

USING AI TOOLS FOR PARAPHRASING IN ACADEMIC WRITING: BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS

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Annotation. AI tools such as ChatGPT can support academic writing and paraphrasing, especially for EFL learners. However, they may cause dependence, meaning changes, and academic integrity problems. This article reviews the benefits and limitations of AI-assisted paraphrasing. The findings suggest that AI can support learning and revision, but students should evaluate AI output, preserve meaning, cite sources, and maintain independent writing and critical thinking.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, AI tools, paraphrasing, academic writing, EFL learners, academic integrity

Annotatsiya. ChatGPT kabi sun'iy intellekt (SI) vositalari, ayniqsa ingliz tilini xorijiy til sifatida o'rganuvchi talabalar uchun akademik yozuv va parafrazlashda yordam berishi mumkin. Biroq ulardan foydalanish texnologiyaga qaramlik, mazmunning buzilishi va akademik halollik bilan bog'liq muammolarga olib kelishi mumkin. Maqolada parafrazlashda SIDan foydalanishning afzalliklari va cheklovlari ko'rib chiqiladi. Natijalar SI o'rganish va tahrirlashda yordam berishi mumkinligini ko'rsatadi, biroq talabalar natijalarni tekshirishi, asl mazmunni saqlashi, manbalarni to'g'ri ko'rsatishi hamda mustaqil yozish va tanqidiy fikrlash ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishi kerak.

Kalit so'zlar: sun'iy intellekt, SI vositalari, parafrazlash, akademik yozuv, ingliz tilini xorijiy til sifatida o'rganuvchilar, akademik halollik.

Аннотация. Инструменты искусственного интеллекта (ИИ), такие как ChatGPT, могут поддерживать студентов в академическом письме и перефразировании, особенно изучающих английский как иностранный. Однако их использование может привести к зависимости, искажению смысла и проблемам академической добросовестности. В статье рассматриваются преимущества и ограничения ИИ при перефразировании. Результаты показывают, что ИИ может помогать в обучении и редактировании, однако студенты должны проверять результаты, сохранять

исходный смысл, правильно цитировать источники и развивать самостоятельное письмо и критическое мышление.

Ключевые слова: искусственный интеллект, инструменты ИИ, парафразирование, академическое письмо, изучающие английский как иностранный язык, академическая добросовестность.

Introduction

Academic writing requires students to use information from different sources and present it in a clear and appropriate way. One of the most important skills in this process is paraphrasing. Paraphrasing means expressing information from a source using different words and sentence structures while keeping the original meaning. It helps students integrate information into their own academic texts and avoid direct copying.

However, paraphrasing is often difficult for university students, especially those who study English as a foreign language (EFL). Students may have limited academic vocabulary and difficulties with grammar, sentence structure, and academic style. As a result, they may follow the original text too closely or replace only a few words with synonyms. Such writing can become patchwriting and may lead to plagiarism. The development of artificial intelligence has created new possibilities for supporting students with these difficulties. Generative AI tools can provide alternative vocabulary, sentence structures, explanations, and examples. Students can use these tools to receive immediate feedback and compare different ways of expressing the same idea. Research has also shown that students use ChatGPT for brainstorming, organising ideas, editing, and improving their academic writing (Meniado et al., 2024).

At the same time, AI-assisted paraphrasing has raised concerns. A student may ask an AI tool to paraphrase a complete paragraph and then submit the generated text without making any personal contribution. AI can also change the meaning of the original text or provide inappropriate vocabulary. Therefore, the use of AI in academic writing requires careful consideration.

The purpose of this article is to examine the benefits and limitations of using AI tools for paraphrasing in academic writing.

Paraphrasing in Academic Writing

Paraphrasing is an important academic skill because students frequently need to use ideas from previous research. A good paraphrase demonstrates that the writer understands the original text and can communicate the same idea independently. Effective paraphrasing involves more than replacing words with synonyms. Students need to change vocabulary and sentence structure while

preserving the original meaning. They also need to cite the source. For EFL students, this process can be particularly challenging. Limited vocabulary may lead them to use the same words and structures as the original author. This can result in patchwriting, which is a common problem in academic writing.

