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Kinds of Notes

The notes you gather from your research must blend into the body of your paper to provide documentation in support of your thesis. These notes are of three kinds: the paraphrase, the summary, and the quotation.

1 The paraphrase

1.1 What is a paraphrase?

Paraphrasing means changing the wording of a text so that it is significantly different from the original source, without changing the meaning. This is what is usually meant by the phrase “in your own words”. Note that the paraphrase should be clearer and more easily understood than the original. Importantly, effective paraphrasing is a key academic skill needed to avoid the risk of plagiarism: it demonstrates your understanding of a source.

Remember that when paraphrasing you are actually trying to avoid over quoting in your work. In other words, you do not want to quote word for word. Hence, paraphrasing is the alternative to direct quoting, and even the best solution. You will probably therefore only need to paraphrase short texts. When dealing with long paragraphs or indeed pages or chapters, summarizing the main ideas in the text would be more appropriate.

1.2 The Elements of Effective Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing and summarising are normally used together in essay writing, but while summarising aims to **reduce** information to a suitable length, paraphrasing attempts to **restate** the relevant information. When you paraphrase, you need to change the words and the structure of the original text, but keep the meaning the same. Do remember that even when you paraphrase someone’s work you are still required to acknowledge the original author of those ideas by providing a reference – after all, just because you’ve restated their ideas doesn’t mean you’ve taken ownership of them! This crucial fact emphasises one key characteristic of a good paraphrase: the restatement of information in such a way that it does not change the meaning of the original.

For example, the following sentences:

- a) There has been much debate about the reasons for the industrial revolution happening in eighteenth-century Britain, rather than in France or Germany (Baily, 2011).

could be paraphrased:

Why the industrial revolution occurred in Britain in the eighteenth century, instead of on the continent, has been the subject of considerable discussion (Baily, 2011).

b) Evidence of a lost civilization has been found off the coast of China (Baily, 2011).

could be paraphrased:

Baily (2011) points out that the remains of an ancient society have been discovered in the sea near China.

1.2 Techniques for Effective Paraphrasing

1.2.1 Changing vocabulary:

studies > research society > civilization mud > deposits

Note: Not all words and phrases can be paraphrased. For example, *economics*, *socialism* or *global warming* have no effective synonyms.

1.2.2 Changing the Sentence Structure

1.2.2.1 Changing Word Class:

Egypt (n.) > Egyptian (adj.)

mountainous regions (adj. +n.) > in the mountains (n.)

1.2.2.2 Changing Word Order:

Ancient Egypt collapsed > the collapse of Egyptian society began

1.3 Stages of effective paraphrasing

a) Read and make sure you understand the original text.

b) Make notes on the original text that can serve as cues during the rewriting of it.

We recommend doing this without referring to the original text as this keeps distance between your version and the original – an important consideration seeing as you are not quoting it directly.

c) Rewrite the original text from your notes. This will involve some restructuring, rephrasing and perhaps the use of synonyms.

d) Ensure that the new text flows smoothly.

e) Check that your text is an accurate reflection of the original and does not misrepresent it. Remember that taking an idea and placing it in a new context can sometimes change the way in which that idea is understood.

f) Acknowledge other people's work through appropriate referencing.

Summary

Note that an effective paraphrase usually:

- ✓ has a different structure to the original;
- ✓ has mainly different vocabulary;
- ✓ retains the same meaning;
- ✓ keeps some phrases from the original that are in common use

- e.g. ‘industrial revolution’ or ‘eighteenth century’;
- ✓ is the same length as the original
 - ✓ uses an in-text citation (reference) at the start or end of it.

Exercises

1. Read the text below and then decide which is the better paraphrase, (a) or (b).

Ancient Egypt collapsed in about 2180 BC. Studies conducted of the mud from the River Nile showed that at this time the mountainous regions which feed the Nile suffered from a prolonged drought. This would have had a devastating effect on the ability of Egyptian society to feed itself (Baily, 2011).

a) The sudden ending of Egyptian civilization over 4,000 years ago was probably caused by changes in the weather in the region to the south. Without the regular river flooding there would not have been enough food (Baily, 2011).

b) Research into deposits of the Egyptian Nile indicate that a long dry period in the mountains at the river’s source may have led to a lack of water for irrigation around 2180BC, which was when the collapse of Egyptian society began (Baily, 2011).

