

Students' Responses To The Use of '*Jumanlly*' Developed With Genially in Teaching Writing Skills

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Abstract

Writing remains one of the most difficult English skills for Indonesian Senior High School students due to limited vocabulary, grammatical difficulties, and low motivation. This study aimed to develop "*Jumanlly*", a digital learning medium using Genially, and to investigate eleventh-grade students' responses toward it. This Research and Development (R&D) study followed the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation). The product was developed to teach the expression of giving opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing in writing. The study involved nineteen eleventh-grade students at SMA KARTIKA XIX-4 CIMAH. Data were collected through expert validation sheets, field notes, student interviews, and teacher interviews, and analyzed qualitatively. The results showed that "*Jumanlly*," an interactive game-based medium inspired by the Jumanji concept and containing a hundred writing tasks, was successfully developed. Expert validation indicated high feasibility with strong scores across all components, including learning objectives, material selection, and task design. Field trials demonstrated good practicality in classroom settings. Students' responses were highly positive. They found the product fun, engaging, and helpful for practicing writing. In conclusion, "*Jumanlly*" using the Genially platform received strong positive perceptions from students and was considered practical and acceptable as an alternative medium for teaching writing skills to eleventh-grade students.

Keywords: *Jumanlly*; Genially; Writing Skills; Game-based Learning; ADDIE Model; Senior High School

INTRODUCTION

One of the most difficult abilities for students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), especially at the Senior High School level, is writing. Indonesian students often struggle with limited vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, poor text organization, and low motivation when learning to write in English (Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017). Writing is a productive ability, namely the ability to be able to convey ideas, intentions, and information from the author to the reader, which is presented in writing (Inayah & Rahayu, 2022). Moreover, English language learners often face motivation constraints due to time limitations, which hinder their ability to allocate sufficient time and effort toward improving their writing abilities (Song & Song, 2023). The low writing ability of students is estimated that there are many factors that influence it, both from students (internally), from parents, from the surrounding environment, from facilities and infrastructure, and from the methods used by the teacher in teaching (Anggraeni & Rachmijati, 2021). Writing is not only about pouring the words into paper but also needs so much knowledge and experience to make a meaningful writing (Dosen et al., 2019). Writing remains difficult despite technological advances because it is fundamentally a thinking process. Technology can correct spelling and grammar errors, but it cannot think critically or construct arguments for students. The core challenges of writing clarifying thoughts, organizing ideas, and developing a coherent style-require human effort that no software can replace. Ultimately,

technology serves as a helpful tool but cannot replace the hard intellectual work at the heart of good writing. The ability to think clearly, communicate persuasively, and express meaning meaningfully remains a uniquely human skill.

Traditional teaching methods, which typically rely on repetitive drills and problems written on the board, tend to be monotonous and fail to capture students' interest, resulting in passive response to these challenges, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and game-based learning has gained increasing attention in language education. Digitizing classrooms is another way that can be used, for example, by creating multimedia-based classrooms (Anggraeni, 2022). Digital tools can create an interactive, engaging, and student-centered learning environment that enhances motivation and provides meaningful practice (Adipat et al., 2021). Among various platforms, Genially has emerged as a promising tool due to its user-friendly interface, rich interactive features, and ability to support gamification without requiring advanced programming skills. Based on a previous study (Ruiz, 2021) stated that the digital platform (Kahoot !) in the writing classroom enriched the quality of student learning, with the highest gains reported in engagement and interaction, learning motivation, and perceptions of the overall improved learning experience.

This study focuses on “*Jumanlly*”, an interactive digital learning medium developed by the researcher using the Genially platform. “*Jumanlly*” is a gamified board game inspired by the Jumanji adventure concept, designed in the form of a snakes-and-ladders game. As students move their avatars across the board by rolling the virtual dice, they encounter various writing tasks at each square. These tasks specifically target the development of writing skills in giving opinions, agreeing and disagreeing expressions through various formats such as completing sentences, expressing personal views, responding to statements, and constructing short paragraphs. The medium contains a hundred varied writing tasks presented through engaging elements, including avatars, dice, animations, pop-up questions, and background sound. This game design encourages repeated practice, immediate feedback, and active language production in a motivating and low-anxiety environment.

The study was conducted at SMA KARTIKA XIX-4 CIMAHI involving nineteen eleventh-grade students. Data on students' responses were collected through expert validation, field notes, and semi-structured interviews with ten students and the English teacher.

This paper presents the students' perceptions regarding the attractiveness, usefulness, clarity, technical aspects, and overall acceptance of “*Jumanlly*” as a writing learning tool. This qualitative research complements the R&D process by providing rich insights into the acceptability and practicality of the developed medium in real classroom settings.

