

## **Technology-Enhanced Paraphrasing Tool to Improve EFL Students' Writing Achievement and Enjoyment**

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### **Abstract**

*The issue of plagiarism and EFL students' difficulties in writing course appeared to be still the challenging task for teachers. Various efforts in order to increase students' competence in producing a decent writing production are still fascinating until the present time. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine whether the use of Technology-Enhance Paraphrasing Tool (TEPT) can improve EFL students' writing performance. Additionally, the way the students react emotionally towards the use of TEPT in writing class, especially in paraphrasing activities was also measured to by the use of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) questionnaire. Paired sample t-test was employed to 48 students from English Department at one of Private Universities in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The findings showed that there was a significant effect towards the use of TEPT in writing class to improve EFL students writing achievement. In addition, all of the students performed positive emotions during the implementations of TEPT in writing class where the results from FLE questionnaire indicated that the students enjoy and being motivated in joining the writing class. Pedagogical implication of the research also discussed further in this article.*

**Keywords:** *technology-enhanced language learning, online paraphrasing tools, foreign language enjoyment, positive emotions, writing class*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The vital position of writing is obviously because its existence is used to communicate with people around the world. However, its importance cannot be separated from the essence that writing is one of difficult aspects in English language proficiency especially in EFL context. It is because in accomplishing a decent writing, procedural steps and complex elements should be employed in order to produce a valuable piece of writing. Writing becomes very challenging for teachers in teaching the students by using appropriate techniques, as well as for students as they face serious problems on developing their writing competences (Syam, 2020; Noor, 2016). Additionally, an obligation to pass the writing subject is not an instance process to be done just in a day but they need more attempts to practice their writing skills (Styati & Irawati, 2020). Other than that, writing is one of the most demanding skills for students to learn even though sometimes there is still neglectful attitude towards the importance of writing skill for students (Jabali, 2018).

Moreover, the issue of plagiarism in writing still become a trending topic where its existence is harmful to another writer whose writing is taken without citing the author. In this case, both lecturers and researchers detect the case of plagiarism in students' writing (Choi, 2012). Many researchers concern about plagiarism where in many context of writing class, the majority of students use copying as a major strategy in their writing text (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). Many students also in another context of study, found that the biggest problem faced by teachers when teaching writing is that the majority of students do word-for-word plagiarism (Hayuningrum, 2021). Thus, lecturers also work hard on how to make their students to not committing to plagiarism (Choi, 2012).

Furthermore, not only an issue raised regarding plagiarism which has been a trending issue in recent years that needs to be solved, students' barriers in doing paraphrasing is also demanded to be unraveled. In this case, many studies showed that EFL students face barriers in paraphrasing their writing assignment (Frodesen, 2007; Sun, 2009; Akbar, 2020). Specifically, it is difficult for them to express themselves in how doing a good paraphrasing text (Choy & Lee, 2012). Limitation in terms of choice of words (Derakhshan & Shirejini, 2020), grammatical terms when paraphrasing (Mataram, 2021), skills on changing sentence structures and findings academic vocabulary and synonym (Choy & Lee, 2012; Na et al., 2017) are also challenging for students. Other than that, knowledge on how to paraphrase a reading text makes students tends to copy the text to their writing (Phakiti & Li, 2011), therefore they are trapped in copycat activities which is considered to be illegal in academic writing.

It is assumed that a solution should be provided in order to solve students' problems in enhancing their writing ability through paraphrasing activity. The existence of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) might become a great choice to offer to EFL students in writing class. TELL eases both teachers and students in the process of FL teaching and learning due the advantages that they can obtain. As several experts and previous studies supported that the use of TELL is potential to improve the students' writing both in terms of process (Cañado, 2018) and output (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). The existence of technology is proven to be an effective technique to help both teachers and students in the process of FL learning of writing (Styati & Irawati, 2020). With different kind of technology, it will ease

teachers and students in conducting the overall teaching and learning process (Kawinkoonlasate, 2019). By the use of TELL, students will gain new experiences, particularly to the use of advanced technology to enhance their FL learning (Albert, 2013).