2. Find synonyms for the words in *italic*.

a) Sleep *scientists* have found that *traditional remedies* for insomnia, *such as* counting sheep, *are ineffective*.

Example:

Sleep *researchers* have found that *established cures* for insomnia, *for instance* counting sheep, *do not work*.

b) Instead, they have *found* that *imagining a pleasant scene* is likely to *send you to* sleep *quickly*.

c) The *research team* *divided* 50 insomnia sufferers into three groups.

d) One group *was told to imagine* a waterfall, while another group *tried* sheep counting.

3. Change the word class of the words in *italic*, and then re-write the sentences

a) A third group was given no *special instructions* about going to sleep.

Example:

A third group was not specially instructed about going to sleep.

b) It was *found* that the group thinking of waterfalls fell asleep 20 minutes quicker.

c) Mechanical tasks like counting sheep are *apparently* too boring to make people sleepy.

4. Change the word order of the following sentences.

a) There are many practical applications to research into insomnia.

Example:

Research into insomnia has many practical applications.

b) About one in ten people are thought to suffer from severe insomnia.

c) It is calculated that the cost of insomnia for the American economy may be \$35 billion a year.

5. Combine all these techniques to paraphrase the paragraph as fully as possible.

According to Smith (2001), sleep scientists have found that traditional remedies for insomnia, such as counting sheep, are ineffective. Instead, they have found that imagining a pleasant scene is likely to send you to sleep quickly. The research team divided 50 insomnia sufferers into three groups. One group imagined watching a waterfall, while another group tried sheep counting. A third group was given no special instructions about going to sleep. It was found that the group thinking of waterfalls fell asleep 20 minutes quicker. Mechanical tasks like counting sheep are apparently too boring to make people sleepy. There are many practical applications for research into insomnia. About one in ten people are thought to suffer from severe insomnia. It is calculated that the cost of insomnia for the American economy may be \$35 billion a year.

6. Use the same techniques to paraphrase the following text.

Before the last century no humans had visited Antarctica, and even today the vast continent has a winter population of less than 200 people. However, a recent report from a New Zealand government agency outlines the scale of the pollution problem in the ice and snow. Although untouched compared with other regions in the world, the bitter cold of Antarctica means that the normal process of decay is prevented. As a result some research stations are surrounded by the rubbish of nearly 60 years' operations.

Despite popular belief, the polar continent is really a desert, with less precipitation than the Sahara. In the past, snowfall slowly covered the waste left behind, like beer cans or dead ponies, but now, possibly due to global warming, the ice is thinning and these are being exposed. Over 10 years ago the countries using Antarctica agreed a treaty on waste disposal, under which everything is to be taken home, and this is slowly improving the situation.

However, the scientists do not want everything removed. The remains of very early expeditions at the beginning of the twentieth century have acquired historical value and will be preserved (Baily, 2011).

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2. The Summary

2.1. What is a summary?

Making oral summaries is a common activity, for example when describing a film or a book. If a friend asks us about a book we are reading, we do not tell him/her about everything in the book. Instead, we make a summary of the most interesting and important aspects. In academic writing it is a vital skill, allowing the writer to condense lengthy sources into a concise form. In other words, a summary is a condensation of significant facts from an original piece of writing. A chapter is condensed into a page, a page into a paragraph, or a paragraph into a sentence, with the condensation in each case retaining the essential facts of the original. Like most skills it becomes easier with practice, and this lecture explains the basic steps needed to achieve an accurate summary.

2.2 Stages of Summarising

The summary may be just one or two sentences, to explain the main idea of the article, and perhaps compare it with another summarised text, or it might be necessary to include much more detail. In other words, a summary can range from 1–2% of the original to more than 50%: summarising is a flexible tool.

