A Socio-Cognitive Approach Toward Source-Based Writing Instruction: Professors' Perceptions and Current Constraints

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Abstract
This article proposes a socio-cognitive approach toward the instruction of source-based writing, a common practice that students are required to perform in the academic milieu at higher education. Writing from sources entails cognitive processes of critically selecting the reliable sources of input, connecting their content to one's own ideas, and integrating them into one's written text to construct meaning. It also requires knowledge of socio-contextual dimensions of academic writing literacy, including ethics of acknowledging the authorship of sources and writers' awareness of their disciplinary genre (Dovey, 2010). The purpose of this interpretive qualitative research, accordingly, is to inquire into the status quo of the approaches implemented in the Iranian academic writing courses of English majors, i.e. English Literature, English Translation, and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), to practice source-based writing. To this end, seven university professors who had the experience of teaching academic writing courses in the context of interest were selected based on purposeful sampling to take part in in-depth semi-structured interviews. The results revealed that the academic writing courses fail to effectively value the cognitive processes of meaning-making involved in writing from sources; these are overshadowed by the existing dominant product-based pedagogy and a number of constraints underlined by the interviewees, including learners' limitations, time restraint, and technological facility impediments. The implications of the study for the curriculum developers and academic writing instructors will be discussed.

Keywords: source-based writing, socio-cognitive approach, writing pedagogy, integrative writing, academic writing literacy

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Introduction

Academic writing literacy is among the most significant skills a student needs to acquire in order to be able to survive in their years of studies at higher education. Writing practices in the academic setting are, to a great extent, composed in response to source materials and students are required to incorporate a number of sources in their writing while creating meaning (Weigle, 2004). Thus, the construct of academic writing literacy can no longer be simply defined as the ability of learners to conform to the formal structures of a written text, explore ideas, and convey their messages through processes of brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014). The ubiquitous online sources available to students (Thompson et al., 2013) have provided a valuable repository for learners to compose their writings based upon and become the main source of input for students while composing their writing tasks. To complete their source-based writing texts, students also need to go through the processes of source selection, synthesis, and acknowledgement (Plakans, 2009; Wette, 2019). Nevertheless, a considerable number of students seem to have difficulties writing their source-based texts within the realms of the academic context, and their written products, by and large, tend to be disappointing.

Research has shown that students experience certain challenges when composing their source-based writing tasks. They do not always assess the credibility of the resources they incorporate into their writings precisely or select the information sources critically (Godwin-Jones, 2010). Writing from sources can also be cognitively demanding, especially when learners face multiple sources of information to write from (Wette, 2019). Moreover, research results have pinpointed that synthesizing is a truly perplexing task for students to accomplish while integrating sources into their written text (Rosenblatt, 2010; Thompson et al., 2013). These are among the reasons why the written performance of learners includes instances of plagiarism and inappropriate textual borrowing patterns (Grabe & Zhang, 2013; Shi, 2004).

It seems that approaches toward academic writing which mainly focus on the linguistic features of the text and the final product of writing will no longer suit the needs of learners, in the information age, when completing source-based writing tasks. The new generation of non-English higher education students who seek to publish their work in international journals, contribute to their field of study, and socialize in their disciplinary discourse communities are increasing in number along with the diversity of their audience and their online mediums of interaction. In order to teach them the right path through finding their authorial voice, we should acknowledge a shift toward an approach to teaching writing which moves beyond the practices of independent writing tasks and fixed linguistic elements of language embedded in the construct of the writing skill (Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012; Pennycook, 2001) and incorporates the instruction of processes and strategies specific to integrated writing form source materials (Machili et al., 2020).

Literature Review
Source-Based Writing in the Academic Context
       Knowledge of source-based writing is among one of the vital literacy skills learners need to acquire in academia these days (Ladbrook & Probert, 2011). Integrated writing based on available sources of information is an important practice in the academic context. In the academic milieu, rather than writing an independent essay, the writer draws on the information sources to construct their own written text and develop/validate their arguments (Tardy, 2010; Weigle, 2004). Source-based writing encompasses learners' reading ability (Plakans, 2009), critical thinking skills (Chang et al., 2011; Greene et. al, 2014; Parsazadeh et al., 2018), synthesizing sources of information (Grabe & Zhang, 2013; Kong, 2014), and acknowledging the ethics of incorporating sources into one's writing (Shi, 2004). In fact, integrated writing from sources has an inter-related underlying construct, comprising the literacy skills of reading as well as writing (Grabe & Zhang, 2013). The discourse synthesis strategies are proven to play an essential role in the integrated performance of learners as well (Plakans, 2009; Zhu et al., 2020). While composing an integrated writing task, the contribution of source materials to the learners' written text is not only restricted to purveying content and sources of ideas/ information for learners, but they also provide language support for writers as they try to reconstruct the meaning embedded in the sources through paraphrasing/summarizing (Golparvar & Khafi, 2021). Thus, due to its complex construct, source-based writing has always been a challenging task for foreign language writers and requires a considerable amount of practice (Grabe & Zhang, 2013; Machili et al., 2020).

