

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING QUILLBOT TO IMPROVE STUDENTS WRITING SKILLS

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Abstract: This study aims to explore students' perceptions regarding the use of Quillbot, an AI-powered paraphrasing tool, in improving their writing skills. This qualitative research involved 31 final semester students at the North Sumatra State Islamic University, using a questionnaire and 4 students were selected to answer interview questions to collect data. These findings indicate that students consider Quillbot to be an effective tool for improving their writing skills, particularly in the areas of grammar, vocabulary, and overall writing quality. In other words, students view the Quillbot application as a digital tool for writing well. Based on research, all participants thought that the Quillbot application could facilitate writing in English. 100% of participants believed that the Quillbot app helped them write more and make fewer mistakes while writing, while up to 90% of participants thought the app could help them write better. Overall, students responded positively to using Quillbot to help improve their writing skills. These insights can help educators integrate AI tools like Quillbot into their teaching practices to support students' writing development.

Keywords: *Quillbot; online application; students' perceptions; writing skills*

INTRODUCTION

In the process of learning English as a foreign language, writing is an important skill. To communicate effectively, students must master these skills. Can be used to speak and express thoughts (Eliwanti & Purwanti, 2021). According to Yamin (2019), although important, writing is often considered difficult and requires strong language and cognitive skills. Writing shows communication skills in addition to speaking. Rather than demonstrating spelling, punctuation, and grammar skills, writing is a way to convey ideas.

To achieve a university degree, One of the most difficult skills that students must acquire is writing. Various writing skills include analyzing, synthesizing, concluding, creating clear and well-structured ideas and paragraphs, creating content that makes sense, and perfecting sentence construction formation, lexical knowledge, and grammatical skills. Furthermore, writing necessitates language proficiency and the synchronization of multiple advanced metacognitive abilities to generate the data and

specifics required to develop novel concepts. In order to produce an organized research paper, students must read, summarize, and paraphrase ideas in addition to searching for pertinent and trustworthy sources. Therefore, it's important to describe, summarize, and paraphrase written works while paying close attention to style and accuracy. In addition, students must cite references correctly (Rahmayani, 2018; Tran & Nguyen, 2022).

Students must write initial research to perform well in classes like research techniques or capstone projects. Research writing often uses paraphrasing, which is considered one of the more advanced academic writing skills (McInnis, 2009). Proper paraphrasing of academic writing indicates a student's level of mastery of certain research skills, such as their understanding of what they read and their ability to rewrite text in their own words. Students who fail to do so may have difficulty writing papers or research projects. Plagiarism and poor writing results are usually caused by poor paraphrasing (Ramadhani, 2019).

Thanks to developments in AI, students can

now use automatic paraphrasing tools (APTs) to assist with academic writing. These tools are programs or web apps that alter the original text's structure while maintaining its meaning through the use of algorithms. While using APT can help students save time and effort, relying too much on it can lead to subpar writing and failure to meet learning objectives in some writing courses. It's critical that students comprehend the subtle distinctions between paraphrasing and plagiarizing when using these tools (Rogerson & McCarthy, 2017).

Rao (2019) underlined the significance of technology for the improvement of English writing abilities. According to Katemba's research (2022), English teachers are increasingly utilizing computer technology to grab students' interest and ignite their passion for learning the language. Thanks to technological advancements, people now have access to information and tools that can greatly improve their writing abilities, which will increase their communication proficiency in English. These developments in technology have brought to light the significance of honing writing abilities to stay up to date with the constantly changing landscape of communications. E-learning platforms and online writing tools have revolutionized the development and acquisition of writing skills by providing fresh, creative approaches to skill enhancement. Writing communities where students can exchange work and get feedback are made possible by technology, and this improves learning (Manullang, H.E. & Katemba, 2023; Katemba, Tobing, & Talitha, 2022).

Writing well is a crucial academic skill, and teaching and learning to write in a foreign language has long been regarded as difficult. Proficiency in writing is the cornerstone of academic success, and it is regarded as a fundamental skill in language instruction and curriculum development.

Given the importance of language in modern society, students must be confident in their ability to communicate fluently in English both orally and in writing. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four main linguistic skills. One of the most challenging components of learning a new language is usually considered by students to be writing, which requires special abilities to convey thoughts and feelings through words (Meiningsih, 2021).

For those who wish to become fluent in English, the ability to communicate in writing has long been considered essential. This is because

teachers painstakingly teach vocabulary and grammar to their students. According to Ismail (2007), more time should be spent writing in ELL classrooms because this is where students need the most help. This is because this is where students need the most help to gain the ability to communicate effectively both in school and outside of school. Their learning about the process of writing in a variety of settings is the best way to achieve this (Cole & Feng, 2015).

