STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING DUOLINGO AS AN ENGLISH VOCABULARY LEARNING MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

From time to time, there are alterations and developments that make the world more contemporary. As a result of the alterations and advancements of the human era, we are currently living in the era of the fourth industrial revolution. In the era of the 4.0 industrial revolution, there have been numerous forms of technology that can be utilized in a variety of fields, including education. In the field of education, technology can be utilized by teachers and students of various subjects, including English teachers. English teachers and students can use a variety of language learning applications, including the Duolingo application, to teach and learn English vocabulary. The application Duolingo is very interesting and useful for educators. However, for some students, utilizing the Duolingo application is not always engaging and beneficial. Therefore, the researcher wished to determine how students felt about using the Duolingo application to learn English. In this study, questionnaires and interviews were utilized to determine student perceptions. Twenty-three eighth graders from SMP Negeri 10 Satar Mese participated in this study. The results indicated that the majority of students were more interested in learning English via the Duolingo application. In addition, students find the Duolingo application to be extremely useful. Using the application Duolingo to learn English vocabulary, students can also easily comprehend the material. On the other hand, the Duolingo application contains something as engaging as a challenging game. This causes the application Duolingo to sharpen students' minds, make learning more enjoyable, and prevent students from becoming bored.

Keywords: *vocabulary; english vocabulary; duolingo application*

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language. English became an international language because the English language is almost used by people all around the world. The English language can be heard spoken by politicians all across the world on television. We will encounter English signage and advertisements wherever we go. When we enter a hotel or restaurant in a foreign city, the staff will speak English, and an English menu will be available (Crystal, 2003:2). Therefore, there could be a billion students learning English around the world; it is a fascinating and useful language with numerous benefits.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language taught from primary school up to the university level. Sadiku in Utami (2020:1) stated that English has four skills which are reading, writing, listening, and speaking are very fundamental. To master these four skills, students need to learn English vocabulary. Nation and Newton (1997) said that vocabulary is the knowledge that learns about words and word meanings. Vocabulary is essential to learn because vocabulary knowledge is the heart of language comprehension. Wilkins on Thornbury (2002:3) said that there is not only a limited fraction of language that can be learned without grammar but there is nothing we can communicate without vocabulary. By mastering and using vocabulary, someone can communicate, learn and think. The ability of students to read, speak and comprehend is affected by their vocabulary.

In the teaching and study of English as a foreign language in Indonesia, vocabulary acquisition has become a big problem for students. It is possible due to the fact that the media utilized to educate and acquire English vocabulary is not engaging. The way to convey material about English vocabulary still uses the conventional method, which is to give a few words and then write and memorize them. This method will make it easy for students to forget vocabulary because of several factors such as weak memory, laziness, and boredom. Putrawansyah (2020) said that teaching language needs interesting media, and the media that is used should be effective or efficient. Suyanto in Sjamsir (2018) said that the use of interesting media could help students understand the material easily. In this case, the teacher teaching English vocabulary, and the students understand and can be master English vocabulary.

According to Cakrawati (2017), teachers confront significant obstacles in educating their students on how to live and survive in the modern world. In this era, the way we teach and learn is inextricably linked to the rapid growth of technology; the emergence and development of technology, as well as its application to teaching and learning, are fully realized in education (Darong & Niman, 2020). Because traditional methods of teaching English vocabulary are ineffective or inefficient, students can become boredom, disinterested and lazy in the process of learning English vocabulary. To combat this, English teachers should develop teaching methods that incorporate technology and media that are commonplace in this age, such as the Duolingo application, because Duolingo is one of the media that can be used for vocabulary learning (Sutari, 2020).

It is safe to say that Duolingo is the most well-known and widely used platform for learning languages online. By utilizing Duolingo, language learning experience more fun, efficient or effective (Duolingo for Schools Guide Book, 2016:3). Duolingo users will study through "trees" customized to their target language, in this case, English, with unique "skills" for practicing vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Wikipedia). Loewen et al. (2019) demonstrated the outcome of a discussion with one of Duolingo's two founders, Luis von Ahn, from https://www.duolingo.com/comment/138340 (2013) and Duolingo's promotional film https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OebgtUjLg4. Duolingo's key selling pitch is that it is more efficient or effective than a university language course, as stated.

