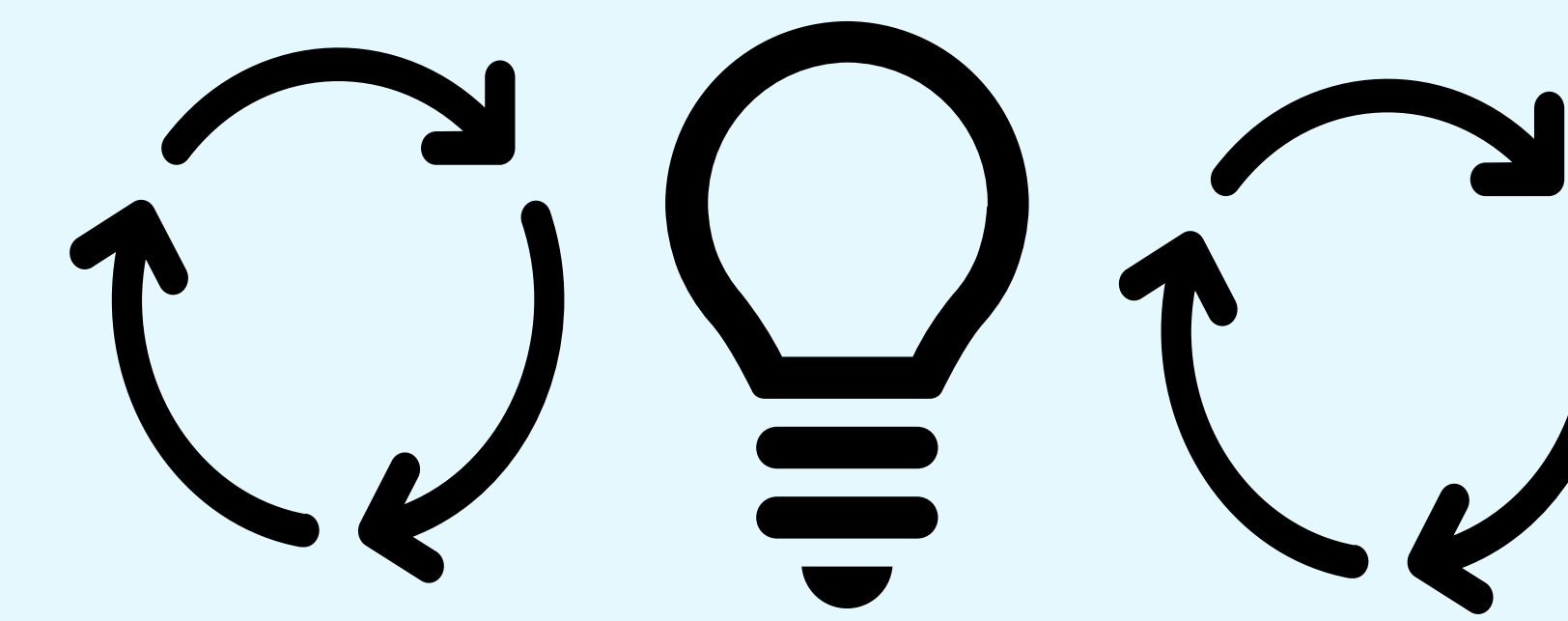


DO BETTER NEXT TIME: AI USE IN ONLINE LEARNING

PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS (PELS), UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO MISSISSAUGA

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INTRODUCTION

PELS is an online asynchronous program for academic English language learning and study skills development. The program uses Validity Based Arguments (VBA) (Chapelle et al., 2010; Kane, 2016) and Critical Language Awareness (CLA) (Shapiro 2022) to encourage critical thinking about writing development. PELS assessment transparency counters the idea that assessment is just a “hoop to jump” or structure to navigate (Pearson, 2017). However, since the launch of ChatGPT-OpenAI, students have submitted Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated text in PELS quizzes. This trend created the opportunity to address the use of AI tools in paraphrasing tasks. This poster contains descriptions of the paraphrase tasks, a typical plagiarized student response, and instructor feedback that analyzes student submissions. I argue that reflecting student’s choices back to them through quantitative analysis can shift their writing decisions in subsequent writing tasks. In sum, students in PELS are taught that AI tools have consequential limitations in paraphrasing tasks, and AI plagiarism can be detected by comparing student writing samples that respond to a common prompt.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

After completing **Module 2** and receiving instructor feedback, students are able to identify the constraints of Artificial Intelligence in paraphrasing tasks. In **Module 4**, students develop critical reading strategies for analyzing a source and composing a paraphrase using their own language choices and paragraph organization. In **Module 8**, students demonstrate writing awareness and development by reflecting on a source about linguistic diversity (Looker, 2016) and their experiences in PELS.

METHODOLOGY & FINDINGS

In Winter 2024, 97% of students (n=688) submitted Module 2 paraphrases that were nearly identical in lexis and syntax (see Module 2 Instructor Feedback to Students). I shared a typical submission with students and deconstructed the incorrect and nonsensical answer. I reminded students that a paraphrase should address purpose, audience and context, and I explained how topics such as linguistic diversity, critical language awareness, and intercultural communicative competence are nuanced topics that require critical thinking. Overall, I approached Module 2 submissions as an important learning opportunity to help students do better next time in Modules 4 & 8.

