THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN DUOLINGO APPLICATION FOR VOCABULARY MASTERY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SKRIPSI

Presented to

IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

By:

Intan Nur Aini

NIM 21120060

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS EDUCATION

IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO

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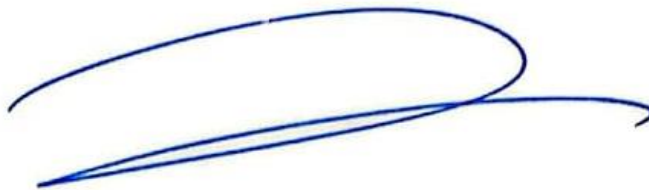
2025

APROVAL SHEET

The skripsi entitled **"THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN DUOLINGO APPLICATION FOR VOCABULARY MASTERY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL"** is compiled by:

Name : Intan Nur Aini

NIM : 211120060

Department : English Education

Has been approved by the advisors.

Bojonegoro 15 Juli 2025

Advisor I

Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah ,M.Pd
NIDN 0723058302

Advisor II

Ayu Fitrianingsih, M.Pd.
NIDN 0720049101

ii

LEGITIMATION

The skripsi entitled **"THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN DUOLINGO APPLICATION FOR VOCABULARY MASTERY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL"** is compiled by:

Name   :   Intan Nur Aini

NIM   :   211120060

Department   :   English Education

This is to certify that this skripsi has been approved by the Board of Examiners as the requirement for the degree of Sarjana in English Education Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro on 30 July 2025

Bojonegoro, 30 July 2025

Chairman,

Secretary,

Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd.

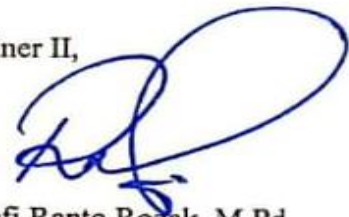Ayu Fitrianingsih, M.Pd.

NIDN 0706058801

NIDN 0720049101

Examiner 1,

Examiner II,

Fitri Nurdianingsih, M.Pd.

Dr. Refi Ranto Rozak, M.Pd.

NIDN: 0729058701

NIDN: 0702058403

Rector,

Dr. Dra. Junarti, M.Pd.

NIDN 0014016501

MOTTO

Ilmu tanpa amal adalah sia-sia, dan amal tanpa ilmu adalah buta."
— **(Terinspirasi dari kata-kata Al-Ghazali)**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, praise and gratitude be to God Almighty for His blessings and grace, which have enabled me to complete this skripsi entitled "**THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN DUOLINGO APPLICATION FOR VOCABULARY MASTERY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**" as a requirement for obtaining a Bachelor's degree at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

Throughout the process of writing this skripsi, I am fully aware that it would not have been possible without the help, guidance, and support of many individuals. Therefore, with all humility, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to:

1. Dr. Junarti, M.Pd. As the Rector of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

2. Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd. as the Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Arts Education.

3. Ayu Fitrianingsih, M.Pd, as the Head of the English Education Study Program.

4. Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah, M.Pd., and Ayu Fitrianingsih, M.Pd., for their patience, valuable guidance, and continuous support throughout the writing of this thesis.

5. All lecturers and academic staff of the Faculty of Languages and Arts Education, who have shared their knowledge and experiences during my time at the university.

6. My fellow students and friends in the English Education Department for their motivation, assistance, and solidarity during this journey.

7. And all other individuals whom I cannot mention one by one, but who have contributed in various ways throughout this process.

I realize that this skripsi is still far from perfect. Therefore, I sincerely welcome constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement in the future.

Lastly, I hope this skripsi can be beneficial to readers and contribute, even in a small way, to the development of knowledge.

