

## Research Article

# Online Paraphrasing Practices for Academic Writing in Indonesian Higher Education

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This research aims to examine how higher education students paraphrase their academic writing to reduce high Turnitin similarity scores. The research uses a descriptive–qualitative research design. Data were collected through observations and in-depth interviews. The observation was conducted by analyzing 20 higher education students' theses in terms of paraphrasing practices. The in-depth interviews with five selected participants were conducted by asking some questions related to the observation results about paraphrasing practices. Based on the observation and the in-depth interviews, the researcher found that most of the students prefer to do paraphrasing practices online compared to paraphrasing practices manually. In addition, most students already know the meaning of paraphrasing but some students have not applied it adequately. The researchers conclude that online paraphrasing is a great idea that can be used to simplify paraphrasing activities. However, the students need to re-read the results of the paraphrase from the online paraphrase to be analyzed and revised if needed. It is crucial to focus on the overall quality of the paraphrased results, making sure to check for proper word choice and grammar. In addition, further research is required to determine the extent to which the text's original context and meaning have been successfully maintained.

**Keywords:** academic writing, paraphrasing, online paraphrasing tool, Turnitin, higher education

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academic writing skill has become a crucial thing for students, especially at the higher education level [1]. However, many students are still having challenges in doing academic writing. However, many students are still having challenges in doing academic writing. One of the challenges is that they still struggle in including references that they can use to support the arguments of their academic writing [2]. Learning how to effectively include references in academic writing is essential for students to strengthen their arguments and demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter [3–7]. The students have easy access to online sources for academic writing, but face challenges in processing varied materials from journals, e-books, blogs, and websites before use [8,

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9]. In this context, students must master paraphrasing for effective source incorporation and plagiarism prevention in academic writing [10]. Furthermore, understanding the functions of citations and practicing cross-textual reading skills can greatly contribute to students' language and academic development [11].

Paraphrasing skill becomes one of the main concerns in academic writing [12–15]. In order to show comprehension, grasp the material, and cite credible sources to back up remarks, academic writing relies heavily on excellent paraphrasing [16]. In higher education, a student's attempts at paraphrasing can provide “insight into how well students read as well as write” [17]. Due to the ongoing challenges with academic writing, students need to develop their paraphrasing skills, and teachers should provide coaching [18]. Students often struggle with paraphrasing because they want to just repeat the original material [19]. This argument is in line with Shi's research [19], which found that students struggle to comprehend how to paraphrase to avoid plagiarism. Wilhoit agrees that paraphrasing is unlikely to be identical because each writer selects what material to include, what language to use, and how to organize their paraphrasing [20]. After rephrasing the text in their own terms, students should provide due acknowledgment to the original author. When an author paraphrases, they include the original material into their work, demonstrating the author's voice synthesis and mediation [19].

One of the strategies that can be used is utilizing online paraphrasing tools wisely. Students may see the availability of free online paraphrasing tools as a potential solution to these issues [21]. One of the most widely used free paraphrase applications is QuillBot. QuillBot has a product that suggests paraphrases based on artificial intelligence (AI) [22]. QuillBot provides a solution by assisting teachers and students in paraphrasing their writing when paraphrasing manually is very difficult for them. This tool is simple to use. After we write or paste texts and then click the paraphrases button, QuillBot rewrites the texts [23].

Some previous researchers have conducted their research on online paraphrasing tools. The research with the purpose of “highlighting the existence, development, uses, and detection of use of Internet-based paraphrasing tools”. This study found that students can use online paraphrase tools or article spinners to avoid being detected by plagiarism detection technologies including Turnitin® [24]. In addition, a case study in which true plagiarism was discovered in a scientific journal and the original material was compared. The result of the study found that the plagiarized material was created using a paraphrasing tool [25]. Although other research has identified limitations, Fitria

highlights the potential benefits of online paraphrase tools. QuillBot is an AI program that uses state-of-the-art technology to help students rewrite articles efficiently [26].

This research aims at examining how higher education students paraphrase their academic writing in order to reduce high Turnitin similarity scores. The results of this study will contribute to the development of online paraphrasing techniques. The student can get insight into how they can avoid plagiarism by empowering online paraphrasing wisely without ignoring the quality of their thesis writing.

## 2. METHODOLOGY/ MATERIALS

This research applied the descriptive qualitative research design. The primary goal of qualitative research is to provide descriptive, understanding, and interpretation of information [27]. The participants of this research were recruited using a purposive random sampling technique with some considerations. The students are in the process of doing thesis writing. A study employing Turnitin similarity checks was voluntarily participated in by twenty students at STKIP YPUP Makassar. The criteria focused on their experiences with online paraphrase techniques and required a similarity score of less than 30%.

