

**THE USE OF DUOLINGO TO IMPROVE THE STUDENTS' WRITING
SKILLS AT THE EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPN 1 LANRISANG KAB.
PINRANG**

Wahyuni Ismail,^{a,1*}, Insani Nurchintyawati,^{b,2}, Eka Purwanti^{c,3}

^{1,2,3} STAI DDI Pinrang, Indonesia

Email: wahyunismail@gmail.com, insaninurchintyawati@staidi-pinrang.ac.id

ekapurwanti@staidi-pinrang.ac.id

*Corresponding Author

DOI:

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

*Duolingo;
writing skill;
language
learning;
technology in
education.*

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the Duolingo application in improving students' English writing skills at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Lanrisang, Pinrang Regency. The research employed a quantitative approach with pre-test and post-test designs using SPSS version 26.0 for data analysis. Thirty-four students participated as the research sample. The results showed a significant improvement in students' writing skills after using Duolingo as a learning medium. The mean score increased from 59.65 (pre-test) to 80.65 (post-test), and the proportion of students achieving the minimum competency standard (KKM) rose from 38.23% to 82.35%. The t-test result showed a significance value of $0.016 < 0.05$, indicating that the use of Duolingo had a significant effect on improving students' writing skills. The findings conclude that Duolingo is an effective technological tool to enhance English writing learning outcomes at the junior high school level.

Article Info:

20/09/2024

Revised:

30/10/2024

Published:

07/11/2024



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International \(CC BY-SA 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in human communication, functioning as a primary means of expressing ideas, feelings, and thoughts. Among the many languages used globally, English has become the most influential international language, serving as a medium for communication, education, business, and technology. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language that must be learned by students to enable them to compete globally and access a wide range of knowledge and information.

The Indonesian government has emphasized English as a compulsory subject from junior high school to university level. The objective is not only to help students understand the structure of English but also to use it as a practical communication tool. However, despite years of learning English at school, many students still find it difficult

to achieve proficiency, especially in writing, which is considered one of the most complex language skills.

Writing requires learners to master several linguistic components simultaneously—such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and coherence. Unlike speaking, writing is a productive skill that demands accuracy, organization, and creativity. Students must be able to generate ideas, organize them logically, and express them using appropriate language forms. For many Indonesian learners, these processes are challenging due to limited vocabulary, insufficient grammar mastery, and a lack of practice.

Previous studies have shown that students often view writing as a difficult and uninteresting activity. Traditional teaching methods, which focus heavily on teacher explanation and textbook exercises, tend to make students passive and less motivated. This has led researchers and teachers to explore innovative ways to enhance engagement and effectiveness in learning English writing skills.

In this digital era, technology integration in education has become increasingly important. The development of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) provides various tools and applications that make language learning more accessible, interactive, and enjoyable. One of the most popular applications is Duolingo, a free, gamified language-learning platform that allows users to learn languages through short, interactive exercises. Duolingo combines game elements such as points, rewards, levels, and progress tracking to motivate users to practice regularly.

Duolingo provides a variety of tasks that enhance vocabulary, grammar, and sentence construction—all essential components of writing. By engaging students through visual and auditory feedback, Duolingo helps learners remember vocabulary and correct grammatical errors immediately. Its “write and translate” features, in particular, encourage students to construct sentences and paragraphs, making it a potentially effective tool for improving writing skills.

Several studies (e.g., Faizah et al., 2024; Monny & Manurung, 2024; Yudha & Mandasari, 2021) have reported that Duolingo improves students’ motivation and performance in English learning, especially in vocabulary and writing tasks. However, few studies have focused specifically on its application in junior high school settings in Indonesia, where students are at the early stages of developing their writing competence.

Therefore, this research was conducted to fill that gap by examining the effectiveness of using Duolingo to improve students’ writing skills at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Lanrisang, Pinrang Regency. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of research on technology-based language learning and to offer practical insights for English teachers seeking alternative methods to enhance writing instruction.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative experimental design with a pre-test and post-test model. The research involved 34 eighth-grade students of SMPN 1 Lanrisang, Pinrang Regency, during the 2024/2025 academic year. Students were given a writing pre-test to assess their initial ability, followed by several treatment sessions using the Duolingo application as a learning medium. After the treatment, a post-test was conducted to measure students’ improvement in writing. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26.0, applying descriptive statistics to calculate means and percentages, and a paired sample t-test to determine the significance of differences between pre-test and post-test scores.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Findings

The pre-test results showed that only 13 out of 34 students achieved the minimum competency score (KKM = 68). The average score was 59.65, indicating a low level of writing proficiency. After learning through the Duolingo application, the post-test results revealed a considerable increase in student achievement, with the average score rising to 80.65 and 28 students surpassing the KKM.

