



USING SCHOOL.DUOLINGO.COM AS AN ALTERNATIVE E-LEARNING AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH ONLINE

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Abstract

The current technological and communication development affects almost all the aspects of human life, and one of them is in education. In English teaching, technological development has a positive impact; it is about teaching English through E-learning. In E-learning, there are a lot of media that can be used by the teacher and the students to support learning English. One of them is through online learning (teaching methods via internet). In online learning, using website can help the teacher and the students to teach and learn English through E-learning. School.duolingo.com is one of the websites that can be used by the teacher and the students as a media to teach and learn English. This website has interesting features that can increase students' interest and motivate them to learn English. The teacher can also check the progress of the students in school.duolingo.com. Through this paper the author hopes that all teachers to be more creative in using media in order to increase interest and motivation of the students to learn English.

Key words: school.duolingo.com, Online Learning, E-learning

A. INTRODUCTION

English is the most spoken language around the world. By using English, people can communicate with foreign language speaker. English also has become one of the key competencies for international communication as globalization has accelerated, and to compete it people must learn English.

Learning English as a foreign language can make the people appreciate the culture and the context of a country, discover entertainment from around the world and certainly open people eyes to amazing things. Unfortunately, some people think that learning English is difficult. One of them is the senior high school's student in Indonesia.

Some of the students, especially high school students, are difficult to understand English because English is a foreign language in Indonesia. They do not know why they have to learn English whereas they can communicate by using

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Indonesian. Therefore they rarely use English outside the classroom and just use it in the classroom because they have to do it by their teacher.

There are several causes why the students feel difficult to learn English. First, the students are lack of vocabulary in English so that they cannot understand the meaning. Sometimes they are also confused using the words. Lack of vocabulary can cause some difficulties in all skills in English, such as listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and writing skill. That is why the students cannot understand English because lacking of vocabulary can affect all skills in learning English.

Second, the students' learning depends on the English teachers as the authorities. If their teachers ask them to use English, they do. If their teachers do not ask them to use English, they do not. It happens because there is no motivation in their life to learn English well. The students need high motivation. This is appropriate with Brown (2000) that says if motivation and concern are high, and then the necessary effort will be expended in pursuit of goals. It means that if they have high motivation, they can learn English by themselves without the authorities of their English teachers.

Last, the media that is used by the teachers is not interesting. Some teachers just prepare the simple media for the students and the students feel bored with it. The students that cannot understand English easily become more bored with the way of their teachers teach them. The teachers should attract the students' attention by using the interesting media so that the students pay attention to what the teachers do.

Nowadays, most of the teachers have to learn the effectiveness of computer and internet. By using computer and the internet, it can help the teachers in teaching activities, especially in English teaching because it can attract the students' attention in learning English. Because of that, the teachers have to gain more benefits of using computer and the internet to make the class more interesting.

Learning process that uses technology and computer as media is called E-learning. It can be used by connecting into the internet or not. By using E-learning, it allows the students to learn through computers in their respective places because E-learning can be accessed from the local network or the internet.

E-learning includes many components that are familiar from traditional learning, such as presentation of ideas by the students, group discussions, arguments and many other forms of conveying information and accumulating knowledge (Rashty). According to Naidu (2006), E-learning is commonly referred to the intentional use of networked information and communications technology in teaching and learning. A number of other terms are also used to describe this mode of teaching and learning. They include online learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, network and web-based learning. Basically, they all refer to educational processes that utilize information and communications technology to mediate asynchronous as well as synchronous learning and teaching activities.

In E-learning, there is online learning that is a method of delivering educational information via the internet instead of in a physical classroom. There are many different applications for online learning, ranging in scope from simple downloadable content through to structured programs that include assessment and

award. Online learning allows participants to collapse time and space (Cole, 2000); however, the learning materials must be designed properly to engage the learner and promote learning. The delivery method allows for flexibility of access, from anywhere and usually anytime, but the learning must use sound instructional design principles.

