997; Pecorari, 2008). Finally, Howard et al. (2010) have looked specifically at sentence level intertextuality. Structure level intertextuality has not been given much attention in the literature.

This expanded notion of intertextuality, including these four levels of analysis, was partially suggested by the notion of indirect intertextuality proposed by Pecorari and Shaw (2012). Genre analysis was an additional shaping influence. This expanded view of intertextuality allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the Arab postgraduate students’ use of sources, revealing more fully the strategies students adopt in the process of using sources to overcome challenges in their writing.

Thus, my research has made a contribution by putting together all four levels within one framework, motivated by the notion of genres, and this offers a new perspective that contributes to the understanding of intertextuality in academic writing. My research suggests that this level based framework, as motivated by Pecorari and Shaw’s (2012) typology and the notion of genre, contributes to the effectiveness of identifying and understanding students’ source use in academic writing.

8.5.1 Word level Intertextuality
Word level intertextuality pertains to the use of words and phrases from source text. This intertextuality may be indirect, conventional, or unconventional as defined by Pecorari and Shaw (2012). Indirect word level intertextuality refers to generic phrases, words, or bundles of words which, based on literature in this area (Hyland 2008), are common in academic writing. A focus on word bundles is a feature of academic genre research and such bundles seem to be employed by writers to gain access to a discourse community. This form of intertext is not usually cited or referenced overtly by a writer, but creates embedded intertextual relationships which increases the similarity between two texts that share the same topic, content, register, or area.

The results of the analysis of word level indirect intertextuality shows that formulaic language, or word bundles, used by the Arab postgraduate participants in their academic writing resembles somewhat the word bundles identified in academic writing by Hyland (2008). I do not wish to make a comparison of frequency. Rather, this finding illustrates the presence of one type of intertextual relationship between the students’ texts and previous texts in their field. This suggests that the Arab postgraduate student writers attempted to formulate language, or ‘borrowed’ language (whether consciously or not), making their academic writing similar, on the word level, to academic writing in their disciplines more broadly.

By contrast, more conventional word level intertextuality in the Arab students’ writing included the use of words (or phrases) from source texts by either attributing them correctly through single quotation marks, changing their order or grammatical form, or replacing them with synonyms. This conventional use of source texts on the word level seems a somewhat common feature in many of the assignments written by the student participants, and this shows careful use of the source texts by substituting synonyms, changing form and order of words.

Finally, unconventional word level intertextuality was also found in the data, including using words or phrases from a source without proper attribution. Moreover, unconventional word level intertextuality seemed to be related to unconventional sentence level intertextuality in the Arab students’ writing. Sentence level intertextuality is copying entire sentence(s) from the source with
only a few lexical substitutions or wrong attribution. For both forms, alteration of the source language is very minimal and/or appropriate attribution may be missing. For instance, a student might copy a sentence from a source, keeping some key words/phrases and substituting others (both forms of word level intertextuality), but overall keep the same structure and order of words of the original source (sentence level intertextuality). This, then, offers a good illustration of how the level-based view of intertextuality helps to develop understanding of strategies these Arab students employed to overcome the challenges they face in academic writing.

8.5.2 Sentence level Intertextuality

Conventional sentence level intertextuality is the use of source text sentences with appropriate attribution; that is, indicating the author, date of publication and page reference next to the parts taken from the source which are paraphrased or quoted. A paraphrase may also include key terms that may be central to the meaning, yet appropriately cited between single/double quotation marks. Unconventional sentence level of intertextuality, on the other hand, is the copying of entire sentence with minimal change of the original language without appropriate attribution. As discussed above in Section 8.6.1, this level of intertextuality sometimes overlapped with unconventional word level intertextuality.

On this sentence level, the main finding of this research is the problems the Arab student writers encountered with paraphrasing. That is, the types of changes that the Arab postgraduate participants made on the sentence level, when extracting information from a given source in their attempts to paraphrase, seemed to be insufficient in many cases. The interview data helped to suggest possible causes for this, including how the Arab students’ educational background may not have provided sufficient cognitive and creative skills to do more sophisticated paraphrasing.

8.5.3 Paragraph level Intertextuality

Paragraph level intertextuality, as the name suggests, pertains to the intertextual relationship between paragraphs in a student’s text and paragraphs in a source.
This form of intertextual relationship, in accordance to Pecorari and Shaw (2012), may be indirect, conventional, or unconventional. In the case of paragraph level indirect intertextuality, this shared relationship refers to the standard format of paragraphs, which is the topic sentence (or thesis statement), supporting sentences, then a concluding sentence at the end of a paragraph. From the perspective of genre, this way of organising paragraphs in writing serves as a communicative strategy that aligns the writing with academic expectations. Conventional paragraph level intertextuality refers to an attributed intertextual relationship between paragraphs in a student’s text and an original source. This could be in the form of lengthy paraphrasing from a source or quoting with proper attribution. Unconventional paragraph level intertextuality, one the other hand, is long chunks of language taken from a source or quotes without proper attribution.

The present study has shown evidence of some indirect and conventional paragraph level intertextuality in the Arab students’ writing. Unconventional paragraph level intertextuality was a feature of a few of the Arab students’ texts. However, this problematic use of sources was generally less common among students’ texts as compared to unconventional sentence level intertextuality. Overall, the main contribution of this finding about paragraph level intertextuality is to flag the possibility of this kind of intertextuality as something that may be included as a focus in future research.

8.5.4 Structure level Intertextuality

As shown in Chapter Five, structure level intertextuality includes indirect and unconventional intertextuality. Indirect structure intertextuality refers to the conventions of academic writing, which includes the standard elements of organising academic writing. Just as with word and paragraph level indirect intertextuality, indirect structure level intertextual relationships were present in students’ texts in the form of standardised patterns of academic writing. Looking at such a wider textual interaction, as motivated by genre analysis, between students’ texts and writing in their disciplines, helped to create a more comprehensive view of the Arab postgraduate students’ use of sources.
Unconventional structure level intertextuality, on the other hand, refers to adopting a source’s structure, such as adopting the same order, headings or references. This was observed through manual analysis of the sources used in certain texts from the corpus. This study has shown instances of unconventional structure level of intertextuality (see 5.4.4 in Chapter Five), which show that students may occasionally turn to adopting the structure of a source they read. There are two elements in the explanation of why this may be happening. Students may find it easier and time-saving to develop their argument in the same way as a source they have read, and they may think it is acceptable to do so as long as there is change in certain aspects of their texts. Both of these elements may be explained by the combination of different problems faced by the Arab students in developing a well-organised argument in writing. There may also be the erroneous opinion that this is acceptable, or the more extreme thought that they think it will not be discovered. However, the latter is not focussed on in this investigation, as intention to deceive has not been a focus in my research.

In sum, looking at the Arab postgraduate students’ texts in light of the four levels of intertextuality, as suggested by this study, helped to describe the forms of intertextuality in their writing in greater detail than would have been possible with existing definitions of intertextuality. Moreover, further investigating the instances of intertextuality, by asking the students about their source use in follow-up interviews, provided insights into the students’ perspective on the intertextuality in their writing.

8.6 What Universities Should Know

Based on the findings of this research, the following are the points that I believe UK universities might benefit from knowing about Arab students coming to study in the UK. Universities, and specifically language centres in universities, might pay attention to these points when working with students from such backgrounds. The awareness of where students come from facilitates addressing their needs. If universities do not pay attention students’ backgrounds, and fail to provide appropriate support, then, as suggested by my research, these Arab students are
left to their own to develop strategies, some of which may not be acceptable in the new academic setting.

