How far does student annotation of texts reflect the instructor's teaching of the skills involved and an understanding of the process? An analysis of annotated texts used by students in the final exam of a freshman communications course in the Petroleum Institute campus of Khalifa University of Science and Technology in Abu Dhabi.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent students successfully followed and applied the instructor's teaching of annotation and demonstrated the skills involved. Expectations were that there would be clear evidence showing students had effectively employed the taught strategies and approaches. Fourteen randomly-selected annotated texts used by students in a final communications exam were analyzed according to frequency of use of strategies and skills taught by the teacher and quality of the annotations displayed. These were classified according to categories of 'verbatim' and 'critical enquiry.' Descriptions are then given as to the quality of the various annotations in this context. Results revealed that most of the annotated texts showed a high level of employment of the strategies with a varied level of sophistication, and demonstrated a developed understanding of the instructor's approach. Implications for teaching and learning are discussed and pedagogical recommendations given.

Keywords: Annotation, written text, verbatim, critical enquiry, academic, teaching approach.

INTRODUCTION

The petroleum institute is a part of Khalifa University of Science, Technology and Research (KUSTAR) in Abu Dhabi, UAE. It is the top-ranked university in the country. As the name indicates, the university is predominantly focused on science and technology with an emphasis on engineering. Research is a major component of academic activity. Apart from the science and technology courses offered to students, there is a Department of Humanities and Social Sciences running a range of programmes including English and Communication.

The students in this study are enrolled in the first level of a two-level English and communications programme with a major focus on developing applied research skills and teamwork. A major product is a primary research report. The reading load in the programme is high and always purposefully linked to a product such as a proposal, literature review and research report or presentation. Reading therefore always has a clear objective and provides the source knowledge for a number of academic/research tasks. It is thus important that students are able to demonstrate a high level of understanding of the information and knowledge contained in the texts they read. Further, the final examination in the programme is open-book and based on a text the students are able to read and annotate before the test. Being an effective annotator it is therefore a premium skill.

To this end, annotation is explicitly taught and requisite skills developed and monitored throughout the semester.

The purpose of this case study is to determine to what extent students effectively followed the instructor's
teaching of this process and to discuss quantitative and qualitative elements of their annotation. Comments will be made as to reflective teacher practice and how this can improve future classroom dialogue and teaching.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Annotation is a means of helping a/any reader better understand a/any text. It is not exclusively academic in use and is certainly not a recent phenomenon (Evers, 2006). It can be seen as a process of critical interaction with a text, which in academic contexts is usually utilized in the context of a product such as a written text or presentation (application). It is therefore part of a generative process. Students in tertiary education are generally encouraged to annotate including, of course, digital annotation (Johnson et al., 2010).

It is generally agreed that there are a range of tangible benefits resulting from mastery of the skills involved, including improved quality essays and development of knowledge as well as increased motivation (Gao, 2013). Further, the kind of higher order skills required for effective annotation can help students become experts in the content and subject areas they have to deal with. Bransford et al. (2004) identified a range of key principles with respect to expertness in academic contexts. A number of these can be seen to be developed and utilized in the context and process of annotation allowing readers to develop ‘a deep understanding of important subject matter’ (Bransford et al., 2004: 6) as well as, shifting from ‘being able to remember and repeat information to being able to find and use it’ (Bransford et al., 2004: 5). This is significant with respect to the concept of applied knowledge earlier mentioned.

Research in this area tends to focus on investigating the relationship between effective annotation, reading comprehension and the development of critical thinking and literacy skills (Johnson et al., 2010; Porter-O’Donnell, 2004; Monte-Sano, 2011) or how it may influence the development of effective essay writing (Ball et al., 2008; Maloney, 2003; Liu, 2006). It is therefore influenced by improved qualitative performance in specific realms. Of course, it may be that other affective factors are also at play here.