Bojonegoro, 15 July 2025

The Researcher

Intan Nur Aini

NIM 21120060

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

The undersigned below:

Name : Intan Nur Aini

NIM : 21120060

Department : English Education

Faculty : Languages and Arts Education

In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN DUOLINGO APPLICATION FOR VOCABULARY MASTERY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, **I personally** accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, 15 July 2025

The Researcher

Intan Nur Aini

NIM 21120060

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of gamification in the Duolingo application for enhancing vocabulary mastery among fifth-grade students at SD Plus Al-Qomariyah. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. The findings reveal that Duolingo's gamification features—such as points, levels, rewards, audio-visual aids, and immediate feedback—significantly improve student motivation and engagement. Students showed positive responses to the app, reporting that they enjoyed learning English through games and could better remember vocabulary when it was presented visually and audibly. Despite initial challenges with the English-only interface, students gradually adapted and became more confident in using the app. Teachers also noted increased student participation and enthusiasm during English lessons. However, the study also highlights the importance of teacher guidance and digital accessibility, as not all students had the same level of access to devices or internet. Overall, Duolingo is considered an effective supplementary tool for vocabulary learning in primary schools, especially when integrated with proper scaffolding and classroom support.

ABSTRAK

Aini, Intan Nur. 2025. The Role of Gamification in Duolingo Application for Vocabulary Mastery in Elementary School. Skripsi, English Education Department, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Pembimbing (I) Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah, M.Pd., (II) Ayu Fitrianingsih, M.Pd.

Kata Kunci: Gamifikasi, Duolingo, Penguasaan Kosakata, Pendidikan Dasar.

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran gamifikasi dalam aplikasi Duolingo untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa kelas lima di SD Plus Al-Qomariyah. Dengan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, angket, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa fitur gamifikasi Duolingo—seperti poin, level, hadiah, bantuan audio-visual, dan umpan balik langsung—berkontribusi besar terhadap peningkatan motivasi dan keterlibatan siswa. Siswa merespons positif penggunaan aplikasi ini, merasa pembelajaran bahasa Inggris menjadi lebih menyenangkan dan membantu mereka mengingat kosakata dengan lebih baik. Meskipun awalnya menghadapi kendala dengan tampilan aplikasi yang berbahasa Inggris, siswa secara bertahap mampu menyesuaikan diri dan lebih percaya diri dalam menggunakannya. Guru juga mencatat peningkatan partisipasi dan antusiasme siswa selama pelajaran bahasa Inggris. Namun, penelitian ini juga menekankan pentingnya pendampingan guru dan akses digital, karena tidak semua siswa memiliki perangkat atau koneksi internet yang memadai. Secara keseluruhan, Duolingo dinilai efektif sebagai alat bantu pembelajaran kosakata di sekolah dasar, terutama jika didukung dengan bimbingan guru yang tepat di kelas.

PREFACE

All praise and gratitude be to Allah SWT, who has given the writer health, strength, and patience so that this skripsi entitled *"The Role of Gamification in Duolingo Application for Vocabulary Mastery in Elementary School"* can be completed properly. This undergraduate thesis is submitted as a partial requirement for obtaining a Bachelor's degree in English Education at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Throughout the research and writing process, the writer has gained valuable insights into the implementation of gamified learning through the Duolingo application and its impact on elementary students' vocabulary development.

The writer sincerely thanks all individuals who have supported the completion of this thesis. Special appreciation is addressed to the advisor, Dr. Ima Isnaini Taufiqur Rohmah,M.Pd., and Ayu Fitrianingsih,M.Pd., for their guidance, advice, and endless encouragement. The writer also expresses deep gratitude to the English Education Department of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, as well as to the teachers and students of SD Plus Al-Qomariyah who contributed significantly to the data collection process. Above all, the writer dedicates heartfelt thanks to her beloved family for their prayers, moral support, and motivation during every step of this journey. Despite the writer's best efforts, this thesis is not perfect. Therefore, suggestions and constructive criticism are highly welcomed to improve this work further.