Assessment	Average Score	% Above KKM	% Below KKM
Pre-test	59.65	38.23%	61.77%
Post-test	80.65	82.35%	17.65%

Inferential Analysis

The paired-sample t-test produced a significance value (p) of 0.016, which is lower than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, H₀ is rejected and H₁ is accepted, confirming that Duolingo had a statistically significant positive effect on improving students’ writing skills.

Discussion

The improvement in students’ writing performance indicates that Duolingo can serve as an effective supplementary tool in English language learning. The gamified features—such as rewards, streaks, and progress tracking—motivated students to practice consistently.

Duolingo’s exercises in vocabulary, spelling, and grammar enhanced students’ ability to construct coherent and grammatically correct sentences. The app’s instant feedback mechanism also helped learners recognize and correct their errors immediately, fostering self-directed learning.

These results align with previous studies (e.g., Faizah et al., 2024; Monny & Manurung, 2024) that reported the effectiveness of Duolingo in enhancing students’ writing and grammar performance. However, while Duolingo improved basic writing mechanics, it was less effective in developing advanced writing aspects such as

organization and critical reasoning, which require teacher guidance and peer feedback. In conclusion, Duolingo provides an engaging, flexible, and independent medium for improving basic writing skills, particularly in vocabulary and sentence structure mastery.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the use of the Duolingo application significantly improves students' writing skills at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Lanrisang Kab. Pinrang. The average student performance increased from 59.65 to 80.65, with the proportion of students achieving the KKM rising from 38.23% to 82.35%. Statistical analysis confirmed the significant effect ($p = 0.016 < 0.05$). Duolingo's interactive and gamified approach effectively increases students' motivation and engagement in learning English writing. It is recommended that teachers integrate Duolingo as a supporting tool alongside classroom instruction to enhance students' writing proficiency.

REFERENCES

- Abir, Toumi, and Selami Yasmine.(2023). '*The Impact of Using Duolingo as a Mobile Assisted Language-Learning Tool in Developing Students Vocabulary Size*' ,Kasdi Merbah Ouargla University.
- Alejandro, Moyano Núñez Luis.(2025). '*New Technologies and Writing Skills*' ,
- Ali, Hashim Hameed Hamudi.(2022). '*The Importance of the Four English Language Skills: Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening in Teaching Iraqi Learners*' , Humanitarian and Natural Sciences Journal.
- Aliya, Annisa Faza.(2025). '*The Effectiveness of Duolingo Mobile Application in Enhancing Students' Vocabulary Mastery*' ,Jakarta: FITK UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
- Alta'any, Mohammad, Salah Kayed, Rasmi Meqbel, and Khaldoun Albitar.(2025). '*Speaking Success: Managerial Tone in Earnings Conference Calls and Financial Performance*' , Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society.
- Amobonye, Ayodeji, Japareng Lalung, Gift Mheta, and Santhosh Pillai.(2024). '*Writing a Scientific Review Article: Comprehensive Insights for Beginners*' , The Scientific World Journal.
- Apoko, Tri Wintolo, Alfaruqi Alalwani Dunggio, and Su Li Chong.(2023). '*The students Perceptions On The Use Of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning Through Duolingo In Improving Vocabulary Mastery At The Tertiary Level*' , Journal of English Education.
- Aslamiah, Suaibatul.(2020). '*Kesulitan Belajar Bahasa Inggris Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan*' , Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Dasar Dan Anak Usia Dini.
- Bastiaan, Rachel Getroida, Lawren Julio Rumokoy, and Maria V J Tielung.(2024). '*What Lies Beyond Streaks And Bagdes? Duolingo's Gamification Strategy And Its Limitations*' , Jurnal Riset Ekonomi, Manajemen, Bisnis Dan Akuntansi.