According to Rossett (2002), online learning has many promises, but it takes commitment and resources, and must be done right. Doing it right means that online learning materials must be designed properly, with the learners and learning in focus, and that adequate support must be provided. Ring and Mathieux (2002) suggest that online learning should have high authenticity, high interactivity, and high collaboration. There were some previous researchers which had been conducted related to the online English. One of them was Syafitri and Fitrawati (2014) which was conducted the “WWW.BABEL.COM” in teaching vocabulary of junior high school.

Based on the problems above, one of the solutions that can be applied is by using “school.duolingo.com” as an alternative E-learning media. Duolingo is a gamification browser-based and mobile application launched in 2012 that allows users to “Learn a language for free. Forever” (Duolingo, 2015), and Duolingo has released Duolingo for School for foreign language learner.

Even though there is other E-learning media like Moodle, it has some problems like Yorkshire has said; the more students that access the platform, the slower the system becomes. This can be troublesome for students when they are trying to take quizzes or tests, or just simply trying to access the course content. The website can also shut down on occasion, blocking the opportunity for students to access course materials.

By using school.duolingo.com, the system is never slow even though there are many users used it. In school.duolingo.com the teachers can see the students’ progresses that have been done by the students in Duolingo and it can solve the students’ problems like lack of vocabulary, motivation, and especially can help the teacher gives some feedback to the students on the discussion forum via online so that the students become more interested in learning English and can increase their ability in English. School.duolingo.com recognize that students need to be motivated to make sure they come back to this media and engage in some more language fun.

Duolingo uses several different methods to keep the students hooked like using a mixture of activities; students listen and transcribe, speak, and translate in a simple interface. The students can also compete with others by using find friends via e-mail. Therefore, the writer is interested in discussing the way the use of “school.duolingo.com” as an alternative E-learning media in learning English at senior high school.

By using Duolingo, the students can learn English as an alternative E-learning media because it is fun and the students will not be bored. It is also easy to be used by the students. In Duolingo activities, there is an interesting feature that can help the students to face the listening activities. There is slow down button in turtle picture that make the students able to slow down what they hear by clicking

it. So if the students get confused when they hear the audio that is spoken by the native speaker they can slow down the audio and they can hear it repeatedly.

Duolingo pays impressive attention to feedback. Feedback is an essential part of effective learning. It helps students to understand the subject being studied and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their learning. Before giving a feedback, teachers need more information about where students are hesitating or having to repeat the lessons. It will aid teacher planning to preview lesson components. The teacher must provide students with the kind of feedback that will increase motivation, build on existing knowledge, and help them reflect on what they have learned. For example, the teacher takes the time to provide students with information on what exactly they did well, and what may still need improvement. It can be helpful to tell the students what they are doing differently than before.

B. DISCUSSION

1. Preparation

Before the teacher and the students start using school.duolingo.com, they have to have an e-mail account for creating new account. If the teacher wants to use synchronous learning as the way to teach and learn English, the teacher has to provide a computer lab that has internet connection to the students. If the teacher wants to use asynchronous learning, the teacher has to give some materials based on the curriculum to the students well.

2. Implementation

Synchronous learning is the teacher and the students have to interact directly by using internet in the same time. It is like the regular classroom that is led by the teacher but they can do it in different location by connected each other by using internet. Using school.duolingo.com in synchronous learning leads the teacher and the students do some activities; warm up activity, power practice, and blended learning sessions.

Warm up activity means that the students come into class and then they get their device and start practicing Duolingo. This gets students learning right from the start of class, and could help minimize distractions while other students arrive and the class gets settled. Power practice session is an automatically constructed 10-question quiz based on the average progress of members of the class. The teacher can use it as a fun review activity or as a standby in case students finish work early; the teacher projects it onto the board, and the students play as a class, in teams, or the teacher can ask the students compete each other.

The teacher can use school.duolingo.com in blended learning session. Teacher can combine school.duolingo.com with face-to-face learning in teacher's classes. Students get the benefits of school.duolingo.com and most of students that work independently on the computer gives opportunity to the teacher to work more closely with small groups or individuals. There are two ways that teacher could use this time: providing small-group instruction tailored to students' needs and pairing conversation practice.

