

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING *BUSUU* APPLICATION FOR ENGLISH LEARNING IN *BAHASA* CLASS OF FULL-DAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to investigate students' perceptions of using the *Busuu* application in English learning at the *Bahasa* class of the Full-Day School Program at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas. The participants were 36 students from grade 7 and 8. A mixed-method design was applied, and the data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and index categorization from Serman and Sukjaya as well as Nazir and Utami. Meanwhile, the interview data were examined through Miles and Huberman's model, which included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The perception index scores were 73.2% for general perceptions, 79.4% for ease of use, 75.1% for usefulness, and 74.6% for expectations. These numbers indicated an overall positive perception of 75.5%. The qualitative data supported these results, students expressed enjoyment in using the application, showed development in vocabulary and English skills, and felt more motivated to study English and other languages independently through *Busuu*.

Keywords: *Busuu* application; English learning; Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

INTRODUCTION

English is considered by most people to be the most indispensable second language these days due to the fact that it provides individuals with access to science, technology, and international communication. Furthermore, it is how knowledge and ideas are communicated across countries (Ilyosovna, 2020). All the same, learning how to become fluent in English will not manifest instantly. Exercise, exposure, and efforts over time are all essential. That is why English is taught through all educational levels and viewed as a fundamental subject for students to become used to. Teachers here play a determining role not only in explaining lessons but also in directing and encouraging students through methodologies suitable to their needs and capability (Monawati, 2018; Nurdyansyah and Fahyuni, 2016).

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Besides, technology has also become a part of everyday learning. Children today are exposed to gadgets, social media, and apps from childhood onwards, and they tend to impact learning automatically. A number of studies attest that learning utilizing technology can make learning fun as well as more effective (Ahmed, 2016). Given that most students already know computers and other technological instruments, it is not unexpected that they use them for learning (Sugita, Setini and Anshori, 2021). A number of applications advocate English learning by introducing structured learning, interactive activities, and even native speaker interaction (Bonfield *et al.*, 2020). One such popular one is *Busuu* as it introduces structured learning as well as interactive activities and also provides learning opportunities from native speakers (Sophonhiranrak, 2021). The application follows the CEFR syllabus and is used by millions of learners all over the world (Winans, 2020).

Related to the use of applications for learning activity, MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas is one of the schools that tries to follow the trends. The school has a full day school program aiming to develop students' academic and spiritual potential by offering a structured and intensive learning in three classes, namely Tahfidz, Science and *Bahasa* class. Tahfidz class focuses on memorization of Al-Qur'an. Science class is for enrichment of science. *Bahasa* class focusses on exploration of English subject. In *Bahasa* class, however, students was mostly at the basic levels of English. They tended to struggle in comprehending upper level vocabulary and grammar. They also lacked confidence in speaking in front of their classmates. With these problems, the teacher tried introducing *Busuu* as a supplementary learning tool that they could use not only in class but also for personal studies. The outcomes ran both ways. Some students reported feeling inspired by activities and having fun with them, whereas other students could not use it due to technical issues or lack of proficiency in languages (Kholis, 2021). These contrasts made one consideration most important how do students really feel about learning English through *Busuu*.

Previous research has attempted to ask comparable questions in various contexts. AlDakhil and AlFadda (2022) explored the EFL learners' perception towards the application of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to secondary students in Saudi Arabia in a mixed-method study through survey and a semi-structured interview. The result showed a positive response towards the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Wulandari and Sabat (2024) investigated university students who

practiced with *Busuu* for self-access learning in Indonesia. The data were gathered through online questionnaire and interview. The result shows positive response towards the use of *Busuu* as a useful and effective medium in learning English autonomously. In addition, Afifka and Daulay (2024) investigated how *Busuu* contributed to learning vocabulary in senior high schools. Gathered using questionnaire and interview, the data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The result revealed the effectiveness of the application for about 83.57% and categorized as good in improving students' vocabulary. The application also has interactive audio visual features and systematically arranged material. Altogether, these prior investigations point to strong promise for *Busuu* to serve English learning in some contexts. Much less is known about how younger students in full-day schooling react to the app and thus this investigation is pertinent. In grasping students' responses, one will need to consider the element of perception. Perception refers to how individuals draw meaning from experience and may be positive or negative (Qiong, 2017). Perception upon learning English will make one comprehend whether they will wish to utilize a tool or not. Perception is thus a good notion to utilize when attempting to comprehend how students react to technology-supported learning.

