

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the study. It contains the research background, research questions, research purposes, research significances, research scope, conceptual framework, hypothesis, and previous study.

### **A. Background**

This study explores the use of the Duolingo application to improve students' writing skills. Writing skills are considered difficult at the junior high school level (Ismail & Gistituanti, 2018). Besides that, the study finds writing applications have not been effectively used and writing problems might be the students' fear in learning writing at this level. It further discusses previous studies in Indonesia and non-Indonesia contexts. In addition, this study also refers to previous studies that clarify the focus of the research.

Writing is a communication activity that involves conveying messages or information to readers. For this reason, students must consider the topic, sentence structure, vocabulary, and fluency in writing (Utami, Rais & Setyaningsih, 2012). This shows that writing skills can develop knowledge and insight for students. Students' writing ability reflects the success of a student's language learning as it indicates students' ability to write. However, it is very unfortunate that learning of writing skills at formal schools is still rare. According to Anshori (2003), the low literacy culture was caused by a weak system for learning to write at school.

Some high school students have a problem with English writing. Some of them are vocabulary mastery, topics, or ideas in writing, and less in the use of media in learning (Ismail & Gistituanti, 2018). Students find it difficult to express their ideas or thoughts in written form. In addition, in the teaching and learning process, the teacher is not exposed to providing a variety of teaching variations. In this case, the teacher does not use visual media to stimulate students' writing skills. This causes students to feel bored, and their attention is poor; they are sleepy, and consequently, learning goals cannot be achieved.

Moreover, to hone students' writing skills, teachers use a medium that requires students to keep writing in English. One of the activities is writing sentences because students will have more opportunities to write everywhere and every time using the mobile application. Likewise, based on the preliminary observation and short interview with the English teachers at MTs Negeri 2 Garut in August. Writing activities are often done as material in English lessons because this activity is believed to improve students' writing skills. However, in practice, not all students can write English correctly. They still need more vocabulary, are confused with the formula of writing, and need media to help them learn to write. To know the student's writing skills, can see the scores students' writing in MTs Negeri 2 Garut (see in appendix B.1). Moreover, the writer occasionally observed and followed the teaching activity while doing a teaching practicum program at this school and found that the writer could explore this activity more. One of them is by finding out how their writing skills time by time.

The use of media in the learning process is one method for improving learning quality. Duolingo assists students in learning English. This application provides speaking, listening, reading, and writing materials. Duolingo is a mobile based language application that combines visuals, audio and questions about a language's grammar. Duolingo helps users become skilled writers in the language (Cindy & Isabel, 2020).

Fun learning media is required for students to enjoy the learning process. Learning to use the Duolingo application is designed with game features so that it is more interesting and adapts to activities and learning English styles. In Duolingo applications, users or learners must complete various types of exercises, such as multiple choice, writing, matching, and speaking through the microphone in the application. By using repeated tests or problem exercises in lessons, learners cannot proceed to the next level if they have not been able to work on the previous level.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of mobile applications in improving EFL students' skills. Fatin (2021) examines the use of the Cake application in improving vocabulary mastery. This study shows that the cake application can improve vocabulary mastery skills with drill techniques that can be

used to help students practice memorizing vocabulary that is learned repeatedly using the cake application. Hafifah (2021) shows that improving students' speaking skills is effective when using the Duolingo application. In addition, children's reading skills can be improved by using mobile phone content (Joshi, 2018).

From the previous studies above, the technology applications in various learning context can be applied to support English teaching and learning activities. Therefore, this research centers on finding students' writing skills in MTs Negeri 2 Garut and the effect of Duolingo on their writing skills. Clearly, in this school, students' writing skills are only sometimes at a low level when doing the conventional method. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how students' writing abilities develop as they use Duolingo. This research will investigate the effect of the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills in junior high schools of MTs Negeri 2 Garut.

## **B. Research Questions**

This study formulates two research questions. The first one is concerned with describing the process of the implementation of Duolingo application in students' writing skills. The second one deals with the effectiveness of the Duolingo application in improving student writing skills. Both questions aim to determine the effectiveness of the Duolingo Application in improving students' writing skills. The two research questions are provided as follows:

1. How are students' writing skills with using Duolingo application?
2. How are students' writing skills without using Duolingo application?
3. Does using the Duolingo application give an effect on students' writing skills?

## **C. Research Purposes**

This study focuses on the effectiveness of the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills. This study looks at the outcomes of learning to write using the Duolingo application, as well as the effectiveness of the application. Two research objectives were established based on the problem. First, this research to find out about students' writing skills with using Duolingo application. Second,

this research uses the Duolingo application to find out about students' writing skills without using Duolingo application. Third, this research determines the effects of the Duolingo application on students' writing skills in seventh grade MTs Negeri 2 Garut.

#### **D. Research Significances**

This research has two benefits. First, theoretically, the result of this study can be used by English teachers and further researchers as a reference that using the Duolingo application is an alternative way to improve students' writing skills. Second, practically, the result of this study can be used by English teachers as an interesting type of media in the teaching and learning process, especially in the teaching of writing. Both benefits contribute to improving students' writing skills using the Duolingo application.