The OJS page provides advice on writing scientific articles and preparing articles for publication in national journals, as well as detailed instructions on how to publish research online. Systematically and thoroughly, the delivery helps participants learn from the material presented (Rohman et al., 2022).

Incorporating technology into everyday learning to enhance 21st century education. Incorporating technology into the classroom may have advantages that cannot be obtained with more conventional teaching methods, according to Kalyuga and Liu (2015). As a result, contemporary language teaching utilizes technology that has been developed and adapted to be applied in various fields of science (Asih, 2022). Better knowledge helps students solve problems quickly.

Writing has been supplanted by copying and altering other people's work due to today's rapid technological advancements. Instead of using their own words to articulate their opinions, students frequently just copy and paste statements from other sources. Instructors need to support and encourage their pupils in writing original scientific articles. Teachers are crucial in motivating students to write by teaching them scientific writing techniques (Oktaria et al., 2022).

The world of education has witnessed rapid technological progress in recent times. The unavoidable use of technology in the classroom is unavoidable. In addition, these technological advances provide great benefits for English language teaching and learning. In the midst of a global epidemic, incorporating technology into the classroom is impossible. Students can benefit from this technology in several ways, including by better writing scientifically in English and utilizing its application techniques (Simanjuntak et al., 2022).

The issue of inadequate paraphrasing abilities in academic writing can be solved by utilizing modern technology. The advancement of technology has made it possible to use it to solve problems with academic writing. Students are

always looking for and using technology in this digital age to assist them with their academic writing problems, especially when it comes to paraphrasing. Because of their natural proficiency with technology, students are often referred to as "digital natives" (Zulfa et al., 2023). According to a prior study by Hajimaghsoodi & Maftoon (2020), students' writing achievement and skills increased when they used technology while writing. Because of this, students who are referred to as "digital natives" use AI in their academic English writing to demonstrate their interest in technology. Additionally, there have been several recent attempts to assist students in writing scientific papers using AI-based technology (Schmohl et al., 2020). One example of the benefits of using AI in the academic field is the use of online paraphrasing tools created by AI-based technology to help students paraphrase. Additionally, by using online paraphrasing tools, students can improve their paraphrasing abilities (Syahnaz & Fithriani, 2023).

Students now frequently use Quillbot, an online tool for paraphrasing, to create original academic writing. According to earlier research by Kurniati & Fithriani (2022), graduate students most frequently use Quillbot as a digital tool to assist them with their academic assignments. Mendeley, Turnitin, and Grammarly are a few more digital tools that are used. Furthermore, according to Fitria (2021), Quillbot is an online tool that aids writers in streamlining their work, avoiding plagiarism, condensing lengthy sentences, and improving grammar to make it read more smoothly and clearly. Students can enhance their paraphrasing skills by using Quillbot, an online tool that is simple to use and offers both free and paid versions (Fitria, 2021; Syahnaz & Fithriani, 2023). According to earlier research by Kurniati & Fithriani (2022), the majority of students view Quillbot as a digital tool that assists them with academic writing.

However, even though many studies show that students benefit greatly from the use of AI, such as Quillbot as an online paraphrasing tool, the public remains opposed to it due to the possibility that AI will replace humans. The main reason, according to logistic regression analysis, is a lack of knowledge about AI technology which is related to the fear of being watched. More specifically, not much research has investigated students' direct experiences with using Quillbot for English academic writing. As a result, no research has studied how the use of Quillbot might impact students' writing processes at the

undergraduate level. In order to close an empirical gap, this study uses Quillbot to investigate undergraduate students' experiences and the steps they take to enhance the caliber of their academic writing in English. The purpose of this study's findings is to learn more about how students use Quillbot and how that affects their writing process. Furthermore, the objective is to raise awareness among educators, instructors, educators, and the general public regarding artificial intelligence (AI), which is frequently viewed as irrational and harmful to students. Quillbot is an online paraphrasing tool that can assist students in writing if they are taught about the limitations of using AI in this process.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method approach which is used because the problem being studied is very complex and the researcher intends to understand the situation more deeply and wants to further analyze students' perceptions of the use of the Quillbot application in improving writing skills which cannot be known using quantitative methods. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) It is also stated that qualitative is a type of research that produces discoveries that cannot be achieved or obtained using statistical procedures or other quantification methods. Then, in line with (Fadli, 2021), qualitative research is an investigation into the caliber of interactions, events, circumstances, or different resources. This means that rather than comparing the effects of various treatments or attempting to explain people's attitudes or behavior, qualitative research lays more emphasis on holistic descriptions that can explain in detail what activities or situations are taking place.