Thus, the use of online tool might be beneficial for students, even though in a research done by Choi (2012), both teacher-led and web-based paraphrasing strategies are useful and give positive effect towards the students awareness and performance of paraphrase. Specifically in this study, to reveal Technology-Enhanced Language Learning, an online paraphrasing tool i.e. Quillbot was used as a Technology-Enhanced Paraphrasing Tool (TEPT) to ease students in paraphrasing as it is included as one of valuable online application which function is to paraphrase, avoid plagiarism, summarize sentences, and accommodate precise grammar (Fitria, 2021).

Not limited to the use of Quillbot to enhance the production of paraphrasing text of students, positive emotion of students should be built during writing. In this case, the focus on students' emotions becomes vital in language learning because it will influence the achievement of students' FL learning. Specifically, positive emotions is important to highlight in order to counter negative emotions that might be appeared during FL learning such as boredom, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, discourage, shame, and doubt which are potential to make students lack of engagement in learning (Dewaele, 2011; Dewaele & Pavelescu, 2019). Consequently, the less-engaged students will be less-understood towards the materials and instructions given by the teachers (Farizka et al., 2020). Providing a learning environment which is safe for students in FL learning is vital in stimulating students' risk-taking behaviors (Subekti, 2020). Teachers are suggested to make the learning atmosphere becomes more interesting by being more creative to design kind of challenging learning activities for students (Dewaele, 2015). The use of various kinds of technology will help students in reducing their level of anxiety and increase their motivation. Thus, exploration and experiments towards the use certain technique in boosting students' performance not only in terms of cognitive ability but also from students' emotions side is significant to be investigated (Citrawati et al., 2021).

The study noticed previously explained how technology, specifically TELL as well as investigating students' emotions are two important aspects in FL learning. Therefore, the aim of the research is to investigate whether there is significant difference between students' pre-test and post-test writing score by the use of TEPT in writing class. Additionally, how students perceive the usage of TEPT to help them in enhancing their paraphrasing ability was also analysed. Particularly, the Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) towards the use of TEPT during the writing class was exposed. The objectives of the research are clearly stated on the following research questions (RQ):

- RQ 1: Is there any significant difference between pre-test and post-test from the use of TEPT in writing class?
- RQ 2: To what extent the students' positive emotion reflected in the writing class towards the use of TEPT in students' paraphrasing activities?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to figure out the academic crime such as plagiarism, paraphrase is the right answer to solve this problem. Specifically, an ability to restate a passage or paraphrasing is an important skill to be mastered by students in order to engage in academic writing classrooms (Chen et al., 2015). The aim of paraphrasing is to ease the readers' understanding by the changing of words, expressions, and phrases (Rsichards & Schmidt, 2010). Lecturers can prevent students from plagiarism by an attempt of asking students to use their own words (Esain, 2015). In this case, the most common strategy used in paraphrase is by changing the original text to a paraphrasing text by using students' own words (Choi, 2012). Moreover, in the current context in the learning of English writing, several useful online paraphrasing tools were utilized to ease students to counter their difficulties in writing. The present article presents the use of Quillbot as the choice of alternatives in enhancing students' ability in writing. Thus, the following figures give some description of Quillbot features that both teachers and students can use.

