
Students' Perception of Using Duolingo as a Media for Learning Vocabulary

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to determine students' perceptions after using the Duolingo application as a media for learning vocabulary. The research was carried out at SMP Negeri 1 Manganitu in October 2023. The subjects of the research were students of class IX B consisted of 25 students. This research used the Descriptive Quantitative research method. Researcher used questionnaire to collect data. In the questionnaire, there are seventeen statements containing five aspects. In the first aspect, most students gave positive responses. In the second aspect, students gave positive and neutral responses. The third aspect is that the students gave a positive response. In the fourth aspect, students gave positive and neutral responses. And in the fifth aspect, the students gave a neutral response. The data was analyzed using a percentage formula. The findings show that the majority of students responded positively to the statements contained in the questionnaire. In the first, second, third, fourth and fifth statements, most students gave positive responses to each statement. Furthermore, in the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth statements, most students gave quite positive responses to each statement. Then for the tenth and eleventh statements, the students gave positive responses. Furthermore, for the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth statements, most students gave quite positive responses to each statement. And finally, for the sixteenth and seventeenth statements, the students gave positive responses.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication tool, it is arbitrary, conventional and is a symbol of sound (Suhandra, 2019). Language can be sounds or voices produced from human speech. Language is something that cannot be separated from life because language has a very important role to be able to connect with other living things. Language is unique to humans and has clear differences between linguistic and non-linguistic aspects and has meaning (Burridge & Stebbins, 2019). Without language humans will not be able to connect with each other. That's why language is a meaningful and important communication tool (Noermanzah 2019).

In our diverse world, numerous languages exist, ranging from mother tongues and regional dialects to those spoken across different nations. Among them, English stands out as one of the most prominent. As highlighted by Maduwu (2016), English holds a universal appeal, being adopted as the primary language by many nations worldwide. Its status as a global language underscores its importance for communication and cross-cultural understanding. Particularly in former British colonies, English often serves as a secondary language, learned alongside one's native tongue. It serves as the official language for numerous Commonwealth nations, facilitating widespread comprehension and usage. English enjoys prevalence in more countries than any other language, emphasizing its significance on the global stage.

English holds a significant and influential role in the educational landscape of Indonesia, serving as an international language with indirect but profound importance. As noted by Alfarisy (2021), the majority of scientific and technological advancements across various disciplines are documented in English or other foreign languages. Consequently, proficiency in English or other foreign languages opens pathways for accessing and contributing to the dissemination and development of knowledge within Indonesia. In learning English, vocabulary is very important for students to master because it will influence other English skills such as listening, reading, writing and speaking (Amirzai, 2021). If students do not master vocabulary, it will be difficult for them to understand conversations, sentences and reading in English. Apart from that, they will have difficulty communicating in English (Sa'd & Rajabi, 2018).

Vocabulary is important because it's miles the idea of all languages. it's miles an uncooked foundation that we are able to use to specific our thoughts, percentage information, understand others, and develop non-public relationships. According to Richard & Renandya (2002) in Jaelani & Sutari (2020), Vocabulary is a central aspect of language acquisition and presents quite a few foundations for how properly students listen, speak, read, and write. Faraj (2015) in Andriani & Wahyuningsih (2019) said that Vocabulary is an essential constructing block of language and consequently, it makes sense to students' understanding of it. Vocabulary is therefore one of the maximum vital components in language learning and teaching an overseas language since it offers language-experienced persons entry to all types of spoken and written conversation from pronouncing. Meanwhile, according to Irawan, Wilson & Sutrisno (2020), in their writing research they said that vocabulary is an important subject in language that is involved by linguists in foreign language teaching methodologies. Vocabulary is one aspect of language that is very important in mastering a language. Vocabulary can help someone to understand every sentence in English that is listening, speaking, reading and writing. In this modern era, it is not difficult to find sources for learning vocabulary. Because with so many sophisticated technologies, it makes it easier for us to find English learning media to learn vocabulary.

Various forms of media, such as videos, songs, films, and English learning applications, serve as valuable resources for expanding vocabulary. According to Gerlach & Ely (1980), media encompasses any entity or event that creates conditions conducive to knowledge acquisition, skill development, and attitude formation. Similarly, Kozma, Belle & Williams (1991) categorize media based on its generation, symbol system, and processing capabilities, highlighting its technological attributes and functional properties.

