

**THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN DUOLINGO APPLICATION IN
SHAPING EFL STUDENT MOTIVATION**

THESIS

**This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
obtaining the Bachelor's Degree in English Education.**



By:

ROMADON WITFI DEYUSON

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**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PONOROGO**

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ABSTRACT

Romadon Witfi Deyuson. The Role of Gamification in Duolingo Application in Shaping EFL Students' Motivation. Thesis. English Education Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. Advisor 1 Dr. Ana Maghfiroh M.Pd. B.I., Advisor 2 Muhammad Lukman Syafii, S.Pd, M.Pd.

This research aims to: (1) Analyze how gamification features in Duolingo influence students' motivation in learning English as a foreign language, (2) To describe how students perceive and respond to the gamification elements in Duolingo and how these elements shape their learning engagement and experience of students in Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo

The integration of gamification into language learning applications has changed the way students engage with English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Duolingo is one of the most popular language learning applications, incorporating gamification features such as streaks, XP, badges, and leaderboards. This study aimed to explore how Duolingo's gamification features influence students' motivation and how students perceive these features in their English learning experiences.

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design. The participants were seven university students who actively used Duolingo for learning English. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and subjected to thematic analysis. The research was theoretically framed within the Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

The findings revealed that gamification in Duolingo had a role in student learning motivation by encouraging learning consistency, adding to their sense of accomplishment, and raising their overall engagement. Streaks seemed to be the one of element mechanism for promoting consistency, whereas XP, badges, and leaderboards influence the users' achievements and satisfaction. Participants also perceived Duolingo as a combination of learning and gaming, making the learning process more enjoyable. However, some participants reported challenges such as frustration from losing streaks, competitive pressure, and repetitive learning activities.

The study concludes that Duolingo's gamification features play an important role in shaping EFL students' motivation by supporting learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These findings contribute to a better understanding of motivation in gamified language learning environments.

Keywords: Duolingo, Gamification, Motivation, Self-Determination Theory, EFL Learning.

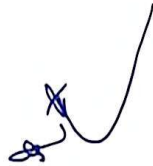
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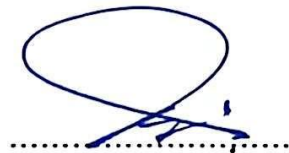
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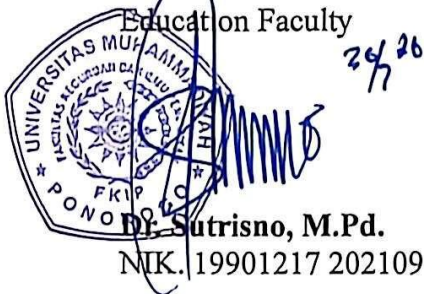
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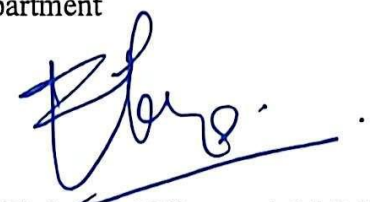


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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the following people:

1. The researcher's beloved parents, Tobroni Sonia Asmara and Yuli Sri Rahayu. And family for their endless love, prayers, encouragement, and unwavering support throughout the academic journey.
2. All lecturers and the research supervisor of the English Education Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, whose valuable guidance, constructive feedback, patience, and continuous support have been invaluable throughout the research process. The researcher is deeply grateful for all the knowledge, advice, and motivation provided during the completion of this thesis for their knowledge, guidance, and inspiration throughout the years of study.
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6. The seven participants who willingly shared their experiences and valuable insights during this research. Without their participation, this study would not have been possible.

Finally, the researcher realizes that this thesis is not free from limitations. Therefore, constructive suggestions and criticism are sincerely welcomed for future improvement. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the development of English language teaching, particularly in the use of gamification and mobile-assisted language learning to enhance students' motivation in EFL contexts.

Ponorogo, 14 July 2026

The Researcher



Romadon Witfi Deyuson

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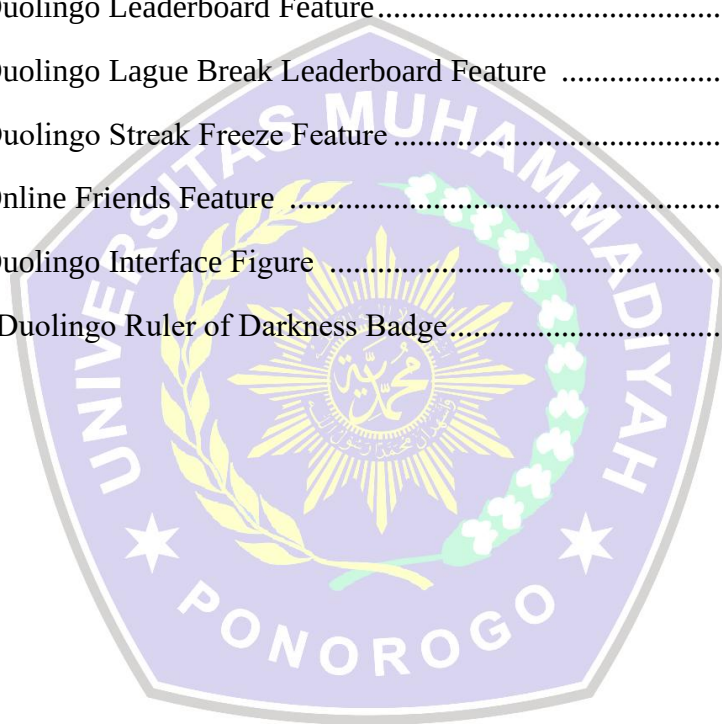
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