

Vietnamese University Students' Perceptions of Using QuillBot to Improve Their English Language Writing Performances

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Abstract—Writing is one of the four basic skills that learners must master when learning a language. To improve language skills, in addition to hard practice, students today are also supported by many artificial intelligence (AI) applications. The aim of the study is to uncover students' perceptions of using QuillBot to improve their English language writing performances. The research project was conducted at a university in Vietnam with the participation of 90 fourth-year students majoring in English language. The data collection tools were questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The research results indicated that students considered QuillBot an effective tool to improve their writing performances, especially their grammar and vocabulary. 100% of the participants believe that QuillBot helped them write more and reduce errors. In other words, students had positive attitudes toward utilizing QuillBot in the writing process. The findings of the study also provide evidence for educators to consider integrating AI tools like QuillBot into their teaching methods to support the development of students' English writing performances.

Index Terms—Vietnamese university students, perceptions, QuillBot, writing performances, paraphrasing

I. INTRODUCTION

The field of education has witnessed significant advancement with the help of technology recently. It is a given that the application of technology in classrooms has greatly improved English teaching and learning. Rao (2019) emphasized the importance of technology in improving English writing performances. According to Katemba (2020), teachers of English are increasingly using computer technology to engage learners and arouse their passion for language learning. With the advancements in technology, language learners now have access to information and tools to enhance their writing performances, thereby strengthening their English communication skills. Thanks to fresh and creative methods, online learning environments and writing resources have entirely changed how writing skills are developed and acquired (Alammar & Eman, 2023).

In the process of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), the ability to write is considered crucial. Learners must become proficient in this ability to communicate effectively. They often find writing difficult since it requires a lot of knowledge and other language skills as well as their cognitive and thinking abilities (Laila & Daulay, 2024). Writing is not only a way to demonstrate spelling, punctuation, and grammar; it is also associated with conveying ideas. Recently, several teachers have integrated AI applications to enhance the effectiveness of teaching English writing skills to learners, along with applying new teaching methods, and QuillBot is one of the helpful choices (Ha, 2023).

Simanjuntak et al. (2022) argue that EFL students can use technology to improve their language skills, including writing. Fitria's (2021) research results show that students' writing performances increase when they use technology in their learning process. According to Ha (2023), QuillBot helps improve students' English essay writing skills, especially in grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, and coherence. They enjoyed their experience with QuillBot and were willing to continue using the tool and recommend it to others. El-Garawany (2024) also indicates that QuillBot can improve EFL learners' writing performances, especially reducing writing anxiety. Most students in several different research projects had positive attitudes toward QuillBot and reported that the tool helped them write better and make fewer errors (Mohammad et al., 2023; Laila & Daulay, 2024; Ha, 2023; El-Garawany, 2024).

For academic writing, QuillBot is particularly useful for its paraphrasing service (Yoandita & Hasnah, 2024; Mohammad et al., 2024). Mohammad et al. (2024) claim that EFL teachers can utilize QuillBot to encourage students to learn, enhance their paraphrasing abilities, and modify their teaching strategies to accommodate technology. According to Nurmayanti and Suryadi (2023), students can utilize the software to paraphrase texts without altering their contents. Mohammad et al. (2023) demonstrated that using AI-based online paraphrasing tools helps students paraphrase more effectively. Similarly, Syahnaz and Fithriani (2023) discovered that AI enhanced students' paraphrasing abilities.

The researcher works as a university teacher and has directly taught English writing skills to students for many years. In teaching practice, the author often introduces and guides students to use QuillBot as a support tool to strengthen their writing skills. Using QuillBot has proven effective in enhancing students' English writing performances, as evidenced by their final exam results. To gather additional evidence regarding the impacts of QuillBot on the writing process, the author conducted a research project that investigated fourth-year students' perceptions of using this support tool to

enhance their English language writing performances. The findings of the study are expected to answer the following two research questions:

- (1) How does Quillbot positively impact students' writing process?
- (2) What are the benefits of using Quillbot in the writing process?

