

# THE EFFECT OF DUOLINGO ON THE STUDENTS' TRANSLATION MASTERY AT THE VIII GRADE OF MTS PANCA DHARMAPADANGSIDIMPUAN

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine whether students' translation skills can have a good effect using the Duolingo application for class VIII students using quantitative and qualitative methods. This research was conducted on 15 students of class VIII MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan. The results of this study indicate that the use of the Duolingo application is effective. This is evidenced by the data collected in the field. At that time the results of the pre-test were still bad. Then at the post-test stage 100% achieved the minimum completeness criteria. Therefore, related to the results of observations showed that students experienced an increase. Based on the students who passed the KKM above, it means that the actions taken were successful. The suggestion of this research to other researchers is to use the Duolingo application to help students' translation skills.

**Keywords:** Duolingo, Translation

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah kemampuan terjemahan siswa dapat berpengaruh baik dengan menggunakan aplikasi Duolingo untuk siswa kelas VIII dengan menggunakan metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada 15 siswa kelas VIII MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan aplikasi Duolingo efektif. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan data yang dikumpulkan di lapangan. Saat itu hasil pre-test masih buruk. Kemudian pada tahap post-test 100% mencapai kriteria ketuntasan minimal. Oleh karena itu, terkait dengan hasil observasi menunjukkan bahwa siswa mengalami peningkatan. Berdasarkan siswa yang lulus KKM di atas, berarti tindakan yang dilakukan berhasil. Saran penelitian ini kepada peneliti lain adalah menggunakan aplikasi Duolingo untuk membantu kemampuan penerjemahan siswa.

**Kata kunci:** Duolingo, Penguasaan Terjemahan

## INTRODUCTION

Language plays an essential role in communication. Every individual in the world always uses language to communicate, provide information and knowledge, express their feelings and thoughts, etc. Human is surrounded by language during every moment of their lifetime. Khan (2011) states that language is not only used in social relations but also in controlling cognitive processes. Hence, people in the world nowadays tend to master more than one language. There is no doubt that language will give a very precious position in our communication in expressing our ideas, thoughts and feelings (Mayasari, 2019). In other words, language is the method of interaction that contains a set of sentences to convey the idea.

Translation also has a special method. According to Newmark, the method for translating is operational. Thus, challenging the view that language acquisition is based on innate, language-specific cognitive abilities. Otherwise stated, translation makes it an individual possible to connect by transferring the languages. Richards and Schmidt (2010) state that language is a human speech mechanism that consists of an organized grouping of sounds (or written interpretations). Mastering a foreign language, especially English, has become a must in this globalization era. Teaching English as a foreign language in this era should be done through different ways and strategies. Teachers and students should be more creative and innovative in getting and transferring the material (Mayasari et al., 2018).

Based on the pre-research of 8th graders at MTs Panca Dharma, several reasons make learning English difficult. The first problem is that students have difficulty translating a word. Once they have acquired a few words, they find it difficult to apply them because they only remember the meaning, not how to use it in a sentence. Also, many words have the same meaning which makes it more difficult for them to translate a sentence. The second problem is that students are less focused in class. Most of the learning of English consists of explanations from the teacher and the lack of student movement activities. In this case, they just sit in their chairs listening to their teacher without any other activity. Due to the relatively passive and monotonous learning, students lose focus, and the English learning taught by the teacher is difficult to understand.

One of the technological devices that can be used for general translation is Duolingo. Duolingo offers to learn English through a mobile application. Duolingo is one of those mobile technologies used to learn a language. According to Ye (2014), Duolingo is a website for free language learning that was made public in 2012. The ultimate goal of this application is to provide anyone with access to the experience of a private tutor through technology.

While this study is talking about English, this application provides the user with all the English skills, which are listening, reading, speaking, and writing along with language elements, which are grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Mayasari et al. (2020) argue that the commonest English learner's problem in translating a language is the lack of vocabulary and grammatical structure. In Indonesia, translation is prominent as people learn English as a second language or as a foreign language. As people nowadays live in a technological era, not only from a dictionary but also from technological development learners can practice the translation exercises. Thus, the development of technology is also needed in learning a new language nowadays. Research by Kaceti & Klímová (2019) intended to explore original, participant English studies to decide if mobile apps were useful and/or efficient in learning English as a foreign language. The findings of the study showed that mobile learning was becoming an important characteristic of education as it was an excellent chance for learning foreign languages.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

The researcher used mixed methods which are dominated by qualitative. According to Sugiyono (2011 : 18), said that, "Mixed methods is research method by combining two research methods simultaneously, qualitative and quantitative in a research activity, so that it will obtain more comprehensive, valid, reliable, and objective data".

A quantitative approach is a kind of approach that focused on data or scores in explaining the result of the research. This approach gave an explanation or description by showing data or scores in the research. Thus, it can be said that readers could understand the quantitative approach by scoring in the research.

Population is the number of research subjects. The population could be interpreted as the amount obtained in obtaining sources of information or data needed in a study. The population in this study are students of class VIII MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan.