Additionally, Loewen displays the outcome of an interview with Luis von Ahn, who indicated that Duolingo is more efficient and effective as a supplement to in-person formal training. In the previous research, Jiang et al. (2021) investigated how well Duolingo teaches speaking skills using 156 Spanish and 102 French learners of Duolingo who studied these languages via the English user interface. The findings indicated that the majority of beginning-level Duolingo learners had achieved the necessary competency outcomes and curriculum objectives for speaking abilities through the speaking evaluation. Specifically, the test subscores indicated that Duolingo students meet the standards for four speaking subskills, with the exception of French students' pronunciation.

In the study that was presented, the researcher were particularly interested in investigating students perceptions about using the Duolingo as an English vocabulary learning media.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research methodology. According to Hancock et al (2007:6), qualitative research is defined by its objectives, which are related to comprehending certain aspects of social life, and by its techniques, which (in general) generate words as data for analysis rather than statistics. Additionally, the researcher used the case study method to perform this research. According to Polit and Beck (2009:271), a case study is an in-depth examination of a single or a limited number of organizations. The entity could be a person, a family, an institution, a community, or another type of social research.

The participants in this study are students in the eighth grade at SMP Negeri 10 Satar Mese. Twenty-three students were invited to participate in this study. The tool used to collect data and conduct interviews was developed and simplified from research conducted previously by Jaelani and Sutari (2021) and Inayah et al. (2020).
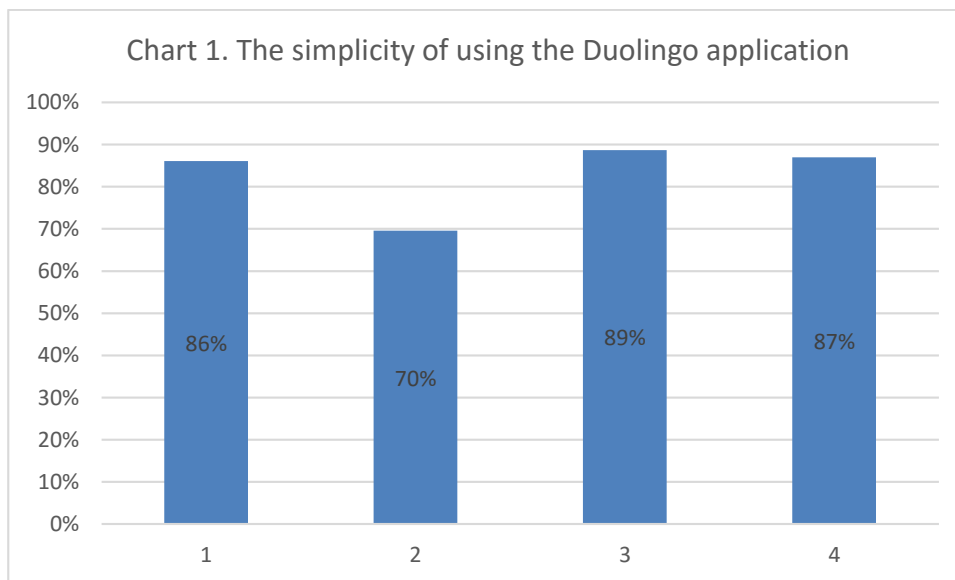
The questions are closed-ended and utilize a five-point Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The purpose of the questionnaires is to determine how students perceive Duolingo as an English vocabulary learning media. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions; questions 1-4 address the simplicity of using the Duolingo application, questions 5-9 address whether Duolingo is an efficient English vocabulary learning application, questions 10-13 address the advantages of Duolingo, questions 14-16 address disadvantages of Duolingo, questions 17-18 address the students' interest in using Duolingo, and questions 19-20 address the students' enthusiasm for learning English vocabulary with Duolingo. In the meantime, more information on the students' perceptions of using the Duolingo application as a media for learning English vocabulary was obtained through the conduct of an interview with five different students.

