Paraphrasing Exercises

Decide whether the paraphrased passages are acceptable or unacceptable. If unacceptable, say WHY.

Original Source

A key factor in explaining the sad state of American education can be found in overbureaucratization, which is seen in the compulsion to consolidate our public schools into massive factories and to increase to mammoth size our universities even in underpopulated states. The problem with bureaucracies is that they have to work hard and long to keep from substituting self-serving survival and growth for their original primary objective. Few succeed. Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience. If there is a single stumbling block on the road to the future, it is the bureaucracy as we know it.


Paraphrase 1

American education is overly bureaucratic. This is manifest in the increasing size of educational institutions, even in small states. Bureaucracies are bad because they tend to work to promote their own survival and growth rather than that of the institution, as was their initial objective. Most bureaucracies fail because they have a conscience or a soul. I believe that bureaucracies are the biggest stumbling block on the road to the educational future.

Paraphrase 2

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. Bureaucracies have to work long and hard to keep from promoting their own survival rather than the educational goals that were their primary objective.

Paraphrase 3

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. This means that, as In Hall's (1977) opinion today’s educational institutions “have no soul, no memory, and no conscience”.

Paraphrase 4

Hall (1977) discusses the problems posed by the increasing bureaucratization of American educational institutions. Hall maintains that overbureaucratization is one of the key factors governing the state of education in America today. He points to the tendency of bureaucracies to promote their own growth and survival first and foremost, and observes that few overcome that tendency. He believes that this is responsible for the fact that many public schools bear a closer resemblance to factories than to educational institutions. In Hall's (1977)words, “Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience” (p. 219).
P1. Unacceptable. This paraphrase retains most of the original author's ideas, as well as his way of structuring and expressing them. The writer has not only made no effort to acknowledge the original author, she has used the expression “I believe…” in a way that suggests that the ideas in question are her own.

P2. Unacceptable. This paraphrase retains most of the original author's ideas and several key phrases, although it juggles their order around and rephrases them. The writer has not acknowledged the original author.

P3. Unacceptable. The writer does credit the original author, but she only credits him with one of the ideas/phrases she uses and she misrepresents what he says by omitting a key word from her quote.

P4. Acceptable. The writer has avoided using too many of Hall's key phrases and clearly attributes his ideas to him without distorting their meaning.