

Topic 2. Avoiding scientific misconduct and improving your style

OUTLINE

1. A scientific misconduct: plagiarism.
2. The key techniques of avoiding the inappropriate relationship between a text and its sources: a linguistic perspective.
 - 2.1 Paraphrasing.
 - 2.1.1 Paraphrasing techniques: stripping the main idea and using key words.
 - 2.1.2 Tools and means of paraphrasing.
 - 2.1.2.1 Shift of attention / focus.
 - 2.1.2.2 Paradigmatic substitution.
 - 2.1.2.3 Changing the order of ideas.
 - 2.2 Summarizing.
 - 2.3 Academic writing style.

Assignment 1. What techniques of avoiding plagiarism are described below?

_____ involves re-writing a text so that the language is substantially different while the content stays the same.

_____ means reducing the length of a text but retaining the main points.

Assignment 2. Read the following passages and decide which of the paraphrased ones are acceptable. Give your reasons.

A.

Original version

“Rapunzel had beautiful long hair that shone like gold. When she heard the voice of the witch she would undo the fastening of the upper window, unbind the plaits of her hair, and let it down twenty ells* below, and the witch would climb up by it.” (Grimm, J. and Grimm, W. (1995). Grimm’s fairy tales with illustrations by Jill Bauman. Stamford, Ct: Longmeadow press, p. 94).

(Source: *Paraphrasing without plagiarizing* by Laura Isakov and C. Klassen, 2004, pp. 2-3. Douglas College Learning Centre).



* *Ell* < PGmc **alinō*, L. *ulna*. The Viking unit of measurement, approximating the length of a man's arm from the elbow (*elbow* lit. “the bend (*bow*) of the arm (*ell*)”) to the tip of the middle finger, or about 18 inches (457 mm). This custom of measurement was observed in several Germanic cultures.

Paraphrased passages

(a) According to Grimm, when Rapunzel heard the voice of the witch she would undo the fastening of the upper window, unbind the plaits of her hair, and let it down twenty ells below, and the witch would climb up by it (1995, p. 94).

(b) According to Grimm, when Rapunzel heard the witch, she undid the fastening of the window, unbound the plaits of her wonderful long hair that shone like gold, and let it down and the witch would climb up it (1995, p. 94).

(c) Rapunzel had lovely long hair that was blonde. When she heard the voice of the witch she would open the fastening of the top window, undo the braid, and let it down many feet below, and the witch would climb up by it (1995, p. 94).

(d) Rapunzel's long blonde hair was used as a rope ladder so she and the witch could get in and out of the tower (Grimm, 1995).

(e) According to Grimm, Rapunzel would open the window and drop her hair for the witch to climb up into the tower (Grimm, 1995, p. 94).

(f) The witch used Rapunzel's hair to climb up into the tower (Grimm, 1995, p.94).

(g) Rapunzel would obey the witch and drop her long blonde hair out the window so the witch could climb up into the tower (Grimm, 1995, p.94).

B.

Original version

RAILWAY MANIAS

In 1830 there were a few dozen miles of railways in all the world – chiefly consisting of the line from Liverpool to Manchester. By 1840 there were over 4,500 miles, by 1850 over 23,500. Most of them were projected in a few bursts of speculative frenzy known as the 'railway manias' of 1835–7 and especially in 1844–7; most of them were built in large part with British capital, British iron, machines and know-how. These investment booms appear irrational, because in fact few railways were much more profitable to the investor than other forms of enterprise, most yielded quite modest profits and many none at all: in 1855 the average interest on capital sunk in the British railways was a mere 3.7 per cent.

(From *The Age of Revolution* by Eric Hobsbawm, 1995, p. 45).

(Source: *Academic writing. A Handbook for International Students* by Stephen Bailey, 2003, pp. 33-34).

Paraphrased passages

(a) Between 1830 and 1850 there was very rapid development in railway construction worldwide. Two periods of especially feverish growth were 1835–7 and 1844–7. It is hard to understand the reason for this intense activity, since railways were not particularly profitable investments and some produced no return at all. (Hobsbawm, 1995: 45)

(b) There were only a few dozen miles of railways in 1830, including the Liverpool to Manchester line. But by 1840 there were over 4,500 miles and over 23,500 by 1850. Most of them were built in large part with British capital, British iron, machines and know-how, and most of them were projected in a few bursts of speculative frenzy known as the ‘railway manias’ of 1835–7 and especially in 1844–7. Because most yielded quite modest profits and many none at all these investment booms appear irrational. In fact few railways were much more profitable to the investor than other forms of enterprise. (Hobsbawm, 1995: 45)

(c) As Hobsbawm (1995) argues, nineteenth-century railway mania was partly irrational: ‘because in fact few railways were much more profitable to the investor than other forms of enterprise, most yielded quite modest profits and many none at all: in 1855 the average interest on capital sunk in the British railways was a mere 3.7 per cent.’ (Hobsbawm, 1995: 45)

(d) Globally, railway networks increased dramatically from 1830 to 1850; the majority in short periods of ‘mania’ (1835–7 and 1844–7). British technology and capital were responsible for much of this growth, yet the returns on the investment were hardly any better than comparable business opportunities. (Hobsbawm, 1895: 45)

(e) The dramatic growth of railways between 1830 and 1850 was largely achieved using British technology. However, it has been claimed that much of this development was irrational because few railways were much more profitable to the investor than other forms of enterprise; most yielded quite modest profits and many none at all.

