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### The Quillbot Involvement and Paraphrasing Skills among Pre-Service English Teachers of Cebu Normal University

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#### Abstract

Paraphrasing is a crucial writing skill that allows learners to deconstruct text and comprehend its meaning. Recent research has identified paraphrasing as a challenging skill for second language learners. As a solution, they opt to use an online paraphrasing tool called Quillbot. Quillbot is a piece of technology software that automates the process of rewriting text. Therefore, this descriptive quantitative study aims to describe the levels of involvement of Quillbot and students' proficiency in paraphrasing skills within the Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English program at Cebu Normal University - Main Campus. The researchers used two standardized questionnaires, one from a study by Michela Sandra Arizina & Dina Merris Mayasari (2021) <sup>[2]</sup> to measure Quillbot involvement and another created by Eto

(2022) <sup>[8]</sup> to evaluate paraphrasing skills. These questionnaires were administered to sixty second-year English major students selected through Stratified Random Sampling. The researchers used descriptive analysis to analyze the data. Results indicate that the second-year English major students were 'Involved' in Quillbot as an A.I. paraphrasing tool and also revealed their level of paraphrasing skills, garnering 'Excellent' remarks. The results of this study imply that integrating Quillbot could be advantageous in enhancing the paraphrasing abilities of second language learners. In acknowledgment of the study's limitations, recommendations based on the results were also addressed.

**Keywords:** Pre-Service Teachers, English Teachers, Paraphrasing Skills, Quillbot Involvement

#### Introduction

The involvement of Quillbot in Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English students' paraphrasing skills can have a significant impact, ranging from improved understanding of sentence structure and writing fluency to over-reliance and loss of critical thinking. The most valuable asset a student should possess is the ability to write. Writing enhances their ability to communicate, encourages creativity, and helps them remember and comprehend the subject matter better. An effective writer uses vocabulary, paraphrasing, and structured language when writing. Writing, in this sense, is a skill that requires all abilities in order to organize ideas and communicate with readers. Students should be able to use the appropriate words based on how the paragraphs are structured (Fitria, 2021) <sup>[9]</sup>. With the speed of life today, technology is becoming more accessible, widespread, and all-pervasive as it develops. Today's technology changes how students think and write. It inevitably disrupts educators' current educational strategies (Aswin, *et al.* 2022) <sup>[4]</sup>. It is important researchers study the impacts of Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly AI paraphrasers, on English majors. The more they use the technology the more their skills are dependent on AI. Relying solely on it for paraphrasing without actively engaging in the learning process. It is critical that students develop their own paraphrasing skills rather than relying solely on AI, and that they understand and analyze the content they are paraphrasing independently. It is also critical that students have a thorough understanding of their source material in order to ensure learning and accurate paraphrasing. Consequences must be considered, whether positive or negative, in order to learn how to use the tool and navigate it for better learning and teaching.

In this age of digital technology students now rely heavily on technology to learn, create, and collaborate in novel ways, to aid them in succeeding academically. One particular AI that is popular among English majors is Quillbot, an artificial intelligent paraphrasing tool. Quillbot uses modern natural language processing (NLP) techniques that are employed to assist users in

writing more effectively, coming up with new phrases, and enhancing the clarity and standard of their content. The ability of Quillbot to successfully paraphrase text is one of its key capabilities. Quillbot generates substitutes while maintaining the meaning of the original when students enter a word, sentence, or paragraph. A paraphrasing tool can be either beneficial or detrimental to writers and students who are seeking to avoid plagiarism, break down difficult words, or have trouble expressing themselves. On the positive side, it can assist students in overcoming academic writing challenges and learning power strategies. Excessive use of paraphrasing tools, on the other hand, can impair their critical thinking skills and the ability to analyze grammar structures (Miranda, 2021) <sup>[7]</sup>. According to studies, paraphrasing tools can help with grammar but have a limited impact on readability and plagiarism prevention. Quillbot paraphraser is useful to students, and it has aided their academic success. However, concerns have been raised about the tool's precision (Kavanagh, 2022) <sup>[11]</sup>. According to Quillbot's own statistics, the Philippines is its number one user of 2022.

In terms of its importance, research has shown that the advancement of technology has provided students with an indefinite amount of tools that offer assistance, one of which is in the field of writing, specifically Quillbot, a paraphrasing AI. The study aims to describe the involvement level of Quillbot on Pre-service English Teachers paraphrasing skill. In an era where plagiarism has become increasingly apparent and academic integrity is a paramount concern, the ability to effectively paraphrase is a vital academic skill. By examining the level of involvement of Quillbot in the paraphrasing skills of Pre-Service English Teachers, we aim to shed light on the broader implications of integrating AI tools into education and the evolving academic skills in the digital age.