The first point that UK universities may benefit from knowing about is students’ past experiences in relation to writing and literacy. University lecturers would benefit from having a basic knowledge about the backgrounds of their students. They need to know that Arab students come from a region where writing is not necessarily something that is focused on. Arab students may be used to approach learning through memorisation, due to its root in their culture of orality. They may be used to the teacher being in control of the learning experience and this makes them less visibly active in class. For these reasons, students from Arab backgrounds may lack the critical, creative, cognitive and linguistic skills needed to successfully use sources in their academic writing. Many face difficulties with synthesising information, analysing it, paraphrasing source language, linking everything together and building a well written argument. Also, Arab students may be influenced by their previous learning experiences, and may transfer many of these perceptions about learning to their UK experience. Any extra support, then, should focus on both the skills needed to succeed in the UK academic setting, as well as giving Arab students the awareness needed to make a successful transition.

The second thing that UK universities would find beneficial to know about with respect to students from Arab backgrounds is that for many of these students religion and culture affects their learning and education. Having memorisation as an approach to learning is something deeply rooted in the Arab culture. The Islamic faith holds at its heart the Quran (the Holy Book) and memorising it (or at least parts of it) is at the heart of the realities of the religion, particularly as it enables prayer which is a priority in the Islamic faith (Nasr, 1992). Even before Islam, Arab nomadic life influenced how people viewed the transmission of knowledge through orality, which in turn enhanced the skill of memorisation (Yusuf, 2010). This is to say that students may be unfamiliar with the approach to learning that is expected of them at UK universities. These expectations are not sometimes clear to students and thus results in confusion among the students as they adjust to the new academic environment. By recognising these differences, students and tutors may facilitate the transition and draw both minds together.
Students may need to shift their learning styles and attitudes, and this is challenging given their backgrounds. Identifying these needs may better help to facilitate the transition for them and identifying appropriate strategies to meet academic expectations in the postgraduate level.

The third thing that UK universities would benefit from knowing more about is knowing how Arab students may understand the concept of plagiarism. Students’ concerns as a result of plagiarism warnings that they face at the start of their academic study may cause anxiety and may also create a negative attitude towards learning how to use sources. This may result in students focusing on how to avoid plagiarism as opposed to how to learn to use sources appropriately. This may underlie the result in this research, that there seems to be a gap between how students understand plagiarism and how UK universities view it. This was evident through features of unconventional intertextuality that I identified in my corpus of academic writing. These unconventional forms of intertextuality reveal misconceptions about using sources. For example, most participants have the idea that synonym substitution, without other necessary alterations, is paraphrasing. That is, the Arab students in this study did not seem to have a very nuanced understanding of paraphrasing. Other misconceptions about source use that my participants had were related to conventions of referencing such as over-using secondary citations and believing this to be acceptable. Students often depend on their own efforts to learn writing and referencing conventions, something which is not the norm in their previous teacher-centred educational experiences. Through their individual efforts, students may not fully comprehend writing and referencing conventions and may follow the conventions in a way that does not meet UK universities’ expectations.

Supporting Arab students in understanding the concept of plagiarism and the value of attribution of sources may improve their understanding of the academic writing in the UK setting. This will not only contribute to their development to learn how to use sources efficiently in their own writing, but will also work as a preventive step to avoid the plagiarism which many universities struggle with. Providing appropriate support may help make Arab students’ practice of attribution more authentic and meaningful, and may also be of benefit for them in
later studies such as PhD degrees and publication, or even through them bringing back their new understanding to their Arab home contexts.

Fourthly, it is important that academic staff in UK universities learn more about the teaching approach that students from Arab backgrounds are familiar with. Arab students often come from an educational system where learning is structured for them by their instructors. That is, many students who come from Arab countries are familiar with the traditional classroom where the tutor lectures on the given topic, students take notes, and then students study those notes to excel. That means that Arab students may be less able to take control of their own learning. It also means that these students may not value their own opinion, and instead adhere to voices of authority such as their teachers. Independent learning is less common in the Arab context, and as a result when faced with an expectation to be independent and autonomous when in the UK, students may become confused and this would devalue their educational experience. Finally, the expectation to be self-reliant, independent, and active intensifies during academic writing tasks which are an essential component of UK postgraduate study.

Bringing with them their own values and beliefs about education, academic writing and source use may put Arab students in confrontation with the new academic environment. Universities do sometimes recognise such differences, but pay more attention to communicating what is expected from students when in the UK, and less attention to what students bring with them and how this forms challenges for the students to meet the expectations of the UK academic setting. Working on what students bring with them, and using this as a starting point, might help facilitate more effective development of the necessary skills and awareness among Arab postgraduate students arriving in the UK.

Finally, the experiences of the Arab postgraduate student participants in this research may be shared by, or overlap with, the experiences of other groups of international students. International students start off their UK programmes with much motivation and aspiration for success and may then face challenges that decrease that impulse. It may be wise for tutors and universities to develop insights into how their international students acquire knowledge and what their background experience looks like. Learning about these cultural differences,
which also includes differences in academic expectations, may help to put in place strategies that can boost the confidence of international students, and thereby reduce their anxiety and stress during their academic journey.

8.7 Further Research

This study has focussed on how postgraduate students from Arab backgrounds, attending UK university programmes, use sources in their academic writing, as well as how their educational background may have affected their source use and they adjustment to the UK academic setting. The investigation of source use in their academic assignments, and the interviews with participants, has highlighted a number of issues related to intertextuality and plagiarism. The intention was not to focus on plagiarism or how the Arab participants tried to avoid it, but rather on how students used sources in their academic writing and what affected this use, either appropriate or in-appropriate.

The expanded notion of intertextuality as used in this research enriched the study in terms of providing a more comprehensive view of indirect intertextuality. Connecting the notion of intertextuality with genre provided a wider and more holistic way of looking at students’ use of sources. Stretching the notion of intertextuality in respect to academic writing is a theoretical contribution. It is not a radical departure from past research on intertextuality in academic writing, and the extension was, in part, suggested by the well-known work of Pecorari and Shaw (2012). From this, and taking advantage of what seems to be an overlap between intertextuality and the notion of genres – i.e. the way writers use language and structure to satisfy expectations of written genres – contributed to the suggestion in this study, of a four-level analysis of intertextuality in students’ academic writing. To understand the full potential of this expanded view of intertextuality would require further research on different student groups and different forms of academic writing.

Turning to the participants in this research; the intention of this research was not to demonstrate that students from Arab backgrounds are not good writers. Rather, the intention was to discuss how they manage to write and meet the expectations
of the UK university setting, what influences this, what the challenges they faced are, and what the strategies they used to overcome these challenges. The skills needed to write from sources are not easy skills to master, and even native speakers struggle to do so. However, the research has shown that students who come from a different educational system experience potentially different challenges and obstacles that need to be recognised and responded to by institutions. In future research, it would be useful, then, to look at comparisons between native speakers and non-native speakers of English and whether they face similar challenges in their academic writing. This could also be taken further by looking at the forms of intertextuality found in the academic writing of native speakers of English, and whether those are similar to the forms found in the academic writing of non-native speakers of English. Finally, many of the forms of intertextuality found in my research indicates that the Arab students’ source use is affected by their past educational experiences, and it might be useful, then, to compare this to how the forms of intertextuality found in the academic writing of other non-native speaker students, as well as native speaker students, may be affected by educational background.

In this investigation, I was not able to obtain tutors’ feedback of the assessed texts that composed the corpus in this research. Another area, then, that might be useful to investigate is tutors’ feedback on assignments written by students from Arab backgrounds. Looking at the types of positive feedback noted by tutors may provide insights into strengths that Arab students possess, and problems noted by tutors might help identify weaknesses and possible remedies.

Finally, it was challenging to recruit participants for this research and the participants in the interviews in my research were all from four countries from the Arab region: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, United Arab Emirates and Iraq. It might be worth doing a study on a wider group of Arab students, including other countries in the region, to enhance the understanding of whether all students who come from Arab countries really do share similar problems. A wider scale study might also include a larger corpus that would enable a more thorough investigation of forms of intertextuality. This could make use of the analytical framework developed in this study, as adapted from Pecorari and Shaw (2012), which
included four levels of intertextuality: word, sentence, paragraph and structure level intertextuality.

