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## **Decreased Plagiarism Behavior in Academic Writing by Using Reflective Writing**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the effectiveness of reflective writing pedagogy and elucidates students' plagiarism behavior, causality, and compositional resources. Drawing on a mixed-methods sequential exploratory design, it addresses the problem of student plagiarism using second-semester graduate students at IAIN Palopo, Indonesia, as a sample and data collected via writing tests, interviews, and documentation studies using Turnitin software. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods was used for evaluation, and a qualitative description was used to analyze the behavior and needs. The results show a 33.13% decrease in plagiarism following attendance of reflective writing classes, with a considerable value of 0.001. Students' most ubiquitous form of plagiarism was direct quotations without proper citations. The factors driving plagiarism include difficulties with paraphrasing, crafting coherent paragraphs, time constraints, and incorrect utilization of Turnitin software. The study concludes that reflective-writing instructions are imperative for reducing plagiarism propensity as students require writing guidance.

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## 1. Introduction

Students' plagiarism resulting from inadequate writing instruction corresponds with several studies that demonstrate the origin of plagiarism behavior is flawed pedagogy (Fatemi & Saito, 2019; Guraya & Guraya, 2017; Stander, 2020). Ineffective writing instruction encourages student behavior, including direct quotations without paraphrasing or word-for-word plagiarism. When employing a quotation, students frequently experience difficulty distinguishing between the boundaries of linguistic ownership and ideas (Vaccino-Salvadore & Hall Buck, 2021).

In Indonesia, universities have not optimally handled plagiarism. Plagiarism material in learning to write is given at the end of the learning period (Adiningrum, 2015). Students teach about plagiarism and how to prevent it when writing a thesis. The consistency of plagiarism between lecturers also varies (Adiningrum, 2015; Agustina & Raharjo, 2017; Patak et al., 2021). The lecturer's assignment system also does not fully pay attention to plagiarism behavior. In addition, even though the definition of plagiarism is clear, there is no strict punishment for the perpetrators, so students continue to commit plagiarism (Akbar & Picard, 2019; Putra et al., 2022). According to a preliminary study of graduate-level student papers at the State Islamic Institute of Palopo (IAIN Palopo), Indonesia, 78% of the students employed indirect quotations without changing words. More alarmingly, students use paraphrasing and translation software without considering context (Wrigley, 2019), substitute words with synonyms (Liu et al., 2018), or use phonemes or numbers as intermediaries to evade plagiarism detection. Consequently, it is essential to scrutinize the proper writing instructions for students to avoid plagiarism.

In higher education, various pedagogical approaches are used to prevent plagiarism. One such method is the employment of reflective writing techniques (Dalal, 2015; Odom & Helfers, 2016; Watson, 2017) and the 'Writing With Your Own Voice' method (Yang et al., 2019), not to mention training on the fundamentals of writing (Dayyeh & Skakiyya, 2018; Holt, 2012), workshop method (Divan et al., 2015; Rathore et al., 2018), and gradual scientific writing training and mentoring (Carnero et al., 2017). Tutorials can also be

conducted individually (Chew et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2018; Wrigley, 2019) or in groups (Burgess-Proctor et al., 2014; Colton & Surasinghe, 2014; Owens & White, 2013).

Several researchers have recognized that the reflective writing method is more effective than other methods in developing students' awareness of plagiarism avoidance (Dalal, 2015; Odom & Helfers, 2016; Watson, 2017). Reflective practice has multiple definitions and frameworks but no precise approach to implementation (Hickson, 2011). Effective teaching methods can influence students' self-efficacy in avoiding plagiarism (Rocher, 2020). Strong writing skills can influence students' confidence in writing, affecting plagiarism behavior (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). Therefore, the discovery of effective writing instruction methods can serve as a foundation for preventing plagiarism in the education of writing. However, the studies conducted by Odom and Helfers (2016) and Watson (2017) did not include reflective practice. Although Dalal (2015) employed reflective writing through dialogue, the sample size was limited. This highlights the importance of further exploration to identify reflective writing practices that address plagiarism.

Based on the above discussion, this study's primary objective is to scrutinize the effectiveness of reflective writing learning outcomes on students' plagiarism behavior. To achieve this objective, it examines instances of plagiarism in the contributions of students at IAIN Palopo, the underlying factors contributing to such plagiarism, and the requisite learning materials to address the inadequacies of prior studies that examined reflective writing pedagogy. Elucidating these features would help educators and learners to use reflective methods to effectively mitigate plagiarism in writing.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Plagiarism Behavior

Plagiarism originates from the Latin 'plagiarius', meaning kidnapping and theft (Husain et al., 2017). It is the intentional or unintentional act of obtaining credit for a scientific work by citing a part or all of someone else's work and publishing it as if it were their own without citing a source (Siaputra

& Santosa, 2016). This action is undoubtedly contrary to students' honesty and academic ethics. Among the wide range of plagiarism types found in international academic environments, two are distinctive: unintentional plagiarism by individuals unfamiliar with plagiarism (Rachmawati, 2017), and intentional plagiarism by those who are familiar with the idea but still choose to engage in it (Awasthi, 2019; Rachmawati, 2017). Owens and White (2013) classify plagiarism into resource-to-person and person-to-person, whereas Howard (2001) lists four types: fraud, problematic patchwriting, failure to cite, and failure to quote. Likewise, Coughlin (2015) categorizes plagiarism into three types: verbatim copying without quotation marks and reference to the source; paraphrasing without attribution; and using unique ideas, data, or evidence from another writer (even if not their exact words) without referencing the source. Krokosz (2021) elaborates on these subtypes, including word-for-word plagiarism, paraphrasing plagiarism, mosaic/patchwriting plagiarism, collusion plagiarism (acknowledging others' work), inaccurate phrase plagiarism, secondary-source plagiarism, and self-plagiarism. Wangaard (2016) identifies six common student plagiarisms: making up sources, including quotes not in the reference list in the text and vice versa, copying material and framework from other sources without attribution, allowing others to extensively revise a paper, writing by copying/plagiarizing the framework from other sources without attribution, and self-plagiarising without citations from previous works.

