



The Usefulness of Realization of Plagiarism to Third-year English-Majored Students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology in Doing Research Paper

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Abstract: Via the three tools such as observation, questionnaire and interview, this study aims to find out whether the third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology have comprehensive realisation of plagiarism and how that realisation helps them with doing research paper. In addition, it also indicates some useful and popular ways to help people check and avoid plagiarism effectively.

Key words: plagiarism, realization of plagiarism, research paper

I. INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism is a big problem in academic environment which has been debated a lot by those who take serious care of this issue. Nowadays, with the strong development of information technology, plagiarism still exists under many sophisticated forms which are very difficult to be recognised. However, beside those who really know about plagiarism, there are still those who commit plagiarism by accident because they are not very clear about this issue. So, what happens if these people are equipped with good understanding about plagiarism? Whether their understanding helps them in doing research paper?

This paper aims to study the real situation of realizing about plagiarism and its usefulness to the third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology in doing research paper after the course of "Research Method" given by Ms. Tran Thi Phuong Thu. In this course, Ms. Tran has directed the learners to pay serious attention to plagiarism and provided them with ways to avoid plagiarizing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Undergraduates, especially those majoring EFL (English as a Foreign Language) are required to gain ability of academic writing. However, in his research, White (1988, pp. 72-73) points out that EFL students in non-western nations get a lot of troubles with academic writing. According to Gomez (2014, p. 154), many students committed plagiarism without realizing that they plagiarized with certain reasons as listed in Ali et al (2012, p. 605) such as learning environment, pressure, ethics and personal attitudes, or realization of plagiarism, etc. Additionally, as stressed by Yang (2014, p. 74) that it is the lack of understanding of bad impacts of plagiarism which accidentally motivates students to plagiarize. Many researchers such as Howard (2007), DeVoss and Rosati (2002) have mentioned EFL students' understanding of plagiarism in their works.

Research questions:

1. Have the third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology got clear realization of plagiarism?
2. What causes lead to plagiarism and what are its bad impacts on students?
3. How is the usefulness of realization of plagiarism to the third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology in doing research paper?

III. METHOD

The Research Method class given above has totally fifty-one juniors majoring in English Language. These students learn Research Method as a compulsory subject to get familiar with doing research in general as well as to be well-prepared for doing graduation thesis in the final year.

When carrying out the study, we have used three different kinds of measures: observation, questionnaires, and live interviews.

We have observed the class from the orientation session given by Ms. Tran to the end of the course. And then, we delivered fifty-one questionnaires to the learners in the break time. Later, we collected just 50 questionnaires with answers because one student left the class for some personal reason. In this questionnaire, the first and the fourth questions are modelled like Likert's scale from 1 (a little agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Question 2- 3 are multiple choices. And the last three ones are opened questions. Finally, the live interviews with four questions were carried out with six students selected randomly including three males and three females.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research question 1: Have the third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology got clear realization of plagiarism?

Observation shows that at the very first session (orientation) given by Ms. Tran, the whole class showed that they were not very clear about plagiarism or its seriously bad effects. When Ms. Tran provided many examples (though papers and video clips) of plagiarism, a lot of students protested those examples because they did not think that was plagiarism and that they often took the ideas or copied some sentences or paragraphs without concerning about the author's right or acknowledging the other authors. They thought that was normal and felt it so strange and confused a lot when hearing about plagiarism. There were still some others who knew something but not obviously clearly enough about plagiarism because they did not know how to avoid plagiarism. This showed that there were still a lot of students who had not realized clearly about plagiarism as well as how to avoid this error. They needed helps and had to improve this matter by themselves.

Later, in the next sessions, Ms. Tran had to repaired lots of writings with plagiarism. She showed the class what were considered as plagiarism and how to fix the errors. The students looked extremely stressed because they supposed that it was too difficult for them to avoid plagiarism. In another word, it was so easy for them to commit plagiarizing! This means that they needed time to get familiar and to practice avoiding plagiarism.

However, gradually till the end of the course, the circumstance got better and better. Ms. Tran did not have to fix paragraphs or papers with plagiarism. If there were some works like that, it was just the technical mistakes when students composed their writing by Microsoft word. The students seemed to be more confident about their writing. They were no longer worried about plagiarism because they understand clearly about this matter and had good realization of the way to acknowledge other authors. This proves that students benefit a lot from their good realization about plagiarism.