Data analysis

Students' closed-ended questionnaire responses were examined and converted into descriptive data. Similar questionnaire items were grouped together and a percentage was computed. The questionnaire data and interview data were then triangulated. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews were used to compile the information that was used to explain the students' perception

regarding Duolingo as a media for learning English vocabulary.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The simplicity of using the Duolingo application
This part contains four statements. The data's results will be discussed below;

Chart 1. The simplicity of using the Duolingo application

Participants indicated in the chart above that they found Duolingo to be a user-friendly application, as shown by the results. With regard to the first statement, 86 percent of participants agreed with the results of a questionnaire study. According to statement number 2, 70 percent of participants agreed that Duolingo could be used independently, without assistance from others. Another statement was number 3, 89 percent of participants agreed that Duolingo is simple to use for English learning. In addition, 87 percent of participants agreed with statement number 4 that Duolingo is an easy-to-use tool for learning English vocabulary.

This indicates that students' perceptions were favorable. The questionnaire analysis results are corroborated by the following statements from interviews;

"No, because the Duolingo application is easy to use."
S1

"I think using the Duolingo application is not difficult. The application is easy to use and very attractive."
S2

"I think the Duolingo app is easy to use and not boring."
S3

*S=Student

According to the interview results above, participants indicated that Duolingo was simple to use. Several participants added an explanation, stating that, in addition to being simple to use, the Duolingo application was extremely engaging.

2. Duolingo is an efficient English vocabulary learning application.

There are five statements in this part. The data's results will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs;

Chart 2. Duolingo is an efficient English vocabulary learning application

Statement	Percentage
5	84%
6	86%
7	86%
8	83%
9	32%
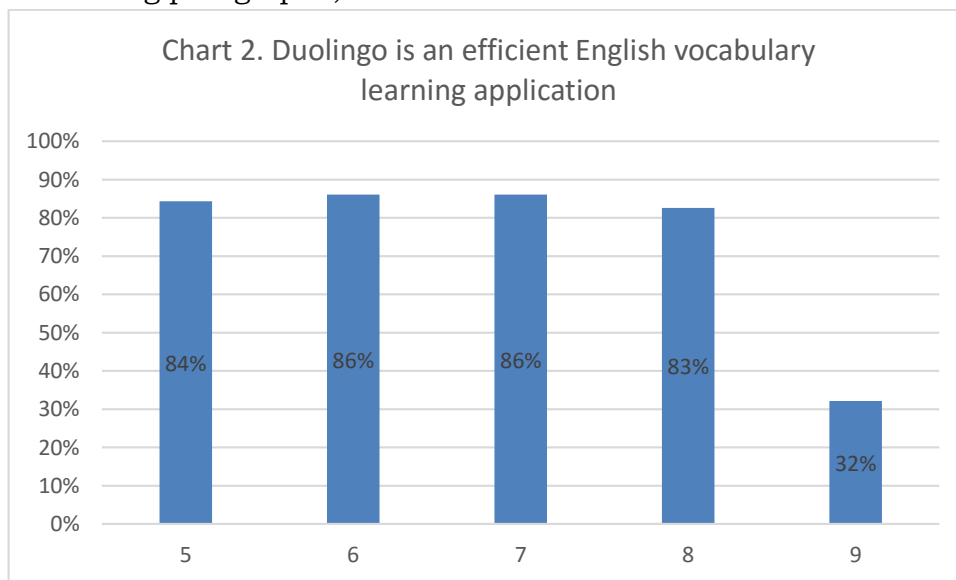
Based on the above chart, it appears that participants found Duolingo to be an efficient tool for learning English vocabulary. As indicated by the analysis of the questionnaire, 84 percent of participants agreed with the fifth assertion that Duolingo is an incredibly useful tool for learning English. In response to statement 6, 86 percent of participants agreed that Duolingo could be accessed at any time and from any location to help them learn English. According to statement 7, 86 percent of participants agree that Duolingo's English vocabulary quizzes are interesting. Another statement is number 8, 83 percent of participants strongly disagree with the statement that Duolingo is boring for learning English. Additionally, statement number 9 revealed that only 32 percent of participants believed Duolingo was not useful for classroom learning.

This indicates that students' perceptions were favorable. The questionnaire analysis results are corroborated by the following statements from interviews;

"Yes, because using the Duolingo application, it is easier for us to learn English vocabulary."
S4

"Yes, Duolingo application is very helpful in understanding English vocabulary material."
S5

"Yes. The reason is, in the Duolingo application and by using it, we can learn vocabulary that we do not understand."
S2

*S=Student

According to the interview results above, participants indicated that Duolingo is an efficient or effective tool for English vocabulary development.