Various factors contribute to plagiarism, including poor self-control, research errors, poor time management, and stakeholders who do not pay sufficient attention to plagiarism (Guraya & Guraya, 2017). Students' writing ability has been suggested to be the most influential factor (Guraya & Guraya, 2017; Stander, 2020). The ease of access to the internet has made plagiarism convenient and faster (Peytcheva-Forsyth et al., 2018; Üney, 2022). Bretag (2016) adds that easy Internet access and an individual's ethical maturity also trigger plagiarism. Students can easily copy and paste existing work, claiming it as their own, making it difficult for instructors to distinguish between original ideas and quoted material (Üney, 2022). Other studies have revealed that

cultural and environmental factors, time constraints, limited language proficiency, and poor communication skills contribute to students' low academic integrity and an increased incidence of plagiarism (Bacha et al., 2012; Strom & Strom, 2007). This is reinforced by the notion that cultural and academic system differences contribute to plagiarism behavior (Fatemi & Saito, 2019). Zejno (2018) suggests that religiousness as a guiding principle can influence all aspects related to plagiarism.

To summarise, it is the instructor's responsibility to respond and act to find the best solution to address plagiarism, given that it is considered an academic violation. Researchers have proposed several solutions to this problem. Implementing writing instructions accompanied by an understanding of plagiarism strongly correlates with students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Students with good writing skills show confidence in writing and avoid a tendency to plagiarise (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). Moreover, the application of active learning strategies and the enhancement of self-efficacy have proven effective in developing anti-plagiarism behaviors (Rocher, 2020). Stephens and Wangaard (2016) add that to develop skills and abilities related to academic integrity, students need to have good academic writing skills (paraphrasing techniques, citing, and time management), social skills to reject copying behavior, and intrapersonal willingness (ego strength to avoid plagiarism behavior). Therefore, instructors should apply appropriate writing instruction methods to improve students' anti-plagiarism behavior.

## 2.2. Reflective Writing

Reflection in learning is defined as careful consideration of the experience of learning goals (Dalal, 2015). Boud et al. (1996) explain that the reflective learning model has two core components: experience and reflection on experience. Experience refers to a person's response to a situation or event, while reflection on experience involves an individual's efforts to recall, think about, contemplate, and turn experiences into lessons. Reflective learning is an analytical activity in which individuals understand and transform their experiences into learning (Boud, 2001). Although individuals tend to automatically reflect on experiences, conscious reflection enables them to bring subconscious thoughts and feelings to the

surface, thereby enhancing learning (Boud et al., 1996).

Reflective writing allows students to develop, practice, and refine metacognitive skills while gaining an authentic writing experience (O'Loughlin & Griffith, 2020). Students gain a better understanding of how to improve their writing abilities (Jayantini et al., 2022). Furthermore, reflective writing promotes deeper learning and reflective thinking to enhance academic performance (Afshar & Moradifar, 2021; Gelmez & Bagli, 2018; Tsingos-Lucas et al., 2017). Students reflect on their previous work in reflective writing learning (Dalal, 2015). In Dalal's study, students reflected on their previous written work related to plagiarism. Through reflective practice, students can recognize their mistakes and learn to improve their writing by detecting plagiarism. Transformative learning theory states that the process of perspective transformation includes three dimensions: psychological, belief, and behavioral change (Mezirow, 2000). Providing students with ongoing knowledge and training can enhance their confidence (Fazilatfar et al., 2018) and motivation to avoid plagiarism (Rocher, 2020). A review by Pecorari and Petrić (2014) shows that while studies have examined pedagogical interventions in the form of using sources/references, they have not shown a significant reduction in plagiarism. Therefore, it is necessary to apply a reflective method to writing. The success of students' application of reflective writing can be measured by the decrease in plagiarism in their work, which is otherwise caused by a lack of awareness and understanding of how to prevent it (Awasthi, 2019; Bretag, 2016; Guraya & Guraya, 2017; Rachmawati, 2017; Stander, 2020).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

The research population consisted of IAIN Palopo second-semester graduate students enrolled in a Scientific Writing course in 2021. Graduate students were selected based on their assumed maturity in terms of plagiarism, with the participants' ages ranging from 22 to 45. The population was considered homogeneous in terms of academic level and had the basic knowledge of writing acquired from a mandatory Bahasa Indonesia course in the first

semester. Multistage sampling was conducted among five graduate programs. In the first step, a classical random group of 33 students was selected from two programs, Islamic Law and Islamic Education Management. Using the Slovin formula, 30 students (63.3% male, 36.7% female) were randomly selected from this group for the reflective writing treatment.

#### 3.2. Instruments

Data were collected using test instruments, interviews, and documentation. The test instrument was a scientific proposal writing test that contained background, literature review, and research methods in the Indonesian language. Semi-structured interviews were conducted virtually to explore plagiarism behavior, contributing factors, and learning materials required by students. Documentation studies related to plagiarism behavior in writing were obtained from the Turnitin application. The test was administered at the beginning of the second meeting and at the end of the 14th meeting. Before data collection, the test instrument was validated by two experts, resulting in a category of instruments deemed suitable for use. To analyse the documents, the researcher was assisted by two assessors who performed inter-rater reliability testing, which resulted in a reliable score. The reliability measurement was based on an asymptotic standardized error calculation, yielding a score of  $0.800 > 0.75$ , indicating excellent agreement (Fleiss, 1975). Owing to the lingering pandemic, data collection took place over one semester, and the interview process was conducted via mobile phones. Documentation, test administration, and other activities were conducted online using the IAIN Palopo Learning Management System (LMS). Learning activities during the second and 14th meetings included tests.

