

# Student Voices: Undergraduate Perceptions on the Use of Quillbot Paraphraser in English Academic Writing Course

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## Abstract

The evolution of technology has significantly altered numerous aspects of people's lives, including academic writing. This is a challenging task for some students that requires critical thinking and good writing abilities. Thus, excellent writing and paraphrasing skills are in high demand to produce well-written work in the academe. Students, particularly those who struggle with paraphrasing, are fortunate to be born in today's digital world because many helpful tools are available, such as Quillbot Paraphraser, which has emerged as a promising remedy to the challenges that writers encounter. This study investigates the perspectives of 20 BSED English Majors from a local college on the use of Quillbot Paraphraser in English academic writing class. The data were collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews, employing a qualitative-phenomenological research design. The findings reveal that the participants discovered Quillbot Paraphraser through personal recommendations, a popular paraphrasing tool that helps them in their academic tasks. Moreover, it was noted the multifunctional benefits of Quillbot in assisting students' academic writing tasks, such as enhancing paraphrasing and vocabulary skills, increasing positive attitudes toward writing, and improving students' language facility. Thus, the participant's English academic writing experiences draw various positive and negative aspects in improving their overall writing abilities based on its perceived benefits, challenges, and coping strategies.

**Keywords:** *BSED English major, english academic writing, paraphrasing skills, Quillbot*

## Introduction

The development of technology has significantly altered numerous aspects of people's lives, including academic writing. The ability to paraphrase, which is essential for creating unique content that is free of plagiarism, is one that students frequently struggle with. A skill that calls for practice and linguistic knowledge, paraphrasing involves rewording existing text while maintaining the intended meaning. Quillbot Paraphraser is one such tool that has emerged as a promising remedy to ease writers' difficulties.

Writing is a continuous task throughout one's entire academic life. It is a skill learned in elementary school and continued to work on in college (Litscher, 2016). Many believe that writing in English is the most complex of all language skills. According to Budjalemba and Listyani (2020), it could be more challenging than other skills, such as listening, speaking, and reading. Since an average individual dedicates years trying to improve their writing skills and only makes marginal progress (Litscher, 2016), most students regard writing as a difficult skill in which they frequently make errors and mistakes (Krismonica et al., 2021). Its complexity demands effort, practice, and commitment. Hence, one should learn as much vocabulary and grammar as possible because writing is the top skill in the hierarchy (Storozhilova, 2022). It is unavoidable

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since it is a vital skill that is in demand even after one has graduated from college or begun working. Writing skills are essential since they are a common requirement in business and higher education (Krismonica et al., 2021).

One of the responsibilities that all students at higher levels must fulfill is academic writing. It is a formal writing style, usually utilized by colleges or universities and academic publications (Scribbr, n.d.). According to the same source, it is common in scholarly journal articles and books, and people expect students to write their essays, research papers, and dissertations academically. It is a form of communication that researchers use to describe the academic boundaries of their fields and areas of expertise (University of Southern California Libraries, 2023). The same source added that it has a serious tone, a preference for the third-person perspective rather than the first-person perspective, a strong focus on the study issue at hand, and exact language choice. It is, however, more than merely stringing words together to construct sentences and paragraphs. Academic writing is a challenging task since it demands students to use critical thinking and high-quality writing abilities (Lin & Morrison, 2021; Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022).

Academic writing requires paraphrasing and putting reputable references. The following facts support the previous statement. Generally, it is the process of re-creating an idea from another source in one's own words and style (Arun et al., 2019; Rakhmanina & Serasi, 2022). As a powerful technique for academic writing, it not only repeats, condenses, and expands on another author's ideas, but it also lends credibility to one's argument (Walden University, 2023). Writing in academic contexts depends heavily on paraphrasing skills to prove that the author understands the primary idea of what they have read and uses properly referenced evidence to back up their claim (Fillenbaum, 1970; Keck, 2006, 2014; Shi, 2012; Rogerson & McCarthy, 2017). Paraphrasing strategy is excellent at improving students, especially their writing skills (Masniyah, 2017; Pratama et al., 2022). According to the British Council Vietnam (2019), the top five paraphrasing strategies are employing synonyms, adopting a different word form, transitioning from the active to the passive voice, modifying the word order, and combining techniques.

With so many aspects to consider in academic writing, stress becomes inescapable among students from higher educational levels. People expect college students, in particular, to be able to generate high-quality written work because they are presumed to have mastered the fundamentals of a good paragraph in elementary and high school (Ugalingan, 2021). However, when confronted with specific academic writing features, higher education students may encounter issues related to lexical diversity, poor grammar, or unstructured text (Rafikova, 2022).