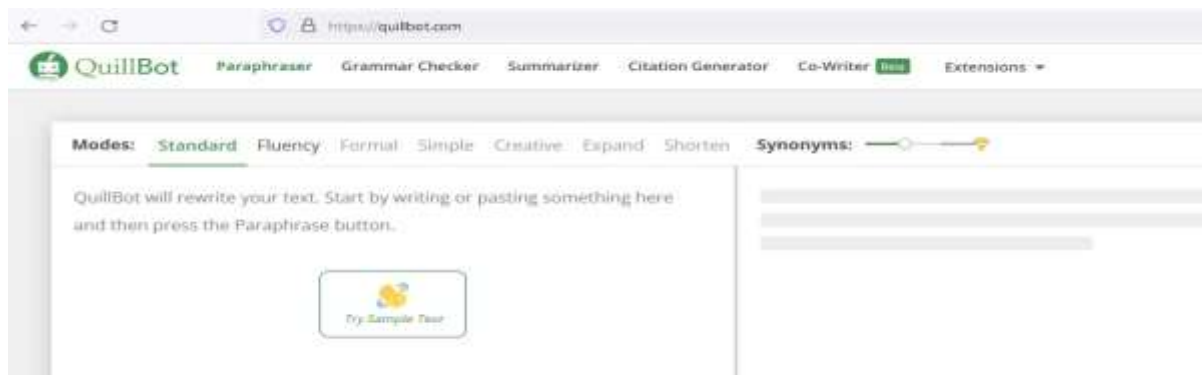


Figure 1. Quillbot Appearance in Website Platform



Figure 2. Quillbot Feature as Paraphraser

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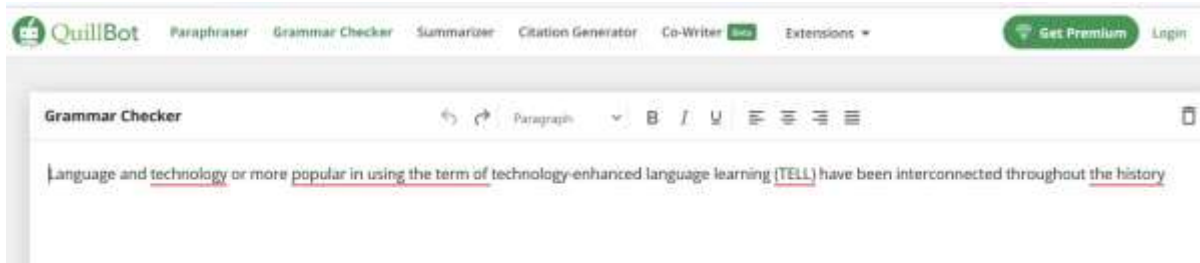