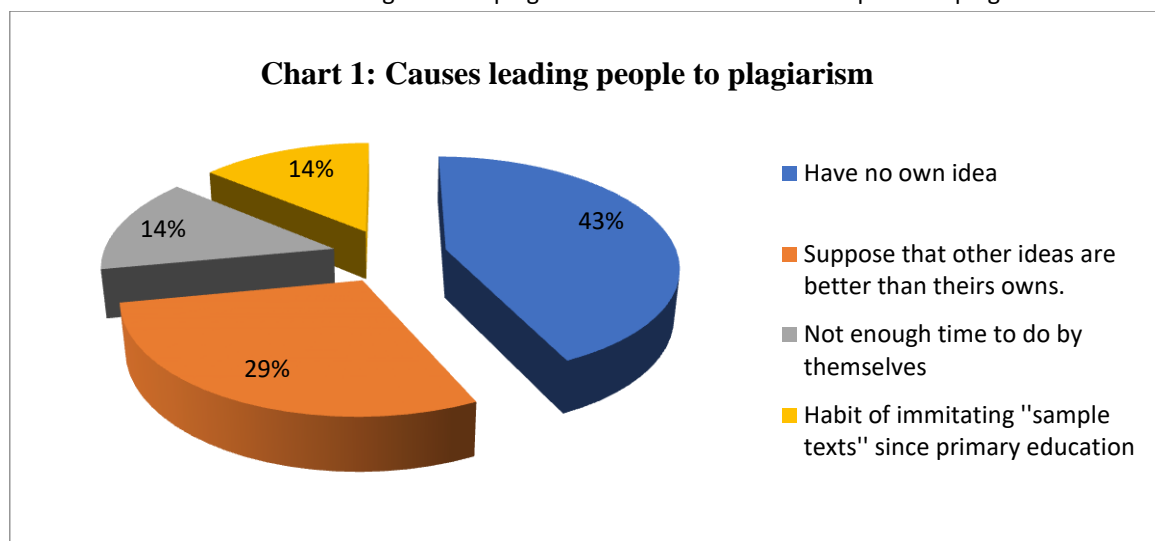
As can be seen in table 1, there was just one person (2%) who a little agreed with plagiarism. In the rest ones, 48% disagreed and 50% strongly disagree. This is such a meaningful signal showing that nearly 100% of the students understand about plagiarism and saying no to it.

Table 1: Students' thought of plagiarism

	Number	Percent
A little agree	1	2
Agree	0	0
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	24	48
Strongly disagree	25	50
Total	50	100.0

Research question 2: *What causes lead to plagiarism and what are its bad impacts on students?*

Through the statistics illustrated by chart 1 and chart 2, it could be seen that the students in this class realized well about the causes leading them to plagiarism and the bad mental impacts on plagiarists.



According to chart 1, many blamed for having no time (14%) or being influenced by sample texts since primary school (14%). However, as can be seen, the most important reason is they did not have own ideas – 43%. This shows that it is very difficult for the students to create new ideas, new inventions, or innovations, etc. The second reason is the students supposed other authors' ideas were much better than theirs. The percentage of 29% indicates that there are a lot of students who lacked self-confidence of their abilities. So, they had to rely on other sources to do their affairs. In sum, the main reasons that the students committed plagiarism were the lack of idea and self-confidence.

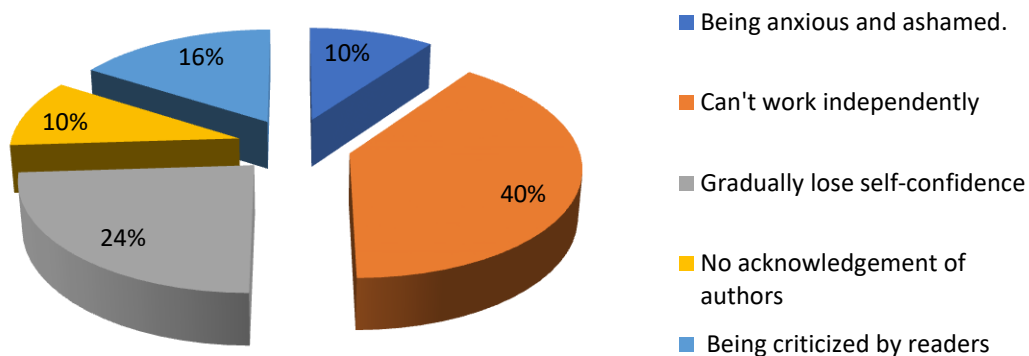
Chart 2: Plagiarism consequences to plagiarists

Chart 2 reveals that the most serious effect on those who plagiarise is they gradually cannot work independently (40%). In another way, they had to rely on other sources to do their own work and tried to cheat in many ways. The second most serious problem happening to plagiarists is losing self-confidence (24%). Once they cannot believe in themselves, they cannot do things effectively and lose their own creativity.