Five participants out of five agreed that Duolingo aided them in learning and comprehending English vocabulary material.

3. The Duolingo advantages

This section contains four statements. The data's findings will be discussed in detail below.

Chart 3. The Duolingo advantages
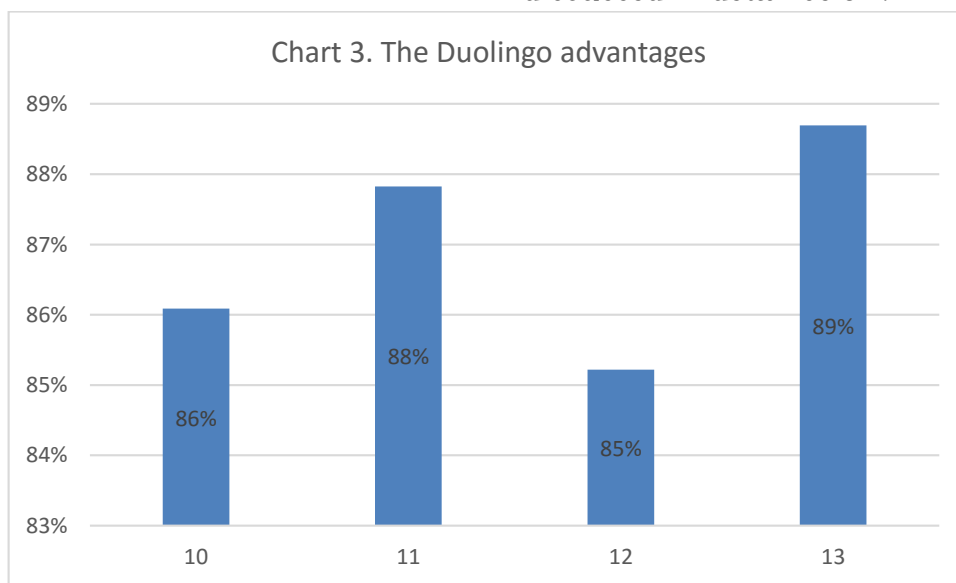
According to the diagram above, participants agreed that the Duolingo application has a plethora of benefits. This is demonstrated by the questionnaire analysis results, which indicate that 86 percent of participants agreed with the tenth statement, which stated that students will be able to be more active in their learning with Duolingo. According to statement 11, 88 percent of participants agreed that learning with Duolingo helps students memorize new vocabulary. Another assertion was made in number 12, 85 percent of participants agreed that learning to use Duolingo helps students comprehend the learning material. Additionally, statement number 13 indicated that 89 percent of participants agreed that learning to use Duolingo enables students to apply their English language skills in everyday life.

This indicates that students' perceptions were favorable. The questionnaire analysis results are corroborated by the following statements from interviews:

"Yes, I am able to apply English skills in daily life after completing the Duolingo application."
S3

"Yes, because the English vocabulary in the Duolingo application is simple, we can easily understand it."
S2

"Yes, because the Duolingo application assists me in comprehending English vocabulary."
S5

*S=Student

According to the interview results above, participants stated that Duolingo has a plethora of advantages in terms of

usage. According to some participants, the Duolingo application teaches students English language skills, which they can apply in everyday life. Additionally, the vocabulary in the Duolingo application is simple, which enables students to easily comprehend the material.

4. The Duolingo disadvantages

This part contains three statements. The data's findings will be discussed in detail below;

