

Minimizing Plagiarism of Undergraduate Students' Thesis Proposal by Using Quillbot Paraphraser

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Abstract

This qualitative study investigates how undergraduate students use the QuillBot Paraphraser to minimize plagiarism in the process of writing their thesis proposals. Conducted in December 2024 at the English Education Department of STKIP YPUP Makassar, the research employed purposive sampling to select five students who were actively working on their proposals and had prior experience using QuillBot. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and supported by document analysis using Turnitin plagiarism reports. The findings revealed that students generally follow a structured paraphrasing process. Students reported significant improvements in sentence structure, vocabulary use, and a noticeable reduction in similarity percentages on Turnitin. The study concludes that QuillBot can effectively support the minimization of plagiarism and improvement of academic writing quality.

Keywords: Plagiarism, QuillBot, Paraphrasing.

1. Introduction

English has been required coursework in Indonesian elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and universities at least since the early 2000s. Given the crucial role that language plays in present-day lifestyle and culture, students need to be confident in their ability to express themselves clearly in both spoken and written English. The four most crucial language skills are reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Writing is frequently cited by students as one of the most difficult components of learning English. Academic writing is being taught from elementary school to high school in order to increase students' high-level analytical writing skills and eventually academic language proficiency. Academic writing, on the other hand, is mostly undertaken by students in higher institutions. Higher education students, particularly those at the graduate level, are more likely than undergraduate students to have academic writing tasks; they must manage more specialized and complicated academic writing projects.

Gaining competence in English writing is challenging, but it's necessary for efficient communication in a variety of contexts. It has been widely believed that the ability to write clearly is a necessary component of fluency in the English language. Nunan (2003) defines writing as the process of coming up with ideas, thinking through how to present them, and organizing them into coherent sentences and paragraphs. Students are permitted to seek suggestions when writing scholarly articles or personal essays in order to change the topic or use different language. A paraphrasing tool can help them if they have been muted for a while, but they can still accomplish a higher quality by doing it by hand. In addition, academic culture rejects citing sources of information and copy-paste ethics.

Due to easy access to information, finding references or resources for academic writing or assignments is not difficult. This leads many people to freely copy and paste from books, the Internet, or other sources. People who compose together a thesis, in particular, must avoid copying and pasting other people's work because Turnitin can detect it. Amsal et al. (2024) have reported that plagiarism is a common occurrence among academicians, including students. Numerous factors, such as indolence, a lack of time, busyness, or even the desire to find a quick fix without exerting much effort or thought, can lead to plagiarism.

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In academic writing, one of the most crucial abilities for writers to have is paraphrasing. This is so because research is frequently dependent on previously published articles, necessitating the integration of existing knowledge into your work. When you take ideas or content from another source and quickly paraphrase or summarize it in your own words, you are engaging in paraphrasing. This is highly helpful in ensuring that one's writing is lacking in plagiarism and copyright violations.

Online paraphrasing is one option for free or paid paraphrasing. There are numerous websites that offer free paraphrase services. However, only a few produces good results and are simple to interpret. Most other websites just paraphrase without attention regarding whether or not the paraphrase follows the sense of the originating sentence. Zhou and Bhat (2021) define paraphrases as texts that use various vocabulary or sentence patterns to communicate the same message. Paraphrase generation has long been a challenge in natural language learning. The field of paraphrase generation has seen a progressive transition in recent years from traditional methods to more sophisticated neural approaches due to the rapid development of different brain models. Besides that, Yang et al (2019) Paraphrases use distinct language expressions to communicate the same meaning as the source sentences or material. The goal of paraphrase creation is to automatically create paraphrases of a given sentence.

One paraphrasing tool that is available online in both free and paid versions is called QuillBot. QuillBot is a system that enables a lot of people to paraphrase extremely basic. According to Nurmayanti and Suryadi's (2023) study, "The Effectiveness of Using QuillBot in Improving Writing," using QuillBot to help students learn English is essential. Particularly for students who still have trouble with English, QuillBot makes it easy for them to write scientific articles. It is also easy to use and learn. Therefore, using QuillBot to enhance scientific writing in English requires a substantial time and effort commitment.

A lot of researchers also look into paraphrasing, whether it's done manually or online. For example, they might use a platform like NooJ to translate a sentence. Additionally, this study uses an online tool called QuillBot paraphraser to reduce plagiarism.

