

Analysis of Advantages and Limitations of “Duolingo” Application

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Abstract: Learning foreign languages is becoming increasingly popular, and with hundreds of apps offering learning assistance, choosing the right tool can be a daunting task. One of the most famous and widely used language learning apps is Duolingo. This article discusses the advantages and limitations of Duolingo in learning a foreign language.

Keywords: Duolingo, online platform, gamification, visuality, interactivity.

Introduction. The incorporation of technology into education significantly impacts learning and student engagement (Picton, 2019). In our daily lives, technology plays a crucial role, especially in learning languages and acquiring knowledge. Much of our reading and writing now takes place through digital platforms like websites, blogs, and social media. These technological tools not only enhance the learning experience but also empower individuals to learn at their own pace. Technology helps to alleviate the tedium and monotony often associated with traditional learning methods by presenting information in visually appealing and diverse formats. One effective way to harness technology is through online platforms and mobile applications. There is a plethora of language learning apps available for download on smartphones, catering to the increasing demand for convenient and accessible tools for mastering foreign languages. Among these, Duolingo stands out as a widely used platform that offers a variety of exercises and interactive games designed to develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in the chosen language.

Methodology. To conduct this review, various scientific articles, research papers and academic sources were considered. The search focused on papers examining the effectiveness of Duolingo in language learning, including its benefits and limitations. The findings were synthesized to provide a comprehensive overview of Duolingo's effectiveness.

Results and Discussion. Duolingo is a free online language learning platform that enables users to learn various languages through its website and apps (Garsia, 2013). Founded in November 2011 by Louis von Ahn, Ph.D., and Severin Hacker, Ph.D., Duolingo has gained popularity for its practical and engaging approach, which enhances students' interest in language learning. The app is rooted in game-based learning, where users engage in activities like transcription, pronunciation, and translation, which constitute 80 percent of its tasks, as noted by Purwanto and Syafryadin (2023). Previous studies, including White (2017), have highlighted Duolingo's effectiveness in providing affordable language learning opportunities accessible to anyone. The platform's gamified approach creates a supportive environment that fosters enjoyable learning experiences for students studying foreign languages (Tahir & Wang, 2017). Duolingo incorporates interactive features such as images and sounds, alongside a user-friendly interface that further enhances its appeal and usability.

In our examination of this platform, we have identified the following benefits of using Duolingo:

- **Accessibility:** Duolingo provides free access to foundational language training, making it available to a wide audience without requiring payment for subscriptions or learning materials.
- **Multiplatform Availability:** The Duolingo app is accessible across various platforms, including web browsers, Android and iOS smartphones, and tablets. This allows users to learn languages at their convenience, anytime and anywhere.

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- **Gamified Approach:** Duolingo incorporates gamification elements such as points, levels, and leaderboards to enhance the language learning experience, making it more engaging and enjoyable.
- **Visual Design:** The platform and app feature an appealing and user-friendly design with vibrant illustrations, enhancing the visual appeal and enjoyment of the learning process.
- **Interactive Exercises:** Duolingo offers diverse interactive exercises covering reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. These include translation tasks, sentence construction, audio exercises, and more, which help maintain learner engagement and motivation.
- However, Duolingo does have some limitations:
- **Level Coverage:** The app primarily focuses on beginner and intermediate levels of language proficiency. It may not adequately support advanced learners seeking further skill development and fluency.
- **Real-life Application:** Some exercises in Duolingo can feel disconnected from real-world language use, lacking context and practical application. This could make it challenging for users to apply their language skills in authentic situations.
- **Limited Feedback:** While Duolingo offers automatic answer checking, the feedback provided may be limited in detail and explanations. This might not fully assist learners in understanding and correcting their mistakes.

Overall, Duolingo is a valuable tool for beginners and intermediate learners, offering accessible language learning resources and engaging exercises. To optimize its effectiveness, combining Duolingo with other language learning methods is recommended. Integrating Duolingo with activities such as conversing with native speakers, reading authentic texts, and listening to audio materials can help learners advance their language skills and bridge the gap between Duolingo exercises and real-world language use.

Conclusion. Duolingo is a widely utilized language learning app known for its free access, playful approach, and diverse exercises suitable for beginners and intermediate learners. However, it's important to recognize its limitations, such as a focus on basic speaking skills, lack of real-life context, and limited feedback. To achieve higher levels of language proficiency, supplementing Duolingo with additional learning strategies and practices across various contexts is recommended. Ultimately, Duolingo serves as an effective starting point for language learning and skill development.

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