The sample is the smallest group of individuals who are directly related to the research. From the quote the author uses, the sample of this study is one class consisting of the experimental group and the control group, namely class 8.1. The experimental group is using the Duolingo application and the control group is taught using conventional techniques or without using the Duolingo application. The class consists of 15 students. Researchers took 15 as samples, so 15 students participated as samples in this study.

The researcher collects data through pretest and posttest. Data were analyzed with quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was taken from the mean score of students in the pretest. Qualitative data were taken from observation sheets, interviews, and documentation. This research was conducted in one class with 15 students. This research is conducted in two steps.

The first stage is a pretest, which is done by giving a translation test before we introduce Duolingo. Then, after students answered the pretest questions, they entered the second stage, namely the post-test. In this second stage, the researcher introduced the Duolingo learning application which was downloaded on each student's cellphone. After knowing and explaining how to use the application, they were asked to work on the questions in the Duolingo application, and each time they worked on the questions they were asked to take screenshots of the questions they were working on. Once done they were asked to send back the author a screenshot of the question they were working on. All data descriptions are displayed as follows:

## **The Qualitative Data**

### **1. Observation**

The writer observed the students, what situations, conditions and problems were found when the writer did the pre-research. Researchers looked at student activities during the teaching and learning process and tested some students during observations, how students were able to translate English to find out what they would do at the next meeting. Based on the observations, the researcher noted that the students were very enthusiastic, active, and enthusiastic in translating English using the Duolingo application.

### **2. Interview**

This interview was conducted on July 28, 2022 after completing the second stage, namely the post-test. The researcher asked some questions to the students. Starting with the general condition of students during the implementation of the action. According to students' views, using the Duolingo application is good to be applied in learning to translate English. They look enthusiastic and enthusiastic during the teaching and learning process. However, some students did not understand and some of them still have a limited amount of vocabulary. They found it easier to memorize vocabulary because of this technique. In general, student participation is good because activities in the classroom involve students.

Another question was about the difficulties faced by students and their solutions in using the Duolingo application during the implementation of the action. It used to be

observed that most students found it difficult to translate English words, besides that they find it difficult to do English assignments because of the lack of vocabulary they know. Therefore, teachers must provide more motivation to students to study hard. The teacher should give them the perspective that speaking English can give them a lot of advantages, and to be able to understand English requires as much practice as possible.

The last category regarding the opinion of the Duolingo application, according to them the Duolingo application is a good technique in increasing English vocabulary, and can make it easier for them to memorize English vocabulary. So, it can be an alternative technique in teaching. It can be seen in the final score that there is a significant difference before the technique is applied in students' English learning.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded from the post interview that the teacher and students gave a positive response to the use of the Duolingo application in learning English. In addition, the use of this application has a good impact on students' ability to translate and gives a spirit effect in learning English.

### 3. Documentation

Documentation is one source as documentation or observations for researchers to capture every moment that is considered important. Then because this research uses an application, the author also makes screenshots of the students' test results in the post-test as evidence that the author has conducted research.

#### 4.1.2. The Quantitative Data

Quantitative data is taken from the results of tests given to students. The tests given are pretest and posttest. Each test there are 15 questions that will be done, from the number of tests will be seen how many correct answers. Here will be shown the results of the first stage, namely the pretest and the second hold, namely the post-test. The results of the test scores are shown in the table:

##### 1. Pre-test

At the beginning of the meeting, the researcher asked some of the students about English lessons. After that, the researcher immediately gave the pretest questions for them to answer. Furthermore, the researchers looked at the results of the tests they did and the results of the students' pretest scores were still low, due to a lack of knowledge about students' words and grammar and this affected student achievement.

**Table 4.1. Students' pretest scores**

No	Students' Name	Pre-test
1	Yulia Zahra	2
2	Rafli Al-Farizi	6
3	Sri Admini	13
4	Nabila Aisyah	12
5	Hadi Pratama Pane	4
6	Ananda Putra Wijaya	5
7	Xena Adelia Putri Pane	8
8	Riski Fauzi	6
9	Rapa Simbolon	7
10	Cantika Hayati	5
11	Rasyin Nasution	1
12	Windy Zahraini	2
13	Arif Rahman	6
14	Leo	8
15	Ikhwan Saleh	10

## 2. Post-test

At the time of doing the post-test student scores have increased. This can be calculated from the value of correct answers to tests carried out by students. Students who give a reaction pay more attention to the post test and student reactions have an influence on student achievement in translating words. From table 4.2 that in the post-test all students are seen or 100% can pass completeness. This means that all students can improve their translating skills by using the Duolingo app.

**Table 4.2. Students' post-test scores**

No	Students'Name	Post-test
1	Yulia Zahra	10
2	Rafli Al-Farizi	10
3	Sri Admini	13
4	Nabila Aisyah	13
5	Hadi Pratama Pane	13
6	Ananda Putra Wijaya	15
7	Xena Adelia Putri Pane	12
8	Riski Fauzi	10
9	Rapa Simbolon	13
10	Cantika Hayati	11
11	Rasyin Nasution	10
12	Windy Zahraini	15
13	Arif Rahman	13
14	Leo	14
15	Ikhwan Saleh	15

From the data above, the researcher found that there was an increase in students' ability to translate words into English. This can be seen from the increasing pretest and posttest scores.