Figure 3. Quillbot Feature as Grammar Checker



Figure 4. Quillbot Feature as Summarizer

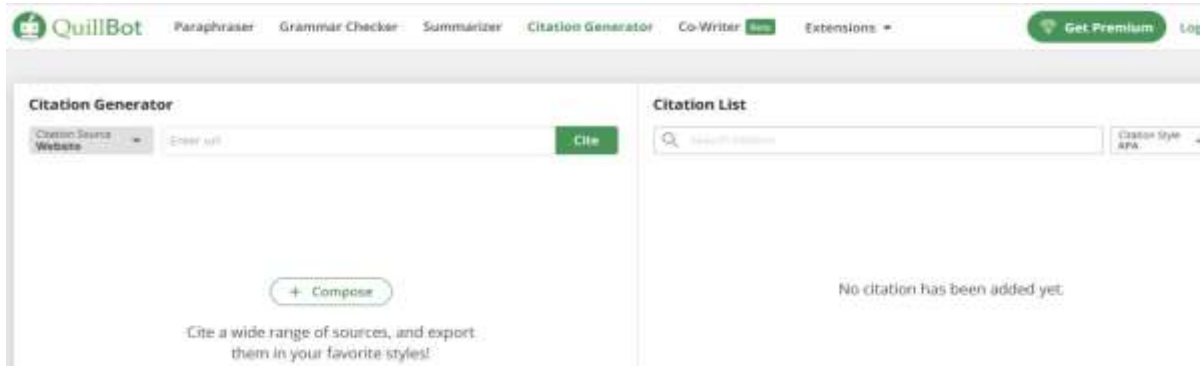


Figure 5. Quillbot Feature as Citation Generator

Based on above displays regarding Quillbot features, there are quite many of menu that students can choose to check for their writing. Even though some features are locked and limited to the premium usage, but the use of Quillbot as paraphraser, grammar checker, summarizer, and citation generator are considered valuable to help students in the process of producing a decent writing.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Quantitative research approach (Kumar, 2011; Cresswell, 2005) was implemented in this study in order to measure and cover the RQ 1 and RQ2, where in this case, statistical computation was employed. In relation to RQ 1, Pre-experimental research design was applied where there was only one group treated by using TEPT then the pre-test and post-test were employed to compare whether there is significant effect on the students' writing score between the pre-test and post-test (Cohen et al., 2017). Moreover, in answering the RQ 2, the researchers instigated a survey study (McKay, 2008) by the use of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) questionnaire to measure for the students' positive emotions, especially related to enjoyment that the students feel during the treatment of TEPT given in writing class.

#### **3.2 Participants**

There were 48 students from English Department in one of Private Universities in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, who became the participants in this study. Specifically, overall students were from the fourth semester students which consisted of two classes where it is assumed that they have similar writing course and treatment during the FL learning.

#### **3.3 Instruments**

Regarding the RQ 1, specifically on the pre-test, the students were asked to paraphrase two paragraphs consisting five experts' theories from books and journal articles manually. Moreover, on the post test, the students were asked to paraphrase a text which contained similar term and condition as the pre-test part by using TEPT, i.e. Quillbot as an online paraphrasing tool. In relation to the RQ 2, the researcher utilized Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) questionnaire with 5-point Likert scale consisting "absolutely disagree" = 1, "disagree" = disagree, "neither agree nor disagree", "agree" = 4, "strongly agree" = 5. In this case, due to the limitations of sources regarding FLE questionnaire, the researchers adapted to the research conducted by Dewaele & MacIntyre (2014) where they distributed the FLE questionnaire to 1746 students with high Cronbach Alpha coefficient (.86).

Specifically, in relation to the questionnaire, the researchers applied ten positive statements adapted from Dewaele & MacIntyre (2016) which include "There is positive environment when using TEPT in writing class", "There is good atmosphere when using TEPT in writing class", "It is encouraging to use TEPT in writing class", "I enjoy to use TEPT in writing class", "It is fun to use TEPT in writing class", "I do not get bored when using TEPT in writing class", "I learn interesting things when using TEPT in writing class", "It is cool to know TEPT in writing class", "I feel worthy when using TEPT in writing class", and "I do not worry about making mistakes when using TEPT in writing class".

#### **3.4 Data Analysis**

In relation to the RQ 1, the researchers used SPSS software in terms of normality test as well as analyzing the pre-test and post-test scores. Additionally, the researchers also

displayed the effect size with APA report proposed by Pallant (2011) in order to determine how is the effect size towards the treatment, whether small, moderate or large towards the students' writing performance. Regarding the RQ 2, the researcher utilized 5-point Likert scale to measure the result gained from the FLE questionnaire.

#### 4. FINDINGS

##### 4.1. RQ 1: The Effect of TEPT in Improving EFL Students' Achievement

In this section, before analyzing the students' pre-test and post-test writing scores, the researchers checked the normality of data distribution by using descriptive analysis test. As the result from following Q-Q Plot test to both pre-test and post-test was normally distributed, therefore, Paired Sample T-test was employed in order to measure the significant effect towards the use of TEPT in writing class.

