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TEACHING & LEARNING SUMMIT 2016

Carnegie Mellon University
Global Communication Center

The Paraphrasing Spectrum:
Interactive Videos to Teach Rhetorical Source Use

Problem

Current paraphrasing instruction is largely *arhetorical*: focused on rearranging wording to avoid plagiarism.

Students need to learn how to use sources to achieve a desired rhetorical effect.

Solution

We created a series of interactive videos to clarify the difference between *knowledge-telling* (repeating what one has read) versus *knowledge-transforming* (responding to/synthesizing what one has read).

Students use this framework to analyze a task's rhetorical purpose and their own rhetorical choices before paraphrasing. Students are also taught note-taking techniques for transforming what they have read.

Pilot evaluation

Learning outcomes of the videos were tested on First Year Writing students who took pre- and post-surveys for either video or traditional classroom instruction on paraphrasing.

Student understanding improved from pre- to post-video *(n=19)*

|	Pre-Video	Post-Video	Change
I take a lot of notes when I read source readings.	3.3	5.3	2.0
When I paraphrase source readings, I change words but keep the sentence structure the same.	3.1	1.9	*1.2
When I paraphrase source reading, I combine my own ideas with the reading's words.	4.0	4.8	0.8
I understand the differences among "summarizing" "responding" "taking a position" and "explaining"	4.7	5.4	0.7
I try to quote rather than paraphrase source readings as much as possible	3.4	2.9	*.5
I feel confident using my own words to paraphrase source readings	4.9	5.3	.4
When paraphrasing it is important to capture all of the details of the source reading	3.0	3.3	.3

1= "never" 6= "always"
*Lower scores better

Students were able to independently restate key messages of video

" *Responding to a text allows you to build off of what was said by making your own claim about the text itself instead of restating the original argument*

When using sources for support, don't just take their exact ideas, use your own and further explain your interpretation of their source to support your claim "

Learning gains from video instruction were comparable to – or higher than – traditional workshop