#### 3.3. Procedure

##### 3.3.1. Data Collection

To investigate plagiarism, this study applied the mixed-methods sequential exploratory design proposed by Creswell (2014). First, quantitative research was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the plagiarism intervention before and after treatment, using an experimental design with a pre-post-test. Second, a qualitative study was conducted to investigate the factors contributing to

plagiarism and the learning materials required to reduce plagiarism.

In this study, a 14-week writing training program was administered. The program began with a presentation, followed by a writing skills test at the second meeting. The results obtained were tabulated as Task I (pre-test) and as reflective material on students' plagiarism behavior for the ensuing sessions. This treatment process included providing information to the students about plagiarism policies in the campus academic guidelines. In addition, materials on writing skills, such as diction, sentence formation, paragraph writing, and essay writing, were provided. The treatment included paraphrasing techniques, online source searching, and explaining how the Turnitin software works. After the materials were delivered, the students were instructed to perform writing exercises accompanied by feedback and peer reviews. They were also encouraged to discuss and reflect on plagiarism by analyzing their writings. At the 14th meeting, a final test (post-test) was conducted to measure the students' final semester grades and the extent of the success of the treatment.

### 3.3.2. Data Analysis

To describe the data, the analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics such as percentages, categorization of high, low, and average levels of student academic plagiarism, and presentation of data on plagiarism scores using graphs. To test the effectiveness of the program, a parametric paired-sample test was conducted, preceded by tests of normality and homogeneity. The normality test results using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed significance values of 0.200 for Task 1 and 0.147 for Task 2. Both were greater than 0.05, indicating that the data were usually distributed. Similarly, the homogeneity test using Levene's statistic showed a significance value of  $0.289 >$

$0.05$ , indicating homogeneous data. The researcher conducted a qualitative descriptive analysis of the documentation and interview data to validate the findings and analyze plagiarism, its factors, and relevant learning materials.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Effectiveness of Reflective Writing Pedagogy

The process of implementing the reflective writing learning method involves several steps. The first step was for the lecturer to equip the students with plagiarism knowledge. Although most students were aware of plagiarism, they still needed further explanation regarding the plagiarism policies implemented on campus. The next step was the provision of writing materials that mainly addressed the basics of writing and how to cite, paraphrase, and write references. In their feedback process, most students complained about their citations being identified as plagiarised in the Turnitin tests. In addition to accidental plagiarism, some students intentionally committed plagiarism. This was due to a lack of writing skills and misleading ways of avoiding plagiarism found on social media.

The next step was for students to reflect on their plagiarism behavior and improve their writing by referring to the results of the Turnitin test. The following findings were obtained based on the results of the statistical significance test by analyzing the difference between the scores of the first and second tasks. As presented in Table 1, the significance value obtained is  $\text{sig } 0.001 < 0.05$ , which indicates that reflective writing learning effectively reduces the level of plagiarism among students. The reduction can be seen descriptively in the mean values of students' plagiarism levels presented in Table 2.

**Table 1**  
*Results of Paired Samples Test*

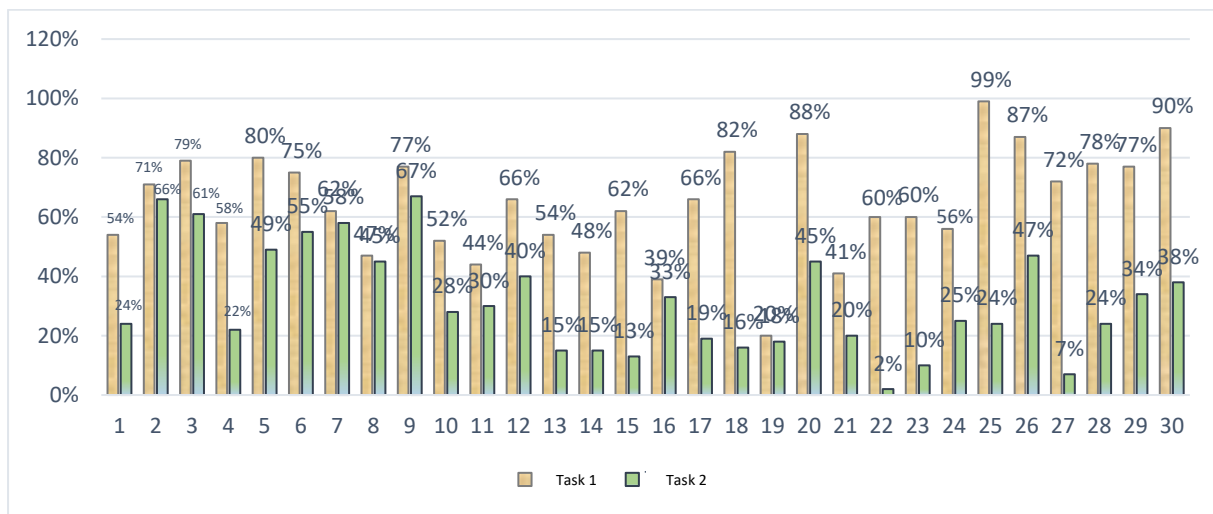
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Test1 - Test2	30.43333	19.78624	3.61246	23.04503	37.82164	8.425	29	.001

