

CASE Lecture 5: Paraphrasing, summarising & synthesising

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Session Aims

- Definitions
- Quiz
- EPAX video

Definitions

What are **paraphrasing**, **summarising** and **synthesising**, and why are they important in academic writing?

- A paraphrase is an accurate, simpler restatement, in **your own words**, of the content of a piece of text without the alteration of the original meaning'. *(Beekman et al, 2011, page 55)*
- A summary is a shortened version of the original text by selecting only the main ideas, or those relevant to your argument, and major supporting details.
- Synthesis is the combining of two or more summaries, looking for themes in each, searching for the links between various materials in order to make **your point**. Academic writing, relies heavily on synthesis.

Paraphrasing and summarising require active reading and mental processing so that you can express the ideas from your sources in your own style of thinking and writing.

Introductory Quiz

1. Which of the following is *unlikely* to be true of a paraphrase?
 - A. It is shorter than the original text.
 - B. It will contain lots of direct quotation from the original text.
 - C. It is simpler than the original text.
 - D. It is a restatement of the original text.
2. Which of the following is *unlikely* to be true of the skill of paraphrasing?
 - A. It will help you to understand difficult texts.
 - B. It will *reduce the flow* of your writing.
 - C. It will help you to avoid plagiarising the original text.
 - D. It will help you reduce the number of direct quotations in your writing.
3. Which of the following is *unlikely* to be a stage in the process of paraphrasing?
 - A. Read the original sentence/paragraph carefully to ensure you understand it.
 - B. Underline/highlight the main points and supporting examples.
 - C. Copy the main points and supporting examples into your writing.
 - D. Consider changing the order of the points in your writing.

Introductory Quiz (cont.)

4. Which of the following is *unlikely* to be true of a summary?
 - A. It is the same length as the original text.
 - B. It contains only the main ideas and most important supporting points.
 - C. It can be applied to texts of any length.
 - D. It might not include all the main ideas from the original text, but just the ones that you wish to use to support your argument.

5. Which of the following is *not true* of a synthesis of different sources?
 - A. A synthesis is a combination of several texts made into one.
 - B. A synthesis of sources would be written after individual texts had been paraphrased.
 - C. A synthesis of sources would be written after individual texts had been summarised.
 - D. When reading the final synthesised text, the different writing styles of the original authors should still be recognisable.

Watch EPAX video



Strategies for paraphrasing

1. use a different word that has the same meaning as the original (synonyms)
2. change the form of the word
3. change the tense/voice of the verb
4. change the structure of the sentence
5. change the order of the information

A Change the form of the word, using the prompt in brackets.

e.g. development (change to verb) - to develop

To analyse (change to noun)

1. Evaluation (change to verb)
2. Theoretical (change to verb)
3. Problem (change to adjective)
4. To expect (change to noun)
5. To agree (change to opposite verb)
6. To prove (change to noun)
7. To prove (change to opposite verb)

B Finish these paraphrased sentences by changing the word/word type and grammar.

e.g. We studied the statistics then applied for funding.

After _____ the statistics, we made an _____ for funding.

After **studying** the statistics, we made an **application** for funding.

1. The council cut funding so we could not provide free parking.

- Because of council funding _____, there was no _____ for free parking.

2. His proposal was a failure as it was too theoretical.

- His proposal _____ because it relied too much on _____ .

3. As the emphasis was only on the UK, there were weaknesses in the evidence.

- By _____ the UK only, the evidence was _____ .

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C Decide which paraphrase is better. (NB! Remember, your essay should not just be one long paraphrase, even a good paraphrase!)

1. Adverts are a major part of everyday life.

Paraphrase 1

Advertising is an important feature of daily life.

Paraphrase 2

The influence of adverts can be felt in all aspects of our lives.

2. Adverts for the soft drink, Tango, have recently been banned for possibly encouraging playground bullying.

Paraphrase 1

Advertising for the fizzy drink, Tango, have been disallowed recently for potentially leading to school bullying.

Paraphrase 2

A ban on Tango adverts has been implemented recently, as some felt the content could encourage school bullies.

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D Paraphrase the following.

