

WHY PARAPHRASING IS IMPORTANT IN ACADEMIC WRITING

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ABSTRACT

Paraphrasing is when you take an original idea and re-write it to express the same meaning but in a different way. This might be by changing words, word forms, sentence structure, or using synonyms. If you think this is just for writing academic papers, think again. We actually paraphrase all the time! When you read a book, article, or watch a movie and tell your friends about it, you are paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is important to the IELTS writing task 2 because your introduction paragraph is basically a paraphrase of the essay prompt.

Key words: *paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism, using synonyms, IELTS writing task 2, order of clauses.*

ПОЧЕМУ ПЕРЕПИСЫВАНИЕ ВАЖНО В АКАДЕМИЧЕСКОМ ПИСЬМЕ

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Перефразирование — это когда вы берете оригинальную идею и переписываете ее, чтобы выразить тот же смысл, но по-другому. Это может быть изменение слов, словоформ, структуры предложения или использование синонимов. Если вы думаете, что это только для написания академических работ, подумайте еще раз. На самом деле мы все время перефразируем! Когда вы читаете книгу, статью или смотрите фильм и рассказываете об этом своим друзьям, вы перефразируете. Перефразирование важно для письменного задания IELTS 2, потому что ваш вступительный абзац, по сути, является перефразированием подсказки к эссе.

Ключевые слова: перифразирование, избегание плагиата, использование синонимов, письменное задание IELTS 2, порядок предложений.

INTRODUCTION

When discussing text in the classroom, it's tough for students to shift from utilizing an author's words (copying) to accepting the challenge to express that author's idea in their own words (paraphrasing). But teaching effective paraphrasing is necessary because the use of paraphrasing facilitates important literacy skills: It encourages repeated reading, develops note-taking habits as students track quotes and outline text details, and expands vocabulary as they consider appropriate ways to describe the original text. The skill may seem daunting to students because it takes time to find the appropriate words to reshape a sentence, but that is time well spent. We also need to teach paraphrasing, of course, so that students develop the skill set required to avoid committing plagiarism unintentionally. Paraphrasing is when you take an original idea and re-write it to express the same meaning but in a different way. This might be by changing words, word forms, sentence structure, or using synonyms. If you think this is just for writing academic papers, think again. We actually paraphrase all the time! When you read a book, article, or watch a movie and tell your friends about it, you are paraphrasing. When you tell your friend or colleague about a conversation you had with your boss, you are paraphrasing. You are not repeating the original conversation word for word. You are giving them the main idea of the conversation using your own words.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Paraphrasing is important to the IELTS writing task 2 because your introduction paragraph is basically a paraphrase of the essay prompt. You will need to re-write the essay prompt in your own words to introduce your essay. Before you attempt to paraphrase, you need to make sure that you understand the gist, or meaning of the paragraph. Paraphrasing is more than just changing words. Your paraphrase needs to make sense and still convey the original message. So, you should read the original text a couple of times to make sure you understand the message it conveys. Then turn the ideas over in your mind. Think of how you would express the same ideas to a friend.

Below are three techniques to paraphrase. Rather than exclusively using one of them, a good paraphrase includes all methods.

Use synonyms. Synonyms are different words that express the same or similar meaning.

For example: Interesting, fascinating, curious and amusing are all synonyms.

But! Some synonyms can have a slightly different meaning.

For example, fascinating has a stronger meaning than interesting. So be careful when using synonyms. We need to make sure that the words we are using convey the same level of meaning as the original.

Example:

Original: Many people think that cars should not be allowed in city centres.

Paraphrase: Many people believe that motor vehicles should be banned in urban areas.

Synonyms

think → believe

cars → motor vehicles

should not be allowed → should be banned

city centres → urban areas

Change the sentence structure. A third way to paraphrase is to change sentence structure. This could be by changing the sentence from passive to active or vice versa, or changing the order of the clauses. Let's have a look.

Active to Passive

Original: The hurricane destroyed the city.

Paraphrase: The city was destroyed by the hurricane.

In the sentence above, the subject (the hurricane) became the object, and the object (the city) became the subject. To be passive, we also changed the verb destroyed into past perfect (was/were + past participle).

Passive to Active

Original: The public transport system was developed by the city council.

Paraphrase: The city council developed the public transport system.

In the sentence above the subject (the public transport system) became the object, and the object (the city council) became the subject.

Order of clauses. A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb. Some sentences can be a single clause. Some sentences can be made up of two or more clauses.

For example: It is difficult to say whether the economy will improve.

The two clauses are: It is difficult to say / whether the economy will improve.

One way to paraphrase is by changing the order of the clauses.

For example: Whether the economy will improve, it is difficult to say.

Let's look at another example:

Original: During the summer, many people visit the temple.

Paraphrase: Many people visit the temple during the summer.

Paraphrasing an essay prompt to write your introduction. In IELTS Writing Task 2, you write your introduction by paraphrasing the essay prompt. In order to do this, you will need to unpack or break the essay prompt into parts. Usually, an essay prompt consists of three parts:

A general statement that introduces the topic

A specific statement that gives you the specific idea about the topic

Finally, your instructions/question

Let's look at an example:

Nowadays, more and more foreign students are going to English-speaking countries to learn the international language – English. It is undoubtedly true that studying English in an English-speaking country is the best way, but it is not the only way to learn it. Do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

To unpack this prompt, the first sentence is the general statement. Nowadays, more and more foreign students are going to English-speaking countries to learn the international language – English. This tells us what the essay topic is.

The second sentence is the specific statement. It is undoubtedly true that studying English in an English-speaking country is the best way, but it is not the only way to learn it. It gives an opinion about the topic.

The third sentence is the question. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement? This means you have to express your opinion on the second sentence.

So! In order to write your introduction, you need to paraphrase the three parts of this essay prompt.

Let's look at an example of a paraphrase of each:

Sentence 1: Nowadays, more and more foreign students are going to English-speaking countries to learn the international language – English

Paraphrase: In recent times, a growing number of international students are learning English in English-speaking countries.

Sentence 2: It is undoubtedly true that studying English in an English-speaking country is the best way, but it is not the only way to learn it.

Paraphrase: Although it is beneficial to learn English in a country where it is natively spoken, there are other effective ways to learn it.

Sentence 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

Paraphrase: I agree with this statement to a large degree.

Putting it all together:

Original (essay prompt): Nowadays, more and more foreign students are going to English-Speaking countries to learn the “international language – English”. It is undoubtedly true that studying English in an English-speaking country is the best way, but it is not the only way to learn it. Do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

Paraphrase (introduction): In recent times, a growing number of international students are learning English in English-speaking countries. Although it is most beneficial to learn English in a country where it is natively spoken, there are other effective ways to learn it. I agree with this statement to a large degree.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the purpose of paraphrasing is not to simply swap a few words; it is to take ideas and explain them using different words and an entirely different sentence structure. It has a greater purpose; it shows that you've understood the literature on your subject and are able to express it clearly to your reader. In other words, proper paraphrasing and paraphrase citation shows not only that you're literate but also that you are familiar with the ideas in your field, and it enables you to support your own research with in-text citations. Knowing when to paraphrase or quote strengthens your research presentation and arguments. Asking for paraphrasing help before you accidentally plagiarize shows that you understand the value of academic integrity.

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