This research focuses on students at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra. A total of 31 participants were selected based on their familiarity with using Quillbot for academic writing. The reason for selecting 31 students was to find out their perceptions. In this case, the criteria for selected participants that need to be met is their familiarity with using the Quillbot application in learning to write. The data source for this research consists of the human element as the key instrument, namely researchers who are involved in observing and interviewing participants as informants. (LJ Moleong, 2022). The perceptions of 4 students were taken as samples in this research, in order to determine the role of the Quillbot application in improving writing skills. Students are also expected to demonstrate communicative competence through

their understanding of writing and other types of writing.

This research uses a descriptive qualitative case study approach using questionnaires and interviews. This method is a type of research procedure, producing narrative descriptive data, or words originating from holistic observations of the research object (Williams & Moser, 2019). The questionnaire was conducted using a Likert scale and interviews were analyzed qualitatively.

In-depth interviews and questionnaires serve as the two main non-test data sources for this study's non-test data collection method. The purpose of selecting instruments is to ensure the validity of the data. According to (Simamora, 2022) A person's or a group's attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions regarding social phenomena can be gauged using the Likert scale. The variables you wish to measure are defined as indicators when using a Likert scale. A Google Forms-created, four-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) closed-question questionnaire was given to participants in order to gather data. One benefit of utilizing a

Likert scale with four scales in a questionnaire instrument is that it can accept responses from respondents indicating whether they agree or disagree. Hertanto (2017). The sum of the respondent's response scores is the total score, which is then used to determine the respondent's place on the Likert scale. (Fadjarajani dkk., 2020). Based on the answers to the questionnaire, in-depth interviews were done. The aim of the in-depth interview is to investigate the respondent's questionnaire responses in more detail. Questionnaires were used to collect data regarding student attitudes towards the Quillbot Application. Then, to find out information about students' perceptions of the Quillbot application, researchers used interview techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings from a survey asking students about their thoughts on utilizing the Quillbot app to hone their writing abilities. The survey's results are displayed in the table below:

Table 1. *Questionnaire results regarding students' views on using the Quillbot application in improving writing skills*

NO	STATEMENT	RESPONSE			
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Quillbot is an easily accessible digital tool	61,3%	38,7%	-	-
2	Quillbot really helps me in writing	41,9%	58,1%	-	-
3	The Quillbot application is effective because it is equipped with several features that can help me improve the quality of my writing	45,2%	54,8%	-	-
4	The Quillbot application encourages me to write and reduces my mistakes in writing	29%	61,3%	9,7%	-
5	Using the Quillbot application increases my confidence in my writing	19,4%	67,7%	12,9%	-
6	By using the Quillbot application my writing skills in processing text have increased	29%	61,3%	9,7%	-
7	Without realizing it, the word processing I used, especially the terms used in writing text increased	32,3%	48,4%	19,4%	-
8	I prefer Quillbot over other applications	19,4%	45,2%	35,5%	-
9	I can write efficiently and my writing results get better when I use the Quillbot application	32,3%	61,3%	6,5%	-

Nine questionnaire statements completed by students are displayed in the above table. All of the survey results show that there are a number of variations. Table 1's data shows that a majority of

students strongly agree, and some also agree, that Quillbot is a digital tool that is simple to use. This means that out of the 31 participants, most of them responded favorably to this statement.

Overall, the students find the first statement "Quillbot is a digital tool that is simple to use." to be quite acceptable and highly recommended. The second statement, which claims that Quillbot has attributes significantly help students with academic writing, comes next. 41,9% of study participants strongly agreed with this statement, and 58,1% of participants agreed. However, given that every participant gave a positive response, it can be said that Quillbot's features can help students with writing.

The majority of participants, if not all of them, gave a positive response to the third statement about how the Quillbot's features contribute to its effectiveness. Participants were divided into two categories: those who agreed with the statement and those who strongly agreed with it. Then, the fourth statement—that encouraging students to write and lowering writing-related anxiety is one of the advantages of using the Quillbot—receives a reasonably positive response; 29% of participants chose strongly agree, 61,3% chose agree, and only 9,7% chose disagree. This suggests that the statement was accepted by the majority of participants.

