

Course Topic: Teaching Writing, Teaching English for Academic Purposes**Course Instructor:**

Heather Perry has a Master of Educational Studies in TESOL from Providence College in Manitoba. She is a trained Canadian Language Benchmarks assessor. She has worked as an English language teacher, language assessor, curriculum developer and English language teacher trainer for the past ten years throughout Canada and internationally.

Course Synopsis

The skills of quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing are largely expected in the academic environment of the North American culture. Often, the international student does not know how to explain in their own words what an expert has already stated. This course will examine different strategies needed in order to teach these skills.

Course Agenda

1. Introduction
2. What is Plagiarism?
3. Quoting, Paraphrasing and Summarizing Explained
4. Competencies Needed for Paraphrasing and Summarizing
5. Strategies Used to Teach Paraphrasing and Summarizing

1. Introduction

There are cultural differences that come into play when discussing the topic of knowledge and the "knower". In North America, knowledge is seen as something that can be owned or possessed. Because I "own" knowledge, when a student refers to my words, those words must be attributed to me. In other cultures, knowledge is shared and therefore use of it doesn't need to be acknowledged.

In some cultures, there is a difference between the "knower" and the "not-knower". The knower, or in the education system, the teacher, is often put on a pedestal. There is a big gap between the teacher and the student. The teacher shares the knowledge with the students. The students feel there is nothing to add to the teacher's knowledge because the teacher is viewed as the expert.

In North America, the teacher is not put on a pedestal. The teacher's knowledge can be changed, challenged and even discarded because they are not always the expert. However, if a student chooses to use ideas or exact words from a teacher or a book or a journal, those words must be referenced properly.

In North America, students are expected to present original ideas or concepts but provide credibility to their ideas by referencing other people's work. International students coming to study in the North American education system often find that it is difficult to put the expert's ideas in their own words. In fact, they may even say, "I can't say it better than the expert." Whether or not the international students like the idea of this different education system, they must learn to adapt in order to succeed.

2. What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism occurs when a student takes someone else's ideas or exact words and passes them off as his/her own or does not give proper citation or reference to the originator of the idea. In North American colleges and universities, this is a serious action and severe consequences often result. At the very least, a mark of zero on the paper is warranted, but with more than one infraction, a suspension or expulsion from the institution can take place. In order to avoid this, a student must present his or her original ideas in a paper using the three skills of quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing.

3. Quoting, Paraphrasing and Summarizing Explained

What is Quoting?

Quoting is necessary when the words that you use in a paper are identical to the source, word for word. You need to show that you are using someone else's words by the use of quotation marks, or for longer works; by setting the quote off with different margins in your paper. Often you will use a direct quotation in order to provide credibility to your own work. There are several citation systems and each post secondary institution has their own system that they prefer to use.

What is Paraphrasing?

This is when you restate someone else's ideas in your own words. Because the ideas are not your own, you must give reference to the work that you are paraphrasing. The main idea and key points are stated in your own words but progress in the order of the original work.

What is Summarizing?

This is when you give the general idea or break down larger ideas and give the gist in your own words. The summary is shorter than the original. You are taking the bare essentials of the original work and giving only the main idea and key points that are worth noting or remembering. The best comparison is a trailer to advertise an upcoming movie. The movie itself may be over 90 minutes long, but the trailer that entices viewers to watch the movie is only about 90 seconds. It is, in a sense, a summary. We are going to look at some competencies that are needed in order to effectively paraphrase and summarize.

4. Competencies Needed for Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Extracting the Main Idea

The main idea is the nugget or the most important concept of the reading or listening text. The main idea uses few words. Beyond the main idea there are the bare essentials. These are key points that need to be remembered or are worth noting.

Getting to the Key Points

These are points that support the main idea that are worth remembering. Unimportant details, opinions expressed by the author, examples and anecdotes are NOT included in the key points. You only want to include supporting details that add to the main idea.

Synonyms

A synonym is a word that is similar in meaning to another word. In order to rephrase a sentence in your own words, you must be able to replace the original words with synonyms.

Activity #1: Look at the following list of words and come up with three synonyms for each word.

Ill	
Shut	
Round	
Quick	
Impolite	
Expensive	
Furious	
Recommend	
Ban	
Annoy	

A thesaurus is a dictionary that lists synonyms for words. An important activity for your students would be to become familiar with the structure of a thesaurus as well as how to use it.

We have looked at extracting the main idea, getting to the key points and synonyms. For each of these competencies, take a moment and decide whether it would be used for summarizing, paraphrasing or both.

Extracting the main idea → both.

Getting to the key points → summarizing.

Synonyms → paraphrasing.

5. Strategies and Activities for Teaching Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Now let's take a look at some strategies and activities that you can use in the classroom to help your students develop the important skills of paraphrasing and summarizing. Not all of these activities involve the use of academic texts.

1. **Graphic Organizers.** Graphic organizers are visual cues to help organize your thoughts in order to create a summary of the listening or reading text. These are useful tools because they force the students to look for the bare essentials and place only a few words on the graphic organizer. Examples of graphic organizers include word or idea maps, timelines, charts and Venn Diagrams. As an example activity, watch a 30 minute television show. Students work in small groups to fill out a graphic organizer indicating who the main characters are and the plot of the show. Then, looking only at the graphic organizer, students write a paragraph in full sentences summarizing the main idea of the TV show.

You will find a selection of graphic organizers on pages 6-8 of this handout that you can use with your students. You can also check out the following website for free customizable graphic organizer templates: <http://www.worksheetworks.com/miscellanea/graphic-organizers.html>.

2. **Extracting Important Information.** Make copies of invitations or advertisements about an event - the wordier the better. Have students scan for details (don't introduce the five WH-questions just yet). Ask the students the purpose of the event (what?); the date the event takes place (when?); the location of the event (where?); the people that might attend (who?); and the cost of attending (how much?). As a class, create a sentence with the bare essentials of the invitation: "A free carnival for young families is happening at the library on Saturday May 10 from 2-5 p.m." An alternate activity is to read a children's story aloud that your students would be familiar with. Ask the students the five WH-questions about the story and write their answers on the board. Because the length of the story is short, you can usually get to the main idea and key points just by answering the WH-questions.
3. **Jigsaw Reading.** For lengthier texts, divide the reading up into logical sections and divide students into groups. Assign each group a section of the reading. As a group, students will go over their section and underline the main idea and key points. They will then write them on the board so that the board is divided up into segments with the key points written out for each section of the reading. Each group will select a different section of the reading and choose a scribe. The scribe, along with the help of the group and without looking at the reading, will

write a paragraph in full sentences using the main points in order to summarize that section of reading.

4. *Margin Notes.* Students make notes of important information or main ideas from a reading in the margin of the text. Students use these notes as the basis for a text summary.
5. *Summary Cube.* Make a cube and come up with six main ideas, one idea written on each side of the cube. Place the students into groups and give each group a cube. Students roll the cube and must add a supporting detail to whatever main idea comes up. This is a great way to review for a test.
6. *Picture Paraphrase.* Have students bring in pictures of a recent vacation, their family or their hometown. Divide students up into groups of three. Student A will tell student B about his/her picture, student B will paraphrase about student A's picture to student C, and student C will then summarize the picture with a caption. Rotate roles so that each student has an opportunity to talk about their pictures.

When correctly using the skills of quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing, your students will be able to present their own ideas in accordance with the standards of the educational institutions of North America.

Thanks for participating!

www.aceducation.ca