

An effective paraphrasing techniques: A study

Dr. R Vanitha

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Karpagam University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

The study gives the techniques which will make the paraphrasing successful. Real need of teaching paraphrasing skills from the school level to doctorate level will increase the comprehensive way of learning. The problem of forgetting the information after writing exams is reducing the interest of further learning as the student surprised by the fact of vanishing the subject information immediately after writing the exams. To rectify the above said problem and storing the subject matters in the long time memory of the student, the teaching should activate comprehensive way of learning and paraphrasing is the best to activate the comprehensive ability of the student.

Keywords: paraphrasing, comprehensive ability, rephrasing

1. Introduction

Paraphrasing, the word is derived from a Greek word gives the meaning of equal sentence. Paraphrasing means that restating the author's idea by using different words, word orders, voices, clauses, etc. Strictly the paraphrasing should not change the meaning of the main idea of the author. It is not copying the text, if it is so, it is termed as Plagiarism.

The old scriptures are made alive by effective paraphrasing. For example, the Shakespeare or Thirukkural both are available and easy to understand only because of paraphrasing. Without changing the main idea and aim of the author, the scriptures are rephrased by the legend writers. They are so kind enough and dedicated their life time for paraphrasing the great works of the old times. In addition, we should not forget that the paraphrasing is a technique helps the learner to actively participate in the learning as the learner moves from the understanding level to actively participating level of comprehension. While hearing or reading the text, usually the listener or reader has to paraphrase with his own words to save the message in the long time memory. When the teacher demands the student to write the texts as it is, then the student is not given any opportunity to comprehend the text on his own. Hence, writing word by word as given in the text to earn good marks, the student lacks in memorising the concepts of the subjects. The student can score marks but immediately after the exams or after some time, the student cannot recall the information what he/she wrote in the examination. It becomes the habit of the students, like studying the subjects for scoring marks, and forgetting the subjects. To change this learning behaviour, the student should be motivated to write on their own, the habit of writing with their own words, sentences, ideas and examples will improve the students understanding of the subject. If the students comprehend the message on their own will improve their understanding level. Paraphrasing is nothing but writing the author's idea using our own words. So, it is far proved that the effective paraphrasing always helps in saving the messages in the long time memory.

Now, we can discuss the techniques of paraphrasing. Simply rearrangement of the words in a sentences does not mean a correct paraphrasing.

2. Techniques of Paraphrasing

This paper analyses the following techniques of paraphrasing in detail.

- Synonym Replacement
- Changing the Parts of Speech
- Changing Affirmative to Negative
- Changing word order
- Reduction of Clauses
- Explaining the concepts and abstract ideas of the text

2.1 Synonym Replacement

Hard words to understand and unfamiliar words can be replaced with easy and familiar words for better understanding. The same time too much of new words and easy word can spoil the real aim and depth of the sentence. So, simply changing the words with their synonyms is not a paraphrasing, instead, for easy understanding and reach, the text should be rephrased with suitable synonyms without spoiling the main idea of the text.

For example:

Main sentence: The Reynard is content with the Vixen

Paraphrased sentence: The male fox is happy with the female fox.

Here, the word, "Reynard" is replaced with "male fox", "Vixen" with "female fox" and the word "content" with "happy" and made the sentence easy to understand.

2.2 Changing the Parts of Speech

Native speaker of English will be using the complex words and phrases, but the non-native speakers of English will be finding difficult to understand the complex structures of the language. Parts of speech are ranging from verbs and nouns to adjectives and adverbs are replaced with new parts of speech

while paraphrasing.

For Example:

Main sentence: The girl quickly jump across the finish line, grabbing yet another victory.

Paraphrased sentence: The girl grabbed another victory when she jumped across the finish line.

In this sentence, the verb phrase with the gerund grabbing becomes the verb jumped.

2.3 Changing Affirmative to Negative

Without changing the meaning, the sentence can be interchanged with Affirmative or Negative.

For example:

Main sentence: The politicians disagreed with all the concepts.

Paraphrased sentence: No concepts was agreed by the politicians.

2.4 Changing word order

Changing the word order comprises changing from Active to Passive or moving the modifiers to different positions.

For Example:

1. Main sentence: They were saddened by the news.

Paraphrased sentence: The news depressed them

2. Main sentence: Gold Prices

Paraphrased sentence: Prices of Gold

By changing the voice, the first sentence can be easily understood by the student. Second sentence is made easy by simply changing the word order.

2.5 Reduction of Clauses

The technique of reducing the number of clauses in a sentence, which can be interruptive or confusing, by incorporating the phrases into the sentence will help in easy comprehension. Here is an example of reduction of clauses paraphrasing:

Example:

Main Sentence: While I understand where you are coming from, and truly respect your opinion, I wish you would express yourself more clearly, like Rama does.

Paraphrased sentence:

I understand where you are coming from and respect your opinion, but I wish you would be more like Rama and express yourself more clearly.

2.6 Explaining the concepts and abstract ideas of the text

The abstract ideas of the text can be made in a concrete way for better understanding. The restatement should not change the meaning of the main text but it can explain with clarity as the paraphrasing is meant for simplifying the texts for better clarity. The given example will better prove the above said phenomenon of rephrasing the abstract ideas.

Main sentence: The symptom and reason of autism has also been a matter of argument. Its incidence is about one in a thousand, and it occurs throughout the world, its features remarkably consistent even in extremely different cultures the condition is often not noticeable in the child's first year, yet it becomes more apparent as the child reaches the age of two or three.

Paraphrased sentence: We know, for example, that the condition occurs in roughly one out of every thousand

children. We also know that the characteristics of autism do not vary from one culture to the next. And we know that the condition is difficult to diagnose until the child has entered the second or third year of life

3. Essential skills needed for Paraphrasing

Without changing the synonyms, the text cannot be simplified or rephrased. A good knowledge on vocabulary and word order gives the confidence of paraphrasing. By using the dictionary and thesaurus, the words can be replaced with its equivalent as well as common and easy to understand. Familiarity with the present grammatical usage also helps a lot in effective paraphrasing. Reduction of clauses can alone produce best result in paraphrasing, if it is used effectively. Paraphrasing is also equal to translation. It is not dealing with one language to another but one mind to another.

4. Difficulties in Paraphrasing

Problems of processing skills especially in language can make the paraphrasing a challenging task. Inefficiency in the word level (semantic level), sentence level (syntactic level) and paragraph level (discourse level), reduces the capability to perform with words. Restricted vocabulary skill and limitedness in understanding the complex sentences make the students to struggle in rephrasing in writing as well as saying the things in their own words.

5. Conclusion

All the scientific facts, finding are rephrased by the respective country authors for the easy understanding of the students. It is a well familiar word in the science discipline, "*the Indian author and Foreign author*", the Indian author of science knows the difficulty of the students and the author will try to explain the facts by simple sentences as well as with lively examples. Every teacher should cultivate the skill of paraphrasing in order to succeed as a teacher also to inspire the student for further learning without any regard of the discipline. The classroom will be successful in learning when the teacher is skilled in paraphrasing the ideas of the author or sometimes their own ideas if the situation demands with relevant and lively examples.

6. References

1. Amaudet M, Barrett M. Approaches to academic reading and writing. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1984.
2. Currie P, Cray E. Strictly academic: A reading and writing text. New York: Newbury House, 1987.
3. McEvedy M, Wyatt P. Assignment writing; developing communication skills. Australia: Nelson, 1990.