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. Writing Performance

According to Crusan (2013), writing performance is the learners' capacity to compose logical and productive essays. Sharing the same perspective with Crusan (2013), Cheung (2016) characterizes writing performance as the creation of a proficient written work aimed at achieving a particular objective. Patchan et al. (2016) assert that writing quality is improved through repeated tasks. Ferris (2018) also means that learners must possess advanced control over both linguistic and extralinguistic features (such as vocabulary, spelling, grammar, cohesive ties, punctuation, capitalization, and formatting) that are suitable for the content, style, and intended readers of their writing. Actually, writing performance encompasses the evaluation of distinct skills, including (1) content fulfillment, (2) organizational development, (3) vocabulary proficiency, (4) grammatical knowledge, and (5) mechanical accuracy (El-Garawany, 2024). According to El-Garawany (2024), content fulfillment assesses the extent to which learners effectively engage with a given topic; organizational development evaluates the capacity of learners to structure and articulate their ideas coherently; vocabulary proficiency refers to learners' capacity to employ accurate and diverse lexical choices; grammatical knowledge involves learners' proficiency in applying English grammar rules through the use of various sentence structures with minimal linguistic errors; and mechanical accuracy, in Kim (2011), pertains to learners' compliance with English academic writing conventions regarding spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Thus, learners must comprehend and adhere to the appropriate writing process, which encompasses stages of brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising, proofreading, etc.

Writing performance denotes the capacity to articulate ideas, emotions, information, or any thought through a coherent text. It includes the development and presentation of one's ideas in a structured and intelligible language, in addition to being a visual depiction of speech. Writing performance is considered an important part of communication, and improving it has become a necessity, as it helps connect with a large audience in a clear and effective way. Safdari (2021) asserts that writing plays a significant role in assessing the academic performances of language learners. However, writing is seen as the most difficult skill in acquiring a language. According to Rass (2015), writing is not an easy skill for both native and non-native speakers. Unlike learning to speak, learning to write a cohesive text is a challenging and extensive accomplishment in learners' cognitive development (Kellogg & Raulerson, 2008). For those learning English as a foreign language, writing skills can be a challenge since the writing process requires learners to focus on several different aspects, such as content, knowledge, structure, purpose, readers, vocabulary, grammatical structures, etc. To improve writing performance, learners need to be motivated to learn, have systematic guidance from teachers, actively interact with classmates, and, most importantly, spend enough time practicing.

El-Garawany (2024) states that learners require effective pedagogical strategies to enhance their writing performances and navigate the writing process, which becomes more embedded through practice and experience. Written corrective feedback, according to Lee (2017), is regarded as an effective instructional technique for improving learners' writing performances as well as prompting revision. It offers learners individualized and contextualized feedback activities from the teachers, which indicates their learning progress, presents advice and explanation for improvement, and engages them in future practice tasks (El-Garawany, 2024). Teachers view written corrective feedback as a necessary yet demanding activity because of so many tasks and the large number of learners (Ahmed, 2016; Sayed & Curabba, 2020; Ouahidi & Lamkhanter, 2020). Employing automated feedback can be advantageous, particularly during the revision stage (Li, 2021; Zhang, 2020). Wigglesworth and Storch (2012) emphasize that the collaborative processing of feedback promotes active engagement and enhances learners' motivation. As a result, collaborative writing is proposed to support writing steps using QuillBot for learners to communicate with each other, divide tasks, and make decisions together to create a single piece of writing (El-Garawany, 2024). Odo (2024) examined the collaborative use of AWE (LanguageTool) and DWA (Wordtune) by learner-teachers in an essay writing course. Post-reflections from learners indicated that AI feedback facilitated the correction of grammar and word-choice errors, thereby enhancing the quality of their writing through immediate suggestions provided. Wiboolyarsin et al. (2024) carried out a 10-week program with 39 Thai college students, using a clear three-step method: first, they worked together on outlines using a wiki; then they wrote independently with help from ChatGPT; and finally, they collaborated again on the final drafts using the wiki. Post-testing results demonstrated that the experimental group significantly surpassed the control group in EFL essay writing performances.

B. QuillBot

Originally introduced in 2017 as an AI paraphraser, QuillBot (<https://www.quillbot.com>) has now grown to include a citation generator, grammar checker, summarizer, translator, paraphraser, plagiarism checker, etc. Its fundamental idea still applies to paraphrase because of its enabling affordances. Users can choose from various paraphrase techniques, with an emphasis on fluidity or more scholarly or imaginative language use. By allowing users to regulate the degree of

word modifications, it guarantees that all items are changed nonarbitrarily in order to keep the original meaning (El-Garawany, 2024). Additionally, it lets users add or remove concepts without altering the original input, making it more succinct. It also offers other analytical tools, such as comparing modes and counts of words, sentences, and characters (Adams & Chuah, 2023).

