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كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

قسم اللغة الانكليزية

اسم استاذ المادة: أ.م.د. علاء اسماعيل جلوب

المرحلة: الثالثة-صباحي

اسم المادة باللغة العربية: طرق البحث العلمي

Methods of Scientific Research

المحاضرة العاشرة

الفصل السادس: استخدام مادة البحث

Chapter Six:

Using Research Material

Lecture Outline:

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Using Research Material

One of the most important lessons in the research paper process is learning how to present the quotations, paraphrases, and summaries you've worked hard to find. To succeed, you'll have to resist the almost irresistible: the urge to write a paper that *displays* your research material instead of using it for support. Keep in mind that your goal is not to draw attention to good quotations but to use all kinds of research material to persuade your readers to accept your thesis. Yes, you want your readers to notice how good that material is. But you also want your readers in to notice that you use it correctly—to reinforce your ideas with convincing support. You want your readers to think, "This is really an interesting convincing paper," not just, "Looks like some good quotations here and there".

WHEN TO QUOTE

As a general rule, *quote only when you have a good reason to do so*. Use summaries and paraphrases the rest of the time. Beginning writers often reverse this rule, quoting frequently and almost exclusively, probably because paraphrasing and summarizing require an extra step: mentally processing the material and convening it to the writer's own words. But therein lies the value. Because paraphrases and surrunaries are in the writer's own words, they draw less attention to themselves and interrupt the flow of the paper less. Most of the time, they also make for greater economy and sharper focus of supporting evidence. The result is that the readers are more likely to stay with the logic of the paper—the argument being presented—than when they run up against quotation after quotation.

CRITERIA FOR QUOTING

Still, there are good reasons to quote, and properly selected quotations can be the most effective parts of your paper. One good time to quote is when the original material is worded especially well, when not just the content but the style, too, is worth retaining. For example, after describing in detail the first ascent of the Matterhorn and then describing the desolation and anguish of seeing four of his companions fall to their deaths during the descent, Edward Whymper wrote a particularly moving passage:

> Others may tread its summit-snows, but none will ever know the feelings of those who first gazed upon its marvelous panorama; and none, I trust, will ever be compelled to tell of joy turned into grief, and of laughter into mourning. It proved to be a stubborn foe; it resisted long, and gave many a hard blow; it was defeated at last with an ease that none could have anticipated, but, like a relentless enemy-conquered but not crushed-it took terrible vengeance.'

Would you want to quote this passage in a paper on mountain climbing? Perhaps. It meets the test of being worded especially well. Now you must consider the relationship of this passage to the paper you are writing. If you're writing about the Matterhom, this passage might provide a dramatic conclusion to your paper or support an important point you are making. In either case, quoting-all or part, of this passage could be justified.

Sometime, too, the exact words are worth retaining because the writer has written very clearly. This can be important when you're trying to express a somewhat complicated process or technique and you know that a paraphrase or summary would be a poor cousin to the original. Suppose, for example, that you're writing about how both patrons and employees of gambling establishments attempt to cheat the house. One part of your paper might deal with the methods patrons use to cheat slot machines and the countermeasures the gambling houses use to prevent that cheating. You might consider quoting all or part of this passage:

> Another lucrative slot scam is called stringing and involves drilling a hole through a silver dollar and tying a string to it. (Dental floss and three-pound monofilament are currently the strings of choice.) Most slot ma-chines are activated by a microswitch located about three inches below the coin drop; to string, you drop your dollar far enough to trigger the switch, then pull it back up. Unlikely as it sounds, lots of people string.
>
> But your average Ike dollar, while passing through the coin acceptor, activates the machine's microswitch for only 20 milliseconds. And even the best stringer on the planet can't drop and retrieve his coin in so short a time. Hence, the coming of the antistring modification, first perfected by an engineer at the downtown Mint casino. When the micro-switch remains activated even a twitch longer than 20 milliseconds, the machine automatically locks and sets off an alarm.'

This passage does do an unusually good job of explaining ideas that, if not complicated, at least are not particularly simple. Before deciding to quote it, though, you would want to make sure the passage would make a significant contribution to your paper.

Another appropriate time to quote is to take advantage of the words of an authority. The authority doesn't necessarily have to be a famous person, though just someone in a position to know. For example, *Time* magazine quotes an employee of the Dieppe gambling casino in France as saying, "The croupiers [attendants at gambling tables] could have swiped the chandeliers from the casino if they had wanted to." To support a point about the ease with which employees of gambling

houses can cheat management; this passage might deserve the emphasis that quoting would give it.