Artificial Intelligence and Academic Writing

AI tools have become increasingly popular in education because they can provide immediate language support. ChatGPT, for example, can explain vocabulary, suggest alternative expressions, identify grammatical problems, and provide different versions of a sentence. AI can therefore be useful as a writing assistant. Students can use it during different stages of the writing process, including planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Research by Meniado et al. (2024) found that EFL learners used ChatGPT for several aspects of second-language writing, including generating ideas, organising content, and improving texts. Mahapatra (2024) also found potential benefits of ChatGPT as a formative feedback tool for ESL students. These findings suggest that AI can support writing development when students actively interact with and evaluate the generated information. AI should not be considered as a replacement for students' writing abilities. Students still need to understand sources, make decisions about language, and produce their own academic arguments.

Benefits of AI-assisted paraphrasing

The first major benefit is **vocabulary development**. Students can ask AI tools to provide alternative words and expressions. This can help them expand their academic vocabulary and avoid unnecessary repetition.

For example:

Original: Online education has changed the way students access educational resources.

Possible paraphrase: Digital learning has transformed how students obtain academic materials.

Students can compare the two sentences and identify changes in vocabulary and sentence structure. The second benefit is *grammatical support*. AI tools can provide alternative sentence structures and explain grammatical differences. This can be especially useful for EFL students who may not have enough confidence in their grammatical knowledge.

The third benefit is *immediate feedback*. Students can receive suggestions without waiting for teacher feedback. They can ask AI whether their paraphrase is grammatically correct, whether it is sufficiently different from the original, or whether the academic style is appropriate. Another important benefit is *writing*

confidence. Students who are uncertain about their English may feel more comfortable experimenting with different expressions when they have access to AI support.

Finally, AI tools can save time. Students can quickly compare several possible formulations and then decide which one is most appropriate for their context.

Main benefits of AI-assisted paraphrasing

Benefit	Possible contribution
Vocabulary support	Provides alternative academic expressions
Grammar support	Suggests different grammatical structures
Immediate feedback	Gives instant suggestions and explanations
Writing confidence	Helps students experiment with language
Time efficiency	Reduces time spent searching for alternatives
Learning support	Allows comparison of different versions

Limitations of AI-assisted paraphrasing

Despite these benefits, AI-assisted paraphrasing has several limitations. The first problem is change of meaning. AI may produce a grammatically correct sentence that does not have exactly the same meaning as the original.

For example: *The findings suggest that social media may affect students' academic performance.*

It could become: *The findings prove that social media affects students' academic performance.*

The words *suggest* and *prove* have different meanings. The AI-generated version makes a much stronger claim.

The second limitation is *overdependence on AI*. If students always ask AI to paraphrase their sources, they may not develop their own paraphrasing skills. Academic writing requires students to understand and communicate ideas independently.

The third problem is *academic integrity*. Automated paraphrasing tools have created new challenges for universities because students can easily transform source material without demonstrating their own understanding (Roe and Perkins, 2022).

Another limitation is *loss of personal writing style*. AI-generated academic language can sound formal but sometimes generic. If students rely heavily on AI, their writing may become less personal and less connected to their own ideas.

Finally, AI tools can produce inaccurate information. Students therefore need to check AI-generated texts carefully rather than accepting every suggestion.

Discussion

The results show that AI-assisted paraphrasing can be useful when it is treated as a learning tool rather than a replacement for students' work. There is an important difference between using AI to do paraphrasing and using AI to learn paraphrasing. When students simply enter a paragraph into an AI tool and copy the result, they have limited opportunity to develop their own skills. In contrast, students can first create their own paraphrase and then use AI to compare and evaluate it.

Conclusion

AI tools provide new opportunities for supporting academic writing and paraphrasing. They can help students develop vocabulary, improve grammar, explore different sentence structures, and receive immediate feedback. These advantages can be particularly useful for EFL students. However, AI-assisted paraphrasing also presents important challenges. AI can change the original meaning, produce inaccurate language, encourage dependence, and create academic integrity problems. Therefore, students should not use AI simply to produce ready-made paraphrases. The most effective approach is to use AI as a supporting tool. Students should first understand the source and attempt their own paraphrase. They can then use AI to compare, evaluate, and improve their work. In this way, AI can become part of the learning process rather than a replacement for independent writing. The future of academic writing education should therefore focus not only on whether students use AI, but also on how responsibly and critically they use it.

References

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