

# **EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS PARAPHRASING CHALLENGES IN THESIS WRITING**

## **THESIS**

Submitted by  
**AUDINA ZAHRA**  
NIM. 200203090

Student of Faculty of *Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*  
Department of English Language Education



**FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY  
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# THESIS

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The Bachelor Degree of Education in English Language Teaching

by:

AUDINA ZAHRA  
NIM. 200203090

Student of Faculty *Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*  
Department of English Language Education

Approved by:

جامعة الرانيري

Supervisor,

A R - R A N I R Y



Prof. Dr.phil. Saiful Akmal, M.A.

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It has been defended in *Sidang Munaqasyah*  
in front of the board of the Examination for the working paper  
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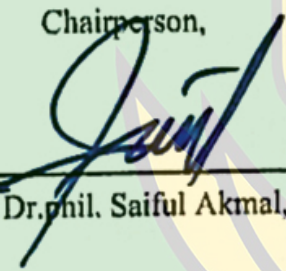
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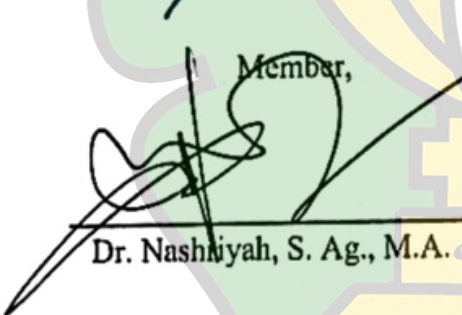
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Member,

  
Dr. Nashriyah, S. Ag., M.A.

  
Khairiah Syahabuddin, MHSc.ESL.,  
M. TESOL, Ph.D

Certified by:

The Dean of *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*  
*Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh*



  
Prof. Saiful Mulk S.Ag., M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D.

NIP. 301021997031003

## SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN

*(Declaration of Originality)*

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Audina Zahra

NIM : 200203090

Tempat/tanggal lahir : Lhokseumawe, 22 Mei 2002

Alamat : Jl. Tgk. Cut Plieng, Kec. Kuta Alam, Kota Banda Aceh

Menyatakan dengan sesungguhnya bahwa skripsi yang berjudul:

### **Exploring EFL Students' Strategies to Address Paraphrasing Challenges in Thesis Writing**

adalah benar-benar karya saya, kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggungjawab saya. Demikianlah surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

Banda Aceh, 13 Juni 2024

Saya yang membuat surat pernyataan,



Audina Zahra

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The Writer,

Audina Zahra

## ABSTRACT

Name : Audina Zahra  
NIM : 200203090  
Faculty : *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*  
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Thesis is a final project that must be undertaken to obtain a master's degree. Paraphrasing is essential in thesis writing, yet postgraduate students still encounter difficulties in mastering this skill. This qualitative research explores the challenges and strategies used by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) postgraduate students to address paraphrasing challenges in thesis writing. Furthermore, phenomenological research was used as a research design in this study. The subjects of this research were eight participants from the 2020-2022 batch in the graduate program in English Language Education at Syiah Kuala University. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. The findings identified several aspects of challenges in paraphrasing, including vocabulary skills, reading comprehension skills, difficult topics, concentration, achieving coherence, and maintaining the original meaning which includes paraphrasing words that are too specific. The strategies used by postgraduate students to overcome these paraphrasing challenges include substitution with synonyms or elaboration, deletion, reordering, copy verbatim, utilize online tools or resources, reread and translate the text, find in related journal, capture the main idea, ask for feedback, and compare with the original. The findings suggest that EFL students require support in developing their vocabulary knowledge, critical thinking skills, and language-related skills to improve their paraphrasing abilities in thesis writing.

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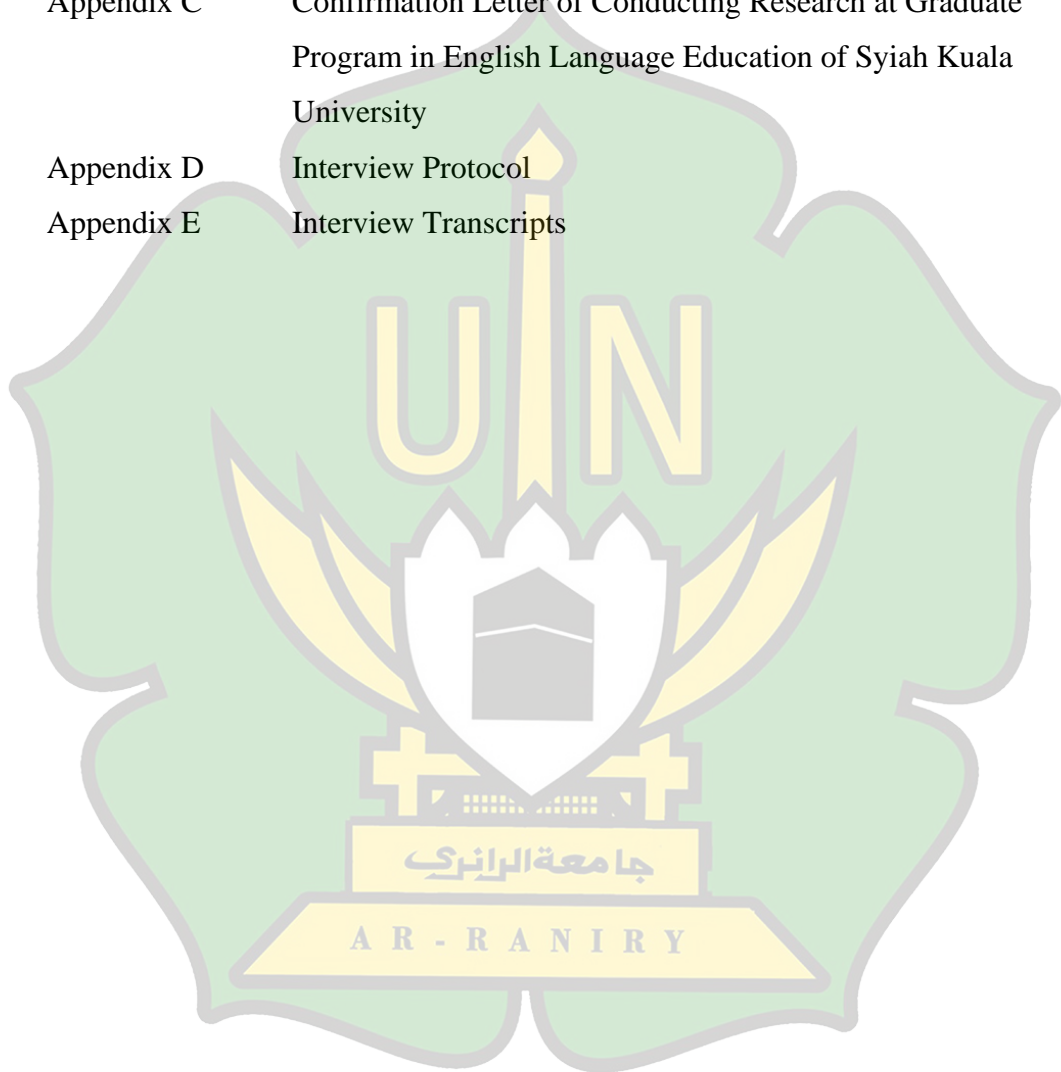
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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The researcher provides an overview of this study. This chapter not only discusses the background of the study, but also covers the purpose of the study which is based on the research questions. This chapter also explains the significance of the study and is followed by the research terminology.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Paraphrasing is a critical skill in academic writing, especially for English as a Foreign Language (henceforth EFL) students in higher education. In higher education, students are required to write a thesis, which is part of academic writing, as the final project of their studies before obtaining a degree. Thesis is a comprehensive written project, where students have to conduct independent research based on their chosen field of study and to engage critically with references from previous studies (Fitria, 2022) as students have to insert references in thesis to support their arguments. Therefore, paraphrasing one of the writing skills that is in demand during thesis writing and prerequisite for students' academic success in university.

Paraphrasing involves restating a source text from a different perspective while retaining the original meaning or its main idea (Bailey, 2011). This skill enables students to convey someone else's ideas neither directly copying their words nor changing the core of their ideas. By paraphrasing, it means that students have sufficiently understood the source well to be able to

rewrite it in their own words. Moreover, paraphrasing serves as a cognitive skill that aids comprehension, stimulates prior knowledge, fosters the development of writing skills (Khrismawan & Widiati, 2013). Therefore, this skill can foster deeper understanding of a reading and also mitigate the risk of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is an academic crime where someone takes someone else's words or ideas without giving acknowledgement to the author by citing it properly (Bailey, 2011). Students will be subject to sanctions in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable at the university if plagiarism is found in their written work, particularly in their thesis. Muluk et al. (2021a) in their research found that two factors that can lead to plagiarism are students' laziness to read and interpret journals and their inability to adequately paraphrase which could possibly be the result of the limited academic vocabulary they have knowledge of. One of the fundamental skills within this area is paraphrasing, the ability to restating ideas with different expressions while maintaining the original meaning.

In the context of thesis writing for EFL students, paraphrasing is particularly a challenging skill to master. Several studies have demonstrated that students experience various difficulties when paraphrasing in English. Khrismawan and Widiati (2013) in their research found that participants indeed agree that paraphrasing is difficult. Their perceptions regarding the reasons paraphrasing problems include difficulties in maintaining the original text meaning, having sufficient paraphrasing skills, and avoiding plagiarism. In another study, Rusdianto and Fitrawati (2022) in their research found that the

paraphrased text produced from a paragraph by participants had an average score of 51.9 and was categorized as unsatisfactory because it included too much information from the source.

In line with this, a study conducted by Seliana et al. (2023) where they aimed to know the undergraduate EFL students' abilities in paraphrasing. The researchers analyzed the responses of nine undergraduate students then categorized them into groups. The result showed that those students' abilities to paraphrase are generally low, as none of them fell into the "good" category. Instead, most of them were placed in the poor and very poor categories. The rationale for categorizing them as "poor" and "very poor" groups was because students copied most of the words, only slightly changed the structure of the text, or changed the vocabulary with their own words and lead to changes in the meaning of the source text.

Despite its significance, EFL students often encounter significant obstacles in mastering paraphrasing skill. In light of the previously mentioned challenges, it is essential to explore the strategies that EFL students use to address paraphrasing challenges in thesis writing. Several studies regarding students' challenges in paraphrasing and strategies for overcoming them have been conducted in undergraduate contexts. Although many studies have emphasized the challenges and strategies in paraphrasing, they lack particular debate on postgraduate students' strategies in overcoming paraphrasing challenges even though they have experienced this hurdle during their undergraduate studies. To fill the gap, this research attempts to identify the



strategies that postgraduate students employed in overcoming paraphrasing challenges when writing their theses. This would enlighten on how these difficulties evolve or persist as students' progress through their educational journey.

### **B. Research Question**

Based on the background of the study above, researcher would like to conduct a research in order to answer questions:

1. What are the paraphrasing challenges faced by postgraduate students in thesis writing?
2. What are postgraduate students' strategies to address those paraphrasing challenges?

### **C. Research Aim**

Based on the problems mentioned earlier, this research aims

1. To identify the varying challenges of paraphrasing that postgraduate student encountered in thesis writing.
2. To explore the strategies that postgraduate students employed to overcome paraphrasing challenges.

### **D. Research Significance**

The researcher anticipates that this study will have positive outcomes for students, lecturers, and the development of curriculum.

### **1. *Students***

Postgraduate students are often considered to be advanced in terms of language proficiency. Therefore, this study is expected to benefit EFL students by providing several strategies or techniques to overcome difficulties in paraphrasing that can be applied when they have to write academically. This guide not only facilitates their skill development, but also instills confidence in students, as they are equipped with practical solutions to overcome the complexities of academic writing, especially in thesis writing.