There is little research however, on how student understanding of the teacher’s approach to teaching annotation skills is exemplified qualitatively and quantitatively in the ways in which they annotate a given text. Knowledge of what our learners are doing and what they have learned from what we teach is clearly useful in informing reflective practice and there would be general agreement that such practice is an essential element in thoughtful and effective teaching (Ghaye, 2010; Farrell, 2008).

However, as educators we are often unclear about what our students have ‘learned’. Evidence can be fleeting and anecdotal and students and teachers often have different opinions about what was taught and learnt (Boss et al., 2003). The constant review and evolution of approaches to teaching, especially in the context of language teaching (Richards and Rogers, 2014) stand as testament to concerns about how effectively students were learning (or conversely on how teachers are teaching). This can be compounded by the problem of traditional assessment often not being designed to evaluate learning (Stiggins, 2002).

Hard-copy student-annotated texts though, can provide us with tangible data of student thinking and action on which dialogue can be based as to what was taught and learned and acted upon. Further, they can enlighten useful reflection on behalf of both learners and teachers. For the author, this is not based primarily on a desire to ‘improve performance’ (Cornford, 2002: 230), as this can be seen as a somewhat teacher-centered concept, but rather to gain a better understanding of the developing knowledge of my learners and be able to respond more effectively to their needs.

The study therefore sets out to determine to what extent students have effectively understood and followed the instructor’s teaching of this process.

Teacher approach

As stated, the students in this programme have a heavy reading load, given that they are involved in primary research and work with a range of different self-selected source texts over the course of a semester. An ability to annotate effectively is crucial. Before looking at skills and approaches to annotation, time was spent on in-class discussion and contextualization. Our students have often come from educational environments where teacher-dependency has been a significant dynamic issue (Mbabazi et al., 2012). The communications programme, however, has a strong focus on learner-centeredness and autonomy. The concept of ‘ownership’ is central to this idea and annotation is one way that such ownership can be expressed. ‘One important way that readers take ownership of a text is by literally writing all over it-annotating it with comments, questions, highlights and other annotations’ (Berger et al., 2016: 95). Different applied uses of annotation were identified and specifically located in the context of texts students would use for their primary research; we tend to learn best what is purposeful. Students were asked to explain their current practice and specific approaches and skills were reviewed, developed and re-taught where necessary. Time was spent particularly focusing on the more complex skills of paraphrasing, summarizing and identifying text/author purpose. As these are second-language learners, translation was a feature of the preparatory teaching as was effective defining, given the critical nature of vocabulary.

As the students worked with their texts throughout the
semester, periodic reviews of the annotations would take place with students presenting projected images of their work to the class for comment and feedback. This was on a purely voluntary basis, but all students were happy to cooperate as the classroom environment is supportive and they could quickly see the benefits in improvement of their understanding of content and text culture such as rhetorical patterns, structure and argument. During these sessions, they were asked to explain their annotation system and why they had done things in particular ways. For example, the efficacy of simple techniques like highlighting and underlining were deliberated, especially where supporting notes and comments were not evident, as these techniques in and of themselves may have little practical use (Dunlosky et al., 2013).

Vocabulary was a major focus, especially for my students, as it has been estimated that second language learners need to understand 95% of a text in order to have comprehension (Lauffer, 1989; Hu and Nation, 2000). Explicit vocabulary teaching and contextual exploration and annotation of texts was a feature of the teaching as well as, emphasis on what strategies students might be used to develop their lexical repertoire. Vocabulary development was present in all classes with the efficacy of different approaches (hard copy bi and mono-lingual dictionaries, Google translate, electronic dictionaries etc) being a focus of discussion. Translation and use of L1 in annotation was also deliberated as a valuable ‘access’ tool.

Identifying and summarizing text elements students felt important and how to do this was also a feature of the preparation. The more conceptually and cognitively challenging skill of paraphrasing (Krishmawan and Widiati, 2013) had considerable class time devoted to it and was placed in the context of evidence of deeper understanding of information to be used in writing. It is also a skill that helps in avoiding plagiarism. The latter is a major concern internationally with 50,000 cases being reported in UK universities between 2013 and 2016 (Independent Newspaper, 2016). Consistent with the international nature of this problem, concerns have also been raised within our own institute (Craig and Dalton, 2014).

