

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF DUOLINGO PLATFORM  
FOR LEARNING ENGLISH IN DEPARTMENT ENGLISH  
EDUCATION AT MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA**



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in the Department of English Education Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

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The Researcher



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# **STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF DUOLINGO PLATFORM FOR LEARNING ENGLISH IN DEPARTMENT ENGLISH EDUCATION AT MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA**

## **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) mengetahui persepsi siswa terhadap penggunaan platform DuoLingo untuk mengasah kemampuan berbahasa Inggris; (2) menemukan tantangan belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing di platform DuoLingo; (3) Kemampuan Bahasa Inggris lebih berkembang setelah menggunakan platform DuoLingo. Jenis penelitian ini adalah kualitatif. Subyek penelitian adalah mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Objek penelitian adalah persepsi mahasiswa terhadap penggunaan platform DuoLingo untuk meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris mereka, dengan mengambil 30 mahasiswa semester 5. Peneliti menemukan bahwa platform DuoLingo dapat digunakan sebagai media pembelajaran bahasa Inggris; membantu meningkatkan motivasi belajar; membantu meningkatkan penguasaan kosa kata; mudah diakses; bisa menjadi kursus online gratis; meningkatkan keterampilan tata bahasa; memiliki fitur yang canggih dan modern; memperkenalkan aksen Inggris; sarana komunikasi internasional; dan mengembangkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris.

**Kata kunci:** DuoLingo, kemampuan berbahasa Inggris, persepsi siswa.

## **Abstract**

This study aims to (1) find out students' perceptions of the use of the DuoLingo platform to hone English skills; (2) discovering the challenges of learning English as a foreign language on the DuoLingo platform; (3) English skills are more developed after using the DuoLingo platform. This type of research is qualitative. The research subjects were students of the English Language Education Study Program at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The object of the study was students' perceptions of using the DuoLingo platform to improve their English skills, by taking 30 students in semester 5. Researchers found that the DuoLingo platform can be used as a medium for learning English; helps increase motivation to learn; help improve vocabulary mastery; easy to access; can be a free online course; improve grammar skills; has advanced and modern features; introduced a British accent; international means of communication; and develop English skills.

**Keywords:** DuoLingo, English skills, students' perception.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Language is used as a human communication tool as a medium for exchanging information. The language that is generally used as the language of communication between countries is English. In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject for students. Even at the university level, they have also prepared study programs in English literature or education. For students of English study programs, of course they need to learn more things than at the school level. In learning English, there are four skills that need to be mastered, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are used together as a communication tool (Anderson, 1969:2). A person's fluency in learning a language can be measured by how well they master

the four English skills. To hone these 4 skills, support for vocabulary and grammar mastery is needed. Learning English as a foreign language requires a sufficient mastery of vocabulary and grammar to become proficient in these 4 language skills. When learning a foreign language or English we need to know some vocabulary and learn grammar to make it easier to apply when practicing.

In order for students to be able to master the four English skills, vocabulary, and English grammar, media is needed to support learning. Munadi (2013: 2) said that the use of media and tools is widely recommended by educational practitioners to really support learning process activities both inside and outside the classroom. This shows that the media can expedite the learning process so that the learning objectives are achieved properly. In this digital era, we can easily find many learning media with the internet. O'Brien (2005) said the internet as a computer network that is developing very rapidly which provides benefits for several interests, such as educational, business, and government interests. Evidence of technological developments in education is the existence of scientific information, examples of questions and answers, electronic books, electronic dictionaries and much more. According to Onno W. Purbo (2005), the internet is a medium that allows for an efficient communication process by connecting it with applications. Applications can also be interpreted as computer programs created to help humans solve certain problems (Noviansyah, 201:56). One application that many students use to learn English is the DuoLingo application. This platform has many features that can help students learn English. That way students can use their computers or smartphones. This platform was created by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker, launched in November 2016. How it works, users will be given light quizzes that are similar to games. Some of the features contained in DuoLingo can be a medium for learning English skills.

Based on this description, the problem statements of this study are: 1) How are students' perceptions of using the DuoLingo platform to improve English skills; 2) The challenge of learning English as a foreign language on the DuoLingo platform; 3) More developed skills after using the DuoLingo platform. The research objectives to be achieved from this research are: 1) To find out if Muhammadiyah Surakarta University students usually use the DuoLingo platform to learn English; 2) To find out the effectiveness of the DuoLingo platform on mastering English skills, vocabulary and grammar based on student perceptions; 3) To find out students' perceptions of using the DuoLingo platform as a medium for learning English vocabulary.

## **2. METHOD**

The type of research used in this study is qualitative. Data collection with a questionnaire is done by asking questions to respondents in writing. Questionnaire is a data collection technique in which the respondent is given a series of written questions or responses, and the researcher does not ask the respondent directly. The informants are 5th semester students of the Department English Education at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. In this study, researchers used the interview method to obtain research data from informants. The interview is a face-to-face question and answer conducted by the interviewer with the person being interviewed to obtain the necessary information.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS**

The section consists of argumentation of the article regarding to answer the research problems. Subheadings consists of detail analysis to object of research with consideration of approach, theory used in analyzing.