8.8 Conclusion

This thesis has discussed a range of issues related to the Arab students’ past experiences of literacy and their academic writing. The question was then raised of whether these experiences plays a role in the way these students use sources in their academic writing when arriving in the UK, and whether it affects their adaptation to the UK academic environment. The results of this study indicate that the previous educational preparation of students coming from the Arab region is less than optimal for succeeding at the postgraduate level in UK universities. For many of these Arab students, having to write academic assignments with appropriate use of sources was a new experience to them. To learn the new skills required for this type of academic writing at such a late stage of their educational careers - the postgraduate level - was a challenge for them. It is true that writing academically starts at later stages even in western educational settings. The transition from secondary education to tertiary level is demanding for L1 speakers (Swales, 1990) as well as L2 speakers. However, in the western context, students usually have more chances to work creatively with the language at secondary level, and they are also given the opportunity to develop the needed cognitive skills at the secondary level. Therefore, western students can bring with them already developed creative and cognitive skills when they enter university. By contrast, Arab students may not get this preparation in their Arab educational settings, and hence face a difficult time when starting University study in the UK. This situation then results in the particular forms of intertextuality found in the assignments analysed in this thesis, and the particular types of adjustment challenges experienced by the Arab postgraduate student participants in this study.

The participants in this research came from four countries in the Arab world, and the findings will reflect the particular circumstances and educational experiences offered to students in these countries. Different countries in the region may vary in terms of socioeconomics, and this may have an effect on the education student
receive. Some countries, such as Qatar for example, are known for investing more on educational initiatives through building more universities, developing their educational systems and creating innovative forms of quality education through international partnerships. As a result, they are 'fast forwarding' the development of their educational systems and thereby creating a foundation for future success (Coughlan 2012). However, other countries which have less investment going into education may struggle to improve despite well-meaning reforms taking place. That is, the lack of socioeconomic progress in these countries may hold them back. Sadly, due to recent events in the Middle East, the education systems in a number of countries have actually been severely affected. In these places, it is difficult to talk about ‘progress’.
References


Participants’ Text References


Appendices

Appendix 1 Invitation for participation / Student

Dear…,

My name is Sahar Abdulelah and I'm a PhD student in education, University of Manchester doing research around academic writing. My research title is: *Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The Case of Arab Students*.

Part of my research is to look at PGT students' papers and I’m emailing to invite you to participate in my research.

I will ask participants to send me 1 or 2 of any of their past assignments that has already been assessed. Then some of the participants might be invited for an interview.

Before your involvement I would have to ask the permission of the course tutor(s) of whom you submitted the papers to. You are not asked to contact them, I will contact them myself upon your agreement to participate.

I am attaching the information sheet about my study so you can take a look at the details about my research and get answers for some of the questions you may have in mind.

Also I am kindly asking that you forward this email and refer me to potential participants if you feel they meet the criteria.

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate
Appendix 2 Participant Information Sheet

Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The Case of Arab Students

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of my project toward the degree of PhD in Education. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. You can take two weeks to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Sahar Abdelelah - School of Education, University of Manchester.

Title of the Research

Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The case of Arab students

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of this study is to investigate intertextuality and how students use sources in academic writing. The goal is to develop an understanding of how Arab students understand their use of sources and whether students’ educational and cultural background shape or affect their understanding of use of sources in their academic writing projects.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen as you are an Arab postgraduate student taking or have taken units or courses that involve a written assignment as part of the assessment. You and around 30-50 other students will be involved in this study.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to send one or two of your previously assessed assignments from your current program of study via email to the researcher. You might then be asked to participate in two 45 minute long interviews.

What happens to the data collected?

The assignments that you provide will be analysed in terms of how you have used published sources, and the way you have referenced/cited these sources. The data you provide in the interviews will be used to investigate your understanding of source use and whether educational and/or cultural factors affect this understanding in academic writing.

How is confidentiality maintained?

The data you provide will be confidential, stored and kept secured; access will be limited to the researcher and the supervisors of the study. The results will be anonymous and it will not be
possible to identify you as a participant. The audio-records of interviews will be completely deleted and destroyed after the completion of the study.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

What is the duration of the research?

2 interviews of 45 minutes each

Where will the research be conducted?

The interviews will be conducted on campus; details on location and time will be sent to you/negotiated via email.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The results of the study will primarily be used for my PhD thesis. The results may also be published in academic journals or presented at academic conferences. I may use direct quotations from the interview data. However, all data will be anonymised and linking the data to you will not be possible.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or my supervisor on the following email addresses:

Sahar Abdelelah    sahar.abdulelah@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Juup Stelma        Juup.Stelma@manchester.ac.uk
Appendix 3 Participant Consent Form

Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The Case of Arab Students

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree to take part in the above project

_________________________________________ Date Signature

Name of person taking consent
Sahar Abdulelah

_________________________________________ Date Signature
Appendix 4 Invitation for participation/ Tutors

Dear ..,

My name is Sahar Abdulelah and I'm a PhD student in Education, University of Manchester doing research around academic writing. My research title is: *Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The Case of Arab Students*. 

Part of my research is to look at students' assignments and I'm emailing to take your permission for involving a student's of yours papers in my research. The student is (student’s name), (student ID), (course unit).

I have contacted the student and she/he agrees to take part and gave me your name and email so as to contact you for permission.

May I kindly ask you to go over the information sheet attached and if you agree to give permission please sign the consent form and send it back to me either through my email or my internal address on:

(Address)

If you have any questions regarding my study or your participation, please do not hesitate to email me.

I really appreciate your help and cooperation

Many thanks in advance,
Appendix 5 Tutors Information Sheet

*Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The Case of Arab Students*

You are being contacted to get your permission for involving a previous student of yours (name of student / Student ID / course unit number / name of course unit) in a research study as part of my project toward the degree of PhD in Education. It is important to get your consent because part of my analysis involves acquiring assessed assignments of students. These assignments will be collected from students only if you agree to that and if the paper has been run through Turnitin already.

Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for reading this.

**Who will conduct the research?**

*Sahar Abdalelah - School of Education, University of Manchester.*

**Title of the Research**

*Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The case of Arab students*

**What is the aim of the research?**

The aim of this study is to investigate intertextuality and how students use sources in academic writing. The goal is to develop an understanding of how Arab students understand their use of sources and whether students’ educational and cultural background shape or affect their understanding of use of sources in their academic writing projects.

**What would I be asked to do if I give my permission?**

*If you give me permission to involve your student, you will be asked to sign the consent form for this. Nothing else will be required from you.*

**What happens if I do not wish to give my permission?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to give your permission. If you give your permission you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

*The results of the study will primarily be used for my PhD thesis. The results may also be published in academic journals or presented at academic conferences. However, all data will be anonymised and linking the data to participants or course unit tutors will not be possible.*

**Contact for further information**
If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or my supervisor on the following email addresses:

Sahar Abdalelah  sahar.abdalelah@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Juup Stelma  Juup.Stelma@manchester.ac.uk
Appendix 6 Tutor Consent Form

Intertextuality and Source Use in Academic Writing: The Case of Arab Students

If you are happy to give your permission please complete and sign the consent form below.

5. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily

6. I agree to give my permission to involve my student’s assignment in the study

7. I confirm that my permission is voluntary

4. I confirm that the assignment has been run through Turnitin previously

I agree to take part in the above project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Tutor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<th>Name of person taking consent</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sahar Abdulelah</td>
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</table>
Appendix 7 Inter-Coder Reliability (ICR) Check

This typology is based on Pecorari and Shaw (2012). Please read the description of each category below and put each example to which category it belongs, whether indirect type of intertextuality, conventional, or unconventional. You may use the space under each example to put any comments if needed. For a more explanation on the typology see attached file of Pecorari and Shaw article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect Intertextuality</th>
<th>Formulaic language including words or phrases e.g. it can be seen that/it should be noted that/play an important role in.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conventional Intertextuality</td>
<td>Intext citation from a source with appropriate attribution. Use of synonyms, direct quotes or ideas is based on standards of referencing in academic writing and is clearly identified by the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconventional Intertextuality</td>
<td>Intext use of words/phrases/ long chunks of quoted sentences/ ideas from a source with inadequate attribution. Direct quotes are not signalled appropriately. There may be few alterations such as substitution of synonyms or word order, and the source of what is altered is not clear or wrongly attributed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Student paper:

Hofstede (2005:4) defines culture in national terms as a "collective programming of the mind" which drives our patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. In his view, individuals of one group can be distinguished from others according their culture, which is basically learned and acquired from the social environment, rather than being inherited from one's roots.