Traditional Instruction n=19
Video Instruction n=19
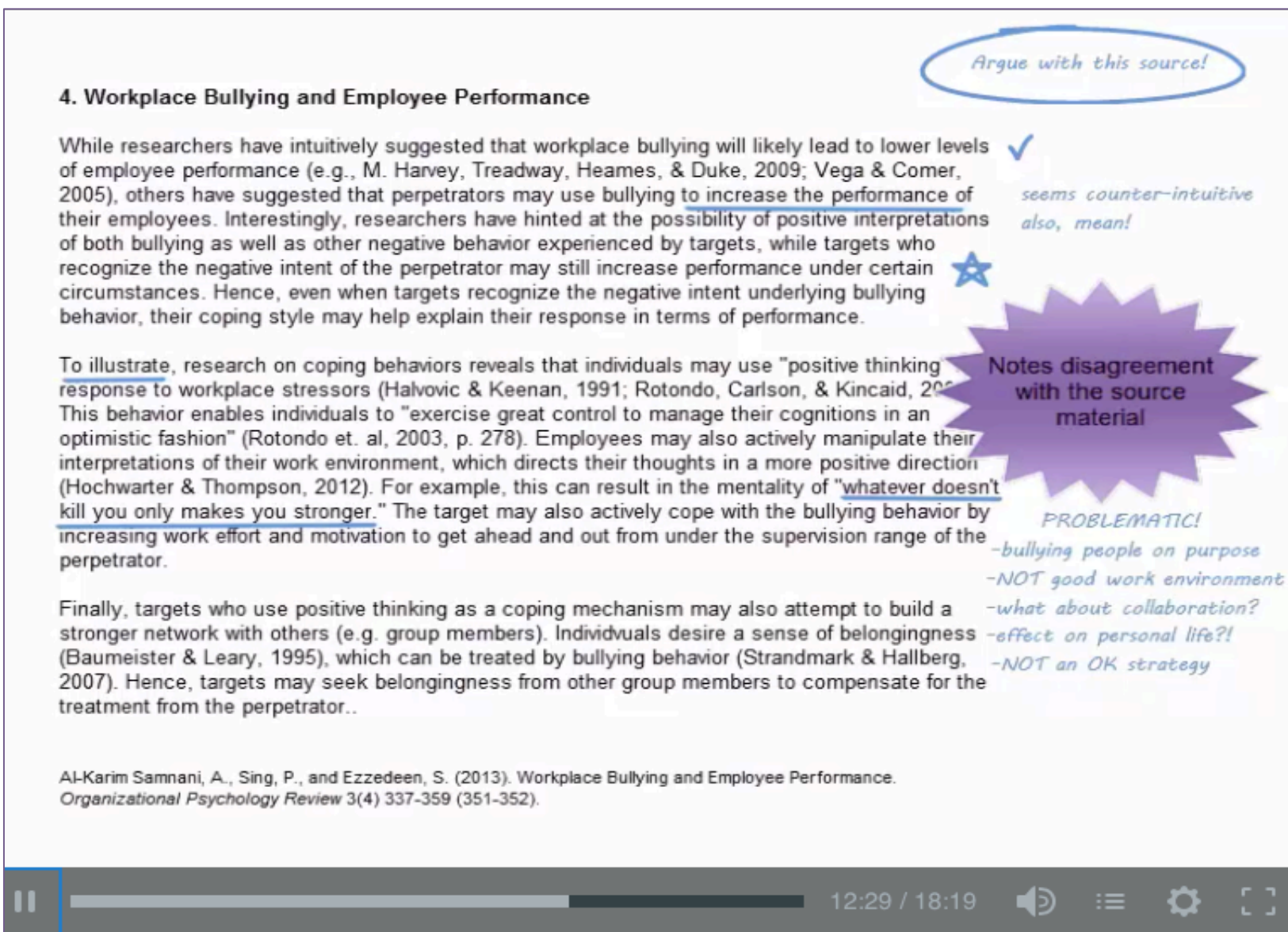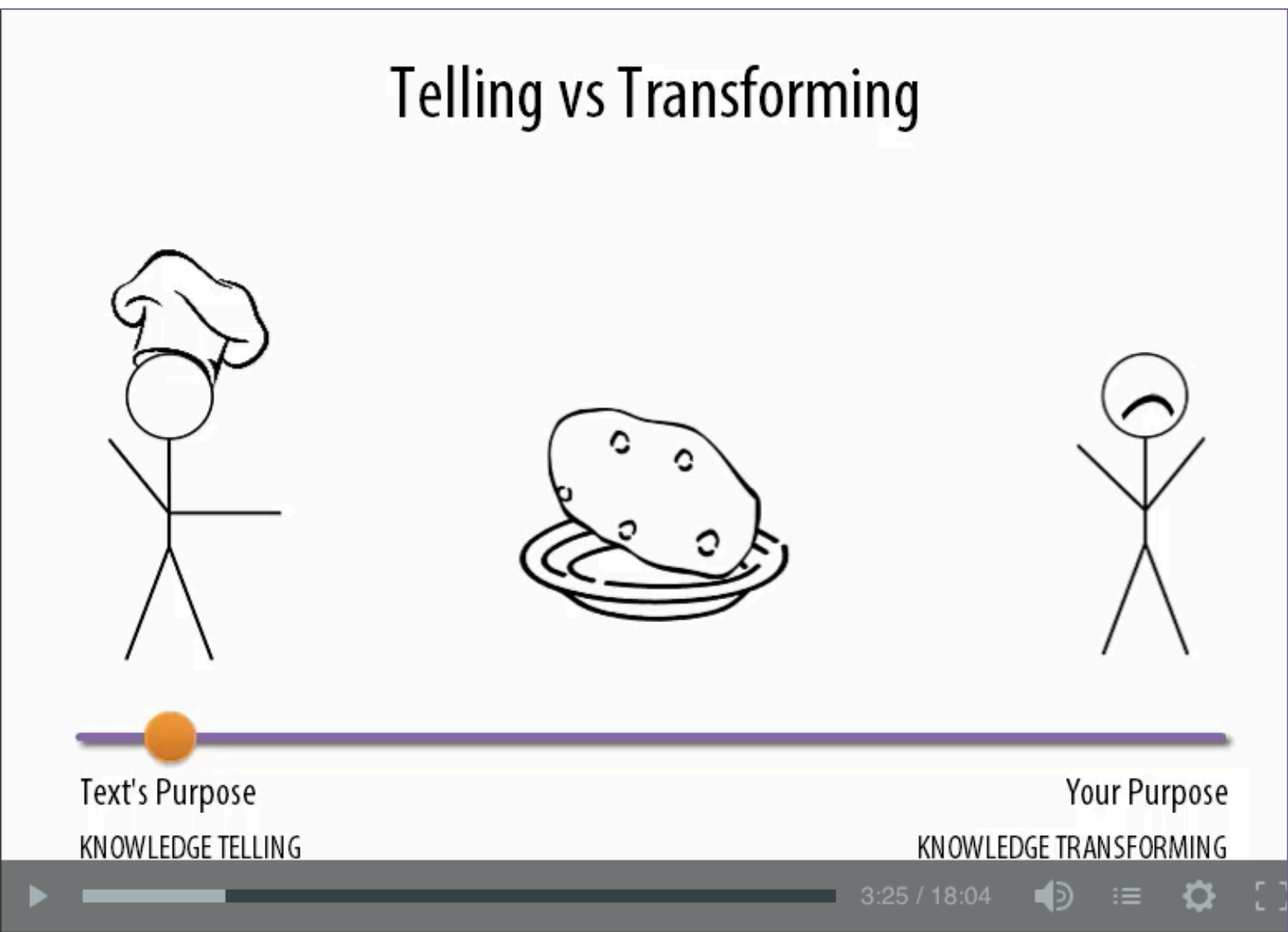