



The Effectiveness of Educational Games: Learning Media Innovation to Increase Motivation in Literary and Essay Criticism

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Abstract

One of the main problems faced in the teaching of literary criticism and essays is the lack of motivation and participation of students, which is caused by the use of unattractive conventional learning methods. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of the use of innovative instruments, such as educational games and interactive methods, motivation, discipline, and involvement in learning literary criticism and essays. Based on a descriptive qualitative framework, this study uses a questionnaire instrument filled out by 32 students as research subjects. The results showed that a large part of the students had a high level of motivation in learning literary criticism and essays. Schools not only need entertaining and original learning media, but also must be used more effectively to obtain a higher level of efficiency, to reduce the time and energy used in utilizing educational games as a medium for critical thinking and essay learning. For studies that involve comprehension, the ability to submit work on time, and important statements, most learners are adequately motivated during learning. Even the fact that this process includes games creates a learning environment that makes it fun and energizing for students. Therefore, this model method is effective that can contribute not only to the provision of academic success, but also to the development of more general personality traits in students. It's open-mindedness and critical feedback, which is a problem that education solves more than ever. As a result of this study, it can be concluded that innovative instruments can serve as an effective strategy to improve students' learning motivation, engagement, and discipline.

Keywords: Innovative Learning Media, Educational Games, Literary Criticism and Essay, Student Academic Motivation, Interactive Methods

Introduction

The learning of literary theory in Indonesia faces the same challenges; students are not accustomed to applying critical analysis of texts. As can be seen, the critical paradigm is still well left in literary learning. This conventional teaching method is too monotonous,

far from a learning environment that allows students to freely explore the implications in a text, and is not only directed to summarize the explicit content. As a result, the ability to choose a theory that is truly relevant and use it in essay learning also becomes stressful. Limited critical literary knowledge brings perdita to the learning outcomes of 21st century graduates and this has been proven by several studies. Innovations in teaching methods are often identified as an important effort to overcome gaps in literature teaching (Pamungkas et al., 2023; Wibowo et al., 2023). The use of technology in schools allows teachers to educate. As a result, conventional teaching methodologies have been ineffective for a long time and have affected the quality of literacy graduates (Höglund, 2021; Kuhl, 2019). In other ways, this gap can be successfully broken through as many studies have shown that more engaging learning software and approaches facilitate better learning.

As a result, as the most important component of academic achievement, learning motivation is an important aspect of the learning process. The definition of motivation has three dimensions: orientation, perseverance, and intensity, which are synergistically combined, maximizing student engagement. At the same time, studies show that students' academic achievement is significantly dependent on their motivation; conversely, students with low motivation tend to be more unsuccessful (Eyal & Roth, 2011). Therefore, learning through motivation is an important aspect of the teaching process. Empowerment through learning media is one of the more cost-effective and fun ways to achieve students' motivational goals. The development of educational game apps such as Match Up facilitates student understanding and creates a more enjoyable learning experience (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2024; Safira et al., 2023). In addition, learning media allows teachers to directly see students' difficulties and provide more appropriate feedback. The integrity of media and digital technology allows teachers to control the fluency of students' positive reactions, allowing them to be a more active part of the learning experience.

The use of educational games, such as Match Up, not only has an impact on increasing learning motivation, but also has a positive impact on various aspects of student development. This media helps in the cognitive, social, and emotional development of students, especially those who are in the formal operational stage because they have begun to think abstractly and logically. The app is designed to have a different learning experience with engaging features to support student interaction such as dynamic visual displays and challenging game mechanics (Safira et al., 2023). Previous research noted that when students use this medium, they have experienced significant improvements in analytical and creative skills. In addition, it provides opportunities to improve collaborative skills through group activities that are incorporated into the learning process. For this reason, this study aims to assess the impact of the implementation of Match Up on student learning motivation at SMA 4 Cirebon City, especially including the learning of critical texts in literature and essay texts. This research is expected not only to provide new insights into the implementation of technology in literature learning, but also to strengthen alternative

approaches and innovative education.