The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on game-based learning and digital media in EFL writing instruction, particularly in the Indonesian Senior High School context. By highlighting students' perspectives, this study provides practical insight for English teachers seeking innovative and engaging approaches to address the ongoing challenges of teaching writing skills.

METHOD

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach following the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) to create “*Jumanlly*.” Although the product was fully developed and its feasibility was evaluated, the primary focus of this article is on students' responses toward the use of “*Jumanlly*” in real

classroom settings. In the analysis phase, students' needs and difficulties in writing were identified. The design and development phases focused on creating the interactive board game containing a hundred writing tasks. The implementation phase involved limited and extensive classroom trials with nineteen eleventh-grade students, while the evaluation phase assessed the product's feasibility through expert validation and user feedback. Although the full R&D process was conducted, this article primarily focuses on the findings from the implementation and evaluation phases. A descriptive qualitative approach was adopted to deeply explore students' perceptions, experiences, and responses toward "*Jumanlly*."

The research was carried out at SMA KARTIKA XIX-4 CIMAHI, West Java, Indonesia. The participants were nineteen eleventh-grade students, consisting of six males and thirteen females. A limited trial was conducted with four students, while an extensive trial involved all nineteen students. To gain in-depth insight into students' responses, ten students were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews. The selection criteria included: (1) active participation during the game sessions, (2) representation of both the limited trial (four students) and extensive trial (six students), (3) diversity in gender and academic performance (mix of high, average, and low achievers), and (4) willingness to share detailed experiences. This purposive sampling technique was chosen to obtain rich, varied, and representative data regarding students' perception of "*Jumanlly*."

"*Jumanlly*" is an interactive digital learning medium developed using the Genially platform. Inspired by the Jumanji adventure concept, the medium takes the form of a Snakes and Ladders board game, containing a hundred writing tasks related to giving opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing. It incorporates various gamification elements such as avatars, dice, animations, pop-up questions, background music, and interactive features to create an engaging learning experience.

Data on students' responses were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, and field notes. Ten students were individually interviewed using five open-ended questions that explored their learning experience, perceived usefulness, level of enjoyment, difficulties encountered, and suggestions for improvement. Additionally, one English teacher was interviewed to obtain supporting perspectives. Field notes were taken during both limited and extensive trials to record student behavior, engagement levels, and any technical issues observed during the learning activities. Expert validation sheets were also used to assess the quality of the product before classroom implementation. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis. Interview recordings were transcribed, followed by data reduction to select relevant and meaningful responses. The data were then grouped into emerging themes and verified through triangulation by comparing findings from student interviews, teacher interviews, and field notes. This process ensured the reliability and validity of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study developed "*Jumanlly*," an interactive game-based learning medium using the Genially platform, and investigated eleventh-grade students' responses toward its implementation in teaching writing skills, particularly on giving opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing. The findings revealed that students' responses toward "*Jumanlly*" were highly

positive, with all interviewed students describing the medium as fun, engaging, and helpful for practicing writing skills, despite some minor technical challenges.

All ten interviewed students expressed positive perceptions of their learning experience with “Jumanlly.” They frequently used the word “seru” (fun/exciting). For example, one student stated, “Menurut aku game-nya seru, terus aku juga dibawa suasana sama sound efek-nya, jadi kaya ngerasa lebih excited ngelakuin game itu” (S1). Another student added, “Seru banget, mempermudah terus kaya ga ngebosenin gitu cara belajarnya” (S8). The participants perceived that the combination of learning and playing, supported by avatars, dice, animations, and background sound, transformed writing practice from a routine task into an enjoyable adventure. These responses suggest that the students felt more enthusiastic and motivated during the learning process compared to their usual writing tasks.

Regarding the perceived usefulness of the medium, the majority of students (nine out of ten) reported that “Jumanlly” helped them practice writing. They perceived that the medium encouraged faster thinking, active expression of ideas, and better understanding of the material. The participants also viewed the clear instructions and varied question types (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and open-ended) as beneficial for practicing vocabulary and sentence construction. For example, one student mentioned, “Iya ngebantu banget, terus dari media itu juga ngebuat aku jadi tertarik juga untuk main games itu” (S1). Another student mentioned, “Paling jadi kita bisa mencari jawaban dengan cepat, karena dengan kita main itu kita lebih semangat, instruksi dan tampilannya juga jelas” (S5). These self-reported perceptions suggest that students felt the game-based format supported their writing practice in a more engaging way.

