

A Duolingo-based English Language Skills Assessment: Through the Eyes of Vocational Students

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Abstract

The utilization of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) enhances learning activities. As online learning modalities proliferate, Duolingo is becoming increasingly well-known but understudied as an English-learning assessment tool. This study explores the utilization of Duolingo as an English-learning assessment tool, specifically in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Indonesia. Three Electromedical Engineering students were selected as participants, and semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather data. Thematic Analysis was employed to analyze the collected data. The findings revealed several positive impressions students had when using Duolingo as an English language skills assessment (ELSA) tool, including its engaging nature, facilitation of autonomous language skills assessment, provision of positive motivation, and improvement in vocabulary mastery. However, participants also mentioned drawbacks, such as Duolingo's inability to provide specialized Electromedical Engineering vocabulary, the use of fake images that hindered comprehension of meaning in real-life contexts, and the lack of interactivity in language skills assessment. The study recommends ESP practitioners to consider student-centered learning tools for assessing English proficiency, focusing on the test's purpose, objectives, practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback effects.

Keywords: Duolingo, English for specific purposes, English language skills assessment tool, Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), Technology-based English language skills assessment.

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INTRODUCTION

English for specific purposes (ESP) assists students with a particular genre of English by focusing on their own goals, and it is geared and concentrated on English teaching and learning. Numerous English for language teaching (ELT) experts have defined ESP (Ghafar, 2022; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2020). Furthermore, ESP teaches English for a utilitarian purpose (Yablokov, 2020). The objective is to determine the student's academic, occupational, and scientific needs through study. These demands, in turn, revealed essential information for the ESP program.

The ESP course prepares students for real-world scenarios, including the capacity to communicate with others and apply information. It is a challenging skill that is expected of vocational students. To increase their English competence, they

must master various subskills, including a sufficient vocabulary, arranging words and phrases, and more (Jiang et al., 2021). Teaching English for specific purposes guarantees that students can communicate successfully in English. In addition, because language usage tends to be context-dependent, ESP was developed with a learner-centered approach.

Assessment in ESP is akin to assessment in other domains of language study. The assessment practitioners must take into account the aims, the characteristics of the students, the students' profiles, and the target language use context (Douglas, 2012). The purpose of English language skills assessment (ELSA) is to identify the specific student's strengths and, more crucially, the students' shortcomings with regard to the characteristics that they have not yet mastered. They can reflect on their thinking, their strengths, and their weaknesses as a result of ELSA. In addition, they can provide significant insights into student learning. However, the interpretation of the data they provide should be analyzed by ESP teachers to create a lesson plan that focuses on the needs and profiles of students. ELSA in language classrooms is said to play a significant role in giving immediate and high-quality feedback for the enhancement of the learning process (Alderson, Brunfaut, & Harding, 2014). Nevertheless, many ESP practitioners still find it challenging to implement ELSA in the classroom, as they must consider the test's purpose and objectives and its practicability, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback. Moreover, applying to ELSA should consider students' diverse backgrounds and characteristics. In addition, since ELSA can also be viewed as a process for analyzing the student's needs, it is essential to determine the students' motivation to actively participate in the language testing process by analyzing their responses through their insights.

Utilizing technology in the learning process is currently a concern. It can be shown through numerous digital media in educational activities. In this instance, the researchers deployed the Duolingo application for ELSA. It is a platform consisting of a language-learning website and application that provides textual lessons and dictation, allowing more advanced users to progress through speech practice and a vocabulary section where they may practice learning words (Hernadijaya, 2020). This platform offers courses in twenty-seven foreign languages and is available as an Android, iOS, and Windows mobile application (Teske, 2017). Therefore, it is available for free download on both the App Store and Play Store. Duolingo is a gamified platform, sometimes known as a gamified platform (Huynh & Iida, 2017), aims to assist EFL teachers in producing, deploying, and designing more effective and efficient learning materials (Rodrigues, Oliveira, & Rodrigues, 2019; Toda et al., 2019). Due to the fact that Duolingo is a language-learning tool, the teacher must employ it based on the student's profile, acceptance, and effectiveness.

