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**The Students` Perception About Use of Duolingo Application for Improving English  
Vocabulary**

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**Abstract:**

The various challenges in education today require that the instructors should employ technology to make teaching English more appealing. Technology can serve as an alternative way to help students in learning English vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the essential things for helping students in rich reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Nevertheless, there is a teacher who cannot use technology to support the teaching and learning process. This article aims to discuss and review previous studies about using the Duolingo application as one of the applications that supported students in English vocabulary. This article also provides information about the previous student perception of the Duolingo application to help students learn English vocabulary.

**Keyword:** Technology, English Vocabulary, Duolingo Application, Student Perception

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**INTRODUCTION**

The fast growth of technologies has benefited education in more than one way and led to the emergence of what is nowadays known as “Educational Technologies”. According to Chun et al. (2016), language and technology have been deeply intertwined ever since the invention of writing some 5000 years ago. The technology also grows in both marketing education and practice. For example, Clarke et al. (2001) stated that the internet has grown exponentially over the last few years. In addition, Naismith and Corlett (2017) state that access to technology, ownership, and connectivity are crucial success factors for integrating mobile learning in higher education.

The teacher can use technology has been used as a technique to improve education and teaching methods (Ahmed, 2016). The teacher should support their English teaching and learning by using technologies, especially for teaching English vocabulary. Using technology for learning English is a necessary half of interactive learning that is acceptable for the student. Most of them square measure acquainted with numerous technological aspects together with gadgets, applications, and social media and thus can most certainly embrace the thought of together with them for learning purposes (Handrianto, Rasool, Rahman, Musta`in,

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& Ilhami, 2021). Technology is also part of everyday lives, and it is time to rethink integrating technology into the curriculum and embed technology into teaching to support the learning process. Therefore, technology becomes an integral part of the learning experience and a significant issue for teachers, from preparing learning experiences through to the teaching and learning process (Eady & Lockyer, 2013).

Pourhossein, Gilakjani, and Sabouri (2017) said that technology had been changed to support the English language teaching method. It means that technology has an important role and effect on teacher teaching methods in promoting activities for a student (Rita & Handrianto, 2021). If teachers do not use technologies in teaching the student, they will never be able to keep up with these technologies. Thus, teachers need to have full knowledge of these technologies in teaching English vocabulary. After all, it is essential in learning English as a foreign language because it needs to link four skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It means that the teacher has to develop teaching methods and teaching media to increase the quality between teacher and student.

According to Murcia (2001), vocabulary is essential for helping students in rich reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills because it is central to a language component. Therefore, the teacher should be able to teach English vocabulary learning to make the student have much vocabulary for mastering four English skills. However, if the teacher does not have a good strategy in teaching, the students exactly have difficulty remembering and memorizing vocabulary.

Based on the explanation above, there are various applications of educational games that use technology that can be applied to support English teaching and learning activities. In recent years, educational games have increasingly supported learning. Based on Ewa (2016), the games have advantages such as promoting communicative competence and encouraging creative and spontaneous use of language. In addition, it is adequate to increase motivation and promote learner-centered so that it can also help students improve their English skills not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom (Saputra, Handrianto, Pernantah, Ismaniar, & Shidiq, 2021).

Duolingo is one of the applications that can use for improving English vocabulary. Duolingo is a free application that can be accessed through a website, a laptop, or a smartphone. It supports students to boost English vocabulary. Then, facilitate students to specialize in developing learning English vocabulary. It can also attract and involve students actively within the learning method.

Based on personal expertise, learning by victimization Duolingo is noteworthy to develop learning English. Duolingo application has excellent learning methods as a result of its inspiring learning system. This application connects lessons with games that may build interest in learning. Moreover, Duolingo combines audio, visual, and, additionally, question enjoyably encompassing vocabulary and synchronic linguistics. Finally, the objective of this article was to investigate the students' perception towards the use of Duolingo application in English vocabulary.

