THE PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM STUDENTS OF FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU ON THE USE OF DUOLINGO IN LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the perceptions of students from the English Study Program at FKIP Universitas Riau regarding the use of the Duolingo application in learning English vocabulary. In conducting this research, the researcher applied a quantitative method. This research is conducted on the third-semester students of the English Study Program at FKIP Universitas Riau. Purposive sampling is the type of sampling technique in this research where 30 students from class A are the sample class. The instrument used to collect the data was a questionnaire that consisted of 21 statements. The questionnaire was based on three main indicators: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Attitude Toward Using Duolingo. The data were analyzed by SPSS. The results of the data analysis showed that the perceived usefulness indicator had a mean score of 4.00, suggesting that students found Duolingo effective for learning vocabulary. The Perceived Ease of Use indicator scored 4.11, reflecting that students considered Duolingo easy and accessible to use. Meanwhile, the Attitude Toward Using indicator received a score of 3.91, showing a generally positive attitude among students toward learning with Duolingo. The overall mean score across all indicators was 4.01. The results showed that all three indicators received high mean scores, indicating positive student perceptions.

Keywords: Duolingo, Student Perception, English Vocabulary

PERSEPSI MAHASISWA PROGRAM STUDI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN DUOLINGO DALAM PEMBELAJARAN KOSAKATA BAHASA INGGRIS

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan apakah terdapat pengaruh yang signifikan dari cartoon story maker terhadap pemahaman membaca pada siswa kelas XI SMAN 5 Tambusai Utara terhadap narrrative text. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian pra-eksperimen dengan desain One Group Pre-Test Post-Test, yaitu suatu desain eksperimen yang hanya menggunakan satu kelompok sampel dan melakukan pengukuran sebelum dan sesudah diberikan perlakuan kepada sampel. data di dapat kan dari Pre-Test dan Post-Test dalam bentuk pilihan ganda sebanyak 40 soal. Rata rata dari Pre-Test adalah 64.91 dan rata rata untuk Post-Test adalah 82.21 yang menunjukkan adanya kenaikan signifikan pada siswa. Data di analisis menggunakan Wilcoxon Signed Test menunjukkan nilai Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) sebesar 0.000 yang berarti hipotesis nol (H0) di tolak dan hipotesis alternatif (Ha) diterima. dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa cartoon story maker merupakan media yang memiliki pengaruh positif dan meningkatkan pemahaman membaca pada teks naratif.

Kata kunci: Duolingo, Persepsi Mahasiswa, Kosakata Bahasa Inggris

INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements have significantly transformed language learning, offering new, flexible, and interactive ways to acquire skills. With online platforms, learners can study at their own pace and access resources anytime and anywhere, making learning more personal and effective.

Multimedia tools such as text, images, audio, and video enhance the learning experience by making it more engaging Yusda et al. (2020) emphasized that technology provides captivating materials, increasing students' interest and improving learning outcomes in English. Many platforms now feature interactive elements like games, quizzes, and speech practice, helping learners develop essential skills in a fun environment. English is a global language crucial for communication in various domains including education, employment, and entertainment. Therefore, mastering English comprising listening, speaking, reading, and writing is essential. Beyond these core skills, vocabulary plays a foundational role. It allows learners to express ideas, understand others, and acquire new knowledge effectively. Without a strong vocabulary, communication is hindered, and language proficiency suffers. As Dakhi (2019) highlighted, vocabulary is a key skill that underpins the development of other language competencies. A rich vocabulary helps convey thoughts and understand messages accurately, reducing the chances of miscommunication.

Despite its importance, many students face difficulties in acquiring English vocabulary. Simanjuntak (2021) identified several challenges, such as student passivity and lack of interest due to limited vocabulary. This makes it difficult for them to engage in discussions or understand texts, negatively affecting their learning experience. Moreover, vocabulary learning is often perceived as dull and difficult to retain, especially when focused solely on memorization without practical usage. This traditional method can frustrate learners and reduce their motivation. However, integrating technology into vocabulary instruction can alleviate these issues. Interactive applications like Duolingo make learning vocabulary more dynamic and enjoyable, offering students an opportunity to practice in a stimulating and gamified environment. Duolingo is a free, educational app available on both web and mobile platforms. It offers comprehensive activities in listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, and speaking, covering over 20 global languages. As an educational tool, it can be used both in classrooms and independently. Users can access it anytime and anywhere, adding flexibility to their study routine. The app ranks among the top three in the education category on the App Store and Google Play. Duolingo stands out by turning language learning into a game-like experience, which is particularly effective in vocabulary acquisition.

