

Information for avoiding self-plagiarism in your PhD-thesis

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's intellectual or literary property, work or ideas as one's own. In the scientific context it often involves the partial or full usage of another author's text by incorporating it into one's own work without proper citation.

Self-plagiarism is a type of plagiarism, in which the writer republishes a work in its entirety or reuses portions of a previously written text in a new manuscript without proper citation (*American Psychological Association, 2010*).

The controversial term "self-plagiarism" often leads to the assumption that data which has been published once cannot be used for further publications by the same author. The same rules apply to both one's own previously published text or data and third-party material.

It is mandatory to cite previous publications in an appropriate manner.

Improper citation will be considered as willful deception. The reuse of scientific data has to be transparent.

In the memorandum "Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice" from 1988 the DFG refers to the utilization of one's own preliminary work as follows:

- „*Previous work must be presented specifically and completely.*“
- *“Publications must be precisely cited. Unpublished manuscripts must be clearly identified as “in press in ...”, “accepted by ...” or “submitted to ...”.*“

It should be noted that particularly the validity of meta-studies will be influenced by repeated publication of identical data records.

The following guidelines will help you to ensure the transparency of your PhD thesis.

1. Published first – graduated afterwards

If you use the results of your own published, accepted or submitted data (text or figures) in a cumulative PhD thesis or monography, you have to give a clear indication of the previous work. This could be placed, e.g., in the preliminary remarks or at the beginning of the adopted section and reads as follows.

„Partial results of the presented work have been published in: <bibliographical data>/<date>“

or

„Partial results of the presented work have been submitted at: <bibliographical data>/<date>“

or

„Partial results of the presented work have been accepted: <journal“

If you worked together with co-authors you should specify your part of the publication.

Before using figures, table sheets, or parts of the abstract find out from the editor of the journal if you transferred the copyrights when you submitted the paper.

2. Graduated first – published afterwards

There are special rules about using data from your thesis in scientific publications. Adherence to the rules of good scientific practice requires that the editor of a journal must be informed about data already published by the time of submission. **Note that every thesis completed at the Charité is published and is available on the internet.**

- a. If the publication is based on data collection and work you did during your PhD, you should place a note either in the acknowledgement, an introductory comment or an endnote. This could be worded as follows:

„This publication uses data collected within the framework of the PhD thesis <titel> of <name> published in <year> at the faculty <name>“

or

„The following chapter is a revised version of the text <title and bibliographic data> of <author's name>“

- b. If you transfer complete data, figures, graphs or longer parts or chapters this must be recognizable as such by the reader for example by an appropriate marking like:

„The following table is based on <bibliographic information>“

or

„The following part/ chapter was previously published in: <bibliographic information>.“

Furthermore each reference cited in the text must be listed in the literature section and vice versa. **Please note that even your own thesis must be cited because it is published in the internet!**

„Author: Title of the document. Release date. Internet address (URL). Date and time of request“

- American Psychological Association, 2010
American Psychological Association
The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association
(sixth ed.) American Psychological Association, Washington, DC (2010)