Socio-Cognitive Approach in Writing Instruction
       In the earliest approaches to teaching second/foreign language writing, the focus was primarily on the written products, and students were encouraged to practice language structures, lexical terms, and the role of cohesive devices in constructing the building blocks of paragraphs within a text (Hyland, 2003; Raimes, 1991). As Reichelt et al. (2012) state, the foreign language writers' exposure to the target language is inadequate compared to native speakers, and the resources available to them are for the most part restricted to classroom practices; hence, learning the linguistic forms of a foreign language is definitely beneficial to learners' writing skill. Nonetheless, this approach has been discredited by the researchers who view writing as a multidimensional construct entailing learners' cognitive process as well as socio-cultural related factors (Allen, 2018; Kern, 2000). According to Hyland (2011), in addition to linguistic knowledge, foreign language writers need to foster (1) content-based knowledge, to be able to develop their ideas within the realms of the topics/subjects in their disciplines; (2) contextual awareness, to fulfill their audience expectations and cultural preferences; (3) genre awareness, to observe the communicative purposes of the specific written text; and (4) knowledge of writing process, to be able to understand the recursive nature of writing and follow the stages of composing a text from the early step of brainstorming to revising and editing. In fact, proponents of the socio-cognitive approach in writing instruction believe that the writer's thinking process and

the social context of writing are not independent of one another, i.e., the writer's cognition is formed by the socio-cultural context in which they interact with their readers (Chandrasegaran, 2013). In the same vein, Dovey (2010) proposes a socio-cognitive approach to source-based writing instruction as well.

It is wise to first discuss the literature relevant to the cognitive and social writing practices of source-based writing separately and then move toward the studies which emphasize the integration of both practices. Considering the social dimensions of source-based writing construct, one of the key activities prevailing in source-based writing instruction revolves around raising students' genre awareness (Dovey, 2010). In a genre-based approach, learners explore and deconstruct the linguistic as well as rhetorical features of exemplar model texts in a particular written genre and try to learn from, transform, and even imitate them while composing their own disciplinary-specific writings to communicate with their audience (Hyland, 2004; Tardy, 2010). This helps learners to better interpret the ideas of the reading source materials, understand the organization of the sources, and integrate them in their writings (Plakans, 2009; Wette, 2017). This practice further assists learners to acknowledge the inter-relationship between the writing and reading skills (Allen & Paesani, 2020). Thus, Grabe and Zhang (2013) propose the inclusion of text models and reading comprehension activities in the practices of source-based writing. Allen and Goodspeed (2018), likewise, looked into the inter-relation between readers and writers in a genre-based writing instruction where the students used model text sources to complete their writings. Their results indicate that despite the learners' borrowing of rhetorical styles of the sources, they avoided borrowing the exact words and expressions from the source texts. They further insist that their participants "combined intertextuality or weaving in model text conventions and resources with individual expression, as learners infused their texts with creative perspectives, ideas, and expression" (p.102).

Moving to cognitive processes involved in meaning construction while completing a source-based written task, paraphrasing, summarizing, and synthesizing seem to be among the common teaching activities identified with the cognitive processes enabling writing from sources. Plakans and Gebril's (2013) findings showed that the features of source text use accounted for a large amount of the variance in the integrated writing scores of learners. While the low-performance learners directly copied phrases from the sources in their writings, the high-performance ones were careful to synthesize the source texts in their writings. This indicates that providing instruction on synthesizing strategies including organizing, selecting, and connecting when integrating multiple sources into one's own writing can improve the written performance of learners (Cheong et al., 2019). In her research, Zhang (2013) also applied an explicit instruction of synthesis writing in an experimental study and discovered that the experiment had a significant impact on the writing performance of learners. Consistent with this approach, Storch (2012) developed a writing course in which the source integration process was completely taught and learners had tasks to practice synthesizing, summarizing, and paraphrasing. She claims that while the instances of textual

borrowing patterns in the students' writing decreased after the instruction, there existed some misinterpretations of the information provided in the source materials or inaccuracies in the process of source integration.

Although learners can highly benefit from the exclusive instruction of social and cognitive dimensions of source-based writing, their writings cannot be sufficiently improved if the two practices are not simultaneously integrated into the teaching approaches toward writing from sources. On the bases of Dovey's (2010) results, analysis of reliable model texts alone proves not to be able to enhance integrated written products of learners, leading to their writings suffering from lack of coherence and instances of patch-writing. That is why she insists that it is not acceptable to neglect the importance of the process of meaning construction and assume that foreign language learners are able to conveniently create meaning and express ideas when familiarized with the existing contextual features. Furthermore, as she declares, writing process practices should neither "be individualistic and a-cultural, but [should] recognize the ways in which reading and writing are socio-cognitive culture-specific processes" (p. 59). As a result of these drawbacks, some studies have been further conducted which conformed with the theories behind the integrated socio-cognitive approach toward source-based writing instruction and their results were convincing. Tardy (2010) provided a real-life project for her learners to ameliorate their academic writing literacy. The participants were assigned a project to write a Wikipedia entry. In the meantime, they learned how to analyze wikis, search for information sources, evaluate the credibility of the sources, synthesize the selected sources, and compose their written text based on them. The results reveal that learners improved in searching multiple sources to synthesize information and the ethics of academic writing. In a more comprehensive study, Dovey (2010) implemented an integrative writing pedagogy in which the principles of a process-based approach, as well as genre awareness in completing source-based writing tasks, were observed. Based on her findings, following the instruction, learners' patch-writing attitude declined and their writings turned into more organized and coherent works.

Purpose and Context of the Study

Looking at the academic foreign language writing courses held in Iran in higher education, we will notice that the students' needs are not always thoroughly accommodated and many of them suffer while composing their writings and seeking to integrate within their disciplinary community (Fathkouhi, 2018; Neissi, 2017). In interviews Fathkouhi (2018) conducted with a number of EFL university professors, they reflected their discontent with the existing curriculum, naming the traditional approach toward writing, focus on quantity rather than quality, and absence of effective evaluation as some of its shortcomings. As Neissi (2017) claims, it appears that writing in some Iranian academic courses is mainly language-oriented and underpinned by the instruction of grammar and syntactic structures. On the other hand, practices of various genres in the academic Iranian writing courses should be equally emphasized to help learners compose their writings to achieve different educational purposes (Fatahipour et al., 2020), and the construct of integrated

writing from sources must neither be overlooked in the courses taught nor insufficiently covered. As research indicates, a noteworthy number of Iranian students inadvertently get involved in the act of plagiarism. The results of Jalilifar et al. (2018) reveal that Iranian students' publications in various applied linguistics journals have instances of inappropriately borrowed patterns. In support of this finding, Soleimani and Mahdavipour (2014) found that English major students' text-based integrated writing tasks included a considerable amount of inappropriate copied sentences which were not cited. Although this was more common among low language proficient students, they related it to the students' lack of practice in source-based writing in the writing courses held in higher education.