### **2. *Lecturers***

The findings from this study will contribute to the development of tailored instructional strategies by lecturers that can effectively address the challenges students face in mastering paraphrasing to enhance students' proficiency in academic writing by providing insights on specific areas in paraphrasing where students often experience difficulties.

### **3. *Curriculum Developer***

In addition to being useful for lecturers and students, the results of this study will also provide valuable insights for curriculum developers. Understanding students' paraphrasing difficulties in academic writing can inform curriculum improvements that prioritize the development of this important skill, for example by establishing a dedicated course focused on paraphrasing skills. This approach could enhance language education, particularly in writing classes at the higher education level.

## **E. Research Terminology**

It is necessary to include the definitions of the components which are useful for the readers to clarify the terms used in this study.

### ***1. English as Foreign Language (EFL)***

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a term used for those who learn English in countries where English is not spoken on a daily basis such as in Indonesia, China, Japan, and Argentina (Ikramunnisa et al., 2023). As a foreign language, English is not domestically utilized as a tool for communication, but it is used for other purposes such as when traveling abroad to communicate internationally, engaging with native speakers, reading foreign journals whether for academic purposes or not (Si, 2019). Furthermore, one role of the English usage is that it can be utilized for academic purposes in non-English speaking countries, especially in the process of learning English (Hibatullah, 2019).

In conclusion, the term English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to someone who learns English in a non-English speaking country. The focus EFL students in this study are Indonesian postgraduate students majoring in English Language Education.

### ***2. Thesis***

A thesis serves as the final requirement for undergraduate or postgraduate students in pursuing academic degree. Across various universities, students are required to work on a thesis according to the topic of their scientific field and interests. Thesis is a research paper filed for an

academic degree that presents the author's independent research and findings (Tiwari, 2019). Therefore, this study aims to explore the challenges faced by EFL postgraduate students during the process of paraphrasing their thesis writing. Additionally, the researcher will investigate the strategies these students employ to overcome the paraphrasing challenges. Moreover, master thesis from English Language Education was the focus of this study.

### 3. *Paraphrase*

Paraphrasing is similar to storytelling, where the paraphraser attempts to retell what another writer conveyed in a different manner from the original, whether in the structure of the writing or the use of vocabulary, while retaining the main ideas of the source. According to Bailey (2011), paraphrasing is the act of restating information that one has obtained from a source without distorting the meaning that the author of the source intended to convey. In conclusion, paraphrasing is the process of recasting the ideas read from a passage in one's own words and understanding without changing the meaning of the passage.

In this study, the focus is on paraphrasing challenges and strategies. Effective paraphrasing, however, is a skill needed in academic writing contexts to prevent academic offense since students in higher education have to paraphrase the information that they get from scientific sources to include in their academic writings, such as theses and papers as references for their written works.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents definition and difficulties in writing thesis. This chapter also explains about paraphrasing, types of paraphrasing, its importance, the strategies and challenges in paraphrasing. Apart from that, this chapter also presents relevant studies and existing literature related to this study.

#### A. Thesis

##### *1. Definition of Thesis*

Thesis is one of the requirements that must be done to be successful in completing one's degree by conducting independent research on a problem (Tiwari, 2019). According to Puspita (2019), a thesis is the written product produced by people through conducting research on a particular topic, and it is written scientifically. Thesis refers to the final writing project (Fitria, 2022) undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students and its completion is necessary for obtaining a bachelor's degree at the undergraduate level and a master's degree at the postgraduate level.

A thesis, therefore, is a type of academic writing that university students must write to complete their studies. Like other scientific papers, a thesis relies on evidence to present the writer's ideas or arguments, and those ideas or arguments are supported by insights from previous research that has been read (Fitria, 2022). Moreover, writing a thesis is



also a literacy practice, as it requires students to read many scientific references and re-express what they have read to their writing. They must present this information logically and coherently by integrating it with other arguments.

Therefore, it can be concluded that a thesis is an academic writing that contains the results of independent research on a specific topic, made to fulfill the requirements for a degree, and supported by evidence and insights from relevant previous research. In this study, the research was conducted with EFL postgraduate students as the sample. Hence, the type of thesis referred in this research was a master's thesis.

## ***2. Difficulties in Thesis Writing***

Writing is a skill that is considered as the most difficult skill among others which are listening, speaking, and reading learned by EFL students. This phenomenon is in line with a research conducted by Alisha et al. (2019) where they found that indeed students face some problems in writing English due to lack of vocabulary and grammar mastery. Writing is a complex process because it requires many skills to be applied in the process and is a cognitive skill that involves grammar, higher order thinking skills, sufficient reading and writing skills (Na & Mai, 2017).

For students, however, writing is a difficult task, especially when aiming to produce a good piece of academic writing, for instance a thesis. It is a journey that demands dedication, perseverance, and the ability to

present the ideas in a clear manner. In addition, it is also challenging to write in English for EFL students since English is not their native language. Moreover, many students fail in writing their academic paper and stuck during the process due to their ignorance of the academic writing rules.

Nenotek et al. (2022) argued that problems encountered by students in academic writing are happened because of their ignorance of academic writing rules which are the use of language, coherence, cohesion, discovering relevant topics and sources, references, and citations. Adhering to this finding, Belkhir and Benyelles (2017) similarly found that cohesion, coherence, and lack of writing practice also contributed to the academic writing difficulties that were encountered by 30 English language education students program. This indicates that students indeed encounter various difficulties when engaging in academic writing.

Other researchers have also conducted studies regarding students' difficulties in thesis writing. In a study conducted by Rizwan and Naas (2022), three main factors were identified as influencing students' difficulties in thesis writing: psychological, linguistic, and socio-culture factors. Among psychological factors, students' self-esteem was the dominant issue. Linguistic factors included challenges with diction, while socio-culture factors highlighted the student and lecturer relationship as the most significant influence.

Meanwhile, Fitria (2022) identified two primary factors contributing to EFL students' difficulties in writing a thesis: internal and external factors. Internal factors included a lack of courage and anxiety about the later proposal seminar or thesis examination besides struggled with producing correct English grammar in sentences or paragraphs. These internal issues were cited by 92.5% of students as the main causes of difficulties in thesis writing. While for external factors involved students' difficulties in finding references related to their thesis topics, as indicated by 82.5% of students.

Furthermore, Puspita (2019) in her research stated that students often encounter challenges in thesis writing such as in organizing ideas and structure, limited knowledge of vocabulary, and paraphrasing the source in order to rewrite it. Based on the previous studies, various challenges are found in thesis writing, ranging from linguistic to psychological factors, to internal and external factors. Therefore, overcoming these obstacles will not only facilitate the writing process, but will also improve the quality of the academic work produced.

## **B. Paraphrasing**

### ***1. Definition of Paraphrasing***

Paraphrasing is the act of expressing someone's written or spoken words using different vocabulary so that it is distinct from the original, but still conveys the same meaning (Ismail et al., 2020). Similarly, Bailey (2011) argues that paraphrasing involves restructuring the original source

in terms of its wording so that it is significantly different. In line with this, Rusdianto and Fitrawati (2022) emphasize that paraphrasing entails expressing someone else's ideas in their own words, structure, and style while preserving the original meaning and details. When paraphrasing, the paraphraser needs to ensure that they are aware of the nuances of the author's work and correctly interpret the ideas (Fitria, 2021).

Therefore, paraphrasing is a useful technique to effectively convey the same meaning as the original text, but in different words. It is objectionable if the paraphraser takes the original source and reproduces the same grammatical and lexical structure as the source text (Cesme, 2022) as it may be perceived as plagiarism, which is prohibited in academic writing. To avoid plagiarism, paraphrasing is an effective strategy that is frequently applied. Correspondingly, Muluk et al. (2021b) reported that one of the strategies used by students to anticipate plagiarism is paraphrasing and quoting other people's ideas with acknowledgment of the source.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that paraphrasing is the act of restating what someone obtained from a source in different words or structure while retaining the original ideas and citing the source. Paraphrasing simply implies to write whatever one gets from a source as one understands it. However, paraphrasing is more than mere word substitution. It involves capturing the essence of the source

text and articulating it in one's own language, while still acknowledging the original author.

## ***2. Types of Paraphrasing***

Paraphrasing is a fundamental skill that is necessary for university students to possess, especially for those who are writing a thesis. Paraphrasing allows writers to reorganize and restate ideas in their own words while maintaining the original meaning. It can also improve students' reading and writing skills because paraphrasing involves students in comprehending the source text and integrating it into their writing in a coherent manner (Marzec-Stawiarska, 2019).

Moreover, existing literatures have provided different types of paraphrasing. Previous research has categorized paraphrasing into two primary categories: superficial and substantial. Superficial paraphrasing involves minor adjustments to the original text, typically involving word substitutions, deletions, and additions, as well as rearrangements of sentence structures. In contrast, substantial paraphrasing involves significant modifications to the source material (Marzec-Stawiarska, 2019).

In terms of the amounts of words copied from the original source, Keck (2014) identified four distinct types of paraphrasing which vary according to the number of unique links found in the paraphrase: Near copy, Minimal revision, Moderate revision, and Substantial revision.



Unique links are words copied from the original text and are not the text topics or technical terms. Therefore, through this type of paraphrasing, it is possible to determine the acceptability of one's paraphrasing in terms of plagiarism.

**Table 2.1** *The Taxonomy of Paraphrase Type (adopted from Keck, 2014)*

Paraphrase type	Lexical criteria	Linguistic characteristics	Examples
			Original Excerpt <b>Children speak more like adults, dress more like adults and behave more like adults than they used to.</b>
<b>Near Copy</b>	50% or more words contained within unique links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copied strings of 5 or more words</li> <li>• Simplification through synonym substitution and deletion.</li> </ul>	Nowadays, children's behavior <b>more like adults than they used to.</b>
<b>Minimal Revision</b>	20–49% words contained within unique links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copied strings of 3–4 words</li> </ul>	Children are acting <b>more and more like adults</b> every day.
<b>Moderate Revision</b>	1–19% words contained within unique links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple synonym substitutions</li> <li>• Borrowing of 1–2 word phrases</li> <li>• Combination of synonym substitution and the revision of clause structures (e.g., <i>ing</i> → <i>to clause</i>)</li> </ul>	Modern children seem to be behaving, through <b>dress</b> and speech, <b>like adults</b> at an alarmingly young age.
<b>Substantial Revision</b>	No unique links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrowing of individual words</li> </ul>	It seems like the things that

- 
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of clause structures</li> <li>• Use of synonymous constructions, often in the form of complex noun phrases</li> </ul> | children do and even the clothes that they wear are more adult-like than ever before. |
|---|---|
- 

From the table above, it can be inferred that the higher the percentage of unique links, the greater the possibility of plagiarism. Among all those paraphrase types, moderate revision and substantial revision are acceptable. On the other hand, near copy is an unacceptable type of paraphrase and can result in one's writing falling into plagiarism (Asmanda & Hafizh, 2021).

### ***3. The Importance of Paraphrasing in Thesis Writing***

Paraphrasing is an indispensable part of the thesis writing process, allowing students to integrate external sources into their work while demonstrating a thorough understanding of the material. This skill facilitates the incorporation of ideas from different sources into one's written work with a coherent format which can foster the development of the students' writing skill. In addition to presenting the writer's ideas and findings in the thesis, it is also necessary to reference previous studies related to the thesis topic in thesis writing. Consequently, the inability to properly paraphrase not only jeopardizes the quality of the written work but also generates concerns about plagiarism.

