

Lexico-semantic and Morphosyntactic Analyses of Student-generated Paraphrased Academic Texts

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Abstract : In this age of AI-assisted teaching and learning, there seems to be a dearth of research literature on the linguistic analysis of English as a Second Language (ESL) student-generated paraphrased academic texts. This study sought to examine the lexico-semantic, morphosyntactic features of paraphrased academic texts generated by ESL students. Employing a descriptive qualitative design, specifically linguistic analysis, the study involved a total of 85 students from senior high school, college, and graduate school enrolled in research courses. Data collection consisted of a 60-minute real-time, on-site paraphrasing practice exercise using excerpts from discipline-specific literature reviews of 150 to 200 words. A focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted to probe into the challenges experienced by the participants. The writing exercise yielded a total of 516 paraphrase pairs. A total of 176 paraphrase units (PUs) and 340 non-paraphrase pairs (NPPs) were detected. Findings from the linguistic analysis of PUs reveal that the modifications made to the original texts are predominantly syntax-based (Diathesis Alterations and Coordination Changes) and a combination of Miscellaneous Changes (Change of Order, Change of Format, and Addition/Deletion). Results of the analysis of paraphrase extremes (PE) show that Identical Structures resulting from the use of synonymous substitutions, with no significant change in the structural features of the original, is the most frequently occurring instance of PE. The analysis of paraphrase errors reveals that synonymous substitutions resulting in identical structures are the most frequently occurring error that leads to PE. Another type of paraphrasing error involves semantic and content loss resulting from the deletion or addition of meaning-altering content. Three major themes emerged from the FGD: (1) The Challenge of Preserving Semantic Content and Fidelity; (2) The Best Words in the Best Order: Grappling with the Lexico-semantic and Morphosyntactic Demands of Paraphrasing; and (3) Contending with Limited Vocabulary, Poor Comprehension, and Lack of Practice. A pedagogical paradigm was designed based on the major findings of the study for a sustainable instructional intervention.

Keywords : academic text, lexico-semantic analysis, linguistic analysis, morphosyntactic analysis, paraphrasing

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