The fifth claim is that students' confidence in their writing is increased by the Quillbot application. As can be seen from the above table, 19,4% of participants strongly agreed and 67,7% agreed, representing more than half of the participants' positive responses. Even though 12,9% of participants disagreed, this had no bearing on the statement because the percentage of participants who disagreed was small in comparison to those who agreed and strongly agreed. In reference to the sixth assertion, the results demonstrate that students' writing abilities in text organization have enhanced and are in agreement with using the Quillbot application. This is demonstrated by the questionnaire results, which showed that 29% of participants strongly agreed, 61,3% agreed, and only 9,7% disagreed with this statement. Seventh statement: "Quillbot can also improve the participant's English vocabulary, especially in terms of academic terms" received 32,3% of participants' strong agreement and 48,4% of participants' "agree" responses; nearly eighty percent of participants agreed with this statement.

Additionally, the statement "I prefer Quillbot over other applications" was strongly agreed with by 19,4% of participants, and 45,2% of participants agreed with it. This means that 64,6% of participants gave a positive response to the statement, and the remaining participants

comprised only less than half of those who disagreed. Given that more than half of participants said they preferred using Quillbot over other digital tools, the statement is true in this particular context. Finally, but just as importantly, the Quillbot application can produce high-quality writing quickly. This statement was met with a very positive response. The table above provides evidence that the majority of respondents—32,3% plus 61,3%—agreed with the statement, with only 6,5% disagreeing.

The majority of students strongly agreed or agreed that the Quillbot application was very useful in improving the quality of writing, while there were some differences in how each respondent answered the questionnaire. Overall, respondents gave positive responses to the use of the Quillbot application in improving writing skills, which were analyzed using a Likert scale. Data questionnaires was collected through and interviews asking respondents' views regarding the use of the Quillbot application in improving writing skills. They conclude that using this application can significantly enhance writing output. Pupils are more confident in their ability to write better because they believe that the Quillbot application can assist with content creation, organization, vocabulary, mechanics, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

To find out their opinions about Quillbot's application in scholarly writing, researchers contacted four people for further interviews, as shown in Table 1. The four individuals were chosen on the basis of their questionnaire answers and fulfillment of the author's criteria. Each theme will guide the organization of the interview results, which will be bolstered by a single anonymous participant response.

The perceptions of students regarding the merit of using Quillbot to improve writing skills

The researchers found three key themes about the advantages of using Quillbot in academic writing after evaluating students' perceptions of it as a digital writing tool: boosting students' writing motivation, providing an approachable writing style, and promoting language development.

Theme 1: Encouraging pupils to write with positivity

Most participants, according to data from both sources, found that using Quillbot improved their attitudes toward writing and reduced their anxiety about writing. Additionally, they claimed that employing it in their scholarly writing boosted

their self-assurance in the caliber of their work:

"I have grown more self-assured and have stopped worrying so much about the grammar and content of my writing since I started using Quillbot to write articles for my collage assignments. I frequently didn't know what I was writing before I used Quillbot. My writing now has a regular language and structure, so I like to read it as "I feel like it's original writing." (Excerpt 1, Interview)

During my senior semester, I was unsure of how to begin my scholarly writing. My academic writing is deemed to contain a high degree of plagiarism since I simply copy and paste body notes, which are necessary for academic writing. As a result, when I tried to write academic papers, I got bored and lazy. This app makes writing enjoyable and helps us paraphrase our writing by using writing structure, synonyms, and other word changes. (Excerpt 2, Interview)

They added that because the Quillbot app could be used as a reference to provide feedback, using it to improve their writing abilities encouraged them to write and boosted their enthusiasm for it. Online platform feedback, according to Honeycut (quoted in Pahlevi 2020), can encourage students to take an active role in the writing process by giving them the opportunity to edit and engage with their own work. Consequently, this leads to a notable level of student involvement, communication, and interaction throughout the educational process. These results are in line with the argument of Zimmerman & Labuhn (2012) which states that digital tools supported by AI will increase student engagement, achievement, and self-regulation. Online learning environments may make it simpler for students to learn, which could lead to more engaged students who write more and more. This is because a student's motivation is intrinsically linked to their involvement in the learning process, which enables them to feel good about themselves and carry on practicing with confidence and persistence (Mandernach, 2009). On the other hand, language learners who are unmotivated to study find it difficult to improve their language skills over time. It is consistent with the findings of Dulay et al. (1982), who claimed that a language learner's long-term success is directly correlated with their level of motivation. In this quickly changing era, we can use technology in the language-learning process to increase student motivation, particularly when

it comes to writing. The results of Ariyanti & Anam (2021) show that students can become more motivated and feel less anxious when technology is used in language learning and instruction. The empirical results support the hypothesis that students who integrate technology more into their education are more likely to grow creatively, which boosts their drive to learn. According to Kelleher et al. (quoted in Meysarah, 2018), research has demonstrated that re-engaging students in the learning process can be achieved by incorporating ICT (information and communication technology) into the educational process's structure. In this instance, it has been found that using technology powered by artificial intelligence (AI), such as Quillbot drive, greatly improves students' positive attitudes during the writing process.