Methods

This study uses quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2014; Sugiyono, 2016) in analyzing the responses of the students involved by using the Match Up educational game to introduce the learning of literary criticism and essay studies. The research subjects were taken from 32 students of grade XII MIPA 4 at SMA Negeri 4 Cirebon City for the 2023–2024 school year consisting of 14 male students and 17 female students. The research subjects are sorted purposively, namely based on the similarity of characteristics and characteristics taken in the cluster, namely classes that have a level of mastery of literary criticism study material. The data used as primary data is a closed questionnaire with five indicators of learning motivation and in-depth interviews to support the data of the questionnaire results with qualitative data. The questionnaire continues with a theoretical frame based on Hamzah B. Uno's motivation totaling 22 questionnaires with four alternative answers, this data dimension explains the working picture of the learning motivation aspect consisting of desire and desire to succeed, encouragement and need for learning, hopes and ideals for the future, appreciation in learning, and the existence of interesting learning activities.

Support, consistency patterns were identified, and the validity of the findings increased. Survey data is quantitatively analyzed to uncover trends in student responses, while interviews provide insight into the most influential aspects of motivation. This study is designed to measure the effectiveness of interactive digital learning media, such as Match Up, in creating a fun learning atmosphere, increasing students' active engagement and strengthening their motivation for continuous learning. By presenting innovations in technology-based teaching methods, this research aims to make a practical contribution to improving the quality of literary studies in Indonesia. In addition, it also serves as a reference for teachers when developing more adaptive learning strategies.

Results and Discussion

According to the Febrita & Ulfah study, the use of attractive, accurate, and high-quality media increases students' interest and motivation. One of the learning methods designed to provide teaching methods and expand knowledge through innovative and interesting media is the so-called educational game (Wijanarka, 2023). Learning media is a type of material used by teachers in the educational process with the aim of attracting students' attention, increasing creativity, and conveying content. Learning media is expected to contribute to student motivation. Figure 1 is an analysis of students' responses to learning literary criticism and essays through interesting and innovative learning media.

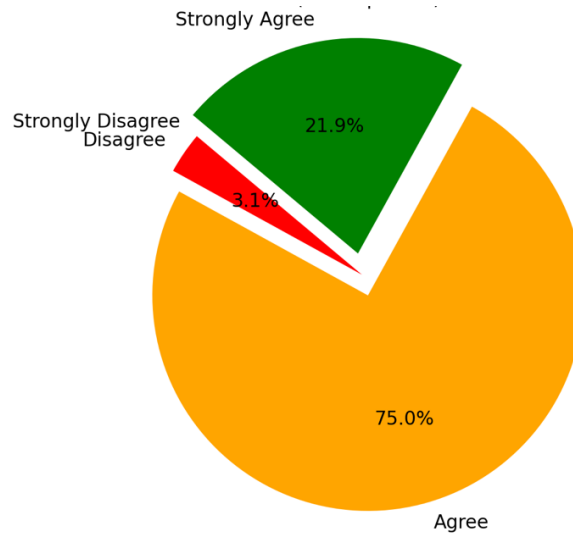


Figure 1: Student responses in learning literary criticism and essays

In the first question about students' desire and desire to succeed in learning literary criticism and essays, the data analysis seems to be as follows: 21.9% of students strongly agree, 75% agree, and 3.1% disagree. Most students are motivated and aspired to succeed because they feel satisfaction during the learning process of literary criticism and essays. Thus, the absorption of interesting learning materials makes the learning environment very enjoyable, thus, students become more eager to learn. From this, innovative learning media makes a positive contribution to the level of student motivation. Therefore, the use of media, such as developing educational games or other learning aids, must be comfortable and adjusted to each student's subject in order to optimize learning.

The use of entertaining and interactive learning media, such as educational games, has been proven to increase student motivation to learn. This creates a more enjoyable environment for learning and provides a stimulus to complete tasks better. One of the indicators of the success of the application of appropriate learning media by students is the intrinsic motivation they experience (Hughes, 2002). Featured in the student's commitment to completing literary criticism and essay assignments within a set time frame, this is an important aspect to measure in research. Figure 2 is the result of the students' answers to this aspect.