At first students need to follow a series of steps to summarise successfully. With practice the number of steps may be reduced, as the process becomes more automatic.

- a) Read the original text carefully and check any new or difficult vocabulary.
- b) Mark the key points by underlining or highlighting.
- c) Make notes of the key points, paraphrasing where possible.
- d) Write the summary from your notes, re-organising the structure if needed.
- e) Check the summary to ensure it is accurate and nothing important has been changed or lost.
- f) Acknowledge other people's work through appropriate referencing.

Exercises

1. Read the following text and compare the summaries. Decide which is best, giving reasons.

Researchers in France and the United States have recently reported that baboons are able to think abstractly. It has been known for some time that chimpanzees are capable of abstract thought, but baboons are a more distant relation to mankind. In the experiment, scientists trained two baboons to use a personal computer and a joystick. The animals had to match computer designs which were basically the same, but had superficial differences. In the experiment the baboons performed better than would be expected by chance. The researchers describe their study in an article in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* (Baily, 2011).

a) Baily (2011) asserted that French and American scientists have shown for the first time that baboons have the ability to think in an abstract way. The animals were taught to use a computer, and then had to select patterns that were similar, which they did at a rate better than chance.

b) Baboons are a kind of monkey more distant from man than chimpanzees. Although it is known that chimpanzees are able to think abstractly, until recently it was not clear if baboons could do the same. But new research by various scientists has shown that this is so (Baily, 2011).

c) According to a recent article in the Journal of Experimental Psychology, baboons are able to think in an abstract way. The article describes how researchers trained two baboons to use a personal computer and a joystick. The animals did better than would be expected (Baily, 2011).

2. Read the following text and underline the key points.

Indian researchers are trying to find out if there is any truth in old sayings which claim to predict the weather. In Gujarat farmers have the choice of planting either peanuts, which are more profitable in wet years, or castor, which does better in drier conditions. The difference depends on the timing of the monsoon rains, which can arrive at any time between the beginning and the middle of June. Farmers, however, have to decide what seeds to sow in April or May.

There is a local saying, at least a thousand years old, which claims that the monsoon starts 45 days after the flowering of a common tree, Cassia fistula. Dr. Kanani, an agronomist from Gujarat Agricultural University, has been studying the relationship since 1996, and has found that the tree does successfully predict the approximate date of the monsoon's arrival (Baily, 2011).

3. Complete the following notes of the key points.

- a) Indian scientists checking ancient
- b) Old saying links monsoon to
- c) Used by farmers to select peanuts (for wet) or
- d) Dr Kanani of Gujarat Agricultural University has found that

4. Link the notes together to make a complete summary using conjunctions where necessary. Check the final text for factual accuracy.

Indian scientists are checking.....

5. Summarise the summary in no more than 20 words.

6. Summarise the following article in about 75 words.

South Korea is planning to move its capital from Seoul to a new site in the middle of the country. Although Seoul has been the capital since the fourteenth century, the city of over 20 million is now very crowded, and also close to the hostile armies of North

Korea. The new capital is planned to cost \$45 billion, with construction finishing by 2012.

There is, however, strong opposition to the project, since similar schemes in other countries have taken far longer and cost much more than originally planned. Australia, for example, took over 70 years to finish building Canberra, while Nigeria has never completed its planned new capital, Abuja. Both Brazil and Malaysia have found that the building of new capitals (Brasilia and Putrajaya) can sharply increase the national burden of debt. Even if the government does eventually move to the new capital, it is unlikely that South Korea's main businesses will follow it, so Seoul will probably continue to be the country's principal city (Bailey, 2011).

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3. Direct Quotations

3.1 Definition

A direct quotation reproduces an author's words exactly as they were spoken or written, preserving even peculiarities of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. In other words, using a quotation means bringing the original words of a writer into your work. Student papers tend to overuse quoted material (so much so that many teachers automatically regard excessive quotations as a sign of padding). Actually, your own writing is more important to your teacher or supervisor. However, when you do include quotations they should be acknowledged with the correct reference conventions and listed at the end of your writing.

