

UTILIZING QUIZZES ON THE DUOLINGO TO PROMOTE STUDENTS VOCABULARY MASTERY

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Abstract: This research aims to find out the effectiveness of Duolingo games to help students' vocabulary mastery and describe students' perceptions of learning English using the Duolingo application. One of problems found in learning English is a lack of vocabulary that can make it difficult for students to understand texts, speak, listen, and write effectively. Limited student emphasis on acquiring vocabulary in class. In addition, schools that still use conventional learning methods make students bored. This research was conducted using qualitative methods using questionnaires and interviews to determine student perceptions. This research was conducted in one of Islamic senior High School in Tasikmalaya involving 33 students from class X participants. The results of this study indicate that students give a positive perception about the Duolingo application because most students (79%) agree more with learning English vocabulary using the Duolingo application as a medium of learning vocabulary. Apart from it, there are several advantages that can be drawn from using the Duolingo application as a medium for learning English vocabulary: 1) the Duolingo application make the students easy to understand the material; 2) the Duolingo application made the students more enthusiastic in learning English vocabulary; 3) the Duolingo application can eliminate boredom in learning; and 4) the Duolingo application encourage the students for generating new idea in learning.

Keywords: Vocabulary, learning Vocabulary, Duolingo application

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary mastery is an important component of learning English because it is very valuable for learners. In addition, the ability to understand vocabulary is a fundamental skill before they advance to other abilities. Without an emphasis on vocabulary acquisition, students may not learn the words they need to effectively express themselves and communicate their thoughts and ideas in English. It is in accordance with (Ramezanali & Faez, 2019) in that without a large vocabulary and methods for learning new words, people are unable to take the chances for language learning that are all around them, such as listening to the radio or native speakers, conversing with another environment, reading, or watching television. Students with sufficient variety of vocabulary mastery lead to be an effective communicator. In contrary, students cannot communicate well without having a sufficient knowledge of mastery (Sari & Aminatun, 2021).

It is very unfortunate that in reality, teachers feel hard to encourage their student's motivation to learn English vocabulary. The aforementioned condition arises from 1) the shyness of students in performing their ability, 2) large students in a class, and 3) the students 'reluctant in using the English language as a medium to communicate in the class (Yudha & Mandasari, 2021). Accordingly, since English vocabulary learning is categorized into a hard task, teachers are challenged to find techniques so that the students can be very active in learning English (Ibid), in particular the vocabulary. Another problems is that many teachers focus on grammar instead of helping students to build their vocabulary. Consequently, the students are hampered by a limited emphasis on vocabulary acquisition in class. Therefore, "Teachers must place a strong emphasis on vocabulary development. Teachers must employ cutting-edge techniques and media to improve pupils' interest in acquiring language" as suggested by (Ajisoko, 2020, p. 150).

As previously mentioned, some problems found in learning English due to the lack of vocabulary (Afzal, 2019) that can make it difficult for students to understand texts, speak, listen, and write effectively. Furthermore, one of the problems in learning English is that schools still use conventional learning methods which makes students feel bored. Many tools and methods are available to improve vocabulary mastery. Regarding the tools which can be considered as a learning media, teachers, nowadays, have been familiar with digital technology in their teaching and learning process. Despite the fact that the use of technology makes some challenges, it has given a significant impact on students' vocabulary improvement. In detail, one of the studies reviews that using digital technology can improve vocabulary mastery if it is implemented "under five key concepts namely vocabulary knowledge and retention, motivation in learning, active participation, immediate feedback and self-regulated learning" (Raw & Ismail, 2021).

To encourage students to be motivated in learning English, the teaching and learning process is encouraged to use fun digital games such as Duolingo. Conforming to (Jaelani & Sutari, 2020), Duolingo as a medium for learning English vocabulary, makes the students more enthusiastic and motivated to learn English vocabulary. Moreover, using Duolingo can eliminate boredom in learning and also encourage them to find new ideas in learning (Ajisoko, 2020). Duolingo which has emerged as a popular language learning platform that provides learners with various interactive activities to develop English skills. Another study concludes that Duolingo is believed to be a language learning app that can gamified to develop vocabulary skills (Hernadijaya, 2020). Thus, it can create the students' engagement during vocabulary teaching and learning process.