Hofstede (2005:4)

Culture is always a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. Culture is learned, not innate. It derives from one's social environment rather than from one's genes. Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from individual's personality on the other.

☐ Indirect  ☐ Conventional  ☐ Unconventional

Any comments?
2. Student’s paper:
In the past few years, education technology has been combined into teaching and learning in many educational institutions all around the world.


In recent years, educational technology has been widely incorporated into teaching and learning in many educational institutions across the globe.

☐ Indirect ☐ Conventional ☐ Unconventional

Any comments?

3. Student’s paper:
The main objective of the LA fitness is eager to sustain the same commitment to customers as day one, LA fitness joined with MidOcean Partners in 2005. Since then LA fitness continuing building on 20 years’ experience in the fitness industry, joining with other groups like Dragon gyms to help bring our unique, affordable and fun brand of fitness closer to your doorstep (LA fitness, 2013).

LA fitness website 2013

Keen to maintain the same commitment to customers as day one, LA fitness joined with MidOcean Partners in 2005. Since then, we’ve been building on 20 years’ experience in the fitness industry, joining with other groups like Dragon gyms to help bring our unique, affordable and fun brand of fitness closer to your doorstep.

☐ Indirect ☐ Conventional ☐ Unconventional

Any comments?
4. Student’s paper:

Professional development, (Mainka 2007) suggest this factor is important since it allows teachers to have continuous learning in order to increase their skills and knowledge.


According to Mainka (2007), this factor is very important as it allows teachers to engage in continuous learning in order to keep advancing their skills and to ensure that students can always be provided with quality learning conditions.

☐ Indirect  ☐ Conventional  ☐ Unconventional

Any comments?

5. Student’s paper:

Lee and Park (2009) found that there was positive relationship between CSR activities and firm value for hotels while no relationship in the context of casinos was found. Still, the authors did not differentiate between the positive and negative impacts of CSR. Garcia and Armas (2007) provided evidence of a positive impact of CSR activities on company return on assets (ROA). However, the measurement of CSR activities was based on managers’ opinions, and therefore the observations might have been biased (Garcia and Armas, 2007).

Kang et al. (2010) p. 73-74

In a recent study, Garcia and Armas (2007) found a positive relationship between hotel companies’ CSR activities and return on assets (ROA). However, in measuring CSR activities, they collected data based on managers’ opinions, which might be biased, reflecting lower construct validity. Another study (Lee and Park, 2009) measured impacts of CSR activities separately for hotel and casino companies in terms of profitability (ROE and ROA) and firm value (AMV: average market value). Lee and Park found a different relationship between CSR activities and profitability (and firm value) for hotel companies (positive relationship) and casino companies (no relationship). However, their study measured CSR as one aggregate variable that combines positive and negative CSR activities together, thereby commingling the possible individual impact of two such different (i.e., positive and negative) activities.

☐ Indirect  ☐ Conventional  ☐ Unconventional
Any comments?

6. Student’s paper:

To conclude this discussion, unlike ‘ghosts’, ‘gunmen known as shabiha’ and ‘pro-regime militia’ which give an inadequate meaning of the neologism shabiha, a phrase such as ‘pro-Assad militiamen, known as shabiha or "ghosts"’ could be more readable, accurate and the closest to the reality of the situation in Syria. Thus, an acceptable rendition of shabiha would be by transferring it into the TL, with further explanation that preserves the cultural impact of the term.

Alawneh 2007 P.49

To tell the truth, this rendition could be more accurate and closer to the reality of the situation in Palestine because the process of tasfiyah is committed by the occupiers without any consideration of others’ rights. In addition, ‘elimination’ is frequently used by the occupier. Unlike ‘elimination’, the other meanings of ‘liquidation’, in the same dictionary, include reference to commerce or business from which the term tasfiyah has developed.

To conclude this discussion, elimination gives an inaccurate rendering of the neologism tasfiyah as far as the resistance members are concerned.

☐ Indirect ☐ Conventional ☐ Unconventional

Any comments?

7. Student’s paper:

Kray and colleagues (2001) investigated the impact of the negative stereotype that women are perceived as a threat in the aspect of managerial behaviour, particularly in negotiation performance. They concluded that women negotiated worse than men when the stereotype threat was significant. On the other hand, when the stereotype threat was not salient, there was no difference between women’s and men’s negotiation performance (Kray et al., 2002).

Bergeron et al. 2006 p. 137

Previous research has demonstrated that women do experience stereotype threat in the domain of a managerial activity, namely in negotiation performance (Kray et al., 2001). Kray and her colleagues (2001) investigated the impact of the negative stereotype that women are perceived to possess more traits characteristic of ineffective
negotiators than are men. They found that women negotiated worse than men when stereotype threat was salient (Kray et al., 2001), but there was no difference when stereotype threat was not salient (Kray, Galinsky, & Thompson, 2002).

8. Student’s paper

Moreover, GRI designed to ensure firms report precise and expose right information to their stakeholder, provide a framework for measuring more than just the financial performance of organizations and looking to the whole of the organization’s impact (Boulter, 2011).

Scholz, (2012)

GRI started in 1997 as a joint initiative between CERES and UNEP to provide a framework for measuring more than just the financial performance of organizations, looking to the entirety of the organization’s impact.

9. Student’s paper:

Smith and Kleiner (1987) believe that there is always a "dominant culture" that reflects the overall interests and the core values of the majority.

Smith and Kleiner (1987)

There is usually a dominant culture which expresses core values that are shared by a majority of the organisation’s members.
10. Student’s paper:

Additionally, Miroshnik (2002) believes that in the **divergent process**, there would be greater chances for improving **problem-solving skills**, enhancing **flexibility** and adapting new marketing ideas.

Miroshnik (2002) p. 528

*We can observe, whereas cultural diversity causes most problems in convergent processes, it leads to the most advantages in divergent processes...Thus, advantages include enhanced creativity, flexibility and problem solving skills especially on complex problems involving large numbers of quantitative factors...*


\[ \begin{array}{ccc}
\square & \text{Indirect} & \square & \text{Conventional} & \square & \text{Unconventional}
\end{array} \]

Any comments?

11. Student’s paper:

Three substantial elements of organizational culture have been identified, all positively related to marketing efficiency: **customer orientation**, **service quality orientation** and **informality and innovation orientation** (Sin & Tse, 2000)

Sin & Tse, (2000) p. 301

*As a result of the above analyses, the organizational culture of a service firm can be described as being made up of three essential components: customer orientation, service quality orientation, and informality and innovation orientation.*

\[ \begin{array}{ccc}
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\end{array} \]

Any comments?

12. Student’s paper:

* A positive culture when members of an organization develop healthy relationships,
communication and collaboration with other members. (Marwan and Sweeney 2010)

Marwan and Sweeney (2010) p. 466

According to Sopow, an organization can be said to have a positive culture if members of this organization can develop healthy relationships, communication and collaboration with other members.

☐ Indirect  ☐ Conventional  ☐ Unconventional

Any comments?
Appendix 8 Inter-Coder Reliability Check (ICR) Results

- The shaded boxes mark disagreement between coders.

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<th>Coder 3</th>
<th>Coder 4</th>
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Appendix 9 Interview One Schedule

Semi-structured Interview

The interview will be conducted on campus, in one of the study rooms in the library as these are formal enough for the interviews and having the transparent walls would make such a location more culturally appropriate for male participants from Arab countries. The following interview questions mark the general focus of the phase 2 interviews.