It becomes more challenging for English as a Second Language (ESL) students to articulate and organize their thoughts in English. ESL and EFL students at the tertiary level must excel in written and speech production (Budjalemba & Listyani, 2020). Regardless of its value, writing is a testing and complicated task for them (Ugalingan, 2021). Because writing in a local, cultural, and educational system is a norm among ESL students (Wei, 2017), it appears necessary to consider writing in their mother tongue before converting it to English (Pratiwi, 2021). Owing to their academic and language context, ESL students struggle to adjust to the English writing class (Wei, 2017). Anderson (n.d.) identified four key obstacles that ESL students encounter when writing academic papers. They are the following: English language incompetence, poor comprehension of academic writing norms, difficulty researching and applying new knowledge in light of the paper, and the student's context. Further reasons why ESL students do not enjoy writing are language difficulties, cognitive understanding, paragraph and text construction, and psychological obstacles throughout the writing process (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016; Wei, 2017).

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Interestingly, research indicates that many ESL students struggle with paraphrasing sentences. According to the study, most students encounter these three leading challenges when paraphrasing, such as vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension (Thadphoothon, 2019). Also, students who do not believe in their writing abilities when constructing in a second or foreign language tend to copy the texts of the original owners rather than rewording their ideas (Rahmayani, 2018). In short, they plagiarize. However, when they attempt to avoid plagiarism by paraphrasing, the paraphrased text appears to lose connection with the original text. Thadphoothon (2019) highlighted that the students understood the original text in several cases; however, when they paraphrased it, the meaning changed. Findings show that when people explicitly asked students to rephrase a sentence, they were able to do so; however, their lack of confidence, which led to a lack of motivation, caused them to become so frustrated with the 'threat' of plagiarism that they lost sight of the purpose and benefits of paraphrasing (Esain, 2015).

With the advancement of technology over time, learners find it easier to meet writing requirements. The increasing use of technology can help to reduce the above-mentioned barriers to academic writing (Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022). Many learners in today's generation, when digital literacy is a reality, rely on AI-powered web and native apps. Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to any automated tool capable of emulating human intellectual processes, such as learning, reasoning, and self-correction (Popenici & Kerr, 2017; Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022). There are AI-generated tools that can edit, self-correct, and organize one's writing. One of the examples is Quillbot.

Rohan Gupta, Anil Jason, and David Silin launched Quillbot in 2017, stationed in Chicago, Illinois (Pagan Research, 2017). Based on the same source, it is powered by sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) paraphrasing technology that employs natural language understanding (NLU), automatically reconstructing the user's content and improving how clear the intended message is. It is a writing tool with AI that mainly provides editing tools for writers, particularly academics and publishers (Become A Writer Today, 2023). In the year 2022, which was a big one for the QuillBot team, they were able to help over 150 million people make writing easier (Pfeifer, 2022). Utilizing artificial intelligence, Quillbot helps in paraphrasing, grammar checking, summarizing, and detecting plagiarism (Dale, 2020; Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022). QuillBot is an online paraphrasing tool for improving grammar to be more exact and look professional, making words concise, and minimizing plagiarism (Williams & Davis, 2017; Fitria, 2021). Several features, including Paraphraser, Grammar Checker, Plagiarism Checker, Co-Writer, Summarizer, and Citation Generator, will be available in the application by simply launching the browser and typing <https://QuillBot.com/> into the search bar (Rakhmanina & Serasi, 2022).

The paraphrasing tool is one of Quillbot's most popular functions. A paraphrasing tool is a program that enables one to keep the essence of a text after modifying its words (Bin & Michael, 2019; Fitria, 2021). Quillbot is so popular that it pops up first whenever one searches online the term "paraphrasing tool." To appear first and frequently in search results, Quillbot is redefining Search Engine Optimization (SEO), an entire content strategy focused on piling in keywords, things important to someone's audience (eZaroorat, 2018). Hence, it increases web traffic, according to the same source. Fitria (2021) states that it is one of the most widely used free paraphrase tools. Moreover, it has gained the trust of teachers, bloggers, writers, students, and others (Chapelle & Sauro, 2019; Fitria, 2021). There are seven paraphrasing modes available on Quillbot. The standard and fluency modes are free to use, but the remaining ones, formal, simple, creative, expand, and shorter, demand users to acquire Quillbot Premium (Miranda, 2021). Standard mode paraphrasing reliably retains meaning, whereas fluency mode modifies one's writing the least, resulting in a more grammatically correct and naturally pleasant language (Rakhmanina & Serasi, 2022).

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In this day and age, excellent writing and paraphrasing skills are in high demand. However, some students need to trust their paraphrasing abilities. As a result, they employ paraphrasing tools such as Quillbot. According to Nurmayanti and Suryadi (2023), paraphrasing tools can boost students' confidence in challenging coursework. In essence, these paraphrasing tools will continue attracting students who need clarification on their writing abilities (Enago Academy, 2022).