## **DUOLINGO APPLICATION**

### **About Duolingo**

Duolingo is a free online language-learning tool available on different platforms (websites, Android/iOS phones, and tablets). The Duolingo guide book stated that Duolingo has many languages that language students can select the language what student wants to learn, for example, English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Dutch, and other languages. Duolingo also has educators from that the users can exchange fewer lessons ideas and experiences with each other such as teachers or students, to make them more accessible in learning that it can measure students' achievement and dedication in perfect ways. It provides data such as point

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earned, of course, overview tree, the streak, and the time spent.

Duolingo is one of the applications used for technology that can be used for the students to play and learn English. Duolingo is a freemium language-learning platform for cell phones or computers created by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker in 2012. It offers 68 different language courses across 28 languages. Duolingo's website presents that the Duolingo application makes it easy for teachers to teach four English skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking to the student. The four skills are present during the learning activities in Duolingo through questions, small text to heard, and transcribed. The students also have to record their pronunciation to assess their speaking ability.

Some of the positive feedback has been given by many experts that use Duolingo in teaching and learning English. According to (Krashen, 2014) the Duolingo application is a web-based that guides students step-by-step through a sequence of tasks, primarily based on translation. Most of the activities in the application are based on translation, dictation, and pronunciation. It also incorporates some gamification elements to motivate and engage students (Handrianto & Rahman, 2018; Munday, 2016).

Furthermore, White (2014) states that Duolingo is an online learning program that allows people to take free language courses because they translate. According to Jaskova (2014) Duolingo is a free application (used on various platforms, such as computers, mobile phones, and others) that offers courses in over 23 languages and has about 200 million registered users worldwide. It was introduced in 2012 by Louis von Ahn and Severin Hacker from Cambridge Mellon University for learning and acquiring a foreign or second language that learners wish to learn (Nushi & Eqbali, 2017).

### **The Purposes of Duolingo**

The purposes of Duolingo are to help and support students in understanding the language. According to Nagy, Herman, and Anderson (1985), learning the second language, especially English vocabulary, may be overwhelming. Using the interactive and fun application may motivate the student to embrace learning the language, especially English vocabulary. According to Melitz (2016) more than 1,5 billion speakers worldwide use English as an internationally recognized language that has become the biggest and the largest lingua franca in the world. Based on Harmer (2015), communication for many people worldwide would a dominant English as a foreign language.

Mastering vocabulary is essential for a beginner in learning a language, especially for a foreign language student (Siang, Hasan, & Tamhir, 2019). If the students lack vocabulary, it will be hard tounderstand what they read or listen because understanding the sentence is not easy for beginners. That is why vocabulary is essential to understand a language. A teacher must be able to know the exciting technique to teach vocabulary for the students.

Duolingo is being as a future in learning a language. It can easily access and provide many languages. Then it is helpful for students who want to learn a new language. The student can use Duolingo to research varied vocabulary acquisition and apply noninheritable technology in a fun and interactive ways. Mobile applications for vocabularylearning such as Duolingo provide fun and pleasant means to explore a language. Such fun encounters are also appealing to the learners, particularly younger ones. United Nations agencies can forever try and open them and learn much vocabulary whenever they need some free time. A varied feature like "test/quiz" is also applicable in such instances, permitting the learners to recap their last learning sessions.

Duolingo has many features that can help the student quickly learn the language, such as list words every day, discussion with other users so the learners can share, and more immersion for more advanced learners. If students use the Duolingo application, it provides learning that concentrates on improving and developing mastery of English vocabulary.

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Duolingo can be a medium for students to improve their vocabulary, and teachers can use it in the room to help students master vocabulary. Vocabulary plays a vital role in learning English as a foreign language because it links four skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It means that the teacher has to develop teaching methods and teaching media to increase the quality between teacher and student.