The teacher provides small-group instruction tailored to students' needs. The teacher can review skills that students are struggling with, or introduce more challenging material to students who are doing well. The data from school.duolingo.com can help the teacher forms groups and selects the most appropriate topics for students. The teacher can also pair conversation practice by taking out students in pairs to have conversations using material they have covered in school.duolingo.com. As there are only two students to focus on, the teacher can give targeted feedback and work on specific issues as necessary.

In other hand, asynchronous learning allows the students to control their own time to learn by themselves. The teacher and the students do not need to have a schedule to interact through E-learning. They can do it in different time but still have to communicate each other. Asynchronous learning using school.duolingo.com can be applied by giving homework to the students. The teacher sets homework assignments, either using the function within school.duolingo.com or mix it up by setting some different tasks, such as a target for how many days in a week to use school.duolingo.com, or how many lessons to complete, or even a points competition for the week. Then, the teacher can check the progress of the students in school.duolingo.com.

a. Creating New Duolingo Account for the Teachers

Creating a new account is very important for users in the first time using school.duolingo.com. It is very easy to create it. The teacher just goes to the link www.school.duolingo.com. To complete the registration, the teacher has to fill Duolingo's registration list. It just needs full name (*Nama Lengkap*), an e-mail account (*Surel*), and a password (*Kata Sandi*). Also, teacher can sign up with Google account which is just need to Log in on Google (*Daftar via Google*). Later, it will be automatically connected to the Duolingo.

b. Making the New Class

On the teacher's dashboard, the teacher can make a class by filling the description of the class; the name of the class and the language that wants to be practicing by the students. The teacher can give any name of the class that they like and for the language they have to choose English. The teacher can invite the students to join to the class by using e-mail and by using class code. If the teacher wants to use e-mail, the teacher should fill with all of students' e-mail. If the teacher wants to use class code, the teacher must tell the students the link of the class code that is automatically made by the server.

c. Creating New Duolingo Account for the Students

After getting the link of the class by the teacher, the students must visit it by copying on the address bar of the browser. The example of the link is <https://www.duolingo.com/o/etamwt>. After that the students will jump into the page of Duolingo and join the class automatically.

Because the students have not created the account of the Duolingo, the students must sign up by filling the full name, e-mail, and the

password. The students can also register by sign up via Facebook or Google account. To get all of notification from the teacher, the students must follow teacher's account.

d. Giving Tasks

By using School.duolingo.com, the teacher can give the tasks to the students. The tasks are not made by the teacher, but the tasks are provided by Duolingo. The teacher can choose what material that they want to give to the students. There are two optional tasks that are provided by Duolingo; to collect the point and to complete students' skill. Collecting points means that the teacher chooses the task based on the target points that want to be achieved by the students. On the other hand, completing students' skill means that the teacher chooses the task based on the skills that want to be achieved by the students.

The teacher can also set the limit time when the tasks are completely done by the students and check the progress of the students.

e. Student's Task Activity

1) Translation Task Activity

Translation is the communication of the meaning of a source-language text by means of an equivalent target-language text. Translation integrated into the language learning practice along with generally used learning activities, such as reading, listening, writing, and vocabulary development could be defined as a pedagogical tool. Pedagogical tool is anything used to teach or learn something. In Duolingo, most of the task is translation task because it is the easiest and shortest way of explaining meaning of words and phrases. On the beginning of the task, the students will be provided a picture that is related to the word or phrase of the task. It makes the students easy to understand the word. It also has the audio how to pronounce it while we do the task.

2) Listening and Transcribing Task Activity

Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Listening is the key to all effective communication, without the ability to listen effectively messages are easily misunderstood. In Duolingo listening and transcribing task, the students have to listen and transcribe what they are hearing. If the students have some difficulties to hear the audio clearly, the students can click *turtle* button to make the audio becomes slow down. So the students can listen it carefully and then transcribe it.