Finally, another good time for quoting instead of paraphrasing or summarizing is when you are using primary source material. As we explained at the beginning of Chapter 4, a primary source is the origin of basic facts on your subject, whereas a secondary source uses primary sources or other secondary sources as its basis. In writing your own critique of a novel, you'll no doubt want to quote some of the key passages you discuss. You also may want to use some of the critic's views, but summarizing or paraphrasing them often is advisable. You do not always have to quote primary material and always summarize or paraphrase secondary material, of course. You're simply more likely to quote from primary material because more often it will meet the other criteria for quoting: wording that is especially effective or clear or material that is from an authority on the subject.

WHEN NOT TO QUOTE

Now that we've shown some examples of when to quote, let's look more closely at an example of when not to quote—when, in this case, a paraphrase would be more effective.

While she was conducting research for her paper on the early modern Olympics, the writer of the sample paper in Chapter 7 decided to show that the 400-meter race in the 1908 Olympics was controversial. She found this passage:

> perhaps the biggest uproar came during the running of the 400-meter final. It involved three American runners—W. C. Robbins of Harvard, J. C. Carpenter of Cornell and J. B. Taylor of New York—and a British favorite, Wyndham Halswelle. The crowd, stirred up by local newspapers which had warned that the Americans might gang up on Halswelle, was tense.
>
> As the race progressed and the four turned into the home stretch, • Halswelle was running third behind Robbins and Carpenter. Then Halswelle put on a burst of speed and the three were closely bunched. As Carpenter ran wide to meet the challenge, British officials began yelling, "Foul! Foul!" One of the judges stepped in front of Taylor, who wasn't involved. Another judge cut the tape at the finish line before Carpenter, Robbins and Halswelle came across in that order. The judges then deliberated and declared the race void. They disqualified Carpenter for interference and ruled that the race would have to be rerun the next day.
>
> Now furious American officials stormed out, shouted that they had been robbed and refused to let the U.S. runners compete in the rerun. So on

> the final day Wyndham Halswelle ran the course all by himself and won a gold medal.'

This is written clearly enough and with some liveliness, so it could qualify as a quotation. But there is simply too much irrelevant information—readers have no need to know all those names, which could be confusing. So, having no good reason to quote, she decided to paraphrase. Here is the result:

> In the 400-meter final, the British crowd, which had been provoked by the newspapers, was convinced that the Americans would conspire against the local sympathetic favorite to keep him from winning. Indeed, the British runner and three Americans were close to each other near the finish when the British officials suddenly shouted that there had been a foul. One of the officials then blocked an American, keeping him from finishing the race, and another cut the tape before the other Americans could cross the finish. Of course, there was an uproar. The British decided to run the race again the next day, but the Americans refused to participate. The British runner ran alone—nobody cried foul this time—and took home a gold medal (Paul and Orr 35). Clearly, this controversy, which had both the British and Americans filming, did not improve international relations.

Do you see the advantages of paraphrasing? Not only did she exclude information that would be unimportant to her readers, but by telling the story of the race in her own words, she did not distract them with extra attention that a quotation tends to draw to itself.

Summaries, too, function better than quotations when you're presenting basic facts and opinions from a source and have no real need for the original wording. As we noted in Chapter 4, summaries condense material more than paraphrases do. Had the writer of the paraphrase above chosen to present details about the 400-meter race in a much shorter form, she might have written this:

> In the 400-meter final, British officials interfered in the finish of the race and then demanded that it be run again. When the outraged Americans refused to participate, the British athlete ran alone for the gold (Paul and Orr 35).

As an alternative, perhaps the writer could have quoted only key words from the original here and summarized the rest, like this:

> In the 400-meter final, British officials interfered in the finish of the race and "then deliberated and declared the race void. They . . . ruled that the race would have to be rerun the next day." When the outraged Americans refused to participate, the British athlete "ran the course all by himself and won a gold medal" (Paul and Orr 35).

However, these pieces of quotation do not appear to meet the criteria for quoting. Instead, the writer is forced into awkward wording to fit unimportant pieces of the original into her paragraph. Thus, the quoted material adds nothing but does distract. The straight summary, on the other hand, captures the same facts and ideas and flows more smoothly.

The idea, then, is to quote for effect—when the original is particularly well worded, is particularly clear, or represents an authority, especially an authoritative primary source. At other times, show preference to paraphrases and summaries. They allow you to process material—to simplify and tailor it to your needs.

HOW MUCH TO QUOTE

In addition to quoting too often, beginning writers also tend to quote too much. They will quote an entire paragraph when a sentence or two will do, and they will quote a sentence when a phrase will do. One result is that readers have to read more than is necessary. But more important, the effect of the quotation is diluted by the unnecessary words.