One of the plans to use Duolingo is to facilitate students to master new vocabulary through games so that they do not get bored in learning, and one of the straight games that can be contested for this purpose is Duolingo. Based on Duy (2018), Duolingo is the translation of its student can enrich a language learning platform that was intended. Duolingo has one of the essential features, namely Badge. It is characterized as a requirement to obtain goals, make progress, and achieve results in a learning environment. The primary purpose of the badges is used to lift the motivation of students when they study English (Huynh, Zuo, & Lida, 2018).

### **THE PROCEDURE OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY LEARNING IN DUOLINGO**

According to Wilbert (2016) Duolingo is one of the most popular learning media that is the future of language learning. Duolingo can be used as a combination of visual, audio and questions about a language's grammar. Based on Putri and Islamiati (2018), the method used in delivering learning material is enjoyable because the system of Duolingo application has several features such as a game that makes the student feel learning while playing, adding an attractive visual display that is supported by audio.

The language skills learned in this application area unit are pretty complete, starting from listening, writing, speaking, grammar and vocabulary, and on the market on numerous platforms. This application is very light once used; therefore, it does not overburden the platform used. Moreover, their area unit had almost no weaknesses during this application. But this application has some advantages. This application additionally has some weaknesses, that area unit some activities cannot be conducted on each computer and smartphone, lack of accessible language material for Asian learners and this application additionally needs a web connection to access it. Therefore, it is pretty tough for the learner in a small space (Kenny, 2014; Rita, Muliana, & Handrianto, 2021). Duolingo implements dictation and written learning, and speaking practice for a student who has entered a certain level.

According to Liang (2018) there are several exercises on the Duolingo application. First is the translation exercise, in which the student needs to translate some words, sentences, or phrases from English into Bahasa or reverse or other languages. The second is the matching exercise, in which the student matched a picture that was given with some words available. The third is the listening exercise, in which the student heard a word, sentence, or phrase in English, and they have to type it correctly. Fourth is speaking exercise, in which the student heard some word, sentence, or phrase in English and they have to say it correctly. The last exercise is to fill in the blank in an exercise in the form of multiple choice. The students must choose the correct answer among two or three choices. De Castro, da Hora Macedo, and Bastos (2016) state that Duolingo can motivate the students to practice using the foreign language daily because it is found that the Duolingo application contributed to increasing the vocabulary, improving pronunciation, and simple grammatical.

One of the advantages of technology as media learning is that it makes learning a language faster, more accessible, less painful, and allows for more participation in reviewing the language once it is learned (Siang, Nurdin, & Robinson, 2019). Many language learners use Duolingo to learn languages. There is a couple of notable aspects Duolingo application that create the exercises greats. One is that tiny typos are tolerated. If the student accidentally spell a word, reasonably, the exercises may still be marked correct powerful Duolingo can

mean the mistake. If the learners created a tiny low mistake, Duolingo could mark it wrong regardless. The student will understand that their answer ought to be accepted through their answer not correct. The format that bestowed the message and data tailored by Duolingo is referred to as drill and practiced. in keeping with practice, provide to students the instance to extend their ability that it

### The Step to Operate Duolingo

The tool of the Duolingo application is available on IOS, Android, and Windows 8 and 10 platforms with about 150 million users worldwide. The teacher and student must install the Duolingo application before using it. Duolingo application can be found in Google Play Store for Android users, in Apple Store for IOS users. Between Google Play Store and IOS Store has differences that in the rating of the application. Duolingo in Android took over the seventh place in the education category, which gets a 4.7 stars rating from the Android users, but IOS took over as top 3 application in the education category, which placed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place with a 4.8 stars rating from the IOS users.

In the first step, make sure the teacher and student have an excellent connection to access, then download the Duolingo application through the App Store. After downloading, open the Duolingo application. In the second step, the student can register with a Google or Facebook account to maintain their progress. In the third step, select the Get started menu at the start screen, and the language students want to learn (English), then select the language used (Indonesian) picture. Then there will be a choice of daily learning goals in which there are simple choices (5 minutes a day), normal (10 minutes a day), serious (15 minutes a day), and crazy (20 minutes a day).