Learning media plays a pivotal role in shaping the learning process for students, fostering interest and enthusiasm. Newby, Stepich, Lehman & Russell (2000) define learning media as tools that convey messages to achieve learning objectives. Additionally, Prasetyo et al. (2011) describe learning media as instruments facilitating learning activities for educators and students. Gagne & Briggs (1979) delineate learning media as physical tools utilized to deliver educational content, encompassing a range of resources like books, recordings, films, and computers. Essentially, media serves as vehicles for instructional material in a learning environment, stimulating student engagement and comprehension. The utilization of learning media aims to enhance communication and optimize learning outcomes. One such application for English language learning and vocabulary expansion is the Duolingo application.

The Duolingo app is an intelligent tool crafted to aid individuals in learning foreign languages, presented in a contemporary manner to foster comfortable and engaging learning experiences. Offering an English course model centered on everyday life, Duolingo boasts a user base exceeding 100 million globally and garners a remarkable 4.5 rating from over fourteen million Android users (Google Play Store, 2023).

Described by Jaskova (2014) as the vanguard of language learning and global communication, Duolingo represents the forefront of online learning. Accessible across various platforms—web, Android, iOS, and Windows Phone—Duolingo is not restricted to English alone but is accessible in 39 languages. According to Kusumadewi & Widyastuti (2018), it was developed by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker, launching in November 2011 as a free language learning application. Duolingo incorporates dictation, written exercises, and speaking practices, facilitating continuous learning anywhere, anytime.

Designed akin to a game, Duolingo's vibrant and engaging interface ensures learning remains enjoyable and captivating. Wilbert et al. (2016) identify Duolingo as a pioneer in future language learning and global communication. Utilizing a blend of visuals, audio, and grammar-focused questions, Duolingo serves as a mobile language tutor. As outlined in the Duolingo guidebook (2015) cited by Muddin (2018), the platform offers a plethora of languages for beginners to choose from, along with an educator forum fostering collaborative learning among users and instructors, facilitating a comprehensive assessment of student progress and dedication.

The aim of this research is to determine students' perceptions of using the Duolingo application as a media for learning vocabulary. And the importance of this research for students is that by using the Duolingo application as a medium for learning vocabulary, it is hoped that students can learn English vocabulary in a more fun and exciting way so that they can develop their interest in learning English vocabulary. It is hoped that teachers will receive learning methods using the Duolingo application media to teach English vocabulary.

METHOD

This research was carried out at SMP Negeri 1 Manganitu in October 2023. The researchers used quantitative descriptive methods. According to the Aliaga and Gunderson (2002) in Utami (2020), "quantitative research explains and understands the phenomenon of social problems by collecting numerical data which is analyzed using mathematics-based methods such as certain statistics." Quantitative research is considered pure research because quantitative research can be explained with exact numbers (Darwin et al., 2021). The subjects in this research were students in class IX B of SMP Negeri 1 Manganitu. For this research, researchers have taken 25 students as subjects. These students already have experience in using the Duolingo application.

In this study, researchers adapted the questionnaire items by Jaelani & Sutari (2020), and modified them with Likert scale responses, namely Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire consists of seventeen statements, of which there are five aspects covering the seventeen statements:

1. The first is regarding the effective tool for learning vocabulary which is found in statements number 1-5.
2. The second is regarding Students' Interest on Duolingo Application in Learning Vocabulary which is found in statements numbers 10 and 11.
3. The third is regarding Students' Motivation on Learning Vocabulary which is in statements numbers 16 and 17.
4. The fourth is regarding The Advantages of Duolingo which is in numbers 12-15.
5. The fifth is regarding The Disadvantages of Duolingo which is in statement numbers 6-9.