The data were collected through observation and in-depth interviews. The observation was conducted by analyzing 20 higher education students' academic writing in terms of paraphrasing practices. The first student's thesis writing draft who have submitted to turnitin were compared to the last student's thesis writing. By using this method, the researchers find the paraphrasing results to some pieces of the students' thesis writing. There were 182 paraphrases that the researcher used as the data found from the observation. The data obtained from the observation were followed up through in-depth interviews. The in-depth interviews were conducted to 5 selected participants by asking structured interview questions related to the observation results about paraphrasing practices. In analyzing the data, the researcher analyzed 182 paraphrases in order to find out the form and the quality of students' paraphrasing practices. The data from the interviews were analyzed using Miles and Huberman Theory which consist of data collection, data display, data reduction, and conclusion [28].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The objective of this research is how higher education students paraphrase their academic writing in order to reduce high Turnitin similarity scores. In this research, there are some findings based on the observation from the paraphrasing practice in students' academic writing. The findings also came from the in-depth interview with participants.

#### 3.1. Paraphrasing and Similarity Score

The finding shows that after paraphrasing the students can get a low similarity Turnitin index. The following Table 1 shows the Turnitin similarity score after doing paraphrasing.

TABLE 1: Turnitin similarity score after doing paraphrasing.

No	Participants	Words	Number Paraphrases	of	Formal instruction related to paraphrasing	Last Turnitin Similarity score
1	MRB	13083	20		No	26%
2	JDA	14963	16		No	30%
3	SSL	14905	17		Yes	29%
4	NFU	11556	27		Yes	30%
5	SNT	13726	13		Yes	30%
6	HLD	14561	10		Yes	24%
7	NRZ	12210	20		Yes	10%
8	VR	12257	12		Yes	28%
9	RSN	18672	14		Yes	28%
10	MKR	11530	13		Yes	18%
11	WND	14981	20		No	30%

The low Turnitin similarity score found in the students' academic writing shows the effectiveness of paraphrasing in reducing the Turnitin similarity score. However, the results of the study found that the main goal of doing paraphrasing is only to reduce the Turnitin similarity score. The students do not pay attention to the quality of the paraphrases. Based on the observation, it is found that some students do not acknowledge the sources that have been paraphrased. Not acknowledging the sources after paraphrasing can be referred to as plagiarism. In this context, plagiarism could be defined as a student submitting work generated by an internet tool without providing necessary acknowledgment [24]. How the students do not provide the sources after paraphrasing can be seen in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Turnitin similarity score after doing paraphrasing.

Source text	Paraphrase
<p>English as an international language is speak almost all over the world. In the global era, English takes an important role as communication language use in many sector of life, such as trading, bilateral relationship, politic, science, technology and many others. In fact, people use the language to express their feelings, ideas, and desires. English has become the language use by many people over the world to connect and share with another. Therefore, people must understand and master English in order to gain broader knowledge, information, and technology.</p>	<p>English is spoken practically everywhere in the globe as an international language. In the global era, English plays an essential role as a communication language in a variety of fields, including trade, bilateral relations, politics, science, and technology. People do, in fact, utilize the language to convey their emotions, thoughts, and desires. English has become the language of choice for many people around the world to communicate and share information.</p>

It is not in line with the results found in the interview with some of the participants which shows that writing the sources is very important after paraphrasing to those materials which have been used to support the academic writing. One of the reasons why the authors need to acknowledge the sources is because the authors should respect the previous author who has the ideas. The following interview shows the reason for writing the name of the previous authors and an appreciation for the ideas.

*“I mention the source, this is important because mentioning the source is a way to appreciate other people’s work” SSL interview (May, 2021)*

The students were asked, “Did you mention the source after you paraphrase? Why is this important?”. SSL admitted that it is important to write the source after paraphrasing since it is to appreciate the people’s work. In addition, she suggests that in writing a thesis the authors are required to give recognition or appreciation by mentioning the complete reference source.

*My suggestion regarding paraphrasing activities in thesis writing is that paraphrasing is very important in thesis writing but please note that using the thoughts, processes, results or writings of others, whether published or not, must give recognition or appreciation by mentioning the complete reference source. SSL interview (May, 2021)*

### 3.2. Online paraphrasing tools

Based on the observation and interview, it is found that most of the participants prefer to use online paraphrasing tools than doing paraphrasing manually since using online paraphrasing makes it easy to paraphrase their citation that will be used as references in their academic writing. The online paraphrasing tool used by the participants is Quillbot. This is an online tool that helps paraphrase writing to minimize plagiarism, summarize large sentences, and enhance grammar to make it more precise and professional-looking [12]. Figure 1 is an example of using quillbot in paraphrasing.

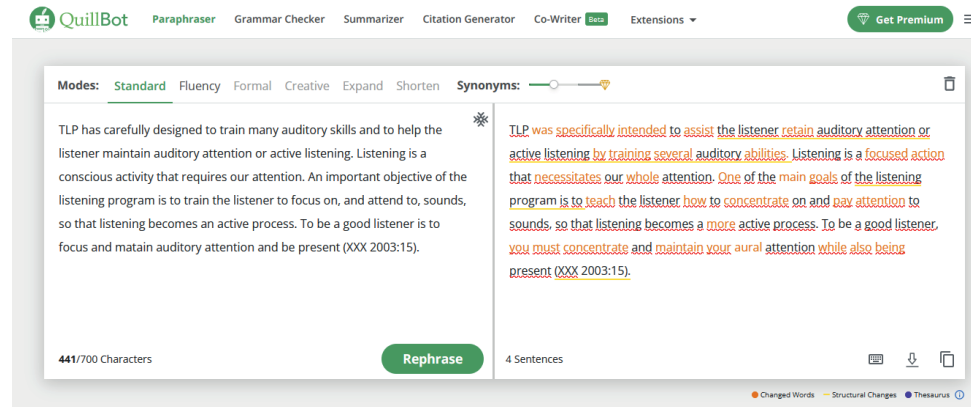


Figure 1: the use of quillbot in paraphrasing.