On the one hand, despite their numerous advantages as learning aids, long-term usage of paraphrasing tools on students' paraphrasing skills might be disadvantageous (Miranda, 2021). Successful paraphrasing is necessary for effective academic writing, but ineffective paraphrasing can lead to accidental plagiarism (Walden University, 2023). Paraphrasing tools encourage students to copy work and rely on computer-generated output instead of their abilities, threatening academic honesty (Rogerson, 2010; Miranda, 2021). Consequently, the researchers indicate it is important to raise awareness among students, teachers, and institutions about the usage and function of paraphrasing tools to promote discussion about improving individual writing skills and better detecting these emerging practices (Rogerson, 2017). Although challenging, paraphrasing is an ability that every student should learn and master as it builds critical thinking, competence, and the power to express oneself meaningfully (Enago Academy, 2022).

### ***Statement of the Problem***

The main objective of this study was to understand the perceptions of BSED students on the use of Quillbot Paraphraser for English Academic Writing class. Furthermore, this research would look into the distinct responses obtained to evaluate the meaning and commonality of the participants' various experiences.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

1. How do participants perceive Quillbot Paraphraser in general?
2. What are the perspectives of participants toward their experiences in using Quillbot Paraphraser for English Academic Writing in terms of:
  - 2.1. Benefits;
  - 2.2. Challenges and difficulties; and
  - 2.3. Coping Strategies?
3. What learnings do participants gain from their experience?

### ***Theoretical Framework***

There are many reasons why people use the media. Amidst the latest revelations that the world's search behaviors are changing, "finding information" (57.8%) remains the primary reason why people aged 16 to 64 use the internet today, according to the Global Web Index's latest wave of research (Kemp, 2023). Also, from the same source, one of the primary reasons why internet users aged 16-64 use the internet is because of education and study-related purposes (38.3%). Academics can utilize digital media to stay current in their field, connect with others, and share research with a broader audience (Barton & McCulloch, 2018).

Blogs, emails, music and television streaming services, social media networks, virtual and augmented reality, and websites are examples of new media (Cote, 2022). Quillbot is primarily a media and web-based tool, but it is also available through extensions for Microsoft Word, Google Chrome extension, and Google Documents extension (Become a Writer Today, 2023).

The researchers used Blumler and Katz's Uses and Gratification Theory to understand the perspective of third-year BSEd English Majors on using the Quillbot Paraphraser for English academic writing. This user-centered approach focuses on how people utilize media for personal purposes and gratification, highlighting

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audience members' motives and self-perceived needs (Sridharan, 2023). The same article described audiences as increasingly engaged in media usage, a vital media searches to meet a specific need.

The uses and gratifications theory consists of the following needs: affective, cognitive, personal, integrative, and tension-free needs (Kasirye, 2022).

## **Methods**

This study employed a phenomenological research design to understand the perspectives of BSED English Majors on the use of Quillbot Paraphraser in writing their academic papers. According to Tenny (2022), utilizing the qualitative approach, participants can self-explain how, why, and what they were thinking, feeling, and experiencing at a particular time or during an event of interest. This method is suited for gathering comprehensive information while eliciting responses from participants through semi-structured questions.

The participants were 20 (10) BSED English majors from the Dalubhasaang Politkeniko ng Lungsod ng Baliwag under the Institute of Education who are using Quillbot Paraphraser. The researcher selected them via two non-probability sampling techniques, namely purposive sampling. Non-probability sampling is a subjective or non-random method for selecting units from a population that is a quick, easy, and cost-effective form of data collecting that does not require a full survey frame (Statistics Canada, 2021). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that includes a deliberate selection of participants based on their ability to explain a particular theme, concept, or phenomenon (Robinson, 2014). In other words, participants are chosen "on purpose" in purposive sampling (Nikolopoulou, 2022). Hence, the researcher established guidelines to decide who among in the population would be suitable to answer the research questions. In line with this, the participants were selected based on the following criteria: the participants must be (1) students at Dalubhasaang Politekniko ng Lungsod ng Baliwag, (2) third-year Bachelor of Secondary Education English majors from the -Institute of Education (IE), and (3) Quillbot Paraphraser users for at least six months. The study is purposive because the interviewer controls the conversation, ensuring participants stay on topic, and give meaningful information.

The researcher utilized semi-structured interview guides, where questions are mostly open-ended, to elicit responses about their use of Quillbot for English academic writing. Interview questions, which are usually open-ended, help researchers explain, better understand, and explore research subjects' perspectives, attitudes, encounters, phenomena, and so on, as well as thoroughly gather information (Virginia Tech, 2018). As a form of data gathering, researchers utilize a semi-structured interview to ask questions in the structure of a predefined theme (George, 2022). From the same source, some questions in a semi-structured interview appear fixed, while others are not. Open-ended questions require participants to respond with their thoughts, giving researchers more information than basic yes-or-no answers (SmartSurvey, 2023).