Chart 4. The Duolingo disadvantages

Statement	Percentage
14	45%
15	66%
16	33%
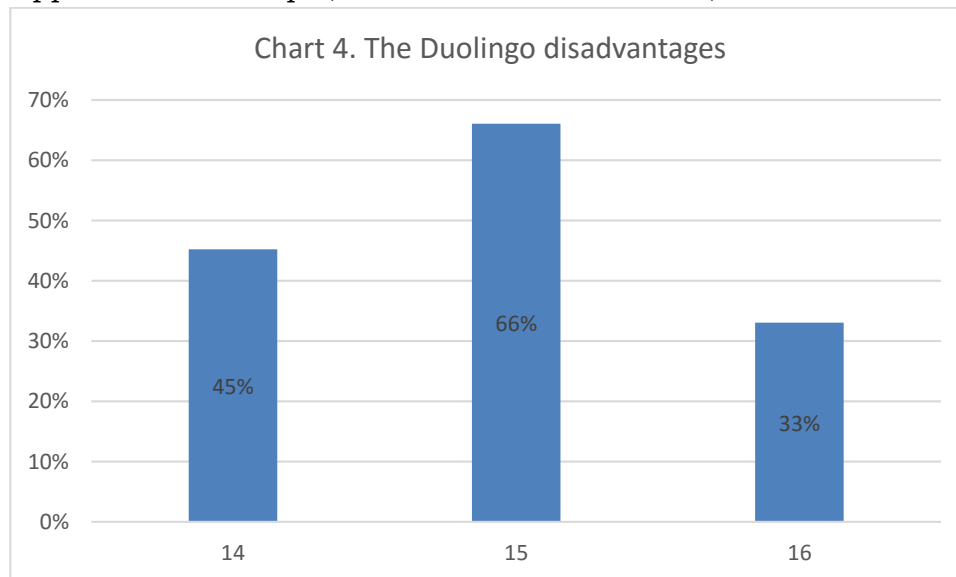
As can be seen above, the majority of participants disagreed with the statement about Duolingo's weakness, but they agreed on one point, as evidenced by the results of the analysis of questionnaire number 14, which indicated that only 45 percent of participants agreed that Duolingo is less useful for classroom learning. The remainder, or 55 percent of participants, disagreed with the statement. This indicated that the majority of participants find the Duolingo application beneficial for classroom learning. In response to statement number 15, 66 percent of participants agreed that Duolingo is difficult to use without an internet connection. This means that students will encounter difficulties and will be unable to learn English using Duolingo if an internet connection is unavailable. Only 33 percent of participants agreed with statement number 16 that Duolingo made it difficult for students to learn English vocabulary. The remaining 67 percent expressed strong disagreement with the statement. This indicated that the majority of participants have little difficulty learning English. That is, students have a favorable attitude toward several statements and a negative attitude toward one.

The questionnaire result was corroborated by the following statements from interview transcripts;

"I believe that using the Duolingo application is extremely beneficial because it is similar to playing a game, and we immediately know whether our answers are correct or incorrect." S2

"Yes, because many friends came to see me while I was studying with Duolingo, which disrupted my concentration."
S4

"Yes, Duolingo cannot be used without an internet connection."
S1

*S=Student

According to the results above, participants stated that Duolingo's shortcomings have a detrimental effect on their ability to learn English vocabulary. Duolingo is difficult to use and less useful in the classroom for five participants, whereas two agreed.

5. The students' interest in using Duolingo

This part contained two statements. The data's outcome will be discussed below;

Chart 5. The students' interest in using Duolingo

Category	Percentage
13	92%
14	84%
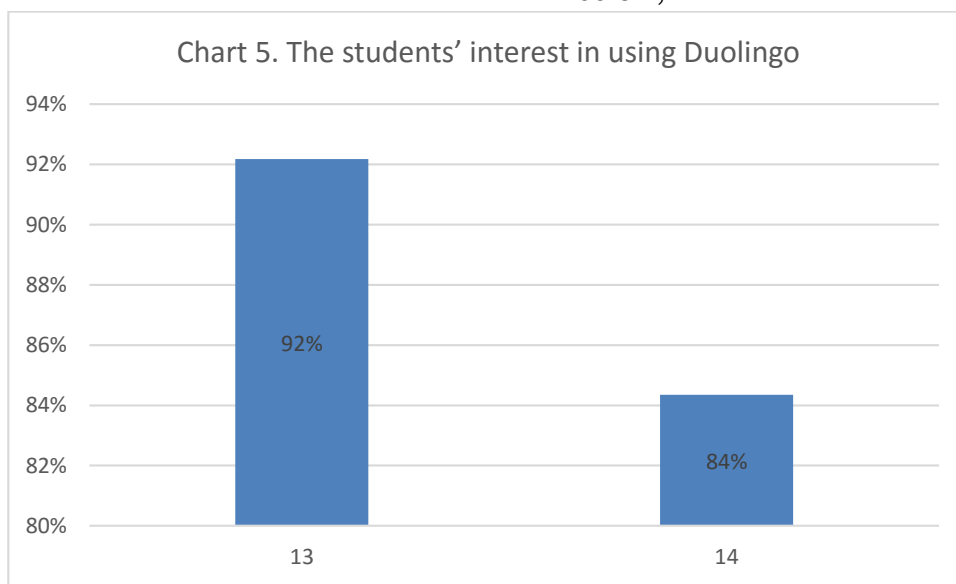
92 percent of participants agreed that students are motivated to study with Duolingo because it helps them better comprehend the meaning of English vocabulary, according to the results of questionnaire analysis number 13. According to previously demonstrated, students found learning English using the Duolingo application to be engaging. And based on the results of questionnaire analysis number 14, 84 percent of participants felt that learning to utilize Duolingo allows students to become more active learners. This indicated that students' perceptions were favorable.