Assignment 3. The following examples demonstrate several types of paraphrasing. Explain what means are employed to avoid plagiarism.

ORIGINAL VERSION

“Rapunzel had beautiful long hair that shone like gold. When she heard the voice of the witch she would undo the fastening of the upper window, unbind the plaits of her hair, and let it down twenty ells* below, and the witch would climb up by it.”

However, many car makers are currently threatened by increased competition and saturated markets.

PARAPHRASED VERSION

(a) Rapunzel had **lovely** long **blonde** hair. When she heard the voice of the witch she would **open** the **top** window, **undo the braid** of her hair, and let it down about **10 meters** below, and the witch would climb up by it.

(b) **When Rapunzel heard the witch**, she would **let down** her long, lovely hair out the window so that the witch could climb the 10 meters up to the room.

(c) Rapunzel was a **beauty** with long **golden** hair. **Upon hearing** the voice of the witch, she ...

However, increased competition and saturated markets currently threaten many car makers.

Assignment 4. Watch the 14-min video *How to write a good essay: Paraphrasing the question*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9aVjBHEEbU>

Answer the questions:

1. What does it mean to paraphrase?
2. Why do we need to paraphrase the topic question of the essay?
3. What are the ways to paraphrase?
4. How can you change the sentence structure?
5. Is *concession* a good way to paraphrase?
6. What does a concession consist of?
7. What key words and punctuation rules are employed in making concessions?
8. Which of the ways to paraphrase do you find most handy? Why?

Assignment 5. Match the sentences on the left with the appropriate sentence on the right. Discuss the ways of paraphrasing used in the sentences.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The committee's emphasis on the word 'recycling' was noticeable. | A. Some, however, are emphatic that more research needs to be carried out. |
| 2. Our guide accentuated the importance of remaining calm if there was trouble. | B. She emphasised the fact that panicking would only make matters worse. |
| 3. Our teacher explained that it was crucially important to pace ourselves while revising for the exam. | C. The main speaker gave prominence in his speech to the need for better job opportunities. |
| 4. At the conference, the accent was on unemployment. | D. We consider progress in this field to be extremely important . |
| 5. Prominent scientists have stated that genetically modified food is probably perfectly safe. | E. He put great stress on the maxim that 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy'. |
| 6. It is of crucial importance that we make more use of technology if we are to make progress. | F. They stressed again and again the importance of reusing things as much as possible. |

Assignment 6. Choose a proper technique to paraphrase the following:

1. . . . the best explanation for the British location of the industrial revolution is found by studying demand factors.
2. At the same time, trades unions became increasingly militant in defense of their members' jobs
3. Today the industry owns some of the most famous brands in the world.
4. In the 1920s Alfred Sloan's management theories helped General Motors to become the world's dominant car company
5. After the second world war the car makers focused on the styling of their products, to encourage more frequent model changes.
6. From the 1970s there was criticism of the industry due to the inefficiency of most vehicles, which used petrol wastefully.
7. The growth of the car industry parallels the development of modern capitalism.
8. It began in France and Germany, but took off in the United States.
9. There Henry Ford adapted the moving production line from the Chicago meat industry to motor manufacturing, thus inventing mass production.

Assignment 7. Study the following ways of how to start a concession.

- While I am generally opposed to the idea of ..., I admit that ... has / have some value...
- Although ... should probably be ... , there are some admittedly reasonable arguments in favour of them...
- In spite of my previous arguments, I must concede that there are some positive aspects to ...
- However, there are several reasons why perhaps ... should be allowed to exist.
- Some people believe that ... are beneficial...
- Many people think that ... are good ...
- Supporters of ... think that...

Find more tips on *concession* at

<https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/paragraphs/concession>

Use a concession to express your acknowledgement of opposing ideas.

(1) Advances in science and technology and other areas of society in the last century have transformed the way we live as well as postponing the day we die. There is no better time to be alive than now. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

(2) Some people say that the best way to improve public health is by increasing the number of sports facilities. Others, however, say that this would have little effect on public health and that other measures are required. Discuss both the views and give your opinion.