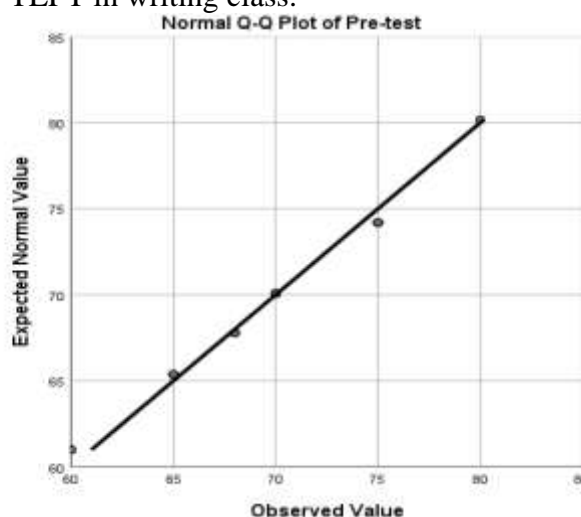


Figure 6. Normality Test of Pre-test Result Using Q-Q Plot

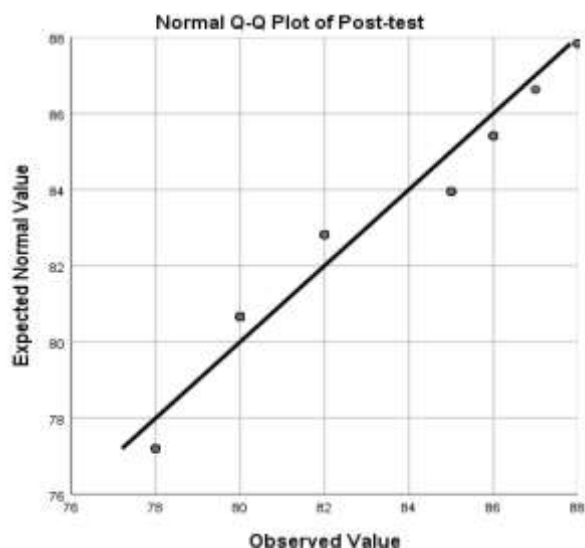


Figure 7. Normality Test of Post-test Result Using Q-Q Plot

Table 1. Paired Sample T-test Result

Treatment	Mean	N	SD	t	Sig. two-tailed
Pre-test	69.3125	48	4.87790	-17.819	.000
Post-test	82.1667	48	3.09655	-17.819	.000

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the use of TEPT in improving EFL writing achievement. There was a statistically significant increase writing score from pre-test (M = 69.31, SD = 4.87) to post-test (M = 82.16), SD = 3.09),  $t(48) = -17.81$ ,  $p < .005$  (two-tailed). The eta squared statistically (.87) indicated a large effect size.

**4.2. RQ 2: FLE of EFL Students towards the Use of TEPT in Writing Class**

Table 2. Five-Point Likert Scale Summary

Items	Absolutely disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	43.80%	27	56.30%
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	39.60%	29	60.40%
3	-	-	-	-	1	2.10%	21	43.80%	26	54.20%
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	20.80%	38	79.20%
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	58.30%	20	41.70%
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	35.40%	31	64.60%
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	62.50%	18	37.50%
8	-	-	-	-	4	8.30%	35	72.90%	9	18.80%
9	-	-	-	-	18	37.50%	25	52.10%	5	10.40%
10	-	-	-	-	6	12.50%	31	64.60%	11	22.90%