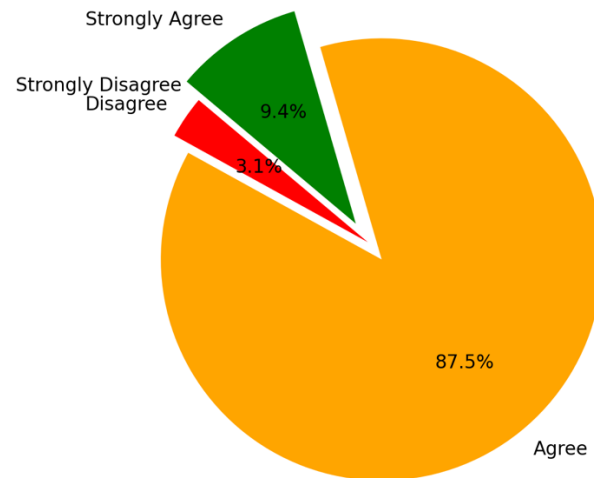


Figure 2: Students' determination to complete literary criticism and essay assignments on time

From the analysis, 87.5% of students agreed, 9.4% strongly agreed, and 3.1% disagreed with the statement that they exerted efforts to complete literary criticism and essay assignments on time. The majority of students, more than 90% percent, for the combined category strongly agreed and agreed, demonstrating a significant commitment to completing assignments on time. Thus, the use of interactive learning not only increases students' motivation but also contributes to the development of their discipline and responsibility for completing tasks. These findings emphasize the importance of learning media, which hinders students' active engagement and, consequently, intrinsic motivation. Therefore, learning media such as educational games not only contribute to the creation of a friendly learning environment but also produce optimal learning outcomes in terms of completing assignments on time. Student learning motivation is one of the important factors that have a positive impact on the success of the learning process (Wijanarka, 2023). The first factor that shows learning motivation among students is their willingness to understand the material presented. In the context of literary criticism and essay assignments, it also refers to how learning media arouses students' interest and motivates active participation. This analysis represents the students' response to motivation in understanding literary criticism material and essays.

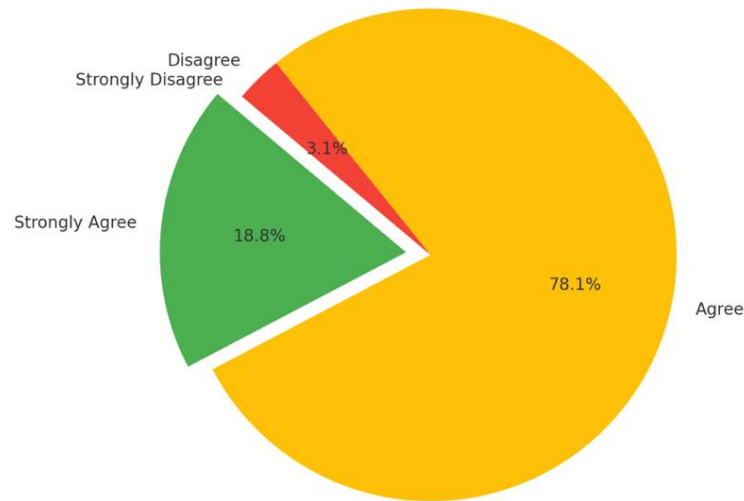


Figure 3: Students' motivation in understanding literary criticism and essay material

The analysis identified that 78.1% of students agreed, and 18.8% strongly agreed that they were motivated to understand critical literature and essay material. However, there was a 3.1% disagreement with the statement. Most of the favorable responses indicate that students are highly motivated in their learning, and that can contribute to the use of innovative, student-centered educational media (Pamungkas & Sudigdo, 2022). This high motivation emphasizes the importance of choosing learning media that can not only act as instruments but also create an exciting and interactive learning atmosphere. Thus, students are more motivated to actively participate and express a strong desire to understand the material in depth. These findings can be applied by teachers as a basis to continue to develop motivational and pursuit-based learning approaches. Figure 4 is an analysis of students' responses regarding their efforts to maintain and improve learning outcomes after obtaining satisfactory grades.