Theme 2: Providing a variety of user-friendly writing features

The fact that Quillbot has many easy-to-use writing features that can enhance students' writing, particularly that of high school students, is another reason it outperforms other writing programs. Take a look at some examples of these features:

"In my opinion, Quillbot is the best resource for teaching students how to write better. This is because it has a lot more features than other tools, like summarizing, a grammar checker, and various paraphrasing styles from standard to expanded. It's easier for me to use one app to do everything I need than to use several." (Excerpt 3, Interview)

The outcomes also support earlier research by Styati & Irawati (2020), which shows that identifying components with different characteristics using technology can significantly affect the caliber of student writing. Graddol (as cited in Maysarah, 2018) states that students in the modern era are more adept at learning because of technological advancements that offer a wide range of learning opportunities, in contrast to more traditional teaching methods. The majority of students still have difficulty with language, math, science, and organic subjects when it comes to academic writing (Ariyanti & Mahakam, 2018; Pratiwi, 2015; Rahmatunisa, 2014 dalam Drivoka, 2021). With the help of Quillbot, a well-liked artificial intelligence digital tool, students can complete this exam quickly. Quillbot is an application that assists students in writing more efficiently by editing, proofreading, and

organizing their work (Popenici & Kerr, 2017). Students can organize, edit, and proofread their writing with the Quillbot app. They can also use proper grammar, condense their sentences, avoid plagiarism, and paraphrase. This includes Quillbot, which is thought to be among the best online applications (Fitria, 2021). According to Zhao (2003), a technology's effectiveness is determined by how easily its features can be accessed during the learning process, not by the technology itself. Previous research and a number of experts back up this claim. It has been proven that using tools with multiple functions to write in a foreign language is successful and advantageous, as it improves both performance and awareness. (Styati & Irawati, 2020; Choi, 2012).

Theme 3: Encouraging students' language development

The final advantage that most students brought up was the fact that they had developed their language skills both consciously and unconsciously. Their writing abilities, as well as their command of grammar and vocabulary, had improved, as demonstrated by the following excerpts:

"Quillbot has the ability to write text with a variety of structural styles, but it also has a similar style that is known as paraphrasing." Typically, this application also identifies synonyms for a few words that we can choose from; consequently, I find it difficult to learn synonyms from those words. For example, "perception" is synonymous with "view." (Excerpt 4 Interview).

These results validate that students' performance in writing and other subjects is enhanced by AI-powered digital tools (Voogt et al., 2018). Online writing tools, like paraphrasing tools, can help students improve their grammar and vocabulary, claim Na & Chi (2017). Through more accurate and academic paraphrasing of elements, students can increase their vocabulary, especially with academic terms. At the same time, ICT use has supported the growth of students' metacognitive, cognitive, affective, and social strategies when they write in technologically enhanced environments (Perez, 2018). According to another study, students can use Automatic Writing Feedback (AWE), which offers comments and suggestions, to correct their mistakes by applying their common sense, language competency, and reasoning (Zaini,

2014). By using this application to analyze their mistakes, spot incorrect writing patterns, and reformulate them, students' grammatical skills are gradually improved (Hegelheimer & Lee, 2013). Students may be motivated to rewrite if technology offers real-time feedback (Moore & MacArthur, 2016). They are therefore getting used to appreciating the writing process more than the final product. This is in line with earlier research (Zhang, 2017; Zhang & Hyland, 2018) which demonstrated that students' engagement with AWE feedback during the writing process increased when they were motivated.

CONCLUSION

This study identified key trends in students' perceptions of Quillbot, highlighting its effectiveness in improving writing skills. These findings suggest that Quillbot is a valuable tool for EFL students and should be integrated into writing instruction. This is in line with research findings, which show that most students think using Quillbot helps them become better academic writers. In other words, students view the Quillbot application as a digital tool for writing well. Based on research, each participant considered using the Quillbot application to be simple. Almost all participants 100% thought that the Quillbot application could make writing in English easier. 100% of participants believed that the Quillbot app helped them write more and make fewer mistakes while writing, while up to 90% of participants thought the app could help them write better. Students believe that there are many benefits to using the Quillbot app, including accessibility, assistance in writing, improved writing, reduced writing errors, increased self-confidence, improved text processing abilities, improved vocabulary use, increased efficiency, and improved writing. The Quillbot application has the potential to improve students' writing skills. With this application, students can become better at writing. Future research could investigate the long-term impact of Quillbot on writing proficiency and explore its use in different educational contexts.

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