This interview also aims to generate data on the influence of the participants’ educational and cultural background on their use of sources. The following questions represent the general focus of the interview, yet there might be some alterations or additions given the uniqueness of each participant.

The interview is expected to last about 45 minutes.

Part I

- Self introduction and creating rapport with the participant
- Giving an overview of the study, how long the interview will last, what to expect in it, and asserting confidentiality of the data collected
- Asking the participant general questions: where they come from, their current and previous major, course taken in university
- I would like to ask you about your previous university education: Did you attend a private or public university? Was the degree in the same area of what you’re doing here in Mcr? what kinds of writing did you do during your undergrad years?
- How much reading were you doing in university? What kinds of readings were you acquainted with? Related to your area/interest/
- What are the types of assessment you had in your previous education? For example, research papers, exams, presentations etc.
- Were there projects where you had to analyse and evaluate information or create an argument?
- If yes, in these projects were your ideas present?
- Or were there cases where you had to present your ideas and opinions, and were these valued/ encouraged?
• Were you trained in university in how to do referencing/manage information (e.g. note taking) in project papers?

Part II

• Tell me about your education in school: Private/public school?

• How much writing did you do during your school years? Was there focus on writing? (Arabic/English) Were there any research/reports projects that you have to complete?

• Was there any analytical writing where you had to analyse information and incorporate them in your writing?

• What types of assessment were common in your school?

Part III

• When you read articles/books related to your field of study, do you sometimes disagree with what you read? Do you explain this disagreement in writing for example in your papers? Or orally during class/group discussions. Have you done that in previous instances in university or school?

• Tell me about copyrights or intellectual rights in your country. Are these ideas common? Is this a topic of discussion? If yes, is this recently or has been an issue in past years?

• Do people talk about owning ideas in your society?

• Are there any cases where originality of work has been discussed? Authorship?

• Is there anything that you would like to add?

Thanking the participant and Closure
Sahar: Thank you for accepting to have this interview. Can I first ask you if I can audio record this interview?

Mehad: I authorize you to record, of course I am willingly here to have an interview.

Sahar: All right thank you very much. First of all, let me tell you again about my research. My research is about intertextuality and working on how students use sources in their academic writing, and I particularly look at students from Arabic backgrounds. Now can I ask you to tell me a little bit about yourself, what you do here and where you come from?

Mehad: I come from the united arab imarates one of the youngest countries in the world, I have brought up in a village in my country in a country side and as other people I just went to the primary school to the preparatory..the secondary school um..and then, there is nothing in particular but I was a good student I mean my grade..i always get the first or second one in the class and in my secondary school I got like 94 percent , if you familiar with the science (Arabic: ‘ilmy adabi) it was (‘ilmy) as well, so maybe this influence my studying..

Sahar: yeah, alright.I would like to ask you a little bit about your university education was that in ….

Sahar: ok, lets continue then , I’d like to ask you about your previous university education was it , you said in Emirates.

Mehad: yes after my secondary school I went to the police college, this college is training military, marching ..this kind of military training as well as they give us special courses and it equals to bachelor. So they are qualified for giving bacholar in law, I’ve done my part in this police college four years and half graduated by..I got the first one as well, among 180 persons, fortunately, so I got my bacholar.

Sahar: I’m thinking how about the assessment in that bachelors degree.

Mehad: that’s a good question. The assessment was always always based on the exams, testing your memories, its familiar with the law because they give you like examples, situation either you are a lawyer or a judge and you just argue about it but your argument always, the lecturer always encourage us to just write whats there in the book, so it’s like one way communication or..just the best answer, one right answer.

Sahar: ok, and how about writing, did you have any kind of projects like research or..

Mehad: Well we’ve done the last year they ask us as a new initiative for change the teaching style in police college, they ask us to do some research, but it was a very light one. It taken like two days three days we went to the internet we did some research and then we write it down in Arabic. I was, this was the hardest part among us as students.

Sahar: do you mean the writing?
Mehad: yes the research process was the most difficult one, because it’s new for people, you used to just read and write, that’s it, and they ask to be researched it was difficult for them.

Sahar: how about reading, how much reading were you doing in your BA degree, I mean the types of reading and materials

Mehad: we got a lot books I remember, a lot of books, so it can’t be read, all of them, that’s why..

Sahar: Who assign these? The tutor or someone else?

Mehad: No by the system, that’s where the lecturer part come, he just come and say these books are silly and just read this chapter, these chapters, he specified certain chapters which we focus on it and then the exams always come like this because he the one who put the exam, so there was like a disagreement between the lecturer and the content itself in one part, and the second part in the exam he always, we always argue with him so we talk to him please can you help us, and he just delete one chapter from the exam (laughing) they use to send me all the time to him because I was good, I was like convincing at some points so they said go to him talk to him just we need two chapters, and it usually worked.

Sahar: how about..were there any kind of other readings for interest or any kind of..

Mehad: (interrupts) no, no, it wasn’t any kind of reading but to be clear here our study was a little bit different from university one because we used to be under observation all the time as you know military souldiers lets say, policemen so we don’t have time for it, half day we just spend it outside doing a lot of training, sports, judo, karate, shooting so that’s why I heard a new system now, they overweighted the educational part of time, and most of the time when we have like exam we just go to the..we had like this compulsory reading time as soldiers so this, you have two hours you need to read all the ...like machine, training time, studying time and now reading time, sleeping time (laughing). I remember once it was a sleeping time and I want to study more, they ask me no, just sleep, its not allowed to read, it’s unbelievable, you got 2 hours its unfair to have more than 2 hours (laughing)

Sahar: ok…and ..so we talked about the assessment...did you during that project that you’ve written at the end of the program did you..you said you’ve used information from the internet like sources...

Mehad: (interrupt) yeah I remember yeah but we had no clue which source are reliable or not so the first thing I learned when I came to the UK that the Wikipedia is not a reliable one, so I was kind of disappointed (laughing) because I thought it’s one of the best because usually it gives you the right answer, straightforward in a simple way and whatever, so they say no you can’t, you can’t do it.

Sahar: and did you, is there a section in that project where you had to present your opinions and ideas or discuss what you have read..

Mehad: oh I can’t exactly remember but in your part of question I don’t think so because what we were asked is just to buy some books or read some books and summarize it in your way , that’s what I was doing, and I achieved a good result
on it. Of course it’s your choice of the books you choose and the way you summarize and the voice you choose.

Sahar: do you remember if you had listed the references that you had used.

Mehad: I don’t even remember the title (laughing) but it was about leadership, because it’s long time ago like 2005/4, maybe for some it’s recent but for me, I can’t remember anything.

Sahar: Ok one more question, do you remember also having been trained in university on how to manage information and how to do referencing and..like notetaking for example

Mehad: In the referencing part we studied in the research that I’ve done, the one I told you about. They gave us a special course for how to reference but, the same way, they just put books and say just do it this way, that’s why..they don’t tell us why we should do it this way or what is this way called because when I got the other books I thought oh they did wrong, because they didn’t follow my way of referencing, or the way taught me to, so they didn’t explain the big picture, so we like always kind of lost, so they should explain like there are many kinds of referencing and this way called for example Harvard system lets say.

Sahar: do you mean they taught you the English kind of referencing?

Mehad: no no it was Arabic but I said Harvard system as an example. That’s why it just…we forgot it straightforward because the way they taught us it doesn’t…it was like a temporary time…yeah I used to put one reference in my eyes and just follow it.

Sahar: so going back to …trying to remember your school days, particularly highschool, the last 2/3 years of highschool, did you attend a private or a public school.

Mehad: it was a public school.

Sahar: Tell me about writing in school, what kind of writing were you doing during school, like do remember the kinds of writing, projects or research..

