Editorial

Correct citation in DYNA and anti-plagiarism editorial policy

In November 2013, Universidad Nacional de Colombia begun to use Turnitin (www.turnitin.com), a Web-based tool commonly used for, at least, for 9.500 institutions in the world to check manuscripts' originality, improper citation or possible plagiarism. According to Turnitin Web Page, the software checks the manuscripts against current and archived Web pages, student papers, and content partnerships (including Emerald, SAGE, Ebsco and crossref.org —the association of scholarly publishers that include Elsevier, Springer, and Taylor & Francis, among others).

As a consequence, our editorial team has started to use Turnitin from this number and manuscripts may be checked at any point during the peer review or production processes. Manuscripts with minor problems in citations will return to the authors requesting changes, but more serious problems will be cause for automatic rejection the manuscript.

In order to clarify rejections and requests of changes, the concepts of improper citation and plagiarism will be discuss in the rest of this editorial; the discussion is presented in a general context, but important details about our editorial policy are introduced when it is necessary.

Plagiarism is defined by the IEEE as:

> the reuse of someone else's prior ideas, processes, results, or words without explicitly acknowledging the original author and source [1]

Writers must take into account that there is not an acceptable minimum level of copying without due citation [1] such that "plagiarism is plagiarism" [2]; and that citation rules are very strict and it is understood that any violation of such rules is plagiarism. In order to avoid plagiarism charges, citation must be done properly.

Citations can be direct or indirect [3]. In direct citations, the reused text (from other author) is quoted and the source is identified when such text is placed in the same line of the current text; see the example in the previous paragraph. When direct citation exceeds certain number of lines (defined by the style of citation followed by each journal), most handbooks indicate that the text should be placed in a separate paragraph without quotation and indented such that the cited text must be clearly identified from the text of the writer, and, possibly with a small size letter. Citation should be place and the end of the cited text. In DYNA, we recomend text indentation in both margins and font size of 9 pointswhen the cited text exceds two lines; view the example above.

Here, it is important aware to authors that a "credited verbatim copying of a major portion of a paper without clear delimitation" is also plagiarism [1] and an alone citation without quotes is not enough to acknowledge the source.

In indirect citations, the words or ideas of other authors are put in the words of the writer, but crediting the source is mandatory. Note that, also exists a limit in the extension of phrases and ideas cited from a work of another authors; as a general idea it is illegal to cite, directly or indirectly, to such an extent that the core of the cited work is reproduced or when citation is not genuinely required [4]. Generally, each country has its own legislation and in some cases there is a limit to the number of words that can be quoted; for example, in Argentina (Article 10, Law 11.723 from 1933) this limit is a thousand words.

Other form of plagiarism is the substantial copy [5] of the work of others where findings are presented as their own and without acknowledging the source. This class of unethical behavior is difficult to prove as there is not a literal copying and the offender usually claims ignorance of the original work. To avoid this misconduct, authors submitting manuscripts to DYNA must check and report the main differences between similar published works, including the findings.

Finally, the self-plagiarism is defined as the excessive reuse of parts of author's previous work [6][7][8] without proper citation; however, in other cases, self-plagiarism is defined also as duplicate publication [9], where the offender submits and publishes the same work in different journals. In the case of text recycling, it is not necessary that the author quote his or her own previous work, but the citation must be necessary [7].

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