



**STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF DUOLINGO APPLICATION IN  
LEARNING ENGLISH DURING COVID-19**

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Keywords	Abstract
<p><i>Keywords: Students' Perception, Duolingo Application, Learning English</i></p>	<p>This research aims to find out how students' perception of the use of Duolingo application in learning English. This research was conducted in SMP Swasta IT Al-Fattah Desa Lama. A qualitative method was used for this research and there were 20 students in the ninth class as the sample of this research. In collecting the data, this research used a questionnaire and interview. The findings took the result that most students agree and gave a positive response than the negative one of the uses of Duolingo application in learning English during Covid-19. Duolingo application gave the benefits and contribution to both the students and teachers in learning English. 1) This application made the students feel enjoyable in learning English and made the learning process became fun during this Covid 19 pandemic; 2) This application gave a significant impact and increased students' knowledge and improved their English during this Covid 19 pandemic; 3) Using this application, the students had a chance to improve their English whenever they want to learn it. The conclusion could be taken that the students had positive responses and perceptions in using Duolingo application for learning English.</p>

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## INTRODUCTION

English is the language used for communication by people around the world. English is a language which used for every situation whether formal for academic activity, school, or informal situations like a daily conversation. All that activities or interactions need English as a tool for communication with each other. Crystal (2003:24) stated that English is the main key or ability to be successful in reaching a global presence. It showed that the use of English is important among people around the world. In Indonesia, the position of English is still a foreign language. But regardless of that position, in reality, English is a dominant foreign language that is learned by language learners in Indonesia. Related to that thing, teaching and learning English are expected to be able to urge students' ability in mastering English both understanding and producing it correctly.

English learners can start learning basic skills of English such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Bilican et.all, 2012). These skills are necessary for English learners because the most basic part of English is those skills. English learner must improve their understanding of those skills before going to the next level of English topics. Learning those skills cannot be separated or just focus on one skill for mastering English because those four skills will be used sequentially. Almost English learners learn English to build communication. Meanwhile, communication means sharing one message and information to get feedback from one person to others (Daulay, 2019). Commonly, in an academic activity like a school, students are urged to practice their knowledge related to those skills by speaking and using English to speak. In reality, most of the students just learn the theory without practicing it in class. It is because they get less understanding related to those four skills and use their first language every day.

The situation of academic activity is different right now because of Covid-19 pandemic. This pandemic gave a bad impact on the educational field and gave new challenges because of new rules applied by the government. This situation makes all activities outside of the home like academic activity stopped and using online learning instead. Using online learning is an appropriate way. It can be applied without meeting people directly. It builds the learning activity in separate places through mobile phones.

Linuma (2016:15) state the use of an internet network is important as a tool to get various information easily and quickly. Most of the institutions around the world it in every aspect like teaching and learning aspect. Meanwhile, online learning is applied by using an internet connection as the main thing in that activity. During this pandemic, there are some applications applied by the teacher in online learning such as Hello English, Memerise, Cake,

BBC Learning English, and Duolingo. That application is usually used by the students at home to improve their English. On the other hand, in Indonesia many learners or students choose Duolingo application to be used as an application to learn English. It is proven by data stated that there are 1,74 million users of Duolingo application in Indonesia (Google Play Store, 2021). Duolingo application is known to make the students enjoyable in learning English because of its' gaming feature and sound and the other advantages. So almost of students believe Duolingo is the best application to learn English during this Covid-19 pandemic. In this research, the students may tell differently whether Duolingo application is a good or bad application based on their perception after they used it. Based on the background above the objective of this research is to find out the students' perception of the use of Duolingo application in learning English during Covid-19.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **English Language Teaching**

Teaching is defined as an activity that involve two or more people in transferring knowledge from one person to the others. The English language is one of the dominant foreign languages that was studied by many learners, especially in Indonesia. English is also a global language. Related to the importance of English language teaching in Indonesia, every level of education applied English teaching in the class from primary school until senior high school. Teaching and learning English is an important aspect for the students to enrich their knowledge to they can apply it by communicating with other people (Daulay, 2021).

Although English is always taught at school, it is not practiced directly in the classroom. Rahmanita & Mukminatien (2019: 27) found in their research that in the country in which English is taught as a foreign language, it can be found almost the learners prefer speaking in their first language to English. This lack makes them lazy to practice because they are more confident speaking in their first language. This is one of the problems of teaching foreign languages in Indonesia.

### **English Language Learning Media**

Media is the plural of word *medium*. Merriam-Webster's Collegiat Dictionary (1993) defined *medium* as a tool for influencing or delivering the information from one to the others. There are two definitions of media based on the function and related to the educational field. Media has the function to deliver information, and build communication, and entertainment

systems. Meanwhile, in the educational field, media is something used by the teacher to deliver the information of the material. Hamidjojo (2009) stated in Sadiman et. al medium kind of tools are used by the people to deliver an idea and its function is to make the people easily build communication.