Mehad: I can’t, no, it was most of the assessment based on the exam, I remembered even in the English class, we used to have this kind of writing type so even the writing part, they gave us 3 or 4 paragraphs and they told us that one of them will come in the exam. You imagine, this is the secondary school, the highschool, the last, so, we just, what we have to do is just to memorise the 4 paragraphs, and when it comes in the exam, we just write it down as it is and we got like the full mark. If you write it as it is, you will get the full mark. So suppose that 5 people got the full mark, say they have the same paragraph which is in the book, that’s how my study experience based on.

Sahar: this is the English part how about Arabic did you have any…

Mehad: No, no writing, oh yeah, in the Arabic class there was like ta’bir (Arabic) you know, I remember this ta’bir تعبير, but nothing else, in the science it’s just like books, read your book, you will be alright.

Sahar: did you do any kind of presentations or any kind of

Mehad: (Interrupts) not in my school, no, in the bachelor we’ve done presentation, what you have researched in the last year.
Sahar: ok, I’ll move to the last part of this interview…when you read articles or books related to your field of study, do you sometimes disagree with what you read?

Mehad: yeah I did sometimes, if you need an example I can give you, I remember once when they say the Arab people always say (Arabic) mashaallah because they are, they fear to plan for the future, because they believe that the future is with, in the gods will, and I wrote it in one assignment that I think this is based on the misunderstanding of the Islamic teaching or values, because we are ordered in Quran to plan ( wa a’du lahüm mastatatu’um min quwa) (quranic verse) we are ordered to work hard, we are ordered to (wamshu fi manakebeha ..(quranic verse) for example, but you do your part and the result is based on Allah will, I wrote it very frankly in my dissertation and I was argue about it. Because it was like a wrong interpretation of English or western or eastern writer so here is my part as a researcher I should express myself, and I did this sentence without reference because it’s my voice in my research.

Sahar: so you did that in your dissertation?

Mehad: I done it in my assignment actually.

Sahar: were you used to doing something like that in your previous degree in your country?

Mehad: Because.. I haven’t done any research, my first research, real research it was here, during my master degree, but the English language and how you are good at it is very critical point because if you have a good English, you have a lot of basic vocabulary then you can rephrase very easily, while if you haven’t these kind of, you just put the sentence as it is then it looks like plagiarism.

Sahar: ok..tell me about copyrights or intellectual rights in your country, like are these ideas common, is it a topic of discussion for example..

Mehad: Yeah, actually I found a very interesting thing last time when I was in Emirates I’m not sure if I can say this in a, but I will say it, I found Arabic books written by Arabic people and these books are copy paste from English books

Sahar: Do you mean is it like translation or what?

Mehad: Absolutely translation from English to Arabic and they put their name on it. Without saying that this is… it was amazing, I should have reported it in some point but I didn’t find the manager that day, which was my last day in my country before I came back here, but I’m planning to do something about it.

Sahar: Why do you think this has happened? And you found these books in a book store?

Mehad: In library.

Sahar: Is there like any control over infringement? ‘Jihat muraqaba lilmukhalafat’?

Mehad: I’m not sure, they should have some kind of, but maybe there are lack of experience and because of the Arabic translation, they couldn’t find a match between them, but for me I just, even the structure was the same as a book I read
Sahar: is it something related to your field?

Mehad: it was, I just went to the library to see what is the Arabic thinking (laugh) then I found the Arabic oh wow, I read it, just same as the other book, same exactly, chapters, come on, not even a sentence or a page, chapters, chapters by chapters, exactly the same as English book, and then some guy from lebanese with a fancy clothes suit and..a pink tie..sorry I went off topic

Sahar: no absolutely fine, this is part of the topic.

Mehad: why you choose a topic like that (laughing)

Sahar: do you think people would talk about owning ideas, so if like other people saw that incident that happen with you would they talk about it and would they say that this shouldn’t happen.

Mehad: I think people start thinking like this way..

Sahar: start? Do you mean in past years they wouldn’t think that way

Mehad: I remember like hadramout restaurant we got 10 or 20 restaurant called hadrmout so like even the brand business they have, they don’t mind to have the same name in your business, different owners, different management, different shop, so this kind of owning concept they don’t have it in mind. Nowadays they start changing, adapting, what’s me it’s for me, you can’t claim it back, yeah

Sahar: why do you think this is happening?

Mehad: hmm..I can’t give you a straightforward answer, but it’s a culture, its cultural thing I guess, yeah, lack of academic culture as well, there are many things in the mass law, are you familiar with the mass law peramid, that people the first thing they need to have is some kind of security food then they need a job then they need like a good positions so what his argument is you always look for the basics then you got the advanced level so when you talking about ownening ideas, they have something even have more priority than this and they don’t have it in the country, maybe if you can go to the micro level of political speaking, democracy, how to express feelings and ideas and you talking about ownening ideas? come on (laugh) I mean maybe it’s something related to, yeah.

Sahar: is there anything that you’de like to add at the end?

Mehad: not right now (laugh)

Sahar: thank you very much.
Appendix 11 Interview Two Schedule

**Semi-structured Interview**

The interview in this phase will be conducted as a follow-up to the previous interview so as to allow for some reflections on what was said in the previous one. Therefore, before this interview takes place, the previous one should have been transcribed.

Two copies of the participant’s text (which was previously analysed in phase 1) should be available for the interviewer and the interviewee, and both will include highlighting of the specific examples of intertextuality that will be discussed.

Questions in this interview will respond to the unique features of the interviewee’s text and accordingly questions will be added/eliminated as appropriate.

It is important in this interview to set the recording device in a place where it is not affected by the movement of the papers as this movement may create noise or interrupt the recording.

**Part I**
- Creating rapport with the participant
- Asking for verbal consent to do audio recording
- Giving an overview of the study, how long the interview will last, what to expect in it, and asserting confidentiality of the data collected

**Part II**
- Tell me about the paper you sent: purpose of paper, for which course, choice of topic how much time it took you to complete.
- Was it easy to find sources for your paper? Did you use mostly books or journal articles? Why? Can you talk a little about a source that you can remember using? How useful it was? In what ways?
- Did you use any Arabic language sources in your paper? Did you have to translate those? Were these books? Journal articles? Websites? Newspapers?
- Were these Arab sources easy to reference?
- Do you find any difficulties in doing in-text citations and listing references?
Part III

- Did you use any referencing software or did you manually organize your sources?

- Did you use any editing/proofreading services? why? If yes, how much change was done to the paper? Do you remember what kind of changes? Grammatical/structural/referencing/other...

- How did you synthesise (collect or put together/manage) information? For example, did you start by making a plan of which sources too look at through search engines, or did you take notes from each source and accumulate them before writing? Or, did you start writing and incorporated sources one by one? Or, did you do something different?

* Now I’m going to ask you some questions about referencing in your paper, and my questions are basically on what you did; I’m not making any judgments whether it’s good or bad, and I’m not interested in whether it’s good or bad either. What interests me is how you did it and how you think when you did it. (Can switch to Arabic just to make them feel more comfortable)

- You have used certain source(s) heavily (I will point to examples), what is the reason?

- You have a number of quotes in your paper, why did you use direct quotes? Was there a difficulty of paraphrasing? Why do you think? For example, the sentences are long? The vocabulary is complicated? The ideas are difficult to understand? Using the quotes was the best way to communicate?

- In page...you changed some of the words in the original source and copied the rest, What do you think of this specific example? Why did you do that?

- In page ...there is a direct quote but you did not put quotation marks/page numbers, why do you think this happened?

- In page.. do you think you accurately conveyed the meaning the source text presented?

(For the above question, I will bring the source text to the interview so that the participant can have a look at it as well)

- In page...you used synonyms of the words in the source text, how did you get these synonyms? Why did you use synonyms? How did that happened? Did you use a dictionary? Other?

- Is there anything that you would like to add regarding your source use in this text or about anything else you think I might benefit from knowing about?