In addition to Mendeley, Turnitin, and Grammarly, students today commonly use QuillBot as a digital tool to help them with their academic writing projects (Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022). Fitria (2021) highlights QuillBot as an online tool that helps writers streamline content, avoid plagiarism, condense long sentences, and improve grammar for better reading fluency and clarity. Students can improve their paraphrasing abilities by utilizing QuillBot, an easy-to-use online tool (Fitria, 2021; Syahnaz & Fithriani, 2023).

Although there have been several studies showing that students benefit much from AI, its overuse also has negative impacts. Technological advances have replaced writing with copying and altering other people's works. Instead of expressing ideas in their own words, students usually just copy and paste information from other sources. Teachers need to support and encourage their students to write original papers, and they play an important role in motivating students to write with appropriate writing techniques (Laila & Daulay, 2024). In fact, technology is just a tool to support people in their work and cannot replace them, especially in learning.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

In this research project, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods is used through questionnaires and in-depth interviews as data collection tools.

A. Research Setting

The university where the researcher works enrolls about 350 students in each English language course. These students are divided into 12 classes. According to the training program of the university, students have 48 credits for practical English skills, 12 of which are for English writing skills. They learn to write in parallel with listening, speaking, and reading during the first six semesters, with an average of three writing periods per week. The fourth-year students (after finishing 6 semesters of practical English skills) have English proficiency at C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). During the learning process, the teachers usually encourage their students to use QuillBot as a support tool for writing practice. Basically, QuillBot has a positive impact on the writing process as well as the learning outcomes of students, as shown through the results of periodic tests and final exams. However, there have been no formal investigations into students' perceptions of QuillBot at this university.

B. Participants

In this study, the sample (non-probability) was purposively selected from 90 fourth-year English language students in 3 classes that the researcher directly taught. The research project was conducted at the beginning of semester 7, academic year 2024-2025, when students had completed 6 English writing skills courses. 90 students volunteered to participate in the research project. For the qualitative data, 8 out of 90 students were randomly selected to participate in in-depth interviews.

C. Data Collection Instruments

The data collection tools used in the present study are questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The contents of the questionnaires and interviews were designed and constructed according to the steps and criteria of Kothari (1990). The purpose of selecting the tools is to ensure the validity of the data.

(a). Questionnaires

The questionnaire is a quantitative data collection tool, consisting of 9 statements. The questionnaire is administered on a Likert scale. Specifically, each statement in the questionnaire has four response options: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. A Likert scale can be used to evaluate an individual's or a group's attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of social phenomena (Simamora et al., 2020).

(b). In-Depth Interviews

In addition to the quantitative data collection tool (questionnaires), the researcher interviewed 8 students (randomly selected from 90 participants). The interviews focused on questions to clarify students' perceptions of the benefits of QuillBot in the writing process. Each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

D. Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

The data collection procedure consists of 2 steps:

Step 1: The researcher distributed the questionnaires to 90 students. The students were instructed for about 5 minutes on how to fill out and answer each question in the questionnaires that they had 10 minutes to finish.

Step 2: The researcher randomly selected 8 students out of 90 participants in the research project to interview. The interview contents were constructed in the form of semi-structured questions to clarify the issues raised in the questionnaires. All interviews were recorded for archival purposes.

After the survey, 90 questionnaires collected were valid. We entered the quantitative data into Excel. The students' responses in the questionnaires, according to the number of students, were converted into percentages and displayed in a table. Qualitative data were examined by listening to the recordings. In other words, both quantitative and qualitative data were evaluated and analyzed before reaching concluding remarks.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results and Analysis From Questionnaires

We conducted a survey on students' perceptions of using QuillBot to improve their English language writing performances. The results are shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING QUILLBOT TO IMPROVE THEIR ENGLISH LANGUAGE WRITING PERFORMANCES
(N: NUMBER OF STUDENTS)

