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Tanka črta med avtorstvom in plagiatorstvom

Zgodilo se je. Zgodilo se je tudi v Sloveniji, kar se je že zgodilo in se dogaja tudi drugod po svetu. Odkrit in potrjen je bil prvi primer plagiatorstva pri znanstvenem delu in posledica je bila odvzem znanstvenega naziva.

Dogodek mi je dal misliti. Kako to, da se je to po vseh teh letih šele zdaj odkrilo in pripeljalo do takega zaključka. Kaj ne bi bilo mogoče plagiatorstva odkriti že prej, preden je sploh prišlo do znanstvenega dela in podelitve naziva? Pri komu gre iskati odgovornost? Je le-ta res samo na strani avtorja?

Živimo v času, ko se vse dogaja hitro, ko vse želimo imeti takoj in zdaj. V času, ko so znanstveniki prisiljeni za svoj obstoj v akademski sferi slediti znani misli »publish or perish« - objavi ali propadi. Zato večkrat naredimo in opravimo delo površno, kar ima za posledico napake, spodrsaljaje ali pomanjkljivosti. Vseeno je, kako jih poimenujemo, lahko tudi kar plagiatorstvo.

Skoraj z gotovostjo si lahko priznamo, da to ni edini primer plagiatorstva v Sloveniji. Čim bolj hitimo, čim večkrat, ko si vzamemo premalo časa, čim manjkrat si priznamo, da se je potrebno tudi ustaviti in delo opraviti vestno in odgovorno, tem več bo takih primerov. Menim, da odgovornost za nastale dogodke ne gre iskati samo pri avtorjih, ampak tudi pri vseh, ki sodelujejo v samem postopku nastajanja znanstvenega dela.

Ni vse v količini, ni vse v količini objavljenih del, količini prevzemanja številnih mentorstev. Ni vse v pehanju za točkami tako za habilitacije na univerzah kot tudi za točkami za prijave na razpisane projekte s strani sofinancerjev. Vodilo bi nam moralo biti kakovost, ne količina. Ni zaman rek: manj je več.

Danes obstajajo ob dostopni tehnologiji številni programi, ki omogočajo računalniško odkrivanje plagiatorstva. Mnoge fakultete slovenskih univerz o tem razmišljajo, če ne že kar uporabljajo take programe. Ob veliki količini objavljenih del tudi mentor lahko spregleda, da delo ni avtorsko. Možno, da tudi spregleda, da niso vključeni potrebni citati; možno, da zaupa avtorju, da so vsi citati pravilno citirani.

A ko sama dobim v roko rokopis, ne morem mimo tega, da najprej ne pogledam navedeno literaturo. In ob danes dostopni tehnologiji se mi zdi zelo neodgovorno in površno tako od avtorja kot od recenzentov, mentorjev, da lahko tako slabo in površno navedene reference spregledajo, s tem pa morebiti tudi delo, ki je morda plagiat.

Mar je potem smiselno nadaljevati z objavljanjem znanstvenih del? Mar ni poslanstvo mentorjev, profesorjev, recenzentov in urednikov, vseh, ki sodelujemo v znanstvenem publiciranju in komuniciranju, da se odgovorno odzovemo, omejimo in/ali preprečimo po svojih najboljših močeh take objave?

V letih, ki jih imam za seboj kot urednica, mi je pod roke prišlo kar nekaj člankov, ki so bili pred objavo sporni. Ne samo, da se je pokazalo plagiatorstvo, oddani