Several studies have shown Duolingo's effectiveness in increasing learner motivation and vocabulary mastery. Vini and Fattimah (2023), in their study on the use of Duolingo in English learning, found that the app significantly increased students' interest and engagement. Similarly, Irawan et al. (2020) showed that Duolingo's fun and game-based approach enhanced vocabulary learning and made English more accessible to students. Learners who used Duolingo reported improved test scores and found vocabulary learning more enjoyable. These findings suggest that Duolingo can be a valuable supplementary tool in English instruction, helping students build vocabulary in a fun and effective way. While numerous studies focus on Duolingo's effectiveness in vocabulary development and motivation, less attention has been paid to students' perceptions of the app. Understanding how students view Duolingo is critical because their perceptions can influence how engaged and motivated they are in using the tool. When students find an app useful and user-friendly, they are more likely to continue using it and benefit from it. Thus, assessing learners' perceptions of Duolingo could offer deeper insights into how to improve vocabulary instruction using digital tools.

Based on this context, the current research aims to explore the perceptions of third-semester English education students at FKIP Universitas Riau regarding the use of Duolingo in learning English vocabulary. This focus is important because these students are directly involved in the learning process, and their views can inform educators and researchers about the effectiveness and acceptance of technology in language instruction. The main research question is: *What is the perception of English study program students of FKIP Universitas Riau on the use of Duolingo in*

learning English vocabulary? The objective is to explore and describe these students' perspectives regarding Duolingo's role in supporting their vocabulary learning. The study seeks to identify whether they find the app beneficial, motivating, and relevant to their needs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The Concept of Perception

   Perception is the process through which we understand the world around us, and it plays a crucial role in how we interact with our environment. As Slameto (2003) explains, perception begins with our five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Each sense provides us with different kinds of information. However, perception is not just about noticing these stimuli; it also involves a deeper connection to what we experience. Wijaya (2020) points out that when we perceive something, we actively engage with it. This means that our feelings and thoughts play a significant role in how we interpret sensory information. perception is the process through which individuals perceive and interpret stimuli using their five senses, leading to either positive or negative responses. Even when people are in similar situations, their reactions can vary significantly due to the unique combination of their sensory experiences. This suggests that perception is highly individualized, shaped by both sensory input and personal context.

   According to Robbins and Judge (2017), perceptions can be categorized into two main types: positive perception and negative perception. Each type has distinct characteristics that differentiate them.

   a) Positive Perception

      Positive perception occurs when an individual feels satisfied with a specific object or experience that forms the basis of their perception. This satisfaction often stems from their familiarity with the object and their personal experiences related to it.

   b) Negative Perception

      On the other hand, negative perception is influenced by an individual's dissatisfaction with the object that is being perceived. This negative viewpoint can result from a lack of knowledge or experience with the object, leading to a more critical or unfavorable impression.

2. The Concept of Duolingo

   The technology that is used as a media is referred to as a digital media. There exist three forms of media: visual, auditory, and textual. These are employed as learning aids to make the process simpler, more engaging, and less monotonous. It supports the teacher in a variety of tasks, including instruction, assessment, and evaluation. Therefore, the use of technology into education is significantly altering the practice of teaching. However, remaining under the teacher's supervision, giving proper values and norms priority, while paying attention to the teacher's instructions. As teachers, we may benefit from the use of media in vocabulary instruction to help students learn more words and expand their vocabulary. One of the various media tools available to teachers is the Duolingo.

   According to Irwit Santi et al. (2023) Duolingo is a modern program that helps people learn and master various languages. Luis von Ahn and Severin Hacker launched Duolingo in 2011 with the goal of creating an easily accessible language learning platform. Their goals were to democratize education and give everyone in the globe access to free language instruction. This e-learning tool can also be accessed with application by using a smartphone or with web by online computer.