Paraphrasing is therefore a pivotal writing skill for EFL students to master. It is a way to demonstrate students' understanding of the material and integrate external sources into their work while avoiding plagiarism (Bailey, 2011). Furthermore, it is an essential skill for achieving student's academic success as its necessary in the process to achieve the requirements of a degree, a thesis. Na and Mai (2017) in their research asserted that there are two reasons for the importance of paraphrasing in academic writing for English language learners. First, paraphrasing serves as a prevention against plagiarism. Second, as an illustration that shows the learners' understanding of the source text and at the same time reflects their second language proficiency in reading and writing.

For these reasons, mastering the art of paraphrasing is essential for EFL students in thesis writing. It not only ensures the avoidance of plagiarism, but also reflects a deep understanding of the source material, contributing to the credibility of their academic written work.

#### **4. *Challenges in Paraphrasing***

Paraphrasing challenges are the obstacles that writers encounter when attempting to rephrase their sources. Given academic context, the ability of students to paraphrase is an important matter since students will be exposed to plenty of academic texts and literature sources during their

university years. However, many EFL students that still face difficulties in paraphrasing.

A study conducted by Relia et al. (2021) involving 34 students in University of Riau in Indonesia, they found that many students struggle with paraphrasing, particularly in the areas of content information, choice of words, and writing conventions that includes grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Similarly, another study conducted by Clarin et al. (2023) aimed to uncover the paraphrasing challenges encountered by 14 students majoring in English through semi-structured interviews. This study identified four main themes of challenges in paraphrasing: lack of vocabulary skills, inaccuracy of paraphrasing tools, poor reading comprehension skills, and the tendency to copy someone else's work.

In Thadphoothon's (2019) research, it revealed that the participants viewed paraphrasing as a significant hurdle in language learning. According to research results found by him, there were many challenges encountered by among 52 English major students in paraphrasing. Therefore, it can be categorized into three main challenges; vocabulary skills, syntactic ability, and reading comprehension skills.

**Table 2.2** *Challenges in Paraphrasing by Thadphoothon (2019)*  
**Challenges in Paraphrasing**                      **Area**

Vocabulary skills	Do not know the words
	Word choice (do not know which word to use)
	Do not know the synonyms
Syntactic ability	The use of tenses
	Grammatical errors / Incorrect grammar
	Do not understand in modifying parts of speech
	Changing the structure to enhance understanding
	Using inappropriate part of speech
Reading comprehension skills	Inability to understand the whole meaning of original text
	The complexity of sentences
	Incomprehension the context of the text

### 5. *Strategies in Paraphrasing*

Paraphrasing is a complex process that requires mental effort, which needed the use of brain and involves the process of thinking. Therefore, complex cognitive and linguistic skills are needed for second language learner to successfully paraphrasing (Na & Mai, 2017). In addition to comprehend the text's meaning, which engages students' reading skills and critical thinking, to have effective paraphrasing in academic writing involves the thoughtful selection of crucial information, transforming it, and coherently integrating it into their own writing. Moreover, existing literature provides valuable insights into the different strategies used in attempting to paraphrase.



In a study investigating students' paraphrasing techniques conducted by Maiyoritsa and Wahyuni (2021), it was found that the participants utilized synonym technique, sentence combination, and omission of unnecessary information as the strategies. Another study on paraphrasing strategies among Indonesian university students was conducted by Ismail et al. (2020) are change synonyms, changes in transition, expand phrases for clarity, rearrange word order, shorten phrases for conciseness, change part of speech, change of voice, change positive to negative and vice versa, change the structure of idea, combine two sentences, and changing clause into phrase or vice versa.

Moreover, these findings are in line with Bailey (2011) who introduced three strategies for paraphrasing in terms of change. These include replacing vocabulary by using synonyms, changing the word class, and modifying the word order. 1) Change of synonyms involves the writer replacing the word with its synonym that is appropriate in order to maintain the original ideas. For example, from happy to joyful, angry to mad. 2) Change of word class. This paraphrasing strategy involves altering the part of speech of a word or phrase in original source. For example: explanation (n.) to explain (v.), effective (adj.) to effectively (adv.). 3) Change of word order. This kind of strategy involves rearranging the words in a sentence to create a new sentence while maintaining the source's ideas.

According to research results found by Sun and Yang (2015), there were many strategies applied among 71 published authors in paraphrasing their journal articles. Therefore, Sun and Yang identified the strategies into eight categories, namely copy verbatim, substitution, insertion, deletion, modifying citation, reordering, combination, and separation.

**Table 2.3** *Paraphrasing Strategies by Sun and Yang (2015)*

No.	Category	Strategy
1	Copy verbatim	Copy verbatim, direct quotation
2	Substitution	Using synonyms (abbreviation/expansion)
		Using syntactic changes
		Using auxiliary verb changes (including verb tense change)
		Using singular/plural changes
		Using additional information/elaboration (specification)
		Using pronoun/antecedent changes
		Using generalizations
		Using part of speech change (e.g., from verb to noun)
		Using definite/indefinite article changes
		Using transition/connection
3	Insertion	Using antonym
		Inserting additional information (specification)
		Inserting transitions/connections
		Inserting definite/indefinite article changes
		Inserting synonyms
		Inserting pronouns/antecedents
4	Deletion	Inserting definitions
		Inserting examples
5	Modifying citation	Inserting generalizations
		Deleting
		Inserting citations
6	Reordering	Deleting citations
		Modifying citations
6	Reordering	Reordering
		Reordering with syntactic changes

		Combining sentences from different sources/articles
7	Combination	Combining sentences from the same paragraph Combining sentences from different paragraphs (same source)
8	Separation	Breaking sentences with syntactic change

In another research conducted by Na and Mai (2017), it appears that students are inclined to change vocabulary more frequently than sentence structure. The study results indicate that the most commonly employed paraphrasing technique by students is the use of synonyms, followed by word transformation, and syntactic modification method.

### C. Existing Literature

Several studies have been undertaken regarding students' attempts at paraphrasing. As cited in Rusdianto and Fitrawati (2022), students face various challenges when trying to paraphrase. These difficulties include misunderstanding the source text, incorporating too much from the source text, omitting crucial information, inserting personal opinions, summarizing instead of paraphrasing, and inappropriately substituting synonyms.

Based on interviews conducted with ten second-year students majoring in English, Na and Mai (2017) found that language-related issues were a common difficulty experienced by the participants. This is in line with research conducted by Kotamjani et al. (2018) on international postgraduate students who also encountered difficulties in

language-related problems. Language-related problems includes skills such as employing specific language features within an academic context, forming coherent paragraphs, summarizing and paraphrasing, using suitable lexical expressions, using academic vocabulary, linking sentences in accordance and appropriately, and following proper grammar. Alaofi (2020) in his study also found that 90% of his participants encountered language-related problems as the struggles in summarizing and paraphrasing such as in grammar and vocabulary.

In another study conducted by Ismail et al. (2020), it was found that students were still confused about how to rewrite the text with various techniques in paraphrasing. Moreover, despite the use of these methods, it was apparent that students were prone to mistakes in their application. As a result, the paraphrases they produced were considered unacceptable, which emphasizing their limited proficiency in paraphrasing appropriately. Therefore, this affirms that paraphrasing in academic writing requires cognitive skills because students are required to be able to select important information and include it in their writing in a cohesive and continuous manner, both between sentences and paragraphs.

This is in line with what Asmanda and Hafizh (2021) stated in their paper which states that students have difficulty in paraphrasing with the main problem being caused by their incomprehension of the original source and linguistic challenges in forming sentences to express their understanding. In light of these findings, it becomes evident that the challenges surrounding paraphrasing in thesis writing extend beyond mere comprehension of techniques.



## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the researcher explains about the research plan in order to find the answer to the questions previously stated in chapter one. In this part, the researcher presents about research design, research participants, method of data collection, and the technique of data analysis. All of them have to be explained in order to understand the processes that have been done by the researcher.

#### **A. Research Design**

The word research originally derives from the old French word '*recherchier*' which means to search (Bhardwaj, 2019). Research refers for an activity to obtain knowledge and is performed through systematic procedures. According to Aspers and Corte (2019), research is a series of action taken with purpose to enhance understanding regarding a topic or issue by collecting and analyzing information. Furthermore, he asserts that research typically involves three fundamental steps: formulating a question, gathering data to address the questions, and presenting the answer.

This research employed qualitative research. Qualitative research utilizes qualitative data, including interviews, documents, and observations to comprehend and explain a social phenomenon. This type of research aims to understand the conditions of a context by leading to a detailed and in-depth description of the study and focusing on the meanings and interpretations of



words. Moreover, the responses of participants to questions about their experiences play an important role in the research process because qualitative researchers rely on participants' answers (Jackson et al., 2007). Accordingly, Aspers and Corte (2019) state that qualitative research is the process of understanding and interpreting participant's answer. Therefore, the use of qualitative research is in line with this research objectives, to explore phenomena and understand postgraduate student's experiences in paraphrasing.

Furthermore, the researcher used qualitative phenomenological research design as an approach in this study. This approach seeks to understand the essence of lived experiences and it involves exploring and describing the lived experiences of individuals to gain insights into how they perceive and interpret phenomena (Riadil et al., 2023). The phenomenon studied in this research was EFL postgraduate students' strategies in addressing paraphrasing challenges. By using this type of research, the researcher can explore not only the difficulties EFL postgraduate students experience in paraphrasing but also the strategies employed by them to overcome it.

## **B. Research Participants**

Samples are part of population which represents a smaller group that is studied in order to make inferences about the entire population (Creswell, 2012). The population of this study was student of graduate program in English Language Education of Syiah Kuala University batch 2020-2022. This population was chosen because Syiah Kuala University is the only university in Banda Aceh that offers a Master of English Education program, making the

students of this program appropriately represents the population that is the focus of this research, which is an EFL postgraduate student.

The researcher used purposive sampling to sample subjects for the study. Purposive sampling, also referred to as deliberate or judgmental sampling, is a nonprobability sampling in which the samples or participants are selected according to the research objectives (Bhardwaj, 2019). By employing purposive sampling, it will help researcher to choose source of information that in accordance with the research objectives. Hence, the researcher deliberately selected only EFL postgraduate students who are English major students who were currently writing their thesis as participants for this study.

The sample of this study were eight students of Graduate Program in English Language Education Syiah Kuala University batch 2020-2022. According to Bekele and Ago (2022), six participants are the minimum number required for phenomenological studies in designing research. Accordingly, Creswell (2016) suggest that it is advisable for a phenomenological study to conduct interview with 5 to 25 individuals who have ever experienced the phenomenon under study. In addition, Guest et al. (2006) stated that 6-12 interviews are sufficient to obtain information for one qualitative research project. Furthermore, 12 interviews are adequate if comprehending common experiences and perceptions among a relatively homogeneous group of individuals is the research objective (Bekele & Ago, 2022).

Moreover, Bryman (2012) suggests that when conducting qualitative research, the sample size should be balanced. The sample size should not be too small as that might lead to data saturation, yet it should not be too large as it could hinder in-depth analysis. Given the existing recommendations, the researcher chose eight postgraduate students to be taken as the research participants for this study to obtain useful information on their experiences of paraphrasing.

Therefore, the participants in this study were eight postgraduate students enrolled in Graduate Program in English Language Education of Syiah Kuala University, class of 2020-2022. They all have bachelor under English Language Education department. The participants were recruited using purposive sampling based on criteria that they are currently writing thesis.

**Table 3.1** *List of Participants*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Batch</b>	<b>Gender</b>
1	GK	2021	Female
2	WD	2021	Female
3	IR	2021	Male
4	CS	2021	Female
5	KM	2021	Female
6	MB	2020	Female
7	M	2020	Female
8	PF	2022	Female

### **C. Method of Data Collection**

To collect data in qualitative research, there are several techniques and methods that can be used as a tool to examine people's experiences such as observations, interviews, focus groups, etc. (Alamri, 2019). In this study, interview was employed as a research tool to collect research data. Qualitative interviews are a great tool that researchers can use to obtain information from interviewees. It is flexible and adaptable, so it is very suitable for capturing participants' voices and interpreting their experiences of something that a researcher attempts to discover (Rabionet, 2011).

