



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
Centre for Open Learning

English Language Education

# Academic Writing for Postgraduates Informatics Workshop



DUGALD STEWART

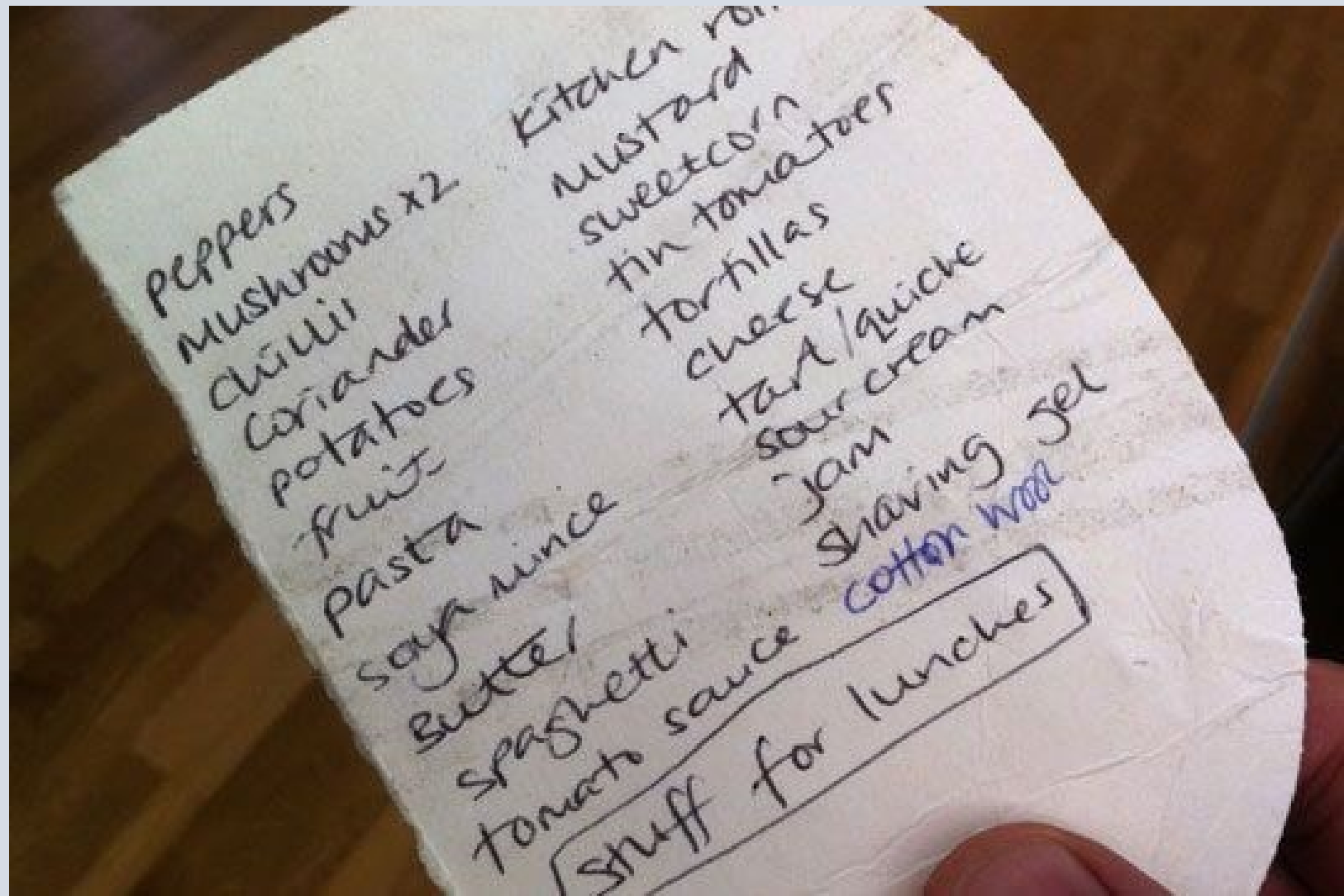
**Any questions:  
Pop them in the  
chat.**



## Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

Remember the sources are there to support YOUR argument.

Do not provide a shopping list!



## Exercise One: Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

*What's wrong with the following?*

Gabrenya, Latane & Wang (1981) and Albanese & Van Fleet (1985) note that as group sizes increase there is a tendency for the effort put in by the group to be less than the average effort put in by individuals engaged on the same task separately. Albanese & Van Fleet (1985) report on the 'free-rider problem', where the collective nature of the 'contract' obscures the fact of one member failing to honour their part of the contract. Gabrenya, Latane & Wang (1981, p180) discuss the phenomenon of 'social loafing' and typically define it as "one where everyone puts in a little less".