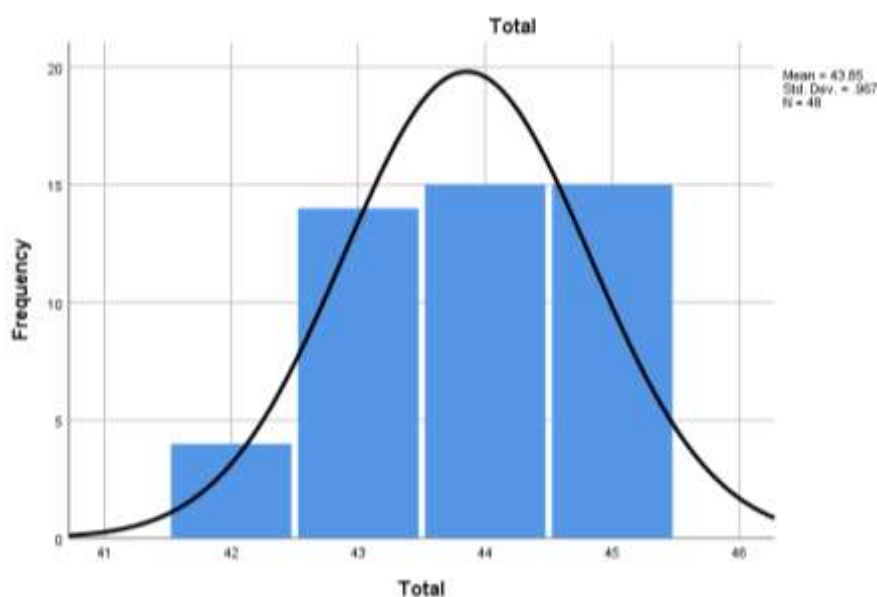


Figure 8. Total Result from FLE Questionnaire



## **5. DISCUSSION**

From the results displayed on the findings section, it is indicated that EFL writing score in paraphrasing activities was significantly increased in post-test result. This finding is confirmed to the previous findings which stated that the use of online paraphrasing tool is beneficial in giving significant effect to the students' writing production (Choi, 2012; Fitria, 2021). It is also quite provoking that the use of Quillbot as part of TELL is beneficial to ease students' FL learning, therefore technology is highly suggested to be used in FL learning (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). TELL can incorporate successfully in the process of teaching and learning in FL context (Taj et al., 2017) and provide facilities to various online media that both teachers and students can use (Bush, 2008; Bloch, 2013; Chapelle, 2001). Other previous research also proved that technology used can give a significant effect to students' writing quality (Styati & Irawati, 2020).

Moreover, regarding the findings gained from RQ 2, the results from FLE questionnaire reveal that all students performed positive emotions towards most of items mentioned on the questionnaire. The students were motivated in joining the writing class especially to the activities of TEPT by using Quillbot. The findings of the research confirm to several previous studies where by having students maintained in positive condition, it indeed has high impact to students' performance in FL learning especially to decrease negative feelings of students that might occur (Jin et al., 2020; Chen, 2020). Other than that, a research from Farizka et al. (2020) proved that students who are enjoy in FL leaning, they can engage more to the process of learning and get the essential meaning of the materials. On the contrary, Farizka et al. (2020) added that students who are not engage to the learning will usually failed in understanding teachers' instructions. It is also confirmed by the study conducted by Sun (2007) that students are almost welcome and having a positive attitude towards the use of technology to enhance their FL ability, especially their writing competence. The findings of the current study also supported by a research conducted by also mentioned that technology used in FL learning especially in writing course raised students' encouragement (Meysarah, 2018).

After highlighting the findings of the study so far, the researchers come to the novelty of the research is that the students can learn not only how to substitute some words to their synonymy in order to make a decent production of paraphrasing text, but from the TEPT i.e. Quillbot features, they can simply use more than just paraphrasing tool, but also to grammar check that they feel it is crucial in writing. The findings and the comparison among above studies and the current research drive a pedagogical implication of the research that students in EFL context are still in needs of technology touch so hat they can always try new experiences in FL learning then they can shape their learning strategies to what technique or media they prefer to learn. In addition, the research which is still demanded in the present time is not only related to TELL, but also students' emotions and enjoyment in joining the FL learning. Therefore, it is suggested for further studies to elaborate between TELL and positive psychology aspects as the focus of study in the future.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

From above findings and discussion, the researchers can simply conclude this study to several major points i.e. (1) there was significant effect towards the use of TEPT in

improving EFL students' writing achievement, (2) all of students performed positive emotions towards the implementation of TEPT n writing class. The positive emotions revealed i.e. the feeling of fun, motivation, enjoyment, and away from boredom during the writing course, especially to the paraphrasing activities in the classroom. As the result from this research was typically giving a description on how students perform a very positive atmosphere, it is suggested to further studies to have more explorations on the study regarding TELL utilization, and how it contributes to the well-being and positive emotions of the students in FL learning.

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