In this study, the theoretical framework utilized is Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989). TAM defines technology use through two core factors: perceived usefulness, that is belief that the instrument facilitates one's performance, and perceived ease of use, that is belief that one's instrument is easy to use. Other studies suggest that enjoyment and affordability also play their role in technology use (Moon and Kim, 2001; AlDakhil and AlFadda, 2022). Accordingly, students' attitudes toward *Busuu* are examined through four dimensions: general impression, ease of use, usefulness, and expectations.

Busuu itself was launched in 2008 and has progressed to become a recognized platform for learning languages, like English. Systematic lessons are complemented by interactive activities and include opportunities for learners to interact with native speakers. They are aligned along the CEFR framework such that learners may track their progress step by step from beginner to advanced levels (Sophonhiranrak, 2021; Winans, 2020). With vocabulary practice, speaking drills, and interaction with the community, *Busuu* is now highly used individually as well as in-class (Bonfield *et al.*, 2020). In light of this background, this study aims to uncover students' perceptions

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about learning English using *Busuu* at the *Bahasa* class of Full-Day School Program in MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas. The research focuses on four scopes general perception, ease of use, helpfulness, and expectations to develop a more clear picture about how students feel about the app and if it is capable of becoming a complementary tool throughout their learning process.

METHOD

This research utilized a mixed-method design by blending quantitative and qualitative paradigms for finding out students' perceptions of using the *Busuu* application in English learning in the *Bahasa* class of the Full Day School Program at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas in greater detail. Questionnaires were utilized for gathering quantitative data, and interview questions provided qualitative evidence and other observations for supporting findings. The research was conducted in March and April 2025 in MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas, specifically in *Bahasa* class of Full-Day School Program.

Participants in this research were 36 students comprising 17 from grade 8 and 19 from grade 7. For such a small population size, all students participated to ensure all individuals' perceptions were captured. The quantitative data was collected via closed-ended questionnaire having statements of 25, structured in four sections: general perception, ease of use, usefulness, and expectations. A four-point Likert scale was employed, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Qualitative data was collected via semi-structured interview from 3–4 students who scored highest on the questionnaire. Interviews had five directive questions covering students' experience, perceived benefits, challenges encountered, learning motivation levels, and intentions to use *Busuu*.

For data analysis, quantitative results were examined using descriptive statistics based on Suherman and Sukjaya in Malik (2018) using the formula $P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$. The proportion of responses were coded in four levels: strongly negative (0–25%), negative (26–50%), positive (51–75%), and strongly positive (76–100%). The formula used was. Qualitative data were examined based on Miles and Huberman's framework using three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Mezmir, 2020). The dual use of analyses enabled both numeric evidence and descriptive comprehension to draw students' perceptions regarding *Busuu* more comprehensively

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

In this research, data were obtained using questionnaire and supplemented by interview. The questionnaire consisted of 25 statements and were aggregated into four sections: students' general attitudes toward *Busuu*, ease of use, useful tool in learning languages, and future use expectations. For additional insights, some students had also been interviewed. The interviewees had been chosen among students with highest scores in perception because they provided more detailed comments regarding use of *Busuu* as part of their learning process.

Perceptions on using *Busuu* in general

The following table presents students' perceptions of using the *Busuu* application in general.

Table 1. Students' Perception using *Busuu* in General

| No | Statement | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|---|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 1. | I use <i>Busuu</i> once a day. | 0 | 21 | 15 | 0 |
| | | 0% | 58.3% | 41.7% | 0% |
| 2. | I used the <i>Busuu</i> application for a few days according to the learning target I set at the beginning. | 6 | 26 | 4 | 0 |
| | | 16.7% | 72.2% | 11.1% | 0% |
| 3. | I spend more than 10 minutes using <i>Busuu</i> . | 1 | 29 | 6 | 0 |
| | | 2.8% | 80.6% | 16.7% | 0% |
| 4. | I like all the features in the application <i>Busuu</i> (grammar practice, vocabulary practice, reading practice, writing practice, listening practice, and sharing feedback with different users). | 18 | 16 | 1 | 1 |
| | | 50% | 44.4% | 2.8% | 2.8% |
| 5. | I think that the automated feedback in <i>Busuu</i> is excellent (when your answer turns green if correct or red when you make an error). | 16 | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| | | 44.4% | 52.8% | 2.8% | 0% |
| 6. | I share my writing exercise with <i>Busuu</i> users. | 1 | 20 | 13 | 2 |
| | | 2.8% | 55.6% | 36.1% | 5.6% |
| 7. | I provide correcting/ feedback for other <i>Busuu</i> users. | 1 | 21 | 13 | 1 |
| | | 2.8% | 58.3% | 36.1% | 2.8% |

