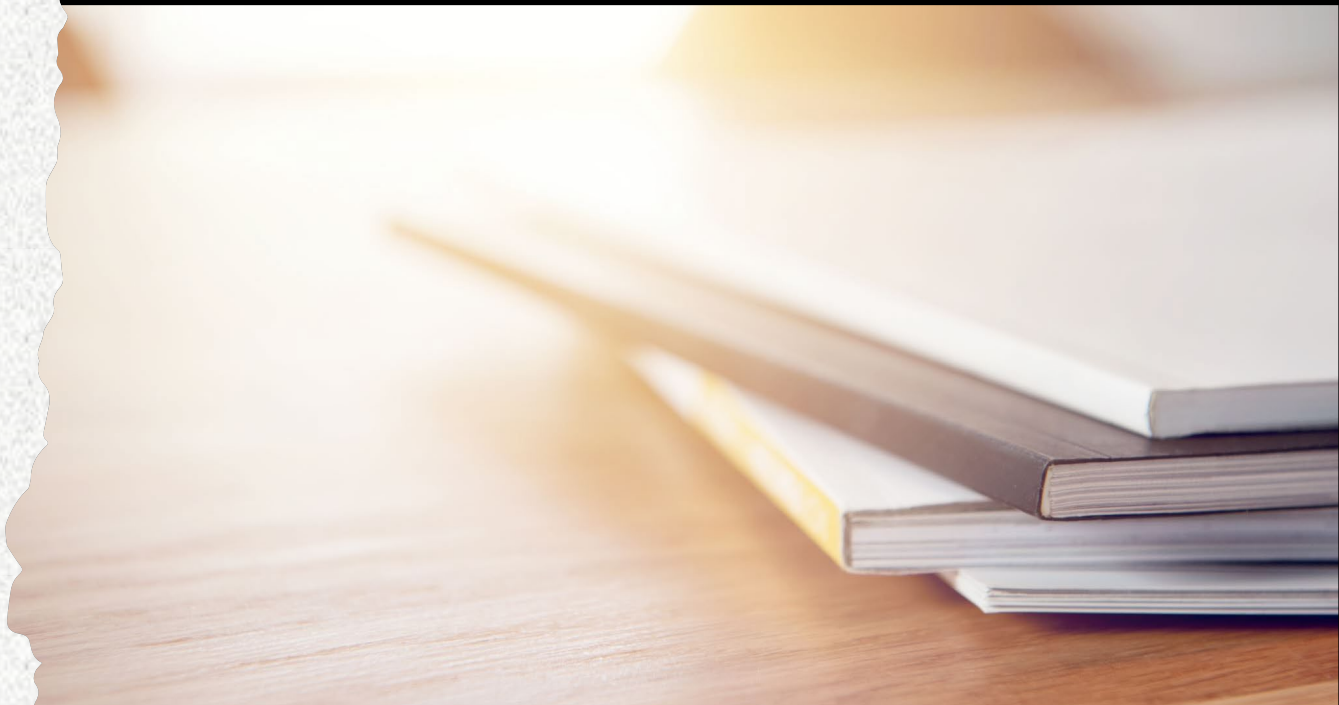
Paraphrasing

Multilingual Student Support
Camosun College



Contents

- Defining Paraphrasing
  - What is Paraphrasing?
  - Criteria for a Good Paraphrase
- Examples of Paraphrasing
- Paraphrasing Techniques:
  - Reporting verbs
  - Synonyms
  - Word Forms
  - Sentence structure
- Identifying Errors in Paraphrasing
- Summary

Goals

By the end of this presentation, you will be able to …

- explain what makes a good paraphrase
- use effective language strategies when paraphrasing
- identify paraphrasing errors and avoid them in your writing (plagiarism vs paraphrasing)

Defining Paraphrasing

What are the criteria?

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What is Paraphrasing?

- A paraphrase is a rewritten version of another writer's ideas and usually relates to a specific point that the writer has made. It is a way to incorporate evidence and indicate understanding of points being made in the original text.