The questionnaire result was corroborated by the following statements from the interview:

"Yes, this application is extremely enjoyable, sharpens the mind, and is not monotonous."
S1

"Yeah, this app is a lot of fun and has the appearance of a game."
S3

"Yes, because Duolingo simplifies the process of learning English."
S4

*S=Student

According to the results above, participants found learning English through the Duolingo application to be interesting. Five-fifths participants agreed that Duolingo can help students learn English more readily, and the interface's resemblance to a game makes it very fascinating and not at all monotonous.

6. The students' enthusiasm for learning English vocabulary with Duolingo

There are two statements in this part. The data's results will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs;

Chart 6. The students' enthusiasm for learning English vocabulary with Duolingo
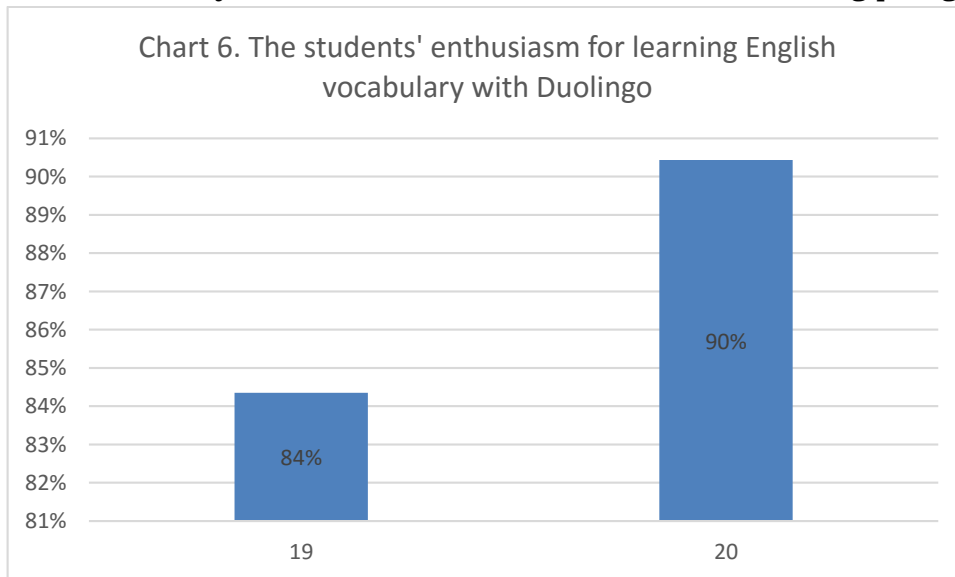
As mentioned previously, participants agreed that Duolingo could help students learn English. According to the result of statement 19, 84 percent of participants agreed that students felt more engaged in learning when they use Duolingo. Another statement is number 20, which indicated that 90 percent of participants agreed that Duolingo enthuses students to memorize English vocabulary. That is, the students has a favorable perception.

The aforementioned survey result was also backed by remarks from the interview results;

"To be honest, I am more thrilled and driven to acquire vocabulary in English now that I've used Duolingo to learn the language."

S3

Yes, because when I use the Duolingo application, I feel I can understand English vocabulary."
S4

"Yes, the Duolingo app is very helpful. I became more enthusiastic about learning English."
S1

*S=Student

From the result above, the participants indicated that Duolingo may drive students to study English, as indicated by the previous result. Five-fifths participants stated that the Duolingo application facilitates

students' comprehension of English vocabulary, and that after using it, students feel enthused and driven to study English vocabulary.