According to Kinga and Gupta in Miranda (2021), QuillBot.com provides a solution by helping teachers and students automatically paraphrase their work when they are unable to do so manually. This tool can be used in simple ways. Thus, the research question in this research is how do the students use QuillBot Paraphraser to minimize plagiarism of their thesis proposals?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the practice of representing someone else's work or ideas as one's own. Some experts have confirmed about plagiarism. As Khaled and Tamimi (2020) confirmed that Plagiarism Detection Systems serve an essential role in detecting instances of plagiarism, particularly in the field of education with scientific research and papers. Plagiarism occurs when content is copied without permission or citation from the original author. Plagiarism, according to Khalil and Er (2023), is defined as presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own without proper attribution. Plagiarism covers both text and image copying. The latter is concerned when an image or any part of an image is reproduced without attribution to the source.

There are several forms of plagiarism according to Sentleng and King (2012) namely:

- a. Rephrasing without referencing the original
- b. Simplifying the sentence without citing the reference
- c. Replicating text without citing the original
- d. Plagiarism without considering copyright
- e. Modification of the text
- f. Composing a piece of writing for another person
- g. Citing without including the source
- h. Misusing the source or reference
- i. Filed in a group work that was acknowledged as an individual task.

- j. Admitting to using an online copy of a piece of art.

2.2. QuillBot Paraphraser

QuillBot is an online tool that will enhance the clarity and professionalism of your written work by modifying words and sentences, recognizing and minimizing plagiarism, and summarizing lengthy paragraphs (Nurmayanti and Suryadi, 2023). Paraphrase is a linguistic term that refers to the ability to repeat a concept in a different language without changing its meaning (Usman 2015).

The most widely used feature of QuillBot is its paraphrase tool, which allows you to reword any text in a variety of ways. By selecting the best words, this technology seeks to enhance the writing quality of its users. People can use QuillBot for paraphrasing in seven different modes, comprising two free and seven premium options. To change a mode, click on the name of the mode you want to select. In this figure, the locations of the modes are circled in green.

3. Research Methods

This research used qualitative research method. Qualitative method according to Creswell (2012) qualitative research is a research method to explore and understand the meaning that some individuals or groups of people think come from social or human problems. This research was conducted in December 2024 at the English Education Department of STKIP YPUP Makassar. The researcher used purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method in which participants are chosen according to specific characteristics related to the objectives of the study. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2012), purposive sampling, also known as judgement sampling, is the process of selecting an existing sample that is believed to be representative of a specific population. Participants were selected from among five undergraduate students who were actively working on their thesis proposals and were acquainted with the QuillBot Paraphraser. After deciding to conduct qualitative research, the data gained from the interview questions and documentations. There were six questions for this interview. Interview was conducted to find out what steps participants have taken to minimize plagiarism by using QuillBot paraphraser. one type of instrument or technique for gathering qualitative research data is the interview, which involves a question-and-answer exchange between the researcher and research participants, either directly or indirectly (Haryoko et al, 2020). While, the document instrument used in this study was the results of students' Turnitin proposals after using QuillBot Paraphraser to minimize their plagiarism.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Result

This section presents the findings of the research. To find out how do the students use QuillBot Paraphraser to minimize plagiarism of their thesis proposal, there were six questions that the researcher has been asking to the students such as: 1) What are the steps of minimizing plagiarism of your thesis proposal by using QuillBot Paraphraser? 2) How is the result after doing paraphrasing by using QuillBot Paraphraser? 3) What is the positive and negative aspect of using QuillBot Paraphraser? 4) What challenges do students experience when minimizing plagiarism of their thesis proposals by using QuillBot paraphraser? 5) What features are available to improve proposal writing on QuillBot application? and 6) What aspects of writing are related to QuillBot performance?

The following are the results of the interview.

- a. The steps of minimizing plagiarism

Extract 1

“Jadi, langkah-langkah untuk meminimalkan plagiarisme yaitu upload teks proposal ke QuillBot, pilih parafrase mode misalnya standar, akademis atau kreatif tetapi saya paling sering menggunakan mode standar, kemudian periksa hasil parafrase.” (P1)

[“Steps to minimize plagiarism such as upload proposal text to QuillBot, select paraphrase mode for example standard, academic or creative but mostly I use the standard mode, then check paraphrasing result.”] (P1)

Extract 2

“For the English text, I just copy the text that I want to paraphrase, paste it in QuillBot, then I see the word that I want to use in my thesis.” (P2)