According to the results of the calculations, the perception index in this area is 73.2%, reflecting a "Positive" perception of the overall use of the *Busuu* app (range (51%-75%). This represents that a majority of students perceived the overall use of the *Busuu* app positively in light of how much time they spent with it, how often they engaged in it, and their perceptions of the app in terms of features like grammar, vocabulary, and automated feedback. A majority of students had a good perception about utilizing *Busuu* in general. Some issues appeared regarding technical issues and access restrictions as shown on the result of the interview.

“Kadang saya ngga bisa buka aplikasinya karena internet nya lambat dan juga beberapa pelajaran yang harus pake akun premium dan itu berbayar. Jadi saya tidak bisa membuka semuanya”. (Student 1, 2025)

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'Sometimes I can't access the application because the internet connection was so bad and some lessons should use premium and paid account. So I can't access all the features'. (Student 1, 2025)

Another problem was mentioned by the other student that not having premium account limited their exploration of the features on the application.

"Kadang itu ada di sinyal, sama karena akunku itu bukan akun premium jadi nggak bisa eksplor lebih saat pakai Busuu." (Student 2, 2025)

'Sometimes it is signal problem, and because my account is not premium so I can't explore more when I use the *Busuu* application'. (Student 2, 2025)

These statements reflect how low network speed and limited access for regular accounts created obstacles to students' overall experience with the application.

Perceptions towards Busuu as an easy learning tool

The following table presents students' perceptions towards *Busuu* as an easy learning tool.

Table 2. Students' Perception Towards *Busuu* as an Easy Learning Tool

| No | Statement | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|---|-------|-------|-------|----|
| 1. | Registering to <i>Busuu</i> is easy. | 13 | 21 | 2 | 0 |
| | | 36.1% | 58.3% | 5.6% | 0% |
| 2. | The instructions for using <i>Busuu</i> are clear. | 9 | 26 | 1 | 0 |
| | | 25% | 72.2% | 2.8% | 0% |
| 3. | I find <i>Busuu</i> simple in design and easy to navigate. | 12 | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 33.3% | 66.7% | 0% | 0% |
| 4. | I can manage my account and switch between lessons smoothly. | 0 | 34 | 2 | 0 |
| | | 0% | 94.4% | 5.6% | 0% |
| 5. | I think of <i>Busuu</i> as an accessible resource when I struggle with a particular topic in class. | 6 | 25 | 5 | 0 |
| | | 16.7% | 69.4% | 13.9% | 0% |
| 6. | I enjoyed learning the language using <i>Busuu</i> . | 11 | 22 | 3 | 0 |
| | | 30.6% | 61.1% | 8.3% | 0% |

This page's index score was 79.4%, which put it in the category of "Very Positive" (76%-100%). That would translate to students overwhelmingly thinking *Busuu* to be highly usable program with brief instructions, effortless navigation, and positive functionality for self-direction and flexibility in learning. Although students found it hard to get started with *Busuu* initially, they adapted after instructions by colleagues and mentors.

"Waktu pertama kali pakai Busuu, aku agak bingung soalnya belum paham sama fitur-fiturnya. Tapi karena ada arahan dari mentor dan juga dibantu teman-teman, akhirnya aku bisa ngerti fitur-fitur di aplikasi Busuu." (Student 3, 2025)

'The first time I used *Busuu*, I was a bit confused because I didn't really understand the features. But after getting some guidance from my mentor and help from my friends, I could be able to learn the features in the *Busuu* application.' (Student 3, 2025)

This proves that while initial struggle with the use of the program was difficult, supportive learning environments made it easy for students to acclimate easily to its use.

Perceptions towards Busuu as a useful language tool

The following table presents students' perceptions towards *Busuu* as a useful language tool.