3) Speaking Task Activity

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words. Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through

the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts (Chaney, 1998, p. 13). In Duolingo, a sentence is provided and then the students have to click *Microfon* button and then speak based on the sentence. If the students are confused how to pronounce it, the students can click the small speaker button to listen the pronunciation. It helps the students' speaking ability and it is easy to use it.

f. Making Discussion Forum

Duolingo provides discussion forum that can help the teacher and the students can discuss any topic that they want. Before the teacher makes a discussion forum, the teacher has to make sure that all the students have followed his/her account, so that the students can see the discussion forum from their dashboard.

In the discussion forum there are feedbacks between teacher and students. If the students find some difficulties to answer the tasks that have been given by the teacher, the students can ask their teacher. The teacher can give some suggestions to the student, and the other students can also give some additional information to their friends.

3. The Advantages and Disadvantages of school.duolingo.com

a. The Advantages of school.duolingo.com

Duolingo is a game-based platform for learning foreign languages. It is available as a browser-based application or an iOS, Android, or Windows Phone application. School.duolingo.com has been released by Duolingo that uses a mixture of activities; students listen, transcribe, speak, and translate in a simple interface as they work through words and phrases.

School.duolingo.coms lets teachers easily track students' language learning progress. Students share their language learning progress directly with their teacher, who can then track their progress through a dedicated dashboard. By being able to tracks their students' progress, teacher can plan lessons, assign Duolingo skills as homework, and award extra credit points accordingly.

It also motivates the students to keep going and beat their previous records, and the students can also compete with their friends. The students can gain experience points (XP) and pass through different levels, then they earn lingots with which they can purchase items and bonus lessons. Duolingo can be accessed on PC and also on the android by downloading it on the Play Store.

The interface is clean and very easy to use. There is also a nice balance between translation, listening, matching, and speaking exercises. The voice recognition program is not too bad.

b. The Disadvantages of School.duolingo.com

Duolingo uses a computerized voice system for all of its listening exercises, so the students are not introduced to how the

language really sounds. The voice is dry, non-rhythmical, and it sounds like a computer. If the students want to be able to speak a language fluently, the most important thing in their language learning is actually speaking with native speakers of their target language. There really is no substitute for it and currently Duolingo has no way of allowing people to converse with any native speakers.

Duolingo does not offer any explanation of grammatical structures as part of its dashboard. Grammar is an essential part of language learning and it makes the students have some difficulties to do the task.

C. CONCLUSION

Nowadays teacher and students can use technology to improve learning qualities. They can use E-learning as a process of teaching and learning that use technology as media. In e-learning, there are two strategies that should be observed by the teacher; synchronous and asynchronous. These two strategies are different in how teacher deliver materials. Synchronous is a process of delivering material that need internet connection, and should do in a real time process. In other hand, asynchronous can be used by using internet connection or not. If the teacher is using internet connection for asynchronous, teacher and students do not need to connect in same time.

One of the examples of media that can be used for e-learning is online learning. Online learning is a method of delivering educational information via the internet instead of in a physical classroom. Online learning should have high authenticity, high interactivity, and high collaboration. The learning materials of online learning must be designed properly to engage the learner and promote learning.

Duolingo for School (school.duolingo.com) has been released by Duolingo for foreign language learners. Duolingo for school uses a mixture of activities; students listen and transcribe, speak, and translate in a simple interface as they work through words and phrases. For basic learners, the approach is very nicely done, with popups and extras to enhance understanding and game-based elements to increase motivation.

In using Duolingo for School, teacher and students have to do some steps. The first step is creating Duolingo account for the teacher. After that, the teacher can make his/her class and then invite the students to his/her class. The students join the class then creating Duolingo account. All the students that have joined the class will be given the task by the teacher. Then the teacher can make a discussion forum to discuss the topic of the task with the students. The teacher and the students can give some feedback each other. Last, the teacher can see the students' progresses that have been done by the students.

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