   According to Mulya et al (2016) said that Duolingo has advantages, including:

- Due to its gamified approach, which turns language lessons into enjoyable challenges.
- Duolingo is accessible, Duolingo is free to use anytime and anywhere via web browsers on personal computers or as an Android app from the Play Store and Application Store. Its user interface is straightforward and easy to navigate.
- Duolingo has been made available for use with a combination of exercises; as students go through words and phrases, they can listen, transcribe, speak, and translate using an easy-to-use interface.
- In Duolingo, students can earn experience points (XP) to indicate how much they have completed tasks and advance through different levels, allowing teachers to quickly monitor their progress in language acquisition.

3. The Concept of Vocabulary

   According to Hatch and Brown (1995), vocabulary consists of the words that learners are required to use. It was highlighted that vocabulary is the single system in a language arranged by letter sequence. Furthermore, Anton Adi Purwanto & Syafryadin (2023) believes this means that students cannot learn to communicate effectively unless they have enough vocabulary. Vocabulary is the bridge that connects language skills. It implies that students need vocabulary which is one of the steps forward to be good in language. Nation (2001) divided vocabulary into two categories, that is receptive and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary includes words that learners can recognize and understand when they see or hear them in context, such as during reading or listening activities. On the other hand, productive vocabulary involves words that learners can both understand and use effectively in their own communication. It is important for students to understand a vocabulary because a limited vocabulary could effect the effective communication. Teaching students how to use a language in spoken, written, and visual forms is part of the process of learning a language.

4. Technology Acceptance Model

   The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), introduced by Davis in 1989, is used to predict users' intention to adopt technology based on their perceptions (Woodeson, 2022). It helps explain how likely people are to use a technology based on what they think and feel about it. TAM has been regarded as a reliable model for explaining and predicting how individuals accept and use new technologies in various contexts. The model identifies two key factors that influence technology acceptance: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU). Because TAM helps explain how people feel, what they intend to do, and what they actually do, it is often used to understand how these perceptions influence individuals' attitudes and decision-making when using technology (Limna et al., 2023, as cited in Kei & Chaichi, 2021).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was used a quantitative approach. This approach involves collecting data using instruments and analyzing it through quantitative and statistical techniques. Therefore, this research was designed to discover student perceptions of the use of Duolingo in learning English vocabulary ability. The researcher collected data from third semester students at FKIP Universitas Riau using a Google Forms questionnaire to determine their perceptions of the use of the Duolingo. The population of this research is the Third Semester students of the English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau batch 2023. The total population was 116 students which consist of three classes 3A, 3B, and 3C. In this research, the sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique. The selection of participants is based on criteria that considered important for the research. The sample

criteria in this research consist of third-semester students from the English Study Program FKIP Universitas Riau, who use Duolingo. In this research, data collection was conducted using a questionnaire to obtain information and assess results. The researcher employed a closed-ended questionnaire, where responses were measured on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. This type of questionnaire limits respondents to a set list of answers. Specifically, the scale used options ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," with a neutral option as the midpoint. Strongly agree (SA) scored 5, Agree (4) scored 4, Neutral (N) scored 3, Disagree (D) scored 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) score 1. The Likert scale score was referenced from the study by Wang et al. (2016).

The researcher was collected data in several steps. As stated earlier, the researcher used a close-ended questionnaire as the research instrument. The research instrument was adapted from Apoko et al. (2023) and Anandra and Salmiah (2024). Then an online questionnaire was created in Google Forms. The researcher shared this link with students via WhatsApp and asked them to follow the instructions to fill it out. The students answered the questions using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). After they submitted their answers, the responses were downloaded into Microsoft Excel. From there, the data was analyzed using both Excel and SPSS 25. Before distributing the questionnaire to students in the sample class, it is important to conduct a trial or try out to assess its validity and reliability.

The researcher used SPSS 25.00 to analyze the data based on the categories of Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Attitude Toward Using through descriptive statistics.The questionnaire was distributed to the try out class. After the data was collected, the results were checked using Microsoft Excel and SPSS 25.00 to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire items. Responses were collected through Google Forms. The analyzed data was further explained and described by focusing on each indicator. The ratings of students' perception interpretation adopted from Hadiyanto (2019), is detailed as follows.

