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Software tools to avoid plagiarism in academia – different approaches to prevent and to sanction different forms of plagiarism

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Abstract:

With several prominent politicians like German minister of defense Carl Guttenberg having their doctoral title annulled by universities the question of plagiarism quickly became a vividly discussed topic in the academic world; but it also led to the development of several software solutions that help to detect plagiarism by analyzing texts and finding similarities with existing scientific work. These solutions can help detect plagiarism in academic works and are now used all over the world.

This kind of software detects voluntary and involuntary plagiarism alike. Another approach less discussed which focusses on the avoidance of involuntary plagiarism is the use of software to help academic scholars to better structure and organize their scientific work and thereby avoid the danger of involuntary plagiarism. The presentation will outline the differences between the various types of plagiarism and which technical answers can be given to each of them. The focus will then lie on the use of reference management programs to organize the large quantities of scientific literature available and how they can help prevent plagiarism. The presentation will conclude with some suggestions how to integrate these software tools in the education of students and young scientists.