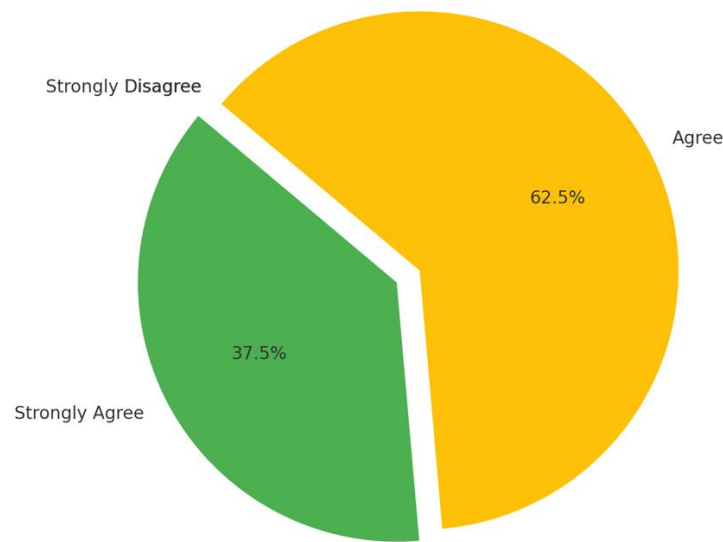


Figure 4: Students' response to learning motivation after achieving satisfactory grades

The results as shown in figure 4, it can be seen that 62.5% of students stated learning objectives, and 37.5% of them stated their objectives in such a way that they were willing to learn more when given satisfactory grades. No one is a student who states that they disagree or that they do not agree at all, to the above statement. This data shows a positive relationship between achievement and motivation for student learning. Since students are given the opportunity to place their appreciation for their own learning to learn, they are required to take that improvement and use it throughout the learning process. In this context, it is critical, at least from the perspective of staff members, to provide them with positive reinforcement through motivating evaluation results. Teachers can also use student learning outcomes as agents to motivate them to continue their work by building teaching strategies that encourage the development of their knowledge and skills to a greater level (Zidny et al., 2021), but motivating students in this way is not just a tool to achieve goals; it is also an academic success rooted in self-satisfaction.

Students' expectations to understand the learning material are one of the most important indicators that can be used to identify whether someone is interested and willing to learn in the learning process or not. On the other hand, the introduction of the context of essay teaching and literary criticism, the relevance of teaching methods that originate from this context, is also expected of students to face the content of what they learn. Figure 5 is an analysis of the results of students' responses to the need to understand the essay material and literary criticism.

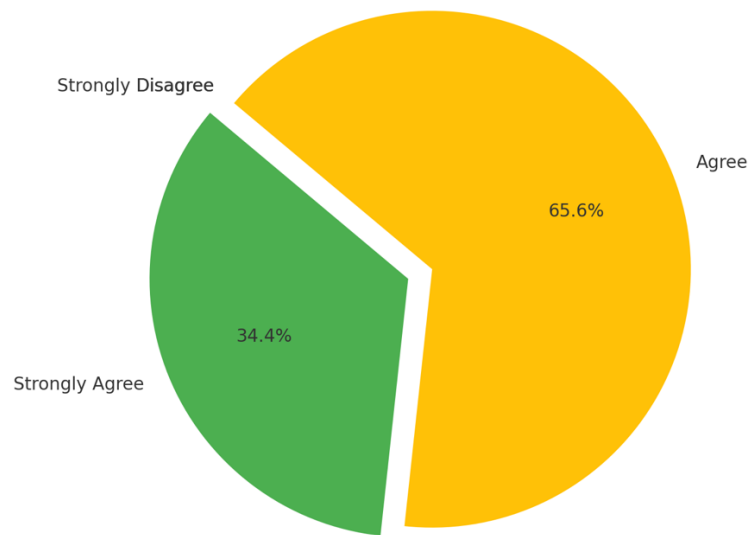


Figure 5: Students' expectations in understanding literary criticism and essay material

Based on the results of the analysis, 65.6% of students have stated their goals, while 34.4% have explicitly stated that they have the ability to understand the material of essay material and literary criticism. None of the students have shown that they disagree or disagree at all regarding the above. As a result, most students have a high level of confidence in their ability to understand the material they are learning. This means that the students, in this case, should see critical thinking and essay material as something that is important for them to learn and related to their academic needs. The need for a learning approach that focuses on developing students' conceptual understanding is a necessity, hence the purpose of this discussion (Glasser & Hirsh, 2016). For this reason, teachers are advised to use interactive and media-based teaching methods such as group discussions or educational games to improve students' understanding of the material. In this method, the teaching process goes beyond meeting the needs of students; It also promotes the active participation of students in understanding and utilizing the material.