[“Untuk teks bahasa Inggris, saya hanya menyalin teks yang ingin saya parafrasekan, menempelkannya di QuillBot, lalu saya melihat kata yang ingin saya gunakan dalam tesis saya.”] (P2)

Extract 3

“Langkahnya, kita harus memahami isi dari materi yang akan kita paraphrase, menyalin materi tersebut ke dalam aplikasi QuillBot, memilih mode parafrase seperti standar, fluency, and creative, kemudian mereview atau menganalisis teks yang telah diparafrase sehingga maknanya tetap sama.” (P3)

[“The steps are that we have to understand the material or content that we will paraphrase, copy the material into the QuillBot application, choose the mode like standard, fluency, and creative, then review or analyze the text that has been paraphrased so that the meaning remains the same.”] (P3)

Extract 4

“To minimize plagiarism, the first is understand the original content, input text into QuillBot, select the providing mode, paraphrase and review, and modify the output” (P4)

“Untuk meminimalkan plagiarisme, hal pertama yang harus dilakukan adalah memahami konten asli, memasukkan teks ke QuillBot, memilih mode penyediaan, melakukan parafrase dan meninjau, lalu memodifikasi output” (P4)

Extract 5

“I copy the part of my thesis that I want to rewrite or paraphrase, paste into QuillBot, then I select the paraphrasing mode after QuillBot paraphrase it, I review the output to make sure the meaning is clear and accurate.” (P5)

[“Saya menyalin bagian tesis yang ingin saya tulis ulang atau parafrasekan, menempelkannya ke QuillBot, lalu saya memilih mode parafrase. Setelah QuillBot memparafrasekannya, saya meninjau hasilnya untuk memastikan maknanya jelas dan akurat.”] (P5)

b. The result after doing paraphrasing by using QuillBot Paraphraser

Extract 6

“Mengubah struktur kalimat teks saya, mengganti kata dengan sinonim, mempertahankan makna aslinya, dan mengurangi risiko plagiarisme.” (P1)

[“Change the sentence structure of my text, replace word with synonyms, retain the original meaning, and reduce the risk of plagiarism.”] (P1)

Extract 7

“Ouh, the result was good. It is like more human than other paraphraser tools like GPT.” (P2)

[“Wah, hasilnya bagus. Kayaknya lebih manusiawi dibanding alat parafrase lain kayak GPT.”] (P2)

Extract 8

“Hasilnya akurat, jelas, asli serta, terkadang kehilangan konteks. Akuratnya tergantung tapi terkadang sekitar 80% karena terkadang ada yang tidak sesuai jadi kita harus perbaiki lagi.” (P3)

[“The results are accurate, clear, original and, at times, devoid of context. The accuracy depends but sometimes it's around 80% because sometimes something doesn't match so we have to fix it again.”] (P3)

Extract 9

“Effective for paraphrasing the text while maintaining the original meaning.” (P4)

[“Efektif untuk memparafrasekan teks sambil mempertahankan makna aslinya.”] (P4)

Extract 10

“The results are pretty good, because QuillBot changes the sentence structure and uses different words while keeping the same meaning. But sometimes I have to edit it a little to make it more natural or fit my academic style.” (P5)

[“Hasilnya cukup bagus, karena QuillBot mengubah struktur kalimat dan menggunakan kata-kata yang berbeda sambil tetap mempertahankan makna yang sama. Namun terkadang saya harus mengeditnya sedikit agar lebih alami atau sesuai dengan gaya akademis saya.”] (P5).

c. The positive and negative aspect of using QuillBot Paraphraser

Extract 11

“The positive aspects make the paraphrasing process easier, saving time, and helps reduce plagiarism.” The negative aspects of using QuillBot Paraphraser are potential change in meaning and the quality of paraphrasing is not always perfect.” (P1)

[“Aspek positifnya adalah membuat proses parafrase menjadi lebih mudah, menghemat waktu, dan membantu mengurangi plagiarisme.” Aspek negatif dari penggunaan QuillBot Paraphraser adalah potensi perubahan makna dan kualitas parafrase yang tidak selalu sempurna.”] (P1)

Extract 12

“The positive, I can use it and improve my vocabulary, I can choose words that suit my writing skills. But for the negative, the student or I will be less creative because kalimatnya langsung muncul didepan layer tanpa berfikir lagi.” (P2)