Given that the students are working on primary research projects, purposeful selection of source texts is paramount and to this end, considerable time is spent reading and looking at ways to identify author and text purpose. These are amongst a range of skills and strategies worked with in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of annotation and formed the focus for the collection of data. (Liu, 2006; Donohue and Feito, 2008; Baumeister, 2015). In this study, the former were seen as simple, such as highlighting/underlining, defining and translation and the latter as complex, using proficiencies like summarizing, identifying purpose and paraphrasing. This broad division is a useful one as it reflects significant (though not all) elements of the teacher’s focus in teaching annotation and allows a description of to what extent these skills and approaches were applied and the quality of resulting annotations.

The categories looked at were:

1) Highlighting/underlining;
2) Defining;
3) Translating;
4) Identifying author/text purpose;
5) Summarizing;
6) Paraphrasing.

Highlighting and underlining were sub-divided into ‘supported’ and ‘unsupported’ for reasons earlier mentioned. Supported highlighting would be seen as complex according to the reasons earlier mentioned criteria and thus an example of ‘critical enquiry’.

Instances of the first three measures on the aforementioned list were counted and collated. For the last three a dichotomous Yes/No evaluation was utilized since the question was simply whether evidence was present or not.

Qualitative description through selected exemplification was then given of the annotation behaviours of the students, with reference to summarizing and paraphrasing, as these are more cognitively challenging and more informed by the element of critical enquiry earlier outlined. The latter are categorized referring to Keck’s (2006) descriptions of Near Copy, Minimal Revision, Moderate Revision and Substantial Revision, while the use of Kleck’s qualitative definitions may be somewhat rudimentary here, it does enable classification according to some established guidelines.

All texts carry student names and IDs. This allows teacher knowledge of the student to inform interpretation and allow follow-up. The texts were used as take-home preparatory reading for a final open-book written examination in the freshman Communications program at our university (Moylam, 2008) learning by project: Developing Essential 21st Century Skills using Student Team Projects (International Journal of Learning, 15-2, 287-291).

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the quantitative data from the analysis of the annotated texts. As can be seen, highlighting and underlining in either form were common to all texts, although, the level of frequency varied. Thirteen of the fourteen texts (92.8%) showed supporting comments with a total of 173 examples of this. Seven texts (50%) had a
Table 1: The quantitative data from the analysis of the annotated texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Highlighting S**</th>
<th>Highlighting US**</th>
<th>Defining</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Summarizing</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Paraphrasing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text 1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 1</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
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<td>32</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*S-supported. **U-unsupported.

A high level of supported highlighting and either no or low levels of unsupported mark ups. As might be expected, frequency of highlighting varied with a range of 0 to 23 for supported examples and 0 to 21 for unsupported.

A one-sample t test was conducted on the Highlighting Supported scores to evaluate whether their mean was statistically significant from the mean scores of Highlighting Unsupported. The mean of Hi S (M = 12.4, SD = 7.15) was statistically significantly different from the mean of H US (M = 7.43, SD = 6.70; t(13) = 2.58, p = 0.023). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 4.95, 95% CI: 0.80 to 9.06) was 0.71, indicating a medium effect. For Cohen's d 0.2 = small effect, 0.5 = medium effect and 0.8 = large effect (Cohen, 1988). Figures 1 and 2 show the distribution of Hi S and H US scores.

This indicates a significant mean difference, with the magnitude of the difference being medium (Figures 1 and 2). Defining was evident in ten texts (71.4%) and translation in eight (57.1%) with a total of 98 examples and a range of 0 to 23 instances across all texts. There were 150 examples of translation and a range of 0 to 47 instances across the texts.

The purpose of the author was appropriately identified in 12 texts (85.7%). The same number of texts displayed evidence of summarizing and paraphrasing evident in 7 (50%). The results for the latter are described below.