1. For many people across Europe, the introduction of the Euro has led to price rises in many everyday goods.
 2. Women have traditionally been seen as mothers and home makers and it is only in recent years that they have been making significant inroads into the job market. There is still a long way to go before they achieve complete equality with men but the situation has definitely improved.
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1. For the majority of the European population, the Euro resulted in higher prices for many daily items.
 - 2a. As women have moved into the job market, they have left behind their traditional roles as housewives and mothers, and seen their situation generally improve, though equality with men is still some way off.
 - 2b. Though not yet equal to men in the job market, women are generally in a stronger position now than in the past when they were more restricted to traditional roles in the home.

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E Summarise the following paragraph in the number of words in brackets.

One restriction would arguably be on food advertising. 95% of these during children's television programmes were for products high in fat, salt or sugar (Grissom, 2010) and many, including the World Health Organisation, believe that there is a link between such foods and increasing levels of obesity and high blood pressure. Yet for every \$1 spent by the WHO to combat these effects of a poor diet, the global food industry spends \$500, part of an annual industry worth \$25 billion (WHO, 2009). It is obviously not a fair fight and as children's health is at stake, there is a strong case for a limitation on food advertising to the young. (30 words)

Given growing health problems in children, there is an argument for banning adverts for unhealthy food, especially as the food industry far outspends those trying to promote a more balanced diet. (31 words)

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Paraphrase practice/example

...there is indeed considerable overlap between ethics and law. In fact, the law is essentially an institutionalisation or codification of ethics into specific social rules, regulations, and proscriptions. Nevertheless, the two are not equivalent. ... The law might be said to be a definition of the minimum acceptable standards of behaviour. However, many morally contestable issues, whether in business or elsewhere, are not explicitly covered by the law. ... In one sense then, business ethics can be said to begin where the law ends. Business ethics is primarily concerned with those issues not covered by the law, or where there is no definite consensus on whether something is right or wrong.

(Extract from Crane, A. and Matten, D. (2007) Business Ethics. pp5, 7)

When describing what business ethics is, it is essential to clarify that it is not synonymous with the law or with morals in general. Although the law overlaps with ethics, it usually only regulates the lowest level of acceptable behaviour (Crane and Matten, 2007). In fact, business ethics is mainly concerned with issues and areas of business conduct which are not specifically covered by the law and which are therefore vulnerable to exploitation and to what is viewed as immoral behaviour, even though it may be legal (ibid).

Extra

So far there is no clear evidence from health studies of a relation between mobile phone use and mortality or morbidity. Indeed, tantalising findings in humans include a speeding up of reaction time during exposure, particularly during behavioural tasks calling for attention and electrical brain activity changes during cognitive processes. It is not clear, however, whether these findings have any positive implications for health.

(Maier, M., Blakemore, C. and Koivisto, M. (2000) 'The health hazards of mobile phones'. *British Medical Journal* 320 pp 1288-1289)

Studies point to interesting results which suggest that mobile users experience quicker reaction times to tasks which require both changes in electrical brain activity and concentration (Maier et al. 2000). Although it has not been shown that these effects represent actual benefits to health, there has equally been no data from any disease studies to suggest that mobile phones actually damage health in any way (ibid).

Accurate use of sources

Many commentators have indicated their concern with the failure of educational research to engage adequately with the ongoing problem of social disadvantage (Reddy 2005).

(In Creme, P. & Lea M.R. 2009 p118)

This is slightly ambiguous. It could mean:

1. Reddy is one of the commentators being referred to by the student.
2. Reddy is reporting on these commentators who have indicated their concern with the failure of educational research.

The following is clearer:

Reddy (2005) points to the fact that many commentators (Falls 2003, Nason 2007) have indicated their concern with the failure of educational research to engage adequately with the ongoing problem of social disadvantage.

(In Creme, P. & Lea M.R. 2009 p118)

Summary

- OSCOLA for lawyers; Harvard for all the rest
- Get the basics right first, then worry about the fine details!
- Referencing starts at the note-taking stage
- Incorporation of good sources and well referenced work WILL result in HIGHER marks.

References

Beekman, L., Dube, C. and Underhill, J., (2011) *Academic Literacy*. Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.

Crene, P. and Lea, M., (2008) *Writing at University*. Maidenhead: Open University Press .

Osmond, A., (2011) *Academic Writing and Grammar for Students*. London: SAGE.