**Table 2**  
*Results of Plagiarism Check*

No	Plagiarism score	Task 1	Task 2
1	The Lowest	20	2
2	The Highest	99	67
3	Average	64.80	31.67

The data in Table 1 indicate that the average score for Task 1 was 64.80, which decreased to 31.67 in Task 2. This indicates a 33.13% decrease

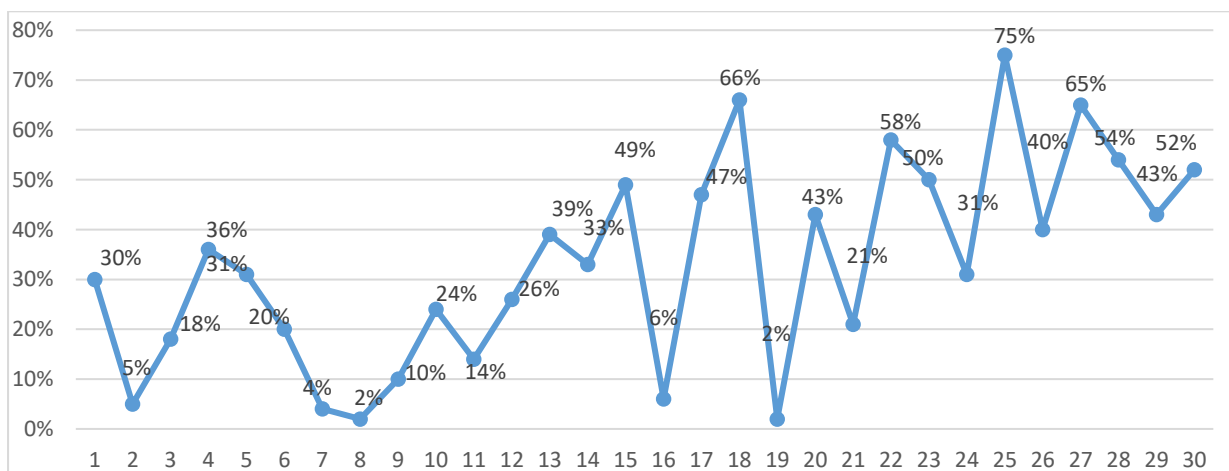
in intermediate-level student plagiarism. A comparison of plagiarism levels for each student in Tasks 1 and 2 is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1**  
*A Comparison of Plagiarism Score*

As shown in Figure 1, the scores of several students' writing tests significantly decreased when they engaged in reflective writing compared to the first writing test. Figure 2

shows that more than 50% of students' writing had lower plagiarism, as also displayed in documents nos. 18, 22, 25, 27, 28, and 30.



**Figure 2**  
*Level of Reduction in Plagiarism*

Figure 2 shows that all students experienced a decrease in plagiarism levels after participating in reflective writing instruction. However, this was not uniform among students. This decline was observed through the difference in plagiarism levels between Tasks 1 and 2 after treatment. Therefore, the effort to reduce plagiarism still depends on other factors besides reflective writing instruction.

#### Data 1

Pembelajaran bahasa memiliki peran yang sangat penting, bukan hanya untuk membina keterampilan komunikasi melainkan juga untuk kepentingan penguasaan ilmu pengetahuan. Melalui bahasalah manusia belajar berbagai macam ilmu

The pink-highlighted block in Data 1 displays the report of the Turnitin application owned by eprints.umm.ac.id, indicating that the sentence quoted in the text resulted in a high level of plagiarism. The Turnitin application reads the text and presents a report on plagiarism. Students did not include proper citations in sentences, a type of plagiarism more commonly observed than others. Another action is failing to refer to the quoted words in the reference list

#### Data 2

Pembelajaran bahasa memiliki peran yang sangat penting, bukan hanya untuk membina keterampilan komunikasi melainkan juga untuk kepentingan penguasaan ilmu pengetahuan. Melalui bahasalah manusia belajar berbagai macam ilmu pengetahuan di dunia. Oleh karena itu, sudah selayaknya pembelajaran bahasa di seluruh tingkatan pendidikan dilaksanakan dengan sebaik-baiknya, karena bahasa merupakan cerminan pribadi, karakter, bahkan pendidikan seseorang. Penggunaan bahasa yang lemah lembut, sopan santun, sistematis, teratur, jelas, dan lugas mencerminkan pribadi penuturnya yang berpendidikan dan memiliki pribadi yang baik. Sebaliknya, melalui penggunaan bahasa yang kasar, menghujat, mencacimaki, menghina, itu mencerminkan pribadi yang tidak berpendidikan dan tidak berbudi.

Data 2 shows that students composed paragraphs by quoting from two different sources. They added only a few words to make the paragraph coherent without including any quotation marks. The paragraph created appears to reflect the author's opinion but, in reality, it remains a quote from another source.

## 4.2. Plagiarism Behaviour of the Students

### 4.2.1. Taking Someone's Ideas without Referencing

Document analysis revealed that the postgraduate students adopted others' ideas without providing direct or indirect quotations.

or vice versa. Consequently, the cited and primary sources of the reference lists differed.

### 4.2.2. Patchwriting

Another type of plagiarism is patchwriting, which involves replicating unknown fragments taken from various sources and combining them with different words, conjunctions, and prepositions to make sense, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

### 4.2.3. Citing Secondary Sources

Many students engaged in reproducing bibliographic references obtained from other sources. They seemed to quote from primary sources without directly examining them; instead, they really cite from secondary sources. This is evident from Data 3.