**Summarizing and paraphrasing**

For the purposes of this study a summary was taken to mean a short description giving the main points or ideas about something - in this case, sections of a text. It is usually shorter that the text it is derived from.

A paraphrase communicates the same meaning as the original text, but with completely different wording. It may be longer than the text it is derived from. Quoting may be found in either.

**Summarizing**

Summaries were in general, well expressed. Figure 3 shows the main ideas of this paragraph have been identified, though the point of teacher control is omitted. Figure 4 shows here that the student identified and annotated the two salient points in this paragraph.

Figure 5 shows this summary captured the main information in the first section of the paragraph, but the reader seems to have misunderstood the author’s premise in the latter half. Figure 6 shows this student summarized a longer section of text, marking all of the significant points of information.

As earlier mentioned, all relevant points were identified and annotated.

**Paraphrasing**

As might be expected, paraphrasing varied more widely in quality, given the more complex and challenging nature of the process.

A range of types was observed in the annotation, from near copies to substantial revisions. These are displayed and further described below.
Project-Based Learning may be described from two different perspectives, both of which are derived from the teacher control of the classroom (Kraft, 2005). One perspective emphasizes the students performing a teacher-facilitated project, with the transformation from "teacher telling" to "students doing." The second perspective uses a teacher-guided project to involve the students in their own self-directed learning, while using a standard curriculum approach to lecture the students on course material content (What is PBL?, 2008). In both cases, the
Introduction

There is a general consensus among educators, business, and other interested parties that a significant gap exists between the knowledge and skills needed for success in life and the current state of education in primary and secondary education schools throughout the world (The Conference Board, et al, 2006). Educators and business (Trilling, 2008) have identified seven key skill sets as essential for success in the 21st century.

Figure 4: Summary from text 12.

Figure 5: Summary from text 3.

Figure 6: Summary from text 13.
Figures 7 and 8 shows an attempt to paraphrase. There are quotation marks around “tools of the trade” and reference is made to constructivist learning. However, the rest of this simply uses verbatim words from the text. As such, it is hard to see this as an effective paraphrase. It would be classified as a near copy according to Keck’s description (2006: 268).

This example in Figure 9 reads as an effective paraphrase of the text, with a high use of the student’s own words, quotation and high retention of the sense of the original. It would be classified as a substantial revision.

A clear attempt by the student to use their own words is seen in Figure 10. However, it may be that they misunderstood that it is the competitions which facilitate the understanding. It would be classified as a moderate to substantial revision.

Figure 11 shows that this paraphrase is a mixture of vocabulary from the text combined with the student’s own word choices. However, the attempt at paraphrase is evident. As expressed, it would be classified as a near copy. Again we see a mixture of vocabulary from the text and the student’s own words (Figure 12). However, the attempt to paraphrase is clear. This is a minimal revision.

**DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Highlighting and underlining elements of texts can simply be a mechanistic reader response and students often mark everything without discrimination (Kennet et al., 2015). It can then be difficult to recall why the action was taken and the significance of the highlighted text. I tried to encourage students to comment on these areas of text as to the significance of the marked information. The results show clear evidence of thinking processes at work from most students (as described in the results section) and a range of useful comments were made in the margins around highlighted and underlined text. For example, Text 3 has seven 21st century key skill sets underlined and the comment that “these are all skills that can be gained from project based learning”. The frequency and potential usefulness of the comments indicate a high level of understanding of the importance of not simply marking the text, but interacting with it in order to be able to apply the annotated information. The notion of ‘application’ of knowledge was a key theme in the teaching approach taken.