First, the researcher formally obtained permission from the Dean of the Institute of Education to conduct participant eligibility screening and distribute the forms to the two sections of third-year BSED English Majors. Second, the researcher designed a qualitative and semi-structured interview questionnaire with the approval of research validators. Third, the researcher secured the Dean's approval to conduct face-to-face interviews with the selected participants who passed the pre-screening.

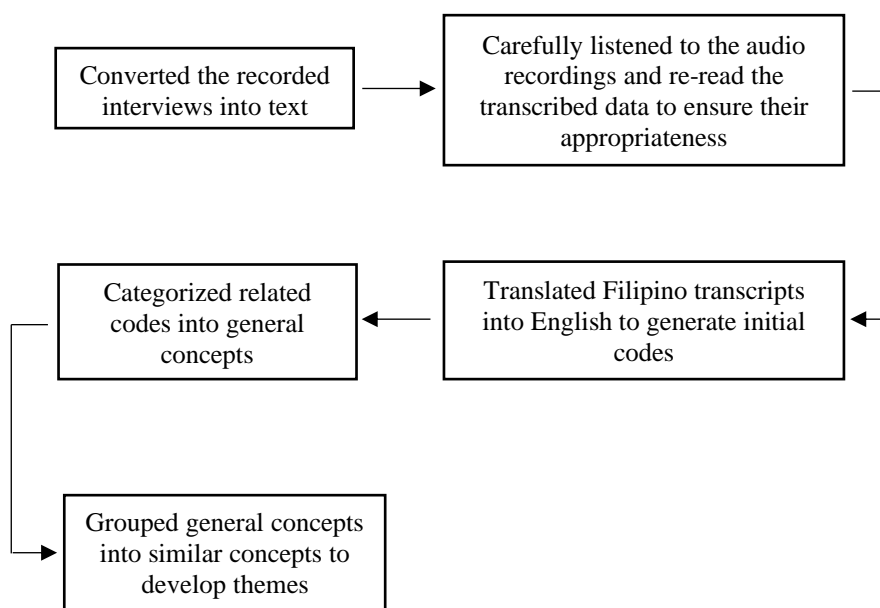
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Fourth, each participant was given a consent letter and informed about the study's nature and objectives. Fifth, the researcher provided the questionnaire after the participants had digested the information and were ready to be interviewed. Sixth, the researcher recorded the entire interviews with the participants' permission. Seventh, to keep the interview flow smooth, the researcher clarified some questions the participants found challenging to grasp. Eighth, they collected, transcribed, and translated the raw audio data to prepare it for further analysis and categorization. Ninth, via Messenger, the researcher sent the transcripts to the participants for reviewing purposes to confirm that the transcribed and translated responses were true and accurate. Lastly, after the participants validated the transcripts' authenticity and accuracy, the researchers were ready to analyze and generate codes, concepts, and themes.

The researcher employed coding and thematic analysis to evaluate the quality of the collected data. Coding and thematic analysis are helpful for data organizing, data analysis, and presentation. Coding is an aspect of thematic analysis that involves assigning a descriptive label to help identify similar material across data (Illinois Library, 2023). To identify similar themes, such as subjects, ideas, and orders of recurring meanings, the researchers did a close examination of the data by using thematic analysis (Caulfield, 2022). This type of analysis is effective when examining varying perspectives and finding similarities and meanings in data.

Using the audio recordings of the interviews, the researcher converted them into text. Then, he ensured the appropriateness of the transcription of the interviews by carefully listening to the audio recordings while reading them at the same time. Following that, to generate initial codes, the researcher translated various Filipino responses into English. Next, they categorized the related codes into general concepts. Finally, the researcher grouped them into similar concepts and eventually became themes.

**Figure 2**  
*Data Analysis Procedure*



As the researcher collected the data, the researcher acknowledged and prioritized the anonymity of the participants to protect their privacy, following Republic Act 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which states that the names, addresses, and other vital information of the participants are confidential and must be protected. In addition, the researcher informed the participants of their right to withdraw from the study without resentment. The researcher would consider removing their responses if ever. Hence, the researchers considered the following: 1) nature and extent of involvement, 2) risk and inconveniences, 3) benefits to taking part in the study, 4) voluntariness of participation, 5) confidentiality and data management, and 6) access to the results of the study.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Participants' General Perception of Quillbot Paraphraser***

Quillbot Paraphraser is generally regarded as a helpful tool for paraphrasing and creating alternative sentence structures. Users of Quillbot Paraphraser can rephrase sentences, change word choices, and enhance overall clarity by using AI algorithms to rewrite the text.