-McCormack & Slaght, 2009

Criteria for a Good Paraphrase

1. A good paraphrase has the same meaning as the original.

- *All main ideas are included*
- *No new ideas are added*

Criteria for a Good Paraphrase

2. A good paraphrase is different enough from the original to be considered your own writing.

- *Uses no more than 2-3 content **words in a row** from the original source.*
- *Changes grammar and vocabulary as much as possible.*

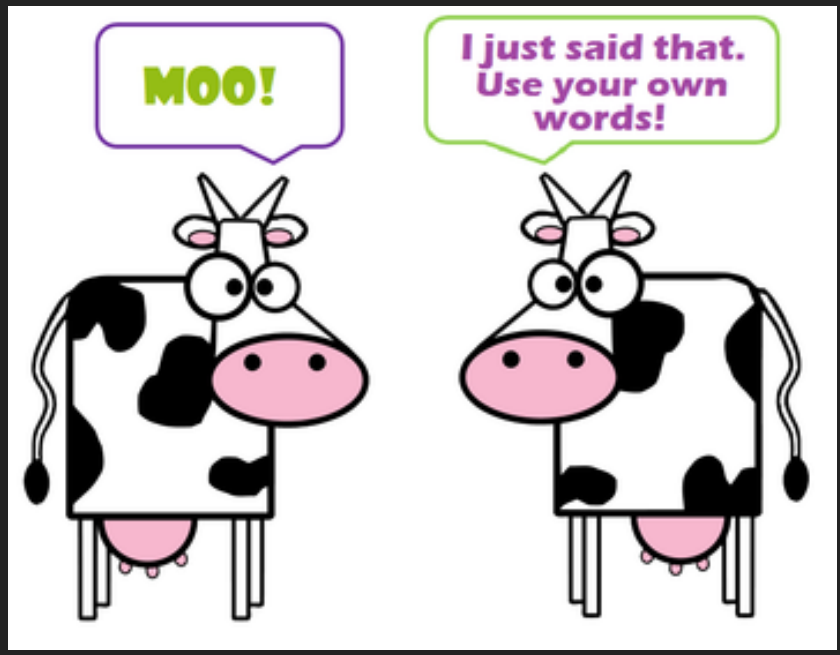
Criteria for a Good Paraphrase

3. A good paraphrase refers directly to (or cites) the original source.

Ex. Pinker (2010) writes that people can't ...

(See MSS resources on citation for additional information)

Examples of Paraphrasing



Examples of paraphrasing

Original

"Genuine multitasking, too, has been exposed as a myth, not just by laboratory studies but by the familiar sight of an S.U.V. undulating between the lanes as the driver cuts deals on his cellphone."

- -Pinker, Steven, "Mind over Mass Media," June 10, 2010

Paraphrase 1

Pinker (2010) writes that people can't really do more than one thing at a time; we can see this from scientific research projects and also from just watching a car moving unpredictably down the highway while the driver is talking on a cell phone.

Paraphrase 2

Pinker (2010) says that both lab research and actual experience show that people are incapable of doing several things at once. As an example of this act, he mentions the frequent sight of a person driving dangerously while using a cell phone.

Paraphrasing Techniques

Language strategies you can use.

Paraphrasing Techniques

- Refer to the author with a reporting verb.
- Use of synonyms
- Change in word form (i.e., part of speech)
- Change in sentence structure

Use Reporting Verbs

Ex.: Smith (2006) claimed/ stated …

Willows (2020) has suggested…

Selig (2014) argued …

Use Past or Present Perfect Tense: Literature review (or whenever discussing other researchers' work); method, and description of procedure (APA, 2020, p. 118)

Making a case	Being emphatic	Showing	Commenting on other's opinions	Taking a critical position	Describing
consider say suggest think	argue assert claim conclude confirm contend insist maintain state warn	demonstrate explain indicate note prove reveal show	accept agree deny doubt	blame condemn criticize	characterize classify define evaluate identify portray present

Reporting Verbs: Practice

Does the verb require an object? Check the grammar.