Interview is the act of asking questions to obtain information from the interviewee. It is a conversation between two people exchanging ideas or views about a particular topic of mutual interest (Ruslin et al., 2022). The purpose of an interview is to get important information and gain understanding from the interviewee through a dialogue. This type of data collection is frequently applied in qualitative research, because it enables researchers to explore other people's opinions or experiences about specific matters (Moriarty, 2011). There are three types of research interviews: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Alamri, 2019). Among these types of interviews, the researcher will employ semi-structured interview.

Semi-structured interview has a guide which contains a predetermined number of questions, usually 5-15 questions, but the interviewer may dig deeper with follow-up questions based on issues raised from participants' responses to the topic (McGrath et al., 2019) and allows researcher to do in-depth interview.

According to Rabionet (2011), semi-structured interview allows the researcher to narrow down a topic with probing questions that they want to cover from the interviewee. Semi-structured interview combines the inflexibility of structured interview with the flexibility of unstructured ones. This approach involves preparing a set of predetermined questions related to the topic, but also allows the researcher to deviate from the script and ask additional follow-up questions as needed. Therefore, the questions guide serves as a directional framework, guiding the conversation to stay focused on the research objective while still allowing for deeper exploration of the topic.

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher could raise or ask questions outside of the guideline questions which aim to ask for a deeper explanation of the interviewee's answers. Additionally, semi-structured interview is excellent for exploring and understanding the phenomenon of a person (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021). Therefore, semi-structured interview allows for additional questions in the interview process as a consequence of what the interviewees stated, which is suitable for utilization in this research to fulfill the research objectives and obtain in-depth information from the interviewee.

The interview process was conducted approximately 10-15 minutes for each participant. During the interview process, the researcher took notes on key answers and important points besides recorded the interview process using a voice recorder.



#### **D. Method of Data Analysis**

Once data is collected, it must be organized and managed. In the context of qualitative research, it is essential to transcribe the audio or video recordings of participants' responses. To analyze the data, the researcher refers to Ary et al. (2010) that stated three stages in analyzing the data: organizing and familiarizing, coding and reducing, and interpreting and representing.

The first stage is familiarizing and organizing. In this stage, the researcher thoroughly engaged with the data to develop a deep understanding of it. This involves reading and rereading the notes or comments taken during the interview process, transcripts, and repeatedly listening to the recorded audio. After familiarizing with the data, the researcher organized the collected data by grouping notes and transcripts of audio recordings from the first to the eighth interview to create a clear and logical sequence of data, make it easier to analyze and interpret because the data should be clearly organized and ready to be coded.

The second stage is coding and reducing. At this stage, to code the participants' answer, the researcher read the transcripts carefully to identify patterns, themes, and recurring ideas. Coding is the process of giving name to the themes found in the interview transcripts. The researcher may use as many codes as needed initially, as they can be reduced later by eliminating data that are irrelevant with the research's topic. This coding process serves to assist researcher in identifying differences or similarities within the data.



The last stage is interpreting and representing. In interpreting stage, the researcher engages in deep thinking and reflection to extract key insights from participants' responses. It is the process of transforming raw data into meaningful knowledge. The researcher utilized narrative descriptions to present the data, describing participants' challenges and strategies in paraphrasing. This approach captures participants' experiences and connect these findings with researcher's understanding and previous studies.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter describes the research findings and discussion of the research about EFL students' strategies to address paraphrasing challenges in thesis writing. In addition, this chapter contains analysis of the collected data to answer the research questions.

#### **A. Research Findings**

In this section, the researcher presented the collected data that answered the research questions: what are the paraphrasing challenges faced by postgraduate students in thesis writing and what are their strategies to address those paraphrasing challenges. The data of this research were obtained from interview that had been conducted with a total of eight participants from Graduate Program in English Language Education of Syiah Kuala University batch 2020-2022. The interviewees were anonymously regarded with initials GK, WD, IR, CS, KM, MB, M, PF. After analyzing the data, the researcher discovered several findings related to the research questions. Below are the findings from this research which are explained in detail.

##### ***1. Postgraduate Students' Paraphrasing Challenges in Thesis Writing***

Based on the interview conducted with the eight participants, postgraduate students encountered several challenges when trying to paraphrase their thesis. They explained that there were various obstacles that they faced during paraphrasing in thesis writing. The challenges of paraphrasing which encountered by postgraduate students in thesis writing are explained below.

### ***1.1 Vocabulary skills***

From the interview conducted with eight participants, all of them shared that vocabulary was one of the challenges they faced in paraphrasing during thesis writing. Finding synonyms remained challenging because as EFL students, English is not their first language which leads to the limited vocabulary one has.

Similarly, participant MB admitted that one of the causes of her difficulty in paraphrasing was due to the limited vocabulary she knew. Moreover, participant GK also acknowledged that her lack of vocabulary was a challenge she had experienced during paraphrasing.

*GK: “Challenges that I’ve ever experienced uhm I was lack of vocabularies, to be honest.”*

Another issue in vocabulary that becomes the challenges faced by the postgraduate students was when they are faced with complicated or advanced vocabulary that they have never heard before. Participant WD explained that if the paragraph contains words that are not familiar to her, it will lead to difficulties for her to understand the content of the paragraph. Additionally, participant IR mentioned similar thing.

*IR: “Most academic writing is a high-level writing .... So, they may choose vocabulary that we rarely use or rarely we apply”.*

Besides that, most students also stated that the challenges in vocabulary was to find other appropriate words that can represent their ideas appropriately and at the same time convey the same meaning as the original source. This was

acknowledged by CS, KM, M and IR. Participant KM and M shared that they had difficulty in finding appropriate vocabulary that was in line with their idea.

*KM: “For challenges to be honest even though I’m already in graduate school, maybe it’s more about the lack of vocabulary. ... We have to think about what words to use, for example, what synonyms are appropriate.”*

*M : “When I want to paraphrase a sentence, it’s difficult to find the synonym. We have to restate it correctly so that it fits and matches the source words.”*

In addition, participant PF also stated that it was rather difficult to find the proper synonyms for certain words. Moreover, maintain the tone of the paragraph also became the struggle that the participants experienced due to lack of vocabulary. Participant CS mentioned that it was difficult for her to discover words that can support her ideas because of the need to maintain the tone of the paragraphs she wrote.

*CS: “Some paragraphs has its own tone right. Sometimes we agree or disagree on some ideas. There is one idea that supporting our ideas. But when we paraphrasing it, it difficult to find the words that represent the ideas.”*

## **1.2 Reading comprehension skills**

Paraphrasing involves both reading and writing and involves deep thinking to analyze what they have read and then rewrite the ideas of the source text. Therefore, students may experience this struggle due to their inability to understand the readings or the sources. Half of participants admitted their difficulty in comprehending the text.

As cited by participant WD, one of her challenges when paraphrasing her thesis was that sometimes she had difficulty in understanding the content of the paragraphs she reads.

*WD: “For me, the obstacles when paraphrasing, for example, I did not understand the content of the paragraph and I do not have time to understand it.”*

Moreover, participant GK also conveyed the same thing. She said that reading is very important for paraphrasing, but her reading comprehension was very low.

*GK: “So, my reading is really really really low, and that’s why if I need to understand a paragraph or I need to paraphrase it, I need to reread it a lot and I write what I don’t understand first.”*

Additionally, participant MB also mentioned that understanding and rewriting complex and long sentences was a difficulty she encountered while paraphrasing her thesis.

*MB: “... and it’s difficult when the words are long. It’s difficult to paraphrase. It could be a complex sentence or even a simple sentence, but it’s a long sentence and we have to change the language into our own language.”*

Besides that, participant M also mentioned her paraphrasing difficulty in thesis writing was to separate important and unimportant information from a reading.

*M : “... other obstacles with paraphrasing is that it is difficult to choose which information is important and unimportant.”*

### 1.3 Difficult topics

Students may experience challenges when dealing with complex topics. This is because postgraduate students usually already have a specific field that they focus on as the object of study in their thesis research. This can make paraphrasing more challenging.

One of participants, GK, said that her topic of study which is linguistic made it even harder to paraphrase. Because linguistic concepts and terminology can require a deep understanding of the subject matter, making it challenging for students to properly paraphrase.

*GK: “Well, the struggle in my thesis is because I choose Linguistics, and then I choose Semiotics. So, that’s means I need to understand first the object that I want to do research about.”*

Additionally, participant WD also mentioned similar thing. To understand paragraphs that contain materials that was not of interest causes difficulties in understanding the reading. Moreover, participant M also added that it was difficult to understand the reading if the original text is complex.

*M : “... I am often feeling confused because the reading is difficult ...”*

### 1.4 Concentration

Concentration is the act of focusing and immersing ourselves in the things we are working on. Therefore, concentration is very much needed when we are doing critical thinking activities such as writing a thesis and paraphrasing the readings that will be included in the thesis. Participant WD highlighted that



experiencing a sudden loss of concentration due to distractions was a challenge for her when paraphrasing.

*WD: "Because as a housewife, there are plenty of things to think about. So, when I'm paraphrasing to write my thesis, I suddenly think of my children and my house, so my mind is distracted. ... I struggle with my own situation and conditions ... and it automatically affects me."*

Moreover, GK explained that when she was in a state where she lacks motivation to engage with her thesis, she found it difficult to concentrate and paraphrase even the simple paragraph.

*GK: "... when I was really really don't want to see or touch my thesis, I sometimes cannot even paraphrase at all. It just even though I face like the simple paragraph I just can't, that's the struggle."*

Therefore, this struggle underscores the significant challenge of maintaining focus and concentration when faced with tasks that require mental effort.

### **1.5 Achieving coherence**

In writing, it is necessary to pay attention to the coherence between sentences and between paragraphs. However, to make the sentences or paragraphs coherent to flow meaningfully is still difficult for most people. Two of participants mentioned their problems were difficulties in connecting between sentences and paragraphs.

Participant M added that she had difficulty in making coherence between paragraphs and connecting the paraphrase she made with her personal arguments, and with others so that the paragraphs become coherent.

*M: "What makes it difficult is coherence, the connection. Maintaining coherence from paragraph one to paragraph two."*

Another participant, KM, also shared her difficulty is in maintaining coherence between sentences.

*KM: "... the way we connect the sentences so that we can make a good connection between paragraphs."*

### **1.6 Maintaining original meaning**

Other difficulties related to postgraduate students' challenges with paraphrasing in their thesis writing were to maintain the original meaning which include to paraphrase words that overly specific, since if they substitute the words, it can replace the source's meaning.

Participant IR admitted his difficulty in maintaining the main idea presented by the source.

*IR: "My difficulty is ... maintaining the substance of the experts."*

Participant PF said that to paraphrase sentences that are too specific can be challenging for her.

*PF: "It's hard to paraphrase the sentences that are too specific."*

In line with this, participant M mentioned the challenge of preserving the essence of the source text. Despite her efforts to paraphrase the source maximally, the outcome often results in changes to the essence of the source.

*M: "The most difficult thing is that when we paraphrase, the result is not in the same line as the original, it has been replaced."*

## 2. Postgraduate Students' Strategies to Address Paraphrasing Challenges

In addition to identify the challenges experienced, it is also important to highlight the strategies used by EFL postgraduate students to overcome the challenges. Through interviews with the eight participants, the researcher discovered 11 strategies used by them in addressing the paraphrasing challenges.