To examine the current status quo of the writing approaches implemented to teach source-based writing in Iranian universities, this study discusses the experience of a number of professors who teach English academic writing courses in the context of interest. The first purpose of this research is to extract the approaches and instructional activities they use to teach the cognitive processes and social dimensions of source-based writing in their classes. It also seeks to explain the constraints the professors face in their teaching, leading them to overlook some aspects of source-based writing practices. To pursue these objectives, the following questions are constructed:

RQ1: How do the professors define and practice the cognitive processes embedded in source-based writing construct in their academic writing courses?

RQ2: How do the professors define and practice the social dimensions/aspects of the source-based writing construct in their academic writing courses?

RQ3: How do the professors frame the constraints they face in teaching the subskills of social and cognitive dimensions of source-based writing?

Methodology
Participants

The participants of this research comprised seven university professors in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) and were selected based on purposive sampling. Due to the nature of the qualitative studies as well as the depth and realm of the data analyzed in them, the purposive samples are small in number and sampling typically comes to an end when new information is not added to the data already gathered (Ary et al., 2019). Thus, data saturation, along with the availability of participants, was the primary criterion used in selecting our sample. The next criterion in the selection of our participants was teaching experience in English academic writing courses at higher level education. The participants had 4 to 25 years of teaching experience (M = 12.7, Sd = 9.58). Further, to meet the objectives of the research and have a thorough understanding of the status of source-based academic writing literacy pedagogy in the context under investigation in the age of technology, we tried to interview a diverse number of professors in terms of their teaching experience and the consideration of the need and importance of integration of information technology in their writing courses.

Hence, four of the participants had held online or blended writing courses during their professional work experience; whereas, the other three, claimed not to have employed technological facilities in their courses. Two of the participants had the experience of teaching writing courses to disciplines other than TEFL. Five of them had held writing courses at both BA and MA levels; one had taught only writing courses to BA students and the last one had only taught MA academic writing courses. The participants included both females and males and ranged in age from 35 to 55. The demographics of the participants are shown in Table 1. Their identity is protected throughout this research with the use of pseudonyms.

Table 1
Demographics of the Participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Degree	Educational status	Experience incorporating technology in writing courses	Higher education courses taught
Dr. Dabiri	Female	35-40	Ph.D. in TEFL	Assistant Prof.	Yes	MA
Dr. Fatahi	Female	35-40	Ph.D. in TEFL	Assistant Prof.	Yes	BA and MA
Dr. Rostami	Male	35-40	Ph.D. in TEFL	Assistant Prof.	Yes	BA
Dr. Rahmani	Female	40-45	Ph.D. in TEFL	Assistant Prof.	No	BA and MA
Dr. Safaie	Female	45-50	Ph.D. in TEFL	Associate Prof.	Yes	BA and MA
Dr. Forouzesh	Male	50-55	Ph.D. in TEFL	Associate Prof.	No	BA and MA
Dr. Aryayi	Female	50-55	Ph.D. in TEFL	Assistant Prof.	No	BA and MA

Instrumentation

As part of a larger research, this study seeks to evaluate the status quo of the approaches implemented to practice source-based academic writing at the tertiary level of education in English major courses, i.e. English Literature, English Translation, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), in three universities in the capital city of Iran and probe into the activities and materials employed in the courses to practice this writing skill. In so doing, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a number of university professors teaching academic writing courses in the context of interest. We decided to conduct semi-structured interviews, due to the exploratory nature of the study. These in-depth interviews are flexible enough to allow the interviewees to reflect on their own experiences and viewpoints and put forward novel topics during the interview not pre-determined in the protocol of the interview by the researchers (Heigham & Croker, 2009). The main themes of the questions

targeted the objectives of academic writing courses in higher education in the context of the study; the source-based writing activities, practices, and assignments implemented in the classes; the teaching materials used in the classes; the role of technology in source-based writing practices; and the constraints faced by the stakeholders in the academic writing courses (See Appendix). Furthermore, the course syllabi of five of the participants were also evaluated to have a better understanding of their teaching approaches toward source-based writing, their teaching materials, their class activities, and other relevant information. These relevant documents were triangulated with the interview data to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the results achieved.

Procedure and Data Collection

In this basic interpretive research (Ary et al., 2019), interviewing was the main research method used through which the required qualitative data was gathered. The interview questions were composed by the first researcher, and their content, as well as face validity, were evaluated by a professor in the field of TEFL with nearly 19 years of teaching experience who had taught academic writing courses at university. Based on the feedback received, the questions were revised and double-checked by the aforementioned expert. Thereupon, a pilot interview was held with a lecturer, representative of the participants of the study, who had taught academic writing courses at the BA level. This was done to make the final revisions, find the possible drawbacks, and decide on the potential time of the interview. The participants were interviewed individually in their offices at a pre-arranged time based on mutual consent. The interviews were conducted in Persian or English, based on their own choice. As mentioned, the semi-structured interviews provide for follow-up questions and probe to gather further data in response to the interviewees' reflections/statements when required (Norton, 2009). The average time of the interviews was 45 minutes. All the interviews were recorded with the interviewees' approval.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the research data, the interview files were transcribed verbatim and translated into English by the first researcher. She then carried out inductive theme-analysis on the transcribed data to extract the themes while focusing on the data itself and neglecting the existing literature. As suggested in Ary et al. (2019), initially she reflected on the transcribed text and provided reflection logs for further analyses. Later, the patterns of meaning across the sentences or paragraphs were broken down into segments in the open coding process. This coding process was conducted twice; once merely considering the available data, and the second time, which was done within a week interval, it was repeated based on the objectives of the study, and the themes related to the research questions were noted. Afterwards, the relationship across the segmented units was interpreted through axial coding and they were put into tentative meaningful categories where the potential themes were further created after the second period of observation. Meanwhile, the relevant document, i.e. the course syllabi, were examined and