### **3.1 Students' Perspective on the Use of DuoLingo Platform to Improve English Skills**

Based on the interviews that the researchers conducted regarding students' views on the use of the DuoLingo platform as English Learning aid for students of the Department of English Education Study Program, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, the researchers found several findings from the responses from informants, that are:

- 1) DuoLingo platform as an English Learning medium. From the results of interviews, it is known that students stated that DuoLingo helps students with independent learning difficulties and can be used when they have free time. In Jaelani and Sutari's study (2020) stated that DuoLingo was easy to use anywhere and anytime to learn English.
- 2) DuoLingo increases motivation to study. From the results of the interviews, the researchers found that students felt motivated to learn using DuoLingo because of its simple, easy-to-understand and has gamification learning method. In Habibie's research (2020), said that all student felt enthusiasm for learning by DuoLingo and they found it more interesting and enjoyable.
- 3) DuoLingo helps increase vocabulary. According to Matra (2020) the Duolingo application is effective in learning vocabulary for students. Duolingo is suggested to be an alternative medium for learning English. From the results of the interviews the researcher found that students found vocabulary used for everyday language, memorized vocabulary because of repetition at each level, knew the translation of the vocabulary learned, and found new vocabulary.

- 4) DuoLingo platform is easy to access. Researcher found that students found DuoLingo in the app store. Apart from that, the student also said that he installed DuoLingo from the recommendations of people in a discussion forum. Munday's statement (2016) in his research that Duolingo can be accessed either via the web on a desktop computer or via a cellphone or tablet.
- 5) DuoLingo can be a free online course. Prapbowati (2022) states that Duolingo is a free service/application on a device/smartphone that gives us the opportunity to learn a foreign language. In this study researchers found that some students chose DuoLingo because it was free, and some of them said wanted to save money but still wanted to learn English.
- 6) Duolingo helps increase grammar skill. Studets said in DuoLingo there is a test to construct sentences which improves their grammar skills and it helps with several grammar related college assignments. Redjeki and Muhajir (2020) stated that Duolingo can be used as a complement to support students in learning their grammar, because the exercises are mostly about grammar.
- 7) Learn English by advanced duolingo features. Researchers found that the informants were interested in DuoLingo because of its various advanced features. Adawiyah and Rahmawati (2002) in their research stated that in 2013 Google Play's had given an award to Duolingo application because it has presented a new innovation and provided new knowledge to users.
- 8) Learning using duolingo is fun. DuoLingo is famous for the gamification learning method. Gamification was chosen because it has several advantages such as making the learning process more enjoyable. Rahmawati (2002) in their research, learning applications that apply game mode can be used as entertainment while making a pleasant impression on students while learning.

### **3.2 Challenges of Learning English as a Foreign Language on the DuoLingo Platform**

Based on interviews that researchers conducted regarding challenges of learning English as a foreign language on the DuoLingo platform, the researcher found several findings from the informants' responses, that are:

- 1) Challengy accents from listening task on DuoLingo. Problems arise when English learners want to master learning, problems like namely cultural differences and accent variations (Purwanto 2022). In the listening test on DuoLingo, there are several characters who will say the sentences shown, each character has a different accent and way of speaking. Users said it is become challenge and new experience.



2) Different Styles of Using English as a Global/International Communication. DuoLingo provides a discussion forum for its users, this feature can cover up to global so users can interact with foreigners. Shortt, Tilak, Kuznetcova, Martens & Akinkuolie (2021) stated that the DuoLingo discussion forum is an aspect of the application that allows freestyle writing practice and socializing with other students collaboratively.

### **3.3 English Skills are Developed After Using DuoLingo**

In interviews and surveys conducted by researcher to find out what the students' perceptions were of the questions given. The purpose of the first question is to find out if students are using Duolingo. The results show that up to 26 out of 30 respondents know and use DuoLingo. The next question has purpose to find out whether students are still using Duolingo to learn English. Result showing 14 of 26 students said no, it is mean they no longer use Duolingo, and 12 students are still using Duolingo today. The results of the survey during the interview are attached in the following table.

**Table 1. Table of the order of skills from the most developed to the least developed based on a survey of informants**

No	Developed skills	Number of Votes
1	Vocabulary mastery	11
2	Listening skill	7
3	Grammar mastery	5
4	Writing skill	3
5	Reading skill	0
6	Speaking skill	0

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that English Departement Education students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta who study English with the DuoLingo platform develop the most in vocabulary mastery with 11 votes because DuoLingo tends to give more tests to increase vocabulary. While the skills that are considered less developed are reading skills and speaking skills with 0 votes, this is due to a lack of tests or quizzes to practice reading skills and speaking skills.

## **4. CLOSING**

The researcher concludes that DuoLingo is an effective English learning platform. From a student perspective, DuoLingo can increase learning motivation, is easily accessible, can be a free online course, has many advanced features, and has an easy learning method. In addition,

when studying DuoLingo users said they faced several challenges such as finding accents on listening tests and finding differences in styles of using English in discussion forums. From all the interviews, the researcher conducted an analysis and found that most of the informants agreed that their vocabulary mastery improved the most after learning to use DuoLingo.

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