The adaptive computer technology used by Duolingo can modify the difficulty of the questions. Student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills can be measured using Duolingo-based diagnostic assessments. Likewise, the question categories are diverse and moderately challenging, and they are presented in an integrated manner involving reading and writing abilities (literacy), listening and reading abilities (comprehension), listening and speaking abilities (conversation), and writing and speaking abilities (production). In this study, however, the researchers investigate the vocational students' views related to the use of a free

Duolingo account to measure the level of students' English skills. In particular, two questions are addressed in this study: (1) How do vocational students perceive the benefits of using Duolingo as an English language skills assessment (ELSA) tool?; (2) What are the disadvantages of utilizing Duolingo as an English language skills assessment (ELSA) tool from the standpoint of vocational students are.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study provides a thorough and contextualized account of a particular phenomenon. Using a descriptive case study, the researchers explain a real-world event and its context. Moreover, it is designed to describe the existing condition of a particular case (Atmowardoyo, 2018). In a descriptive case study, propositions and questions regarding a phenomenon are scrutinized and articulated at the onset with great attention and precision (Lapadat, 2009). Using a robust descriptive theory helps the descriptive case study researcher penetrate the crucial understandings of the case and present a case to inform theory development, as well as potentially contributing to the case study databank for future researchers. This research methodology was chosen because it describes and focuses on the phenomenon of how vocational students perceive ELSA through Duolingo.

Participants

The participants were three vocational students from an Electromedical Engineering academy in Indonesia who volunteered to participate in this investigation. Their ages varied from 19 to 20 years old. The majority of their interactions are conducted in their native language. Based on their gender, they were classified as male ($N=1$) and female ($N=2$).

Data Collection Procedures

This study employed semi-structured interviews to describe the phenomenon of how vocational students perceive ELSA through Duolingo. The interview was conducted with three individuals ($N=$ a male and two females). The semi-structured interview analyzes the participants' ideas, emotions, and beliefs around a specific issue (Dejonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). In addition, the interview guide included a variety of questioning subjects. The subjects are linked to the benefits and drawbacks of using Duolingo as an ELSA tool, as perceived by vocational students.

Data Analysis

The data were examined utilizing Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6) to detect, interpret, and report patterns (themes) within the data. In addition, it is a qualitative data analysis technique that entails evaluating data collection to identify, analyze, and report recurring patterns (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). It is also a mechanism for expressing data; however, interpretation is required for selecting codes and producing themes. The steps include becoming familiar with the data, producing initial codes, searching for themes, examining themes, defining and labeling themes, and generating the report. TA could also be considered an experiential method. It is based on the premise that language conveys reality, either a unique universal reality or the subjective reality of a particular participant (Flowerday & Schraw, 2003).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the perspectives of vocational students regarding the usability of Duolingo as an ELSA tool. The findings highlighted two significant themes: the benefits of utilizing Duolingo as an ELSA tool and the drawbacks of utilizing Duolingo as an ELSA tool. The first topic is subdivided into themes: an engaging assessment tool, an autonomous learning scenario, a feeling of positive motivation, and an increase in vocabulary mastery. The second topic is Duolingo's lack of providing students with specialized Electromedical Engineering vocabulary, its use of inauthentic pictures, and its lack of an interactive learning process. Table 1 shows the research result that is presented through the dimension, themes, and subthemes.