Your task, then, is to take a hard look at a passage you plan to quote and decide just how much you really need to illustrate your point. Let's consider an example. The writer of the sample paper we show you in Chapter 7 wanted to present the thoughts of Baron de Coubenin, the father of the modem Olympics, to show the Baron's intentions in reviving the games. The writer wasn't able to find a primary source with de Coubertin's words, but she did find a secondary source that quoted the Baron. Here's the passage that contained information the writer wanted to use:

> Baron de Coubenin foresaw the meetings of sportsmen of all nations. At a, time when politicians were arguing about the merits of Free Trade, the movement of goods without tariffs, he said: "Let us export our oarsmen, our runners, our fencers, into other lands. This is the true Free Trade of the future, and the day it is introduced into Europe the cause of peace will have received a new and strong ally."

Our writer wanted to present de Coubertin's idealistic intentions without the unnecessary reference to Free Trade. The first attempt went like this:

> The Baron's other dream was that this revival would bring peace to the nations of the world. As he expressed it, "the day it [the benefit of the Olympics] is introduced into Europe the cause of peace will have received a new and strong ally" (qtti. in Binfield 23).

The writer has cut away part of the passage from Binfield's book, but to keep the rest she has had to put in brackets an explanation for *it*, since that word doesn't make sense without its original context. This awkward intrusion takes away from

the effect of the quotation. The real problem is simple: The writer has juggled her wording to accommodate too large a passage from her source. When she saw how awkward the result was, she adapted the quotation to fit her needs, like this

> The Baron's other dream was that this revival would being peace to the nations of the world. As he expressed it, the revived Olympics would give peace "a new and strong ally" (qtd_ in Binfleld 23).

The writer of this research paper condensed the key idea from the original paragraph to five words, disposing of awkward, irrelevant ideas and focus-ing on the key phrase-the important idea she wanted her readers to see.

HOW TO INTEGRATE QUOTATIONS, PARAPHRASES, AND SUMMARIES

In Chapter 8 we discuss the technical manuscript conventions for presenting research material-spacing, punctuation, and so forth. Here we will concentrate on achieving the two objectives of integrating research material into your paper: (1) clearly distinguishing between your words and ideas and those from research sources; and (2) at the same time blending research material smoothly into your paper.

FRAMING RESEARCH MATERIAL

You can achieve both objectives-distinguishing research materials from your writing and at the same time blending it into your writing-by using a box or "frame." Whether you're quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing, think of enclosing your research material in an imaginary frame-something separating the research material from the rest of the paper.

For a quotation, the frame is simple: The material is framed at the beginning with quotation marks and at the end by quotation marks and a parenthetical reference:

> Thoreau's Walden is famous for its wise sayings, as meaningful today as in the mid-1800s when he wrote them. Take, for example, this comment on materialism: ["I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of" (6).] The

There's no doubt where the borrowing begins and ends, is there? The quotation marks at the beginning and the quotation marks and parenthetical reference at the end clearly frame the borrowed material. We've indicated the frame with brackets-but, of course, you would not use these in your paper.

How do you frame paraphrases and summaries since you don't use quotation marks with them? The parenthetical reference usually marks the end, and you signal the beginning with an introduction such as "Dr. Richard Leakey and Roger Lewin argue in *Origins* . ." or 'The attorney for the case, Gary Reimer, commented wryly that. . . ." There are innumerable possible introductions, so you don't need to be stuck with saying only, "So-and-so said. . . ." Let's look at a sample paraphrase:

> We think of materialism as burgeoning in the twentieth century, made manifest by shiny automobiles, prefab houses, televisions, and narrow (or is it wide?) lapels and gadgety jewelry. But [Henry David Thoreau, famous for his classic nineteenth-century book Walden, bemoaned the things of his era that were both physical and spiritual baggage to the people he knew (8).] And isn't it true today that the people who strive to collect more and more are all the more burdened by

For this paraphrase, "Henry David Thoreau . . . bemoaned" forms the first part of the frame and the parenthetical reference forms the last pan. The reader should have no doubt where the borrowed material is.

WHEN TO FRAME

Do you always need to introduce research material by mentioning the source (author or title)? No, but you must be very careful when you don't. If you mention a fact-such as the number of square miles in Nevada-followed by a parenthetical reference, readers will know what the borrowed material is. Similar, if you're telling a story, such as the narration of some of the Olympic events in the sample paper in Chapter 7, readers don't need a signal for where the borrowing begins. They will know that the stories of the events couldn't possibly have been created in your mind-that they had to come from somewhere else. And the parenthetical reference at the end of the narrative tells where. The rule, then, is to introduce research material whenever there's a chance that readers may think they're reading your words or ideas if you don't provide the introduction. The parenthetical reference tells them clearly where the borrowing *ends*, but the introduction tells them clearly where it *begins*.