Media is one of the learning tools which function for developing and building an idea in the learning process. Media is applied as a tool and learning source for teaching by the teacher. The main function of media is to encourage the students to get comprehension deeply about the learning material. It is also a tool to raise students' interest in learning. The students reach their goals successfully because they learn through media in learning.

Soko (2017: 26) divided media into three kinds related to its functions or traditionally namely: audio, visual, and audio-visual.

Sukiman (2012: 153) stated Audio is a medium that delivers the message from one to the others by sensory hearing. This media emphasizes the students' listening experience in learning in the class. Using this media makes the students pay attention by focusing on listening to the explanation of the subject material. This media is a common media applied by the teacher in teaching because the tool for this media is still achievable. The students improve their listening skills through audio media such as listening to music, conversation, etc.

Visual media is one of the media related to human vision. In a learning context, this media is a tool for studying and increasing students' comprehension by emphasis to the visual thing in teaching. Visual media such as pictures, charts, drawings, posters, graphs, and cartoons. These examples of visual media can be applied in a form of printed and digital pictures.

Audiovisual comes from the term Audible and Visible. Audible is defined as something that can be heard by the hearing sense meanwhile Visible means something that can be seen by the sense of sign (Sulaeman, 1985). From both terms, Audio-visual is a combination of audio and visual sense.

### **Duolingo Application**

Duolingo is a kind of application for mobile phones. This application used the role of the mobile phone or smartphone to apply it. Duolingo application was introduced by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker in November 2011 (Gafni, R., Achituv, D. B., & Rachmani, G. J, 2017). It was launched for the first time in 2012 for iOS users. Duolingo developed its application specifically for the users of Android on 29 May 2013. This application is an

educational application in Indonesia. It has so many users from the number of people registered on this application. Duolingo had one million times registered users in the first three weeks. It made the Duolingo application became the first educational application in Google Play Store (Silmi, 2019). On the other hand, many people like to use Duolingo application for learning a language, especially learning English because it is a free language application without payment. It had more than 35 foreign languages in the world that can be learned by its users. Jaskova (2014: 15) said "Duolingo is seen as a future in learning languages and global communication". That's why Duolingo was a favorite application having more than 100 million users in the world.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This research used the qualitative method which means describing the data deeply from questionnaires and interviews. To calculate the result of the questionnaire, the researcher took the percentage from the questionnaire sheet answer of each student and it is also supported by the explanation. The result of the interview was explained and described deeply for each student's response. According to Moleong (2018: 6) qualitative research means research focuses on understanding some aspects such as behavior, motivation, and action of the subject of the research. This research was totally about the perception of students so it meant that qualitative research can be used in this research.

### **Participants**

The population was taken at SMP Swasta IT Al-Fattah Desa lama. The researcher chose ninth-grade students' academic year 2019/2020 which the total class is just 1 class and the total number of students is about 35 students. For the participant, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique. It has been selected by following some purposive sampling steps and using some requirements. 1) The participants had a mobile phone and they were able to install and use Duolingo application. 2) They had some problems and difficulties in learning English. So, from those requirements, the researcher chose 20 students from the IX class 2019/2020 because they have fulfilled the requirement.

### **Research Instrument**

The questionnaire is one of the research instruments in this research. The researcher used a closed questionnaire which means the questionnaire had a set of questions or statements and its answer also consisted of every question. So, the students chose the best

answer base on their own and their perceptions about Duolingo application. There were 15 statements about Duolingo application and there were 4 options for every statement on the Likert scale. The option is *strongly agreed, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

Giving the interview was the second instrument in this research for collecting the data. In this section, the researcher gave the questions and the respondent answer them deeply on their own. The result of the interview must be made systematically based on the research objectives (Moleong, 2002). In this research, the researcher used a guided interview which means this interview was carried out by asking the structured question for the detailed information. The questions were prepared by using a transcript. There were 5 questions and this interview was carried out face to face with the researcher to get clear information and a neutral situation.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

Miles & Huberman (2014: 33) stated that in the qualitative method, there are three stages in analyzing the data namely.

1. Data Reduction is the first stage in the data analysis, especially for the qualitative research method. According to Miles & Huberman (1994: 10) data reduction is a step to make the data in a simple form by classifying it and removing unnecessary data. After doing that step, the data can be useful data to make the data easier in concluding.
2. Data display is the second step in data analysis. This technique is presenting the data in a simple and systematic. The data can be in the form of text like narrative text, matrices, graphs, or charts. For the questionnaire, the researcher calculated the result. In calculating the questionnaire, the researcher made a percentage of each option on questionnaire sheets. The result of the questionnaire was supported by the explanation descriptively.

According to Sudjana (2001: 129), the percentage formula as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Note:

P : Percentage

F : Frequency

N : The number of samples

100% : Constant value

- Conclusion drawing and data verification are the stages to find the main point of the data such as looking for relationships of the data, similarities, or differences to draw a clear conclusion for the problem of the research.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Finding

After doing the research and giving the questionnaire, the researcher checked students' questionnaire answers and most of the students had a positive response toward Duolingo application as a tool for language learning. The researcher made the total percentages in the following chart.