added to the interview data. In addition to source data triangulation, to improve the dependability and trustworthiness of the analyses, the researcher ran the theme analysis of data for the second time after nearly a month and a high intra-coder agreement was achieved; hence, only a few umbrella terms were selected for the themes or the integration of few main categories altered. Peer debriefing was also employed at the levels of coding of three randomly selected interviews to enhance the credibility of the results.

Results and Discussion

The results mentioned in this section present the themes extracted from the interviews conducted with the academic writing professors at the tertiary level. A total of 304 codes were extracted (see table 2). Following the research questions of this study, the first main theme delves into the cognitive processes which are prioritized and practiced in source-based writing instruction. The second theme discusses the way the socio-cultural dimension of source-based writing is defined in practice. Finally, the last theme addresses the difficulties and constraints the professors experience while teaching, which may alter their instructional decisions.

Table 2
Extracted Themes

Main themes	Underlying categories	Frequency of the extracted codes	Percentage of codes in each theme
1.Cognitive processes engaged in source-based writing	• Critical analysis of the reliability of sources • Synthesizing sources into one's arguments • Paraphrasing/summarizing the selected information /ideas	1. 86 • 49 • 14 • 23	28.28
2. Source-based writing and social practice	• Raising Learners' awareness of their disciplinary genre • Modeling practices • Ethics of acknowledging sources	2. 124 • 46 • 36 • 42	40.78
3. The constraints facing the instructional decisions	• Learners' impact on instructional decisions • Impact of teaching time on instructional decisions • Impact of technological facilities on instructional decisions	3. 94 • 42 • 21 • 31	30.92
Total codes		304	100

Cognitive Processes Engaged in Source-Based Writing

Critical Analysis of the Reliability of Sources. Source-based writing is one of the common practices the students are engaged with while writing in their academic courses, completing an assignment, or composing their research papers. As Dr. Fatahi stated, "the objectives of the academic writing courses in Iran are gradually shifting toward practicing writing academic journals, critiques, proposals, and different chapters of a thesis which are based on writing from other resources." She added that the policies of the department she is teaching at require her to train the MA students to be prepared to engage in the process of writing their proposals and thesis chapters. Supporting Dr. Fatahi's explanation, other professors also insisted that writing from sources has to be among the common practices in the Iranian academic milieu. They believed written sources, if reliable, can improve learners' linguistic competence, subject-matter knowledge, and knowledge about their disciplinary community.

Some of them even emphasized the growth of new information technologies and insisted on the fact that due to the immediate access of learners to the internet, which contains pervasive sources of information (Thompson et al., 2013), it seems inevitable for the syllabus of academic writing literacy to cover the processes embedded in the construct of source-based writing. The following extracts from Dr. Rahmani and Dr. Safaie put forth this fact clearly.

> Dr. Rahmani: *Students, whether we teach them or not, are going to use the online sources when it is simply available. ... They are going to get the ideas they want from the sources, regardless of the professor teaching them how to do so in the writing class. So, ... it seems logical to teach the students how to benefit from the sources instead of leaving them alone.*
>
> Dr. Safaie: *The idea is that in their real-life situation, if they want to write something, they will probably first refer to online sources, so they should do... I mean... act similarly in their writing course. You know, since I want to increase their digital literacy.*

Dr. Safaie's words on digital literacy lead our discussion to one of the first higher-order thinking processes involved in source-based writing, i.e., critical analysis of the information sources for their credibility (Guo et al., 2015). This process is one of the main components of cognitive dimensions of digital literacy (Ng, 2012, as cited in Ng, 2012) which students require throughout their academic writing experiences. According to Dr. Rahmani, "one of the major concerns when writing in an academic context in the age of information is for learners to be critical thinkers". This helps them to evaluate the reliability of the sources they select with the goal of theme-based learning and genre-awareness, or incorporating them in their own writing as information/opinion resources in line with their power of persuasive arguments. Hence, the interviewees demanded learners learn to examine the trustworthiness of the sources they found online before using them. They insisted that learners need instruction to be able to discern reliable sources. As Dr. Rostami stated, "provided that this skill [critical thinking] is included in

class activities, the students' critical literacy helps them cross-check the sources they select, use triangulation, and write better arguments in their writing". In accord with this view, Thompson et al. (2013) also reinforce the importance of instruction given to first-year university students to select reliable sources while writing from online information. They found that by the end of the course they observed, the students were able to choose the sources critically based on their authoritativeness, reliability, relativeness, and ease of understanding. Our participants' view also substantiated Parsazadeh et al. (2018) work in which they believe literature has indicated learners' lack of competence in critically evaluating the online sources they use; thus, they recommend teaching students the evaluation criteria involved in critically analyzing the sources they select. Additionally, the interviewees of our study warned against the consequences of writing from sources if critical analysis of source materials is not practiced in class. They claimed that the sources may turn into unreliable written model texts for students to learn the conventions of their disciplinary genre from or they can appear as unreliable sources of ideas when incorporated into the learners' written texts. This led some professors to introduce academic electronic-based resources of their discipline to the students where they can search for reliable source materials and use them in their writings. The following extracts indicate the interviewees' concern for students' critical analysis of sources.

