

Chapter 27

Plagiarism, Licensing, and the Proper Use of Digital Textbooks

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores ways to avoid plagiarism in digital textbooks' use and development. Traditionally, the plagiarism recommendation refers to books and articles. How about textbooks? However, to avoid plagiarism it is important to make sure that licensing in digital textbooks' use and development is properly used. For licensing to be a benefit for learning, it is important to note that it may impose additional costs. This chapter reflects and includes in discussion the issue on licensing, specifically the Creative Common (CC) license of open educational resources. Secondly, it considers how the Creative Common License could improve the proper use of digital textbooks. Finally, it explores how the use of digital tools can allow students to learn more effectively.

INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism refers to the acts of “turning in someone else’s work as your own; copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit; failing to put a quotation in quotation marks; giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation; changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit; copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not” (Plagiarism.org, 2014). Oxford University defines plagiarism as “to copying or paraphrasing of other people’s work or ideas without full acknowledgement” (Oxford University, 2014).

There are many types of plagiarism. On WriteCheck blog can be read that The University of Pittsburgh’s undergraduate plagiarism policy (University of Pittsburgh, 2008) lists examples of plagiarism. The following are a few examples of the many manifestation of plagiarism, cited at University of Pittsburgh actual site with reference to *Gaunt, Troubadours and Irony*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1989, p. 23):

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- Copying the text verbatim without enclosing it in quotation marks and acknowledging the source;
- Rearranging the elements of the source text without proper acknowledgment;
- Selective copying elements of the source text without proper acknowledgment;
- Paraphrasing without proper acknowledgment;
- Reproducing information that is neither self-evident nor common knowledge without providing proper acknowledgment;
- Incorporating an idea brought up in conversation into your work without proper acknowledgment;
- Using in your own work ideas or material from another student's work on a similar or identical subject without proper acknowledgment;
- Asking or paying someone more proficient than yourself to vet your work without acknowledging that individual's contribution;
- Using on-line translators or interpreters, or translating or interpreting software in completing your work without proper acknowledgment;
- Asking or paying someone to produce or to complete a piece of work, or purchasing a paper from a Web-based essay service constitutes plagiarism, as does taking Web-based material in one language and translating, or having it translated, into another without proper acknowledgment.

In Harvard Guide to Using Resources (2014) can be read that it is not enough to know why plagiarism is taken so seriously in the academic world or to know how to recognize it. More important is to know how to avoid it. The best way to solve this issue is 1) to understand what it happens when one writes a paper and 2) to do follow a method that is systematic and careful. There are some guidelines:

- Keep track of your sources; print electronic sources;
- Keep sources in correct context;
- Plan ahead: budget enough time to search for sources, to take notes and to think about how to use the sources in essay;
- Don't cut and paste: file and label your sources: open a separate file on computer for each source; include the full citation for the print source or the full URL; back up to files;
- Keep your own writing and your sources separate;
- Keep your notes and your draft separate at all stages of writing process;
- Paraphrase carefully in your notes; acknowledge your sources explicitly when paraphrasing;
- Avoid reading a classmate's paper for inspiration;
- Don't save your citation for later;
- Quote your source properly: always use quotation marks for directly quoted material;
- Keep a source trail in notes and in each successive draft of essay;

This chapter is interested in exploring the key aspects of plagiarism and the ways to avoid it. This chapter will focus, therefore, on the role that licensing choice can play in terms of proper use of digital textbooks. For the purpose of this paper, it was used the term "open textbook" to mean an openly-licensed textbook offered online by its author(s) or through a non-profit or commercial open-licensed publisher. The open license sets up open textbooks apart from traditional textbooks by allowing students to read online, download, or sometimes print the book at no additional costs. Some models allow users the choice to use free online access or low-cost alternative formats such as print, audio, or e-book. Usually the open textbooks are faculty-written and peer reviewed just like printed textbooks.

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