The researchers noticed the rapid development of technology which expanded the access of paraphrasing tools such as Quillbot and with the use of technology being steadily accepted, the researchers aim to describe the level of involvement of Quillbot in Pre-Service English Teachers paraphrasing skills. The researchers would like to contribute the findings of the study by creating discussions or seminars regarding the involvement of Quillbot with the Pre-Service English Teachers paraphrasing skill and to also bring into attention the emerging practice of using Quillbot to the students, teachers and the institutions.

### Statement of the Problem

The study determines the involvement of the Quillbot tool and Pre-Service English Teachers' paraphrasing skills. Specifically, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the students;
  1. Year level
  2. Age
  3. Sex
2. What is the level of the students' paraphrasing skills?
3. What is the level of students' involvement in Quillbot A.I?
4. What are further recommendations?

### Materials and Methods

#### Design

This study utilized a Descriptive Quantitative research method. According to Sirisilla (2023) <sup>[13]</sup>, the descriptive research design entails the observation and gathering of data

on a specific subject without attempting to infer cause-and-effect relationships. Relatively, the method is appropriate to this study since it aims to describe the level of involvement of Quillbot and the paraphrasing skills of Pre-Service English Teachers.

#### Informants and Sampling Design

The study focused on second-year Pre-Service English Teachers at Cebu Normal University as its primary respondents. A total of sixty students were selected randomly through a Stratified Random Sampling technique, with 20 students chosen from each of the three blocks: A, B, and C. Among these participants, there were 51 females and 9 males, aged between 18 and 22 years old. According to Frost, J. (2019), stratified sampling is an effective method for securing a representative sample from a population by categorizing it into relatively similar subpopulations, or strata. In this study, researchers utilized a stratified random sampling approach to guarantee the inclusion of all second-year Pre-Service English Teachers at Cebu Normal University. This approach aimed to provide a well-rounded representation of the target group.

#### Locale

This study was conducted at Cebu Normal University - Main Campus, which is situated on Osmeña Boulevard, Cebu City, 6000. Cebu Normal University is a learning institution with three college departments, namely, the College of Nursing, the College of Teacher Education, and the College of Arts and Sciences, along with its Integrated Laboratory School.

#### Instrumentation

The researchers utilized standardized questionnaires to gather data from the respondents. Two separate questionnaires were used to measure the respondents' Quillbot involvement and their paraphrasing skills. The questionnaire used to assess their involvement was obtained from the study conducted by Michela Sandra Arizina & Dina Merris Mayasari (2021) <sup>[2]</sup>. In contrast, the questionnaire for evaluating their paraphrasing skills was created by Eto (2022) <sup>[8]</sup> and included its answer key. Since the study had a quantitative nature, the researchers used questionnaires as the research instrument. Questionnaires were chosen because they had proven to be a valuable survey instrument for efficiently assessing large populations (Jones, et. al., 2013) <sup>[10]</sup>. The questionnaires were administered through Google Forms to collect data from the respondents.

#### Data Gathering Procedure

A letter of invitation was sent to second-year Pre-Service English Teachers at Cebu Normal University through various social media platforms. This was used to request their permission to participate in the study. Once the students granted their approval, the informed consent form was provided to the participants via Google Forms, followed by the distribution of a survey questionnaire. After the survey questionnaire had been completed, a twenty-peso token was issued to the participating students through a digital wallet called Gcash.

#### Data Analysis

The data gathered was analyzed using a descriptive

statistical tool that summarized and described the collected data in a logical and significant manner. The researchers collected the data from the survey conducted with the randomly chosen respondents, and the results were then interpreted by the statistician to determine the level of involvement of Quillbot paraphrasing tool and the paraphrasing skills of the Pre-Service English Teachers at Cebu Normal University.

*Ethical Consideration*

The study was conducted with approval by the university's Research Ethics Committee (REC). During the data collection, the researchers ensured that the respondents were fully informed about the research, its purpose, and potential risks and benefits. They were provided with informed consent to participate voluntarily, with the option to withdraw at any point without consequences. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, the respondents' identities were concealed and replaced with pseudonyms. Additionally, each respondent received compensation as a token of the researcher's appreciation for their active engagement in the study and recognition of the essential role they played in it.

**Results and Discussions**

**Table 1:** Test Scores of Respondents' Paraphrasing Skill

Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
17.18	17	1.87	Excellent

Table 1 shows the scores of the respondents' paraphrasing skills with a mean of 17.18, 17 median and a standard deviation of 1.87. The test scores of the respondents imply that the respondents have an excellent paraphrasing skill.

The figures in Table 1 from the study indicate that the respondents have excellent paraphrasing skills. The respondents performed well on average, determined by the mean score of 17.18. Half of the respondents scored at or above the median score of 17. Additionally, the results feature a low standard deviation of 1.87, indicating that they fall fairly close to the mean, indicating consistency among the respondents' paraphrasing skills.