After collecting the data using the questionnaire explained before, the data was analyzed quantitatively using Microsoft Excel. The Microsoft Excel is used to calculate the percentage of the students answer in each statement. For scaling categories for perception, the researcher used the category table as follows:

Table 1. Categories for perception

Percentage	Category
80%-100%	Very positive
60%-79%	Positive
40-59%	Moderate
20-39%	Negative
0%-19%	Very Negative

FINDINGS

After administering the questionnaire to the subject of the study, the researches obtained the data of the questionnaire. The data is summarized in the following table:

Table 2. Overall Data Result of Questionnaire

Statements No.	SA (Strongly Agree)	A (Agree)	N (Neutral)	D (Disagree)	SD (Strongly Disagree)	Total
1	14	11	-	-	-	25
2	12	13	-	-	-	25
3	18	6	1	-	-	25
4	8	16	1	-	-	25
5	7	15	3	-	-	25
6	-	-	1	11	13	25
7	-	-	-	14	11	25
8	14	8	3	-	-	25
9	-	-	-	12	13	25
10	8	16	-	-	1	25
11	13	11	1	-	-	25
12	12	10	3	-	-	25
13	8	17	-	-	-	25
14	6	14	5	-	-	25
15	5	10	10	-	-	25
16	15	9	1	-	-	25
17	16	9	-	-	-	25

As seen above, there were several statements that were responded to with Strongly Agree and Also Agree. There were also several statements that were responded to as Neutral, Strongly Disagree and Disagree according to the five Aspects which included the 17 statements. Therefore, this finding detailed is presented in the following diagram bar.

Aspect 1: Duolingo is an Effective Tool for learning vocabulary.

In this part there were five statements in statements number 1 to 5. The result of the data would be described below.

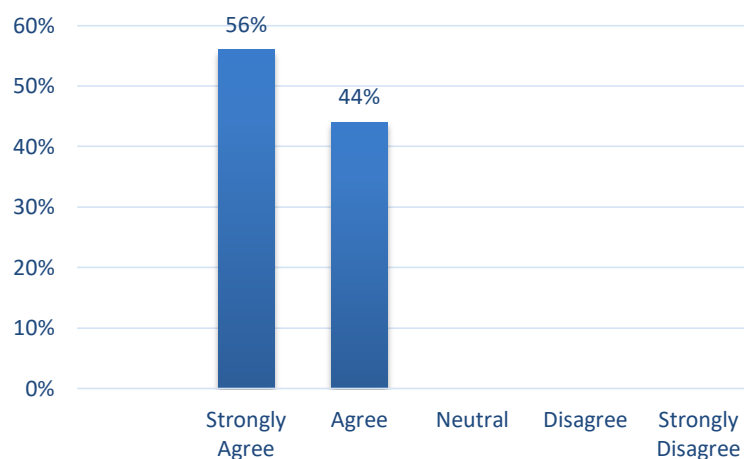


Figure 1. Statement 1: Duolingo is easy to use in learning English

Based on the diagram above, it may be seen that 56% or fourteen of the students strongly agreed, and 44% or eleven of the students agreed with the statement. It showed that the majority of the students strongly agreed with the statement that Duolingo is easy to use in learning English.

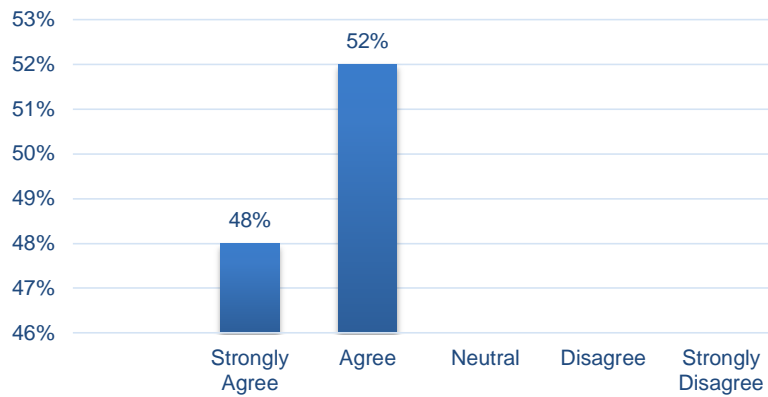


Figure 2. Statement 2: Duolingo is easy to use for learning vocabulary.

The diagram above showed that 48% or twelve of the students strongly agreed, and 52% or thirteen of the students agreed with the statement number two. It showed that the students gave quite good responses to the statement. Which means they agreed that Duolingo is easy to use for learning English Vocabulary.