Research question 3: *How is the usefulness of realization of plagiarism to the third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology in doing research paper?*

Table 2: The usefulness of realization of plagiarism in doing research

	Number	Percent
Not at all	0	0
Very little	0	0
A little bit	0	0
Useful	26	52
Extremely useful	24	48
Total	50	100.0

Table 2 indicates that the students in this class totally admitted the benefits from realization of plagiarism because 100% of them chose choice 4 and 5 (from useful to extremely useful). Most of the ideas collected in the questionnaire suppose that realization of plagiarism helps avoiding plagiarism and acknowledging the other authors as well as their creation. At the same time, they are motivated to work harder to be creative and have critical thinking.

Besides, the six people taking the live interview did agree that comparing between at the beginning of the course and till the end of this course, their realization of plagiarism has changed significantly. At first, they did not know or knew little about this matter and did not take it seriously. But now, all of them have got comprehensive realization of plagiarism and benefited a lot from this by keeping themselves from plagiarism (like the result from the questionnaire).

Furthermore, the interview also finds out the ways the students often use to check plagiarism. Most of students use software on the internet. In addition, Ngoc Hanh says that she always uses google engine to check her work to ensure that her ideas are not the same with others. If there is the similarity, she will search

the source and has citation in the reference part. Moreover, Thu Dung gives another simple way to realise whether there has plagiarism that is the tone and the style of the work. For example, the tone and the style of Asians are different from those of the Westerners. That is also the way Ms. Tran often realizes the works with plagiarism before she uses the software to check that work (personal talk in Research Method class, 2021).

V. CONCLUSION

Through this study, we can gain the answers for the three research questions given before that the students in Research Method class have good realization of plagiarism and are serious about this matter. They also achieve lots of usefulness from this such as critical thinking and being hard working. Also, the study has drawn some popular ways (most importantly the software available on the internet) which help the students check plagiarism in a quick and effective manner.

VI. REFERENCES

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VI. APPENDIX

1. Questionnaire

The usefulness of realization of plagiarism to third-year English-majored students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University of Technology in Doing Research Paper

Dear everyone,

This questionnaire is to serve the assignment on writing a data commentary paragraph. As we know, plagiarism is a big problem in academic study in general and in doing research in particular. Your answers will help us to collect realistic data reflecting the situation of plagiarism in the room of TESOL program. We highly appreciate your enthusiastic cooperation. Thank you.

* Required

1. What do you think about plagiarism? *

1 2 3 4 5

A little agree



Strongly
disagree

Select a value from a range of 1 - A little agree, to 5 - strongly disagree.

2. Why do people plagiarize? *

- ☐ Have no own idea.
- ☐ Not enough time to do by themselves.

- ☒ Suppose that other ideas are better than those of themselves.
- ☐ Want to get high score.
- ☐ Don't know clearly what plagiarism is.
- ☐ Suppose that plagiarism is not serious (normal).
- ☐ Habit of imitating "sample texts" since primary education

3. According to you, what consequences does plagiarism bring about to plagiarists? *

- ☐ Being anxious and ashamed.
- ☐ Can't work independently.
- ☐ Gradually lose self-confidence.
- ☐ No acknowledgement of authors.
- ☐ Being criticized by readers.

4. According to you, does realization of plagiarism help you in doing research? *

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all

Select a value from a range of 1 - Not at all, to 5 - Extremely useful.



Extremely
useful

5. Why is it not useful?

(Specify if you choose 1-2 for question 4)

6. Why is it useful?

(Please specify If you choose 3-5 for question 4.)\

7. According to you, how to avoid plagiarism in doing research paper effectively? *

(Please share your experience)

2. Interview questions

1. Do you realize clearly about plagiarism? Why or why not?
2. Compare between at the beginning and till the end of the course (Academic Writing), are there any changes in your realization about plagiarism? How are those changes?
3. How does your realisation help you in doing research paper?
4. How can you check plagiarism?