

# English Academic Writing

## Module 3.4: Revision

# Revision

- Editing -- improve quality
  - Contents make sense
  - Best possible way to structure and present information
  - No contradictions in the argument
- Proofreading
  - Check for surface errors
    - Typos
    - Spelling mistakes
    - Grammar mistakes
    - Choice of words
    - Different word forms
  - Register and style
  - Punctuation and formatting

# How to revise?

## Revising text

- Focus and structure
  - There are topic sentences in all paragraphs
  - Each section has an overall structure
  - The text does what it sets out to do
- Fluency and readability
  - There are transitions linking both paragraphs and sections
  - Subheadings and transitional phrases

# How to revise?

## Revising language

- Vocabulary
  - Long-term learning
  - Consult references and dictionaries
- Spelling
  - Use spelling checker in your writing software
  - Check for the required spelling convention
- Grammar
  - Ensure grammatically correctness
  - Grammar checkers – potential mistakes
- Sentence structure and punctuation
  - sentence fragments and run-on sentences

# How to revise?

## Checking formal aspects

- Format
  - Check the writing guidelines
  - Word count, line spacing, font size, etc
- Reference
  - the use of references is correct and consistent

## Tips on revision

- Read your work out loud
- Do a verb check
- Cut clutter
- Do an organizational review
- Get feedback from others
- Get editing help

# Read your writing out loud

The brain processes the spoken word differently than the written word!

Easier to identify issues:

- Inaccurate sentence structure
- Punctuation problems
- Lack of transitions
- Repetitive expressions

record your reading or ask someone else to read for you

# Do a verb check

Underline the main verb in each sentence.  
Watch for:

(1) To be verbs (e.g., There are many students who struggle with chemistry.)

(2) passive verbs (e.g., The reaction was observed by her.)

(3) buried verbs (e.g., A careful monitoring of achievement levels before and after the introduction of computers in the teaching of our course revealed no appreciable change in students' performances.).



# Don't be afraid to cut!

## Watch for:

- Dead weight words and phrases (it should be emphasized that)
- Empty words and phrases (basic tenets of, important)
- Long words or phrases that could be short (muscular and cardiorespiratory performance)
- Unnecessary jargon and acronyms
- Repetitive words or phrases (teaches clinicians/guides clinicians)
- Adverbs (very, really, quite, basically)

# Do an organisational review

- **Tag** each paragraph with a phrase or sentence
  - Bring similar ideas together
  - Combine similar paragraphs
  - Improve logical flow

# Get feedback

Ask someone to read your manuscript

Not necessary to have any technical background,  
they should easily grasp:

- the main findings
- take-home messages
- significance of your work

Ask them to point out particularly hard-to-read sentences and paragraphs!

Find a good editor – sentence level editing

# English Academic Writing

## Module 3.5: Plagiarism and reference

# Example



# Example

- Michelle Obama 2008: **"You work hard for what you want in life; that your word is your bond and you do what you say you're going to do; that you treat people with dignity and respect..."**
- Melania Trump 2016: "From a young age, my parents impressed on me the values that **you work hard for what you want in life; that your word is your bond and you do what you say** and keep your promise; that **you treat people with respect.**"
- Michelle Obama 2008: **"We want our children — and all children in this nation — to know that the only limit to the height of your achievements is the reach of your dreams and your willingness to work for them."**
- Melania Trump 2016: **"We want our children in this nation to know that the only limit to your achievements is the strength of your dreams and your willingness to work for them."**

# Plagiarism of others' work

- Passing off other people's writing (or tables and figures) as your own.
  - Includes:
    - cutting and pasting sentences or even phrases from another source
    - slightly rewriting or re-arranging others' words
    - "borrowing" material from sites

without proper citation and quotes!!!

## Example

- **Original Version (from an online encyclopedia):** Ernest Miller Hemingway (July 21, 1899– July 2, 1961) was an American author and journalist. His economical and understated style had a strong influence on 20th- century fiction, while his life of adventure and his public image influenced later generations.
- **Plagiarized Version:** Ernest Hemingway's thrifty and understated style strongly influenced 20th-century fiction. His audacious lifestyle and public image also influenced later generations.



