

## Editorial (99)

Wendy Sutherland-Smith is one of many experts who is very concerned not by “baby boomers” in developing countries in spite of threatening food shortage all over the world, but by “plagiarist boomers” in the academic (to narrow the discussion) world. She, herself a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Education at Monash University, Australia, has been working on the issue of plagiarism for more than a decade, including completing her dissertation on the same issue. We have to admit that rising Internet technologies constitute the lion’s share of the development and spread of this cheating behavior. Sutherland-Smith’s book: *Plagiarism: The Internet and Student Learning*, published by Routledge (Francis and Taylor Group) in 2008 have led us to realize that it’s far from simple and easy-to-solve problem; penalties alone are not the answer. It become more crucial if we face different perceptions about what constitutes plagiarism and diverse understandings of it in various academic institutions and how they cope with the ever increasing problem. The writing services programs facilitated through the Internet are also a very threatening issue on degrading the academic integrity of alumni.

Still warm in our memory is the heated debate some years ago whether Dan Brown who wrote the controversial ‘The Da Vinci Code’ has plagiarized Baigent and Leigh’s ‘Holy Blood, Holy Grail.’ (Sutherland-Smith, 2008). In our country such heated debate has also been ignited by Dedy Kurniawan Wijaya (February 2010) in the newspapers concerning Chairil Anwar’s much cited poem *Karawang-Bekasi* (written in 1948, and was adored and praised by many admirers as one of his best masterpieces). Chairil Anwar was accused having plagiarize the work of Archibald Macleish’s ‘The Young Dead Soldiers Do Not Speak,’ written in 1941. It would not be that far, if, and only if,

Anwar had admitted (not the least reducing his great talent and creativity) that he was inspired by MacLeish’s poem. It’s a pity that he did not do that. This is also one of our students’ weaknesses, that is not skilled and not specifically trained in paraphrasing, which lead to inadequate paraphrasing, still one of the minor plagiarism.

So far, we are concerned with students’ misconduct. What about the misconduct of the lecturers themselves? Ironically academic crime is not the monopoly of students. Some years ago we were astonished with a rather odd but true incident in one of the oldest state universities in Yogyakarta: a fresh graduate of a doctoral program had been detected plagiarizing an undergraduate thesis of a graduate from a private university in Surabaya. His doctoral title was immediately detached from him after the detection. Recently a professor from a well known university in Bandung was expelled from his duty as professor after plagiarizing articles from foreign authors to be published in a local media. An official of a university in Malaysia was so furious with the misconduct of some lecturers in his university, once asked rhetorically: what should we do with these apes in our university? A list of many other cases are easy to find in the newspapers, in the Internet or else.

Before or better parallel with our concern coping with our student misbehavior, we should take care of our dignified profession as lecturers. Hopefully it would be more successful if the Minister of National Education can take firm actions and sentence the academic criminals in order not to spread the virus-like misconduct to our students.

The editor