Table 1. The perspectives of vocational students

Dimension	Themes	Subthemes
The benefits of utilizing Duolingo as an ELSA tool	An engaging assessment tool.	The use of vivid imagery. Rather like playing a game than taking a test.
	An autonomous language skills assessment scenario.	Time flexibility. A stress-free language test. A mobile-based language learning tool.
	A feeling of positive motivation.	A game based-exam. The use of the color and images relieved the students' anxious.
	An increase in vocabulary mastery.	Providing opportunities to practice it. Strengthen the students' comprehension of word usage Discover numerous new words that contain the image.
The drawbacks of utilizing Duolingo as an ELSA tool	Duolingo's lack of providing students with specialized Electromedical Engineering vocabulary	The free version of Duolingo concentrates solely on standard English.
	Its use of inauthentic pictures	Need the actual image to identify the visuals and correlate them with the appropriate vocabulary. The picture is not real. It cannot be easy to comprehend the images because they are given unauthentic images.
	Its lack of an interactive learning process	There is no interaction between players The activity is predominantly one-sided. There is no direct response from the other player

The Benefits of Utilizing Duolingo as an ELSA Tool

There are four sections that will be discussed: (1) an engaging assessment tool, (2) an autonomous language skills assessment scenario, (3) a feeling of positive motivation, (4) an increase in vocabulary mastery.

An Engaging Assessment Tool

Based on the results of the interviews, the researchers determined that vocational students experienced an engaging assessment tool when Duolingo was used as an ELSA, as the participants indicated.

Excerpt 1

- P₁ *This is a positive experience. I did not feel like getting a test. Even though I am aware that this is a test to assess my current English proficiency, I feel like playing a game.*
- P₂ *Duolingo enables me to assess my English skills, particularly my vocabulary mastery. It makes me want to play a game because it contains numerous vivid images.*
- P₃ *My first experience with Duolingo was when my teacher asked me to engage. Knowing that it would be like a test is intriguing and makes me eager to play the game. I discovered certain phrases and sentences that I frequently use.*

Excerpt 1 introduces the concept of an engaging instrument. Due to the use of vivid imagery, students did not feel like they were taking a test but rather like they were playing a game. Duolingo exemplifies the concept of gamification, which uses game-based mechanics, aesthetics, and game thinking to engage individuals, motivate action, promote learning, and solve problems (Kapp, 2012). Students found using Duolingo pleasant, making it an entertaining ELSA tool. As part of the need analysis, the result of ELSA aims to map students' English competence. The teacher should consider the expected learning outcome in designing the learning process. The aims and goals of the language curriculum inform the development of assessment plans. Achievement of curriculum goals and objectives depends heavily on how assessment techniques are established, implemented, monitored, and assessed (Islam et al., 2021). Moreover, considering the students' profile is also important when deciding the assessment tool.

The students, as digital natives, were born into a world imbued with technology and new media, so they are inclined to accept it. They receive information fast, participate actively in the learning process, and are adept at multitasking, displaying various social qualities and having varied life and learning goals (Genç & Köksal, 2021). Consequently, they prefer to adopt and utilize new media and information technology excessively due to the abundance of opportunities available to them.

An Autonomous Language Skills Assessment Scenario

The results of the students' interviews indicate that they believe Duolingo enables them to build an independent language skills assessment scenario that is guided by their teacher. Even though in this study Duolingo was utilized as the ELSA tool, the students noticed that it can also be used as a technology-based learning platform, as revealed by the participants.

Excerpt 2

- P₁ *I adore this test since I can take it anywhere and at any time. As long as I have access to the internet and a device, I can generate my learning opportunities.*
- P₂ *Surprisingly, my teacher permits me to take the exam at a time of my desire. I do not know how exactly the process of the test, but I feel this is the best point of my English test.*
- P₃ *I am aware that Duolingo allows me to learn English outside of school. I may practice my English during my leisure time. In addition, this is a test, yet I feel like playing a relaxing game.*