## Writing about others' ideas/work:

- You must understand the material well enough to put it in your own words!
- Using quotation marks when copying and pasting
- Draw your own conclusions
- Do not mimic the original author's sentence structure or re-arrange the original author's words.

# Plagiarism example

## Original passage (a 1995 paper):

"Our data demonstrate that, despite its usefulness in perimenopausal women, estrogen and progestin administration does not reverse the profound osteopenia seen in all young women with anorexia nervosa. Trabecular bone loss is severe and may progress despite estrogen therapy."

## Plagiarized passage (a 2002 paper):

"In conclusion, our data demonstrate that, despite its usefulness in perimenopausal women, estrogen and progestin administration does not reverse the profound osteopenia seen in all young women with AN. Trabecular bone loss is severe and may progress despite estrogen therapy."

# Self-plagiarism and duplication

-- violate the copyright laws

- Recycling your own writing or data, including:
  - Copying or only slightly rewriting text from your own previously published papers.
  - Adding new data to already published data and presenting it as new results.
  - Submitting identical or overlapping data to multiple journals.

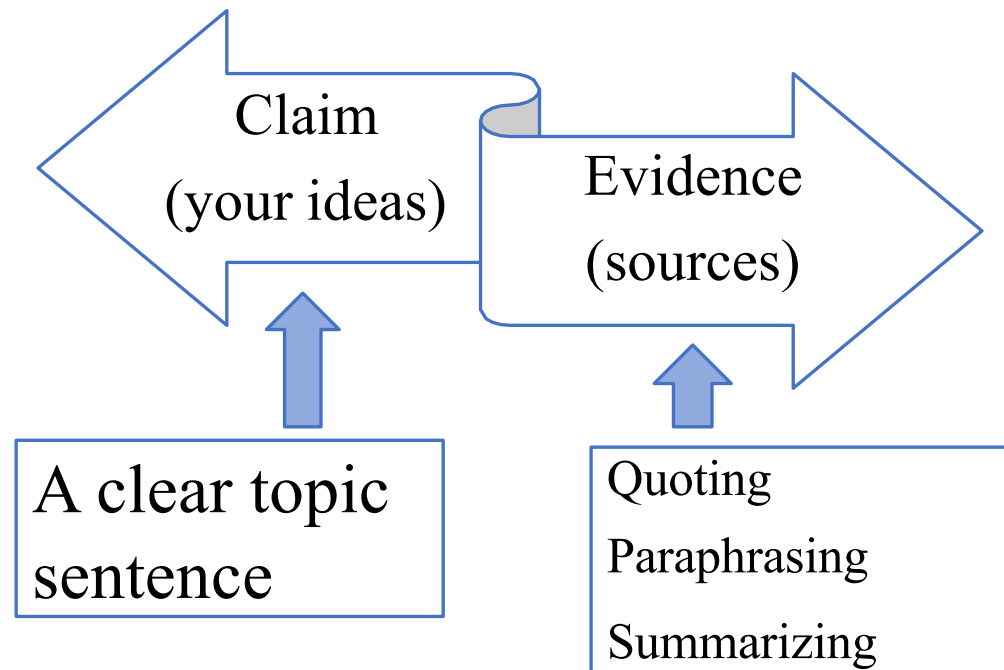
One possible exception:  
duplication within the materials and methods section

# Avoid plagiarism



- A form of cheating, and takes away the originality and trustworthiness of the content.
- It affects the writer and can also change the content creator's career.
  - Destroyed reputation
  - Rejection of assignment
  - Failed course
  - Expulsion
  - Harms the learning curve
  - ruins the opportunity to learn
- We must be careful about plagiarism.
  - Clearly state yours work or someone else's work
  - Refer to your own previous work

# How to give references?



# How to give references?

Quoting      used sparsely in academic writing -- to stress a certain fact.

- Use the exact wording as the original source
  - Identical to the original
  - Use quotation marks or an indentation

A recent poll suggests that EU membership “would be backed by 55 percent of Danish voters” in a referendum (Levring, 2018).