Quillbot Paraphraser is frequently used for various tasks, including content creation, academic writing, and lowering plagiarism. It offered a quick method for producing several text variations while preserving their original meaning. The user-friendly interface and flexibility to customize the degree of rewriting were well-liked by users.

#### ***Theme 1. Personal Recommendations***

It refers to seeking and receiving recommendations, advice, and referrals from people with whom they have personal relationships. Professionally known as word-of-mouth marketing, it is a popular advertising strategy in the business world. With 88% of consumers or users favoring suggestions from peers over conventional media, word-of-mouth marketing is one of the most influential advertising forms (Hayes, 2022). One of the main advantages of personal recommendations is the level of trust and familiarity they carry. Potential consumers or users tend to place confidence in the opinions and advice of their family, friends, classmates or group mates, and others they are familiar with because they believe these people are fully aware or have personal experiences with certain products or services. Fortunately, in the case of Quillbot, which is well-known for its paraphrasing feature, it has acquired the trust of a diverse population of users, including students, authors, bloggers, teaching staff, and anybody else who needs writing aid (Chapelle & Sauro, 2019; Fitria, 2021). It is no surprise that many new or potential consumers are giving it a try because people they are familiar with, who may have positive experiences with it, have recommended it to them.

#### ***Theme 2. Great First Impression***

Quillbot Paraphraser turns out to have a great first impression on users. The first key reason for the positive reception of Quillbot Paraphraser is its impressive functionality. It can help fix groups of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs through its quick and simple-to-use paraphrasing ability. The text becomes rewritten after people type or paste the text and select the Paraphrase button on Quillbot (Kinga & Gupta, 2021; Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022). In less than a minute, QuillBot generates paraphrased results (Rakhmanina & Serasi, 2023). Another key reason that has helped Quillbot Paraphraser earn a good reputation from users, especially students, is its ability to alleviate student workload. Its immediate

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responses aid in making academic obligations easier to do. One user of QuillBot.com claimed that using paraphrasing tools significantly helped students save time when completing assignments (Miranda, 2021).

### *Theme 3. Academic Purposes*

Quillbot Paraphraser has established itself as an asset within academic settings, finding widespread utilization among students. Prominent for its Paraphraser, QuillBot is one of the most often used online paraphrasing tools in writing settings (Kurniati and Fithriani, 2022). Its application extends across wide-ranging academic endeavors, including but not limited to research papers, essays, and various other school-related tasks. Students working on their final project or thesis often performed paraphrasing duties (Fitria, 2022).

### ***Participants' Perspectives toward Their Experiences in Using Quillbot Paraphraser for English Academic Writing in Terms of Benefits, Challenges and Difficulties, and Coping Strategies***

Well-known as a versatile tool, Quillbot Paraphraser provides various advantageous performances to users. Despite its wide-ranging capabilities, users are conscious of the challenges and difficulties that come with relying on AI suggestions of Quillbot Paraphraser. Thus, it calls for a coping mechanism to solve these problems.

### *Theme 1. Multifunctional Performance*

The Paraphraser is a multifunctional Quillbot feature that offers a range of capabilities that highly benefit users, especially students writing their English academic papers. The researchers identified four general concepts from the participants' responses and categorized them as similar ones, which helped establish the theme. The first beneficial capability it performs is efficiency. Quillbot, an automatic paraphrasing tool, saves time and effort while ensuring the maintenance of outcome quality. Generally, one of the many reasons students use paraphrasing tools is to reduce time spent on assignments, and while these programs produce results instantly, they are of excellent quality (Miranda, 2021). According to the findings of Burkhard (2022), the majority of students picked either quality (47.8%) or efficiency (43.7%) as the main benefit of using AI-powered writing tools. Moving on to more specific information supporting the claim about its efficiency, Quillbot, well-known for its paraphrasing and summarizing abilities, allows millions of students and professionals to substantially lower the time allotted for writing by employing forward-looking artificial intelligence to rework any sentence, paragraph, or article (Fitria, 2022). The second beneficial capability it provides is enhancement. It enhances overall writing by expanding one's vocabulary, offering accurate and appropriate word suggestions aiding in the improvement of its sound, improving sentence structures, correcting one's grammar, and reducing plagiarism issues. Quillbot, a strong paraphrasing tool that can improve papers' vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, and the list goes on, can help students and teachers boost the quality of their writing (Kharbach, 2023). The third beneficial capability it shows is availability. It is constantly available for all people, students writing English academic papers, for example, to use at any time and any location. 25.7% of participants indicated that these paraphrasing tools are always available on the Internet and can provide immediate assistance at any time and from anywhere globally (Burkhard, 2022). The fourth and last beneficial capability is universality. It means it caters to everyone, regardless of their current situations or backgrounds. It can even assist users who are not fluent in English.