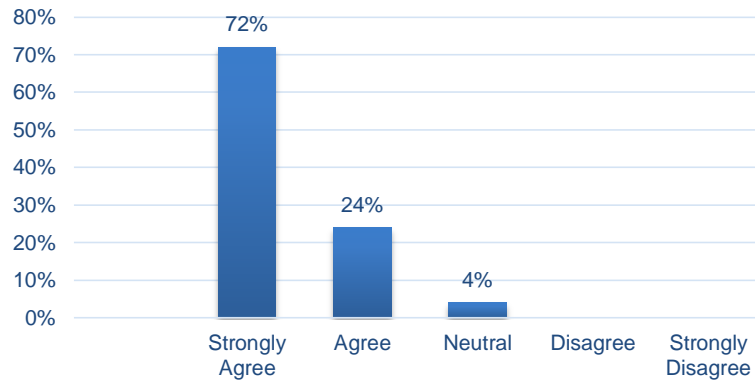


Figure 3. Statement 3: Duolingo can be accessed anywhere and anytime to learn English.

Based on the diagram above, it showed that 72% or eighteen of the students strongly agreed, (24%) or six of the students agreed, and 4% or one student chose neutral with the statement. This showed that most of the students strongly agreed with the statement number three. So, it can be concluded that Duolingo can be accessed anywhere and anytime to learn English.

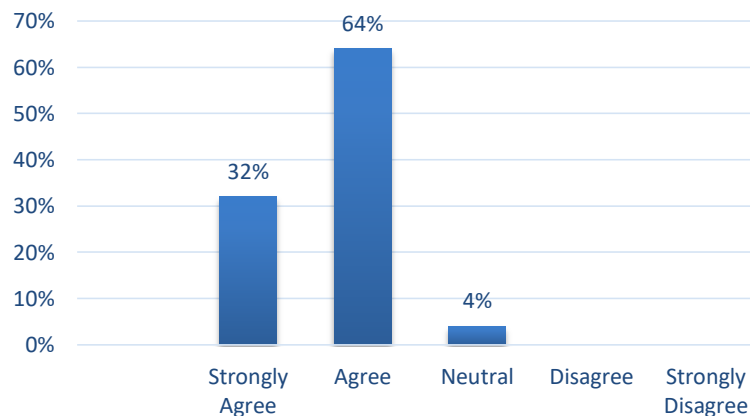


Figure 4. Statement 4: The English vocabulary question in Duolingo are interesting.

In the diagram above, it could be seen that 32% or eight of the students strongly agreed, 64% or sixteen of the students agreed, and 4% or one student choose neutral with the statement. So, it can be concluded that most of the students gave good responses to statement number four and they agreed that English vocabulary questions on Duolingo were interesting.

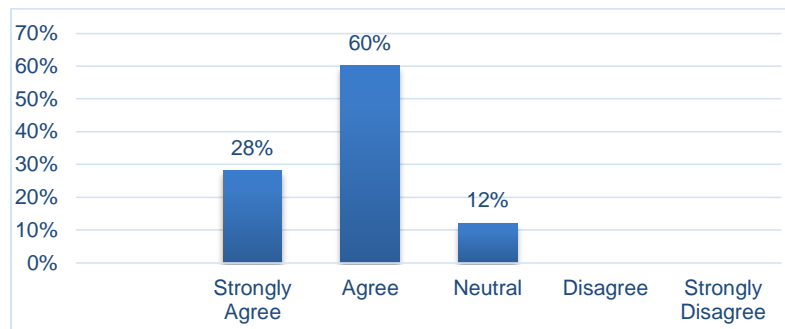


Figure 5. Statement 5: Duolingo's English vocabulary questions are easy to understand.

From the results obtained from the diagram above it showed that 28% or seven of the students strongly agreed, 60% or fifteen of the students agreed, and 12% or three of the students chose neutral with the statement. So, it can be concluded that most of the students chose agreed with the statement number five, which means the English vocabulary questions on Duolingo were Interesting.

Aspect 2: Students' Interest on Duolingo Application in Learning Vocabulary

In this part there were two statements in Statements number 10 and 11. The result of the data would be described below.

