

Lecture 23

23.1 Plagiarism

Using others' words, ideas, art work, or diagrams and claiming them to be your own is called plagiarism. It is intellectual dishonesty of the highest rank and should be avoided at any cost. The American Webster's 3rd Int'l defines it as, *"To commit literary theft: to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source"* ("Definition of PLAGIARIZE," n.d.).

23.2 Introduction

Avoiding plagiarism does not mean that you have to create everything on your own from scratch. Read books, take help from articles, peruse newspapers to build up your background knowledge about a topic. The only thing to be kept in mind is to give credit to the original author when you quote their ideas or material in your write-up.

Observing the principles of originality and integrity result in sharing of knowledge and the legacy of ideas is transferred to the next generation. Also, when due credit is given to the authors, they feel acknowledged and are motivated to work with more enthusiasm.

23.3 Repercussions of Plagiarism

23.3.1 For students

As a student, you may commit plagiarism accidentally and deliberately. If you are taking notes during a lecture, you may end up copying the exact words of the speaker. But often, students commit plagiarism deliberately to save time and effort. Rather than exploring relevant sources, reading them thoroughly and citing them in their work, they resort to copying content from webpages, e-books and Wikipedia.

As teachers, we understand that the magic of 'CTRL+C and CTRL+V' is too tempting to avoid; but remember, that it results in humiliation, poor grades and spending more time on rewriting the assignment.

23.3.2 For professionals

If you are a professional and you copy other's ideas to compose your work, you may be given a letter of concern, or in certain circumstances, may even be expelled from your job. In case you have violated copyright laws, the author may sue you.

23.4 How to avoid it?

Cultivate the habit of reading up on a topic in detail, thinking critically about it and forming your own interpretation. To make your viewpoint credible, quote from critics' articles. Identify and mention the origin in cases such as:

- Idea, opinion and theory of another person
- Graphs, drawings, facts and statistics

- Quotations of another person's spoken or written words
- Paraphrase of another person's spoken or written words

23.5 Quotations

If you want to borrow other's words as it is, use the following two ways:

23.5.1 Short quote

If the quote is comprised of forty or less than forty words, it is written within quotation marks and is incorporated within the text. Author's last name, year of publication and page number is given within the parenthesis at the end of the quotation.

Example:

"Every single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all the others... that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort" (Said, 2003, p. xvi).

23.5.2 Block quote

If the quote is comprised of more than 40 words, give it in the form of block. Start it in a new line by pressing 'enter', indent it ½ inch from the margin and keep double line spacing. The parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark.

Example:

Class consciousness leads to subjectivity,

Marx is not working to create an undivided subject where desire and interest coincide. Class consciousness does not operate toward that goal. Both in the economic area (capitalist) and in the political (world-historical agent), Marx is obliged to construct models of a divided and dislocated subject whose parts are not continuous or coherent with each other. (Spivak, 1992, p. 71)

23.6 Rules of Citations

- You don't need to cite common knowledge and universal truths. You can mention them in your own words without any reference.

Examples:

1. Objects, that have mass, fall towards ground due to gravity.
2. WWI began in 1914.

- You need to document facts that are generally not known. The specific facts appear more credible and correct when you give references.

Example:

Einstein's second postulate, the *light postulate*, asserts that "light is always propagated in empty space with a definite velocity c which is independent of the state of motion of the emitting body" (1946, p. 117).

- Text deleted for shortening should be indicated with ellipsis (...) with proper citation.

Example:

The research concluded the reaction provided "clear evidence that... the fundamental chemistry of the process was being interrupted," although at what point the interruption occurs remains to be demonstrated" (Tinker/Walsh, 3776).

- Cite together the quotes taken from different parts of a single paragraph.

Example:

Ellis observed that "**the decay of the family has long been a favorite theme of social alarmists**" but that in a sense they are "**completely justified**" (2005, p.21).

- If you want to add your own comment for explaining a point, identifying a referent or abbreviation, you give it using square brackets.

