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Due: Oct. 26th

**Why is plagiarism a serious problem for international students？**

**Introduction:**

Plagiarism has been defined as taking the written intellectual property content from another and offering it as your own intellectual property (Fritz Dolak, D.A.2003). Reasons for plagiarizing are varied and include students’ beliefs and values, personality, stress, social groups and peer pressure and situational and contextual factors (Park, 2003). Many reasons lead to plagiarism, such as huge academic burden, limited time and cultural difference. International students face even more pressure since they not only have to deal with study and time pressure, but they also have to face language barrier. Compared with domestic students, international students need to spend more time to understand courses and accomplish assignments. It takes much longer time to read materials and write papers, so in some cases, students have to copy, or refer to, others’ work to catch the deadline. Even if they don’t mean to plagiarize, the result is indeed plagiarism. For international students, some of the plagiarisms are intentional, but many of them are really unintentional. In some countries, students won’t get punished for their plagiarism, so they don’t pay enough attention to it. It happens a lot that students modify the original sentences into their own opinion without citation or even copy the entire sentence. For them, it doesn’t consider as academic misconduct. However, in western countries, it means plagiarism.

**Review of Literature:**

 Diane B. Kraft (2014) in<Helping International Students Avoid the Plagiarism Minefield: Suggestions from a Second Language Teacher and Writer>describes that “Perhaps the most pervasive stereotype about plagiarism by international students is that of the Asian student who plagiarizes because it is acceptable to do so in his culture, or at least it is not viewed as a serious problem.” American magazine “Science” published an article about the global distribution of academic plagiarism conclusions that “Researchers from countries that submit the lion's share of arXiv papers—the United States, Canada, and a small number of industrialized countries in Europe and Asia—tend to plagiarize less often than researchers elsewhere. For example, more than 20% (38 of 186) of authors who submitted papers from Bulgaria were flagged, more than eight times the proportion from New Zealand (five of 207). In Japan, about 6% (269 of 4759) of submitting authors were flagged, compared with over 15% (164 out of 1054) from Iran. A study by Sherman (1992 cited Hyman, 2001) found that Italian students viewed copying original information as acceptable and also as a mark of respect to the author.

**Question/Position:**

 Plagiarism can be defined into two types: intentional and unintentional. For students, some of the plagiarisms are intentional, they just want to copy other’s idea or sentence to save their own time and energy. Obviously, it is plagiarism. However, most of students are really unintentional. They even don’t know they have plagiarized. Plagiarism is easy to happen in international students because of different background and culture. In China, some students don’t have such intuition of righteously referring, so that they might use the contents or conclusions from the reference directly without being referring the original author. However, most of time it won’t be found to be plagiarism, so students don’t care and consider as academic misconduct. If it happened in western country, there will be very serious consequences. So the challenge for international students is to change their academic writing habit in their home country. For instance, Chinese students’ graduation thesis has to check the repeat rate by using a software. The methodology is to check whether there are 13 same word in database. So It won’t be found if students change the word order or express it in another way. A lot of students will use this way modify the original sentences and change a little about it into their own opinion. This behavior won’t have serious consequences in China, but is plagiarism in western concept.

 If international students would not like to change their writing habit and realize the seriousness of plagiarism, the consequence will be serious. On August 27, 2014, China Daily posted a report named A Bold Move against plagiarism, providing information on the Yu Yanru case. Yu translated Nina R. Gelbart’s paper (“Frondeur” Journalism in the 1770s) straightly and used it references in the literature as the annotation. With the Doctor’s Degree in history from Peking University, Yu was accused by the Chinese Journal of Journalism and Communication of plagiarism in her research paper. Peking University announced that the accusation was true and it decided to revoke Yu’s doctorate and graduation degrees on January 10, 2015.

**Conclusion:**

 Differences in cultural background lead to different behavior. Most of the western countries, such as the US, treat even minor plagiarism as severe academic misconduct. Domestic students are taught how to write academic paper when they are very young, so they hardly have problem in unintentional plagiarism. However, international students have little knowledge about American dissertation requirement, let alone the severances of plagiarism. It’s likely that they plagiarizing without knowing it due to the difference in rules in different countries. Changing academic writing habit is not an essay process especially when they first get into a new environment. The unfamiliarity and maladjustment make them choose to use others’ articles as their own opinions and contents. But this couldn’t be the reason of do not pay attention to plagiarize. All in all, plagiarism is a serious problem for international students.

**Bibliography:**

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