### *Theme 2. Limitations and Inconsistencies*

One limitation of Quillbot Paraphraser is that many of its advanced features are only available to users who purchase a premium subscription. Premium users can use QuillBot Paraphraser in any mode: standard,

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fluency, formal, simple, creative, expand, and shorten (Syahnaz & Fithriani, 2023). Contrarily, according to the same source, the tool's free version only permits users to use the standard and fluency modes. This limitation can be restrictive for users who may not have the financial means to subscribe to the premium version, limiting their access to the tool's full potential. Quillbot Paraphraser also restricts the number of words that can be inputted for paraphrasing. The tool's free version has a limited word count, and users with longer texts may need to split their content into smaller segments for paraphrasing. The premium version allows you to paraphrase unlimited words, while the free one only allows you to do so for 125 words at a time (Proofed, 2022). This restriction can be inconvenient and time-consuming for users who need to paraphrase extensive articles, as it disrupts the writing flow and makes maintaining coherence and consistency more difficult. Another limitation of Quillbot Paraphraser is that it may discourage students from developing independent thinking and writing skills. The tool can help achieve alternative results, but it can also limit students' ability to engage critically with the source material and develop their own ideas and writing style. This limitation can stifle students' ability to think independently. It may lead to overdependence on the tool for future writing tasks, which may not be available or permitted in some academic or professional settings. Using paraphrasing tools is a serious risk to academic integrity because it encourages students to copy other people's work and depend on computer-generated results rather than their skills (Rogerson, 2010; Miranda, 2021).

The inconsistent thing about Quillbot Paraphraser is that its paraphrasing suggestions or results may not always meet the user's expectations. While the tool aims to provide alternative phrasing for input sentences, it can sometimes produce output that is less accurate, a little bit awkward, and does not convey the intended meaning. This inconsistency can be frustrating for users who rely on the tool to generate high-quality paraphrases, as they may need to review and revise the suggestions to reach the intended result. The generated phrases can occasionally be unexpected and not even follow the rules of grammar, punctuation, and proper spelling (Rakhmanina & Serasi, 2023). Thus, according to the same authors, editing the paraphrased result's grammar, punctuation, and spelling becomes a requirement.

### *Theme 3. Lack of Fluency, Focus, and Belief in One's Capabilities*

For those who struggle with English fluency or lack confidence and focus in their writing abilities, using Quillbot Paraphraser can be a common choice. The following are some of the reasons why they resort to using it. For non-native English speakers, communicating clearly in this language is difficult. For those with low self-trust in their capabilities, the thought of not living up to other people's expectations or desired standards terrifies them. For those who lack focus, being unable to think correctly is a constant struggle. It is no surprise that they use it. In today's digital age, convenience is the standard, wherein these advanced programs, such as AI-powered tools, immediately provide people with what they need. Paraphrasing tools like Quillbot Paraphraser allow writers to improve and tweak their writing without having a solid command of the language, mental clarity, or enough paraphrasing skills. Quillbot Paraphraser can help non-fluent speakers and those who struggle with focus and self-esteem paraphrase complex sentences or improve the flow and readability of their writing, helping them overcome linguistic hurdles, mental fog, and insecurities. Despite its helpfulness, some people might rely too heavily on Quillbot Paraphraser, using it as a crutch rather than honing their writing abilities. While some students claimed that paraphrasing tools improved their skills, such as acquiring a new language, others believed that it caused them to have idle thinking, damaging their paraphrasing ability (Miranda, 2021). In addition, Rogerson and McCarthy (2017) stated that while paraphrasing tools may appear advantageous to students, particularly non-native English speakers, there is no guarantee that they always generate flawless and accurate results. To be effective,

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learners should not use it as a substitute for learning how to paraphrase independently, according to the same source.

#### *Theme 4. Coping Mechanism*

The researcher carefully analyzed the users' responses to the challenges and difficulties of using Quillbot Paraphraser and identified four concepts that constitute the theme. The first coping strategy detected by the researchers is the utilization of available paraphrasing modes of the mentioned tool. To embrace the fact that this tool's premium modes require payment, free version users only use its openly available ones. Free version users can only use Standard and Fluency modes (Fitria, 2021). On the other hand, premium users have access not only to the two styles but also to the five others, namely the Formal, Simple, Creative, Expand, and Shorten modes. The second coping strategy identified is accepting that there is a word limit for each input in the free version. There is nothing users can do but accept the truth because they have no control over the decision to allow unlimited word entry for everyone, especially those using the free version. The free version allows only 125 words to be paraphrased simultaneously (Syahnaz & Fithriani, 2023). Once users upgrade to the premium version, they can rephrase an unlimited number of words (Proofed, 2022). Apart from accepting reality, they can also maximize the word limit and prepare the excess for another cycle of paraphrasing to accomplish a task as quickly as possible. The third coping strategy discerned is the expansion of app choices. Users look into other writing assistance tools to complete their tasks if QuillBot does not deliver the expected results or has technical difficulties. They might look for alternative AI-powered writing tools or use conventional writing techniques. Sulistyaningrum (2021), as cited in Miranda (2021), mentioned other popular paraphrasing tools besides Quillbot that students utilized to assist them in writing essays, such as paraphrase-tool.com, prepotseo.com, and spinbot.com. The fourth and final coping strategy observed by the researchers is paraphrasing oneself. Users modify their expectations of the tool's capabilities and constraints as well. QuillBot Paraphraser generates suggestions based on the input provided. However, because the outcome may not always meet their expectations, users may need to do manual editing. Quillbot and other related tools share one similar element: they are language models (Rane, 2023). The same author highlighted that users are better writers than these AI-powered tools because they are human beings with views, experiences, ideas, and preferences.