DISCUSSION

I was able to influence students’ choices by showing how AI generated text does not effectively address audience, purpose, and context, and more importantly, it can lead a writer to adopt writing that is cliché, incorrect, nonsensical, and plagiarized. Moreover, I ask students to do better next time. In Modules 4 & 8, students submitted work that met the assignment criteria with few instances that indicated AI generated text use. Module 4 required students to deconstruct a source and write a paraphrase using original language choices and paragraph organization, and the complexity of the task made AI use impractical. After learning how to write a paraphrase in Module 4, 86% of students demonstrated strong source integration strategies in the Module 8 Reflection Essay (n=232) with only 6 papers marked as zero for plagiarism and 14 instances of missing citation information.

References:

- Chapelle, C. A., Enright, M. K. & Jamieson, J. M. (2010). Does an argument-based approach to validity make a difference? *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 29(1), 3-13.
- Kane. (2016). Explicating validity. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 23(2), 198–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2015.1060192>
- Looker, S. (2016). Writing about Language: Studying Language Diversity with First-Year Writers. *Teaching English in the Two-year College*, 44(2) 176-198.
- Pearson, J. (2017). Processfolio: Uniting academic literacies and critical emancipatory action research for practitioner-led inquiry into EAP writing assessment. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 14, 158–181.
- Shapiro, S. 2022. *Cultivating critical language in the writing classroom*. New York, Routledge.

Module 2 Instructions: Paraphrase the following direct quote:

This is what I based my interpretation on; that people with autism tend to have their own timing, spacing, pacing and life-rhythm. I recalled times with my mate Peter doing things like going to the movies where he would laugh loudly at some parts that weren’t intentionally humorous and my time with Matt and other people with autism I’ve known in my lifetime and this seemed to be the best way to describe the experience. As well, it seemed quite a positive way of explaining it and that is very important to me and essential for the Te Reo Hāpai resource in creating clear, correct and appropriate Māori language for now and the future. Hence, ‘Takiwātanga’.

Reference:

Opai, K. (2017). A time and space for Takiwātanga. *Altogether Autism Journal*, 2, 13.

Module 4 Instructions:

Part 1:

1. Read the paragraph below and summarize the main point of the paragraph in one or two sentences in your submission document (MS Word preferred).
2. Copy the source paragraph into your submission document and label the **ICE-T** sentences. **ICE-T** means: **I**= Introduce the point (topic sentence). **C**= Cite the evidence/example. **E**= Explain the evidence/example. **T**= Tie-up sentence(s)/metacommentary. Review Module 4 for a detailed explanation of **ICE-T**.
3. Underline the transition words and phrases [Links to an external site.](#) in the source paragraph.
4. Underline the reporting verbs and **bold** in-text citations in the source paragraph.

Part 2:

1. Paraphrase the source paragraph below. First, take notes using your own language. For example, you can summarize each of the sentences and identify each one in terms of topic sentence(s), example/evidence sentence(s), and explanation sentence(s).
2. Second, without looking at the original source, write a paragraph using only your notes. Furthermore, try to rearrange your ICE-T sentences in a different pattern of organization (order), and use varied sentence structures.
3. Third, underline your paraphrase transitions and reporting verbs.
4. Fourth, **bold** your in-text citations using APA Style.
5. Finally, check that your paragraph looks different from the source in terms of language choices (e.g., transitions, reporting verbs, sentence structures, paragraph organization). When you are satisfied that you have composed a true paraphrase, upload your work as a MS Word document so that it can be annotated with comments.

Reference:

Gallagher, C.E., & Haan, J.E. (2018). University faculty beliefs about emergent multilinguals and linguistically responsive instruction. *TESOL Quarterly*, 52 (2), 304-330.

MODULE 2 INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS

Only 3% of students wrote a correct paraphrase. This indicates that 97% of students incorrectly cited the source and/or used patchwriting. I suspect the use of AI Generated Text because different versions of the following text appeared repeatedly using the first person pronoun instead of citing the author by name and in third person:

“My perspective is based on the fact that people with autism frequently demonstrate unique timing, spacing, pacing, and life rhythms. I turned to personal experiences, such as time spent with my friend Peter, who would exhibit delight at non-humorous times in movies. After reflecting on conversations with Matt and other people with autism throughout the years, I realized that this description best captured the core of the experience. Importantly, I see this representation as positive, which is quite important to me. The Te Reo Hāpai resource aims to provide a clear, accurate, and culturally acceptable Māori language for now and the future. Thus, the name 'Takiwātanga' encompasses this idea.”

When you paraphrase, you are reporting on what the author said. Widespread use of first person tells me that AI tools were used to simply rewrite the source from the perspective of the author. Some students used the third person and added the year of publication date to make their paraphrases appear authentic; however, there was strong repetition of language and structure choices in the majority of submissions (patchwriting). Paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting are foundational in academic writing, so please make the effort to learn these skills. Failing to cite sources accurately creates confusion for your reader in terms of separating your ideas from the ideas of the authors you use to support your points. Get credit for reading and using research in your writing by ALWAYS offering in-text citations. Furthermore, please avoid plagiarism by making your own language and paragraph organization choices.

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