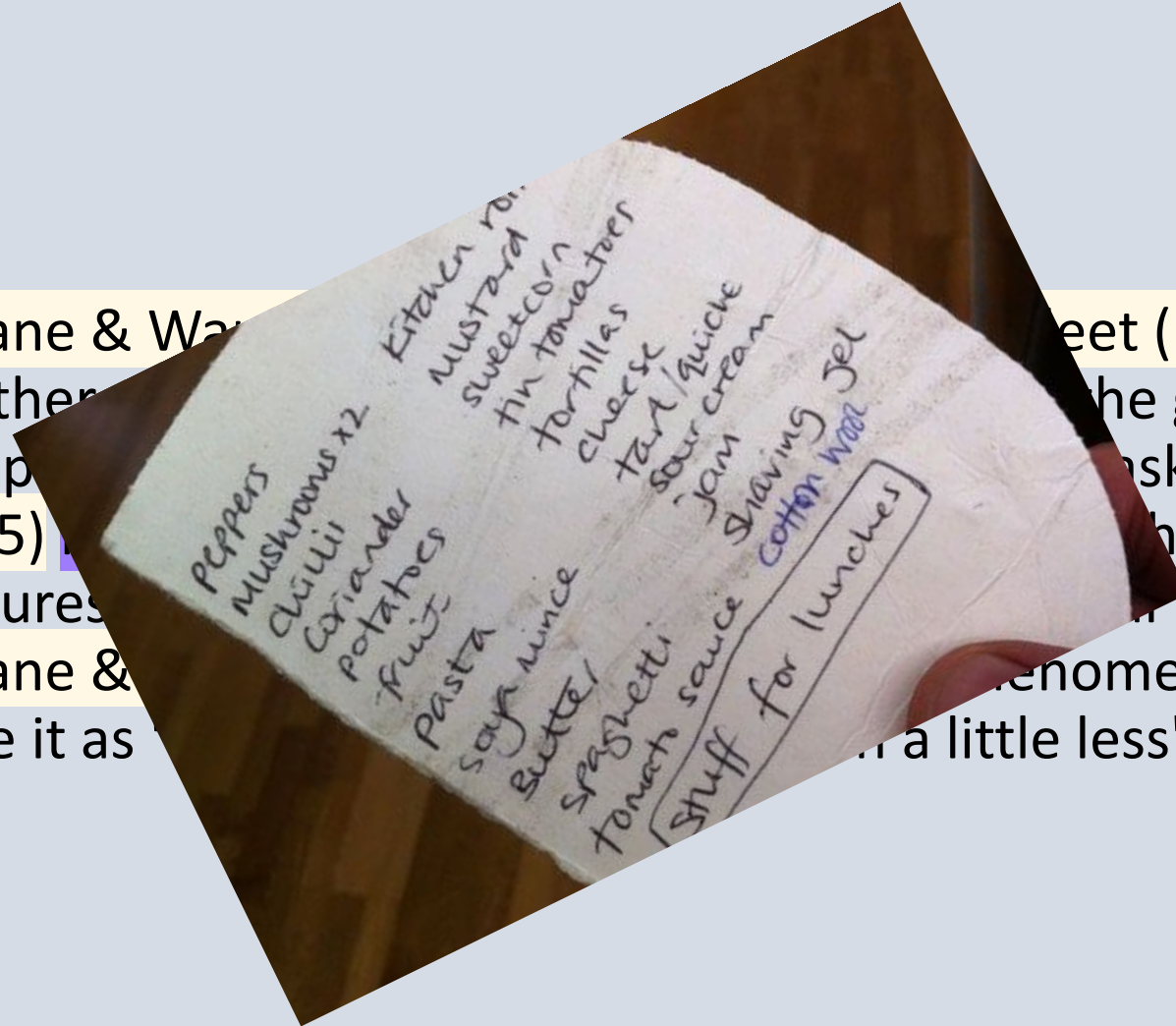
<https://unilearning.uow.edu.au/academic/4bi.html>

## Exercise One: Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

Gabrenya, Latane & Wang (1981) and Albanese & Van Fleet (1985) note that as group sizes increase there is a tendency for the effort put in by the group to be less than the average effort put in by individuals engaged on the same task separately. Albanese & Van Fleet (1985) report on the 'free-rider problem', where the collective nature of the 'contract' obscures the fact of one member failing to honour their part of the contract. Gabrenya, Latane & Wang (1981, p180) discuss the phenomenon of 'social loafing' and typically define it as "one where everyone puts in a little less".