Select the correct option:

1. Milthorp (2009) *doubts / criticizes* the police for the length of time that protestors were contained in one place.

2. Markham (2019) has *concluded / identified* the poor performance of some schools as a key factor in youth unemployment.

3. The authors of the report *demonstrate / evaluate* that health and safety standards have risen on North Sea oil rigs.

4. As Rumisek (2020) *states / classifies* in the introduction to her book, the design of the hospital can have a positive effect on the health of its patients.

Paterson, K. & Wedge, R. (2013). Oxford Grammar for EAP. (Unit 16 – Paraphrasing)

Reporting Verbs: Answers

Select the correct option:

1. Milthorp (2009) *doubts / criticizes* the police for the length of time that protestors were contained in one place.

2. Markham (2019) has *concluded / identified* the poor performance of some schools as a key factor in youth unemployment.

3. The authors of the report *demonstrate / evaluate* that health and safety standards have risen on North Sea oil rigs.

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Use of Synonyms

*Do NOT change conventional or specialized words/phrases for specific things.

Be sure the synonym you choose represents the meaning of the original word in its particular context.

Original: Incorrect versions of the *meetings were supplied to the *committee on several occasions.

Paraphrase: Grierson (2020) argues that the committee was given ~~fake~~/ false accounts of meetings a number of times.

Explanation: fake might suggest that the meetings themselves were invented.

Synonyms

Here are some examples of good synonyms with enough context to show the meaning:

Nouns:

The wealth *[affluence]* of the area was highlighted by the number of gated communities.

Rachel Stevens won the prize *[award]* seven times.

Verbs:

Mixing [combining] business with corporate entertainment can lead to poor decision-making.

Problems go away [disappear] if they are tackled at the source.

Synonyms

Here are some examples of good synonyms with enough context to show the meaning:

Adjectives:

The severity of the cuts is likely to have a negative [harmful] effect on the economy.

Fruitful [productive] talks do not always lead to sweeping [extensive] changes.

Adverbs:

At that point, there was practically [almost] nothing left in the budget.

Some of the prisoners were treated harshly [cruelly].

Change in Word Form

Many commonly-used academic words have several grammatical forms. These are called a word family.

- Ex.: *analyze (v.) → analysis (n.) or analyst (n) → analytical (adj.) → analytically (adv.)*

Changing the form of a word in a source text will require a change in the grammar of your sentence = new sentence (paraphrase).

But *it still has the same meaning, it just looks a lot different. The original sentence is the caterpillar, and your paraphrase is the butterfly.* ☺

Change in Word Form: Example

- A requirement for a comprehensive evaluation of the consequences of long-term unemployment would be a substantial quantity of data.

Paraphrase

- Peters (2023) explains that a thorough study of the effects of long-term employment would require a great deal of data.

Can you spot the four synonyms used in the paraphrase as well?

Change in Word Form and Use of Synonyms

- A requirement for a comprehensive evaluation of the consequences of long-term unemployment would be a substantial quantity of data.

- Peters (2023) explains that a thorough study of the effects of long-term employment would require a great deal of data.