INTRODUCING RESEARCH MATERIAL

An introduction also serves another purpose, one helpful for blending the research material into your writing. It not only says that material came from another source but it identities that source. And readers are curious about that. They probably don't want to know, in the text of the paper, where and when the material was printed,

but they would like to know who said it. That applies to quotations, as well as to paraphrases and summaries. You, too, would probably be distracted by suddenly seeing quotation marks in a paper with no indication of who is quoted:

> In fact, airplanes, trains, ships, and trucks may, in the not-too- distant future, no longer be the primary cargo vessels they, are today. "If absolute safety could be guaranteed, the nuclear-powered airship (dirigible] could become the cargo workhorse of the world" (Starchlld and Holahan 436). Of course, we may never be able to guarantee that the safety

That quotation is spliced so roughly into the text of the paper that it is bound to be distracting.

See the difference that an introduction makes:

> In fact, airplanes, trains, ships, and trucks may, in the not-tee-distant Altura, no longer be the primary cargo vessels they are today. In a journal called The Futurist, Adam Starchild and James Holahan speculate that "if absolute safety could be guaranteed, the nuclear-powered airship [dirigible] could become the cargo workhorse of the world" (435). Of course, we may never be able to guarantee that the safety

Readers probably don't know who those authors are, and they may never have heard of *The Futurist*, but at least the mystery of the source is solved and they can read further without the uneasiness that a quotation by itself tends to produce.

Finally, there is one more good reason to introduce material. Introductions of some sort almost always are necessary for long quotations. Here the introduction not only prevents mystery about who said it, but also provides a perspective on the quotation. If you have a long quotation—anything over a sentence or so—you want to start the readers off by telling them what point you expect them to understand by reading the quotation. That way as they are reading the quotation, they can constantly relate the material to your point. Here's an example:

> Actually, dirigibles may be particularly important to us in the future because, as Starchild and Holahan point out, the fuel cost is low: Because of its buoyancy, the fuel cost of getting and keeping the airship aloft dwindles to almost nothing. Conventional aircraft, not being lighter than air, need considerable thrust to get off the ground. They must employ a powered aerodynamic lift, in contrast to the airship's buoyant aerostatic lift (433-34).

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dishonesty—is presenting someone else's words or ideas without giving credit for

them. You avoid plagiarism by documenting the words and ideas of others when you use them in your writing. Chapters .9 through 12 show you in detail the mechanics of documenting—he’re we're concerned with properly presenting research material in the text of your paper so you're not accused of wrongdoing.

Here are errors you want to avoid:

• Presenting someone else's idea but not documenting it (so the idea seems to be yours).

• Presenting someone else's words without documenting them (so they seem to be part of your writing).

• Quoting someone else's words—perhaps even documenting them—but failing to use quotation marks (even with parenthetical documentation, readers still will think the words are yours unless you use quotation marks).

If you're careful to keep track of your sources' words and ideas when you take notes and then are careful when you work the material into your paper, you're not likely to be guilty of any of these errors. Conscientiously using the frame when you present research material and using quotation marks when you quote will eliminate the risk of plagiarizing.

However, just for emphasis, let's look more closely at the third item in the list above—it seems to be the most troublesome. Suppose this passage is the source material being used for a paper:

> Combining flexibility and range with enormous payload capacities, giant airships could alter today's whole system of moving materials. Such airships could haul huge loads of the kind that conventional earners now find economically unfeasible (Starchild and Holahan 435).

Now here's a dishonest use of that passage in a paper:

> There is a good chance that dirigibles could become an important means of transportation. As Starchild and Holahan note, their range and flexibility would be combined with enormous payload capacities, thus perhaps altering our sys tern of moving materials. Dirigibles could carry much more cargo than conventional carriers now find economically feasible (435).

Is there a frame? Yes, there is an introduction at the beginning and a parenthetical reference at the end. The problem is that within the frame are key words from the original—even though the writer appears to be merely paraphrasing. Here's that dishonest passage with the troublesome key words underlined so that you can see the plagiarism:

> There is a good chance that dirigibles could become an important means of transportation. As Starchild and Holahan note, <u>their range and flexibility</u> would be

> combined with enormous payload capacities, thus perhaps altering our system of moving materials. Dirigibles could carry much more cargo than conventional carriers now find economically feasible (435).

The writer has borrowed key words when he seems to be borrowing only ideas. Without quotation marks, the documentation accounts only for borrowed ideas. The solution is either quotation marks around all the key words (which would be awkward), a less direct rewording (a true paraphrase, in other words), or—probably best of all if the writer really feels he needs every bit of the original material—a quotation.

Use your good judgment and document whenever you are in doubt. Your instructor would prefer too much documentation rather than too little.