> Dr. Rostami: *I have seen our students, even graduate students, use unreliable sources like Wikipedia in their works not considering whether the information given there is trustworthy or not. .... And this is intolerable. So, it is very important to include critical thinking practices in the writing syllabi. Our students should precisely learn which sources to select and include in their academic works. ... They should learn how to be critical thinkers. ... Learn the fact that everything they read is not true, reliable, or academic. They should know how to evaluate them. We should teach them.*

> Dr. Safaie: *Learners have access to the websites, ... but what they don't realize is that some of the material are outdated, that they are untrustworthy, that there are lies.... So recognizing comes with practice. And ... So they naturally have to use those in class and know how to use the sources online. This is one of the things that we do in class. ... I mean, I make sure that they know how to check to see that the sources are credible, whether they are up to date, whether they are true, not biased, and actually, that is part of their education in my classes.*

> Dr. Rahmani: *If they [students] want to be inspired by a piece of written source, they have to be critical enough, so that the source they choose is trustworthy.... Anyway, if it is published on an unreliable platform, then maybe the pattern or structure of that written text which becomes accessible to the students isn't academic and they learn wrong structures, wrong grammar,*

> *wrong moves. ... That is why I always tell my master's to search their sources in Scopus or Thompson Reuters, where at least the articles have face validity.*

Synthesizing Sources into One's Arguments. Synthesizing, as another process involved in composing a written text from sources, was rarely mentioned in the interviews by the professors. Only two professors emphasized its importance and gave a clear example of the practices they applied in their class to integrate this writing process in their syllabus. The relevant tasks which seem to be practiced in this regard include writing sections of literature reviews, completing summarizing tasks, and connecting/organizing the content of a number of articles in their field which present similar or opposing points of view.

Synthesizing is considered one of the challenging processes for learners while writing, as it requires elaborated cognitive processes of selecting, organizing, and connecting relevant sources of input to construct meaning (Guo, 2011). Not practicing this complicated process in class activities can easily give rise to the problems students have integrating others' viewpoints into their own. Plakans (2009) considers this process as the inseparable component of the construct of source-based writing and claims that synthesizing can help most students to make inferences from selected content of the sources, connect them, and construct meaning based on them. Therefore, as Dr. Aryayi insisted "lack of practice in synthesizing process may leave learners clueless in how to connect and organize the ideas of multiple sources in their written text".

Taking no notice of this process may be due to its being complicated; the professors may find it difficult to design tasks or activities to practice in class or they may simply prefer to teach it implicitly by providing feedback on the students' written products. Tardy (2006) supports this view stating that in-class activities usually concentrate on easily taught practices of the formal knowledge of writing moves or structures and that explicit instruction of procedural knowledge may be overlooked due to its difficulties. For instance, Dr. Safaie clarified that she "preferred not to teach synthesizing directly to the students, but through correcting their written products and providing useful feedback to them". The following statement reveals Dr. Fatahi's persistent concern regarding including the synthesizing process in her class activities.

> Dr. Fatahi: *When I write down my syllabus, usually one of the materials I prepare for the class is scientific articles relevant to their field. And I try to choose them based on a theme.... For example, I decide to take articles to the class which address inquiry-based teaching or CALL. I have a purpose in picking articles in this way... . Because I want to work on synthesizing and summarizing with my students. So these articles are thematically the same and we learn how students have to synthesize their concepts together, ... just like what we do in a literature review. So we practice connecting ideas or summarizing and other tasks.*

Paraphrasing/Summarizing the Selected Information/Ideas. Paraphrasing was among the meaning-making processes emphasized by the professors in our study. The interviewees stated their belief that their students are not skillful enough in the process of summarizing and paraphrasing. Nevertheless, our findings show that sufficient time was not assigned to practice these processes in the class by all the interviewees. While in some classes explicit instruction and direct exercises were applied to practice paraphrasing, other professors were inclined to teach them implicitly and embed the learning within a real-life task, such as writing an article or literature review. A few interviewees held that composing abstracts for already written academic articles can be a valuable task for learners to practice and detect their problems in paraphrasing or summarizing. They introduced another common task practiced in classes in which students need to read an article within their field of interest and then compose their summary of the article and include their own response to it while getting help from the pertinent literature. The quote that follows illustrates one of the interviewees' opinions on paraphrasing and summarizing processes.

> Dr. Forouzesh: *My students have serious problems paraphrasing. … Most of the structures they create when integrating a source is a complete patch-writing.… We think they know how to summarize, think they have done it for years, but they really don't know. That's why I teach them how to paraphrase, to summarize. For example, I teach paraphrasing/summarizing when writing an abstract for an article. These are really challenging tasks for the students. We need to teach them which moves to use when summarizing or synthesizing. … Show them how to change the grammatical structure of a sentence… use acceptable synonyms to paraphrase appropriately. These are important in academic writing.*

Source-Based Writing and Social Practice

Raising Learners' Awareness of Their Disciplinary Genre. The interviewees were of the opinion that what some of the syllabi of writing courses are trying to cover, mainly centers around the language proficiency level of learners in English and the process of composing a paragraph/essay while failing to notice other dimensions of academic writing at higher education. They also emphasized the need to practice writing reports, proposals, and research papers in their writing classes; however, mainly in their graduate courses. These types of source-based writing practices depend upon social and contextual standards of the academic writing milieu and one's disciplinary genre. As Dr. Rostami insisted, tertiary level students yearn to enter the academic world and communicate with other scholars or publish their works to contribute to their field of study and relate to the professional audience; hence, they need to be a part of their social community.

> Dr. Dabiri: *It [writing] is not just putting words together and making sentences, but logically presenting the idea in a particular discipline to make the text acceptable for the*

professional audience. … This knowledge generally is the knowledge of academic writing. For example, in addition to the punctuation and styles of referencing and the moves, … I believe, the knowledge of conducting… writing research is important, I mean …. usually the students here don't have that background… they cannot write academically. Can't write using sources or others' ideas.