-
- Bean, John C, and Dan Melzer.(2021). *'The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom'* .
- Cederberg, Wilda, and Andreea-Elena Rus(2024). *'The Influence of Duolingo's Gamified Design Elements: A Study on Maintaining User Engagement'* .
- Coppens, Ine, Toon De Pessemier, and Luc Martens.(2024). *'Repeating My Workouts or Exploring New Activities? A Longitudinal Micro-Randomized User Study for Physical Activity Recommender Systems'* .
- Dinasti, Dinasti, Ilham Ilham, and Fauzi Bafadal.(2025). *'The Effectiveness of Using The Duolingo Application to Enhance Students' English Vocabulary Mastery'*, *Journal of English Language and Education*.
- Dyson, Anne Haas.(1983).*'The Role of Oral Language in Early Writing Processes', Research in the Teaching of English*.
- Fulmer, Bachman P, Sarah Fulmer, and Yuebing Liu.(2021). *'Communication Roulette: Engaging Students in the Practice of Tailored Communication'*, *Issues in Accounting Education*.
- Gm, Dhananjaya, R H Goudar, Anjanabhargavi A Kulkarni, Vijayalaxmi N Rathod, and Geetabai S Hukkeri.(2024). *'A Digital Recommendation System for Personalized Learning to Enhance Online Education*.
- Hanafiah, Waode, Muhammad Aswad, Harlinah Sahib, Abdul Hakim Yassi, and Movahede Sadat Mousavi.(2024). *'The Impact of CALL on Vocabulary Learning, Speaking Skill, and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: The Case Study of Indonesian EFL Learners*.
- Heard, Stephen B.(2022). *The Scientist's Guide to Writing: How to Write More Easily and Effectively throughout Your Scientific Career* (Princeton University Press.
- Kaur, Ravneet, and Ramanpreet Kaur.(2022). *'Portable Devices for E-Learning: Learn Anywhere Anytime*.
- Kurniawan, Dinar Aji.(2022). *'Using WhatsApp Group To Teach Students Writing Recount Text Of 11 Th Grade Of Senior High School At MAN 14 Semarang*.
- Li, Zixi, Curtis J Bonk, and Chen Zhou.(2024). *'Supporting Learners Self-Management for Self-Directed Language Learning: A Study within Duolingo'*, *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*.
- Redjeki, Indah Sri, and R Muhajir.(2020). *'Duolingo for Grammar Learning'*, *Prosiding Lppm Uika Bogor*.
- Richards, Janet C, and Sharon K Miller.(2006). *Doing Academic Writing in Education: Connecting the Personal and the Professional*.
- Roberts, Julia Link, and Tracy Ford Inman.(2023). *'Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom*.
- Saputra, Dian, Rizal Akib, and Amanda Garcellawati.(2025). *'Students' Error Analysis in Using Pronouns Translation Based-Test'*, *Journal of Linguistic and English Studies*.
- Suningsih, Taruni, Shinta Dwi Anugrah, and Nuansyah Indah Putri.(2024). *'Penggunaan Media Untuk Mengenalkan Bahasa Inggris Pada Anak Usia Dini: Literature Review'*, *Jurnal Tumbuh Kembang*.
- Tambunsaribu, Gunawan, and Yusniaty Galingging.(2021). *'Masalah Yang Dihadapi Pelajar Bahasa Inggris Dalam Memahami Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris'*, *Jurnal Dialektika*.

- Taylor, Charlie.(2022). *'A Review of Duolingo's In-House Research Reports', Computer-Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal*.
- Wu, Xiaoming Molly, Helen R Dixon, and Lawrence Jun Zhang.(2021). *'Sustainable Development of Students' Learning Capabilities: The Case of University Students' Attitudes towards Teachers, Peers, and Themselves as Oral Feedback Sources in Learning English', Sustainability*.
- Yudha, Hafidz Tresna, and Berlinda Mandasari.(2021). *'The Analysis of Game Usage for Senior High School Students to Improve Their Vocabulary Mastery', Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*.
- Yulientinah, Dewi Selviani, Rukmi Juwita, and Widia Resdiana.(2022). *'Identifikasi Analisis Kebutuhan Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris (Non Program Studi Bahasa Inggris) Pada Mata Kuliah Bahasa Inggris Khusus/English for Specific Purposes (Esp) Di Program Studi D4 Akuntansi Keuangan Politeknik Pos Indonesia', Competitive*.