## Exercise One: Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

Gabrenya, Latane & Wa  
sizes increase then  
average effort p  
Van Fleet (1985)  
'contract' obscures  
Gabrenya, Latane &  
typically define it as



Van Fleet (1985) note that as group  
the group to be less than the  
task separately. Albanese &  
the collective nature of the  
their part of the contract.  
phenomenon of 'social loafing' and  
a little less".

## Exercise One: Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

### *What's the difference here?*

One phenomenon that can impact greatly on the effectiveness of groups is that as group sizes increase there is a tendency for the effort put in by the group to be less than the average effort put in by individuals engaged on the same task separately (Gabrenya, Latane & Wang 1981; Albanese & Van Fleet 1985). The phenomenon has been described using various terms. Writers influenced by industrial economics describe it as the 'free-rider problem', where the collective nature of the 'contract' obscures the fact of one member failing to honour their part of the contract (Albanese & Van Fleet 1985, p230). Writers who are organisational psychologists tend to label the phenomenon as 'social loafing' and typically define it as "one where everyone puts in a little less" (Gabrenya, Latane & Wang 1981, p120). Whatever the terminology used to describe this phenomenon, it is one that is problematic for groups.

<https://unilearning.uow.edu.au/academic/4bi.html>

## Exercise One: Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

*Make your voice clear! Why are you using these sources?*

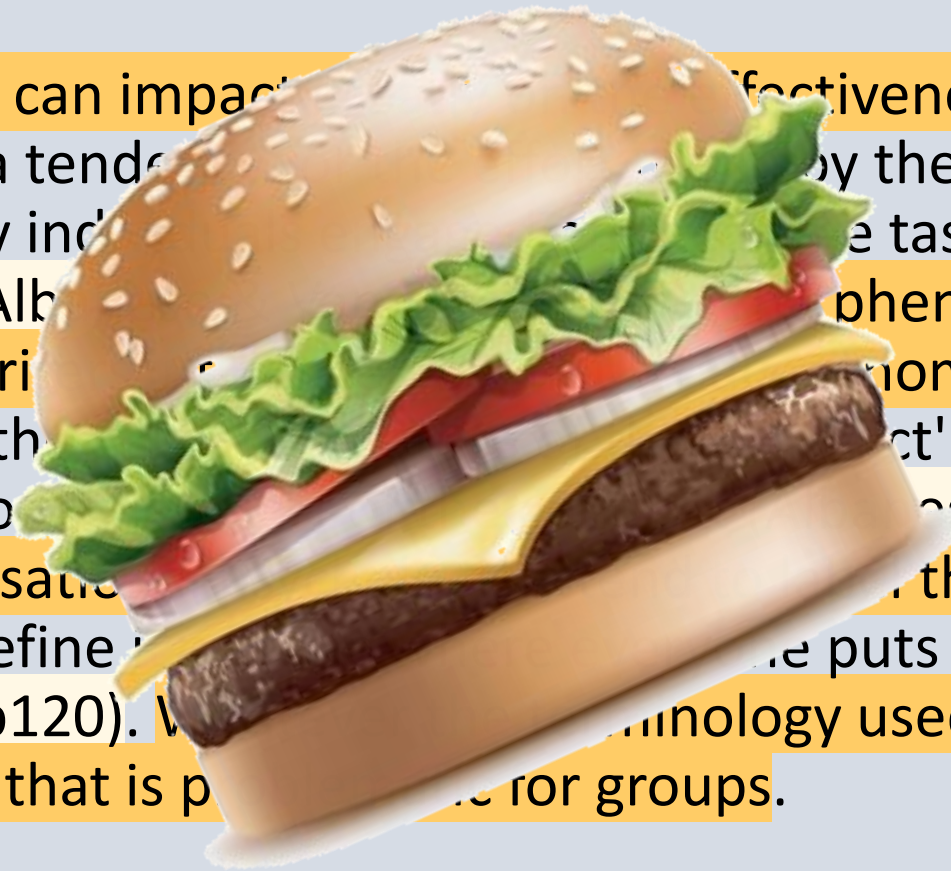
One phenomenon that can impact greatly on the effectiveness of groups is that as group sizes increase there is a tendency for the effort put in by the group to be less than the average effort put in by individuals engaged on the same task separately (Gabrenya, Latane & Wang 1981; Albanese & Van Fleet 1985). The phenomenon has been described using various terms. Writers influenced by industrial economics describe it as the 'free-rider problem', where the collective nature of the 'contract' obscures the fact of one member failing to honour their part of the contract (Albanese & Van Fleet 1985, p230). Writers who are organisational psychologists tend to label the phenomenon as 'social loafing' and typically define it as "one where everyone puts in a little less" (Gabrenya, Latane & Wang 1981, p120). Whatever the terminology used to describe this phenomenon, it is one that is problematic for groups.



