

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is seen as a challenging activity, especially when writing a thesis for higher education students. Writing a thesis requires students to be able to write their opinions and findings academically. Besides, include other experts' theories as supporting ideas for the discussed topic should be performed. Usually, they use expert theories by paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is very well known as an essential strategy in avoiding the plagiarism accusation. However, many EFL students believe it is challenging to become proficient in paraphrasing (Song, 2020). In fact, students tend to lack confidence in paraphrasing an article (Akbar, 2020). It is proven by the research conducted by Thadphoothon (2019) that students face three challenges in paraphrasing: minimum vocabulary mastery, grammatical rules, including syntax, and comprehending the text. These three factors are closely related to each other. If students need to learn the words' meaning, they will understand the authors' message, which could lead to interpretation. As a result, students are afraid to paraphrase due to their weaknesses in comprehending and re-explaining utterances.

Nevertheless, with the advancement of technology, various artificial intelligence tools would help students write, especially paraphrasing such as QuillBot. In this case, QuillBot was informed and recommended to be used in Academic Reading and Writing class by the lecturer to help students in paraphrasing. It is one of the AI paraphrasing tools familiar to students to support their difficulties in paraphrasing. It assists by using various sentence structures and several paraphrasing styles, such as standard, fluency, formal, simple, creative, expand, shorten (Miranda, 2021), and custom modes. However, only Standard and Fluency modes are available for free access, and the remaining modes are accessible exclusively in premium mode. Additionally, it provides four types of English: British, American, Canadian, and Australian English.

In comparison, it provides more writing styles and synonym suggestions to other paraphrasing tools such as Grammarly, Paraphraser.io, Duplichecker, and so on. Additionally, each writing style gives a minimum three sentence choices for the users and it is adjustable with the synonyms of each word offered, which means that QuillBot offers more benefits and convenience for the users. For example, three levels of synonyms are available; the lower level displays fewer changes, and the user can replace each word with a customized synonym or filler list. Besides, it has no advertisements on the screen and is easier to use. As a result, this application has been recommended for use by various people, including students, writers, bloggers, and lecturers. (Chapelle and Sauro, 2019)

Thus, to ascertain the utilization of QuillBot to paraphrase in thesis writing among students, pre-interviews were conducted with several 8th-semester students who were composing their thesis at a university located in Tasikmalaya. It is found that students find it difficult to manually paraphrase text due to a lack of vocabulary, grammatical rules, and understanding of the text. Then, as a result, they tend to use online paraphrasing tools to help them write more academically, in which QuillBot is the most popular.

Several studies have been conducted on the advantages of using QuillBot on students' writing skills. First, Fitria (2021) aimed to evaluate the free and paid versions of QuillBot, an artificial intelligence (AI) tool system that assists students in rewriting and paraphrasing English writing. The study used document analysis as the research methodology. The results showed that QuillBot provides an alternative by assisting students in paraphrasing when they do not have the proficiency to manually paraphrase English writing by "1) paraphrasing by using equations or synonyms, 2) paraphrasing by changing the form of the word, 3) paraphrasing by using active or passive sentences, and 4) paraphrasing by changing the order of words in sentences." (p. 183). The second is the study conducted by Nurmayanti and Suryadi (2023). The study aimed to investigate if the use of QuillBot reduces cases of plagiarism among students. Undergraduate students actively studying at Riau University were examined using a questionnaire of 15 questions. The results reveal that students find it less challenging to experiment

with paraphrasing. Hence, using QuillBot to enhance one's English scientific writing is worthwhile. From the explanation, this tool has supportive tools for students to increase their ability to develop writing competencies.

However, despite several studies that have been conducted, as listed above, research has yet to discuss disadvantages of using QuillBot for paraphrasing skills for students who write a thesis based on their perception. Since the previous researcher always examines the advantages and students focus more on the advantages they experienced while using this tool. However, there always be the upside down effect from the benefits of a tool. Therefore, to fill the gap, the researcher intended to reveal the students' perception related to the disadvantages of using QuillBot through in-depth interviews.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

The primary goal of this research is to provide a response to the question "What are the advantages and disadvantages of using QuillBot in paraphrasing ability while writing thesis based on student perspective?"

## **1.3 Operational Definitions**

To avoid misunderstandings, the operational definition clarifies the following concepts connected to the topic of this study:

- 1.3.1 Students' Perception** : The opinion formed as a result of the students' selection, organization, and interpretation of information inputs and experiences.
- 1.3.2 Paraphrasing** : A method of writing in which a writer modifies an existing statement by rewriting it in his or her own words, typically by altering the sentence structure, the clause, or the synonym.
- 1.3.3 QuillBot** : A software web-application powered by artificial intelligence (AI) that can automatically rephrase sentences in an online setting.

#### **1.4 Aim of the Research**

This research will investigate the advantages and disadvantages of using QuillBot towards students' paraphrasing ability.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to assist students and readers, particularly EFL learners who are in the process of writing a thesis, in improving their writing. Furthermore, this research will help to expand on the previous theory about the benefits and drawbacks of using QuillBot as a pager. Also, the study's findings will inform readers about how the QuillBot affects students' ability to paraphrase.