Quotations are effective in some situations, but must not be overused. They can be valuable:

- when reproducing an exact definition,
- when an author has expressed an idea memorably,
- when you want to respond to exact wording.

It is important to acknowledge the source of the quotations otherwise you may be accused of plagiarism. When you quote directly, you must provide the author, year, and page number of the quotation in the in-text citation in either parenthetical or narrative format. Use the abbreviation "p." to indicate a single page (e.g., p. 25; p.44); use the abbreviation "pp." to indicate multiple pages, and separate the page range with a dash (e.g., pp. 34–36). When pages are discontinuous, use a comma between the page numbers (e.g., pp. 67, 72).

3.2 Incorporating quotations in writing

➤ The main uses of quotations in writing are as follows:

- Support for an argument or point of view. As X has observed, "..."
- Exemplification of the point being made. Thus, for example, "..."
- Introduction of a point or viewpoint etc. According to X, "..."
- Conclusion of a discussion, analysis, etc. Therefore X concludes: "..."
- Explanation of a point, item, etc. X explains it as follows: "..."

➤ Quotations are generally introduced by a phrase/ sentence that shows the source, and also explains how this quotation fits into your argument:

White and Arndt (1991), while acknowledging the importance of grammar in producing written work, assert that "grammatical accuracy and correctness of form are now important" (p.133).

➤ In many instances the quotation precedes the citation:

The Oral-Situational Approach was considered "as an alternative approach to the audiolingual approach promoted in the United States" (Ellis, 2005, p. 3).

The format of a direct quotation depends on its length (fewer than 40 words vs. 40 words or more).

3.3 Short quotations (fewer than 40 words)

- An APA short quotation is made up of less than 40 words.
- It is incorporated as part of the text.
- It is enclosed with double quotation marks.
- The last punctuation mark is placed after the closing parenthesis for the citation.

3.3.1 Short quotation with narrative citation

Ordinarily, introduce the quotation with a signal phrase or sentence that includes the author's last name followed by the date of publication in parentheses. Put the page number (preceded by "p.") in parentheses after the quotation.

- Biebel et al. (2018) noted that "incorporating the voice of students with psychiatric disabilities into supported education services can increase access, involvement, and retention" (p. 299).
- In rare cases, the author and date might both appear in the narrative. In this case, do not use parentheses.
- In 2018, Soto argued that "more similar stimuli, such as those coming from the same modality, produce more configural processing" (p. 598).

3.3.2 Short quotation with parenthetical citation

If the signal phrase or sentence does not name the author, use a parenthetical in-text citation (i.e., place the author's last name, the year, and the page number in parentheses) after the quotation. Use commas between items in the parentheses.

- The item read, "What were the best aspects of the program for you?" (Shayden et al., 2018, p. 304).
- Effective teams can be difficult to describe because "high performance along one domain does not translate to high performance along another" (Ervin et al., 2018, p. 470).

3.4 Block/ long quotations (40 words or more)

If a quotation contains 40 words or more, treat it as a block or long quotation. When writing an APA block quotation,

- start the block quotation on a new line;
- indent the whole block 0.5 inch from the left margin (at the same spot where you would start a new paragraph).
- Do not use any quotation marks.
- Use double spacing for the entire long quote;
- do not add extra space before or after it.

- Either (a) cite the source in parentheses after the quotation's final punctuation or (b) cite the author and year in the narrative before the quotation and place only the page number in parentheses after the quotation's final punctuation.
- Do not add a period after the closing parenthesis in either case.
- Start the text after the quotation on its own line, but with no indentation.