**Data 3**

sejalan dengan teori Dessler yang mengungkapkan bahwa perencanaan melibatkan penetapan tujuan, perkiraan perencanaan, mempertimbangkan tindakan alternatif, mengevaluasi alternatif terbaik, dan kemudian memilih dan mengimplementasikan rencana. Rencana tersebut menunjukkan serangkaian tindakan untuk menjauhkan target dari posisinya saat ini( Dessler, 2015). Perencanaan selalu berorientasi pada

Examining Data 3 shows that the student's writing indirectly quotes Dessler's opinion. However, after conducting a similarity test, it was found that the reference presented is Dessler's opinion in the book *Manajemen Sumber daya Manusia Bidang Pendidikan* (Management of Human Resource Education Division) written by Nurul Ulfain and Teguh Triwijayanto, on page 30. Thus, the students committed secondary-source plagiarism.

**4.2.4. Permission for Committing Plagiarism**

This type of plagiarism can be identified by allowing students to extensively revise their papers. Students commonly requested that their seniors provide them with writing assignments from the same academic writing course as the previous cohort. Subsequently, they copied and made minor changes to their senior papers. This conduct is exhibited by incoming students in a relationship with their seniors but is typically arranged individually. Such behavior is performed individually, as indicated by the following interview excerpt:

"I requested the same from a senior who had previously completed the course and proceeded to revise the introduction and cover of the paper".

This type of plagiarism is also prevalent among graduate students. This occurs at the individual level and among each subsequent generation of students who copy files directly from their peers. Such plagiarism cannot be detected using plagiarism detection software because the

academic work is not stored in academic repositories.

**4.2.5. Self-plagiarism**

The type of self-plagiarism identified in students' academic writing is influenced by a lack of adherence to academic culture or a lack of understanding of plagiarism. This inference was based on the interviews, which suggested the following reasons.

- (1) All lecturers assign so many paper assignments to be completed, so we make minor alterations to reuse them. The lecturers do not even notice the difference.
- (2) I did not know that it was also considered plagiarism because it was my own work.

Interviews reveal that self-plagiarism is prevalent among graduate students, albeit on a small scale. It happens more when students are given two relatively similar assignments in two courses with different lecturers. In such cases, the students are inclined to modify an already written paper to submit it to another lecturer. However, they need to know that reusing their work, making minor modifications, and submitting it to different lecturers is plagiarism.

**4.2.6. Incorrect Plagiarism of Phrase**

The student writing excerpted in Data 4 illustrates this misplaced emphasis. The student attempted to paraphrase but produced a different meaning that did not refer to the context.

**Data 4**

target dari posisinya saat ini( Dessler, 2015). Perencanaan selalu berorientasi pada tujuan. Perencanaan dilakukan untuk menyeimbangkan permintaan dan ketersediaan internal berdasarkan hasil analisis beban kerja. Sedangkan perencanaan jangka panjang dilakukan untuk mendapatkan sumber daya manusia yang memiliki potensi pertumbuhan untuk mengatasi tantangan masa depan. Ada 6 manfaat perencanaan sumber daya manusia yaitu organisasi, SDM yang matang, produktivitas kerja dari



The data reveals a significant meaning reproduction through paraphrasing, as demonstrated in the first quote, 'Planning is always goal-oriented', from the primary source, 'Short-term and medium-term planning'. The second quote, 'Growth potential', refers to the primary source, 'The potential ability to be developed'. The final quote, 'The benefits of human resource planning are a well-organized organization and workforce', is derived from the primary source, '(a) Organizations can better utilize existing human resources within the organization', (b) 'Through sound human resource planning, the work productivity of existing labor can be increased'. The students

did not pay attention to the three words paraphrased from the primary source to the core sentence. As a result, the phrases (1) 'potential that can be developed', (2) 'utilizing human resources', and (3) 'sound planning' do not correspond to their original meanings in the primary source.

#### 4.2.7. Word-for-Word Plagiarism

Data 5 reflects the phenomenon of students copying the entire text from a single source onto their papers. The total similarity index for the students' papers was 98%.

#### Data 5

**File name:** MAKALAH\_EMPIRIK\_-\_awal\_aswal.docx (74.19K)  
**Word count:** 4833  
**Character count:** 31782

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PRIMARY SOURCES

1	<a href="http://www.liputandesa.online">www.liputandesa.online</a> Internet Source	98%
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The high similarity index indicates that the students did not paraphrase someone else's words or include the original source [www.liputandesa.online](http://www.liputandesa.online), but claimed that this was their work. The cause of this plagiarism behavior was revealed in the interviews, and the response quoted below emphasizes their need to understand plagiarism better:

"I typed all the words that I collected from a book, Sir! I didn't copy and paste it directly into my writing".

The response shows that the students comprehended plagiarism to mean copying and pasting text from primary sources onto their papers and not that even typing the words from the primary source without paraphrasing constitutes plagiarism. Such writing is categorized as word-for-word plagiarism. Additionally, some students deliberately concealed verbatim plagiarism by placing hidden texts in their writing, as depicted in Data 6.

#### Data 6

Pernikahan adalah ikatan terdalam, terkuat, dan paling abadi yang menyatukan dua anak manusia dan melibatkan interaksi paling lengkap antara dua orang. Karena itu, hati mereka harus bersatu dan ditemukan dalam ikatan yang biasanya tidak pudar.

Pernikahan adalah ikatan terdalam, terkuat, dan paling abadi yang menyatukan dua anak manusia dan melibatkan interaksi paling lengkap antara dua orang. Karena itu, hati mereka harus bersatu dan ditemukan dalam ikatan yang biasanya tidak pudar. Agar hati dapat bersatu, tujuan

Data 6 illustrates that the Turnitin application can detect hidden text and altered student paper characters. The red box in the figure indicates

detection. We assume that students deliberately engaged in this deception.



