

EVALUATING DUOLINGO'S APPROACH TO LANGUAGE LEARNING: BENEFITS AND DRAWBACK

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ABSTRACT

One of the most well-known language-learning websites is Duolingo, which provides a fun and easy way to learn new languages. The advantages and disadvantages of utilizing Duolingo as an English language learning aid are assessed in this study. Its accessibility, user-friendly design, and well-structured courses that successfully introduce vocabulary and fundamental grammar to beginning and intermediate learners are among its main advantages. Its gamification features, including leaderboards and streak tracking, also encourage users to keep up regular practice. Nevertheless, the platform has some significant drawbacks, such as a lack of focus on conversational and speaking abilities, simplistic grammatical explanations, and a dearth of advanced information. Additionally, learners who want a deeper comprehension of the language may be hampered by repetitious activities and a lack of cultural context. Although Duolingo is a good place to start when learning a language, this study emphasizes how crucial it is to combine its use with other resources and methods, such live chats and immersive experiences, in order to become fluent and fully understand the language.

Keywords: Duolingo, Learning, Language.

INTRODUCTION

Improving English abilities is becoming increasingly crucial in today's globalized world, as communicating across cultures and industries frequently necessitates a strong command of the language. Four talents should be mastered by the students. They are simultaneously speaking, listening, reading, and writing. (Marwati et al., n.d.). Traditional English learning techniques, such as textbooks and classroom instruction, have been supplemented by cutting-edge digital platforms designed to accommodate a wide range of learning styles and preferences (Rismawati et al., n.d.). Raj et al. 2024 stated Nowadays, providing students with educational resources or materials makes it simple to adopt mobile learning.

It is impossible to separate vocabulary from other aspects of learning English. In order for learners to improve other language skills like speaking, listening, reading, and writing, they must first master vocabulary. A large vocabulary is necessary for learners to achieve strong English competence. However, the motivation to use the smartphone was emphasized more than the motivational components as a result of using the smartphone for language learning. Using mobile applications to teach English speaking could significantly increase students' speaking proficiency. Mobile applications may offer students individualized learning options. Pupils are free to choose the subjects that interest them and work at their own speed. In their spare time or when traveling, students can work on their speaking skills. Students may benefit from interactive learning experiences provided by mobile applications. In addition to listening to native speakers and participating in speaking exercises, students can also get feedback on how they pronounce words. Students' motivation to learn English can be increased through the use of mobile applications. Gamification and rewards can be used to make learning more entertaining and interesting.

English teachers can integrate internet resources into their language instruction.

Therefore, use apps to study languages is consistent with the current trend in education Adawiah et al. n.d. One way to improve students' speaking skills when learning English is through the usage of mobile applications. The topic's suitability for mobile devices has been the subject of numerous research. To support students in improving their critical thinking and speaking skills while studying English (Annamalai et al., 2022) mention student can learn all skills such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening.

One of the most popular and successful resources for learning English among them is Duolingo. The software creates a dynamic learning environment that appeals to users of all ages and ability levels by utilizing gamification concepts, adaptive technology, and captivating content undayani et al. 2023. Duolingo's bite-sized lessons are tailored to hectic schedules, allowing students to practice consistently and track their progress over time (Raj et al. 2024). In addition, by emphasizing practical language skills like speaking, listening, reading, and writing, it guarantees that students may develop a solid foundation in English Kusmaryani et al. 2023. Duolingo is revolutionizing the way people learn English by making it enjoyable and efficient Marwati et al. n.d..

The app's spaced repetition technique also enhances learning, allowing users to retain language and concepts over time. Furthermore, Duolingo's social elements promote a feeling of community by allowing learners to interact with others, exchange successes, and participate in friendly challenges. As a result, Duolingo's revolutionary approach to language learning makes it a great tool for anyone wishing to improve their English skills, providing both the structure and flexibility needed to reach fluency Dearestiani et al. 2023.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, writers uses secondary research. A research that uses existing data summarized and organized to increase the overall effectiveness of the research. Secondary research includes research materials published in research reports and similar documents By examining previous research and professional viewpoints, scholars can obtain a thorough grasp of Duolingo's performance in several language learning domains Ajisoko 2020.

The efficiency of gamified features, user engagement, and the platform's capacity to develop fundamental abilities like grammar and vocabulary are all revealed by secondary data. It also draws attention to common complaints, like the exercises' repetitious and context-free nature and their lack of emphasis on conversational competency. By using pre-existing data and a variety of viewpoints, secondary research enables a balanced assessment, saving time and money while guaranteeing that conclusions are supported by solid evidence. This method provides a comprehensive understanding of Duolingo's influence on language learning by highlighting its strengths and opportunities for growth.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As a language-learning tool, Duolingo has both noteworthy advantages and disadvantages. Its gamified approach, user-friendly design, and accessibility are its main advantages since they make learning fun and interesting. Beginners and intermediate learners benefit greatly from features like streak tracking, interactive tasks, and bite-sized lessons, which efficiently help students develop their vocabulary and fundamental grammar. However, because its exercises frequently lack engaging discussion and real-world context, Duolingo has limits, especially when it comes to promoting speaking and conversational skills. Furthermore, advanced learners could not benefit from the app's limited advanced content, repeated tasks, and reduced grammatical explanations. With an approach that combines playfulness and pedagogy Duolingo provides a variety of

language-learning resources and services aimed at making education interesting, efficient, and accessible.