When it comes to measuring effectiveness in learning, one of the most important indicators is students' ability to answer principle-based questions in literature and essays. When a student commits to answering a difficult question, this fact contributes to influencing their motives here as well as their business in understanding the material in a clear way. Figure 6 is a list of the results of the analysis of students' responses to questions about the business they are running to answer questions from difficult literary criticism and essays.

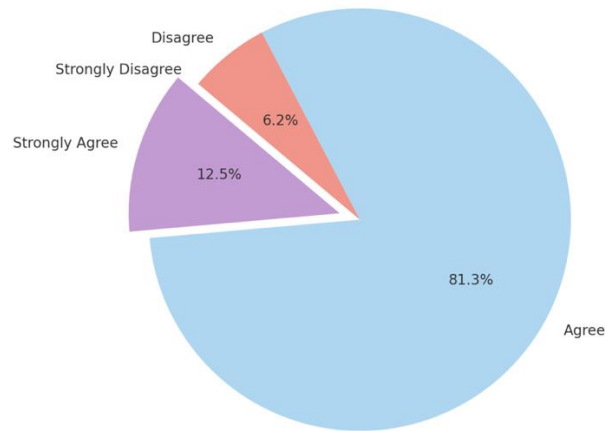


Figure 6: Student responses to attempts to find answers to difficult questions

Figure 5 shows that 81.3% of students have expressed their goals, and 12.5% of students claim that they deliberately understood the questions that arise in essay lessons and literary criticism. However, saying that they were not satisfied with their performance, 6.2% of students stated so. A large number of students have made this commitment, highlighting a strong intrinsic desire to face the challenges they face as students. These findings mark the importance of a learning approach, which is able to help students to build their analytical abilities and problem-solving skills (Jones et al., 1997). This technique empowers students to not only master academic content more effectively, but also to build self-awareness in approaching academic challenges.

In the process of learning essays and literary criticism, the most important indicator of a student's motivation to learn on their own is their ability to answer difficult questions. By asking such questions, students can ensure that they have commitments and competencies that will help them understand the subject they are studying. In this case, below is an analysis of students' reactions to statements made for their learning.

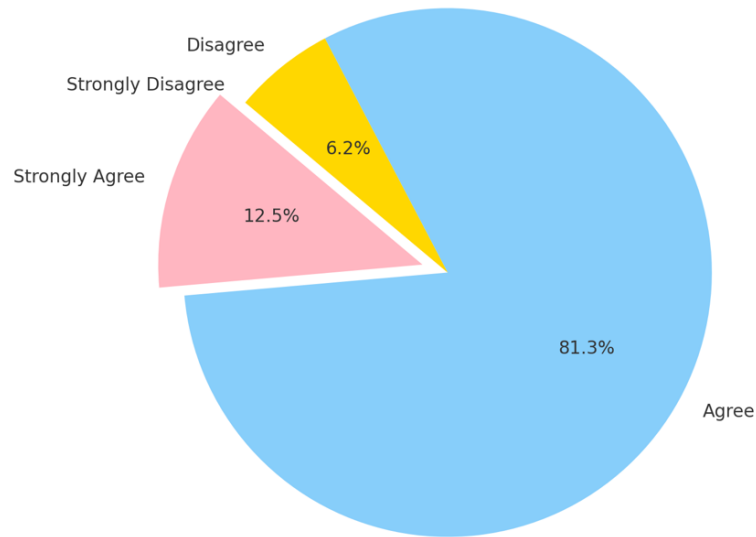


Figure 7: Students' responses to efforts to answer difficult questions in learning literary criticism and essays

The results of the analysis showed that 81.3% of students said they agreed, 12.5% of them strongly agreed that they worked hard to answer the questions asked. There are still 6.2% of students who admit that they are not satisfied with their achievements. This condition describes all students with the same efforts, both inside and outside the scope of education. These findings show that the learning environment plays a very important role in developing students' critical and analytical thinking skills. Teachers can use strategies such as informative distribution (content to promote knowledge about everything), group topics, or the use of interactive technology that helps students learn independently (Monson, 2005). Thus, this method does not provide wisdom to students but they bring a sense of confidence to increase knowledge in the field of education.