18390 suspect characters on 104 pages

263 suspect characters on 8 pages

#### What is hidden text?

An attempt to hinder similarity detection by exploiting exclusion mechanisms or artificially inflating the word count. Text is blended into the white background of a document to make it invisible.

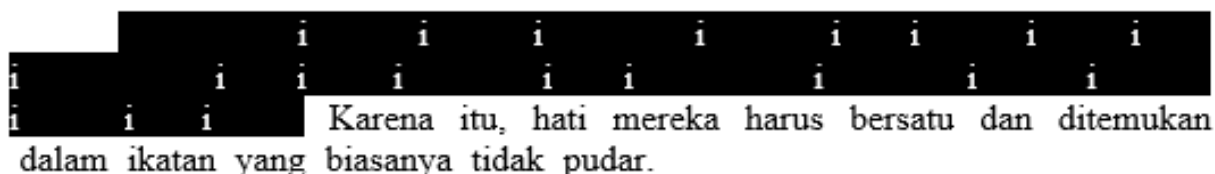
Latin: 168887 Cyrillic: 260 Common: 3

#### What are replaced characters?

An attempt to hinder similarity detection by replacing characters with similar looking ones from different alphabets or character sets.

Other forms of cheating can be detected manually using plagiarism detection tools. The

tool displays the blocked text as hidden text in the image below.



Based on the data, it was discovered that plagiarism was conducted through fraudulent means, specifically utilizing hidden text in the form of font [i] at the beginning of the words. This decrease occurred in 18,390 of the 152,314 characters. Additionally, there were instances of students intentionally double-spacing words.

This deception is even more egregious when students manipulate paraphrasing tools and manually alter data to hide their dishonesty. They changed the font types to closely resemble one another, intentionally misspelled words and incorporated abbreviations into their writing. Data 7 reveals the extent of this deception.

#### Data 7

Josep Schact, *Pengantar Hukum Islam* (Jogjakarta: Islamika, 2003), hlm. 1

Data 7 depicts that students manipulate anti-plagiarism detection by altering Latin letters [l] into Roman letters [I] or numbers [1], such as in words 'Islam' and 'hIm', replacing the number [0] with the letter [O] due to its resemblance to the year 2003, committing misspellings such as in the word 'Hukum'

changed to 'Hokum', modifying Latin letters into Arabic symbols that have the same pronunciation, as seen in the word 'Allah' changed to 'الله' (data 8), and making errors in abbreviation writing, as in the word 'jg' for the correct word 'juga' (Data 8).

#### Data 8

agama. Hal inilah yang membedakan insan bersama makhluk lainnya dan jg meninggikan harkat serta martabat kemuliaan di sisi الله.

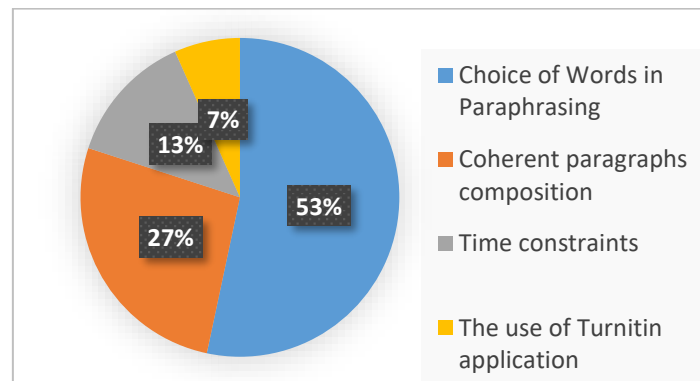
The final deception illustrates how the students manipulate Google Translate during writing. They translated Indonesian (source language)

into Malay or another foreign language (target language) and then retranslated the translated text back to the source language for

paraphrasing. This trick was obtained through interviews with students. They retranslate the primary sources to avoid plagiarism. This manipulation is influenced by word-for-word plagiarism, which, in turn, leads to inaccurate phrase plagiarism and the reproduction of other meanings. Thus, plagiarism creates significant problems when students do not comply with the scientific writing protocols established by the institution.

#### 4.2.8. Factors Promoting Students' Plagiarism

This section investigates the factors influencing student plagiarism by presenting data in diagrams and interview reports. Several student responses at the end of the learning session indicated the presence of plagiarism, as shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3**  
*Factors Promoting Students' Plagiarism*

The main factors behind student plagiarism are the selection of words or phrases to form a correct sentence and the alteration of the meaning of other people's ideas or opinions through paraphrasing. Causal factors were reported by 53% of respondents. Document analysis revealed that plagiarism is often committed in the conceptual study section (the Literature Review section), indicating that students require an excellent ability to synthesize concepts to make them easily understandable and avoid plagiarism. This result is supported by the following interview excerpts.

- (1) The issue I face in academic writing is selecting the appropriate words and sentences.
- (2) Choosing the right words without altering the meaning of other people's ideas or concepts in my paper is difficult.
- (3) I have difficulties in constructing good sentences.
- (4) My problem lies more in understanding paraphrasing.
- (5) It is challenging to select accurate words because their meanings may not be understood by the reader when paraphrasing them.

- (6) I struggle to find the right words in my writing because Turnitin can detect everything I have copied and pasted.

Based on the interview responses, we conclude that the respondents required assistance in selecting appropriate words to paraphrase someone else's ideas from the primary source. Their writing must be more precise to ensure reader comprehension. In addition, the Turnitin application can detect common words, making it difficult for respondents to select appropriate dictions or words. In addition to word choice and sentence structure difficulties, 27% of the respondents complained of difficulty composing cohesive paragraphs, as follows.