According to the second excerpt, the students argued that Duolingo enables them to perform the flexible and stress-free language test because it enables them to take it anywhere. Duolingo is a prime example of gamification, which uses game-based elements to engage individuals, motivate action, promote learning, and solve problems (Huynh, Zuo, & Iida, 2018; Kapp, 2012). In addition, Duolingo can be viewed as a component of MALL, an acronym for Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, which makes language learning possible at any time and place. It can also compensate for an interactive, cooperative, and authentic learning environment (Ma, 2020). The students believe that the use of Duolingo enables them to be self-directed learners since they are able to explore their English language skills as long as they have a device with an online connection and are connected to the internet. The technology-based approach emphasizes students' independent interactions during their usage of instructional tools, and Internet-based activities can enhance learner autonomy (Tran & Duong, 2021). Moreover, in many instances, mobile technology expands learning beyond the classroom, empowering learners to make autonomous decisions on where, when, and how to study a second language (Reinders & Benson, 2017). Due to the usage of Duolingo as the assessment tool, these advantages are apparent. The student response also notes the adaptability of Duolingo not only as an assessment tool, but also as a mobile application for language learning (MALL). This corresponds with the core components of the MALL definition, which include (a) flexibility in time and location of study; (b) continuity of study on many devices, such as tablets, laptops, and mobile phones; (c) easy accessibility of information; and (d) adaptability to individual study habits (Loewen et al., 2019). Therefore, the use of Duolingo enables students to study anytime and anywhere, and their study materials are accessible across devices.

Assessment is an essential component of the learning and teaching process in all areas of education. When utilized correctly, the assessments can identify areas of improvement for individual students or for entire classes or years (Giraldo, 2018). Some strategies can also assist teachers in identifying the precise misunderstandings students may possess. Prior to utilizing evaluations, it is essential for teachers to understand their purpose, regardless of their format. It should be obvious what information the evaluation is intended to create and how it will be used to inform subsequent decisions.

A Feeling of Positive Motivation

The students' acceptance of Duolingo as an ELSA tool corresponds with their positive attitudes. It tends to relate to their internal motivation through their

engagement in a behavior that originates from within because it is naturally satisfying to them, as the participants revealed.

Excerpt 3

- P₁ *This test encourages me to achieve the highest score possible. It resembles a game more than an exam. Due to the time constraint, I feel both delighted and slightly anxious. However, the color and image relieve my anxiety. This was a satisfying experience. I desire more.*
- P₂ *This was the first time I noticed how great the English language is. This tool helped me succeed on the exam because it was provided in an engaging manner. I believe it is more of a game than an exam.*
- P₃ *I strive to achieve the highest score possible on Duolingo. I am confident that it is an engaging instrument for learning English. A reward point indicates my accomplishment. This game facilitates my English proficiency in competition. Excellent.*

The excerpt three describes that students believe Duolingo as a game based-exam. Moreover, the use of the color and images relieved the students' anxious. Language and test anxiety are related, as students with high language anxiety also tend to have high test anxiety levels, and vice versa (Salehi & Marefat, 2014). It suggests that reducing one type of anxiety will also diminish the other type to some extent. In addition, using color and imagery helps create a relaxed test environment for the students. The game-playing environment is fundamental to maintaining an enjoyable and relaxed learning environment (Stoimcheva-Kolarska, 2020). Education and learning outcomes are enhanced and made more fruitful by playing games.

Internal motivation is a crucial factor in achieving success in the English-learning process. Motivation plays a crucial role in the growth of the students' language-learning abilities (Vesselinov & Grego, 2012). As a component of learning, assessment is viewed as the most important feature of students' learning experiences and the impetus for their desire to learn (Mohamed & Long, 2021). Students discovered that using Duolingo made the English language assessment process more enjoyable and intriguing. In addition, students noticed that Duolingo alleviated their test anxiety because it is more of a game than a test. When employing the gamification learning approach, students have the opportunity to be motivated and engaged in the learning process through the use of competition (Hernadijaya, 2020). Moreover, Duolingo uses an interactive image with a gamified layout that combines point-reward to motivate students together with implicit instruction, explanation, and other best practices (Settles & Meeder, 2016; Shortt et al., 2021). This reflects that technology can alter how individuals work, study, interact, and use their time. The evolution of English is also linked to the development of technology. It should be considered as a tool of learning at the service of students, since the applications can provide considerable learning and facilitate the teacher's task of engaging and motivating students to successfully and delightfully acquire the foreign language. In addition, it is essential that the teacher serve as the mediator of this choice.