### 2.1 Substitution

#### a) Using synonyms

One of the most common strategies used by postgraduate students was to find synonyms for key words in the source text. All participants had the same strategy in paraphrasing regarding the use of synonyms.

Participant CS mentioned that she used simple vocabularies to make it easier for readers to understand. Similarly, another participant, GK also tended to use easier vocabulary.

*GK: "Usually, we find that the original text uses language that is really expert and very academic. So, once we look at it, we're like, what is this, why don't they just say this. So, to make it easier for myself too, I choose the easiest vocabulary, the basic vocabulary."*

#### b) Using additional information or elaboration

Another strategy in paraphrasing found in this study is related to word elaboration. Expanding words or phrases can help clarify the meaning of the text and make it easier to paraphrase. This was applied by one participant, CS.

*CS: "... for words that cannot be changed, we can just elaborate on the words."*

Therefore, this strategy can help avoid plagiarism detection by giving clarity to a word or term rather than using it in the thesis.

## 2.2 Deletion

### a) Deleting some information

Omitting unnecessary information from the source text was another effective strategy in paraphrasing, which was acknowledged by two participants. This approach involves identifying and removing irrelevant details to their written from the original text. Therefore, this strategy allows the paraphrased text to focus on the essential information. Participant CS shared:

*CS: "... so I just omit some words, but I take 2 or 3 words that indeed support the idea, and there are some words that I changed."*

## 2.3 Reordering

### a) Changing the structure of ideas

Another strategy applied by participants was paraphrasing by reordering the ideas of the source text. Two participants used the strategy of rearranging the structure to paraphrase a reading source that they wanted to take ideas from to include in their thesis.

*KM: "...I changed the idea to more of the sentence position and changed the words or sentence structure."*

In addition, participant WD also utilized this strategy. She admitted that she also changed the order of the words in the sentence.

*WD: "... so I just take it and I just rearrange the position"*

## 2.4 Copy verbatim

Another strategy mentioned by a participant in this study in order to maintain the original meaning in paraphrasing words that are too specific was copying verbatim or using direct quotation. Participant PF shared:

*PF: “for paraphrasing the sentences that are too specific, I consult it with my advisers and they said that in this situation it’s okay not to paraphrase them ... I would locate in the box add the source under the box.”*

Similarly, participant KM also mentioned that she also borrowed important vocabulary from the source that cannot be changed.

*KM: “There are some theories which term cannot be changed, so we just use the term, for example the phrase open-ended question.”*

## 2.5 Utilize online tools and resources

Many participants highlighted the value of online tools and resources in assisting their attempt to paraphrase, especially in finding the appropriate synonyms. All of participants said that they used online dictionaries such as Thesaurus, Merriam-Webster, Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries, WordHippo, and Google Translate to find synonyms that align with the original source text.

When selecting a synonym, participants often referred to the word’s definition to ensure it accurately represented their ideas while maintaining the context of the original source. Participant M shared her strategy for overcoming a lack of vocabulary when searching for synonyms was that she turned to online dictionaries to find synonyms and selects the appropriate word based on its definition. Additionally, participant CS also shared the same thing on her



criteria for selecting synonyms, where she emphasized the need for precision and formality.

*CS: "So, the first criteria we have to find the exact synonym, and make sure that it's academic words, not just any word. ... because this is a thesis, I think it should use intermediate vocabulary."*

In addition, participant PF also stated similar things. She was more into looking at the examples on how the other word is being used in a sentence. She also added that she used online dictionary and QuillBot as an aid in helping her understanding the meaning of an unknown term or concept.

*PF: "Sometimes I use online dictionary to decide the words, we can see the examples of the words in the sentences so that we can decide the appropriate one. Online dictionary and QuillBot are really helping me to handle my unfamiliarity with terms or concepts that I haven't heard before."*

Moreover, four participants also used QuillBot either to see the word's synonym, or to reformulate sentences and used it as insight to compare with the paraphrased text they produce, as participant IR shared:

*IR: "QuillBot is just used for insights, I would like to see other ways to paraphrasing ..."*

Another online tools, Grammarly, also used by KM and GK. Participant GK shared that she just starting to utilize another online tool, grammarly, at the end of her thesis writing as a tool to help her in checking the grammar in her written work.

*GK: "... so I just started using grammarly recently and it helps me a lot."*



## 2.6 Reread the text

An absolute strategy used to improve reading comprehension was rereading. Rereading the original text can help students to better understand the context and meaning of the text and also make it easier to paraphrase effectively. The participants had similar strategies to improve their comprehension of what they read.

Participant GK shared her experience in dealing with this. To help her comprehension of the reading, she wrote the incomprehensible part on a paper, then she replaced the vocabulary with other easier vocabulary, then she wrote it again, and later she started to understand the meaning of the reading.

*GK: "What I don't understand ... I write it down. And then I mark which ones I don't know."*

Another participant, WD, emphasized the importance of understanding the content of the paragraph in order to paraphrase it. Therefore, she often reread the source text several times to ensure that she really understands the gist of what was written in the source.

*WD: "My key to understand the paragraph is that I read repeatedly."*

Similarly, another participant, CS, also mentioned that it is important to understand the main points of a reading passage.

*CS: "The way I do the paraphrase is I understand the ideas first, and I try to tell it with my words."*

## **2.7 Translate the text**

Another frequently used strategy by the participants in order to improve their reading comprehension was to translate the source text. Five participants chose to translate parts of the text that they found difficult into Indonesian as a first step. This allows them to understand the meaning of the text more comprehensive.

*KM: "...so sometimes when I get stuck in paraphrasing, I translate the English reading into Indonesian, then I think about the idea again, and I organize it into my own language that is easy to understand, and then I translate it into English again."*

## **2.8 Find in related journal or other sources**

Another challenge found in this study in understanding source text was when the participants were not familiar or unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept. Therefore, the strategy for this difficulty was to find other references such as in related journals, libraries, or by looking up on the internet.

Half of the participants sought the topic in journals, while others sought the term on the internet or asked their supervisor. Participant M and CS shared:

*M: "If there is something unfamiliar, I immediately google translate what it means ... and also have to read related journals, especially in research."*

*CS: "... ask my supervisor and I'll try to type the ideas to some journals, because journals are our source."*

## 2.9 Capture the main idea

Paraphrasing requires a clear understanding of the original text. In order to paraphrase, someone must know what is the paragraph or sentence about. This strategy involves identifying key terms or phrases in the original text that convey essential concepts or ideas. Two participants mentioned this strategy in order to maintain the essence of the source. Participant IR shared:

*IR: "I capture the substance of the idea first, then I try to understand it. After completely sure then I write it in my own language."*

Moreover, by underlining the important words, postgraduate students can ensure that they maintained the core meaning of the text when paraphrasing.

Participant GK said:

*GK: "I reread the text like I just need to understand for about 10% or 20% of the paragraph for example. I underlined the important vocabularies so that you know the text maintain the original meaning."*

## 2.10 Ask for feedback

Another strategy in maintaining original meaning was to ask feedback. Feedback can help participants identified parts where their paraphrasing may be unclear or where the original meaning may not have been conveyed accurately. This strategy involves sharing the paraphrased text with others and asking for their feedback and suggestion.

Three of the participants either asked for help from their peers or directly asked for feedback from their supervisors to verify whether their paraphrase has reflected the source text they read. Participant M mentioned that she would

request for feedback from her supervisors or peers as the last step in the paraphrasing process to ensure that the intended idea of the source has not changed. Similarly, participant CS and WD shared their experience in seeking for feedback.

*CS: “Usually I ask my friend to reread again before I bring it to my supervisor. If she or he has the same perception of mine when she reads my paragraph. So, I think it passed the criteria of paraphrasing.*

*WD: “... if I have doubts, I will ask the supervisor whether the paraphrasing is correct or not ... or I usually talk to my partner for second opinion.”*

This emphasized the importance of seeking feedback from peers and supervisors throughout the paraphrasing process, especially for those who are not accustomed to paraphrasing or still have great difficulty in paraphrasing.

### **2.11 Compare with the original**

This strategy involves postgraduate students compared their paraphrased text with the original text to ensure that the meaning remains the same. Participant MB said that she compared the original source with her paraphrased version to ensure that the paraphrase accurately represented the author’s idea. If she felt that there were still differences, she would look for alternative words that conveyed the same meaning.

*MB: “Comparing what I have written with the source, ... whether the meaning is still the same as in the source.*

Similarly, Participant WD followed the same approach. She read the original source over again, understood it, and then compared the resulting paraphrase with the original paragraph.

*WD: "... I looked once again at the original paragraph until I am sure "*

This process of meticulous comparison helped both participants to maintain the accuracy of their paraphrased versions, thus preserving the original meaning of the source material.

## **B. Discussion**

This section is a discussion of the research findings above. This research aims to identify the varying challenges of paraphrasing that postgraduate student encountered in thesis writing and to explore the strategies they employ to overcome those challenges. The research question, "what are the paraphrasing challenges faced by postgraduate students in thesis writing and what are postgraduate students' strategies to address those paraphrasing challenges" has been addressed through interviews. The findings revealed several challenges encountered by postgraduate students in paraphrasing their thesis. Additionally, various strategies that have been employed by postgraduate students were also identified.

Although the participants were postgraduate students who had a bachelor's degree in English Education and have conducted independent research to obtain their bachelor's degree, they still struggled when paraphrasing. There were several aspects related to the paraphrasing challenges that postgraduate students experienced in writing their thesis. These challenges include difficulties with



vocabulary skills, reading comprehension skills, difficult topics, concentration, achieving coherence, and maintaining original meaning as well as paraphrasing words that overly specific.

Based on the interview results, all participants in this study reported that they experienced limited vocabulary when trying to paraphrase and in finding the right synonyms. This finding is in line with research conducted by Rusdianto and Fitrawati (2022) on the issue of paraphrasing. They identified that one of the challenges students faced in paraphrasing a paragraph was that 40% of them included improper synonyms in the paraphrased text. This challenge may occur in EFL students who only get exposure to English through formal education. As EFL students, they may have limited exposure to English language usage outside of the classroom, which can impact their proficiency in paraphrasing and limited their vocabulary knowledge. Consequently, this can make students encounter difficulties in paraphrasing and finding the right words to express their ideas.

Other challenges mentioned by the participants were in reading comprehension. This is similar with findings of Clarin et al. (2023) on students' difficulties in paraphrasing where they identified poor reading comprehension skills as the challenges in paraphrasing. Reading comprehension requires the ability to understand and interpret the text, identify the main ideas and supporting details. It is important to understand the paragraphs, the arguments and supporting details presented in the text. Moreover, paraphrasing is both part of reading and writing skills, where someone have to grasp the essence of the text and at the same able to rewrite the text's essence in their own words (Flores & Lopez, 2019). This can be



a challenging task, especially if the text is complex. Therefore, this challenge is in line with Flores and Lopez's (2019) research where they found that 88% of their participants have poor reading comprehension which causes students' difficulty in paraphrasing.

Moreover, the challenges of paraphrasing among postgraduate students were compounded by the specific topics they focus on in their field of study. This specific topic can lead to difficulties in paraphrasing, as students must accurately convey complex ideas while maintaining academic honesty. This finding is similar to research conducted by Alostath (2021), who found that half of his participants struggled with topic selection in their academic writing, particularly if they did not fully understand the topic or lacked adequate ideas and knowledge about it.

In addition, the demands of academic life were compounded by external responsibilities, such as profession, household management, teaching obligations and other personal issues. These challenges can hinder postgraduate students' ability to engage with source material and produce paraphrases due to a loss of concentration and focus. This finding is consistent with other studies, Alostath (2021), who reported that graduate students often face difficulties in writing due to their life that occupied with business, work, or other activities. Consequently, their busy activities and responsibilities outside the academic context negatively impact their writing. This is different from the research conducted by Fitria (2022) who found that most participants informed that being busy with personal activities such as part-time jobs, hobbies, or organizations did not have a negative impact on them in doing their thesis.