- (1) I encounter difficulty in expressing my thoughts cohesively and coherently to meet the requirements of a cohesive paragraph.
- (2) My issue lies in composing sentences into a well-formed paragraph, especially when there are quotations involved.
- (3) I am not proficient enough in understanding how and when a sentence is treated as a quotation and given a comma or a period.

The interview results reveal that the students struggled to accurately place and organize quotations within the paragraphs. This may be due to deficiencies in their knowledge of paragraph formation and the technical aspects of writing. In other cases, 13% of the respondents reported time constraints as a limiting factor in completing their academic work, leading them to copy and paste from primary sources. The following excerpts provide such evidence.

- (1) The time limit is restrictive, so I simply copied materials from the internet.
- (2) When there is enough time, paraphrasing is easy for me.
- (3) I have an issue with the deadline. Within one to two days, I can read and study many references beforehand to complete my paper.

The limited timeframe for completing essays is perceived as a contributing factor to plagiarism. Copying and pasting words without paraphrasing them is an option to submit essays on time. Besides, 7% of the respondents encountered difficulties using plagiarism detection software, as is clear from the following interview excerpt.

“I am experiencing difficulty in avoiding plagiarism because I do not understand how Turnitin works. Sometimes, I include the name of a lecturer, and it is detected as plagiarism. So, I wonder, ‘how does Turnitin work?’ If Turnitin reads all sentences online, including the lecturer’s name, I assume it will lead the next writer to problematic plagiarism”.

In general, the factors contributing to plagiarism in student papers include difficulties in selecting appropriate words for paraphrasing, organizing cohesive paragraphs, time constraints, understanding the usage of Turnitin software, and other technical aspects.

### 4.3. Required Learning Materials for Students

Preventing plagiarism in student writing requires the use of several resources. The primary resources are closely related to these factors. First, most need to learn how to paraphrase, which, according to the following statements from the students, can facilitate academic writing learning.

- (1) I require instructional materials on effectively executing paraphrasing techniques.
- (2) Academic instructors must provide proper and accurate guidance on the practice of paraphrasing.
- (3) In addition to thesis supervision, students necessitate training and mentorship in writing to prevent plagiarism.
- (4) I require several resources that cover techniques for avoiding plagiarism.

The second material relates to citation methods. How to cite well should be taught to students to reduce plagiarism and make proper citations to enrich their writing. Students are expected to learn to cite sources correctly to avoid plagiarism, as seen in the following interview excerpts.

- (1) I require materials on how to find, select, and write appropriate references for my academic paper topic.
- (2) We require teaching materials on selecting high-quality, up-to-date, and relevant references for the title, as well as the proper way to cite them to avoid plagiarism.
- (3) It is necessary for instructors to teach us the proper and accurate methods for citing and paraphrasing.
- (4) The third pertains to writing techniques and how ideas and concepts are expressed, as outlined in the following interview excerpts.
- (5) I greatly need material about the patterns of expressing thoughts to produce high-quality writing.
- (6) To write well, I expect the lecturer to provide materials on techniques for writing scientific papers per the rules.

The final element concerns the utilization of the plagiarism detection software Turnitin, as supported by the following interview excerpts.

- (1) I require an explanation of the functionality of Turnitin.
- (2) I am perplexed by Turnitin. I am unsure how to reduce plagiarism, as even the instructor’s name is flagged as plagiarism in the Turnitin application.

Based on the above findings, the materials needed for reflective writing instruction can be categorized into general, core, and enrichment materials. The former involves the ability to

express ideas or thoughts and arrange them into a well-written piece of text to produce valuable writing. The second category refers to procedures for citing, paraphrasing, using proper words, referencing, and other techniques to attenuate plagiarism. The third, enrichment material explains anti-plagiarism mechanisms and potential factors that may lead to plagiarism. Not only is there a need to teach basic writing but direct practice and guidance from instructors to students can also help solve common plagiarism problems.

## 5. Discussion

The statistical evidence depicted in Table 1, which shows a significance value of 0.001, indicates that the reflective writing strategy effectively reduces students' intention to plagiarise. This decrease can also be seen in Table 2 and Graph 1, which show a 33.13% reduction in plagiarism. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Dalal (2015) and Odom and Helfers (2016), who found that reflective writing can help students prevent or reduce plagiarism. Through this strategy, students reflected on their writing and identified mistakes (plagiarism behavior) made by referring to the Turnitin test results. This process is an effect of conscious reflection that enables individuals to bring unconscious thoughts and feelings into awareness, thereby enhancing their learning outcomes (Boud et al., 1996). In other words, writing encourages students to compose sentences and paraphrase to improve their writing skills. Students with good writing skills have confidence in their writing, which affects their attitude toward plagiarism (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). Another relationship is that when students' language skills improve, they gain motivation and confidence in writing without plagiarism (Stephens & Wangaard, 2016).

Writing skills cannot be acquired in a short period but only through continuous practice (Petersen et al., 2020). This conviction is reflected in Table 2, which shows an average score of 31.67% for Task 2, and in Figure 2, which shows that the decrease in plagiarism among all students was not uniform. Some students experienced less than a 10% reduction in plagiarism levels, indicating that reflective writing still needs to be continuously learned by students, both by studying reflective writing and connecting it with other factors. Several

studies have found that plagiarism behavior is not only influenced by writing ability but also by poor time management, culture, and academic systems (Bacha et al., 2012; Bretag, 2016; Fatemi & Saito, 2019; Stander, 2020; Strom & Strom, 2007), and religiosity (Zejno, 2018).