Chart 1. Total Percentage of Questionnaire

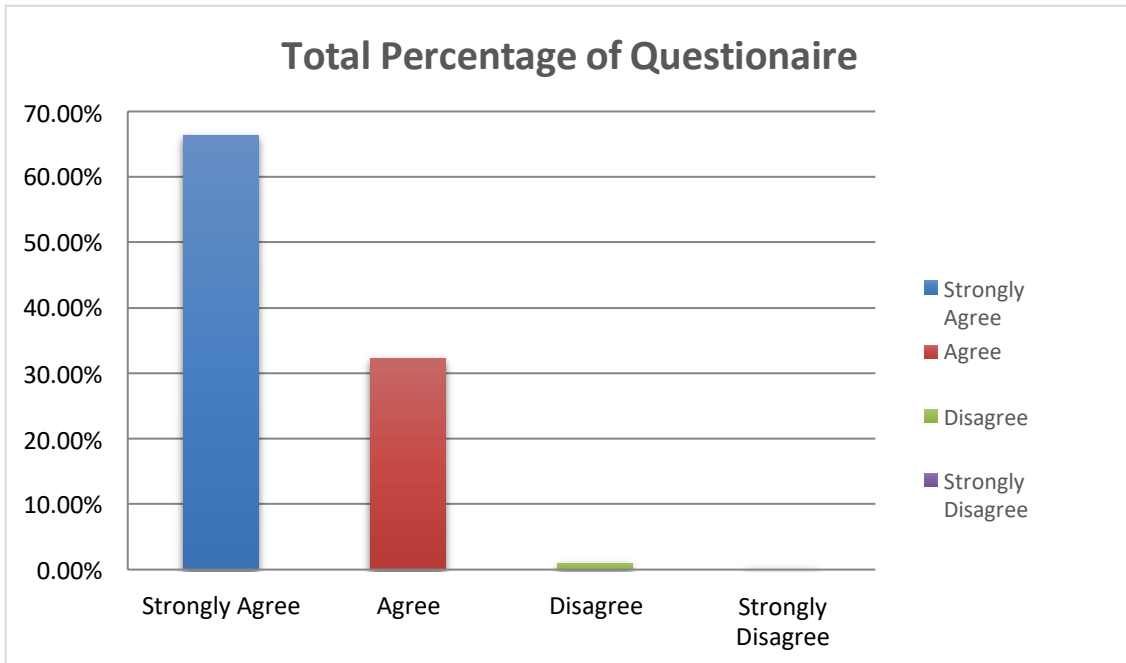


Chart 1 above showed the result 66,30% of students in the option "strongly agree" for positive statement about Duolingo application. For the next, there were 32% of students in the option "agree". For two options both "disagree" and "strongly disagree" got the total percentage 1% and 0,30%. So, from the total percentage above it can be seen many students chose strongly agree and agree. The students had good experiences in using Duolingo application so they gave a good perception and response about it.

The result of the interview was in line with the result above. The students like using Duolingo application because its features are fantastic and enjoyable and it makes them always want to learn English with Duolingo application. As the sixth interviewee said *“Duolingo is a nice application because this application is fun for learning, this application*

*is like a game with sound so I felt like learning and playing a game. Before I learn through this application, I felt like I was lazy for studying but after I used this application, I felt fun for learning this application".*

## **Discussion**

The finding showed that many students preferred using Duolingo to learn English. They were using it every time and everywhere. The researcher also found the result that the student's Duolingo application had a nice feature so they felt it was easy to be used. They could improve their English whenever they want. As Munday (2016) showed in her research Duolingo was an application for learning English in a fun way and learning by this application is a new experience in learning English. Therefore, Duolingo application had an important role for the teacher and the students. It was the main tool for learning activities because, in this Covid-19 pandemic, teaching and learning activity cannot be carried out directly. So using Duolingo application both students and teachers do the learning activity for English subjects by this application.

An interesting media is needed in teaching. The use of media makes the students interested to learn and it is used to make the students understand more about the learning material and also pay attention to the class management. The interviewees said that they got less concentration during English class. That was because their friends talked and they could not hear what the teacher said. The use of Duolingo is suggested because, by an application, the students can learn on their own. This application had an explanation and exercise on it.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Duolingo application gave the benefits and contribution to both the students and teachers in learning English. 1) This application made the students feel enjoyable in learning English and made the learning process became fun during this Covid 19 pandemic; 2) This application gave a significant impact and increased students' knowledge and improved their English during this Covid 19 pandemic; 3) Using this application, the students had a chance to improve their English whenever they want to learn it. Duolingo application helps the students to learn English, especially in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They also enrich their vocabulary through this application. The conclusion could be taken that the students had positive responses and perceptions in using Duolingo application for learning English.



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