DISSCUSION

1. The simplicity of using the Duolingo application

In the first aspect, namely the simplicity of using the Duolingo application, the researcher discovered multiple perceptions indicating that the application is simple to use. In addition to being user-friendly, the students stated that the Duolingo application was also very engaging. This perception is supported by Inayah, et al (2020) asserted that the Duolingo application is straightforward and simple to use. Additionally, this perception is supported by Jaelani and Sutari (2020), who stated that the Duolingo application is easy to use and very interesting, so it can eliminate boredom in learning and encourage students to come up with new learning ideas.

2. Duolingo is an efficient English vocabulary learning application

Regarding the second aspect, namely that Duolingo is an efficient application for learning English vocabulary, the researcher uncovered a small number of student perceptions indicating that learning English with the Duolingo application was more difficult. In addition, the students reported that the Duolingo application was incredibly useful for English comprehension. These facts strongly proved that the Duolingo application is used efficiently as a vocabulary-learning tool. This perception is supported by Jaelani and Sutari (2020), who stated that the Duolingo application makes it simple to

comprehend and learn English vocabulary due to its user-friendliness. In addition, Liang (2018) asserts that Duolingo is an efficient language-learning application because users can learn through a variety of games and activities that they find enjoyable and simple to use.

3. The Duolingo advantages

Regarding the fifth aspect, namely the Duolingo advantages, the researcher discovered that students have favorable perceptions of the application's use. According to the students, the vocabulary material in the Duolingo application was presented in a way that made it easy for them to comprehend and apply the English skills they had acquired in daily life. These are the benefits of using the Duolingo application to expand one's vocabulary. This perception is supported by Mudin in Jaelani and Sutari (2020), who stated that Duolingo's learning English vocabulary can facilitate students' home-based vocabulary improvement practice.

4. The Duolingo disadvantages

In the third aspect, which focuses on the Duolingo advantages, the researcher identifies some positive perspectives regarding the application's use by students. However, the researcher also discovered negative student perceptions that the Duolingo application could not be used without an internet connection. This perception is supported by Jaelani and Sutari (2020), who stated that it was difficult to use the Duolingo application without an internet connection and by Pramesti and Susanti (2020), who stated that the Duolingo application cannot be used

without internet connections.

5. The students' interest in using Duolingo

Regarding the fourth aspect, the students' interest in using Duolingo, the researcher uncovered a number of perceptions indicating that students were interested in using the application. The reason they are interested in the Duolingo application is because it is very entertaining, can sharpen the mind, and is not tedious. Aside from that, the Duolingo application is extremely entertaining and resembles a game. This perception is supported by Inayah, et al (2020) asserted that the Duolingo application is appealing due to the availability of a variety of features. In addition, Kadaryanto in Inayah et al. (2020) demonstrated that students felt more enjoyment and interest in the game after using the Duolingo application; they were more active than before.

6. The students' enthusiasm for learning English vocabulary with Duolingo

Regarding the sixth aspect, the students' enthusiasm for learning English vocabulary with Duolingo, the researcher discovered positive student perceptions. According to the feedback from students, they were excited and enthused to acquire English vocabulary through the use of Duolingo. Jaelani and Sutari both concur with this perception (2020), who stated that the application inspired them to be motivated and enthusiastic during the learning process. Duolingo's application, which resembles a game, can enthuse and engage students in their learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Duolingo application is extremely user-friendly and visually appealing. The Duolingo application assists students in comprehending English vocabulary learning material because it facilitates student learning. The Duolingo application is therefore deemed an efficient or effective tool for learning English vocabulary. In addition, the vocabulary material displayed in the Duolingo application is simple, making it easier for students to comprehend and apply English skills in daily life.

As a tool for learning English vocabulary, the Duolingo application has multiple benefits. However, the Duolingo application has a disadvantage. The disadvantage of the Duolingo application is that it cannot be used without an internet connection. The Duolingo application, when used as a media for learning English vocabulary, generates student interest, motivation, and enthusiasm because it is highly entertaining, can sharpen the mind, and resembles a game.

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