Thanking the participant and Closure
Appendix 12 Interview Two Transcript Sample

Sahar: Hello and welcome to the second interview, I just want to take your consent to record this interview.
Mehad: Yeah I’m ok with that.
Sahar: alright, so we have talked previously about the topic of my research which is intertextuality and source use in academic writing and in this interview I would like to ask you about the papers you sent me. The interview may last 45 minutes approximately.
I brought a copy of the papers. Take a look at this paper here, just to remember what it was about and everything, and for which course was it.
Mehad: yeah this is my first assignment in the master, yeah which took me for one whole month
Sahar: one month to write it or to do the research for it as well?
Mehad: to write it, the second one was for 2 weeks, the third one was for 1 week, and so far so well (laugh).
Sahar: great, so it was gradual then.
Mehad: gradual yeah.
Sahar: how did you choose that topic?
Mehad: well it was a direct answer for the question, so the question was to choose, to talk, it’s not a very specific question but it was open one, but it was about choose an international business and how the culture play critical role on shaping business people planning and even the customers perceptions of the items and..
Sahar: and was it, your masters was in..
Mehad: in organizational change and management but we took one about the international management module so it was one module we have to learn what the international management looks like.
Sahar: and this is under which school?
Mehad: School of environment and development.
Sahar: ok.
Mehad: it could be related to business though because it’s the same thing.
Sahar: right, so it took you one month to complete, ok, was it easy to find sources for this paper?
Mehad: oh because it’s my first paper, I struggle to find journal articles, or articles about it, I don’t, I didn’t even know how to open..but I get ideas from friends from.. I keep asking all the time, and here we go, yeah.
Sahar: did you use mostly books or journal articles?
Mehad: well we were advised to use more journal articles than books but books was easier for me than articles.
Sahar: why so?
Mehad: hmm..because..easier.
Sahar: do you remember that if there was one specific book or article that you really really used a lot or you really like or was more informing to you than any other ones?
Mehad: I remember one book was Armstrong, HR, not in this module but it was in another module, because this book was in a very broad book which talk about everything in HR, and it was designed for students so it was easier for me to find the right information and to reference it in this book whereas in the general articles and the other books maybe the way the presentation of the book wasn’t as simple as this book so maybe this all reason for me.
Sahar: did you use any Arabic sources for this paper?
Mehad: no
Sahar: ok do you find any difficulties in doing in-text citation or listing references?
Mehad: it was very challenging for me.
Sahar: why?
Mehad: because I never done it before, honestly I never done it, I was so cautious not to be accused for plagiarism or whatever so I was so so (repetition) cautious about it so every sentence I just keep writing, keep paraphrasing change the sentence all the time and I wasn’t so confident about my writing until I got the result of this when I get like 63/64 so then I just gain some confidence but otherwise I was so afraid of it because for others they have made it before but for me as an Arabic student it was my absolute first time, yeah.
Sahar: and did you use any editing or proofreading service?
Mehad: well yes I have used one guy, not a website but it was a guy who was a little bit professional and it was recommended by friends he says he know Arabic people so when I say something he understand it, you know some Arabs are directly translate to Arabic or whatever, so he just edit my work and put it in much better presentation and language.
Sahar: how much change do you think was done to the paper?
Mehad: hm...how can I rate it, if I say from 1 to 10 if my writing is 6 it will become 7 after the editing, if it’s 4 it will become 5, like one degree only. But not much change.
Sahar: ok, so, do you remember what kind of changes did he make? Like grammatical, or in terms of references.
Mehad: I got the problem with that all the time, so he change this kind of grammar only, and he usually shorten my sentence, that’s I think, in general he use my words, he doesn’t bring any new words, very rarely when he use another words from his mind or whatever, but in general he just change the passive the active, in a more logical way in the eyes of an English native speaker.
Sahar: how did you synthesise, like I mean by synthesise to collect or put together information, how did you put together all this information for example did you start by making a plan or how did you start this assignment?
Mehad: of course the starting was always my hardest time, especially the introduction part, how to start assignment it was a nightmare for me.
Sahar: do you write a kind of a plan or what you’re going to include in a paper?
Mehad: hmm...it was a plan in kind that I choose my structure then I fill in each heading of the section or subsections, but in general I read, I read, and the more I read the plan change and new ideas come and I translate it into my paper, so there is no specific plan, but, yeah that’s me.
Sahar: but you do use an outline? Or..
Mehad: I use it but I never stick at it because..yeah changing maybe I should read more before that I put the structure or vice versa I don’t really know but it works, it works.
Sahar: do you usually write directly from the book or do you put your information in one file and then use it..
Mehad:(interrupting) directly from the book, that’s a little bit slow, but I mean when I finish my paragraph I don’t come back and put it, or work it again.
Sahar: do you put the reference right away?
Mehad: straight forward all the time, even I put the reference in the down [the reference list] so I don’t delay it until the end.
Sahar: why do you do that?
Mehad: I am a tidy person, I forget a lot so just I don’t even use the notebook, endnote program.
Sahar: do you manually manage your references?
Mehad: I manually manage it, exactly I just trust myself, my fingers, my memories and that’s it, and it works, but I found it more, more safe or more satisfactory for me to put it manually in my way. Yeah so before I reference in the paragraph I just put it in the list.
Sahar: Now I’m going to ask you some questions about referencing in your paper, and my questions are basically on what you did; I’m not making any judgments whether it’s good or bad, and I’m not interested in whether it’s good or bad either. What interests me is how you did it and how you think when you did it. Alright let’s move to talking about this specific paper and talking about examples from the paper. You have cited Luthen and D in here, this one here, if you take a look, you’ve cited it many times, almost 6 times in the paper, why do you think this has happened?
Mehad: because it’s the most relevant article, so sometimes you read a lot of articles but sometimes you feel that this article is, is my paper, more or less, so maybe I follow its structure I liked his opinion or maybe he was more clearer, his language, I don’t know, but if I use a source, the model here, it should be very relevant to my topic, should be very relevant. hmm..yeah.
Sahar: there are few instances in the paper where you changed some of the words and put synonyms, and then you wrote the rest of the sentence as it is, what do you think of these specific examples here, for example in page, here in page 8, you’ve used…(reading sentences from paper) and then you used extent for example instead of degree, and here, to which suits instead of fits, I mean so many synonyms you’ve used, what is the reason for that?
Mehad: because..at this..at that stage when I was, this is my first assignment, this is my way of paraphrasing, this was my way, now I get to know maybe I could combine 2 sentences and put it in a very different way, but at this stage it was my way, yeah
Sahar: and how did you get these synonyms? From where? what did you use?
Mehad: I use the website called ‘thes’..‘therus’, hmm..
Sahar: do you mean thesaurus?
Mehad: that’s the one, I put the word it gives me the whole synonyms, I pick one
(laugh)
Sahar: How do you know if that word is suitable in meaning?
Mehad: sounds..sounds..how it sounds..
Sahar: Ok, alright, so, why did you use synonyms?
Mehad: to avoid the..being accused for plagiarism, that’s what my understanding, yeah, so when you put synonyms, it is you who write the sentence, but if you don’t use it then you should use, you should just copy paste otherwise it become like a quotation not a sentence.
Sahar: alright, in page 2 here…
Mehad: oh you’ve done your homework (laugh)
Sahar: here you’ve talked about the 5 cultural dimensions of Hofstead framework, but you’ve put the exact wording of these dimensions without quotation marks, why do you think this happened here?
Mehad: oh because hmm..these dimensions are kind of terminology and it’s been used for a lot of.. following articles and books and they don’t put the quotation marks. That’s the reason why, because you not quote something, you just put a names, so like the United Arab Emirates is consist of Abu Dhabi Dubai Sharjah you don’t put..it’s a fact..that’s the reason why , yeah..
Sahar: and was that taken from this one? Where did you get the dimensions from?
Mehad: yeah, because..(long pause)
Sahar: did you take them from Hofstead?
Mehad: yeah, he identified 5 principle dimensions, these dimensions are…
Sahar: Aha , ok but why didn’t you add for example the page number?
Mehad: again in our system of referencing, the page is quotation, and it wasn’t a quotation, because he mention this dimension in every page in his book, yeah so it wasn’t like specific sentence or section in his book, no he got a lot of books all of them he talk about that dimension all the time.