Tolkien favours long sentences and detailed descriptions. Indeed, in some cases, Tolkien's sentences are so long they form a paragraph of their own:

To the end of his days Bilbo could never remember how he found himself outside, without a hat, a walking-stick or any money, or anything that he usually took when he went out; leaving his second breakfast half-finished and quite unwashed-up, pushing his keys into Gandalf's hands, and running as fast as his furry feet could carry him down the lane, past the great Mill, across The Water, and then on for a mile or more. (Tolkien, 1937, p. 16)

# How to give references?

## Paraphrasing

- Rewriting material using your own words
- Maintain the original meaning
  - Easier to read
  - Shows your understanding and way of integrating

Rewrite in your own words without copying, change the vocabulary and grammar, but do not change the original meaning.

## (Synonyms)

**Original:** Living aboard a space station in orbit around Earth for months at a time poses problems for astronauts' bodies as well as for their minds.

Source: Clinton, P. (2003). Manned Mars flight: impossible dream? Space Science

**Paraphrase1:** An article in Space Science reports that astronauts will become physically sick and have mental problems if they visit a space station (Clinton, 2003).

**Paraphrase2:** An article in Space Science magazine reports that lengthy space station duty may lead to physical and mental problems for astronauts (Clinton, 2003).

# How to give references?

## Summarising

- Sum up in a few sentences
- Relate it to your own work

paraphrasing -- a smaller specific portion of a source

summarising -- an overview, the main idea of a book or whole body of the work

### Example:

**The original passage:** Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of the final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, students should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.

*(Lester, James D. Writing Research Papers. 2nd ed. (1976): 46-47.)*

**An acceptable summary:** Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-47).



# English Academic Writing

## Module 3.6: Checklist for the final draft

- Check for consistency
  - Numerical consistency
- Check your references

# Check for consistency

- No contradictory in different places in the manuscript

“We followed participants for a minimum of **2 years**” (methods section)

“The average follow-up time was **1.5 years**” (results section)

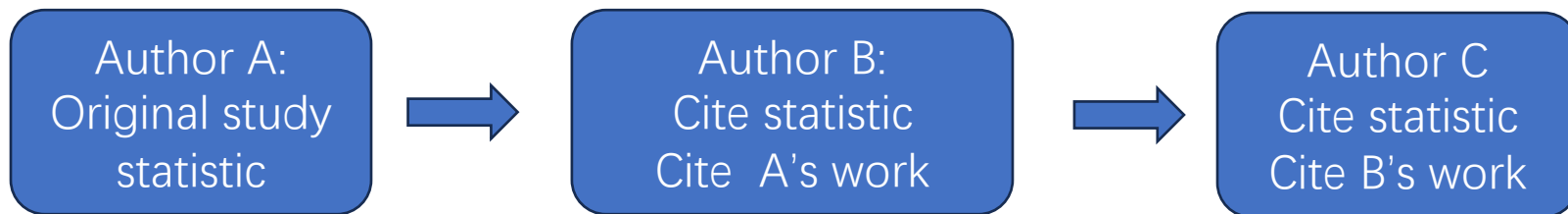


# Check for numerical consistency

- Do the numbers in your abstract match the numbers in your tables/figures/text?
- Do the numbers in the text match those in the tables/figures?
- Do the numbers in each table/figure match those in other tables/figures?

# Check your references

- Do you have “references to nowhere”?
- Reference does not provide the indicated information/fact.
  - Authors misinterpreted or exaggerated the findings from the original source.
  - Reference cites a secondary source rather than a primary source. (Citation propagation: lose information)



- Authors mis-numbered the references
  - Latex, a reference manager program (EndNote)

# Submission process

1. Identify a journal for submission (ideally before writing!)
2. Follow the online “instructions for authors” for writing and formatting the manuscript
3. Submit your manuscript online
4. Possible outcomes: accepted; minor revisions; rejected with resubmission (major revision); rejected without resubmission
  - Read reviewer’s comments and revise the paper
5. Revision and resubmission: re-submit with cover letter that addresses reviewers critiques point by point
6. Once accepted, carefully review final proofs!