No	Statements	Responses							
		Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	QuillBot is an easy-to-use digital tool.	65	72.22	15	27.78	0	0	0	0
2	QuillBot really helps me in my writing process.	40	44.44	50	55.56	0	0	0	0
3	QuillBot is an effective tool since it comes with several services that can help me improve the quality of my writing.	42	46.67	48	53.33	0	0	0	0
4	QuillBot encourages me to write and reduces errors.	31	34.44	55	61.11	4	4.45	0	0
5	QuillBot helps me feel more confident in my writing process.	29	32.22	58	64.44	3	3.34	0	0
6	By using QuillBot, my writing skills in word processing have increased.	25	27.78	57	63.33	8	8.89	0	0
7	My ability to handle vocabulary, particularly terminologies, has improved.	30	33.33	43	47.78	17	18.89	0	0
8	I prefer QuillBot to other apps.	22	24.44	40	44.44	28	31.12	0	0
9	My writing results are better when I use QuillBot.	29	32.22	59	65.56	2	2.22	0	0

The results from Table 1 show that most of the students strongly agreed (72.22%), and the rest also agreed that QuillBot is an easily accessible digital tool. This means that out of the 90 students who participated, most responded positively to statement 1: "QuillBot is an easy-to-use digital tool". Statement 2 suggests that QuillBot has services that significantly help students in learning to write. 44.44% of the participants strongly agreed with this statement, and 55.56% agreed. Thus, all the students who participated believed that the services of QuillBot could help them in practicing English writing.

100% of the participants gave positive feedback to statement 3 about how QuillBot's services support English writing. There were two groups of participants: "agree" (53.33%) and "strongly agree" (46.67%). "QuillBot encourages me to write and reduces errors." Statement 4, which is one of the advantages of using QuillBot, received quite positive feedback: 34.44% of the participants chose "strongly agree", 61.11% selected "agree", and only 4.45% gave their opinions of "disagree". The result indicates that most participants accept this statement.

Statement 5 relates to students' increased confidence in their writing process as a result of using QuillBot. 32.22% of the participants strongly agreed, and 64.44% agreed, accounting for more than half of the positive responses from the students. Although 3.34% of the participants disagreed, it did not significantly affect the statement, as the proportion of the students who disagreed was small compared to those who agreed and strongly agreed. Students' writing ability in organizing text was improved when using QuillBot, which is the content of statement 6. The survey results showed that 27.78% of the participants strongly agreed, 63.33% agreed, and only 8.89% disagreed with this statement. Statement 7 (My ability to handle vocabulary, particularly terminologies, has improved.) received 33.33% strong agreement from the participants and 47.78% "agree" responses.

There was strong agreement (24.44%) and agreement (44.44%) with statement 8 (I prefer QuillBot to other apps). It means that more than two-thirds of the students preferred QuillBot to other digital tools. Last but not least, statement 9 (My writing results are better when I use QuillBot.) received very positive feedback from the participants (32.22% strongly agreed, 65.56% agreed, and only 2.22% disagreed).

The majority of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that QuillBot was helpful in improving the quality of their writings. In other words, using QuillBot can significantly improve their writing performances. The students are more confident in their writing process since they believe that QuillBot can help them create content, structure, vocabulary, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar more accurately and effectively.

B. Results and Analysis From In-Depth Interviews

To further understand students' perceptions of using QuillBot to improve their writing performances and to validate the results from the questionnaires, the researcher conducted interviews with 8 students. The interviews focused on the

benefits of using QuillBot in the writing process. These benefits were specifically grouped into three themes: (1) encouraging students to write with a positive attitude, (2) providing various user-friendly writing services, and (3) promoting students' language development.

Theme 1: QuillBot encourages students to write with a positive attitude.

Most of the participants found that using QuillBot improved their attitudes toward writing and reduced their anxiety about it. Furthermore, using QuillBot boosted their confidence in the writing process. Here are some excerpts from the interviews:

"I feel more confident and less anxious about the grammar and content of my writing since I started using QuillBot. My writing has more precise language and structure." (Excerpt 1 from the interviews).

"In semester 6, I learned to write academic papers. My academic papers usually had a high level of plagiarism because I just copied and pasted the key notes needed. When I had to write academic papers, I felt bored and lazy. QuillBot made writing fun and helped me paraphrase my writing using different structures and synonyms." (Excerpt 2 from the interviews).