Not only those, other challenges that also experienced by postgraduate students were in making a coherence sentence or paragraph. Students often encountered challenges in creating coherent paragraphs, as noted by Al-Fadda (2012). She found that one of many difficulties faced by students in producing an academic writing is in making their writing coherence, which is in combining sentences between their paraphrased text into other arguments in their writing. Besides attempt to make the writing coherent, another challenge also found in this research. The participants struggled with preserving the original meaning which involves rephrasing sentences that were too specific. It is a challenge for them to paraphrase effectively because they were unsure which words or phrases to use as replacements of words in the source.

In response to these challenges, postgraduate students employed a various range of strategies to address paraphrasing issues. There are 11 strategies applied, namely substitution (using synonym and additional information or elaboration), deletion, reordering, copy verbatim, using online tools or resources, reread the text, translate the text, finding in related journal or other sources, capturing the main idea, seeking feedback, and comparing their paraphrase with the original.

The most frequently used strategy was to recast the original text using synonyms. This strategy was in line with Bailey's (2011) theory and Sun and Yang (2015) in paraphrasing strategies regarding substituting the word with its synonym. This strategy involves replacing words with their synonyms, which is considered an effective and straightforward approach to paraphrasing. In line with this, a research by Arifuddin (2021) also found that synonym substitution was one of the

two most commonly used paraphrasing strategies among his participants, followed by changing the word order. This indicates that using synonyms is common and effective strategy for students to paraphrase text as it not requires significant effort compared to other strategies.

Besides employing synonym substitution, the participants also applied other strategies to enhance their paraphrasing skills. For instance, they expanded the meaning of a word, deleted some information, and modified the structure of ideas. These approaches are consistent with the categorization of paraphrasing strategies proposed by Sun and Yang (2015) who identified paraphrasing strategies into eight categories. Specifically, expanding a word's meaning falls under substitution category, where writers use elaboration on words to add clarity. Deleting some information is part of deletion category, where writers omit some unnecessary details from the reading. Meanwhile modifying the structure of ideas is included in the sixth category under reordering strategy proposed by Sun and Yang. Additionally, changing the word order also aligns with Bailey's theory on paraphrasing strategy.

Moreover, the participants also used online tools and resources to facilitate their paraphrasing efforts. They use for example online dictionaries such as Thesaurus, WordHippo, Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, Merriam Webster and Google Translate to find other words that can substitute the source's words. Before incorporating the substitutes into their writing, participants typically look up the definitions to ensure the new words accurately represent their intended meaning while maintaining the same context as the original text. They also used paraphrasing

tools such as QuillBot as insight and also to compare with their paraphrased text and to find synonyms. QuillBot is a paraphraser tool and it facilitates its users with features such as to reformulate sentences, typically by substituting the word's synonym, changing the words order within a sentence, modifying the form of a word, and changing the voice of sentence as found by Fitria (2021) in her research about QuillBot as an online tool for paraphrasing.

Furthermore, two participants also used another online tool, Grammarly, to help them in checking the grammar at the end of thesis writing. This is in line with research conducted by Suryanto et al. (2024) regarding Grammarly where they found that students' perceptions regarding the use of Grammarly in thesis writing were that they strongly agreed that Grammarly was useful and important in their thesis writing process. They also agreed that the application was useful for them and helped them in correcting grammatical errors in time.

For strategy to enhance their comprehension, participants reread the text multiple times. This aligns with the findings of Flores and Lopez (2019), who stated that the strategy to overcome paraphrasing difficulties includes extensively reading texts related to the topic or field they do not understand. In addition, translating the source text is also a strategy applied to understand a text. By translating it into Indonesian, the participants gained a better understanding as the text had been converted into their first language before attempting to paraphrase it. Finding in related journals or other sources was also a strategy implemented for this challenge. The participants will browse ideas on the internet or in relevant journals. This is in line with Azkar (2021) in her research on undergraduate students' strategies in

paraphrasing who found that the participants would look for ideas by typing them in related articles or journals.

Copying verbatim (direct quotation), capturing the main idea, seeking feedback, and comparing their paraphrase with the original were other strategies applied by participants in addressing paraphrasing challenges, especially in maintaining original meaning while avoiding academic dishonesty. The strategy of seeking feedback aligns with the findings of Alostath (2021), who also found that peer feedback significantly impacts the development and improvement of academic writing. Additionally, a participant used this feedback-seeking strategy to ensure that her paragraphs are coherent.

Moreover, another approach to maintain the original meaning when encountered difficulty in paraphrasing words that are too specific, a participant consulted to her supervisor and she were advised to use direct quotation or copy verbatim and properly citing the source. This approach is consistent with the findings of Arifuddin (2021), which showed that participants often avoid substituting essential vocabulary to maintain the original meaning, as they afraid that it might altering the essence of the source. Additionally, this copy verbatim strategy was also part of paraphrasing strategy proposed by Sun and Yang (2015), which involves borrowing words directly from the source.



Based on the paraphrasing challenges identified by Thadphoothon (2019), this study found that two out of three challenges faced by postgraduate students were related to vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. Furthermore, among the eight paraphrasing strategies identified by Sun and Yang (2015), participants primarily utilized four strategies: copy verbatim, substitution, deletion, and reordering. Specifically, participants employed copy verbatim to paraphrase words that were too specific. In the context of substitution, they used synonyms to replace source words with its synonyms appropriately and added elaboration on word's meaning to enhance clarity. For deletion, participants omitted unnecessary information. Finally, they applied reordering strategy by rearranging ideas within sentences or paragraphs.





## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the researcher presents conclusions regarding the results of the research that has been conducted and recommendations for further research.

#### A. Conclusions

The research was conducted in order to answer two research questions. The first research question is what are the paraphrasing challenges faced by postgraduate students in thesis writing. Based on the data, several paraphrasing challenges were encountered by postgraduate students. The paraphrasing challenges faced by postgraduate students in this study encompass five various aspects, including challenges in vocabulary skills, reading comprehension skills, difficult topics, concentration, achieving coherence, and maintaining the original meaning which includes paraphrasing words or phrases that are too specific. These various challenges highlight the complexity of paraphrasing in thesis writing, particularly for EFL students, even though they are already in their master's program.

The second research question was what are postgraduate students' strategies to address those paraphrasing challenges. Based on the interview conducted with participants, the study found that postgraduate students employ 11 strategies to overcome those paraphrasing challenges. Strategies in addressing the challenge of paraphrasing involve substitution (using synonym and additional information or elaboration), deletion, reordering, copy verbatim, use online tools and resources,

reread the text, translate the text, find in related journal or other sources such internet or asking to supervisor, capture the main idea, ask for feedback, and compare the paraphrase with the original text.

## **B. Recommendations**

This study was conducted with postgraduate students as the population, which is relatively underexplored in the context of paraphrasing challenges, especially in the region of Aceh. The findings of this study contribute to students' learning by enhancing their understanding of strategies for overcoming paraphrasing challenges and also raise awareness about the difficulties in paraphrasing. The findings of the research may provide insights to inform strategies for academic writing lecturers to better support students in overcoming paraphrasing challenges in by directing their teaching to improve those difficulties effectively.

Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of vocabulary, reading comprehension, and critical thinking skills in effectively understanding and paraphrasing texts. EFL students are suggested to improve their vocabulary by cultivating the practice of the reading regularly as one approach to addressing this issue besides reading extensively. Additionally, practicing critical thinking is also recommended as it is essential for effectively understanding and paraphrasing texts. By engaging in these activities, it will help EFL students become more proficient in academic writing tasks, especially for students in higher education.

However, this study was conducted with a relatively small sample size and limited to EFL postgraduate students at Syiah Kuala University which might limit the representation of participants to generalize the findings of paraphrasing challenges and strategies to overcome it. In addition, this study only identified several strategies used by postgraduate students to overcome paraphrasing challenges in thesis writing but did not delve deeper into the effectiveness of each strategy.

For future research, this study can be used as a prior study to be conducted with a larger sample and population regarding the strategies applied in overcoming paraphrasing challenges and can explore which strategies are most effective and for what reasons. Thus, the results of future research can provide more detailed guidance for students and lecturers.



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**Appendix A: Appointment Letter of Supervisor**





KEPUTUSAN DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH  
NOMOR: B-1731/Un.08/FTK/Kp.07.6/01/2024

TENTANG:  
PENGANGKATAN PEMBIMBING SKRIPSI MAHASISWA

DENGAN RAHMAT TUHAN YANG MAHA ESA

DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH

Menimbang : a. bahwa untuk kelancaran bimbingan skripsi mahasiswa pada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh maka dipandang perlu menunjuk pembimbing skripsi;  
b. bahwa yang namanya tersebut dalam Surat Keputusan ini dianggap cakap dan mampu untuk diangkat dalam jabatan sebagai pembimbing skripsi mahasiswa;  
c. bahwa berdasarkan pertimbangan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam huruf a dan huruf b, perlu menetapkan Keputusan Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.

Mengingat : 1. Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional;  
2. Undang-Undang Nomor 14 Tahun 2005, tentang Guru dan Dosen;  
3. Undang-Undang Nomor 12 Tahun 2012, tentang Pendidikan Tinggi;  
4. Peraturan Presiden Nomor 74 Tahun 2012, tentang perubahan atas peraturan pemerintah RI Nomor 23 Tahun 2005 tentang pengelolaan keuangan Badan Layanan Umum;  
5. Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 4 Tahun 2014, tentang penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Tinggi dan Pengelolaan Perguruan Tinggi;  
6. Peraturan Presiden Nomor 64 Tahun 2013, tentang perubahan Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Menjadi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
7. Peraturan Menteri Agama RI Nomor 44 Tahun 2022, tentang Organisasi dan Tata Kerja UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
8. Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 14 Tahun 2022, tentang Statuta UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
9. Keputusan Menteri Agama Nomor 492 Tahun 2003, tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang Pengangkatan, Pemindahan dan Pemberhentian PNS di Lingkungan Depag RI;  
10. Keputusan Menteri Keuangan Nomor 293/KmK.05/2011, tentang penetapan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh pada Kementerian Agama sebagai Instansi Pemerintah yang menerapkan Pengelolaan Badan Layanan Umum;  
11. Surat Keputusan Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Nomor 01 Tahun 2015, Tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang kepada Dekan dan Direktur Pascasarjana di Lingkungan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.

MEMUTUSKAN

Menetapkan : Keputusan Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh tentang Pembimbing Skripsi Mahasiswa.

KESATU : Menunjuk Saudara :  
**Prof. Dr. Phil. Saiful Akmal, M.A**

Untuk membimbing Skripsi

Nama : Audina Zahra  
NIM : 200203090  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Judul Skripsi : **Exploring EFL Students' Strategies to Address Paraphrasing Challenges in Thesis Writing**

KEDUA : Kepada pembimbing yang tercantum namanya diatas diberikan honorarium sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku.

KETIGA : Pembiayaan akibat keputusan ini dibebankan pada DIPA UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Nomor SP DIPA-025.04.2.423925/2024 Tanggal 24 November 2023 Tahun Anggaran 2024;

KEEMPAT : Surat Keputusan ini berlaku selama enam bulan sejak tanggal ditetapkan;

KELIMA : Surat Keputusan ini berlaku sejak tanggal ditetapkan dengan ketentuan bahwa segala sesuatu akan diubah dan diperbaiki kembali sebagaimana mestinya, apabila kemudian hari ternyata terdapat kekeliruan dalam Surat Keputusan ini.