Overall, there was significantly more supported highlighting; 173 instances as opposed to 104. While this is highly positive, it is of concern that four texts (28.57%) had high levels of unsupported highlighting. While this issue was addressed in the teacher’s approach, for some reason it was not used by these students in this instance. Follow-up interviews could usefully focus on a dialogue as to why this was so and clearly more emphasis needs to be placed on it for future teaching. Students in these classes screen-project their work using the ClickShare wireless presentation software. It can be that during the feedback process, given the logistics involved, some student annotation behaviours get missed. There is a reflective issue here for me as the instructor to be more conscious of these areas when dialoging with the students about their text annotation. Pre-feedback focus areas could be explicitly stated to the students.

While frequency varied, most students annotated definitions. While one could expect that frequencies here might have been higher as the students are second language users, vocabulary development in context had been a major teaching and learning focus from the start of the semester and especially the type of vocabulary
“Doors to Diplomacy” sponsored by the US Department of State. The U.S. Department of State sponsors the “Doors to Diplomacy” educational challenge - to encourage middle school and high school students around the world to produce web projects that teach others about the importance of international affairs and diplomacy. Each student team member of the winning “Doors to Diplomacy” Award team receives a $2,000 scholarship, and the winning coaches’ schools each receive a $500 cash award. Additional prizes may be provided by sponsors (from the website at http://www.globalschoolnet.org/gsmdoors/index.cfm).

Figure 9: Text 5 paraphrase.

Learning for Life. What better preparation for the 21st century than to involve the student at the earliest age possible in what will become their life long work? Tom Peters (1997) considers project management to be the profession of the new millennium. The 7-Cs suite, the “tools of the trade” of project management, is best taught by involving the student learners on teams doing group projects; i.e., the learning approach of project learning.

Figure 8: paraphrase text 8.

technologies (Moylan, 2007). As noted previously, through international competitions, the PBL students have the opportunity to gain an understanding of other cultures and countries, which furthers global awareness and international cooperation (Andres, 2006; Trilling, 2008).

Figure 10: Text 10 paraphrase.
that might be found in formal texts. Further, one of the criteria in the rubric used for grading writing in the programme is vocabulary range, sophistication and appropriacy. There is thus an instrumental reason for students to work to develop their vocabulary. In reflective classroom discussion, most students felt that their vocabulary had developed significantly. Student writing provided supportive evidence for this perception. Further, a number of the students had been schooled in English-medium institutes and have a high level of contact with the language (family, friends, watching English language films and reading in English) outside the university. However, experience tells me that not all of the vocabulary in the text would have been known (‘constructivist’, ‘augment’ and ‘hallmark’ being possible examples) and that perhaps there should have been more evidence of definitions being required. Equally, this may not be the case.

However, a more focused teacher intervention and review of understanding of such lexical items might be valuable. Further, inclusion of discussion on the type and range of vocabulary learning strategies employed by students and some comparative analysis of these, would be also be useful (Hyso and Tabaku, 2011). Explicit teaching of such strategies should also be included.

Translation had been a focus of discussion in the class, especially since some of the students were researching the
role of L1 and L2 in reading. I had tried to encourage the students to see LI as a valuable ‘access’ tool for their second language development and in general, the position of ‘L2 only’ is in decline (Nazary, 2008) and anyway should be challenged (Hall and Cook, 2012: 272). While students were encouraged to translate if they felt it was useful, not all did. Use of an English-only dictionary was discussed as were electronic translators. The latter have given cause for concern, especially in that they “can prevent students guessing skills and contextualized thinking in vocabulary acquisition” (Zheng and Wang, 2016). Some of the students come from bilingual families and as earlier stated were schooled in English and speak it at home as well as socially. Their need to translate is therefore minimal. Others come from pre-tertiary Arab-medium schools and speak Arabic at home and with peers. L2 to L1 translation is therefore more likely. This may well explain the very mixed results in this area. In texts 2, 3, 5 and 12, it is also possible that translation was replacing defining. Follow-up discussion with the students would indicate if this perception is valid.