Table 3. Students' Perception Towards *Busuu* as a Useful Language Tool

| No | Statement | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|---|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 1. | <i>Busuu</i> has improved my overall knowledge of the language. | 16 | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| | | 44.4% | 52.8% | 2.8% | 0% |
| 2. | <i>Busuu</i> has motivated me to learn more about the language. | 9 | 22 | 4 | 1 |
| | | 25% | 61.1% | 11.1% | 2.8% |
| 3. | <i>Busuu</i> has increased my responsibility for my own learning. | 1 | 26 | 8 | 1 |
| | | 2.8% | 72.2% | 22.2% | 2.8% |
| 4. | <i>Busuu</i> has improved my academic performance in the classroom. | 5 | 23 | 8 | 0 |
| | | 13.9% | 63.9% | 22.2% | 0% |
| 5. | <i>Busuu</i> has given me the courage to participate with my teacher in class. | 1 | 26 | 9 | 0 |
| | | 2.8% | 72.2% | 25% | 0% |
| 6. | <i>Busuu</i> has given me a chance to design a learning plan that suits my needs. | 2 | 27 | 6 | 1 |
| | | 5.6% | 75% | 16.7% | 2.8% |
| 7. | I think of <i>Busuu</i> as a helpful learning tool. | 13 | 19 | 4 | 0 |
| | | 36.1% | 52.8% | 11.1% | 0% |

In this phase, the perception index was 75.1%, thus falling under the "Positive" category. "This indicates that by far most students saw *Busuu* as an effective learning tool for enhancing their language proficiency, encouraging learner autonomy in the learning process, and enhancing their academic results. Yet, though students accomplished a large benefit from this use, some technical issues pertaining to the content of the application were also identified.

“Bingungnya itu misalnya cuma salah satu huruf atau kurang gitu tapi jadi salah semua dinomor itu. Audionya terlalu cepat terus ada beberapa yang nggak bisa diulangi lagi jadi bingung.” (Student 2, 2025)

‘What confuses me is, for example, if only one letter is wrong or missing, the whole answer gets marked wrong. The audio is too fast, and some parts can’t be replayed, so it makes me confused.’ (Student 2, 2025)

The other student also mentioned another kind of problem encountered.

“Ketika kata-kata bahasa Inggrisnya atau bahasanya itu ada yang sulit gitu. Terus sama satu lagi kadang kalau mau itu tuh yang jawabnya itu kadang gak ada, di pilihan itu jawabannya kadang error gitu. Aplikasinya lagi perbaikan mungkin jadi kadang tiba-tiba error.” (Student 4, 2025)

‘Sometimes, the English terms or the language in the application can be hard to comprehend. Additionally, there are moments when I wish to respond, but the response choices don’t show up or there is an error. Maybe the application is under maintenance, so it sometimes suddenly shows errors.’ (Student 4, 2025)

These statements show that although it was perceived that *Busuu* is an effective learning resource, students struggled with speed audio, rigorous checking of answers, and technological issues. These problems sometimes created confusion and frustration when responding to vocabulary and grammar exercises.

Expectations regarding *Busuu*

The following table presents students' expectations regarding *Busuu*.

Table 4. Students' Expectations Regarding *Busuu*

| No | Statement | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|--|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 1. | <i>Busuu</i> works as I expected when I downloaded it. | 4 | 31 | 1 | 0 |
| | | 11.1% | 86.1% | 2.8% | 0% |
| 2. | I have a plan of getting English language certificate after finishing my current level in <i>Busuu</i> . | 6 | 21 | 8 | 1 |
| | | 16.7% | 58.3% | 22.2% | 2.8% |
| 3. | I consider using <i>Busuu</i> to learn other languages in the future. | 11 | 20 | 5 | 0 |
| | | 30.6% | 55.6% | 13.9% | 0% |
| 4. | <i>Busuu</i> has encouraged me to download other language applications. | 2 | 18 | 15 | 1 |
| | | 5.6% | 50% | 41.7% | 2.8% |
| 5. | <i>Busuu</i> has increased my interest in learning the language. | 12 | 19 | 5 | 0 |
| | | 33.3% | 52.8% | 13.9% | 0% |

The perception index was 74.6%, rated as "Positive." This proves that students enjoy positive attitudes toward future use of *Busuu*, i.e., learning other languages, getting certificates, and finding other capabilities of the program. Apart from that, students mentioned that they will keep using the application for learning English and possibly other languages.