One of them is the habit of giving awards by teachers who assign students to solve or solve academic problems. More than a recognition that is related to the worker's business, the function of the award is also a guide on how to continue the improvement of the quality of these services. For this, Figure 8 is a summary of the results of the analysis obtained from the students' responses to the feedback received from a teacher regarding the perception of the teacher's ability to provide a satisfactory understanding of the problem.

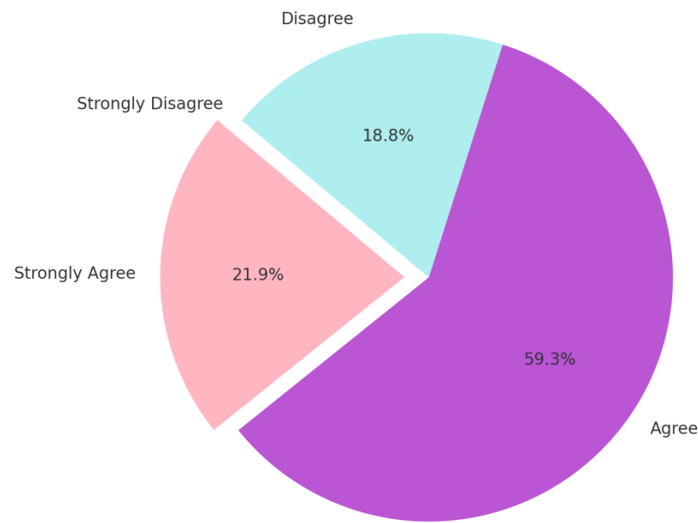


Figure 8: Student responses to teacher awards

According to both types of analysis, 59.3% of students are satisfied with their performance, and 21.9% give high marks to the fact that they have a teacher who guarantees their success in solving problems. On the other hand, another 18.8% of students said they were not finished. Most of the responses are positive, it has been proven, there are quite a lot of students, who are trying to do better because of the benefits offered to them by their teachers, because there are still some weak students, who are not aware of the importance of this fact. All of this shows how important knowledge acquisition strategies are in creating a learning environment that encourages and motivates (Grant, 2017). Teachers are able to guide, in the form of verbal, praise, or small incentives needed, so that students feel directed to the business they are learning. The strategy in question can help improve students' knowledge and prepare them for a better future.

To help increase students' willingness, to become an active participant in the learning process, one of the key elements is the existence of an interesting and non-threatening learning environment. In the teaching of essays and literary criticism, the use of enlightenment methods can result in directive teaching styles and teachings that instill a sense of generosity in students. Figure 9 is the result of an analysis of students' responses to the challenges they face while learning grammar and essays, which are both enlightening and inadequate.

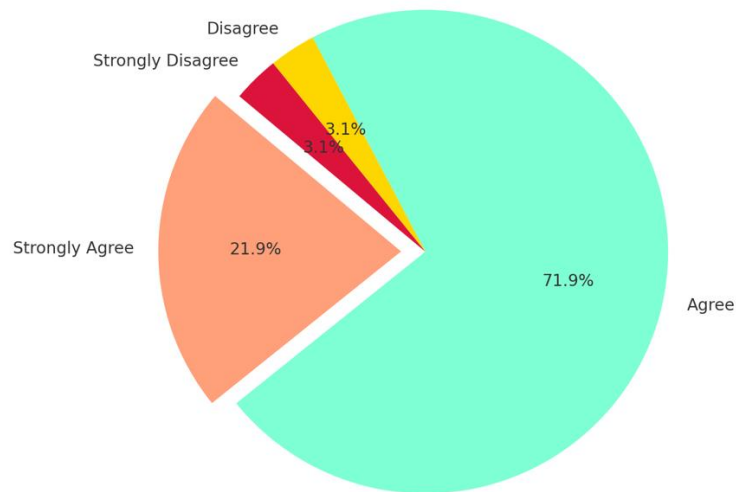


Figure 9: Students' responses to interesting and not boring literary criticism and essay learning

The analysis found that 71.9% of students said they had goals, 21.9 of them stated achieving their goals by studying literary criticism and essays using effective methods. There were 3.1% of students who said they didn't know what they were doing, and 3.1% of students had no idea what they were going to do. Based on the data above, most students are taught in an informative way. We see that teachers are able to create interactive and relevant approaches to teaching students. Methods such as discussions, group activities or interactive media can help maintain a conducive environment for learning (Liu et al., 2020). This will help create a healthy school atmosphere. This shows that creative teaching methods have the power to improve understanding in students, and they engage students more passionately in the process.