One of the Duolingo is quizzes that is available with two versions, i.e., one for the teacher and one for the student. The former is for students which it shows some exercises and quizzes for grammar and vocabulary grouped by various contexts. Meanwhile, the latter is for the teacher version (Duolingo classroom) consisting of "students' management and English curriculum management, constructing assignment, monitoring the class activities, and also giving the tests, assessment, and feedback online" (Zamzami, 2019). can be used to test their knowledge and receive feedback on their progress, while also being motivated to keep learning new words (Habibie, 2020). It has been stated previously that vocabulary in learning English is a core component but besides vocabulary, the ability to speak, listen, read, and write is no less important. This is in agreement with (Alqahtani, 2015, p.22) who states that vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second-language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication.

Several studies have been conducted related to the topic of present study. First, a previous study was conducted by (Jaelani & Sutari, 2020). This study found that using the Duolingo app as a tool for learning English vocabulary has several benefits, including making the material easier to understand, making learners more enthusiastic and motivated, removing boredom from the learning process, and inspiring them to come up with new ideas in a lesson. Second, a study reported by (Ahmed, 2016) focused on participants who used Duolingo to study Spanish and English at the same time for two months. Its analysis revealed that Duolingo can encourage beginners to become fluent in two languages, but it also has limitations. Third, a study conducted by (Tiara et al., 2021)

in which the goal of this study is to review the Duolingo as an application to support learning English vocabulary and previous students' of Duolingo as an assistance in improving their vocabulary mastery. The fourth study is carried out by (Apoko et al., 2023) which came up with the recommendation that Duolingo is useful for EFL and non-EFL students in the tertiary level to enhance their English proficiency, mainly in vocabulary mastery. The reasons are "it is simple, easy to use, and available to access; it provides interesting and informative features; and it promotes the students' willingness and motivations to practice English better"(Apoko et al., 2023). The present study is challenged to find out the effectiveness of Duolingo games to help students' vocabulary mastery, in particular, in one of Islamic senior High School in Tasikmalaya.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative method because it described, analyzed, and made the conclusion about the phenomenon of learning vocabulary using Duolingo media. This is in line with (Creswell, 2018) stating that qualitative research explores a problem and develops a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon. Qualitative research was used in this research to analyze and interpret visual data based on words of the participants' views. In particular, this research was to analyze the use of the Duolingo application for high school students in which the data were collected from questionnaires and interviews.

With regards to the data collection process, the researcher needs to determine the number of participants to be used in this study. In this case, participants were characterized as people who were offered the data to be studied by responding to questionnaire tests, interviews, and observations (Phakiti, 2014). The researcher chose thirty-three students of 10th-grade senior high school students at an Islamic educational institution in Tasikmalaya. This school is a public school in Tasikmaya that combines science and technology education with religious lessons, mainly, an Islamic high school. The researchers used two research instruments in this research which were the questionnaires and the interview.

In the first stage, questionnaires were distributed to students. This questionnaire consists of 12 statements adapted from (Jaelani & Sutari, 2020) who mentioned students' perceptions of the use of the Duolingo application as a vocabulary learning media. In distributing the questionnaires, the researchers prepared a closed questionnaire for them. In filling out the questionnaire, students should answer by putting a checklist [V] on the answer column which consists of five categories, namely "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree and Disagree" or "Neutral", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree". Then, the questionnaire was given to the students and it was explained how to answer it. The results of the questionnaires were then correlated with the theories to support the conclusions. To further address the research issue, the questionnaire findings were triangulated with information from other instruments. Furthermore, the percentage was calculated using a formula that the researcher modified from Fraenkel et al. (2012).

