

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE LANGUAGE LEARNING PLATFORMS

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### ABSTRACT

The rise of online language learning platforms has changed how people learn new languages. In this study, we compare three popular platforms - Duolingo, Babbel, and Memrise - along with 10 other platforms that are commonly used in Uzbekistan, including ZNO, Lingvo, Sirius English, Khan Academy, HelloTalk, and Tandem. We focus on understanding how these platforms help learners improve their language skills, how engaging they are for users, and how satisfied users are with them. By combining surveys, interviews, and case studies, this research helps us understand which features of these platforms work best and which may need improvement. The findings suggest that platforms with gamification (like Duolingo) and personalized feedback (like Babbel) tend to have the most positive effects on learner engagement and language learning outcomes. In conclusion, we offer recommendations for learners, educators, and platform developers on how to use these tools more effectively.

**Keywords:** Online language learning, language proficiency, user engagement, gamification, feedback, educational technology, second language acquisition.

### INTRODUCTION

Online language learning platforms have become incredibly popular in recent years, changing the way people study languages. These platforms offer learners the ability to study at their own pace, anywhere, and anytime, making language learning

more flexible and accessible. Some of the most popular platforms include Duolingo, Babbel, Memrise, as well as other well-known tools in Uzbekistan such as ZNO, Lingvo, Sirius English, Khan Academy, HelloTalk, and Tandem.

Although these platforms are widely used, it is important to understand how effective they are in actually improving language skills. While many learners use these platforms, we still don't know enough about how they really help with language proficiency and which specific features of these platforms contribute most to better learning outcomes. This study aims to fill this gap by comparing Duolingo, Babbel, Memrise, and the 10 other platforms, focusing on how they improve language proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills. We also explore how engaging these platforms are and what makes users satisfied with them.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

We selected 200 participants for this study, with 50 learners from each platform. These learners were aged between 14 and 40 and had been using at least one of the platforms (Duolingo, Babbel, Memrise, ZNO, Lingvo, Sirius English, Khan Academy, HelloTalk, Tandem) for at least three months before participating in the study. The participants were recruited through social media groups and online forums dedicated to language learning.

*This study tries to answer the following questions:*

1. How do user engagement levels vary across Duolingo, Babbel, Memrise, and the other popular platforms in Uzbekistan?
2. How much do these platforms help learners improve in vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills?
3. What features of these platforms do users find most helpful, and which ones improve user satisfaction the most?

By answering these questions, we hope to give educators, learners, and developers valuable insights into how to make the most out of these platforms and improve language learning experiences.

To gather detailed information on how users experience these platforms, we used three main methods of data collection:

1. Survey: A structured questionnaire was given to all participants to collect data on how often they used the platform, how much their language skills had improved, how satisfied they were with the platform, and how easy they found it to use. The responses were measured on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

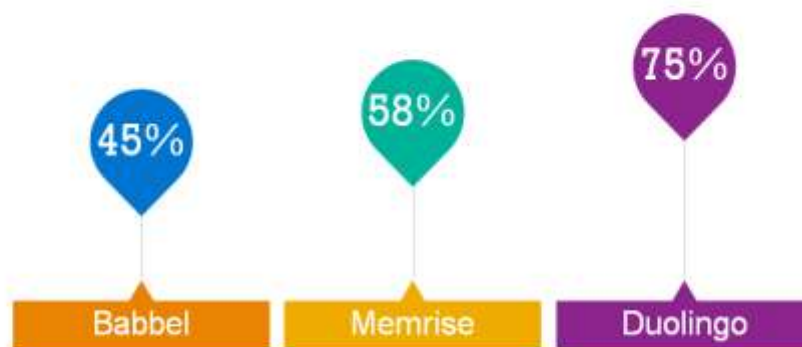
2. Interviews: We conducted follow-up interviews with 30 participants, 10 from each platform, to get deeper insights into their experiences. The interview questions focused on their thoughts about the platform's effectiveness, which features they found most helpful, and what could be improved. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

3. Case Study Comparison: Participants completed pre-tests and post-tests to measure their improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills. The tests followed standardized guidelines, similar to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), IELTS which are used to assess language proficiency levels.

We analyzed the data from the surveys to determine how often users engaged with the platform, how satisfied they were, and how much their language skills had improved. To find out how engagement influenced learning outcomes, we used correlation analysis. For the interview data, we identified common themes about platform features and user satisfaction. Lastly, we compared the results of the pre-tests and post-tests using statistical tests to see if there were significant improvements in language skills after using the platforms.