The inclusion of games in the learning process is one of its innovations that can increase student motivation and make the learning process more interesting. In relation to the teaching of essays and critical thinking, the implementation of the game encourages students to better understand the learning material, but also offers an interactive and stimulating learning atmosphere. Figure 10 is the result of analyzing students' responses to their experiences in essay education and literary criticism with an integrated game from lecturers.

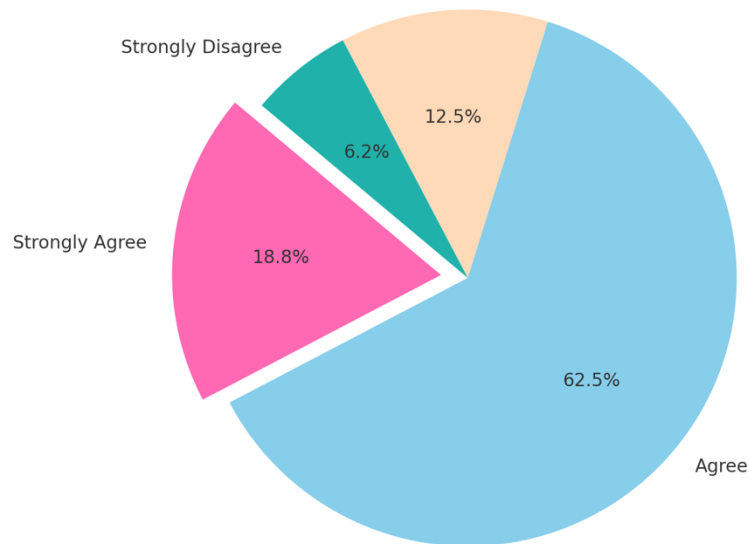


Figure 10: Student responses to literary criticism and essay learning with game integration

The results of the analysis showed that 62.5% of students were motivated to learn, and 18.8% of them were highly motivated to learn because their teachers provided the opportunity to play games while learning. On the other hand, a total of 12.5% of students stated that they were not unsillable, while 6.2% stated that they were not sill. In this sense, the students who have given positive answers have shown that the play-based educational approach has the potential to illuminate their perceptions and revitalize their spirit in the learning process. The results of this study show that the application of games that have been implemented in the field of education has a positive influence on student welfare and students' willingness to stay motivated (Mayangsari & Nurrachmah, 2021). The instructor must constantly look for different types of games that are relevant to the subject being taught, it is suggested. In addition, one can also use gameplay as an assessment tool — to keep students engaged and interactive while gaining learning experiences.

Conclusion

Learning in this condition still requires credible, entertaining, and original learning media, but it must also be used more effectively to obtain a higher level of efficiency and to reduce the time and energy used in utilizing educational games as a medium for critical thinking and essay learning. For studies that involve understanding, the ability to submit

work on time, and important statements, most interns are adequately instructed and motivated during learning. Even the fact that this process includes games creates a learning environment that makes it fun and energizing for students. Therefore, the effective model methods outlined above can contribute not only to the provision of academic success, but also to the development of more general personality traits in students. It's open-mindedness and critical feedback, which is a problem that education solves more than ever.

Conversely, some limitations of this study, for example, are the reliance on a single educational institution and a group of students, and the relatively limited number of explorations based on circumstances in the dataset of student responses, which may be less intuitively understandable. As a result, the recommended follow-up studies are conducted with a larger coverage population with mixed method research so as to obtain more comprehensive knowledge. And then teachers and curriculum developers have more flexibility to develop multiple learning media that need to be tailored to the needs of each student. In addition, an evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching media is needed to ensure the return of academic work, along with the timely development of students' character. Therefore, the teaching of essays and literary criticism should be improved in order to provide as many benefits as possible for students from various levels of education.

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