In line with these statements Paltridge and Woodrow (2012) also maintained that knowing how to write in an academic setting is not just confined to the language proficiency level of the writer; disciplinary representation of oneself goes beyond the knowledge of linguistic resources and entails the social dimensions of writing, as well. Thus, almost all the interviewees claimed to be practicing the bases of the learners' disciplinary genre in their writing courses. In fact, raising the students' genre awareness appeared to be one of the instructional approaches employed by the participants of this study. This has been pursued through multiple routes. Some of the professors made an attempt to highlight "the academic wordlists "or frequent "subject-related lexica" of the students' discipline found in the authentic models in their class activities. Moreover, almost all of them provided their students with practices on useful moves in their disciplinary genre.

Modeling Practices. The most common activity drawn on by the interviewees to raise the students' genre awareness while writing from sources was modeling. The professors benefited from authentic teaching materials, i.e. published articles or theses in their discipline, and provided the learners with authentic materials to study, analyze, and critically comment on. The interviewees were of the opinion that these authentic samples allow for various self-practice and class activities to improve learners' genre-based writing in their academic discipline. These authentic sources were also used as a valuable resource for some academic structures or moves which the students can imitate in their writings. The following extracts explain the use of authentic articles as a model in the professors' writing courses to improve learners' awareness of their disciplinary genre.

Dr. Forouzesh: *I think modeling is very important in genre awareness raising or socializing. … It is very important to me, so I take a lot of writing models to my class. … I tell the students which one is written by a native, which one by a non-native, and we compare them…. It really helps when trying to paraphrase or imitate their writing style.*

Dr. Rahmani: *I remember that I myself always, when working on my Ph.D. dissertation, created a file for myself, and whenever I read an article or thesis, I highlighted the expressions I found useful and thought I could use later in my writing…. So I saved them in the file. For the abstract, or literature review, I saved the helpful expressions and moves for myself in it. I ask the students to do the same thing. … So at the end of the class, they have a great resource. I think that if they read published works carefully, it will really help them a lot.*

Modeling can also be regarded as a valuable practice for students to become familiar with the form and structure of credible sources they wish to refer to; hence, it helps them in examining the reliability of the sources they use. It can further help learners to practice the connection between reading and writing when writing from sources (Grabe & Zhang, 2013). As Allen and Goodspeed (2018) mention, "writers rely on prior knowledge of language use in texts to create new ones" (p. 90). This highlights the notion of intertextuality since the learners move back and forth between their own written text and the content of the resources available. Our participants also unanimously insisted on the interrelationship between reading and writing. They believed the more the learners are familiar with authentic models the more successful they will be in creating meaning from them and integrating them in their writings. On the other hand, the interviewees were simultaneously skeptical about using authentic academic writing sources as models. They believed that it can decrease the creativity of learners; a few were even concerned about it leading them to copy or inappropriately borrow patterns from the source texts in their writings, if not properly taught.

> Dr. Dabiri: *Academic writing can't be enhanced without reading. For me, reading and writing are intertwined and related. So one of the activities we have in our classes is that I share some articles, ... students have time to go over the articles and try to find clear samples of the writing subskill...moves...structures... what we talked about throughout the session, in that article or try to find some problems in it, if there are any... and then we talk about those problems. It helps them to understand and use the sources more easily when they get familiar with their structures.*

Ethics of Acknowledging Sources. The other common social aspect of source-based writing the professors pointed out in their interviews was observing the ethics of writing. These days, a considerable number of students, including Iranians, inadvertently plagiarize while incorporating ideas from other sources in their writings. The results of Jalilifar et al. (2018) which investigated the frequency of inappropriately borrowed patterns in the writings of Iranian applied linguists published in various journals exhibit that more than 30 percent of the corpora examined in their study had instances of plagiarism. According to the interviewees of our study, this can be due to the fact that "there has not been a clear instruction of ethics of writing in the courses the students take at schools". Some of the professors added the "low language proficiency level of students" to the reasons leading to the act of plagiarism. As Chandrasoma et al. (2004) also insist, inappropriate textual borrowing behavior develops in the process of identity construction and can be attributed to social and cultural factors as well as learners' language levels. This is why, as our participants mentioned, the students may believe what they are borrowing and including in their writing through patch-writing or modified copy patterns are acceptable ways of source integration and do not observe the conventions of their disciplinary academic register. Thus, the professors

claimed they allot a session or two to discuss the issues of plagiarism in class. Unfortunately, as stated in the interviews, the lion's share of explicit instruction provided in the interviewees' classes concentrates on the mechanics of writing, consisting of the documentation style of their major, i.e. APA or MLA styles, rather than the process of meaning-making involved while trying to observe the conventions and ethics of writing in composing form sources. This type of instruction mentioned by the interviewees is informed by the genre-based approach toward writing which does not prioritize the processes embedded in writing (Dovey, 2010). As explained in the previous theme, explicit instruction of the processes of synthesizing and paraphrasing was usually dismissed by the interviewees in the class. Hence, it appears that sufficient time is not assigned to observing the writing process of learners and practicing the sequential sub-processes of source integration, i.e. paraphrasing and synthesizing, which enable meaning transformation (Dovey, 2010) and mitigate the amount of copying. This finding aligns with Allen (2018) and Dovey (2010), who also criticize the mere emphasis on writing products rather than practicing the processes involved in the integration of sources.

Constraints Facing the Instructional Decisions

Learners' Impact on Instructional Decisions. One of the issues which was the shared concern of all of the interviewees is the weak performance of learners. The interviewees believed a considerable number of their students possess low-level writing skills. This poor performance of learners' writing skill is not merely restricted to their disciplinary conventions and standards of the academic context but is particularly represented in the linguistics resources of the learners. According to the professors, this was one of the forces which led them to allot excessive time to enhancing the grammatical knowledge and lexical repertoire of the learners, overshadowing other essential sub-skills of source-based writing, such as paraphrasing, synthesizing, etc. The following extract indicates the aforementioned concern.