$$\text{Number of X Percentage} = \frac{\text{Value}}{\text{total}} \times 100$$

The second step was to conduct interviews administered to students. The interview was conducted after collecting the questionnaire. The interview consisted of six questions adapted from (Jaelani & Sutari, 2020). It was about students' perceptions of the use of the Duolingo application as a vocabulary learning media. Furthermore, The interview data was recorded and transcribed (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Transcription, on the other hand, is the act of turning field notes or audiotape recordings into text data that may be utilized to construct written sources and facilitate simple data analysis (Creswell, 2018). The researcher, then, went on to discuss and group the data from the recording that was connected to the hypotheses to support the conclusions. As a result, the information is described and categorized broadly, or a central subject can be established (Creswell, 2018).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, this research aimed at determining students' perceptions of using the Duolingo application in a high school in Tasikmalaya. The participants in this study were thirty-three students at an Islamic high school in Tasikmalaya. The researcher used two research instruments in this study, namely, questionnaires, and interviews. The first step, The questionnaire consisted of twelve questions, 1-3 on Effective tools for learning vocabulary, 4-6 on disadvantages of Duolingo, 7-8 on student interest, 9-10 on strengths of Duolingo, and 11- 12 on student motivation. The second step was conducting interviews with students. The interview was conducted after collecting the questionnaire, which consisted of six questions. It is about the perception of using the Duolingo application as a medium in learning vocabulary and to get more information from students about students' motivation towards learning English using the Duolingo application. The questionnaire and interview were adapted and modified from (Jaelani & Sutari, 2020). The following Figure 1 is the results of the questionnaire.

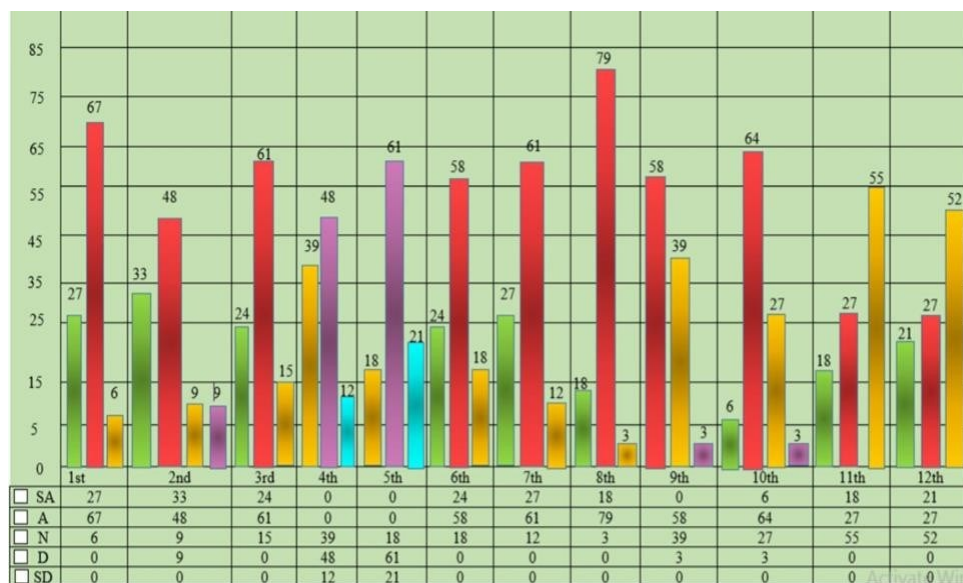


Figure 1 The questionnaires result showing various answers to each question

Based on the questionnaire result in Figure 1, it was found that students considered the five components of using the Duolingo application as a medium for learning vocabulary. First, regarding the effective tool for learning vocabulary component, it is stated that Duolingo is easy to use for learning English vocabulary (67%), using Duolingo can be accessed anywhere and anytime to learn English (48%), and English vocabulary questions in Duolingo is easy to understand (61%). This findings is relevant with the study conducted by Tiara et al. (2021) and Jaelani and Sutari (2020) in that Duolingo Application becomes a media for learning English vocabulary.

The questionnaire results above were also supported by statements from interview results in that the Duolingo application is very helpful in understanding vocabulary learning material because Duolingo itself combines a balanced mix of vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, and listening exercises. Therefore, students understood new vocabulary learning material more quickly because the Duolingo application was in the form of games. It was made the students more fun during learning process by using use the Duolingo application. The findings resulted from interview links to what is found by (Jaelani & Sutari, 2020) and (Ahmed, 2016) in that the Duolingo application had increase students' engagement and students' performance in English language skill.