#### **E. Research Scope**

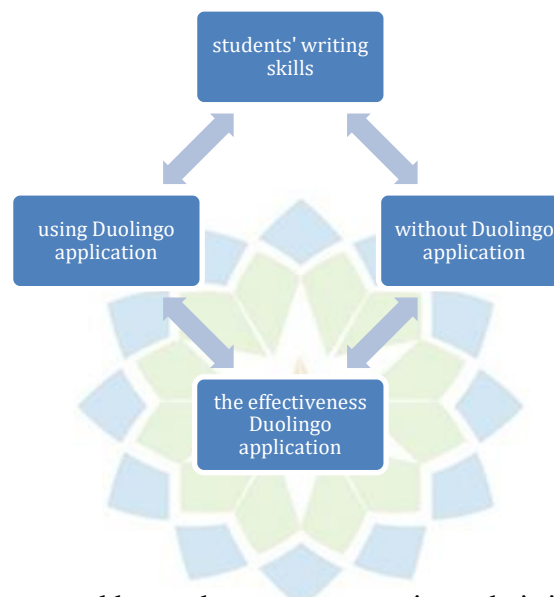
This project aims to find out the effectiveness of the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills at the junior high school level. This study's scope includes the subject, object, and research site. First, the subject is seventh-grade students because the Duolingo app is good for beginners to learn English, especially in writing. Second, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of the Duolingo application on students' writing skills and the improvement of students' writing skills using the Duolingo application. Third, the site of this research is located at MTs Negeri 2 Garut, a junior high school in Indonesia.

#### **F. Conceptual Framework**

This project is designed to investigate the effectiveness of using the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills. The present study is concerned with students' writing skills since these productive skills need to be improved by using technology. Using technology in the classroom provides practical tools for teachers and students to interact and enhance their language abilities (Marleni, 2020). The use of technology, as Marleni (2020) suggests, may facilitate the

learning of students, especially in writing. Therefore, this study presents the Duolingo application that enables the study to investigate its effectiveness in learning writing. The framework can be seen in the following picture. Figure 1 shows the significance between students' writing skills and the use of the Duolingo application.

**Figure 1 Conceptual Framework**



Writing skills are used by students to communicate their ideas through written language. Writing is a form of communication between the writer and the reader (Reszy, 2013). Students can express their ideas through short functional texts in various language styles. One goal of improving English in junior high school is for students to be able to write short functions in the form of procedures, descriptive, narratives, and recounts (Depdiknas, 2006). In this study, students' writing skills are examined in terms of content and fluency in writing, so their writing can be read.

This study examines the impact of the Duolingo application on seventh-grade students at MTs Negeri 2 Garut. Furthermore, this research takes a sample from two classes to investigate the effect of the application on students' writing skills. The first class is an experimental class that is treated with the Duolingo application. The second is a control class that is conducted without Duolingo application. The learning outcomes of students who use the Duolingo application are compared to

those of students who do not use the Duolingo application. Finally, the test results are used to figure out the effectiveness of its application in writing course.

The media is an effective learning method to help students learn in the learning process. Duolingo is a tool that helps you write more creatively (Cindy & Isabel, 2020). As a medium to develop students' writing skills, Duolingo generates students' ideas and creativity in writing. Therefore, it is recommended that Duolingo be used as a medium for improving students' writing skills to solve the problem of learning English, especially writing skills.

### **G. Hypothesis**

This study guides the hypothesis. This research is designed to investigate the effectiveness of using the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills. The researcher formulates the hypothesis as follows:

Ho: There is no significant effect of using the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills.

Ha: There is a significant effect of using the Duolingo application in improving students' writing skills.

In this study, the average scores in the experimental class and control classes are compared to determine the effectiveness of the Duolingo application on students' writing skills. If the average score in the experimental class is higher than the control class, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is approved, and the null hypothesis (Ho) is denied. Its means that the Duolingo application is effective on students' writing skills. Meanwhile, if the experimental class's average score is lower than the control class, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is denied, and the null hypothesis (Ho) is approved. Its means that the Duolingo application is not effective on students' writing skills.

## H. Previous Studies

This study looks at how the Duolingo application might help students improve their writing abilities. As a result, this study builds on previous research. The previous research have been carried out in both Indonesian and non-Indonesian contexts. Furthermore, the findings of earlier studies contribute to the gap in this study.

Previous research in an Indonesian context relate to using mobile applications to improve students' English skills. First, an investigation by Fatin (2021) examines the use of the Cake application to enhance vocabulary mastery. This study shows that the cake application can improve vocabulary mastery skills with drill techniques that can help students practice memorizing vocabulary learned repeatedly using the cake application. The study results indicate that the Cake application effectively improves students' vocabulary mastery.

Second, Hafifah (2021) conducted research on the effectiveness of Duolingo in improving students' speaking skills. This study shows that improving students' speaking skills is effective using the Duolingo application. In conducting this research, the researcher uses a quasi-experimental approach in which the population of this study is the tenth grade. This study shows that the use of Duolingo is significant in improving students' speaking skills.

This research includes results from two earlier non-Indonesian investigations. Joshi (2018) investigated the use of mobile phones to improve early grade reading skills at home. A quasi-experimental methodology was employed in this study to assess the impact of a mobile phone-based reading application on children's reading levels. The findings show mobile phones support the growing literature on improving children's reading skills.

Jašková (2014) investigated Duolingo as a new language learning website and its contribution to E-learning education". This study aims to discover Duolingo's awareness in Czech society and its effect on the Czech community student's final exams. The results showed a significant difference between the initial and the final result using Duolingo. Before using Duolingo, the score was 162.5, but after using



Duolingo, the score increased to 253.9. The score obtains was 91.4. Finally, there is a significant influence of Duolingo through students' final tests.

From the above research, the previous and the present study show the similarity in investigating mobile applications to improve students' English skills. On the other hand, the difference lies on the uses of Duolingo application to enhance students' writing skills. In this study, a mobile application is used to teach English. This investigates the professionalism of the mobile application in the development of writing skills in English. The conditions and findings of a survey of student writing skills in English learning provide the basis for this research. In addition, this study uses quasi-experimental methods to determine the effect of Duolingo applications on improving students' writing skills. Thus, it becomes a gap in this research.