## Exercise One: Synthesising or integrating sources into your text

*Make your voice clear! Why are you using these sources?*

One phenomenon that can impact the effectiveness of groups is that as group sizes increase there is a tendency for the total effort by the group to be less than the average effort put in by individuals if they were to complete the task separately (Gabrenya, Latane & Wang 1981; Albert & Wang 1981). This phenomenon has been described using various terms. Writers in psychology describe it as the 'free-rider problem', where the presence of a free rider obscures the fact of one member failing to honour their commitment (Albert & Van Fleet 1985, p230). Writers who are organisational psychologists describe the phenomenon as 'social loafing' and typically define it as 'the tendency for an individual to put in a little less' (Gabrenya, Latane & Wang 1981, p120). The terminology used to describe this phenomenon, it is one that is particularly relevant for groups.



## Exercise Two: Constructing a paragraph (1)

How has this paragraph been put together? Can you identify the links between the sentences?

Governments are schizophrenic about the Internet. Most are genuinely excited by its phenomenal growth and the opportunities it offers both to business and education. They also sense that any country attempting to hold it back risks looking foolish and technophobic. On the other hand, they find the Internet's libertarian culture and contempt for national borders subversive and frankly terrifying. Although much of the popular demand for Internet regulation comes from the ease with which it allows the distribution of pernicious content, a much more important debate about the future of the wired world is hotting up.

## Exercise Two: Constructing a paragraph (1)

Governments are schizophrenic about the Internet. Most are genuinely excited by its phenomenal growth and the opportunities it offers both to business and education. They also sense that any country attempting to hold it back risks looking foolish and technophobic. On the other hand, they find the Internet's libertarian culture and contempt for national borders subversive and frankly terrifying. Although much of the popular demand for Internet regulation comes from the ease with which it allows the distribution of pernicious content, a much more important debate about the future of the wired world is hotting up.

## Exercise Two: Constructing a paragraph (2)

How has this paragraph been put together? Can you identify the links between the sentences?

Every substance contains a certain amount of heat, even a relatively cold substance such as ice. The heat is the result of the continual motion of the substance's molecules which, by that motion, possess kinetic energy. Temperature is a measurement of the average kinetic energy of the molecules. The cooler a substance becomes the less its molecules move. Thus, it should be possible to continue cooling to the point at which molecular movement ceases completely. This point, "absolute zero", is of great interest to scientists but in practice is unattainable. At temperatures close to absolute zero some materials exhibit remarkable properties, such as superconductivity and superfluidity.

<http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/sequitur/intpriv.htm>

## Exercise Two: Constructing a paragraph (2)

Every substance contains a certain amount of heat, even a relatively cold substance such as ice. The heat is the result of the continual motion of the substance's molecules which, by that motion, possess kinetic energy. Temperature is a measurement of the average kinetic energy of the molecules. The cooler a substance becomes the less its molecules move. Thus, it should be possible to continue cooling to the point at which molecular movement ceases completely. This point, "absolute zero", is of great interest to scientists but in practice is unattainable. At temperatures close to absolute zero some materials exhibit remarkable properties, such as superconductivity and superfluidity.

### Exercise Three: Writing a paragraph

In the paragraph below, the first and last sentences are correct. Rewrite the middle sentences so as to put the *theme* at the beginning and the *rheme* at the end of the sentences.

Perhaps the most striking example of value rigidity is the old south Indian Monkey Trap, which depends on value rigidity for its effectiveness. A hollowed-out coconut chained to a stake makes the trap. A monkey can put its hand through a small hole in the coconut and grab some rice inside. The monkey can put its hand into the hole but cannot take its fist out with rice in it. The monkey's value rigidity traps it when it reaches in. The rice cannot be revalued. He cannot see that freedom without rice is more valuable than capture with it.

Slightly adapted from: Robert Pirsig (1974) *Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance*.  
<http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/parag/paragex9.htm>

### Exercise Three: Writing a paragraph

1. Perhaps the most striking example of **value rigidity** is **the old south Indian Monkey Trap**, which depends on value rigidity for its effectiveness.
2. **The trap** consists of **a hollowed-out coconut** chained to a stake.
3. **The coconut** has **some rice** inside which can be grabbed through **a small hole**.
4. **The hole** is big enough so that **the monkey's** hand can go in, but too small for **his** fist with **rice** in it to come out.
5. **The monkey** reaches in and is suddenly trapped - by nothing more than his own **value rigidity**.
6. **He** can't revalue **the rice**.
7. **He** cannot see that freedom without rice is more valuable than capture with it.

Slightly adapted from: Robert Pirsig (1974) *Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance*.  
<http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/parag/paragex9.htm>

**Any questions?**