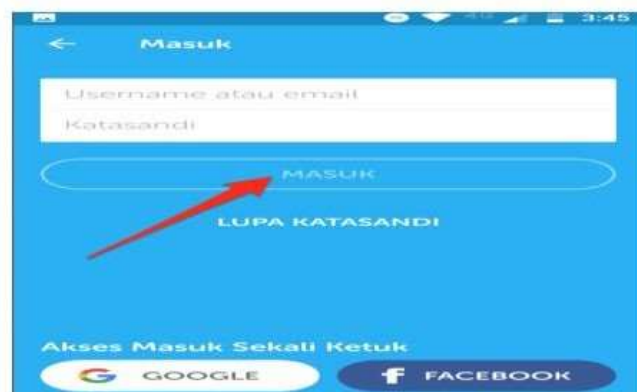


Image 1. Login View



Image 2. Account Register



Image 3. Selecting Target



Image 4. Get Menu and Language

The fourth phase entails determining one's degree of English proficiency. The learner will then be able to begin learning English at a fundamental level. At the most fundamental level, there are English speaking abilities such as Pronunciation, Grammar, and Vocabulary that are assessed by questions given both orally and in writing. Students who use Duolingo regularly will have their level of difficulty changed to reflect their skills as they go through the program.



Image 5. Translation Exercises

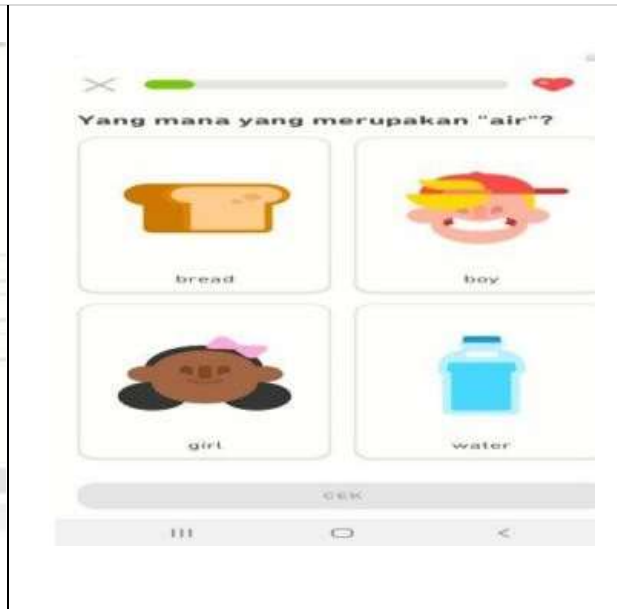


Image 6. Matching Exercises

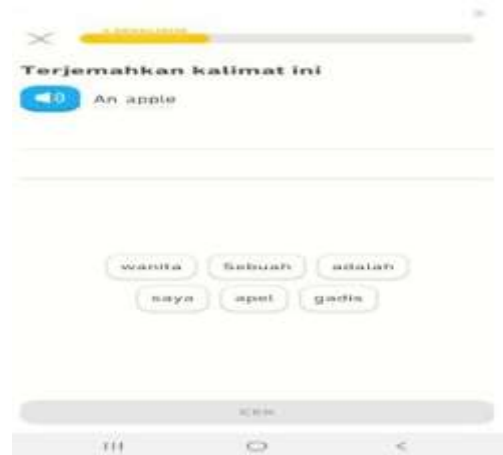


Image 7. Listening Exercise

The techniques in Duolingo application provides in learning square measure therefore numerous and cozy for a beginner. It is straightforward to use as a result of the procedures for the utilization square measure is simple. Since Duolingo is intended for people of various ages, including children, teens, and adults, Duolingo is more popular than traditional assignments and media, according to Munday, which may be attributed to its convenience. It is supported his analysis. It means that Duolingo is simple to use and a lot fascinating. Therefore, it will be snug to be one among the media we tend to use in teaching in the room. Grego and vasselinov (2012) did a search that sees the effectiveness of Duolingo in learning the language. Their analysis showed that the scholars were glad to learn the language with Duolingo and enjoyed being told about it.