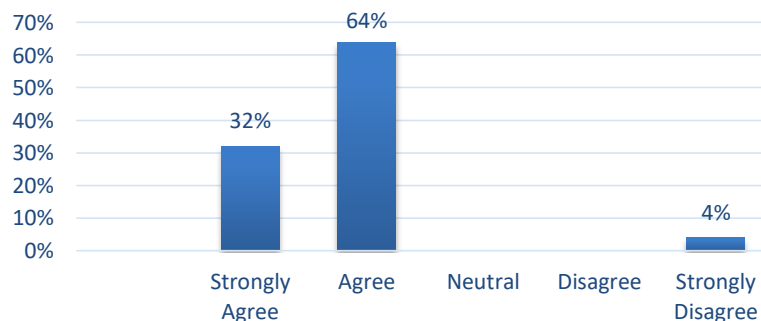


Figure 6. Statement 10: I am interested in learning to use Duolingo because it makes it easier for me to understand the meaning of English vocabulary well.

As could be seen in the diagram above, it showed that 32% or eight of the students strongly agreed, 64% or sixteen of the students agreed, and 4% or one student strongly disagreed. It showed that most of the students responded well to the statement number ten. Which means that most of the students were interested in learning used Duolingo because it makes it easier for them to understand the meaning of English Vocabulary well.

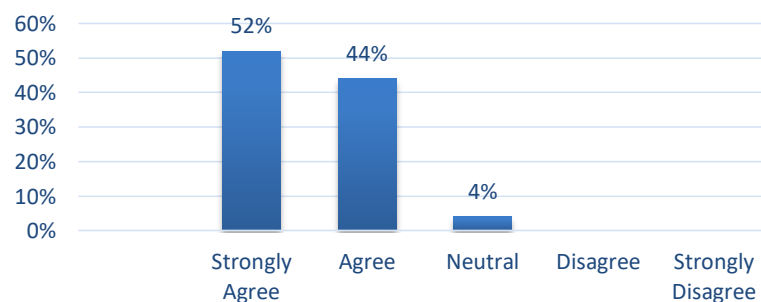


Figure 7. Statement 11: Learning to use Duolingo gives me the opportunity to be more active in learning.

Based on the diagram above, it could be seen that 52% or thirteen of the students strongly agreed, 44% or eleven of the students agreed, and one 4% or one student neutral with the statement. It could be seen from the results of the students' responses the students gave quite good responses to statement number two. So, it can be concluded that learning using Duolingo provided an opportunity for students to be more active in learning.

Aspect 3: Students' Motivation on Learning Vocabulary

In this part there were two statements in statements 16 and 17. The result of the data would be described below.

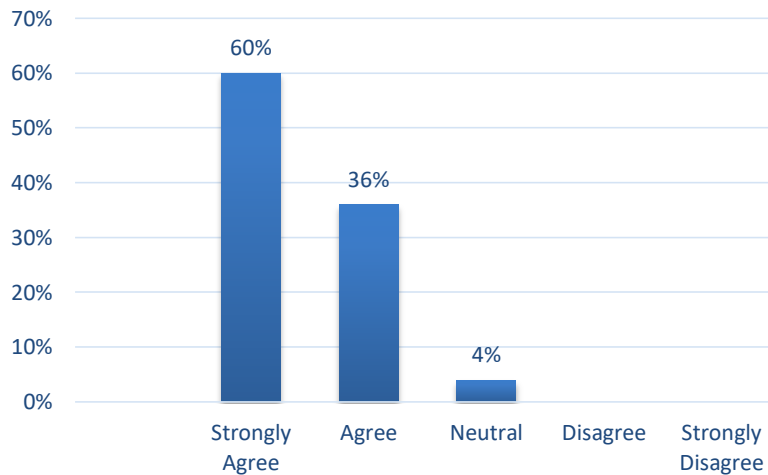


Figure 8. Statement 16: I feel more motivated to learn using Duolingo.

The results from the diagram above showed that 60% or fifteen of the students strongly agreed, (36%) or nine of the students agreed, and 4% or one student neutral with the statement. Most of the students gave good responses to the statements. So, it can be concluded that students feel more motivated to learn using Duolingo.