3.4.1 Block quotation with parenthetical citation

Researchers have studied how people talk to themselves:

Inner speech is a paradoxical phenomenon. It is an experience that is central to many people's everyday lives, and yet it presents considerable challenges to any effort to study it scientifically. Nevertheless, a wide range of methodologies and approaches have combined to shed light on the subjective experience of inner speech and its cognitive and neural underpinnings. (Alderson-Day & Fernyhough, 2015, p. 957)

3.4.2 Block quotation with narrative citation

Flores et al. (2018) described how they addressed potential researcher bias when working with an intersectional community of transgender people of colour:

Everyone on the research team belonged to a stigmatized group but also held privileged identities. Throughout the research process, we attended to the ways in which our privileged and oppressed identities may have influenced the research process, findings, and presentation of results. (p.311)

3.5 Direct quotation of material without page numbers

When quoting from a written source that does not provide page numbers (e.g., webpages and websites, some ebooks), use any of the following approaches to locate the quoted passage.

- Provide a heading or section name.

For people with osteoarthritis, “painful joints should be moved through a full range of motion every day to maintain flexibility and to slow deterioration of cartilage” (Gecht-Silver & Duncombe, 2015, Osteoarthritis section).

- Provide a paragraph number (count the paragraphs manually if they are not numbered).

People planning for retirement need more than just money—they also “need to stockpile their emotional reserves” to ensure adequate support from family and friends (Chamberlin, 2014, para. 1).

- Provide a heading or section name in combination with a paragraph number.

Music and language are intertwined in the brain such that “people who are better at rhythmic memory skills tend to excel at language skills as well” (DeAngelis, 2018, Musical Forays section, para. 4).

Notes:

1. There are many verbs and phrases that can be used to introduce quotations in writing. Some of the main structures are as follows:

- As X observed/pointed out/suggested/noted/indicated “...”
- According to X, “...”
- For example, X argued that “...”
- X suggests that “...”
- The need for it is widely recognised: “...”
- Writing in 1979, X commented that “...”
- To quote X: “...”
- Recent research by X shows that “...”

2. Use brackets, not parentheses, to enclose any additional or explanatory material in a quotation.

“They are studying, from an evolutionary perspective, to what extent [children's] play is a luxury that can be dispensed with when there are too many other competing claims on the growing brain” (Henig, 2008, p. 40).

3. If any incorrect spelling, punctuation, or grammar in the source might confuse readers, insert the word “sic”, italicized and in brackets, immediately after the error in the quotation.

- Nowak (2019) wrote that “people have an obligation to care for there [sic] pets” (p. 52).

Exercises:

1. Study the following paragraph from an article titled ‘The mobile revolution’ in the journal ‘Development Quarterly’ (Issue 34 pages 85–97, 2009) by K. Hoffman. p. 87.

In the developing countries the effect of phone ownership on GDP growth is much stronger than in the developed world, because the ability to make calls is being offered for the first time, rather than as an alternative to existing landlines. As a result, mobile phone operators have emerged in Africa, India and other parts of Asia that are larger and more flexible than Western companies, and which have grown by catering for poorer customers, being therefore well-placed to expand downmarket. In addition Chinese phone makers have successfully challenged the established Western companies in terms of quality as well as innovation. A further trend is the provision of services via the mobile network which offer access to information about topics such as healthcare or agriculture.

- a. Write a summary of the main point, including a citation.
- b. Introduce a quotation to show the key point, referring to the source.
- c. Combine (a) and (b), again acknowledging the source.

2. Study the following extract from page 6 in a book written by Teresa Morley-Warner in 2001.

To write successfully at university you need a sense of what the final product should look and sound like, so if possible, read model assignments or if these are not available, study the way in which journal articles have been written in your specific area. These articles may be lengthy and some may be based on research rather than a discussion of issues, but from them you will get a sense of how academic writing ‘sounds’, that is, its tone, and also how respected writers in your field assemble information. You will also gain a sense of the complexity of being an apprentice writer in an academic culture, or rather cultures, where expectations may vary from discipline to discipline, even subject to subject and where you can build a repertoire of critical thinking and writing skills that enable you to enter the academic debates, even to challenge.

- a. Write a summary of the main point, including a citation.
- b. Introduce an author prominent long quotation to show the key point.
- c. Write a combination of the summary of the main point and an information prominent long quotation illustrating the main point, again acknowledging the source.

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