Table 1. *Interpretation of Mean Score*

No.	Mean Score	Descriptive Interpretation
1	1.00-1.80	Very Low
2	1.81-2.60	Low
3	2.61-3.40	Medium
4	3.41-4.20	High
5	4.21-5.00	Very High

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
A. Result

This research applied content validity with the Pearson Product Moment (Bivariate Pearson) correlation method as its correlation technique. The person validity test is determined by comparing the R count value to the R-table value: if R-count > R-table, the data is considered valid; if R-count < R-table, it is considered invalid. For a sample size of 30 and a 5% significance level, the R-table value is 0.361. From the validity test of item, it was confirmed that all were valid.

Reliability in research implies that the methods and findings can be consistently reproduced by others following the same procedures. To evaluate the consistency of the instrument in this study, a reliability test was performed. The questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient to assess internal consistency. According to Taherdoost (2018), a Cronbach Alpha value above 0.60 indicates that the variable is considered reliable. That is means if Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is > 0.60, the instrument is considered reliable; meanwhile, if it < 0.60, the instrument is considered

unreliable. In this research, the reliability test demonstrated as shown by a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.946 > 0.60, it was indicated that the instrument was Reliable.

In this research, the primary tool for data collection was a questionnaire. The questionnaire, consisting of 21 statements, distributed to participants, who were identified as second-year students from class 3A of the English Study Program at FKIP Universitas Riau.

Table 2. The Finding Of Perceived Usefulness

No.	Steatment	Mean	Interpretation
1	Using Duolingo helps me understand English vocabulary better.	3.87	High
2	Using Duolingo helps enrich my English vocabulary.	4.23	Very High
3	Using Duolingo gives me a good stimulus for memorizing English vocabulary	4.03	High
4	Using Duolingo makes learning English vocabulary more effective	4.33	Very High
5	Using Duolingo improves my daily English skills	3.90	High
6	Using Duolingo encourages me to practice using new English vocabulary in daily context.	3.63	High
7	Using Duolingo increases my understanding in learning English vocabulary.	4.00	High
The Total Mean Score		**4.00 (High)**	

From the table 1, the perceived usefulness indicator it can be seen that statement "Using Duolingo makes learning English vocabulary more effective" was strongly agreed with by most respondents, resulting in the highest mean score of 4.33. Similarly, statement "Using Duolingo helps enrich my English vocabulary" took second place, with a mean score of 42.3. Following this, the statement "Using Duolingo gives me a good stimulus for memorizing English vocabulary" had the mean score 4.03, statement " Using Duolingo increases my understanding in learning English vocabulary" had the mean score 4.00, and statement "Using Duolingo improves my daily English skills" had the mean score 3.90. Meanwhile statement "Using Duolingo helps me understand English vocabulary better" had the mean score 3.87. Moreover, statement "Using Duolingo encourages me to practice using new English vocabulary in daily context" has the lowest mean score of 3.63. Overall, the total average score across all statements for Perceived Usefulness of Duolingo was 4.00, reflecting respondents showed a positive perception. This value is classified within the high category.

Table 3. The Finding of perceived Ease of Use

No.	Steatment	Mean	Interpretation
8	Duolingo is easy to use for learning English.	4.27	Very High
9	I find Duolingo easy to use for learning English vocabulary.	4.00	High
10	Duolingo is easily accessible anytime and anywhere.	4.40	Very High
11	Duolingo provides interesting vocabulary questions.	3.97	High
12	Duolingo provides understandable vocabulary questions.	4.23	Very High
13	Duolingo has features that are easy to understand	4.00	High

	and use.		
14	Duolingo facilitates learning that is suitable for users.	3.93	High
The Total Mean Score		**4.11 (High)**	

In the table 2, the finding of perceived Ease of Use, it was shown that the highest mean score 4.40, was obtained by the statement "Duolingo is easily accessible anytime and anywhere," which was interpreted as Very High. Similarly, high levels of agreement were also recorded for the statements "Duolingo is easy to use for learning English" with mean score 4.27 and "Duolingo provides understandable vocabulary questions" with mean score 4.23, both of which were interpreted as Very High. Other statements such as "I find Duolingo easy to use for learning English. Vocabulary" with mean score 4.00, "Duolingo provides interesting vocabulary questions" with mean score 3.97, "Duolingo has features that are easy to understand and use" with mean score 4.00, and "Duolingo facilitates learning that is suitable for users" with mean score 3.93 were also positively rated and interpreted as High.

