

Nobel Prize Winners for Literature as Palliative for Scientific English

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Plagiarism causes a serious concern in scientific literature. I distinguish two types of plagiarism. What is routinely highlighted and discussed is the reprehensible type of stealing another author's ideas and words. This type I categorize as "heterotrophic" plagiarism. A more prevalent and less-discussed type of plagiarism is the verbatim use of same sentences repetitively by authors in their publications. This I categorize as "autotrophic" plagiarism. Though harmless per se, autotrophic plagiarism is equally taxing on the readers. The occurrence of autotrophic plagiarism is mainly caused by the lack of proficiency in the current lingua franca of science, ie, English. The writings of 22 Nobel literature laureates who wrote in English, especially their travelogues, essays, and letters to the press can be used for benefit of improving one's own vocabulary and writing skills and style. I suggest the writings of three literati – Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell, and Ernest Hemingway – as palliatives for autotrophic plagiarism in scientific publishing.

Key words: creativeness; ethics; famous persons; literature; medicine in literature; Nobel Prize; plagiarism