An Increase in Vocabulary Mastery

Using Duolingo as an assessment tool, students believe that they can increase their vocabulary mastery, which supports their English language skills proficiency when completing tests.

Excerpt 4

- P₁ *Duolingo facilitates me to increase my vocabulary mastery when dealing with the test. The activities involve me to deal with new vocabularies. Moreover, it makes me also dealing with reading and speaking activities.*
- P₂ *It provides listening exercises, including as flashcards and multiple-choice questions, to assist me in practicing my new vocabulary. In addition, there are questions that strengthen my understanding of the word usage. It is a fascinating experience when my teacher uses this tool to evaluate my English proficiency. I am confident that I can motivate myself to actively engage with the test.*
- P₃ *Before my teacher asked me to take a test on Duolingo, I had no idea how to boost my vocabulary proficiency. This is my initial encounter. I can discover many new words that include the image. I am certain that I must force myself to interact with this tool outside of school and for reasons other than the test.*

The fourth excerpt demonstrates that using Duolingo as the assessment tool assists students in mastering new vocabulary by providing them with opportunities to practice it. In addition, the activities on Duolingo strengthen the students' comprehension of word usage, which enables them to discover numerous new words that contain the image. Duolingo facilitates the English learning process. It provides pedagogical affordances that facilitate meaningful learning, particularly vocabulary development, inside and beyond the classroom (Chai, Wong, & King, 2016). Furthermore, through continuous learning, it can be an effective teaching tool for retaining newly learned language. According to the students' perspectives, Duolingo enables them to strengthen their vocabulary mastery through the activities provided, which can be visual or auditory in nature, by stimulating and establishing connections between knowledge forms and their storage in memory, thereby facilitating learners' memory retention and expediting knowledge retrieval (Kohnke & Zou, 2019). As the most fundamental element for foreign and second language learners, vocabulary acquisition is essential for students to increase their English proficiency.

Additionally, students believed that by using Duolingo, they may boost their vocabulary acquisition. It involves acquiring vocabulary as a result of an activity that was not designed for that goal (Pavia et al., 2019). It is also likely that Duolingo's rich input environments give students with an abundance of unintentional learning chances. There are so many opportunities for practice that it is simple for a beginner to learn a new language. The programs are quite user-friendly, and the approaches and activities are basic to comprehend. Additionally, Duolingo is one of the most effective vocabulary-teaching and learning applications available (Abdulloh, 2021; Ajisoko, 2020; Aulia, Wahjuningsih, & Andayani, 2020). It is incredibly interesting for students, as evidenced by their overwhelmingly favorable responses to these applications and the fact that all

students get the same opportunity to practice the topic. Duolingo can reduce boredom throughout the assessment process and encourage students to produce original ideas. Consequently, students require a native speaker to emulate how to speak English, as well as additional learning resources. Through Duolingo, they are exposed to more new terms, enhancing their vocabulary knowledge. In addition, they freely copy how native speakers pronounce these words, which enables them to express their ideas smoothly and with confidence in spoken English.

The Drawbacks of Utilizing Duolingo as an ELSA Tool

There are three sections to be discussed: (1) duolingo's lack of providing students with specialized electromedical engineering vocabulary, (2) its use of inauthentic pictures, (3) its lack of an interactive learning process.

Duolingo's Lack of Providing Students with Specialized Electromedical Engineering Vocabulary

Using Duolingo as the assessment tool during Electromedical Engineering enhances the students' exposure to the English language. It enhances their English proficiency; they ask why Duolingo does not include any Electromedical Engineering-related terms.