Table 4. The Finding of Attitude Towards Using

No.	Steatment	Mean	Interpretation
15	I think using Duolingo to learn English vocabulary is interesting.	3.80	High
16	I think using Duolingo motivates me to learn more English vocabulary.	4.23	Very High
17	I think Duolingo is comfortable to use for learning English vocabulary due to its balanced learning activities.	3.83	High
18	I think using Duolingo to learn English vocabulary is a good idea.	4.30	Very High
19	I think I am satisfied with the experience of learning English vocabulary through Duolingo.	3.80	High
20	I think I will continue using Duolingo to improve my English vocabulary.	3.87	High
21	I prefer learning English vocabulary with Duolingo over other media or applications.	3.53	High
The Total Mean Score		**3.91 (High)**	

From the table 3, the result of a mean score of 4.00 was obtained and interpreted as High. This result indicates that Duolingo was perceived as helpful in supporting students' vocabulary development. This suggests that Duolingo was considered easy to use and did not require significant effort to operate in the learning process. Generally positive attitude among students toward the use of the application in learning English vocabulary. From Perceived Usefulness indicator, a mean score of 4.00 was obtained and interpreted as High. This result indicates that Duolingo was perceived as helpful in supporting students' vocabulary development. The Perceived Ease of Use indicator received the highest mean score among the three, with a mean score of 4.11, also interpreted as High. This suggests that Duolingo was considered easy to use and did not require significant effort to operate in the learning process. Meanwhile, the indicator of Attitude Toward Using Duolingo has a mean score of 3.91, which was likewise interpreted as High. This reflects a generally positive attitude among students toward the use of the application in learning English vocabulary. Overall, the average mean score across all three indicators was 4.01, falling under the High interpretation category. These findings suggest that Duolingo was consistently perceived in a positive light by respondents, particularly in terms of its usefulness, ease of use, and the attitude formed toward its application in the language learning context.

B. Discussion

From the research result, the researcher found that the use of Duolingo in learning English vocabulary makes learning English vocabulary more effective. Duolingo provides engaging activities and interactive exercises that help them understand and remember new words more easily. As a result, it significantly supports their efforts to enrich their English vocabulary. According to Anton Adi Purwanto and Syafryadin (2023) Duolingo is most effective vocabulary learning tools with with perceived highly engaging and easier for users to use and learn English vocabulary. Additionally, Borang et al. (2023) observed significant improvements in students' vocabulary mastery after utilizing Duolingo, highlighting its effectiveness in vocabulary acquisition. Their study showed that regularly using Duolingo helped students improve their vocabulary. Moreover, students find Duolingo user-friendly and accessible. A study by Jaelani and Sutari (2020) supports this finding, reporting that students appreciated the application's ease of use and its ability to make learning enjoyable and engaging. Furthermore, students had a generally positive attitude toward using Duolingo for enhancing their English vocabulary. A positive attitude toward using an application is crucial, as it can significantly influence the motivation to continue using the tool and the effectiveness of the learning process. Jaelani and Sutari (2020) found that students had a favorable perception of Duolingo, highlighting that its engaging interface and interactive features made learning vocabulary an enjoyable experience. These findings suggest that students regard Duolingo as a valuable tool for improving vocabulary acquisition.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, the findings of the research reveal that third-semester students in the English Study Program at Universitas Riau had a positive perception of using Duolingo to learn English vocabulary. They find Duolingo is easily accessible anytime and anywhere. They enjoy the learning process because the application is not only practical but also engaging. The interactive features, such as gamified exercises and instant feedback, make learning vocabulary more enjoyable and less stressful. This positive attitude plays an important role in maintaining their motivation and consistency in learning. As a result, students are more likely to use Duolingo regularly, which contributes to continuous vocabulary improvement.

Duolingo is recommended as an additional learning aid for students aiming to enhance their English vocabulary ability. Future researchers are recommended to explore other methodologies, such as using a mixed-method design, covering a larger number of respondents, and employing various instruments to obtain richer data and produce more generalizable findings.

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