Example:

The CEO finally decided "not to file a challenge to the court's acceptance of amicus briefs [**comments on legal points filed by parties not involved in the lawsuit**]" to counter an assertion that DetCo feared its case was built on inappropriate precedents (Smith, 2006, p.23).

23.7 Paraphrasing

Presenting someone else's ideas by putting them in your own words is called paraphrasing. A correct paraphrase needs to be

- A condensed version of another author's work,
- An original articulation of another author's ideas,
- Structured differently from the original, and

- Cited properly.

23.7.1 Tips of Paraphrasing

Follow these tips to paraphrase content:

- Read carefully until you understand the content
- Cover the content which you have just read
- Do the exercise of writing what you have read (the idea) in your own words
- Compare with the original source to remove similar expressions
- Make a note clearly identifying the source

23.7.2 Inappropriate Paraphrasing

If you are making slight changes in the original wording and passing it off as your own, it will be inappropriate paraphrasing. You need to change the order of words, use different sentence structure and your own words for effectively paraphrasing other's ideas. Putting others' ideas in your own words does not mean that you ignore the acknowledgement of source. Cite the original source to give proper credit to the original author. The example given below shows appropriate paraphrasing.

Example:

The colonizers constructed knowledge in almost all fields ranging from geography, sociology, psychology, ethnology to literary criticism, in terms of power relationships and so they shaped the vision of public around the world and made them view all phenomenon in a specifically determined way in order to serve their imperialist interests (**Loomba, 2000, p. 43-45**).

23.8 Plagiarism and IT

The practice of copying material from webpages has become common as information is readily accessible there. However, in case of online plagiarism, it has also become possible to locate the source which you have exploited. Therefore, online sources (text, graphics) must be cited just as the documentation of printed sources.

23.8.1 Use of Spinner

There are numerous software and websites available that replace the words of the original content with their synonyms. The resultant product is only a mindless jumble of words. It lacks in cohesion and coherence and the use of Word Spinner can be identified at once. You, as a student, are advised not to rely on any such source as it results in embarrassment and wastage of time. Even if, with time, powerful spinners do emerge, it is best to avoid them!

23.9 Plagiarism and Copyright

When a source that has copyrights is copied, it becomes a legal issue. Copyright is a legally stated list of rights belonging to the author of a work. In case of copyright, you are required to seek a written permission from the owner of a work as you cannot cite the material without this prior permission. If the permission is not granted, the material may possibly be used and cited within the domain of an institution as long as

it is used for academic purposes only. The content may not be disseminated beyond campus (including webpage) which would once again be a copyright violation.

23.10 Other Practices Which Constitute Plagiarism

- **Borrowing organization:** Using the general plan, the main headings or a rewritten form of someone else's material
- **Submitting someone else's material as one's own:** The practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which someone submits as his/her own. This includes buying or copying an entire paper or article from the Web
- **Failing to reference/footnote material:** Lifting selected passages and phrases without proper acknowledgement and thereby passing off somebody else's ideas or words as one's own
- **Collusion:** Presenting work done collaboratively as one's own without giving the names of all the participants. While working in collaboration with other students, it must be clarified from the professor whether after a group discussion, an individual written assignment must be turned in or whether a collective work can be submitted
- **False Citation:** Documenting outside sources that were not actually consulted
- **Multiple submission of academic work:** Revising or using all or part of an earlier piece of work or producing a single piece of work to satisfy two requirements

23.11 Characteristics of a Free-From-Plagiarism Document

- It has accurate presentation of ideas from the original message.
- Quotation marks have been used to indicate the parts taken directly from the source.
- The sources are cited properly.

References

Definition of PLAGIARIZE. (n.d.). In Dictionary by Merriam-Webster. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize>

Lomba, A. (2000). *Colonilism/Postcolonialism*. London: Routledge.

Said, E. W. (2003). Preface. In *Orientalism* (p. xvi). London: Penguin.

Spivak, G. C. (1992). Can the Subaltern Speak?. In P. Williams & L. Chrisman (Eds.), *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.