

*Workshop series on Academic Writing & Logical Thinking at the library 2014
6th Workshop – Plagiarism and Logical Thinking Education*

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(The following handout is based on (i) a paper, “Logical Thinking Education to Combat Plagiarism” by Lai, W. L. and Nilep, C. 『言語文化論集』第36卷1号, pp 181 – 195., and (ii) a workshop, “Plagiarism and Logical Thinking Education” by Lai, W. L. and Todayama, K.)

1. What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is defined by Indiana University’s Writing Tutorial Service as “using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information”.

2. Why is plagiarism wrong? (by Prof. Todayama based on the guideline of Penn State University)

When you commit plagiarism, you hurt yourself and the community in the following ways:

- You deny yourself the opportunity to learn and practice skills that may be needed in your future careers.
- You also deny yourself to opportunity to receive honest feedback on how to improve your skills and performance.
- You invite future employers and faculty to question your integrity and performance in general.
- You commit fraud on faculty who are evaluating your work.
- You deprive another author due credit for his or her work.
- You show disrespect for your peers who have done their own work.

3. Solving the plagiarism problem?

Standard definitions of plagiarism such as the one defined above suggest only limited solutions to the problem: acknowledging sources or forbidding reuse. A more comprehensive and satisfactory solution to the plagiarism problem requires not only writing skills but also logical thinking skills.

4. Logical thinking education to combat plagiarism

The need for logical thinking education to combat plagiarism can be immediately seen by understanding that plagiarism runs exactly counter to the development of original and critical thinkers. Thus the most promising strategy to combat plagiarism is to put in place a practical method to develop students into original and critical thinkers. In our view, this can be achieved through developing a set of habits for integrating the ideas in other people’s work into one’s own arguments. In particular, students should get used to answering the following three questions whenever they are using other people’s work.

- (1) What is the thesis statement (C) of your research?
- (2) What is the thought (T) behind the borrowed texts? If possible, try to summarize it in just one sentence.
- (3) How is T related to C?