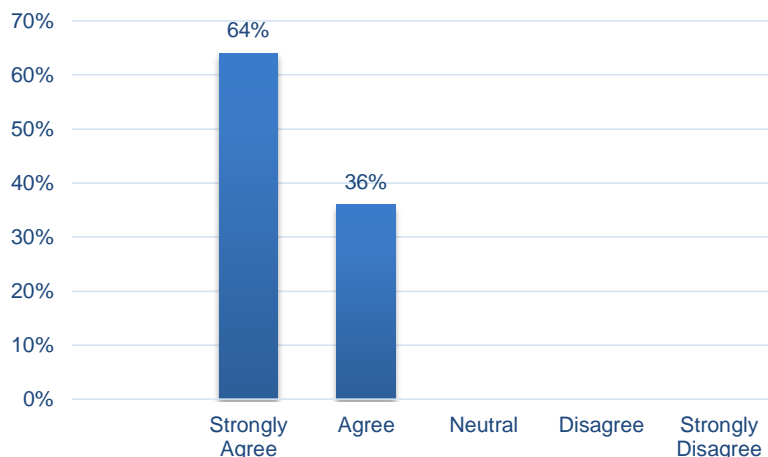


Figure 9. Statement 17: Duolingo makes me more enthusiastic about memorizing English vocabulary.

The results from the diagram above showed that 64% or sixteen of the students strongly agreed, and 36% or nine of the students agreed with the statement. Most of the students gave good and positive responses to the statement. So, it can be concluded that Duolingo makes students feel more enthusiastic about memorizing English vocabulary.

Aspect 4: The Advantages of Duolingo.

In this part there were four statements in statements number 12-15. The result of the data would be described below.

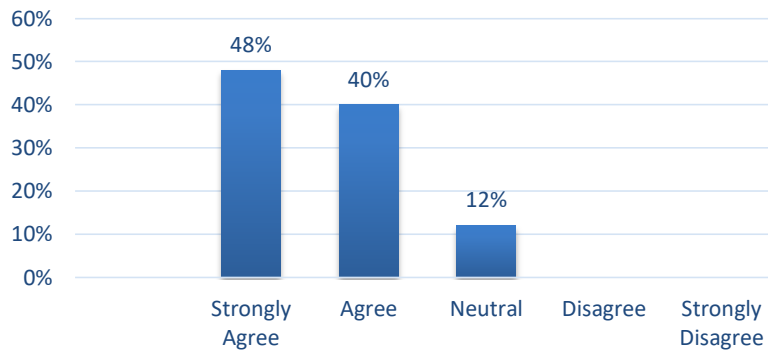


Figure 10. Statement 12: With Duolingo I can easily learn English vocabulary at home.

It may be seen from the results shown in the diagram above, 48% or twelve of the students strongly agreed, 40% or ten of the students agreed, and 12% or three of the students were neutral with the statement. The students responded quite well to statement number twelve. So, it may be concluded that with Duolingo, students can learn English vocabulary at home easily.

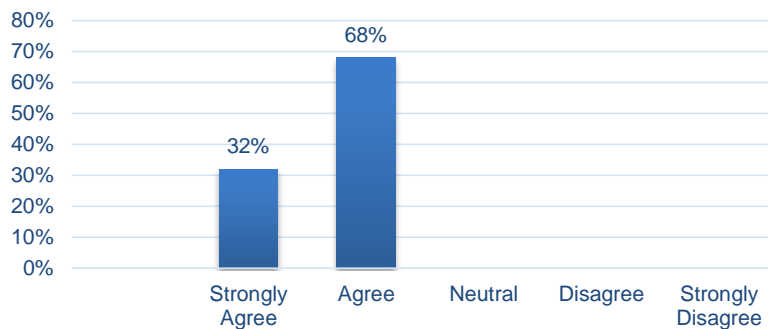


Figure 11. Statement 13: Learning using Duolingo makes me memorize English vocabulary.

Based on the results shown in the diagram above, 32% or eight of the students strongly agreed, and 68% or seventeen of the students agreed. It could be seen that the students gave good and positive responses to statement number thirteen. So, it can be concluded that learning English vocabulary with Duolingo makes students able to memorize vocabulary.