1. Language Courses

With integrated course cater to specific cultural or linguistic contexts for learner such english for Indonesian so student can understand both meaning and context of the language and actually bond with both language and the culture in real life situation.

2. Gamified Learning

The lessons are broken down into Bite-Sized Chunks such as short, interactive lessons with immediate feedback and then count with Streak Tracking as encouragement for consistency by rewarding daily practice and Leaderboards & XP (Experience Points) to Motivates users throughout competition or challenges. And lastly, Skill Trees are a structured progression through topics that the student learned.

3. Interactive Exercises

There are a few exercises that duolingo over, such as; Interactive exercises with Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking skill Practice are created with Activities based targeting different language skills, Matching Exercises that Match words with their meanings or pictures,

Pronunciation Practice by exercising Speaking with voice recognition. And lastly Translation Tasks that included Translate phrases and sentences.

4. Advanced Learning Tools

There are more tools that students can use in the apps, such as Stories, which are short, interactive stories that improve reading and listening comprehension, Language-specific podcast for immersive learning, Timed quiz challenges and thematic challenges for extra practice, and Grammar Tips an Integrated grammar explanations and tips for more structured learning.

5. Community & Support

There are also real-life Forums to engage with a community of your type of language learners for switching tips and discussions. Duolingo also offer Friends & Social Features that connect with friends to compare progress. And lastly a Live Classes (in some languages only) that Premium users may access live with instructor-led classes.

6. Additional Offerings

Duolingo also offer Placement Tests that start at the appropriate level based on prior knowledge, Progress Tracking that detailed stats and weekly reports, Custom Goals to fit your daily learning goals to your schedule, Classroom Integration that offer free resources for educators to use in schools, and duolingo english test that you can use for apply scholarship, job, or student exchange.

While Duolingo are a great language-learning platform, it also have some weaknesses that can affect certain learners. Although it is a helpful tool for basic learning, its drawbacks show that in order to attain full language competency, additional resources are required, such as live conversation practice and in-depth grammatical study. Here are some of the drawbacks in duolingo.

1. Limited Focus on Speaking and Conversation Skills

Duolingo places a strong emphasis on writing, grammar, and vocabulary, but it doesn't offer enough chances to practice having conversations in real world. Although there are speaking activities, they can be overly simplistic and frequently don't mimic the natural flow of a conversation, which can make it difficult for learners to comprehend or take part in real discussions with native speakers.

2. Over-Simplified Grammar Explanations

Duolingo does not always provide comprehensive explanations of grammar. Basic

grammar rules are covered, but there aren't many advanced explanations of complicated subjects or contextual comprehension. This will have an effect on learners who struggle with more intricate sentence constructions or sophisticated grammatical nuances.

3. Lack of Cultural Context

Although Duolingo incorporates real-life scenarios into its lessons, the lessons' primary focus is on language and vocabulary, with little consideration given to cultural idioms, nuances, and context—all of which are crucial for fluent language use. As a result, learners may miss out on understanding how language is used in authentic contexts or fail to grasp culturally significant aspects of communication.

4. Dependence on Repetition

Duolingo reinforces learning with a multitude of repetitive tasks. Although this can be useful for memorizing, it can not interest students who are seeking more complex or varied assignments, which could cause some students to become disinterested or bored after completing the same exercises over and over again.

5. Inconsistent Voice Recognition

Duolingo's use of artificial intelligence (AI) may result in inconsistent speech detection, particularly for non-native speakers or individuals with distinct accents. The software may occasionally give inaccurate pronunciation evaluations, which can be annoying for students who might get inaccurate feedback and impede their confidence and speaking practice.

6. Lack of Context in Some Translations

Duolingo occasionally displays sentences or phrases out of context, which makes it more difficult for students to comprehend how certain words or phrases are used in everyday speech. When students attempt to utilize certain terminology or phrases outside of the app without context, they may misunderstand them.

7. Disruptive Ads (in Free Version)

Despite these drawbacks, Duolingo is still a useful resource for a lot of students, particularly those who are new to the language and want an entertaining and interesting approach to practice. However, it can be advisable to use additional resources in addition to Duolingo for more thorough language study.

CONCLUSION

Duolingo is a useful resource for learning English, especially for those who are just starting out. It is a useful tool for enhancing grammar, developing fundamental reading and listening abilities, and expanding vocabulary because of its gamified approach, captivating UI, and accessibility. For users with hectic schedules, the bite-sized lessons and mobile app's convenience provide regular learning opportunities. Furthermore, tools like leaderboards, interactive activities, and streak tracking support student motivation and engagement.

Duolingo does, however, have some significant drawbacks. Speaking and conversational skills, which are essential for becoming fluent, are not given enough attention. Deeper language understanding may be disrupted by the platform's condensed explanations of grammar and sparse advanced information. Furthermore, the overall learning experience may be harmed by its repetitious activities, uneven speech recognition, and absence of cultural context. Additional resources like live conversation practice, cultural immersion, and more thorough grammar studies should be added to Duolingo for advanced learners or those striving for real-world competency.

In conclusion, even if Duolingo is a great place for English language learners to start, how well they use it determines how effective it is. Its shortcomings can be addressed and a more comprehensive and successful learning experience can result by combining it with other resources and real-world language practice.

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