The second component is regarding the disadvantages of Duolingo, The application of Duolingo in learning English is boring (48%) which means that students do not agree on the statement that the Duolingo application is boring. On the contrary, students are not bored using Duolingo in learning English. Meanwhile, Duolingo makes it difficult for me to learn English

vocabulary (61%) which means that students do not agree with the statement. On the contrary, the Duolingo application does not make it difficult for them to learn English vocabulary. The questionnaire result above were also supported by statements from interview result, that the Duolingo application is not difficult to use because the Duolingo application can be used anywhere and anytime. However, the Duolingo application must be connected to an internet network. If it is not connected to an internet network, the Duolingo application cannot be used. This findings is in line with what is found by (Apoko et al., 2023) in that The Duolingo application is easy to use. Also, the it is similar with the findings reported by (Ahmed, 2016)in that the Duolingo Application has its limitation due to the lack of internet access.

The third statement deals with the Students' Interest in Duolingo Application in Learning Vocabulary component. They said that they agree with learning to use Duolingo because it is easy for them to understand the meaning of English vocabulary well (58%). By using Duolingo, they can learn English vocabulary at home easily (61%). The questionnaire results above were also supported by statements from interview results, that students were motivated to learn English using the Duolingo application. The reason is that Duolingo offers a variety of exercises and activities, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing exercises. This findings is in line with (Zamzami, 2019) who claims that the Duolingo Application is useful for students' management. That is not all, it is also relevant with the study conducted by (Apoko et al., 2023) regarding the availability of the Duolingo Application to be accessed easily.

Fourth, regarding the Duolingo component, they claim that learning to use Duolingo Application makes them easy to memorize new vocabulary (79%); learning to use Duolingo provides an advantages better understand of learning material (58%), and learning to use Duolingo lead them to apply English skills in everyday life (64%). The questionnaire results were also supported by statements from interview results, that student, after using the Duolingo application have certainly improved their English skills and improved vocabulary, grammar, and overall understanding of language. However, its application may notbe enough to fully apply English skills in everyday life, if the surrounding environmentpredominantly uses local languages or Indonesian. Language proficiency requires practice and exposure to real-life conversations and interactions in the target language. This statements resulted from questionnaires and interview are in line with the finding reported by (Tiara et al., 2021) in that the Duolingo Application can assist student in learning English vocabulary.

Fifth, concerning the Students Motivation on Learning Vocabulary component, they stated that theywere more neutral in learning using Duolingo (55%), and they were more neutral in memorizing English vocabulary (52%). The questionnaire results were also supported by statements from interview results in that students were motivated to learn English using the Duolingo Application. The reason is that Duolingo offers a variety of exercises and activities, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing exercises. This diversity keeps the learning experience fresh and interesting, to suit different learning styles and preferences. However, if you prefer a more hands-on form of learning, such as studying with a textbook or taking a formal class, then Duolingo may not be the best fit. Every individual has different learning tendencies, and it is important tofind the most suitable learning method. Thus, this findings is in line with the previous studies conducted by (Apoko et al. (2023) and Jaelani and Sutari (2020) in that the Duolingo Application can increase students' motivation in learning English Vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

This study discussed the use of Duolingo as a medium method in teaching vocabulary mastery. There were research questions that were formulated concerning this study, it covered the effectiveness of using Duolingo as a medium method and students' perception of Duolingo games in learning vocabulary. All students in X senior high school responded to the use of Duolingo as a medium method to assist students' vocabulary mastery. The result from the questionnaire showed that 79% of the students who chose "agree" on the statement "It is Duolingo as a medium method

is good for learning English". The results of the questionnaire analysis showed that the use of the Duolingo method was effective in helping students master vocabulary. Students feel interested in using the Duolingo method as a medium and they also actively interact with their friends to discuss the task. It can be concluded that the use of Duolingo games is effective for improving students' English vocabulary. Additionally, the results of the interview session were used to answer the second research question to further describe students' perceptions of learning English using the Duolingo application. From the results of interviews, students stated that the Duolingo application was very helpful in understanding vocabulary learning material because Duolingo itself combines a balanced blend of vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, and listening exercises. Therefore, students understand new vocabulary learning material more quickly because the Duolingo application is in the form of a game. As a result, they prefer to use the Duolingo application. The Duolingo application uses vocabulary in relevant sentences and phrases. Users are exposed to vocabulary in real-life contexts, which enhances understanding.

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