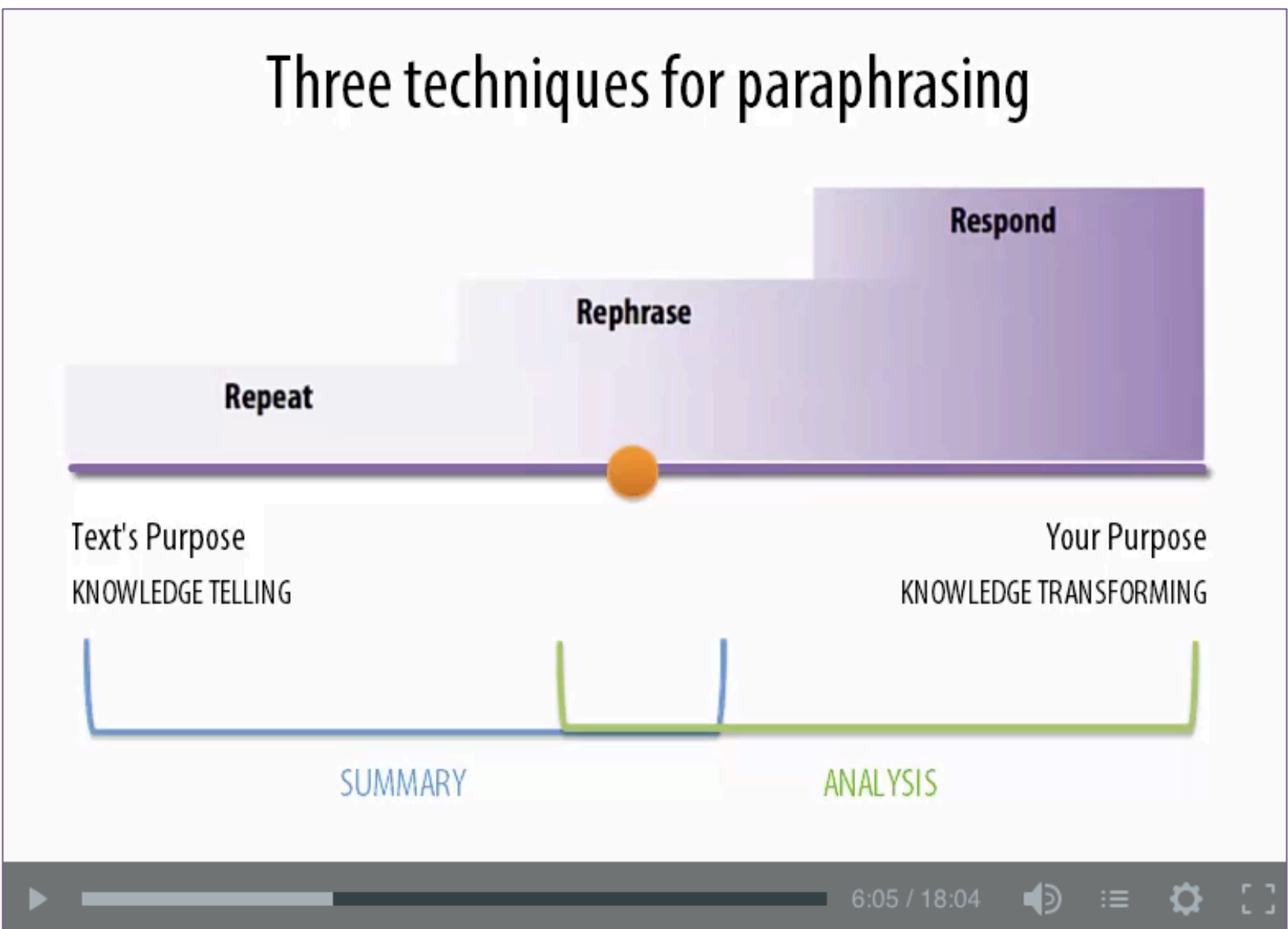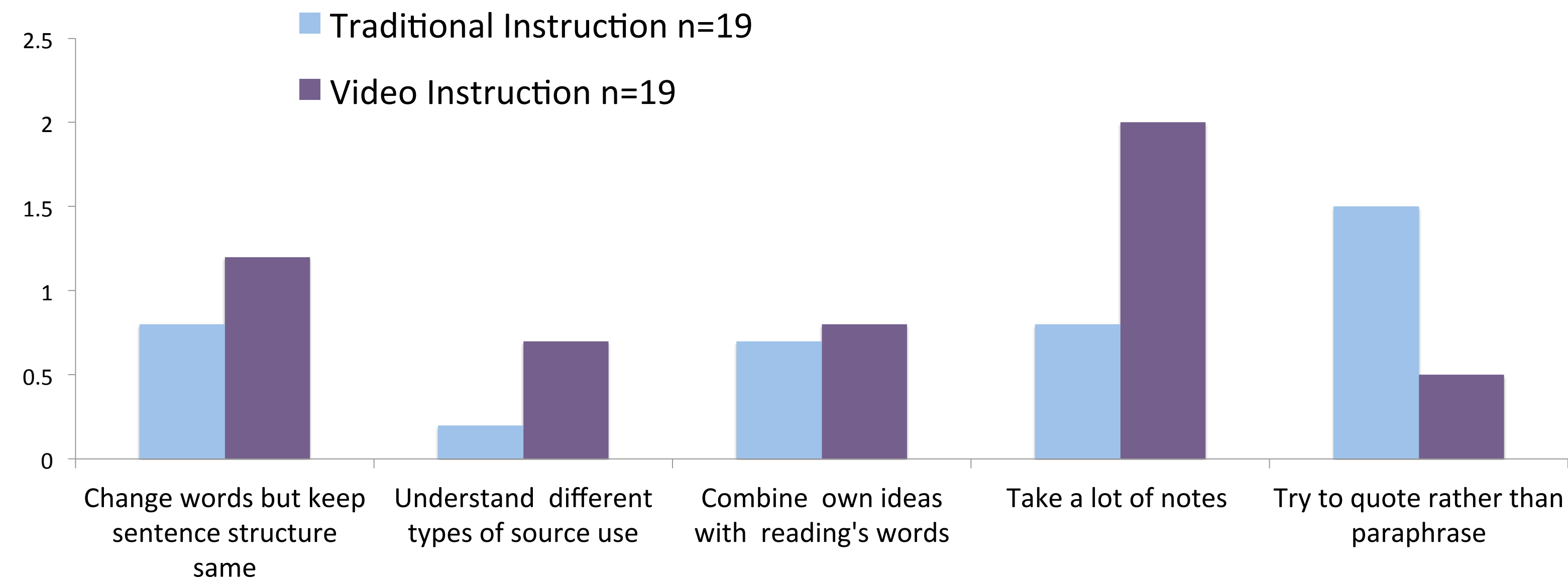
Paraphrasing is taught on a spectrum based on the writer's rhetorical purpose

The videos use accessible metaphors & interactive quizzes

The videos feature think aloud protocols from an expert writer