### **Implication Duolingo for Teacher and Student**

#### **a. Implication for Teacher**

The learning activities that the Duolingo application relies on can help produce positive changes in the way new vocabulary is to be taught and learned. Furthermore, integrating Duolingo as a teaching method might help teachers facilitate an increase in the level of confidence of learners when learning new vocabulary items outside and inside the classroom at their own pace and level.

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#### b. Implication for Student

Learners who participate in educational activities that depend on the Duolingo program will expand their vocabulary and build their self-confidence in a pleasant learning environment that they can access from any location and at any time. As a result, their level of confidence could enhance their motivation. Addressing the need to acquire the necessary vocabulary of the studied course, adult beginner students will learn and practice the vocabulary and grammar in a genuine and most relaxed manner. Consequently, this study promotes the implementation of an online free educational platform that engages both learners and teachers to promote vocabulary and grammar learning regardless of age, time, and qualifications.

#### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Duolingo**

Based on Pramesti (2020), there are several advantages and disadvantages to the Duolingo application. In advantages, Duolingo applications are free and easy to access by students. The student can access it anytime and anywhere, as long as it has an internet connection. Duolingo application is simple, straightforward, and attractive, and it is less an ad, so it is not confusing the student. The content of Duolingo is supported with graphics, video, and other multimedia elements that can be presented with interactive games or quizzes. Duolingo has a concept like a game that makes it fun to learn. The student can compete with another student in the leaderboard by gaining a point, and it will give the student some reward in the form of lingots when completing some exercise. Duolingo application also is interactive and has many choices of exercise such as listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

However, along with the advantages of Duolingo, there are also disadvantages. Duolingo will work when there is an internet connection. In reverence of mobile technologies, connectivity refers to how mobile devices can connect wirelessly using a variety of cellular and wireless access technologies such as GPS, EDGE, GPRS, GSM, 3Gs, 4Gs, and WiMAX Wifi, WLAN. In addition, the Duolingo application also will not be helpful when we live in a remote area without internet access. We must hear and write what we hear in the listening exercise, but the voice that comes out is an unnatural sound. The sentences sometimes are odd and unusual. Moreover, when learners learn something new, they need more explanation to understand. Nevertheless, grammar explanations are absent; thus, we have to comprehend the grammar rules by ourselves.

Furthermore, when the learners answer the wrong question, the application only displays the correct answer and continues to switch to the next question. Duolingo does not offer any explanation whatsoever on grammatical use. Grammar is an essential part of language learning for language learners, and there is no direct grammar lesson. There should be a way to incorporate it along with vocabulary.

#### **Previous of Student Perception about Duolingo**

Based on Pramesti (2020), several student perceptions about the Duolingo application are divided into some points such as student perception towards the Duolingo usability, collaboration, context, control, connectivity, mobility, and cost, blending, content, and technical support.

##### a. Student Perception toward the Duolingo Usability

Based on the interview, some students said that the Duolingo application is easy to use and not too complicated. A student named Ari said that Duolingo is easy to use, it is not too complicated, then it can be installed on all compatible smartphones so that the student can study anywhere. The second student named Baiti, said that the Duolingo application is simple, full color, and easy to operate. Based on two students that explained, it means that

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Duolingo can be used from varied background experiences, the student still quickly started learning. Duolingo also has understandable instructions so that the student easy for using them. The picture of Duolingo is bright and attractive even though the picture is not a real-life picture. So, students positively perceive that Duolingo is easy to use, has fewer steps to do the task, has an appealing design, and has simplified the display.

b. Student Perception toward the Duolingo's Collaboration

The technology could support teachers and students for collaborative learning activities. Using Duolingo is one of the ways that give benefits during the teaching and learning process. Based on the interview, the student named Suliana said that on the Duolingo application, between teacher and student could create an account as a teacher or student.