> Dr. Rahmani: *You need to teach grammar to the students, even in master's courses. Their writing skill is not good in general. Their grammar knowledge is poor. I mean, you have to omit some writing sub-skills you wish to teach to just work on the basic elements of their writing. So that, at least their works look acceptable.*

Other interviewees reinforced this opinion, claiming students' source-based written texts often "contain plagiarism and the arguments taken from sources to support their own ideas are usually weak". Perhaps one of the salient reasons behind the weak performance of the learners can be traced to their attitude toward writing courses in general. According to Dr. Fatahi, "the students often don't like writing and cannot connect themselves to this skill. They do their class assignments just because they are obliged to". Source-based writing within one's disciplinary genre requires a lot of practice and experience. The acknowledged researchers or writing instructors/supervisors in our academic milieu have all been through a long period of "scholarly apprenticeship" to acquire the appropriate linguistic resources, structural

design, and rhetorical knowledge of their own discipline (Paré, 2011). This hardship of the route toward practicing one's authorship has been emphasized by our interviewees, as well.

> Dr, Dabiri: *Any type of writing requires practice. My students will be able to get feedback from me and write three or five chunks or pieces of writing. That's an ideal situation….But they must be eager enough to continue the same procedure and the same strategy, because … writing is a matter of experience… you cannot receive everything from the instructor. The more you read… the more you practice… the more you learn how to write.*

Learners' motivation to participate in writing activities, engage in the long process of multiple revisions, and pursue the road toward their authorship, will not be promoted unless the objectives of the course are accurately defined and explained to the learners. This is where the social interactional needs of the learners gain importance. As Dr. Darabi well stated, the students have to feel "writing is not limited to the class work alone and that their writing skill is going to help them join the social disciplinary communities", "publish their research", and "to communicate with others in their field around the world". Nevertheless, as mentioned before, it seems that our students are not really eager to write in their classes. As one of the professors points out, it seems that only instrumental motivation is what triggers the students to write.

> Dr. Rostami: *In our academic context, unfortunately, students are mostly driven by their instrumental motivation. Students must find a job as soon as possible, so they want to finish their studies soon. They don't want to pay tuition for a long time. You know, they are looking more for shortcuts…. When we don't establish commitment in students, … students don't have institutional commitment, or educational commitment, … so they will be directed to another path…*

Other researchers have expressed similar concerns. East (2019) believes that the written performance of learners is connected to how motivated they are. On the potential factors contributing to Iranian university EFL learners' writing performance, Neissi (2017) maintains that among other affective variables, motivation is predictive of the learners' writing skill. Reichelt et al. (2012) also hold that when writing activities are restricted to in-class assignments and social dimensions of writing are neglected, their integrative motivation will not grow among the students and it will affect the time they wish to spend on practicing writing. Thus, not only do the learners enter the writing courses possessing poor writing skills, but also they are not motivated enough to compensate for their lack of knowledge later in their course; this will only lead to unconstructive writing courses, regardless of what sub-skills of writing are taught, which they typically devalue.

Impact of Teaching time on Instructional Decisions. Considering the immense realm of academic writing, the interviewees believed that the currently established curricula for the academic writing courses of English majors at graduate as well as undergraduate levels do not provide sufficient time for them to cover different dimensions of academic writing. The

interviewees found themselves forced to skip some of the major dimensions of academic writing relevant to writing from sources. Thus, the teaching time of the class "is mainly restricted to the linguistic features of writing, independent writing paragraphs/essays, and product-based instructions", excluding the processes involved in writing from sources. In fact, as Dr. Aryayi indicated, "paragraph development and practices of essay [independent] writing tasks take a considerable time of the class, leaving the processes they [learners] need to practice in writing from sources unnoticed". This may be associated with the recursive nature of the underlying meaning-making writing processes and the multiple revisions engaged in composing texts which take a lot of time (Williams, 2005). Moreover, a one and half-hours class time which lasts for fourteen sessions will not provide enough time for the instructors to cover some writing sub-skills comprehensively. Similarly, Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2012) and Naghdipour and Koç (2014) indicate that the Iranian undergraduate academic writing curriculum is mostly form-focused and product-based, practicing grammar and paragraph or essay writing for the most part. Our interviewees believed that adequate time also has to be devoted to the other important dimensions of the writing skill such as ethics of writing from sources or information literacy, i.e. knowledge of successfully integrating reliable sources of information into one's writing, in the class syllabi. Thus, they suggested for useful workshops to be held for the learners in addition to the course itself to be able to cover different dimensions of academic writing and give feedback on the works of all students to enhance learning. Some even mentioned that separate courses should be designed for academic writing literacy at university, each improving a particular sub-skill of writing.

> Dr. Rostami: *I think writing should be taught in different courses, writings with different subjects, like ..., for example, I guess there really should be a separate course for ethics in writing... or a course entitled ... writing and information literacy.... You know, we should define different modules for academic writing. These all cannot be covered in one course.*

Impact of Technological Facilities on Instructional Decisions. One of the ways the professors can compensate for the inadequate teaching time is to benefit from blended instruction or available technologies during class time to assist learners to practice less teacher-centered activities while learning. As emphasized by the interviewees, there exists a number of "plagiarism checkers, synthesizing tools, and even online sites providing useful exercises for paraphrasing, documentation styles, and etc." They declared that the advent of new technologies has created great opportunities for the professors to incorporate informative websites such as "Purdue writing lab", "reliable online information sources", or tools such as "plagiarism checkers" into their teaching materials. Dr. Safaie, for example, shared some of the sites and tools she incorporates into her class;

> Dr. Safaie: *I use some websites that address writing.... And I find it useful and might use it for particular parts of the course. Then again, you know, in my class the students usually use online sources to incorporate into their writings.... And since I would*

like them to have a real-life audience, real readers, usually I encourage them to share their writings online. So they will have, like, wikis and weblogs. Also, I'd like to talk about plagiarism in my classes…. If I had access to plagiarism checkers, … I would spend some time in class on what plagiarism really is, how to avoid it, and … stuff like that.