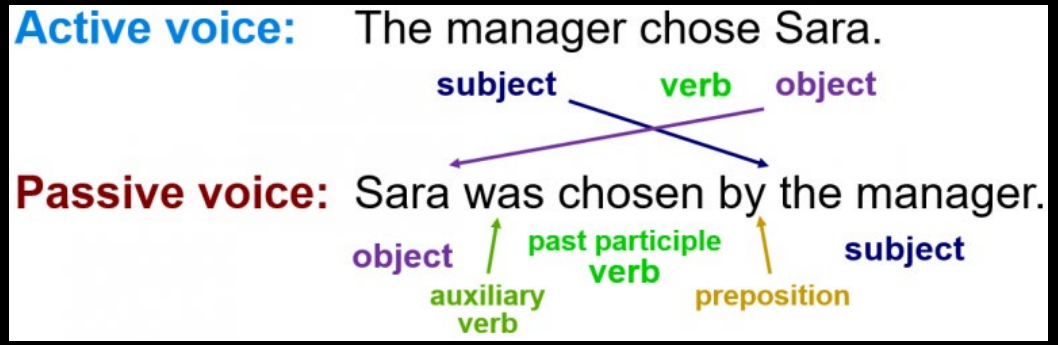
Change in Word Form: Examples

Verb - Noun	A. Companies need to **distribute** their products in the most cost-effective way. B. The cost-effective **distribution** of their products is vital to companies.
Adjective – Adverb	A. Varying height of the roofs in the complex was a **creative** response to the problem. B. The architects responded **creatively** to the problem by varying the height of the roofs.
Verb – Adjective	A. Consultants advised the company to **extend** the range of their products. B. Consultants advised the company to make the range of their products more **extensive.**
Adjective - Noun	A. A football stadium should be easily **accessible** by bus and foot. B. People should be able to gain easy **access** to a football stadium by bus and foot.

Changes in Sentence Structure

- Change active to passive voice.

- Use a different **cause-effect word** and/or clause order. (because/since/as a result, so that...)



Original: **As a result of** the heavy rainfall, the river overflowed its banks.
Paraphrased: The river overflowed its banks **due to** the copious amount of rainfall.

Changes in Sentence Structure

- Use a Participle phrase instead of adverb clause
  - Participle phrase: **Waiting** for the bus, John checked his phone.
  - Adverb clause: **As** he waited for the bus, John checked his phone.
- Use a different contrast word *(although, despite, however, but)*
  - Although it was raining heavily, we decided to go for a walk.
  - We decided to go for a walk; however, it was raining heavily.

Changes in Sentence Structure

Use a different comparison structure (than, like, as...as)

Original: John runs faster than Tom.

Paraphrase: Tom doesn't run as fast as John does.

Use a different modal verb or expression of mood *(can, could, be able to; may, might/could, be possible; should, be likely to, it is necessary)*

Original: You must finish your homework before you can watch TV.

Paraphrase: It is necessary for you to finish your homework before you can watch TV.

Identifying Errors in Paraphrasing

Don't walk the line of accidental plagiarism!

Identifying Errors in Paraphrasing

Original

"Ethnography is the art and science of describing a group or culture. The description may be of a small tribal group in an exotic land or a classroom in middle-class suburbia."

-Fetterman, D. (1990)

Paraphrase 1

Ethnography can be defined as the art and science of describing a group or culture. The description could be of a small tribal group in a far-off land or a classroom in a middle-class suburb. ...

Plagiarism!

Paraphrase 2

Fetterman (1990) defines ethnography as "the art and science of describing a group or culture" (p.1), whether it be in a local urban setting or a far-off country. ...

Examples from Marshall, S. (2017)

Summary

- Keep the meaning in the paraphrase the same as the original.
- Change non-essential words and grammar enough to have a new-looking sentence.
- Don’t forget to cite and use a reporting verb.
- Use a thesaurus for synonyms and to check words in context (how they are used in a sentence).

- Check for changes in word form and sentence structure. (Create some new “butterflies”!)
- Avoid plagiarism.
- Keep practicing. It will get easier. ☺

Thank you!

Please let us know what you think of this workshop/video. ☺

Short 2 min survey:

- https://forms.office.com/r/d8VEWumv9r

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Additional Resources

Camosun Lib Guides: Plagiarism: Understanding and avoiding

https://camosun.libguides.com/plagiarism

Student Learning Success: Research & writing

https://camosun.libguides.com/Research_writing/research

Online Thesaurus:

https://www.thesaurus.com/

Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (*need free account but see words in context)

https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/

Purdue online writing lab:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/quoting_paraphrasing_and_summarizing/paraphrasing.html

TOEFL Writing Help **(paraphrasing):**

http://www.cz-training.com/toefl/paraphrase01.html

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