Bojonegoro, 15 July 2025

The Researcher

Intan Nur Aini
NIM 21120060

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English plays an important role in today's world because it is the most widely used language. According to David crystal (2000) stated that English is a global language used by various nations throughout the world as a mean of cross-cultural communication. Most international events use English as the medium of information in the fields of technology, science, and culture. So, English is the first (international) language. Moreover, it is important to remember that the majority of scientific literature is written in English. Therefore, everyone should be proficient in English, like Indonesian students, so they can understand books related to knowledge acquisition.

English is taught in Indonesia from elementary school to university. However, some Indonesian students are not interested in English because they do not realize that it is an important and difficult subject to learn. In the context of education, English is widely used as a subject that aims to develop oral and written communication skills gradually with a fun and interactive approach, especially to equip the younger generation to face the era of globalization. (Darmawan et al., 2024). In addition, students must master English, which consists of empathetic skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. To master these skills, students must have sufficient knowledge. To master other skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening, students must have a strong

understanding. Without a strong understanding, mastering and comprehending other skills will be difficult.

Methods for learning languages, especially vocabulary acquisition, have changed significantly as a result of the advancement of digital technology in education. A novel method for language learning is gamification, which is the application of game design aspects outside of games (Deterding et al., 2011). When compared to traditional techniques, gamification can boost students' motivation to learn by as much as 47%, according to research published in the Journal of Educational Psychology by Strelan et al. (2020). At the moment, technology advancements truly help with many facets of life, including studying. Children are now quite accustomed to using gadgets, cell phones, and other technological advancements. In actuality, learning English can be made easier and more enjoyable by utilizing technology in the form of applications (Puspita et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the advancement of technology has a good effect on instructors' and students' performance both within and outside of the classroom, boosting learning (Liliana et al., 2020). It is corroborated by Purba & Saragih (2020), who claim that employing technology to learn English could improve learning outcomes. To put it simply, learning media can be utilized to enhance the learning process (Herlina et al., 2021). One gamification-based language learning tool that has demonstrated notable efficacy in vocabulary acquisition is Duolingo. When compared to conventional learning methods, the use of Duolingo improves students' vocabulary retention by 35%, According to research published in Computer Assisted Language Learning by Garcia-Botero et al. (2021). A

longitudinal study by Yang & Chen (2023) published in the British Journal of Educational Technology supports this, showing a favorable association between elementary school pupils' increased vocabulary proficiency and their use of Duolingo's gamification features.

Vocabulary is enhancing English proficiency; many students still struggle with vocabulary acquisition. First, pupils struggle to learn vocabulary since the process of teaching and acquiring vocabulary in the classroom is dull due to a lack of media and repetitive methods (Ambara et al., 2019). It makes it hard for them to communicate verbally and makes it hard for them to comprehend written material. Second, students' lack of vocabulary is caused by their lack of memorization or laziness, and they are unaware of alternative methods of learning vocabulary, such as using apps, because they are still focused on the teacher (Wangloan et al., 2022).

The teacher plays a crucial part in establishing terminology in certain situations. It is advised that educators look for instructional materials that will aid pupils in their English language teaching (Puspita et al., 2022). Without a large vocabulary, language learners are unable to generate or understand the target language efficiently. Widyastuti and Kusumadewi (2018). According to Wangloan (2022), 95% of pupils struggle to comprehend what they read in textbooks because they do not have a broad vocabulary. Therefore, to assist pupils master the target language, they must be fluent in vocabulary so that they can write and speak English properly. Andas and Abin, 2022).

Based on the pre- researchers from the majority of students at SD PLUS AL QOMARIYAH are already familiar with mobile game applications. However, in

reality, the use of technology such as gamification (game-based media) is still not optimally utilized by children to learn foreign languages, especially English. Gamification which refers to the application of game elements in a non-game context has been shown to increase students' motivation and participation in the learning process. (Kapp, 2012) Many students do not use it to learn English because they do not know how to learn English through gaming applications. In this case, teachers play an important role in introducing vocabulary in an engaging way.