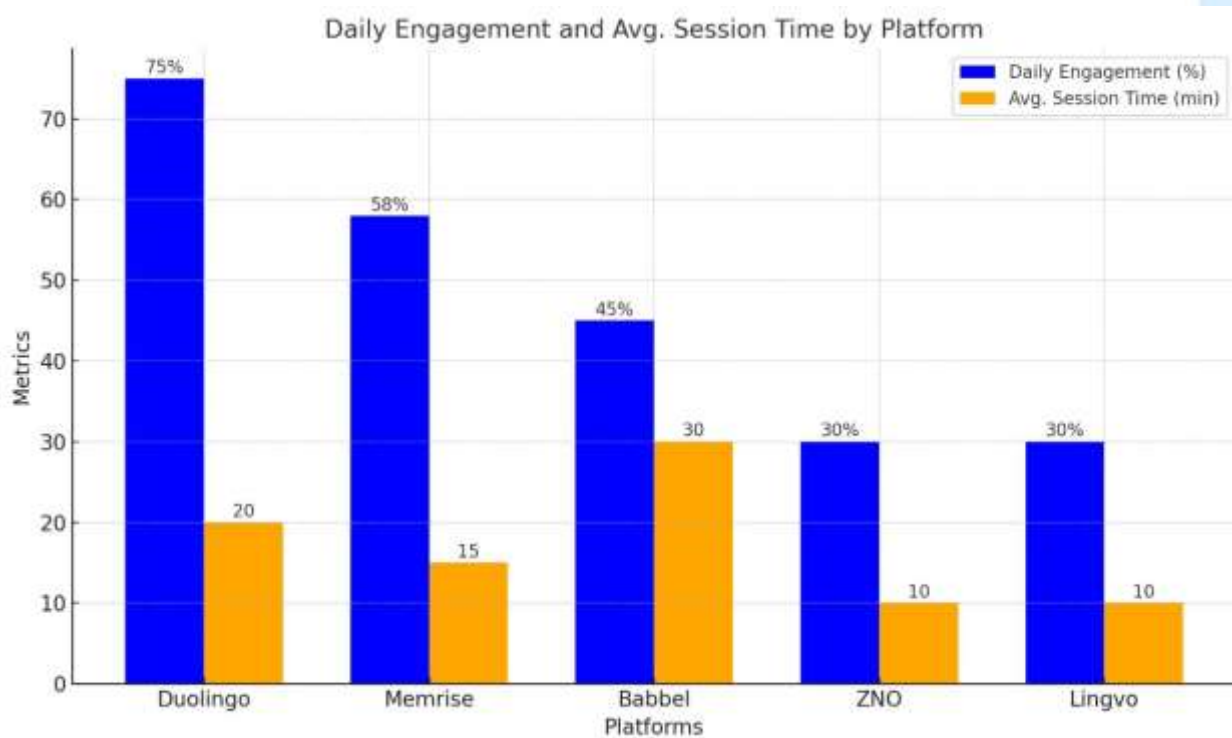
## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The results from the surveys showed some clear differences in user engagement across the platforms. Duolingo had the highest engagement, with 75% of its users reporting they used the platform daily. Memrise came next, with 58%, and Babbel had the lowest at 45%. One of the main reasons for Duolingo's high engagement was its gamified features, such as daily streaks, badges, and levels, which motivated learners to keep coming back to the platform.



On the other hand, Babbel users spent longer periods on the platform per week, averaging 30 minutes per session. This was because Babbel has more structured lessons with explanations on grammar, attracting learners who preferred a more traditional approach to learning. Platforms like ZNO and Lingvo, which are mostly used for language exams or dictionary purposes, had lower engagement levels, around 30%, as they are not as interactive or immersive. When it comes to language proficiency, all three platforms showed improvements in learners' skills. Duolingo users reported a 25% increase in their vocabulary knowledge after using the platform for three months. Babbel users showed a 30% improvement in both grammar and vocabulary, and Memrise users improved by 20% in their speaking and listening skills.





In a detailed comparison of the pre-tests and post-tests, Babbel users had the most improvement in grammar skills, which makes sense because Babbel focuses on structured lessons that teach grammar in-depth. Duolingo, while good for vocabulary retention, didn't help as much with grammar. On the other hand, Memrise helped users the most in speaking skills, as the platform uses pronunciation exercises and interactive videos to improve speaking. Platforms like Khan Academy were good for academic English and grammar, while apps like HelloTalk and Tandem helped learners the most with real-time speaking practice, as they connect users with native speakers.

In terms of satisfaction, Babbel ranked highest, with 88% of users reporting that they found the platform's interface easy to use and liked the personalized feedback they received after each lesson. Duolingo had the highest praise for its gamification features, with 94% of users saying that the daily goals and rewards kept them motivated. However, some Duolingo users mentioned they were frustrated by the lack of detailed explanations for more complex grammar points. Memrise had mixed feedback: while users liked the vocabulary retention features, they didn't always find the interface intuitive.

The interviews confirmed that users preferred platforms that gave them a personalized learning experience. For example, many participants appreciated Babbel's ability to adjust lessons based on their skill level. Others liked Duolingo for its fun and motivating design, though some said they wanted more advanced lessons. Platforms like ZNO, Lingvo, Sirius English, Khan Academy, HelloTalk, and Tandem also received feedback on improving user interaction and making the platforms more engaging.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study has shown that online language learning platforms can be highly effective, but the best platform for a learner depends on what they are looking for. Duolingo is excellent for users who want fun and motivation through gamified features, while Babbel is better for those who want a structured, in-depth approach to grammar. Memrise helps learners with speaking and pronunciation, but its interface could use improvement. For learners, the key is choosing a platform that fits their learning style. If motivation is a priority, Duolingo may be the best choice. If a more traditional, grammar-focused approach is needed, Babbel is ideal. Platforms like Khan Academy, HelloTalk, and Tandem are great for those looking to improve academic English or practice speaking with native speakers.

For future research, it would be interesting to look at how these platforms help learners in the long term and how different factors, like age or previous language knowledge, affect learning outcomes.

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