

PHILOSOPHY, VIDEO

PLAGIARISM OR SLOPPY CITATION?

18.02.2011

We have an interesting discussion here in Germany, how many sloppy citations are being allowed in a dissertation. Does plagiarism only start with central text passages? We all have signed a form like

Ich versichere, dass ich die Arbeit ohne fremde Hilfe und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Quellen angefertigt habe und dass die Arbeit in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form noch keiner anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegen hat und von dieser als Teil einer Prüfungsleistung angenommen wurde. Alle Ausführungen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß übernommen wurden, sind als solche gekennzeichnet.

which is rather clear: "I used only the cited references and nothing else." Already one missed citation therefore threatens the whole thesis. Unfortunately for the prominent author, the [web 2.0 community jumped into that question](#) highlighting so far 76 citations that are not giving a correct source (which may be even an underestimate as there may be more translated text that cannot be easily detected). Here is the permanently updated figure:



Maybe I am not so much interested in a dissertation that may be even obsolete after the legislation changed only slightly. The outcome of this process, however, is an extremely important signpost for the next generation in the science industry. And sorry, "Dr." von Guttenberg, an update on a printed thesis is not possible, it is the final word (that creates at least for other people sleepless nights).

Addendum 24 Feb 2011

There is so much that has been said now with my favorite comments made by [Stockhammer](#) and [Walter](#). See also [Youtube / Bundestag live \(23.02.2011\) – aktuelle Stunde zu Guttenberg](#) or even better this one

[Open letters](#) are also starting now, along with more prominent scientists like [Winnacker](#) along with [less prominent ones](#).

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