Nonetheless, only the three participants who had the experience of teaching online or blended courses at university claimed to have utilized these educational technologies in their writing class. Not only did the cost issues and availability of the tools hinder the integration of beneficial technology in the class syllabi, but also students' unwillingness led the professors to overlook its usage. For instance, two of the interviewees expressed their desire to use the "reliable online databases" of their discipline, if available, "to introduce acceptable models of written text" to their students and ask them to "search for the sources of information they want to add to their own ideas when writing, through these databases". They also thought free access to plagiarism checkers could be of great help in the writing classes and even be taken as an instructional tool. Similar concerns are raised by Hedayati and Marandi (2014) reporting the findings of their interviews with Iranian EFL teachers with regard to the integration of technology in their courses. "Limited access to technology", "lack of suitable internet connection", and "learners' insufficient digital literacy" were among the constraints the teachers perceived in implementing technology-assisted instruction in their classes. The following extracts discuss the problems the professors would face in their classes if they were willing to integrate technology into their syllabi.

Dr. Fatahi: *One of the limitations I have in my writing class is that I can't use technology in the way I wish to. As far as I know, … nowadays, there are great websites which can help students in the process of their writings. But due to the technological constraints, and sometimes, because the students are not really familiar with the technology, … I prefer not to use it in my class. So unfortunately, after a while, I myself get demotivated…. But I know if I'll be able to use it, it has a lot of benefits.*

Dr. Dabiri: *For example, the plagiarism checker is a problem. For the highly reliable ones you need to pay, so it's not available for the students. The free ones… they are not that useful. This [availability] is one of the most important problems…. Well, of course, the cost issues when it comes to buying a particular software and specific plagiarism checkers, that's a serious problem.*

Conclusion

This study investigated the current status quo of source-based writing instruction in Iranian English major academic writing courses. It sought to display the approaches implemented in the aforementioned context to teach and practice the processes embedded in writing from sources and at the same time the social practices associated with the construct of source-based writing.

The results of this research maintained that the syllabi and instructional activities designed for the writing courses did not foreground some of the critical cognitive processes used in the meaning making processes while writing from sources. For instance, synthesizing was largely dismissed by the professors which may have been due to its complicated nature, making it difficult for them to design suitable activities for practice. In some courses the professors overlooked explicit instruction of some of the cognitive processes of source-based writing, such as paraphrasing and summarizing. Overall, genre-based instruction and focus on form rather than meaning were favored over process instruction. In fact, modeling was the common practice employed to raise the genre-awareness of the learner. However, this does not imply that the professors were not aware of the important role of the meaning-making processes while integrating multiple sources into one's writing. This was revealed in their interviews when highlighting the problems students usually confronted trying to make a logical connection among the content of multiple sources they interpret and wish to incorporate in their writing to construct meaning. It is more likely, at least for some of them, that these processes were not included in their syllabi due to the constraints they faced which had an impact on their instructional decisions. Learners' limitations, time constraint, and the impact of technological facilities were among the reasons why the professors put aside some of the dimensions of source-based writing construct in their classes. One of the unresolved problems they had in their classes was the language proficiency level of learners which led the instruction toward a language-oriented approach aiming at improving the linguistic knowledge of learners to help them write within the conventions of their disciplinary register in a foreign language. All of the professors complained about their lack of time to incorporate and practice some of the essential issues of academic writing construct in their courses as well. Furthermore, it was confirmed that a product-orientation approach does not scaffold the writing process of learners in source-based writing. Thus, to meet the full range of students' needs, this paper suggests a socio-cognitive approach toward source-based writing. We argue that the concept of writing process needs to be valued and redefined in source-based writing instruction as the building block of the generation of meaning. This process of meaning construction is not detached from the social conventions of writing but informed by the socio-cognitive theory proposed for writing practices in the academic milieu. The implementation of an integrated socio-cognitive approach to teaching writing from sources acknowledges the presence of new literacies practices in the writing syllabi and empowers both the written text itself as well as the role of the writer and reader in the process of meaning transformation/construction.

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Appendix
Interview questions

1. How would you define the objectives of an academic writing course in higher education?
2. Which sub-skills of writing skill should a professor mainly focus on in an academic writing course in higher education?
3. How important do you think it is for a learner to experience writing from written sources in an academic writing class in higher education? Do you consider source-based writing as a good task to be addressed in the class, if so, how? / If not, why?
4. How can writing from written sources affect the writing skill of learners in higher education?
5. What kinds of class activities/assignments should the students do to practice source-based writing? What kinds of teaching materials should be usually used to practice source-based writing? Explain your own teaching experience in this regard as well.
6. What are the main deficiencies of the tertiary level students in writing from written sources? What reasons do you see as the main sources of these deficiencies? What can an instructor do to mitigate them?
7. What writing activities do you think are relevant and useful for the students to acquire writing from sources, but constraints, such as facilities, administrative issues, technology, etc., don't allow you to work on as much as you wish? What are the constraints?
8. In your opinion what role should technology play in an academic writing course when practicing source-based writing, if any? Should we teach our students to use the internet as a source of input in an academic writing class? Why or why not? (What are its benefits and downsides)?
9. How can we teach the students to benefit from the internet and its information as a source of input?