Gamification, or the introduction of game-based media, is one of the methods. Gamification is a type of media based on games. One useful source for improving vocabulary is game-based media. According to Irawan et al. (2020), this is created with a learning mechanism that encourages individuals to play, think, inspire, and solve problems. Duolingo is one example of an English learning tool that uses gamification. One of the game-based resources for language learning that combines the idea of learning while having fun is the Duolingo website, also known as duolingo.com. The Duolingo English program can be accessed on the Web, iOS, Android, and Windows Phone. (Irawan et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, particularly in Islamic-based elementary schools such as SD PLUS Al QOMARIYAH, the integration of technology in language learning is becoming increasingly important. However, as identified by Wahyuni et al. (2022) in the journal Computer Assisted Language Learning, there is still a research gap regarding the implementation of gamification in the context of Islamic schools in Indonesia. This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing "The role of gamification

in Duolingo application for vocabulary mastery students at SD PLUS Al QOMARIYAH.

B. Research Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the problem can be identified as:

1. What are Roles of Gamification Duolingo Application for elementary school?

2. To what extent does gamification Duolingo enhance in vocabulary?

C. Objective of the Research

Based on the problem statement above, this study aims to find out:

1. To know role of gamification in the Duolingo affect the learning process and engagement of elementary school students.

2. To know the extent of gamification Duolingo enhance on the vocabulary development of elementary school students, including its effectiveness in improving vocabulary acquisition and retention.

D. Research Significance

There are several advantages that can be achieved from this research. Included:

1. Theoretical Significance

By emphasizing how gamification features in the Duolingo software can improve vocabulary knowledge, this study advances language learning theory. In addition to improving knowledge of the relationship between motivation, student engagement, and learning

outcomes in the context of language acquisition, this adds to the body of work on educational technology and gamification.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Researchers

The study's findings can serve as a guide for future investigations into the implementation of gamification in language learning software and offer valuable perspectives on how to quantify the influence of gaming on vocabulary acquisition.

b. For Teachers

This study gives educators useful information about the advantages of utilizing the Duolingo app as a teaching tool. Teachers can create more engaging and successful teaching methods to raise students' motivation and vocabulary mastery learning outcomes by comprehending the function of gamification.

E. Definition of Terminologies

1. Gamification

Gamification is a learning approach that employs elements from games or video games with the goal of motivating students in the learning process and maximizing their feelings of enjoyment and engagement with the learning. Gamification works by creating more engaging technology (Takahashi, 2010), encouraging users to engage in desired behaviours (Stuart, 2010), showing pathways to mastery and autonomy, and

leveraging the psychological tendency of humans to engage in games. According to Zichermann, gamification is the process of thinking like games and using game mechanics to engage users and solve problems. A more general definition (Deterding, 2011) of gamification is the use of design elements that constitute a game in non-game contexts.

2. Duolingo Application

Eric Ravenscraft (2019) explained that Duolingo is an American language-learning website and mobile app. Users learn using "trees" tailored to their target language, with specific "skills" to practice vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation using spaced repetition. Exercises can include writing, reading and speaking comprehension, and short stories. According to Garcia (2013), Duolingo is a free online language learning platform whose goal is to assist users in learning languages by providing them with online and application-based learning activities. Due to its straightforward protocols, Duolingo is easy to use and appropriate for users of all ages. This indicates that Duolingo is a more comfortable teaching tool for online classes because it is user-friendly and interesting.

3. Vocabulary Mastery

Hassani et.al, (2013) said that vocabulary is set lexemes from the smallest unit in the meaning system of a language that can be distinguished from other similar units. This means that a vocabulary is one of the essential elements of a language organized as a set of words in an

alphabetical list that refers to the language of the system of meaning. Many people are aware that their limited language makes it challenging for them to communicate their ideas and thoughts. An essential component of language learning is vocabulary, which must be understood in order to support children's language acquisition. As a result, mastering and consistently enhancing one's language skills is crucial. (Ulfah and other 2019).