Having proficient paraphrasing skills is crucial, especially for academic writers, as the use of formal language and the avoidance of plagiarism are obligatory in scholarly writing. Paraphrasing is a fundamental skill especially in university as it is an operating community of academic thinkers. It is important for individuals to handle others' ideas with integrity while simultaneously bringing their own unique perspectives to the learning environment (Williamson, 2021)<sup>[17]</sup>. Moreover, Dung (2010) stated that paraphrasing is commonly used by university students. The method is done to demonstrate the students' abilities in engaging and understanding the ideas or concepts they have received during learning.

**Table 2:** Level of Students' Involvement in Quillbot

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
1. Quillbot is an easily accessible digital tool.	4.47	0.68	Strongly Agree	Highly Involved
2. Quillbot's features greatly assist me in academic writing.	3.60	1.00	Agree	Involved
3. The Quillbot application is effective because it helps me improve my quality of writing.	3.47	0.98	Agree	Involved
4. The Quillbot application encourages me to write and reduces my writing anxiety.	3.27	1.13	Neutral	Somehow Involved
5. Using the Quillbot application boosts my confidence in my writing.	3.28	1.12	Neutral	Somehow Involved
6. By using the Quillbot application my writing skills in organizing text have improved.	3.32	1.07	Neutral	Somehow Involved
7. Unconsciously, my vocabulary particularly the terms used in academic writing have increased.	3.28	1.08	Neutral	Somehow Involved
8. Using Quillbot application to write academic essay has improved my grammar skills.	3.38	1.08	Neutral	Somehow Involved
9. I prefer Quillbot over other apps.	2.83	0.98	Neutral	Somehow Involved
10. I can write efficiently and my writing gets better results when I use the Quillbot app.	3.17	1.04	Neutral	Somehow Involved
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Involved</b>

  

Range	Verbal Description	Qualitative Interpretation
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Not Involved
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Poorly Involved
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral	Somehow Involved
3.41 – 4.20	Agree	Involved
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Involved

The table shows the average of student's involvement with AI Quillbot with 3.41 mean and 0.81 standard deviation. Both results show strong involvement when associating their paraphrasing skills with usage of AI Quillbot.

Moreover, the study shows how students positively assessed themselves as 'involved' with AI Quillbot as the Paraphrasing tool. The use of this tool in their academic writings improve the quality of their works and elevate their confidence upon submission. Similar to the study of Sulistyaningrum (2021)<sup>[14]</sup>, the findings indicate that 16 out of 27 respondents, or 59.29%, had used an online paraphrasing tool with the motive of enhancing content, structure, and language. This study has also revealed that one of the significant roles of online paraphrasing tools is to ensure appropriate use of grammars and their involvement is a result of challenges with sentence structure, limited vocabulary, and poor paraphrasing strategies.

Based on the data gathered above, it is also in clear evidence that the student's involvement is because of AI Quillbot's features and accessibility that have been a great assistant in academic writing which generates the highest mean value

for accessibility of 4.47 and for its feature of 3.60. In relation with AI Quillbot's feature, A study by Abdelli (2022) about AI Quillbot Involvement among EFL students (English as a Foreign Language) has also confirmed that the aid of the application's features are useful in making sure that the student's work is comprehensible and has no error. It helps the students in producing high-quality content because of its system generated rephrasing sentences. Not only does it paraphrase but it has different features that are used for detecting grammar errors, suggesting synonyms, and summarizing texts. The paraphrasing tool known as Quillbot stands out as a widely used application in the realm of AI. Quillbot provides a service leveraging artificial intelligence to suggest rephrased content, ensure grammatical accuracy, generate summaries, and identify instances of plagiarism. On the contrary, As Quillbot became an interesting AI tool, there were still shortfalls in regard with its accuracy in grammar and paraphrase level such as missed errors and incorrect word suggestions that would fall out of context. (Chui, 2021) [6]. Another point of caution involves the possibility that AI writing tools, like Quillbot, may lead to overly complex language. While Quillbot has the capacity to introduce students to a more extensive vocabulary, there is a risk that students may use these words without a full grasp of their context or connotations, potentially resulting in awkward or excessively formal writing. Expanding the vocabulary is advantageous, but the foremost priorities should always be clarity and precision (Marzuki, Utami Widiati, Diyenti Rusdin, Darwin & Inda Indrawati, 2023) [12].

### Conclusion

This descriptive-quantitative research concludes that the Pre-service English Teachers at Cebu Normal University exhibit an adequate level of involvement with Quillbot as an AI paraphrasing tool. Given the study's descriptive nature, the researchers found a correlation; however, they were limited to assess the level of correlation and the impacts associated with it.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the researchers aim to contribute to the academic community by distributing the study's findings through discussions, seminars, and workshops. By encouraging the implementation and application of Quillbot in education, the findings can play a significant role in assisting educational stakeholders in making decisions about the use of AI technology like Quillbot in language instruction. Future research should explore the role of Quillbot in improving English paraphrasing skills among Bachelor of Secondary Education students. In-depth qualitative studies could provide insights into students' experiences and preferences. Evaluating the long-term impact of Quillbot on students' paraphrasing abilities will help determine its long-term influence.

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