As stated, if electronic translators or on-line translation was being used, this could be problematic and hard copy dictionaries may be more useful, as amongst other things and they allow more extensive reading (Zheng and Wang, 2016: 145). Given that there is often little one –to-one-relationship between words in one language and those of another, use of programmes such as Google translate can also be problematic. For example, the translation of the verb ‘chocar’ from Spanish is given as ‘hit’ in English. However, context is everything and ‘chocar’ would never be used in the context of hitting a ball or a person. Students need to be carefully guided in whatever sources that they might be using for translation.

Identifying text and author purpose would generally be considered a higher order (critical) reading skill (Zin et al., 2014; Mclaughlin and DeVoogd, 2004). The fact that thirteen of the students were able to indicate and annotate text sections where this was expressed is reassuring. As the students are involved in primary research, knowing how to identify purpose in the text is a very significant skill, especially in terms of selecting relevant and appropriate sources for their research projects and particularly, the literature reviews therein.

Summarizing had a high level of frequency and, as can be seen from the examples, generally constitutes reasonable attempts. By this is meant that the summaries mostly identified the main informational load of the text sections they relate to. The summary shown in Figure 6 could clearly be used to provide a context and information for an argument or point the student may want to express in their writing on the role of the teacher in problem based learning.

Paraphrasing, as expected, varied in quality. This is perhaps understandable given that “literature in cognitive psychology shows that paraphrasing is cognitively demanding” (Krishmawan and Widiati, 2013: 136). Because of this “people have limited resources left to automatically engage in thoughtful, systematic processing to determine if they paraphrase properly”. Additionally, some of these examples seem to demonstrate the “fuzziness of the concept of [plagiarism] and how difficult it is to identify” (Currie, 1998; Kerk, 2006: 275). None of the paraphrases was an exact copy of the original and they can be seen as qualitatively varied attempts at paraphrasing. However, given the range of that quality, it may be that the skills involved in effective paraphrasing have not been internalized and understanding of the nature of a paraphrase is faulty. If this is the case, it then falls to the teacher to reflect on how these were taught and what teacher-student interactions took place. The teacher then has an opportunity to reflect on their own learning in this situation in terms of what appears to be working well and what might need to be changed (Ghaye, 2011). For example, modifications to my teaching approach such as including more on-task dialogue and feedback as students work with real-time paraphrasing could be implemented. Lack of clarity on plagiarism could lead to a useful dialogue between students and teacher on their understanding of the concept and some comparative study and student explanation of their paraphrases and the source text would enable a better perception on my behalf of what my learners see.

Conclusion

The research shows that overall, most student texts showed a developed sense of effective annotation as preparation for a formal academic writing task, as identified by significant evidence of the use of a range of critical annotation. I feel this indicates that the students effectively followed the approach used and showed a satisfying level (from my perspective) of understanding.

Particularly, gratifying is the frequency with which students made supporting comments to accompany under-listing and highlighting and the effectiveness of most of the summarizing and reasonable attempts at paraphrasing. This can be seen as evidence of critical ability at work.

It cannot be assumed that because students do not demonstrate a particular skill, they have not learnt it (for example, verbatim). More complex concepts such as argument and the paraphrasing thereof, provide a higher level of challenge to the student and may result in avoidance especially when students see the text as too complex (Shananan et al., 2016). This may be an issue in the poor quality of some of the paraphrases where students may simply produce ’superficially modified’ versions of the original text (Dominowski, 2014: 109).

However, it may equally be that some of the students were not confident of their ability to paraphrase. Further study in our context, could focus on the approaches students take to paraphrasing and their understanding of the concept. Frequently, it is explained as a way to avoid
plagiarism and as a ‘writing’ skill. However, effective paraphrasing involves a range of significant skills and understanding of source concepts, argument, author’s intention and other text features. It is therefore primarily a critical reading and thinking and text comprehension skill. It is also a complex skill (Yeo, 2007). As educators we need to be confident that we teach students to paraphrase with a full understanding of everything it involves. As stated, based on some of the evidence from this study, there is certainly a need to reflect on instructor’s understanding of how well some students have grasped the idea and what they may have understood from elements of the text they have attempted to paraphrase.

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