When compared to conventional writing instruction, all students agreed that “Jumanlly” was far more interesting and enjoyable compared to conventional writing instruction. They described traditional methods as boring and repetitive. In contrast, “Jumanlly” created a lively, competitive, and collaborative learning environment. For example, one student stated, “Lebih menarik, soalnya lebih bervariasi jadi engga boring” (S2). Another participant added, “Menarik banget inovasi yang bagus buat diterapin di kelas” (S10). Students particularly enjoyed discussing answers with their peers and felt more motivated by the game elements. Despite the positive responses, some technical challenges were identified. Five students mentioned difficulties in moving the avatars, occasional lag, and cursor problems. While a few students also found some questions challenging to understand. However, these issues did not diminish their overall positive perception of the medium. Three students reported experiencing no significant difficulties. The participants suggested that these technical issues could be improved in future versions by enhancing avatar navigation (e.g., implementing automatic movement), optimizing loading speed, and improving the clarity of instructions and visual design.

Importantly, all ten students expressed a strong desire to use “Jumanlly” again in future lessons, not only for writing but also for other English skills. They actively recommended the medium to be used more widely in class. For example, one student enthusiastically stated “Mau, malahan mau banget kalo metode belajar nanti pake Jumanlly soalnya bikin ngga bosan” (S1). Suggestions for improvement mainly focused on making avatar navigation easier, improving lighting contrast, adding more game elements (such as snakes and ladders), and increasing the variety of questions.

The English teacher also gave positive feedback. The English teacher noted that “*Jumanlly*” successfully increased student participation, especially among passive students, and encouraged them to think analytically and respond more quickly. The teacher confirmed that the medium was practical and useful for teaching writing in the classroom.

Discussion

The highly positive student responses toward “*Jumanlly*” support previous studies on game-based learning and the use of Genially in EFL contexts. Specifically, the finding that all interviewed students describe “*Jumanlly*” as fun, engaging aligns with and extends the results of (Rahayu et al., 2024), who found that Genially-based interactive media significantly increased student participation and reduced monotony in EFL classrooms. However, while previous studies generally focused on general student engagement, the present study provides more specific evidence by highlighting students’ strong acceptance of a Jumanji-inspired board game format for practicing targeted writing skills (giving opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing), thus offering practical insights for implementing gamification in Senior High School writing instruction.

The results also confirm that gamification elements such as competition, collaboration, and adventure themes can effectively address the common problems in EFL writing instruction – low motivation, limited vocabulary, and grammatical difficulties. By transforming writing practice into an exciting board game adventure, “*Jumanlly*” appeared to help shift students’ perception of writing from a difficult and monotonous task into an enjoyable activity. The students’ self-reported experiences suggest that the game-based format helped reduce their anxiety and increase their willingness to practice targeted writing skills, particularly in giving opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing. However, since this study primarily explored students’ perceptions rather than measuring actual improvements in vocabulary or grammatical accuracy, these findings should be interpreted as perceived benefits rather than conclusive evidence of language development.

The minor technical issues found in this study are consistent with the known limitations of the Genially platform, particularly regarding internet dependency and complex interactivity. These challenges, however, did not outweigh the benefits of the medium and can be improved in future developments through simpler navigation and better optimization. From a theoretical perspective, the collaborative learning observed during gameplay strongly supports Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, particularly the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). During the extensive trial, students worked in small groups, discussing answers, negotiating ideas, and helping each other construct written responses to the opinion, agreement, and disagreement tasks. This peer interaction enabled students to perform beyond their individual capabilities, as weaker students benefited from the guidance and modeling provided by more capable peers. For example, field notes and student interviews revealed that group members frequently exchanged vocabulary suggestions and corrected sentence structures while competing to advance in the game. These collaborative processes not only increased student engagement but also facilitated the construction of knowledge in writing, aligning with Vygotsky’s view that learning is socially mediated.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that “*Jumanlly*” developed with Genially is a practical, engaging, and effective digital medium for teaching writing skills to Senior High School students. The strong positive responses from both students and the teacher suggest that

game-based learning using accessible platforms like Genially has great potential to improve the quality of English writing instruction in Indonesian Senior High Schools.

CONCLUSION

This research developed “*Jumanlly*”, an interactive game-based learning medium using the Genially platform, and explored 11th-grade students’ responses to its use in teaching English writing skills, particularly on giving opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing.

The findings demonstrate that students’ responses to “*Jumanlly*” were highly positive. Students found that the medium was fun, engaging, and motivating. They reported that learning through the Jumanji-inspired game made writing practice more enjoyable and less stressful compared to the conventional method. The majority of students perceived that “*Jumanlly*” helped them practice writing more actively and increased their willingness to use “*Jumanlly*” again in future English lessons and recommended its wider use in the classroom.

Although some technical challenges, such as avatar navigation and occasional lag, were noted, these issues did not reduce the overall positive perception of the medium. Both students and the English teacher agreed that “*Jumanlly*” successfully increased student participation, collaboration, and non-monotonous teaching methods in EFL writing instruction.

The results of this research provide valuable insights for English teachers who want to implement more innovative and student-centered approaches in the classroom. For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct experimental studies with larger samples to measure the impact of “*Jumanlly*” on students’ actual writing performance and to further refine the technical aspects of the medium.

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