Ditetapkan di : Banda Aceh  
Pada tanggal : 31 Januari 2024  
Dekan,

Saiful Muluk

- Tembusan
1. Sekjen Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
  2. Dirjen Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
  3. Direktur Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
  4. Kantor Pelayanan Perbandharaan Negara (KPPN), di Banda Aceh;
  5. Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh di Banda Aceh;
  6. Kepala Bagian Keuangan dan Akuntansi UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh di Banda Aceh;
  7. Yang bersangkutan;
  8. Arsip.





## Appendix B: Recommendation Letter from *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan* to Conduct Field Research



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY  
FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN  
Jl. Syekh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh  
Telepon : 0651- 7557321, Email : uin@ar-raniry.ac.id

Nomor : B-4203/Un.08/FTK.1/TL.00/5/2024  
Lamp : -  
Hal : **Penelitian Ilmiah Mahasiswa**

Kepada Yth,  
Koordinator Program Studi Magister Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Syiah Kuala  
Assalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.  
Pimpinan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry dengan ini menerangkan bahwa:

Nama/NIM : **AUDINA ZAHRA / 200203090**  
Semester/Jurusan : VIII / Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Alamat sekarang : Jl. Tgk. Cut Plieng, No. 1, Kota Baru, Kuta Alam, Banda Aceh

Saudara yang tersebut namanya diatas benar mahasiswa Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan bermaksud melakukan penelitian ilmiah di lembaga yang Bapak/Ibu pimpin dalam rangka penulisan Skripsi dengan judul ***Exploring EFL Students' Strategies to Address Paraphrasing Challenges in Thesis Writing***

Demikian surat ini kami sampaikan atas perhatian dan kerjasama yang baik, kami mengucapkan terimakasih.

Banda Aceh, 19 Mei 2024  
an. Dekan  
Wakil Dekan Bidang Akademik dan  
Kelembagaan,



Berlaku sampai : 19 Juli 2024

Prof. Habiburrahim, S.Ag., M.Com., Ph.D.

AR - RANIRY

**Appendix C: Confirmation Letter of Conducting Research at Graduate Program in English Language Education of Syiah Kuala University**



**KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN, KEBUDAYAAN,  
RISET, DAN TEKNOLOGI  
UNIVERSITAS SYIAH KUALA  
FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN  
PROGRAM STUDI MAGISTER PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS**

Alamat: Jalan Tgk. Hasan Krueng Kale, Darussalam, Banda Aceh 23111

Telepon : (0651) 7412657 Faksimile (0651) 7551407

Home Page : [www.fkip.unsyiah.ac.id](http://www.fkip.unsyiah.ac.id), E-Mail: [mpben.usk.ac.id](mailto:mpben.usk.ac.id) ; [prodimpben@gmail.com](mailto:prodimpben@gmail.com)

**SURAT KETERANGAN**

Nomor: 141/UN11.1.6/KM.00.00/2024

Koordinator Program Studi Magister Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Syiah Kuala Darussalam Banda Aceh, dengan ini menerangkan bahwa

Nama : Audina Zahra  
NIM : 200203090  
Tempat/Tgl. Lahir : Lhokseumawe /22 Mei 2002  
Pekerjaan : Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UIN Ar-Raniry  
Alamat : Jl. Tgk. Cut Plieng, No. 1, Kota Baru, Kuta Alam,  
Banda Aceh.

adalah benar Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah UIN Ar-Raniry dan yang bersangkutan telah melakukan penelitian pada Program Studi Magister Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP USK sejak tanggal 21 Mei s/d 3 Juni 2024.

Demikian surat keterangan ini dibuat untuk dapat dipergunakan dengan penuh tanggungjawab.

**AR - RANIRY**

Darussalam, 10 Juni 2024

Koordinator,

**Dr. Iskandar AS, S.Pd., M.A.**

**NIP 197810252003121004**



## Appendix D: Interview Protocol

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Project : Exploring EFL Students' Strategies to Address Paraphrasing Challenges in Thesis Writing

Time of interview :

Date :

Place :

Interviewer : Audina Zahra

Interviewee :

Position of Interviewee : Student of Graduate Program in English Language Education of Syiah Kuala University Batch ...

This research is about postgraduate students' strategies in paraphrasing. The purposes of this research are to identify the varying challenges of paraphrasing that postgraduate student encountered in thesis writing and to explore the strategies they employ to overcome those challenges. Data will be obtained through semi-structured interview and the interview will be recorded for data analysis material. The interviewer will ask the interviewee several questions related to the research and the interview process will take about 15-20 minutes.

1. What do you think paraphrasing is?
2. What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?
3. Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?
4. How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?
5. What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?
6. How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

## Appendix E: Interview Transcripts

Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: GK

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

GK: Okay, paraphrasing in my opinion is you didn't change the meaning of the entire paragraph actually, the literal meaning from the entire paragraph. You just use your own you know your own words based on what you have read and then also if you confuse you can just look up to another vocabularies based on what you need. That's paraphrasing.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

GK: Challenges that I've ever experienced I was lack of vocabularies, to be honest. And then also when I was really really don't want to see or touch my thesis, I sometimes cannot even paraphrase at all. It just even though I face like the simple paragraph I just can't, that's the struggle.

AZ: So, what did you do when you don't have any clue to paraphrase at all?

GK: I usually take a break for a while and then also I need to reread everything from start to finish what I need to paraphrase. So, my reading is really really really low, and that's why if I need to understand a paragraph or I need to paraphrase it, I need to reread it a lot and I write what I don't understand first.

AZ: So, reading comprehension definitely plays a role here?

GK: Yes, a lot. Reading is really important and that is why maybe people kind of think like oh my reading comprehension is really good. But it is different from when you paraphrase, you just can't, it's not directly done. A lot of process in your mind first, then you do it. It can't be done right away, you don't expect it to be like you read it and then you expect it to be like oh you can do paraphrase right away. You can't, because you paraphrase from English, unless it's from Indonesian. That's the struggle.

AZ: So, reading comprehension also be your struggle?

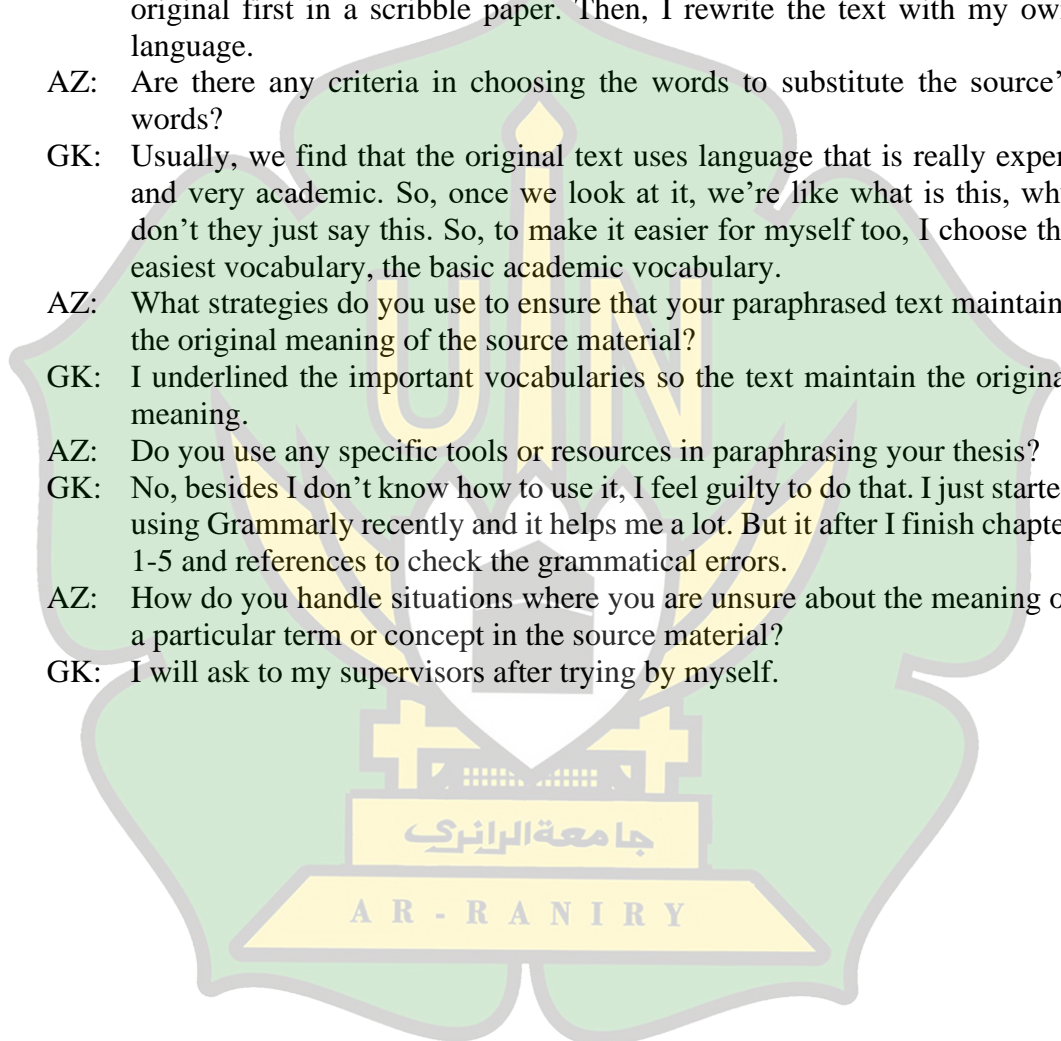
GK: Yes, struggle.

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

GK: Well, the struggle in my thesis is because I choose linguistic. Linguistic is not is not as easy as we think, and because I choose linguistic and then I choose Semiotics. So, that's means I need to understand first the object that I want to do research about, and then I need to translate it to English, and then I need to analyze everything one by one, and then I need also my brain to conduct a really good translation from Indonesian to English. And then analyzing again, a lot of things.

AZ: Okay, so there are several challenges like lack of vocabularies, low reading comprehension, and maybe difficult topic. How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

- GK: Sometimes I write. So, in my thesis I don't expect myself to write everything like one day we can paraphrase two sheets. No, that's impossible. So, I have scribble paper. What I don't understand I write it down. And then I mark which ones I don't know and then I write with another vocabulary and then I write again underneath until slowly I get it. So, I do synonym changes as the strategy. And I also do similar thing for reading comprehension. I reread the text like I just need to understand for about 10% or 20% of the paragraph for example. After that I write the original first in a scribble paper. Then, I rewrite the text with my own language.
- AZ: Are there any criteria in choosing the words to substitute the source's words?
- GK: Usually, we find that the original text uses language that is really expert and very academic. So, once we look at it, we're like what is this, why don't they just say this. So, to make it easier for myself too, I choose the easiest vocabulary, the basic academic vocabulary.
- AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?
- GK: I underlined the important vocabularies so the text maintain the original meaning.
- AZ: Do you use any specific tools or resources in paraphrasing your thesis?
- GK: No, besides I don't know how to use it, I feel guilty to do that. I just started using Grammarly recently and it helps me a lot. But it after I finish chapter 1-5 and references to check the grammatical errors.
- AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?
- GK: I will ask to my supervisors after trying by myself.



Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: WD

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

WD: I have several opinions. First opinion, I think paraphrasing is an exit way for students to disguise and avoid plagiarism detected. Second, it is our way to fully understand a paragraph to incorporate it to our thesis by changing the words but still maintaining the redaction. Third, to improve understanding of a passage and make it easier to restate it.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

WD: For me the obstacles when paraphrasing for example I did not understand the content of the paragraph and I do not have time to understand it. So, reading for understanding is difficult. My key to understand a paragraph is to reread several times. Sometimes, because as a housewife, there are plenty of things to think about. So, when I'm paraphrasing to write my thesis, I suddenly think of my children and my house, so my mind is distracted. That's the obstacle.

AZ: Can you elaborate on the specific challenges you mentioned?