c. Student's Perception toward the Duolingo Context

Shifa said that the example vocabulary exercise on the Duolingo application is about fruits or animals' vocabulary. When students find questions about them and have already mastered all of the vocabularies, they can quickly solve questions. The other students assumed that students had a simple conversation in English by remembering or mastering several phrases in the Duolingo application. It means that the Duolingo application provides the student with some simple sentences related to life.

d. Student's Perception toward the Duolingo's Control

All the students agreed that Duolingo could provide engagements to learn English very well. The student believes that Duolingo has provided some options to draw in students' attention. The student also states that the incentive system in Duolingo is motivating as a consequence of the fact that the student receives rewards after completing specific assignments. The student can get a gift known as Lingot, which is used to shop for the Duolingo being or get the route to create the learning additional accessible. All of the students said that Duolingo could facilitate them to enhance their language mastery and language skills. The other student named Shifa said that translation, pronunciation, and listening skills increased slightly and could recall the vocabulary studied. She also explained that if the student answers the question wrong, the question keeps repeating until the student answer the question correctly. It will remember the material very much because it was repeated. If wrong, it will be done by Duolingo. So students can know the correct answer.

e. Students' Perception toward Duolingo's Connectivity, Mobility, and Cost

According to Koole (2009) Duolingo can be used when there is an internet or wifi connection. Shifa said that she likes the Duolingo application because it can be used anywhere when there is an internet or wifi connection. Another student named Ari said that he likes the Duolingo application because it is easy to carry everywhere. It is installed on a smartphone so that the student can practice anytime and anywhere. From the two student perceptions above, both give the positive perception that Duolingo is different from other learning. Applications that the mobile learning design and the student need to pay for the mobile data usage. This Duolingo application provides a free service; there is no need to pay to download it. It just needs an internet connection only.

f. Student's Perception towards the Duolingo's Blending

Several English skills are combined with various learning approaches on the Duolingo application, such as pronunciation, translating, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The student named Ari said that the Duolingo application is practical because it uses various methods, ranging from visual, audio, and writing to improve English learning. Based on

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student perception about that, it is found that students give positive perception in various learning approaches in Duolingo, namely, pronunciation, translating, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

g. Student's Perception toward the Duolingo's Content

Duolingo application has the concept of learning that is like playing games. Some of the students add that the gamification concept in Duolingo makes the student feel easy, exciting, and motivated to learn English.

h. Student's Perception toward the Duolingo's Technical Support

In the Duolingo application, there is technical assistance if students experience problems when using Duolingo. One of the students said that if there is any technical problem, students can go to the FAQ. It is a list of questions and answers relating to a particular subject. It provides the necessary information for the user. Another feature in Duolingo is the microphone, an extension that students use to record their voices when they do speaking exercises. The microphone can be turned on or off; it depends on the situation or when the student cannot use the microphone in a crowd.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The process of language learning will be more exciting and enjoyable with the Duolingo application. Therefore, it can develop student knowledge about English vocabulary. The conclusion from this article is that the students have a positive perception of the use of Duolingo in learning English, especially vocabulary. It has many benefits to support students' learning process because it could increase, comfortable, enjoy, and motivate students' English skills. Duolingo is one of the applications that give motivation in learning English then it is an effective way to improve English student skills. Based on Mulya and Refnaldi (2016), Duolingo can increase student interest and motivate them to learn English so that the Duolingo applications have positive effects on students' ability. These findings in line with Hyungsung (2012) state that one of the positive effects of Duolingo application is that it can promote students' academic achievement through special subject education, which is supported by selected games. In addition, Anna, Suzana, and Helvia (2017) describe that the teacher and student are discovering the virtual resources can be excellent support face-to-face activities. This application could help the students' learning process, which contributes to the students' achievement. Furthermore, many student perceptions are agreed that Duolingo was an effective and exciting way of learning English.

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