#### ***Participants' Learnings from Their Paraphrasing Experiences with Quillbot Paraphraser***

Students' learnings from their English academic writing experiences using Quillbot Paraphraser have positive elements, especially in their overall writing abilities and how they accomplish their educational tasks. They do, however, have negative aspects, especially in maintaining consistency and accuracy when producing outcomes, as well as the impact of excessive reliance on this tool on their writing and thinking abilities. Hence, it serves as a reminder to use it wisely to improve general writing skills and acquire self-assurance. Researchers found that Quillbot Paraphraser usage helps improve students' paraphrasing and vocabulary skills and allows them to use it effectively on their own. It has been regarded as an overall useful paraphrasing tool intended to help students do their academic obligations, particularly writing-related ones, more efficiently.

#### *Theme 1. Mindfulness of Its Pros and Cons*

Participants are aware of both the positive and negative aspects of the mentioned web-based program. One of the things that participants have learned from their writing experiences with this tool is that it helps them improve their writing. Hiều et al. (2022) found that 60% of the participants undoubtedly agreed that Quillbot, known for its paraphrasing feature, is effective in helping such individuals boost their writing skills. Mainly, they have gained new vocabulary due to the word options provided by this tool whenever

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they click on words of the paraphrased results. One of the features of Quillbot Paraphraser, the integrated thesaurus, allows students to search for synonyms for individual terms, and all they have to do is click on words to check whether they are available (Kharbach, 2023). With the first concept, students have also learned how to fix words and sentences due to the various paraphrasing techniques adopted while using this tool. Despite being aware of the adverse effect of excessive use of this tool, students believe that paraphrasing tools can also be employed as educational assistance to develop their paraphrasing skills (Miranda, 2021). Another thing they learned from their experiences with Quillbot Paraphraser is that it is a helpful tool but not always reliable. While there is no doubt that an AI-enabled paraphrasing tool can be beneficial in many ways, utilizing it excessively can still be paralyzing, especially to one's overall writing capability and thinking skills. It may lead to an overreliance on QuillBot Paraphraser and neglect their writing abilities. Even though QuillBot Paraphraser uses sophisticated AI algorithms, it may also occasionally make inaccurate and inappropriate suggestions for the context. Given that QuillBot's suggestions are produced by an AI model, it is possible that they do not accurately reflect the subtleties, tones, or writing styles of a real writer. Because of this, users, particularly students, should remember Kharbach's (2023) caution that, despite how helpful paraphrasing tools may be, they should always be used responsibly and in ways that follow academic standards.

### *Theme 2. Paraphrasing Skill Upgrade*

The ability to paraphrase better may be aided by using Quillbot's Paraphraser. This tool generates various outcomes of a given passage or sentence. Users, especially students, learn to express the same idea in various ways and are exposed to various phrasings. Students may learn multiple techniques of conveying the same message by entering their work and comparing it to the generated paraphrase (Kharbach, 2023). Exposure to Quillbot's frequent synonymous word suggestions is seen to help academic users in improving their vocabulary. Based on the findings of Hiều et al. (2022) on what students learned from employing Quillbot throughout the writing flow of educational essays, most students who participated in the study agreed that Quillbot allowed them to expand their English vocabulary. Students grow more effective at paraphrasing as they become more familiar with the new words they come across while using Quillbot Paraphraser. The findings on the effectiveness of Quillbot in allowing them to use vocabulary flexibly showed that 90% of the analyzed students agreed that it is beneficial (Hiều et al., 2022). Because of their years of experience and the benefits they gained from Quillbot, they now improved not only their vocabulary and paraphrasing abilities but also their language understanding and overall writing abilities, giving them the confidence to write independently.

### *Theme 3. Academic Aid*

According to the findings, all participants described Quillbot Paraphraser as an overall helpful academic tool. It serves as an assistant for students who need help with finishing and polishing their heavy school tasks, primarily academic papers. According to Miranda (2021), four out of five students thought that paraphrasing is a valuable tool that students can use to finish their assignments more quickly and accurately. According to the same source, two of these four students specifically found Quillbot Paraphraser helpful.