Sahar: right…ok also here in page 2 and page 10 as well if you take a look at it, you quoted something and you have added this sign [sic] so you’ve already put a quotation and then you’ve changed this word because it was this phrase: this knowledge , forms values creates attitudes..but why is it necessary to put this word instead?
Mehad: in our Harvard system, they taught us that when you use, when you change a quotation or some part of the quotation inside it, so for example you ..because hmm..because , it depends on the way you write your paragraph, sometimes ‘she’ or ‘he’ I mean ‘that’, or for plural or singular so it depends so if we change anything from the quotation we should use this marks, that’s my understanding (* tapping on the table again)
Sahar: yeah right but I was just thinking how would it be important in terms of meaning or structure
Mehad: actually I put this kind of referencing, it was my first assignment, so I was, intending to learn every kind of referencing skills or this kinds, and also to show the supervisor that come on I know, I am Arabic, but I know (laugh)
Sahar: oh alright
Mehad: then I learned the ibid one, you know ibid? when you repeat the quotation, so..
Sahar: oh I see
Mehad: so you don’t need to put the name again, you put ibid
Sahar: oh yes this is what I was going to ask you, I’ve seen few of them here
Mehad: really..I get to know this (*tapping again)
Sahar: I believe they were in pages 6,8 and 11
Mehad: I thought I didn’t…oh wow..
Sahar: was it you who wrote these?or the proofreader?
Mehad: not the proofreader, he doesn’t..it was my instructions not to touch anything from the reference because even the..the reference..because the reference maybe the Harvard system they got many styles so.. specially in the last list, so ..like a little letter..I don’t know..so this is my way, don’t touch it, that’s it. Sometimes they put double quotation mark like this but I ask him not to touch anything, all the reference was on me.
Sahar: oh ok, alright .. in the paper there are 2 sources that were listed here at the end of the ..at the reference list, this one, and this one here these 2 were mentioned in the reference list but they were not used in the actual assignment, do you know how did these end up in your reference list?do you remember what happened?
Mehad: it should be one reason, because it happens to me so many times, it should be a sentence that I..it was there referenced by these people, and then I delete it somehow, I change it or maybe the proofreader he did this, I’m not sure and I didn’t just catch it because I did it manually, yeah that’s the only reason, so I haven’t put it to make my reference list longer (laugh) it is long, I don’t need it, I got this hobby..but definitely I was using them then I delete their sentence and they remain in my list
Sahar: ok..
Mehad: now I see why you need the authorization of our supervisor (laugh)
Sahar: why do you think
Mehad: (laugh) because it was a very…I sent you one of my good papers but you still find something, I imagine other students (laugh) …why you use this, where is the reference….(laugh)
Sahar: the idea is not to put you on the spot, it’s only to try to understand if these things happen, what are the reasons behind them,
Mehad: alright alright, I understand
Sahar: is there anything that you’d like to add at the end ?
Mehad: no no its your part now if there is anything please tell me, feel free
Sahar: I think that’s probably it …I was , yeah this was interesting here ..because it says ‘you cannot have a theory of standardation’ and you changed it to we..
Mehad: oh yeah because Horden argues that..oh yeah yeah because if he said you it means like me or someone but I want to argue using ‘us’ all the time so ….we because I’m talking to the, because I always use the third,second person to express like ‘me’ ‘we’ I don’t say ‘I’ ‘we’ as…
Sahar: do you mean, is it related to being like academic? Or ….
Mehad: no I’m just in my writing I’m talking to certain kind of people so I always use ‘we’ instead of ‘I’, ‘we think’ ‘we should do this’ or ‘we shouldn’t have done this’ that’s my way of writing, but if you let me read some of…
Sahar: yeah yeah take your time..
Mehad: yeah…hmm…this gona take time , but I …I believe I use ‘we’ some..alot of times because to not to change the person I’m talking to, the audience, the readers, they talk ‘we’ as ‘we’ ….but you, when you read you, who is you?
Sahar: is it like …to be more general?
Mehad: yeah, yeah that’s what I’m saying, instead of one person ‘you’ which may..
Sahar: are you addressing one organization? or maybe one…?
Mehad: the general, the interesting word about ‘you’ when you read it ‘you’ you refer to me, when I say it ‘you’ refer to you, it is complicated.. yeah
Sahar: do you use that in most of your assignemnts
Mehad:exactly, yeah, ‘we suppose’ ‘we don’t have to’ ‘we argue’ it is our term
Sahar: do you think that’s taken from Arabic?
Mehad: maybe, I don’t know
Sahar: because the word ‘ennana’ ‘we are’
Mehad: ‘laqad qumna’ (we have started)
Sahar: or ‘antom’ (you plural) instead of anta (you singular)
Mehad: I think so, actually this stay in my mind, why I use ‘we’ all the time, I remember in my current thesis I also say ‘let us do this’ or start talking about this so I use ‘us’ as a ‘we’ …‘we’ ‘us’ …maybe it’s my logical part come here..maybe
Sahar: ok…is there anything that you would like to add at the end of the interview?
Mehad: oh no I would like to express my thanks to you
Sahar: Thank YOU very much
Mehad: you enlighten me in some parts and you remind me of good days
Sahar: that’s great I’m so happy to hear this
Mehad: yeah come everyday please (laugh)
Sahar: thanks …. 
## Appendix 13 Transcription Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>..</td>
<td>2 dots indicate a pause, change in a thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>….</td>
<td>More than 3 dots indicate part of the conversation was taken off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>,</td>
<td>Comma indicates a dependent clause or incomplete sentence said by the speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Arabic +word)</td>
<td>If the word Arabic comes in parenthesis, it means what comes after was said in Arabic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORD</td>
<td>Capitalised word indicates emphasis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Smile)</td>
<td>Indicates participant smiles when saying a particular sentence/word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Laugh)</td>
<td>Indicates participant laughs when saying a particular sentence/word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[word]</td>
<td>Word in square bracket is insertion to complete a sentence for a reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Indicates the same repetition as said by the speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>The word interruption in parenthesis indicates that the speaker is interrupted by the other person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 14 Hyland (2008). Most frequent 3-word, 4-word and 5-word bundles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-word</th>
<th>4-word</th>
<th>5-word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in order to</td>
<td>on the other hand</td>
<td>on the other hand the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in terms of</td>
<td>at the same time</td>
<td>at the end of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one of the</td>
<td>in the case of</td>
<td>it should be noted that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the use of</td>
<td>the end of the</td>
<td>it can be seen that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as well as</td>
<td>as well as the</td>
<td>due to the fact that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the number of</td>
<td>at the end of</td>
<td>at the beginning of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>due to the</td>
<td>in terms of</td>
<td>may be due to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the other</td>
<td>on the basis of</td>
<td>it was found that the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on the</td>
<td>in the present study</td>
<td>to the fact that the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the other hand</td>
<td>is one of the</td>
<td>there are a number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in this study</td>
<td>in the form of</td>
<td>in the case of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a number of</td>
<td>the nature of the</td>
<td>as a result of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fact that</td>
<td>the results of the</td>
<td>at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most of the</td>
<td>the fact that the</td>
<td>is one of the most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is a</td>
<td>as a result of</td>
<td>it is possible that the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>according to the</td>
<td>in relation to the</td>
<td>one of the most important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the present study</td>
<td>at the beginning</td>
<td>play an important role in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part of the</td>
<td>with respect to the</td>
<td>can be seen as a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the end of</td>
<td>the other hand the</td>
<td>the results of this study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the relationship between</td>
<td>the relationship between the</td>
<td>from the point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the following</td>
<td>in the context of</td>
<td>the point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the role of</td>
<td>can be used to</td>
<td>it can be observed that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some of the</td>
<td>to the fact that</td>
<td>this may be due to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a result</td>
<td>as shown in figure</td>
<td>an important role in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it can be</td>
<td>it was found that</td>
<td>in the form of a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>