Students interviewed further stated that using Quillbot as a feedback tool could improve their writing ability as well as their enthusiasm for learning tasks. Feedback on an online platform can encourage students to be more active in the learning process by giving them the opportunity to edit and participate in their own writing products. These activities significantly increase the level of student engagement, communication, and interaction throughout the learning process. The result is consistent with Zimmerman and Labuhn's (2012) argument that AI-supported digital tools increase students' engagement and improve their achievement. Online learning environments can make learning easier and attract more students to participate. This change is due to the fact that students' motivation is correlated with their involvement in the learning process, which enables them to feel positive about themselves and practice with perseverance and confidence. However, language learners who lack motivation may find it challenging to gradually improve their language proficiency. These days, we may use technology to boost students' enthusiasm when learning a language, particularly when it comes to writing. Using technology for language practice and learning increases motivation and decreases anxiety (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017).

Theme 2: QuillBot provides various user-friendly writing services.

In fact, QuillBot with its easy-to-use services can improve students' writing performances. Here is an excerpt from a student's interview:

"In my opinion, QuillBot is the best resource to help me write better. It has more services than other tools, such as summarizing, grammar and spelling checking, and many styles of paraphrasing from standard to extended. For me, using one app to do many things I need is easier than using many apps." (Excerpt 3 from the interviews).

The findings of the interviews suggest that using technology to identify elements with distinct qualities can have a big impact on students' writing quality (Styati & Irawati, 2020). Students in the modern era are able to learn better because technological advancements provide more learning opportunities than traditional teaching methods. With the help of QuillBot, a popular digital tool using artificial intelligence, students can complete learning tasks quickly. Students can organize, edit, proofread, and check their writing for plagiarism using QuillBot in the shortest time. According to Zhao (2003), rather than the technology itself, its efficiency is based on how simple it is to use its services during the learning process.

Theme 3: QuillBot promotes students' language development.

The biggest benefit of QuillBot that most of the students interviewed mentioned was that they consciously and unconsciously developed their language skills. Their writing skills as well as their ability to use grammar and vocabulary improved. The specific results are demonstrated in the following interview excerpt:

"Quillbot is able to rewrite texts in several different styles. Specifically, it can reinterpret different grammatical structures with various synonyms. This service helps me develop my knowledge of grammar and vocabulary." (Excerpt 4 from the interviews).

The results of this study confirm that using AI-assisted digital tools improves students' writing performances. Online writing tools, such as paraphrasing services, can help students improve their grammar and vocabulary (Xuyen, 2023). The use of technology has supported the development of learners' metacognitive, cognitive, affective, and social strategies when they perform writing tasks. Learners can use automated writing feedback from technology applications to comment, suggest, and correct their errors, which helps them enhance their self-awareness, language competence, and reasoning. Identifying errors, detecting incorrect structures, and rephrasing them will help learners' grammar skills gradually improve. Students may be motivated to rewrite because technology provides instant feedback.

C. Recommendations

(a). Recommendations for Teachers

Firstly, the research results show that most of the students have positive feedback on using QuillBot to improve their English writing performances; therefore, teachers should introduce and encourage students to use this tool during the writing process. Secondly, teachers should analyze the positive and negative points that QuillBot can affect students during the usage process so that students can consider which service is suitable and at what stage of the writing process.

Finally, teachers can use QuillBot as an online cross-checking support tool to save time in responding to students' writings.

(b). *Recommendations for Students*

In the first place, students need to realize that QuillBot is only a support tool in the writing process, not a tool to replace their thinking and writing skills. Secondly, students need to carefully study the services that QuillBot provides before using them to consider which services are necessary and suitable to support the development of writing skills. Finally, students should not overuse QuillBot in their writing process. In fact, the paraphrasing and error-checking services that QuillBot provides are considered the most useful for students in the writing process because they help improve their grammar and vocabulary. In addition to thinking abilities, grammar and vocabulary are two important contents that help students improve their writing performances in particular and their language abilities in general.

V. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to clarify the main trends in students' perceptions of QuillBot, emphasizing the benefits of this support tool in improving students' English language writing performances. The results of the study reveal that QuillBot is a helpful tool for English language students at universities in particular and English learners in general, and it should be integrated into the teaching and learning of writing skills. The findings align with previous studies indicating that QuillBot assists students in becoming better writers. QuillBot is also a very user-friendly tool. Most students believe that using QuillBot can make their English writing easier. In addition, there are several benefits from QuillBot, such as reducing writing errors, increasing confidence, improving word processing skills, improving vocabulary use, increasing efficiency, and improving writing ability. Thus, with QuillBot, students can write better. The long-term effects of QuillBot on writing performances and its application in various educational contexts can be examined in future research.

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