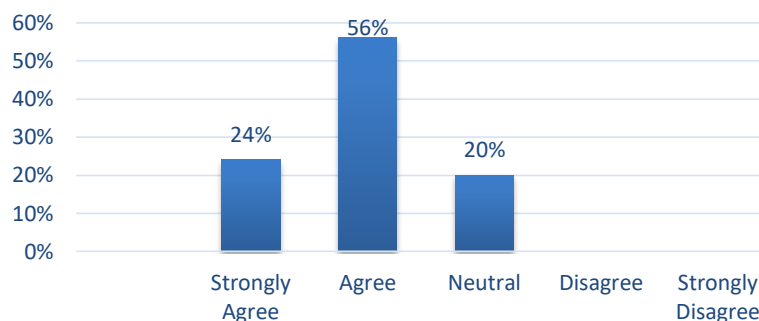


Figure 12. Statement 14: Learning to use Duolingo makes me understand the learning material more deeply.

From the diagram above, it could be seen that 24% or six of the students strongly agreed, 56% or fourteen of the students agreed, and 20% or five of the students neutral with the statement. More students chose agreed, strongly agreed than neutral, so it can be concluded that learning using Duolingo makes students understand the material more deeply.

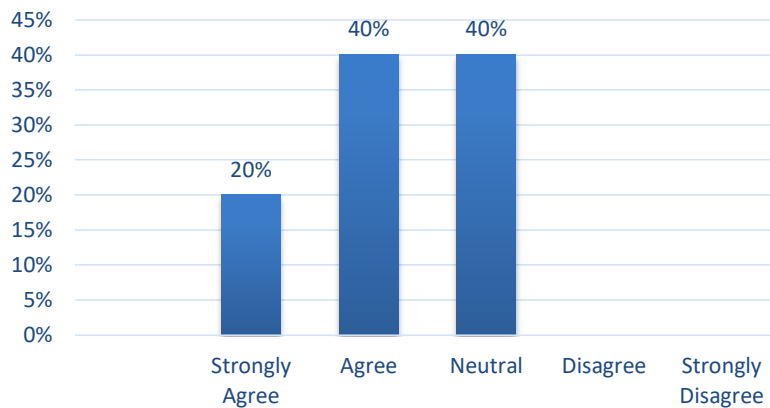


Figure 13. Statement 15: Learning to use Duolingo allows me to apply my English skills in everyday life.

Based on the results shown in the diagram above, 20% five of the students strongly agreed, 40% or ten of the students agreed, and 40% or ten of the students also neutral with the statement. The results of the responses given by the students were quite good. So, it can be concluded that there are students who apply their English skills in everyday life and there are also those who did not often apply their English in everyday life.

Aspect 5: The Disadvantages of Duolingo.

In this part there were four statements in statements number 6 to 9. The result of the data would be described below.

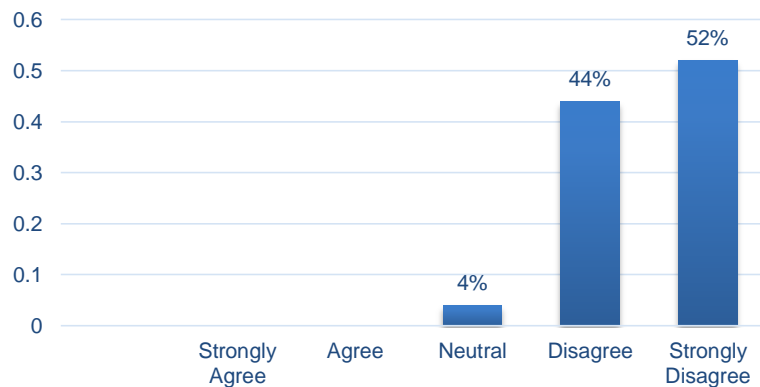


Figure 14. Statement 6: Duolingo in learning English is Boring.

The diagram above showed that 4% or one student neutral, 44% or eleven of the students disagreed, and 52% or thirteen of the students strongly disagreed with the statement. It can be seen that many students do not agree that Duolingo in learning English is boring. So, it can be concluded that Duolingo in English learning is fun.

