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Exploring Polish Students' Perception of Plagiarism: Instances and Types

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Abstract

As for plagiarism, there are multiple types and numerous instances, but the most frequent challenge with plagiarism in institutes of higher education is with students' disregarding the right and ownership of other authors with their ideas, methods or words. However, what calls for considerations is that at often times students are not quite to blame and their committing such ethical violations in fact results from their lack of full knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism. As an initial measure to properly inform students of all varieties of plagiarism is to find out what they perceive of plagiarism. The current study aims at exploring the understanding and perception of a sample of Polish students of language and translation in terms of the various instances of plagiarism. The study uses a questionnaire instrument based on a Likert scale which was designed and established for psychometric properties of the data by the same authors in the Iranian educational context for a similar purpose. The questionnaire contains 34 items, which according to the results of validation measures, manifest five major construct i.e., categories, including a) Fraudulence, b) Unacknowledged Use of Others' Work, c) Duplicate Publication, d) Misreferencing, and e) Excessive Overuse. The instrument was used to collect the responses of approximately 100 Polish graduate and undergraduate students of English studies and Applied Linguistics at the University of Warsaw. The findings report the extent of severity of each instance and type of plagiarism as well as the most and the least serious ones in the view of the participating Polish students of language studies. While they are basically on the right track, the study recommends further orientations in terms of the more subtle forms of plagiarism.

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