

## TO WHOM BELONGS THE IDEA? DISCUSSING PLAGIARISM AT UNIVERSITIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF OWNERSHIP

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**Abstract:** At universities plagiarism is perceived as a serious academic misconduct. “I was not aware that I have to cite every idea” is a comment often uttered by students. Seemingly there is a discrepancy between living in a world of 24/7 access to information and being clear on how to use and re-own a foreign idea.

But are the students to blame? Media and marketing often do not draw a clear distinction between the owner of an idea and the person who made it famous; moreover the owner and the marketer are mutually dependent (e. g. Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak) or the use of ideas is an integral part of a certain field of work. When Bob Dylan cites lines of a Shakespeare poem in his songs, is this considered plagiarism? This led us to the assumption that in general the use of foreign ideas comes naturally and depends on its function due to the context.

The presentation elaborates on text examples of writers and poets demonstrating the tight demarcation line between the creative use of an idea (text, verses) and what is called “plagiarism”; furthermore we will analyse examples of various stages of re-owning of texts (intertextuality) by students and highlight how universities could confront students with the concept of ownership and proper use of foreign ideas within a certain context more consciously.

**Key words:** ownership, digitalisation, plagiarism, academic misconduct, awareness, prevention

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