so bili tudi članki, pri katerih je bilo sporno tudi avtorstvo članka. Znano je, da je neetično prikrivati ali ne navajati soavtorje. Še posebno odgovornega pisca, ki ostaja v ozadju in sploh ni naveden med avtorji. Tudi taki primeri niso bili redki in sama imam tudi take članke za plagiat. Pozabljive (berimo: neetične in nevestne) avtorje, ki oddajajo take članek v uredništvo revije, pa za plagiatorje. Težko pa uredniki, člani uredništva sami odkrijemo, da članek ni v celoti napisan v skladu z znanstvenimi merili in etičnimi načeli. Zato gre velika zahvala tistim recenzentom, ki vestno in odgovorno opravijo oceno članka. Želim in upam, da bo tudi v prihodnje sodelovanje z recenzenti in avtorji člankov na tako visoki ravni kakovosti kot doslej. Zaključila bom s citatom iz Lightmanove monografije Einsteinove sanje¹: »Od kod ta obsedenost s hitrostjo? V tem svetu ljudem, ki se gibljejo, čas teče počasneje. In tako vsakdo potuje pri veliki hitrosti, da bi pridobil na času.«

Petruša Miholič
izvršna urednica

¹ Lightman A. Einsteinove sanje. Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2011: 59

The thin line between authorship and plagiarism

It has happened. What has already happened and is still happening elsewhere in the world has now happened in Slovenia. The first case of plagiarism of a scientific work has been uncovered and confirmed, resulting in divestment of an academic title.

The event caused me to reflect, how come after all these years it has but now been discovered, and has led to such a conclusion. Could not the plagiarism have been uncovered earlier, before the conclusion of the scientific work and the awarding of the title? Where does the responsibility lie? Is it truly only with the author?

We live in a time where everything happens fast, when we wish to have everything immediately and now. In a time when in order to continue their existence in the academic sphere, scientists are forced to follow the famous principle of 'Publish or perish'. We are therefore more likely to produce and perform sloppy work, resulting in errors, blunders or omissions. Whatever we name them, even plagiarism.

We can admit, almost with certainty, that this is not the only instance of plagiarism in Slovenia, and the more we rush, the more we stint on time, and the more we are willing to ignore the need to stop and perform our work conscientiously and responsibly, then the more will we have such cases. I believe that the responsibility for these events does not lie solely with the authors, but also with all those involved in the actual formation process of a scientific work.

Not everything is in quantity, neither in the amount of published works, nor in the number of mentorships. Not everything is in scrambling after points for either lectureships at universities or for points for applying for projects tendered by co-financiers. We should let quality be our guide, not quantity. The saying 'less is more' is not unwarranted.

Today, with the available technology, a number of programs exist that allow computers to detect plagiarism. Many faculties in Slovenian universities are considering, if not already using such programs. With large numbers of published works, even a mentor can overlook that a work is not of original authorship. They may also overlook that not all the necessary citations are included, or possibly they trust the author to cite all the quotations properly.

Yet when I receive a manuscript I cannot help but look through the cited literature immediately. With the technology available today, I find it very irresponsible and superficial of the author, as well as the reviewers and mentors, to overlook such poor and flimsy references, and thereby a work, which may possibly be plagiarism. Does it even make sense to continue publishing scientific works? Is it not the mission of mentors, professors, reviewers and editors, and of all us involved in the publication of science and communication to respond responsibly, limit and/or prevent to the best of our efforts such publishing?

In the years I have been an editor, quite a few articles passed through my hands that were contentious before publication. Not only was plagiarism present, but there

were even articles submitted where the authorship of the article was disputed. It is known that concealing or not naming co-authors is unethical. In particular the main writer, who remains in the background and is not listed among the authors. Even such cases were not rare, and I can only consider such articles as plagiarism, and the forgetful (i.e. unethical and unscrupulous) authors who submit such articles to the editorial board, as plagiarists. It is difficult for editors, and members of the editorial board to discover that an article is not entirely in accordance with scientific standards and ethical principles. Therefore, we can only express grateful acknowledgment to those reviewers who assess articles conscientiously and responsibly. I can only wish and hope that cooperation with reviewers and authors will continue at such a high level of quality.

I will conclude with a quote from Lightman's *Einstein's Dreams*¹: 'Why this obsession with speed? In this world of moving people, time passes slowly. And so everyone travels at high speed in order to gain time.'

Petruša Miholič
Executive editor

¹ Lightman A. *Einsteinove sanje*. Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2011: 59