WD: Usually the difficult paragraphs are the ones that contain fancy words, I rarely hear them and it happens that the content is not about something I like or am interested in, and I am not familiar with the topic.

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

WD: I struggle with my own situation and conditions that are difficult to manage time, with children and home, and automatically affect me. That's what makes me lose focus when I'm reading or writing for paraphrasing.

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

WD: My key to understand the paragraph is that I read repeatedly then I understand what words I have difficulty with. Then, I replace the words with their synonyms. After that, I replace the word with a selection of synonyms provided that I am familiar with so that I understand the meaning of the sentence from the source. Then I also remove the unimportant information and take only the important things from the source. So I just take it and I just rearrange the position of the idea. The main strategy is to read first, so you must first understand what the book says so that the paraphrasing results are good. Understand the source first.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

WD: Usually, after paraphrasing which I think is correct, I read the paraphrase from the book again and I consider whether I have gotten the redaction yet. If I have doubts, I will ask the supervisor whether the paraphrasing is correct or not, or I usually talk to my partner for second opinion. Often, I read it first, then understand it, then I restate it in my own language, then I look again at the original paragraph until I am sure.

- AZ: Did you use any specific tools or resources to help with paraphrasing?
- WD: I use online dictionaries like Hippo.com, Merriam-Webster, Thesaurus when I want to use fancy words. I look for the synonyms in online dictionary.
- AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?
- WD: I will look up about the topic in the google and checked the validity of the sources, and I will ask my lecturer whenever I don't understand and if there is the lecturer.





Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: KM

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

KM: Paraphrasing means conveying ideas in one's language without changing the text's meaning and context. And paraphrasing is commonly seen as an efficient plagiarism-avoiding strategy.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

KM: For challenges to be honest even though I'm already in graduate school, maybe it's more about the lack of vocabulary. Like finding the right balance between being faithful to the source and being original in your expression to maintain original meaning. Then, to connect between sentences or paragraphs.

AZ: What makes lack of vocabulary become your challenge?

KM: Maybe because lack of reading. And also, this is academic and formal so we have to think about what words to use, for example, what synonyms are appropriate.

AZ: Are there any kinds of sentences or phrases that are hard to paraphrase?

KM: I think complex sentence is difficult to paraphrase.

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

KM: First, I ask to peer review with friends to see the connecting or coherence between sentences, then use paraphrasing tools such as Grammarly and Quillbot to check the ambiguity of my sentences. There are some theories which terms cannot be changed, so we just use the term, for example the phrase 'open-ended question'. So, the important vocabulary is still used. Sometimes when I get stuck in paraphrasing, I translate the English reading into Indonesian, then I think about the idea again, and I organize it into my own language that is easy to understand, and then I translate it into English again. And I check for the grammar in Grammarly.

AZ: What about strategies for lack of vocabulary?

KM: I use online dictionary like Merriam-Webster.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

KM: After paraphrase, I see whether the context from the source is in line with the paraphrased text, I compare.

AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

KM: I usually looked in other references yang hampir sama dengan judul saya. I look in ResearchGate journals or in Unsyiah library.

Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: MB

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

MB: Paraphrasing is when we generate new language from a research and we want to take it to use in our thesis by changing the language but retaining the meaning of the source.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

MB: Actually, the challenge is if we don't have a lot of vocabulary, especially in English, because in paraphrasing we have to know a lot of synonyms, so if we don't know a lot, it's a bit difficult. And it's difficult to paraphrase when the words or sentences are long. That's what's difficult in paraphrasing.

AZ: Can you elaborate on the specific challenges you mentioned?

MB: It's hard to paraphrase by finding synonyms that advanced and academic. And it's difficult to paraphrase a sentence it could be a complex sentence or even a simple sentence, but it's a long sentence and we have to change the language into our own language. When it's come to a reading that is a bit difficult to understand, it also becomes a difficulty in paraphrasing,

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

MB: The struggle is when I encounter difficult vocabulary.

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

MB: When come to reading that is a bit difficult to understand, I usually translate it first into Indonesian using google translate, because maybe if from Indonesian we will understand better, then I can paraphrase it again. And I look in the dictionary or on Google if I found difficult vocab. So what I usually do is translate to Indonesian then change it first in my own language and then translate it into English, that's probably the easiest for me.

AZ: What tools or resources do you use?

MB: I use Thesaurus, there are synonyms that we can use for paraphrasing.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

MB: Comparing what I have written with the source, if it is still not the same, maybe I look for new words that can be equivalent to see whether the meanings is still the same as in the source.

AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

MB: If I don't understand, I will look up on Google and find the meaning on it. I will look on internet.

Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: CS

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

CS: I think paraphrasing taking one idea or sort kind of ideas from author/writer that we want to take to support our writing and we do that in our own words. It's like we take what he/she meant about one topic or one case and then we deliver it to our writing with our own words.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

CS: Some paragraphs have its own tone right. Sometimes we agree or disagree on some ideas. There's one idea that supporting our ideas, but when we paraphrasing it, it difficult to find the words that represent the ideas. I have to find the similar words that can represent the source ideas, and some words cannot simply be rephrase in order to maintain the tone.

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

CS: Finding the right words is the most struggling because it's not simply just put its synonym in the paraphrased text. Especially in chapter fourth in discussion, I have to find the right ideas and paraphrasing it so it fit my tone of writing.

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

CS: I usually use online dictionaries, such as Merriam Webster and Oxford or Thesaurus. So, in choosing the synonym the first criteria we have to find the exact synonym, and make sure that it's academic words, not just any words. The way I do paraphrase is I understand the ideas first, and I try to tell it with my words. If there's words or ideas, we don't understand we can just translate it, so we understand first then interpret it in our own words. Also, in paraphrasing I just omit some words, but I take 2 or 3 words that indeed support the idea, and there are some words that I changed. Some words cannot be changed, for words that cannot be changed, we can just elaborate on the words, expand the meaning like giving its definition.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

CS: Usually I ask my friend to reread again before I bring it to my supervisor. If she or he has the same perception of mine when she reads my paragraph, I think it passed the criteria of paraphrasing and to see whether paraphrased text is appropriate or not.

AZ: What is your strategy to maintain the tone of the source?

CS: I have to understand the main source. As long we understand the main source's ideas, our ideas can always align with the source.

AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

CS: I will ask my supervisor and I try to type the ideas in some journals because journals are our source.

Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: PF

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

PF: Paraphrasing is restating the statement from a text. It means that we're expressing the meaning of something by using different words.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

PF: The challenges I face when paraphrasing are rearrange the words to avoid the similarity with the source, sometimes it's a bit tricky to find the right synonyms for certain words.

AZ: Can you elaborate on the specific challenges you mentioned?

PF: It's hard to paraphrase the sentences that are too specific.

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

PF: For examples from brown's book entitle language assessment about macro and micro skills. He states the list of macro and micro skills of speaking. It's hard for me to paraphrase the sentences in each list because it's too specific. One of them is "Produce differences among English phonemes and allophones".

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

PF: For paraphrasing the sentences that are too specific, I consult it with my advisers, they said that in this situation it's okay not to paraphrase them because the sentences that I would located in the box and add the source under the box. Besides that, sometimes I can fix my problem by myself. The strategies that I do, I write down in Bahasa what I got from the sentences and translate it into English. Sometimes I need help from AI.

AZ: What AI or tools do you use?

PF: I use Quillbot. Sometimes I use online dictionary to decide the words, we can see the example of the words in the sentences so that we can decide the appropriate one.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

PF: I compare it with the source.

AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

PF: Online dictionary and Quillbot are really helping me to handle my unfamiliarity with terms or concepts that I haven't heard before. The list of words that I found from Quillbot and Online dictionary help me to make sure the appropriate word to be used because Online dictionary gives some examples how the words using in sentences form.



Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: M

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

M: Paraphrasing is a way to express what an author or other person says in a different way so that it is easier to understand. In other words, paraphrasing is restating the meaning of a writing.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

M: The first challenge is to maintain the originality of the writing because paraphrasing cannot be plagiarized and the rules are to restate without changing or replacing the content of the writing. When I want to paraphrase a sentence, it's difficult to find the synonym. We have to restate it correctly so that it fits and matches the source words. And the most difficult thing is that when we paraphrase the result is not in the same line as the original, it has been replaced. And other obstacles with paraphrasing is that it is difficult to choose which information is important and unimportant. What makes it difficult is to find the synonym, maintain the original meaning and coherence, the connection. Maintaining coherence from paragraph one to paragraph two.

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

M: When we have paraphrased as best as we can, turns out that the result is changed, the original is lost. If we don't change it, the plagiarism is high.

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

M: Change the sentence structure, substitute synonyms for verbs, etc. So first, read and understand the content of the text. Second, we try to make paraphrase by ourselves first. Third, if we are stuck, we can use Thesaurus.com or google translate to find synonyms on the condition that we choose appropriate vocabulary so that it connects with the text.

AZ: What about the strategy for choosing important information?

M: Understand the content of the text first, then make points. So that the points look easier later to paraphrase and people are easier to understand.

AZ: What about in understanding the reading source, are there any obstacles?

M: It is often, I am often feeling confused because the reading is difficult. There are some languages where in the original text we don't understand. So, I translate first to understand it and then paraphrase.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

M: In the end, we ask for feedback from lecturers or from friends.

AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

M: If there is something unfamiliar, I immediately google translate what it means and also have to read related journals, especially in research.



Interviewer: Audina Zahra (AZ)

Participant: IR

AZ: What do you think paraphrasing is?

IR: Paraphrasing is when we cite the opinions of experts from various fields of research and then we write them in our own words without reducing the substance of the expert's ideas.

AZ: What are the challenges you face when paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

IR: My difficulty is more into choosing the appropriate words that fit the context of the idea we want to paraphrase and maintaining the substance of the experts.

AZ: Can you elaborate on the specific challenges you mentioned?

IR: Most academic writing is a high-level writing and the writers are smart and more senior. So, they may choose vocabulary that we rarely use or rarely we apply.

AZ: Can you describe a situation where you struggled with paraphrasing in your thesis writing?

IR: Well, it's more about vocabulary choice and afraid of being the same so that plagiarism will be detected.

AZ: How did you overcome those paraphrasing challenges?

IR: I use online tools like Quillbot to reformulate sentences. But Quillbot is just used for insights, I would like to see other ways to paraphrasing. Mostly I don't use it, only to compare with my paraphrased text. In choosing vocabulary to synonym the word I use online dictionary and dictionary book.

AZ: What strategies do you use to ensure that your paraphrased text maintains the original meaning of the source material?

IR: I capture the substance of the idea first, then I try to understand it. After completely sure, then I write in my own language. And also underlined the important words from the source.

AZ: How do you handle situations where you are unsure about the meaning of a particular term or concept in the source material?

IR: I will search on the internet. If I can't find it on the internet, I will look for books that relate to the theme in *e-perpusnas* or my collection or in the regional library.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1. Name : Audina Zahra
2. Place / Date of Birth : Lhokseumawe / 22 May 2002
3. Sex : Female
4. Religion : Islam
5. Nationality : Indonesian
6. Address : Kp. Kota Baru, Kec. Kuta Alam, Kota Banda Aceh
7. Email : audinaz021@gmail.com
8. Occupation : Student of Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry
9. Parents
  - a. Father's Name : Jalaluddin
  - b. Mother's Name : Rosmaini
  - c. Father's Occupation : Entrepreneur
  - d. Mother's Occupation : Housewife
10. Educational Background
  - a. Elementary School : SD Negeri Arun
  - b. Junior High School : MTsS Yapena
  - c. Senior High School : MAN 1 Banda Aceh
  - d. University : Department of English Language Education, *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*, UIN Ar-Raniry

Banda Aceh, 13 June 2024

The writer,

Audina Zahra