“Saya akan terus pakai aplikasi Busuu karena saya jadi lebih bisa mempelajari banyak kosakata dengan mudah dan bahasa lain di aplikasi Busuu. Pengen belajar bahasa Korea, terus juga ada bahasa Jepang.” (Student 2, 2025)

‘I will keep using *Busuu* because I can learn more about vocabulary easily and other languages in the application. I want to learn Korean and there is Japanese too.’ (Student 2, 2025)

Discussion

Students can improve their language proficiency by using language learning application, like *Busuu*, since the application can provide joyful learning activities.

They kept practicing grammar exercises, building vocabulary, and were provided with instant feedback such that lengthy learning, long-term memory, and self-determination motivation were enhanced (Nation, 2013; Laufer, 2003; Shute, 2008). This is consistent with Wulandari and Sabat (2024) and Afifka and Daulay (2024), who both highlighted *Busuu's* practicality in autonomous learning and vocabulary acquisition. The outcomes in aggregate confirm the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), in which perceived usefulness and ease of use governed the positive usage of *Busuu* among students (Davis, 1989; AlDakhil and AlFadda, 2022).

The ease of the learning application can also help students learning in which most of the students found *Busuu* easy to use due to its simple-to-understand design, simple to navigate, and useful instructions. This represents an analysis of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), indicating that perceived ease of use influences users' attitudes and adoption (Davis, 1989; AlDakhil and AlFadda, 2022). AlDakhil and AlFadda (2022) and Wulandari and Sabat (2024) emphasized consistent results by referring to *Busuu's* ease of accessibility and organized interface as inevitable learning tools for autonomous learning. Learning anywhere and everywhere corresponds to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), allowing individualized education ((Miangah and Nezarat, 2012; Kukulska-Hulme and Shield, 2008). Although some learners were at first bewildered by specific sections, general results emphasize that the accessibility and flexibility of *Busuu* significantly improve learners' engagement and dedication

The use of learning application can facilitate improving their English skills and lead them to be responsible for learning. This is supported by Wulandari and Sabat (2024), who have proven *Busuu's* effectiveness in learning grammar and vocabulary, and Afifka and Daulay (2024), who indicated its effectiveness in independent vocabulary learning. Similarly, AlDakhil and AlFadda (2022) emphasized that its simple design boosts motivation and self-study confidence. Despite being confronted with some challenges, such as quick audio, the student response was an indication of learner autonomy Little (2007), since aspects such as immediate feedback and guided learning paths maintained their interest. Benson (2013) and Lee (2016) mentioned that technological support enables autonomy and addresses learners' needs. *Busuu* was useful in the development of competencies and is an aid capable of causing students to become more engaged, accountable, and independent learners.

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With various benefits gained from the use of *Busuu* application for learning English, it is possible for students to continue using *Busuu* for English and other languages. They were encouraged by the offering of certificates, advanced classes, and gamified rewards, which support intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Dornyei, 2001; (AlDakhil and AlFadda, 2022). Learning pathways and achievements in *Busuu* demonstrate long-term second language learning motivation and a growth mindset. In spite of limitations such as paid premium functions and internet connection problems, students continued to perceive the app as a long-term learning investment. This supports Stockwell and Hubbard (2013), who contend that mobile learning apps motivate learners when providing personalization, autonomy, and long-term gains. According to the Technology Acceptance Model, the perceived utility and enjoyment influenced students' intentions to consistently use the app. In general, *Busuu* was seen as an easy, encouraging, and practical resource for continuous language learning.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined students' perceptions of learning English through using the *Busuu* app at the *Bahasa* class of Full-Day School Program, MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas. Index scores indicated positive perceptions in general: 73.2%, for general perception, 79.4%, for ease of use, 75.1%, for usefulness and 74.6%, for expectations, resulting in an overall perception score of 75.5%, which falls into the "Positive" category. Vocabulary and grammar practice, listening activities, and flexible self-direction were highly appreciated by students and reinforced their skills and motivation. The interview results supported these findings, suggesting that *Busuu* facilitates vocabulary building, language development, and sustained learning interests. Hints of limitations such as internet fluctuation, restricted premium usage, and some time-related glitches did not refute these findings. Instead, they affirmed that despite these limitations, the app remains a convenient, flexible, and motivational autonomous English learning tool.

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