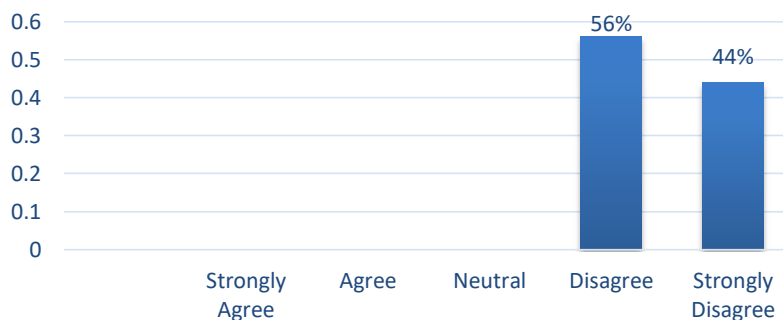


Figure 15. Statement 7: Duolingo is less useful for learning in the classroom.

The diagram above showed that 56% or fourteen of the students disagreed, 44% or eleven of the students strongly disagreed with the statement. So, from these results it can be seen that many students do not agree that Duolingo is not less useful for learning in the classroom. So, it can be concluded that Duolingo in class, learning is not boring and becomes more fun.

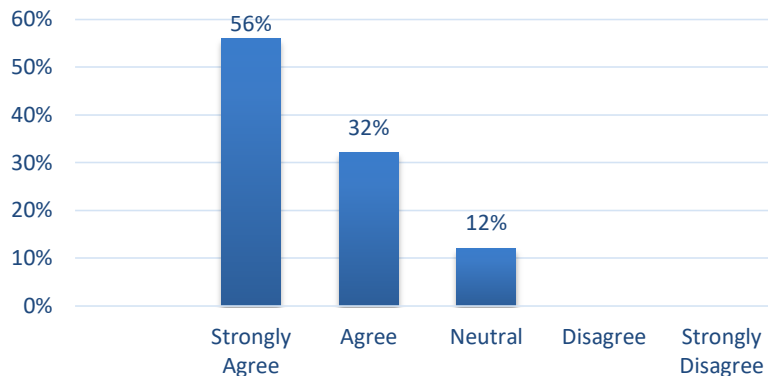


Figure 16. Statement 8: Duolingo is hard to use if you don't have an Internet connection.

Based on the diagram above, it could be seen that 56% or fourteen of the students strongly agreed, (32%) or eight of the students agreed, and 12% or three of the students neutral with the statement. More students responded strongly agree with the statement number eight because if there is no internet connection, it is difficult to access Duolingo. So, it can be concluded that students have difficulty accessing Duolingo if there is no internet connection.



Figure 17. Statement 9: Duolingo makes it difficult for me to learn English vocabulary.

Based on the diagram above, 48% or twelve of the students disagree, 52% or thirteen of the students strongly disagree with the statement. More students responded Strongly disagree with statement number nine that Duolingo makes it difficult to learn English vocabulary. So, it can be concluded that Duolingo does not make it difficult to learn vocabulary. On the other hand, Duolingo actually makes learning vocabulary easier because Duolingo provides questions that can be understood and Duolingo will notify you if you answer the questions incorrectly.

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results obtained from the five aspects contained in the questionnaire. So it can be seen that the first aspect obtained positive and moderate results. Positive results were found in statements number 3, 4, and 5. Meanwhile, in statements number 1 and 2, moderate results were obtained. For the second aspect, there are two statements in numbers 10 and 11, which in this aspect obtain positive and moderate results, which for positive results are found in statement number 10, while for statement number 11, moderate results are obtained. In the third aspect, there are two statements, namely statement numbers 16 and 17 which obtained positive results. Of course, this shows that the students' response was positive towards these two statements.

For the fourth aspect, obtaining moderate and positive results. Which in statements number 12, 14, and 15 obtained moderate results. Meanwhile, statement number 13 obtained positive results. Then for the fifth aspect, in this aspect, moderate results were obtained, where in steps number 6, 7, 8, and 9 all obtained moderate results. So, it can be seen that the aspect that has a lot of positive results is in the first aspect, while the aspect that has a lot of moderate results is in the fifth aspect. For

the other three aspects, namely the second, third and fourth aspects, the results were positive and moderate. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of using the Duolingo application as a media for learning vocabulary obtained moderate results.

CONCLUSION

From the results found and explained by researcher, it can be concluded that the majority of students have positive perceptions of using the Duolingo application as a vocabulary learning media. In this case, students' perceptions of using the Duolingo application as a media for learning vocabulary provide the conclusion that learning English vocabulary using the Duolingo application is able to motivate students to be more active in learning English, especially in studying vocabulary.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests

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