[“The positive, I can use it and improve my vocabulary, I can choose words that suit my writing skills. But for the negative, the student or I will be less creative because of the words or sentences directly appear without thinking anymore.”] (P2)

Extract 13

“Menurut pendapat saya, aspek positif menggunakan parafraser QuillBot adalah menghemat waktu, meningkatkan kejelasan tata bahasa dan bahasa, serta meningkatkan kosakata. Negatifnya membuat saya malas berpikir dan malas berkata-kata sendiri karena dengan menggunakan QuillBot bisa cepat.” (P3)

[“In my opinion, the positive aspects of using QuillBot paraphraser are that it saves time, improves clarity of grammar and language, and improves vocabulary. "The negative thing is that it makes me lazy to think and lazy to say my own words because using QuillBot can be fast.”] (P3)

Extract 14

“Untuk aspek positifnya meningkatkan kualitas penulisan, fleksibilitas berbagai model, menghemat waktu, dan sebagai alat pembelajaran. untuk aspek negatifnya yaitu kurang pengetahuan dan terbatas kreativitas.” (P4)

[“For the positive aspects that is improve writing quality, multiple model flexibility, time-saving, and learning tools. For the negative aspect that is less of knowledge and limited creativity.”] (P4)

Extract 15

“The positive are saving time, reduced plagiarism, and improved grammar and vocabulary. Then, for the negative aspect is the context isn't always perfect so we need to carefully review and edit the text.” (P5)

[“Hal positifnya adalah menghemat waktu, mengurangi plagiarisme, dan meningkatkan tata bahasa dan kosakata. Sementara itu, aspek negatifnya adalah konteksnya tidak selalu sempurna sehingga kita perlu meninjau dan mengedit teks dengan saksama.”] (P5)

d. The Challenges do students experience when minimizing plagiarism of their thesis proposal by using QuillBot paraphraser

Extract 16

“Tantangannya adalah mempertahankan keaslian makna, dan menghindari struktur kalimat yang tidak sesuai.” (P1)

[“The challenge is maintaining the authenticity of meaning, and avoid awkward sentence structure.”] (P1)

Extract 17

“The challenge is that some of the words like I'm not used to it, kayak belum terbiasa dengan kata-kata itu jadi susah untuk mencarinya lagi.” (P2)

["The challenge is that some of the words like I'm not used to it, like I'm not used to those words so it's hard to look for them again."] (P2)

Extract 18

"I think nothing, karena lebih memudahkan. Tapi butuh internet karena it's more difficult." (P3)

["I think nothing, because it makes things easier. But need internet because it's more difficult without the internet."] (P3)

Extract 19

"Menurut saya tantangannya bukan sekedar makna asli, bergantung pada teknologi, dan polanya yang berulang." (P4)

["I think the challenge is not just the original meaning, relying on technology, and the pattern being repeated."] (P4)

Extract 20

"Tantangan terbesar adalah memahami hasil parafrase. Terkadang maknanya tidak jelas atau terlalu rumit. Selain itu, versi gratis memiliki fitur yang terbatas dibandingkan dengan versi premium, yang dapat membuat frustrasi." (P5)

["The biggest challenges are understanding the paraphrased output. sometimes the meaning is unclear or too complex. Also, the free version has limited features compared to the premium one, which can be frustrating."] (P5)

e. The features are available to improve proposal writing on QuillBot application

Extract 21

"The features are different paraphrasing modes, grammar checking, and translation, but for me, the best one is the paraphraser." (P1)

["Fitur-fiturnya adalah mode parafrase yang berbeda, pemeriksaan tata bahasa, dan penerjemahan, tetapi bagi saya, yang terbaik adalah parafrase."] (P1)

Extract 22

"There is a grammar checker and paraphraser; that's all I know. I use both of them." (P2)

["Ada pemeriksa tata bahasa dan parafrase; hanya itu yang saya tahu. Saya menggunakan keduanya."] (P2)

Extract 23

"Paraphrase and grammar checker." (P3)

Extract 24

"Grammar checker and Paraphrase." (P4)

Extract 25

"Ada beberapa fitur seperti pemeriksaan tata bahasa, penggeser sinonim untuk menyesuaikan variasi kata, pemeriksa plagiarisme, dan bahkan alat penulisan bersama. Fitur-fitur ini memudahkan saya dalam menulis dan menyempurnakan proposal saya." (P5)