Quillbot's time-saving features have made it an invaluable tool for students. Institutions usually require students to paraphrase and rephrase information from various sources for writing assignments and research papers. Instead of doing manual paraphrasing of contents, students can save time and effort with the help of Quillbot Paraphraser, which quickly produces alternate versions of a given text. Paraphrasing tools can

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help college and university students who are working on educational tasks like thesis save a significant amount of time by assisting them with paraphrasing (My Private Tutor, 2022).

## **Conclusion**

In line with the above-mentioned findings, the following conclusions were made:

1. Personal recommendation considerably impacts potential or new users since they trust the opinions of their loved ones and other familiar individuals, paving the way for the growing popularity of web-based applications like Quillbot, especially its paraphrasing feature. Its fantastic way of functioning and helping reduce the weight of academic tasks, particularly writing-related ones, leaves a lasting mark on users, particularly students. All of them utilize it for academic reasons.
2. Students benefit significantly from Quillbot Paraphraser because its all-around performance includes efficiency, enhancement, availability, and universality. On the contrary, its limits as a free version and inconsistent way of producing paraphrasing results cause them inconvenience. Students, who are non-native English speakers, have fluency issues, have low self-esteem, need more focus, and get used to using Quillbot Paraphraser, finding paraphrasing English academic papers without this tool challenging. That is why to counter these challenges and difficulties, students use the available modes, namely standard and fluency, accept the limits of the free version like the number of words that users can only input for each paraphrasing set, explore other apps similar to Quillbot Paraphraser, and do it themselves.
3. Students learned from their English academic writing experiences with Quillbot Paraphraser that, while it aids in the improvement of their writing skills, particularly vocabulary and paraphrasing abilities, and the accomplishment of educational tasks, it is still essential to regulate their usage of it for it does not always produce consistent and appropriate results, and overreliance leads to the decline of critical thinking. Many participants have noticed that after using this tool, their vocabulary and paraphrasing skills have increased, and they have learned how to apply them effectively and independently to improve academic papers, such as essays. Most students, who participated in the study, described it as an all-around useful paraphrasing tool designed to help them finish their academic requirements conveniently.

## **Recommendations**

1. Personal recommendations have aided the success of many digital applications, including Quillbot, which is well-known for its paraphrasing tool. Thus, students, especially BSED English majors, may consider the suggestions of their families, friends, classmates, teachers, and other familiar individuals to give this tool a try because the findings of this study show that they do not promote it for nothing. People they know recommend this tool to them because its exceptional style of performing and alleviating academic burdens leaves a lasting impression on them. They may recommend it to other people as well.
  2. Quillbot Paraphraser has a lot of multifunctional capabilities, but its versatility does not exempt it from limitations and inconsistencies. Nonetheless, the findings of this study reveal that the participants are aware of its benefits and disadvantages and have provided tips to overcome challenges when utilizing this tool. In line with the participants' coping mechanisms, students, particularly BSED English majors, may embrace the fact that there are no perfect tools that are free. To open the door to many features, paying is usually a requirement. Even if one pays to access their premium versions, there is no assurance that they are error-free. Thus, the researchers hope that it will serve as a wake-up call for students, particularly BSED English majors, to view it as an opportunity to improve their overall writing skills, especially paraphrasing, and strengthen self-efficacy. To be more specific, they may
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explore the accessible academic materials in several and reliable social media platforms, such as viewing YouTube lectures or participating in open webinars, because almost everything is available on the internet, and all they have to do is use it wisely. They may also ask their teachers and significant others, particularly parents, for encouragement, guidance, and support.

3. In line with the findings, Quillbot Paraphraser has improved the participants' overall writing skills, particularly vocabulary and paraphrasing skills, and their usage of it to accomplish English academic papers. For students, it is generally an academic aid. However, relying on it heavily for the sake of convenience may weaken one's ability to write and think critically and independently. As stated in the previous recommendation, it does not always produce consistent and accurate results. Hence, students, particularly BSED English majors, may find this motivating to moderate their use of it. Though Quillbot Paraphraser has certain advantages, it should never totally replace human capabilities. Students may still use it for minimal assistance.
4. Future researchers may extend this study or fill its gaps by doing a similar study with some twists. They may write it in a quantitative design to generate more conclusive, factual, reliable, and solid data. They may collect data from other student groups. The researchers recommend they feature senior high school students since they also have experience writing research papers with AI-powered writing tools like Quillbot. Aside from the paraphrasing tool, they may explore other Quillbot features. They are as follows: Grammar Checker, Plagiarism Checker, Summarizer, etc.

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