Excerpt 5

- P₁ *I enjoy interacting with Duolingo. This aids my English comprehension. I can improve my English proficiency, particularly in terms of vocabulary. However, the vocabulary is limited to standard English only. I have not found any Electromedical Engineering-specific terminology in the English language.*
- P₂ *I have not discovered the appropriate terminology in the subject of Electromedical Engineering. Possibly because this utility is free. Nonetheless, I enjoy using it to study English. Through the activities given by Duolingo, I am better able to manage my broad vocabulary. My teacher may introduce the use of Duolingo as an English test, as well as how to approach it. I hope to achieve the highest score possible on Duolingo.*
- P₃ *I am interested as to why my teacher utilizes this tool to conduct tests, as I am unable to find any Electromedical Engineering-specific terms. I am also unsure if I can utilize this tool to enhance my Electromedical Engineering vocabulary. However, I recognize that my teacher may merely want to introduce us to this technology so that we can study English for free and at our own convenience.*

The fifth excerpt demonstrates that the free version of Duolingo concentrates solely on standard English. The students could not locate any Electromedical Engineering-specific terms in the English language. In the context of Electromedical Engineering, Duolingo provided the respondents with an English-learning experience; yet, they found that Duolingo lacked Electromedical Engineering-specific vocabulary. Perhaps this is due to the fact that Duolingo's extensive vocabulary primarily pertains to common themes and situations. It also has enough vocabulary to express oneself with some circumlocutions on most issues relevant to their daily lives, such as family, hobbies and interests,

employment, travel, and current events (Abdulloh, 2021). The content of Duolingo is rather decontextualized for ESP students, but it can be used to improve their English proficiency (Jovi, An, & Mer, 2021; Milarisa, 2022; Teba, 2022). The ESP teachers are able to assign exercises that correspond to each student's level in order to track their progress while using Duolingo. The ESP teacher is responsible for leading students through the use of Duolingo, thereby focusing on the development of particular abilities, by assigning exercises that boost the skills development activities within Duolingo.

Its Use of Inauthentic Pictures

The students often bring up the inauthentic images that Duolingo offers. They need actual illustrations to assist learners in distinguishing between a word's meaning and its Electromedical Engineering-specific vocabulary since they anticipate having this vocabulary as part of the test.

Excerpt 6

- P₁ *I am confident that Duolingo can be utilized to study English not only in school but also in any environment where I can access a device and a strong internet connection. However, I discovered that Duolingo delivers the most vivid image. It is interesting, but I would want the actual image to identify the visuals and correlate them with the appropriate vocabulary. Nevertheless, it is acceptable to have a cartoon or fabricated figures. It still aids me in expanding my vocabulary in general.*
- P₂ *I am curious whether Duolingo are able to provide the real picture or not. I think may be because my teacher introduces the free account of Duolingo so the picture is not real. Maybe the colorful picture aims to attract the student's attention. I am sure that the picture still helps me to improve my English proficiency, especially in vocabulary through Duolingo.*
- P₃ *I prefer the authentic images that Duolingo provides. It helps me to comprehend the word. Occasionally, it can be quite difficult to comprehend the images because they are given with unauthentic images. In addition, I am confident that Duolingo encourages me to study English, despite the fact that I have not yet discovered the Electromedical Engineering vocabulary.*

Excerpt six identifies that the most vivid image through Duolingo is interesting, but the actual image makes it easier to identify the visuals and correlate them with the appropriate vocabulary. The students argue that Duolingo facilitates them to deal with the English vocabulary. The use of pictures has a positive effect on students' vocabulary mastery and the process of understanding the meaning is easier (Dawamuddin & Timur, 2021; Romadhon, Indrayanti, & Qurohman, 2022). However, vocabulary knowledge may not be the word knowledge components, but rather mastery of those components through recognition versus recall (Norbert Schmitt, 2019). The usage of images at this point assists students in recalling their earlier knowledge and experiences with the word. Words are the building blocks of a language because they label objects, activities, and concepts, without which it would be impossible to communicate the intended meaning (Ansari, Vahdany, & Sabouri, 2016). Moreover, vocabulary acquisition using both labels and pictures is

helpful and more successful than acquisition using only labels (Lin & Yu, 2017; Shadieff, Wu, & Huang, 2020). Respondents prefer using actual images on Duolingo because it helps their comprehension of new terminology through actual visuals, especially when dealing with the test.