(3) In many countries, children are becoming overweight and unhealthy. Some people think that the government should be responsible for solving this problem. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

(4) Some people believe that the best way to reduce crime is to educate prisoners so that they can find a job after they are released. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

(5) The most important consideration when choosing any career or job is having a high income. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

(6) A person's worth nowadays seems to be judged according to social status and material possessions. Old fashioned values such as honor, kindness, and trust no longer seem important. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Assignment 8. Write an explanation of the concession used in the definition of *Academic Style*.

Concession	Explanation
<p>Mason (2007) and Holmes (2009) vehemently disagree on the fundamental components of primary school education. Despite this strong disagreement, the scholars do agree on the overall importance of formal education for all young children.</p>	<p>In these two sentences, the author is highlighting a disagreement between the two scholars. The author begins the second sentence with the transition phrase, "Despite this strong disagreement," however, to make a concession that Mason and Holmes do agree on the importance of formal education for young children.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Definition – ‘Academic Style’</p> <p>‘Academic Style is... ... the conventions often associated with academic writing. Although there is much debate over ‘what exactly academic style is’, generally there is an agreement among 'most' Academic English tutors to the key elements that should or should not be included. The following is a list of the do's and don'ts..</p>	<hr/>

Assignment 9. Watch the 12-min video *5 Tips To Improve Your Writing* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgkRoYPLhts>

Summarize on 5 tips of how to improve your academic writing. Write a passage of max 100 words.

Assignment 10. Watch the 9-min video *Academic Style (Academic Writing)* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3_VoWd_Ai0 and do the tasks set by the speaker. Compare your answers with those suggested by the speaker.

Assignment 11. Watch the 5-min video *12 Common Errors in Academic English – and how to fix them!*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZQgd2sPxpK>

Do the quiz given in the video.

Assignment 12. Write a summary (max 150 words) of *Dos and Don'ts of Academic Writing*. Consider the information from Assignments 4–8.

Assignment 13. Combine several techniques to paraphrase the following passages.

(A). Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835)

Source: Humboldt, W. von. (1999). *On Language, On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species*. Losonsky, M. (Ed.). Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. (§8 Form of Languages). URL: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/vhumboldt-wilhelm.htm>

Language, regarded in its real nature, is an enduring thing, and at every moment a *transitory* one. Even its maintenance by writing is always just an incomplete, mummy-like preservation, only needed again in attempting thereby to picture the living utterance. In itself it is no product (*Ergon*), but an activity (*Energeia*). Its true definition can therefore only be a genetic one. For it is the ever-repeated *mental labour* of making the *articulated* sound capable of expressing *thought*. In a direct and strict sense, this is the definition of *speech* on any occasion; in its true and essential meaning, however, we can also regard, as it were, only the totality of this speaking as the language. For in the scattered chaos of words and rules that we are, indeed, accustomed to call a language, there is present only the *particular* brought forth by this speaking, and this never completely, and first calling for new work, so as to detect from it the nature of the living speech and to provide a true image of the living language.

(B) Noam Chomsky (b. 1928)

Source: Chomsky, N. (2006). *Language and mind*. 3 ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 86-87.

I have tried to suggest that the study of language may very well, as was traditionally supposed, provide a remarkably favorable perspective for the study of human mental processes. The creative aspect of language use, when investigated with care and respect for the facts, shows that current notions of habit and generalization, as determinants of behavior or knowledge, are quite inadequate. The abstractness of linguistic structure reinforces this conclusion, and it suggests further that in both perception and learning the mind plays an active role in determining the character of the acquired knowledge. The empirical study of linguistic universals has led to the formulation of highly restrictive and, I believe, quite plausible hypotheses concerning the possible variety of human languages, hypotheses that contribute to the attempt to develop a theory of acquisition of knowledge that gives due place to intrinsic mental activity. It seems to me, then, that the study of language should occupy a central place in general psychology.

Assignment 14. The passage below provides some information on how to write a summary (Source: *How to write a Summary* at <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/chapter/how-to-write-a-summary/>). Study the requirements of writing a good summary and do the task that follows.

A summary is condensing a lengthy source (a book or a film) into a concise form. The basic requirements to achieve an accurate summary include:

- identify what is most important;
- restate the text (or other media) in your own words;
- make it in the form of a paragraph;
- begin with an introductory sentence that states the text’s title, author and main point of the text as you see it; it is important to identify the source;
- write in your own words;
- include only the ideas of the original text and do not insert any of your own opinions, interpretations, deductions or comments;
- identify the significant sub-claims the author uses to defend the main point;
- it is important to use some source material because defending claims with source material is what you will be asked to do when writing a research such as a diploma thesis or some other academic papers;
- put “quotation marks” around the passage or extract you chose to cite;
- write the last sentence that “wraps” up your summary; it is often a simple rephrasing of the main point.

You will find more information and an example at <https://depts.washington.edu/owrc/Handouts/How%20to%20Write%20a%20Summary.pdf>

Write a summary (max 250 words) of the article *Bilingualism in the Early Years: What the Science Says* by K. Byers-Heinlein, C. Lew-Williams at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6168212/>