



REFLECTIVE REPORT: TIME MANAGEMENT AND PARAPHRASING SKILLS IN ACADEMIC STUDY

Academic Skills (LCLM4001_LON)

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Introduction

Developing strong academic skills is essential for success at university, as they enable students to manage their studies effectively and achieve high-quality results. Throughout this module, we have explored a range of skills that are useful for academic growth, from planning and organisation to writing and research techniques. In this report, I will focus on time management and paraphrasing, reflecting on how I have improved these skills through the activities completed in class. I will also identify the strategies that worked best for me and the areas that still require further practice and development.

Time Management

During the module, we explored various topics related to academic skills. One of the most significant areas for me was Time Management, which I found particularly engaging because it introduced me to a range of strategies, techniques, and practical applications that I had never considered before.

Previously, I believed that the only way to organize my time was by writing my plans in a notebook. However, during the lecture, I discovered the Eisenhower matrix, which helped me clearly distinguish between urgent and non-urgent tasks. This approach allowed me to prioritise my workload more effectively and avoid wasting time on low-priority activities. Another activity was a scenario-based task, where we had to decide how to prioritise three assignments while also managing part-time work and family responsibilities. In this exercise, I chose the Eisenhower Matrix to identify urgent and important tasks, delegated less essential activities such as cleaning my room, and planned to reduce distractions like social media scrolling. I also conducted my weekly time audit, calculating how many hours I spend on sleeping, eating, studying, and other household chores.

Not all methods worked equally well for me. For example, the Pomodoro Technique was the least effective strategy in my experience. I found that working for only 25 minutes before taking a break interrupted my concentration and made it harder to complete tasks to a high standard. Similarly, the 4D Strategy was not very clear or applicable to my personal working style. However, this process taught me that time management is highly individual, and not every popular method will suit every person.

Nevertheless, my existing planning skills allowed me to successfully complete the weekly planning task with ease. This knowledge is valuable for me as a student, as it helps me manage deadlines, balance study with personal life, and reduce stress. As Van Fleet (2020) argues, effective time management is not only about scheduling tasks, but also about focusing on the right activities that truly contribute to one's goals. This insight reinforces my intention to refine my approach by selecting strategies that align with my personal learning style and priorities. I believe these skills will be crucial not only during my studies but also in my future career, where balancing multiple tasks and meeting deadlines will be essential.

Paraphrasing

I would like to draw attention to the lecture on paraphrasing that we had in 5th week of the course. Learning about this topic was particularly useful for me, as it is one of the most challenging academic skills for me, which is precisely why I chose it. Previously, I thought that paraphrasing would be easy, but I actually ran into several problems once I started applying the techniques.

During the lecture, we studied the elements of effective paraphrasing using example sentences provided by the lecturer. We discussed that good paraphrasing is not just replacing words with synonyms, changing the grammatical form of words, and maintaining the original meaning (Bailey, 2018). We also read a text about the causes of the Industrial Revolution written by Allen (2009) and had a discussion about the accuracy of different paraphrases. Our group compared three different paraphrased versions of a text and discussed which one was the most and least effective. Afterwards, the lecturer explained the key differences between them.

One of the activities I particularly enjoyed was paraphrasing sentences by using synonyms. Although it was interesting, I found it quite challenging because English is not my native language, so I relied on Google to find suitable synonyms. While this approach sometimes worked, it also led to awkward phrasing, which made me realise the importance of understanding word usage in context rather than depending only on translation tools.

Another activity involved changing words into different parts of speech, such as turning a verb into a noun or an adjective into a verb. I did not fully understand this task and found it to be the most challenging part of the lecture. According to Scribbr, effective paraphrasing should go beyond merely substituting words; it should also involve restructuring phrases and changing grammatical forms to ensure originality and clarity (Scribbr, 2025). This insight highlighted the importance of further practising this technique to improve my paraphrased expressions.

In conclusion, although I initially believed that paraphrasing would be an easy topic for me, I discovered that it requires more attention and practice, especially when working with synonyms and changing parts of speech. The lesson helped me understand my strengths and areas that still need improvement. In the future, I plan to practice paraphrasing by summarizing articles from reliable academic sources and checking

my work against the original texts. As Bailey (2018) points out, paraphrasing is a skill that improves over time, and with consistent effort, I am confident I will master it.

Conclusion

Overall, the Academic Skills module has been a valuable learning experience, helping me develop strategies for managing my time and improving my paraphrasing skills. I have learned to plan my schedule effectively, prioritise tasks using the Eisenhower Matrix, and maintain focus with the Pomodoro technique. In paraphrasing, I gained a better understanding of how to use synonyms and restructure sentences while keeping the original meaning. Although I still need more practice with changing parts of speech, I feel more confident in my abilities. Overall, the course provided tools I can apply in academic, personal, and professional life.

References

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