Cultural differences are one of the causes of the prevalence of plagiarism in a country (Fatemi & Saito, 2019). Culture is a framework of assumptions and values that shape academic perceptions and behavior regarding plagiarism (Kasler et al., 2021). The academic culture at a university influences plagiarism behavior by students. Ease of access to good plagiarism policies and education allows students to have a better awareness of plagiarism (Mahmud et al., 2019). Likewise, students who are in an individualistic culture view academic integrity as an individual responsibility. They need to separate their own opinion from the cited sources (Tremayne & Curtis, 2021). Meanwhile, collectivist cultures tend to let their identities be linked and included by other people's identities, so they choose to copy a lot (Tremayne & Curtis, 2021). The findings of this study indicate that plagiarism by graduate students permits plagiarism to copy files directly with their work; they do not need recognition. This is in accordance with the academic writing culture in Indonesia, which tends to adhere to a collectivist writing culture.

Students commit various types of plagiarism while preparing proposals. The results of our analysis and interviews indicated students' limitations in paraphrasing and citing. Consequently, some students used automatic paraphrasing tools (APT). However, the paraphrases generated by these tools often alter the meaning of the original sentences. Additionally, using APTs increases student academic misconduct because they do not detect copied assignments (Wahle et al., 2022). Moreover, APTs weaken the performance of plagiarism detection tools and facilitate the practice of stealing others' work (Roe & Perkins, 2022). Using APTs makes it challenging to differentiate between paraphrasing and patch-writing in student essays (Rogerson & McCarthy, 2017). This is challenging to the universities, including IAIN Palopo, and the academic world as a whole. Considering the many violations of scripting procedures and

plagiarism that academic students can easily commit, the resulting student scholarly work is unlikely to generate new content or innovation for academic output (Roe & Perkins, 2022; Wahle et al., 2022).

Students' insufficient ability to paraphrase is in line with the factors that cause plagiarism in essay writing, as depicted in Figure 1. These factors include word choice in paraphrasing, constructing coherent paragraphs, time constraints, and understanding the use of the Turnitin software. Among these factors, students' paraphrasing ability is the most important. This is consistent with Khairunnisa et al. (2014), who found that high levels of plagiarism in student papers were due to a lack of vocabulary mastery and understanding of plagiarism. Vocabulary mastery affects a person's language skills, including writing (Saddhono et al., 2022). Guraya and Guraya (2017) and Stander (2020) revealed that students' writing ability is the most influential factor in plagiarism behavior.

The availability of free time for writing changes their perception of plagiarism (Vaccino-Salvadore & Hall Buck, 2021). The issue of time constraints in writing is consistent with the findings of Bacha et al. (2012), Strom and Strom (2007), and Vaccino-Salvadore and Hall Buck (2021), who found that limited time led students to resort to plagiarism. This is due to poor time management (Guraya & Guraya, 2017), a tendency to procrastinate (Mukasa et al., 2023), and the ease of accessing material on the Internet (Bretag, 2016; Üney, 2022). Consequently, the students resorted to the quick route of copying and pasting entire texts from the sources, as shown in Data 5. Meanwhile, the low level of understanding of the use of Turnitin software is consistent with Halgamuge's (2017) research, which suggests that understanding Turnitin helps students prepare assignments in an academically acceptable manner. Understanding how Turnitin works can afford students time to prepare their projects without plagiarising.

Students require general, core, and enrichment materials to address the factors that contribute to writing plagiarism. Writing instructions should commence by providing general material on fundamental writing techniques and plagiarism. Writing materials cover how to express ideas and thoughts effectively and how

to write well to produce high-quality writing. In addition to basic writing techniques, students also require an understanding of plagiarism to instill anti-plagiarism behaviors. This knowledge is crucial because students may intentionally commit plagiarism if they have limitations in avoiding it (Bretag, 2016). Furthermore, as Awasthi (2019) suggests, implementing writing training with plagiarism education facilitates students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward writing. Therefore, writing instructions should include the provision of plagiarism learning.

The next stage of learning involves providing core materials, including how to cite, paraphrase, choose sources, and write bibliographies. This aligns with Stephens and Wangaard's (2016) research, which highlights the importance of teaching students good note-taking skills, paraphrasing techniques, citation methods, and referencing styles to develop academic integrity skills. Further, Bacha et al. (2012) state that students should receive writing lessons on accessing references, adjusting them, and paraphrasing their scientific work topics using primary sources to create accurate citations. In the final learning phase, students must also be taught anti-plagiarism mechanics as enrichment material. Providing students with these materials and guiding them to reflect on their writing can help reduce plagiarism. However, lecturers should explain the use of anti-plagiarism software to avoid undermining students' confidence in writing (Chew et al., 2015). They should explain the purpose of checking their work using the Turnitin application and provide detailed feedback to obtain accurate feedback during writing instruction.

In transformative learning theory, the process of perspective transformation has three dimensions: psychological, belief, and behavioral aspects. An improved writing ability increases students' motivation and self-confidence and avoids plagiarism. However, this study only focused on changes in students' plagiarism behavior without examining the psychological and belief aspects. Future researchers should investigate all three dimensions of reflective writing.

The study has implications for teaching academic writing. Specifically, applying reflective methods to writing instruction can

serve as an alternative solution for consistently addressing student plagiarism. Instruction with reflective writing should also focus on plagiarism, its contributing factors, and the need for instructional materials. This study finds that many graduate students at IAIN Palopo do not fully understand plagiarism even after completing their undergraduate education. Therefore, future research should explore all the potential factors contributing to plagiarism, as these are influenced by students' backgrounds, learning motivations, and other environmental, cultural, and educational aspects. Another suggestion is to provide students with alternative methods of writing instruction that align with their learning objectives, produce valuable scholarly work, and promote their academic integrity. Finally, dividing the sample into several categories based on age, maturity, understanding of writing methods and theories, educational background, motivation, career, and degree-seeking goals may yield additional insights.

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