["There are several like grammar checking, a synonym slider to adjust word variety, a plagiarism checker and even a co-writing tool. these features make it easier to write and refine my proposal."] (P5)

f. The aspects of writing are related to QuillBot performance

Extract 26

"Aspek-aspeknya adalah keakuratan makna, struktur kalimat, kohesi dan koheren, terminologi akademik, dan gaya penulisan." (P1)

["The related aspects of writing are accuracy of meaning, sentence structure, cohesion and coherence, academic terminology, and writing style."] (P1)

Extract 27

“If I use QuillBot, it's like improving my creativity to write until it fits with my writing style.” (P2)

[“Jika saya menggunakan QuillBot, itu seperti meningkatkan kreativitas saya dalam menulis hingga sesuai dengan gaya menulis saya.”](P2)

Extract 28

“Clarify and coherence, vocabulary use, content relevance, plagiarism reduction, and customization.” (P3)

[“Klarifikasi dan koherensi, penggunaan kosakata, relevansi konten, pengurangan plagiarisme, dan penyesuaian.”](P3)

Extract 29

“The aspects like paraphrasing, style checking, clarity and consistency and text summarizing.” (P4)

[“Aspek-aspek seperti parafrase, pengecekan gaya, kejelasan dan konsistensi, serta peringkasan teks.”](P4)

Extract 30

“Sangat bagus untuk meningkatkan tata bahasa, struktur kalimat, pilihan kata, dan kejelasan. Ini juga memastikan tulisan saya lebih orisinal yang penting untuk pekerjaan akademis.” (P5)

[“It's great for improving grammar, sentence's structure, word choice and clarity. It also ensures my writing is more original which is important for academic work.”](P5)

While the results of the document as stated below.

Table 1. The Result of QuillBot Paraphraser

No.	Students	The Result of QuillBot Paraphraser			
		Before Paraphrasing		After Paraphrasing	
1	RPG				
2	HA				
3	FM				
4	N				

No.	Students	The Result of QuillBot Paraphraser			
		Before Paraphrasing		After Paraphrasing	
5	GNJ				

4.2. Discussions

This part presents the discussion of research findings. The aim of this research was to find out how do the students use QuillBot Paraphraser to minimize plagiarism of their thesis proposal. Related to research findings, the results show that QuillBot Paraphraser is a useful tool for reducing plagiarism in thesis proposals written by students, especially when used with a thorough awareness of its features and limitations. The majority of students adhere to a methodical procedure: they first understand the source content, then utilise QuillBot's standard, fluent, and creative paraphrasing modes before manually editing and improving the final product. There are a few simple processes involved in using QuillBot to minimise plagiarism. Fitria (2021) found that QuillBot paraphrase in four different ways: 1) by using synonyms; 2) by altering word forms; 3) by switching the sentence structure from active to passive and vice versa; and 4) by altering the sentence's word order. This process makes the paraphrased text easier to read while preserving its original meaning. Improved sentence structure, better word choice through synonyms, increased clarity, and a lower chance of inadvertent plagiarism were among the benefits that students reported. Important tools like the plagiarism detector, synonym slider, and grammar checker were particularly helpful in fostering the growth of academic writing. Students were able to produce more unique and cohesive work thanks to these resources. Dewi et al. (2024), this study found that QuillBot's ability to help with paraphrasing writing tasks was viewed very positively. Despite the advantages, students were also aware of certain disadvantages. These include coming across clumsy wording, strange vocabulary, and sporadic grammatical or contextual mistakes that call for additional manual editing. Challenges also included the requirement for a steady internet connection and the possibility of becoming overly dependent on the tool, which could stifle individual creativity. All things considered, QuillBot Paraphraser is a great tool for encouraging academic writing and lowering plagiarism, but its usefulness greatly depends on students' capacity to assess and revise the paraphrased material. Moreover, many researchers, including Chui (2022), Huang (2022), and Junaidi et al. (2022), believed QuillBot can help students with auto-correcting writing, paraphrasing, and avoiding plagiarism. QuillBot not only supports academic integrity but also raises the standard of students' thesis proposals when used appropriately, in conjunction with sound writing techniques and knowledge of academic standards.

5. Conclusion

QuillBot Paraphraser is a beneficial and valuable tool for students who want to minimize the amount of plagiarism in their thesis proposals. When utilized with a thorough awareness of its benefits and drawbacks, it improves a number of academic writing elements. This can also be seen from the students' Turnitin results before and after paraphrasing using the QuillBot paraphraser.

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