### 1.1.3. Research result

The evidence obtained during the research is that the effect that occurs is very good on students. It can be seen from the results of the pre-test and post-test conducted by the researcher. These results can be evidence or answers to the results of the problem formulation in this study. Like the formulation of the first problem of mastery of translation before using Duolingo which we can see from the results of the pre-test, the lack of knowledge of students when translating a word in the quiz provided by Duolingo can be seen from the results that have been obtained by the researcher. For the second problem formulation, mastery of translation after using Duolingo, which is seen from the test results, greatly affects the translation of the words they know. The third problem formulation is a significant effect on students' mastery of translation using Duolingo, with the results that can be seen from the pre-test and post-test there is a very significant effect after using Duolingo. So the conclusion is that the Duolingo application is very influential on the translation mastery of class VIII students, when doing the pre-test the correct score for answering the quiz is only below 10, but after the researchers introduced Duolingo and tried to use it, they did a post-test through Duolingo. Until finally the researchers saw a good influence on students' mastery of translation and the influence that students got was very significant.

#### **1.1.4. Document Study**

##### **1.1.4.1. Students in Using the Duolingo Application**

The writer has collected data at MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan, this research was carried out by direct research, first the author tested all students with a test (pretest) and the second stage carried out a test (post-test) by interviewing students directly. Students by responding to instructions in a given test.

The author observed their teaching and learning process and sees students' answers, from the exercises that have been carried out. The writer found that the students had difficulty in translating as follows:

- a. Students have difficulty translating English. The students explained that they had a very difficult time learning English.
- b. Students have difficulty in speaking English because of limited vocabulary. Most of the students also use the same vocabulary in their texts.

#### **4.2. Student Response Using the Duolingo application**

To get student responses through the use of the Duolingo application, interviews were conducted on student activities. According to the students, they admitted that using Duolingo to learn English that the writer used was good enough to improve their vocabulary in English. Students become more happy and excited to learn English, although sometimes they feel confused and do not understand when using it, and some of them feel confused about answering the test. However, after answering several questions, they claimed to be happy using the Duolingo application, and they said that this application was not boring.

#### **4.3. Benefits of Duolingo Application for Students**

The writer used data from interviews to obtain information about the benefits, opinions, and feelings of students in using Duolingo. Here are some students' responses after being given an interview :

- a. Makes me happy to learn English
- b. I find it easier to memorize vocabulary
- c. A new way to learn English
- d. I think learning while playing is better
- e. I find it very fun and we can easily understand it
- f. Pleasant
- g. To simplify the learning process
- h. I am happy with this application, enjoy and make learning not bored

#### **4.3. Discussion**

There were some problems that the researcher found when the research was performed. The first was the uneasy feeling of the students when they tried to use Duolingo. They were not used to use smartphone when the teaching activities hour. In the other hand, there were also students who did not own smartphone.

The second was the internet connection and classroom timing consideration. The first time researcher entered the classroom and started applying Duolingo treatment, the low speed internet connection was quite ruined the time management. Some students with the higher internet speed connection had had done the assignment faster than the others.

The last problem was that the Duolingo for school (virtual classroom) only available in the desktop version. Therefore it could only be accessed using personal computer or smartphone's web browser. Although the application had already been downloaded, it would only showed the practice part. The teacher could not manage the students' activities if it was not through the Duolingo classroom in the desktop version.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### 5.1. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find out empirical evidence of the effect of using the Duolingo application on students' English translation of class VIII students of MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan. It also serves as additional evidence of these theories and related previous studies.

Based on the results collected after conducting this research, statistical calculations showed the scores of all students were above average. In addition, the effect of this application is greatly increased more significantly after using Duolingo compared to those who do not use it. In addition, the calculation of the effect size revealed that using Duolingo had a moderate effect on students' translation mastery.

Finally, the researcher concluded that using Duolingo was effective for students, especially for the eighth grade students of MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan.

### 5.2. Suggestions

After doing this research, the researcher thinks that teachers should make their teaching more creative to improve English and to avoid boredom in the classroom. As long as it is digital Today, teachers have the privilege of having many appropriate media that can be used to enhance their teaching. Using Duolingo is suggested because it is proven that it has a positive effect on the translation mastery of eighth grade students of MTs Panca Dharma Padang Sidempuan. This is to make students more interested in learning English translation.

The students now have a new media in learning English translation that is Duolingo, a game-based language learning application that make their learning more fun. There are also other language feature that can be learned alongside vocabulary, such as pronunciation, grammar, simple translation and simple writing. Since it can be access anywhere and anytime, the students also have a duty in learning vocabulary to not only depending on the material given in the classroom; however, they have to practice more at home.

This research is wished to give new information for those who read this and also as a reference for other researchers. As there may be lack somewhere in this research, the researcher hope that further there will be another researcher who conduct a study about the same topic or not in order to enrich the knowledge of teaching and learning.

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