Its Lack of an Interactive Learning Process

Due to the proliferation and spread of technology in the twenty-first century, Duolingo and other language-learning technologies have emerged. Regarding the utilization of Duolingo, students noted that it lacked an interactive process, since they prefer direct dialogue, particularly when it comes to mastering pronunciation.

Excerpt 7

- P₁ *I compare my experience with Duolingo to playing by myself. It resembles a game in which there is no interaction between players. Perhaps it's because I have a free account.*
- P₂ *Playing Duolingo is often passive. The activity is predominantly one-sided. I am considering upgrading to a paid Duolingo account so that I can explore further.*
- P₃ *I am certain that Duolingo is an interactive assessment tool, but I am unable to determine where interaction occurs. During the test, I feel at ease, and the assessment process is enjoyable. In contrast, I require direct response from the other player. When I utilized my premium Duolingo account, I'm sure I was expected to receive feedback.*

Excerpt seven identifies that there is no interaction between players. Moreover, the activity is predominantly one-sided. Students required direct responses from the other player. Different students' perceptions of Duolingo's lack of an interactive assessment process in contrast with prior research, which indicates that the Duolingo application is interactive because it offers numerous activity options, including listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Tiara, Rahman, & Handrianto, 2021). To foster students' critical thinking, it appears that how and why questions should be asked first. It must also be followed by asking more profound, more critical questions regarding the learning process mediated by Duolingo, its design and its application in the classroom--while recognizing the varied impact of individual learner differences (Shortt et al., 2021). In addition to having difficulty understanding their Duolingo learning progress regarding real-world language use, the students believed that their language skills outside of the application tasks were inadequate.

CONCLUSION

This study seeks to determine how vocational students perceive ELSA through Duolingo. The results highlighted the impressions students had when the teacher using Duolingo as a tool for assessing their English language skills, including (1) an engaging assessment tool, (2) facilitating an autonomous language skills assessment situation, (3) a feeling of positive motivation, and (4) an increase in vocabulary mastery. However, they also cite Duolingo's flaws, such as (1) its inability to offer students with specialized Electromedical Engineering vocabulary,

(2) Duolingo's visual use of only images that are not genuine, and (3) Duolingo's assessment process is not interactive. In light of the perspectives of vocational students regarding the use of Duolingo as the ELSA tool, it is suggested that ESP practitioners be advised on how to effectively assess students' English competency using student-centered learning tools, particularly in the context of Indonesian EFL. Furthermore, it is crucial to consider students' needs and students' profile in applying the strategy in language assessment. It is also suggested to consider learning objectives under the perspective of ESP which emphasize English for occupational goals. Teachers must also recognize, prepare for continuous improvement, and assess the English-assessment process in teaching and learning. However, overcoming such obstacles might enhance the effectiveness of the classroom learning process.

This study was limited by its use on a single data collection technique (semi-structured interviews), which focused only on vocational students' perspectives on using Duolingo as ELSA tool. It is also important to investigate further to acquire a more representative description not only in vocational students' context. The subsequent study should employ triangulation data collection techniques, such as document analysis, questionnaire administration, and observation, to collect more reliable information. Another issue is that this study was limited to students in vocational academic programs. It should broaden the scope of future research, including those conducted by teachers and students. This study concluded by describing vocational students' perspectives regarding using Duolingo as an ELSA tool. A critical analytic framework should be a possibility for future studies.

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