Although most of the students believe the importance of using an online paraphrasing tool, the participant states that they prefer to use manual paraphrasing to get the high quality of their thesis writing.

*“I do paraphrasing activities by reading several times in order to quickly grasp the meaning, and make quotes, also make similar meanings or synonyms. I prefer manual paraphrasing because the meaning is more natural and easy to understand and the words are connected to each other.” HLD interview (June 2021)*

Doing paraphrasing activities manually or online depends on the students’ self-awareness of the quality of their thesis writing. The students who are concerned about the high quality of their writing will prefer using paraphrasing manually. However, paraphrasing manually needs more knowledge on linguistic adaptation and content re-contextualization [19]. Therefore, many students prefer to use online paraphrasing due to the limited knowledge on this linguistic adaptation and content re-contextualization [24].

TABLE 3: Inappropriate use of synonym.

Source text	Paraphrase	Notes
<b>Converses</b> mean a <b>pair of words implies</b> the other. For example, parent/child, employer/employee. Again, such words are best explained together	<b>Chats</b> mean a couple of words suggests the other. For instance, parent/kid, manager/worker. Once more, such words are best clarified together.	The use of Synonym is not appropriate
<b>Vocabulary</b> is essentially vital in acquiring a speaker’s target language, whether it is the second or foreign language.	<b>Jargon</b> is basically imperative in securing a speaker’s objective language, regardless of whether it is the second or unknown dialect.	The use of Synonym is not appropriate

The above table shows that the participants do not focus on the quality of paraphrasing. The participants use online paraphrasing without revising the misuse of

synonyms. The word “converses” is paraphrased to be “chats” in which “chats” are inappropriately used in the context. This case is the same with the word “vocabulary” which is paraphrased into “jargon”. The word “jargon” is also inappropriately used by the students. It reveals that paraphrasing tools are much more likely to choose inappropriate synonyms [21]. Therefore, students’ self-awareness is required to pay more attention to the results of online paraphrasing. They also mentioned that the resulting language will be famous for its use of non-idiomatic terms and phrases. In most cases, expected vocabulary such as standard terminology will be replaced with incorrect synonyms.

To get a low similarity index, the use of an online paraphrasing tool will be effectively used. However, the quality of the paraphrase should be placed in the first consideration. It notes that word matching tools, such as Turnitin, may fail to recognize the re-engineered text from the source, resulting in a low similarity index that is not necessarily an indication of the actual extent of plagiarism [21]. Doing paraphrasing using an online paraphrasing tool is a good idea as long as the students are aware of the problems they may encounter and find the solution to the problems. The best solution is that the students need to re-read the online paraphrasing results carefully then revise as needed.

The results show that generally prefer using online paraphrasing tools over manual paraphrasing. This finding is supported by the previous studies conducted by [24] which have found that many students struggle with proper paraphrasing techniques and may inadvertently commit plagiarism. In addition, students often perceive online paraphrasing tools as a convenient and time-saving solution to their paraphrasing difficulties. Therefore, it is important for educators to teach students how to effectively use online paraphrasing tools while also emphasizing the need to understand and practice proper paraphrasing skills [24]. Based on the results and previous studies, it is evident that students have a preference for using online paraphrasing tools due to their perceived convenience and time-saving benefits. Based on the results and previous studies, it is evident that students have a preference for using online paraphrasing tools due to their perceived convenience and time-saving benefits. The use of online paraphrasing tools is preferred by students due to the convenience and time-saving benefits they offer, as supported by previous studies [29, 30].

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that most of the students prefer to do paraphrasing practices online compared to paraphrasing practices manually. Paraphrasing online makes it easier for students to get paraphrasing results instantly. Meanwhile, paraphrasing manually takes a long time and sufficient knowledge in changing word, word form, and sentence structure without changing the meaning of the word. In addition, most students already know the meaning of paraphrasing but some students have not applied it adequately in several ways. First, some students did not include sources after paraphrasing activities in several sentences that would support students' arguments in their thesis writing. Second, most students prefer to use online paraphrasing without paying full attention to the quality of their writing. Online paraphrasing is a great idea that can be used to simplify paraphrasing activities. However, students need to have the self-awareness that they should not rely entirely on these online paraphrasing tools. They need to re-read the results of the paraphrase from the online paraphrase to be analyzed and revised if needed. It will be able to improve the quality of writing with a low level of Turnitin similarity score and will have an impact on academic integrity by avoiding plagiarism.

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