Fondi Application To Enhance Students' Speaking Learning: Students' Views

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the students' perceptions of using the Fondi application in speaking practice. This research applied a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method to understand students' perceptions after using the Fondi app. The subject of the study were 11th grade students at Bandung 1 Percut Sei Tuan Private High School, there were 30 participants, 28 female students and 2 male students. Data was collected through ten questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to five students to gain deeper insights into students' experiences using the Fondi application. After the data was collected, the researcher analyzed it using Thematic Analysis. The results show that students have a generally positive perception of the Fondi app, particularly in four keys aspects: accessibility, effectiveness, interactivity and flexibility. Students found Fondi easy to use, it is not difficult to log into Fondi even for beginners, being able to speak with native speakers without being face-to-face gives them more confidence. In addition, Fondi offers flexibility, allowing students to practice speaking at any time without time limit and also comes with some free features. Overall, this study concludes that the Fondi app is an effective tool in improving students' English speaking skills. The findings provide important implications for the development of interactive and flexible language learning applications.

Keywords : *fondi application, speaking learning, students' views*

Introduction

Communicating effectively in English is essential in the 21st century, especially for students preparing to compete globally. Among the four language skills, speaking is often considered the most challenging skill to master as it demands directness, fluency, accuracy and confidence. According to Tavakoli & Hunter (2020), speaking fluency in a second language depends not only on how much vocabulary or grammar students master, but also on how often they get the opportunity to speak in authentic contexts. They emphasize that fluency in speaking is the result of continuous practice in real communication situations.

According to Erling et al. (2023), schools focus on providing language theory rather than applying it. Learning a language requires practice to improve communication skills. English is the only language almost universally used in all industries, including business, engineering, tourism, science, information technology, and medicine (Mehrajuddin, 2022). English is a subject that must be studied in the media. English has become a global lingua franca (Okkavia et al., 2019). English is an international language or the main language of education worldwide, so it is increasingly important in Indonesian education. English has many academic benefits (Bun, 2021).

Daulay et al (2023) argues that the digital era improves life by facilitating access to knowledge and connecting individuals worldwide. The ability of humans to construct increasingly complicated technology facilitates and accelerates human operations by providing accessibility to the Internet network. Several challenges are faced globally in using technology to improve English speaking skills. One of the biggest issues is the technology access gap and digital divide, which affects the ability of students in various parts of the world to access technology-based applications, such as Fondi. In many developing countries, limited technology infrastructure, high devices, and high internet access costs are major obstacles to implementing application-based learning.

In Indonesia, one of the main issues is limited access to technology, especially in remote areas, where students often do not have adequate devices or stable internet access to use learning apps like Fondi. In addition, Indonesia's education system still emphasises mastering grammar and writing skills, while learning to speak is often neglected or only gets a limited portion of the curriculum. Another factor is students' lack of confidence in speaking English. Many students are afraid to speak for fear of making mistakes, and a less supportive learning environment often exacerbates this problem.

To overcome these challenges, technology-assisted learning tools have attracted attention as innovative solutions. One such tool is the Fondi app, which integrates interactive speaking exercises, real-time feedback, and engaging activities designed to improve speaking proficiency. Research has shown the effectiveness of mobile applications in language learning. According to Derakhshan et al. (2022), speaking skills in foreign language learning are often hampered by psychological factors such as anxiety and lack of confidence. To overcome these barriers, mobile-assisted language learning (MALL)-based technology has been shown to increase student interaction and motivation in speaking (Pimpa & Suwannoppharat, 2021).

Therefore, innovative approaches that support the development of speaking skills through technology and more interactive learning methods are needed. The Fondi application is a technological device that facilitates language learning, especially in developing speaking skills. Designed with interactive features such as live conversation, pronunciation practice, and feedback mechanisms, Fondi provides a supportive and engaging environment for students to improve their oral communication skills.

Fondi, a mobile application designed to improve speaking skills, offers interactive features such as real-time conversation practice, pronunciation analysis, and personalised feedback. Recent studies have shown that applications like Fondi can improve speaking fluency and accuracy and increase learner motivation (Alqahtani, 2020). Additionally, research by Ahmadi (2018) indicates that technology-based learning tools are particularly effective in engaging digital-native students as they align with their learning preferences.

Previous studies have explored using technology and apps in language learning, such as Duolingo, Babbel, and Rosetta Stone, to improve students' speaking skills. However, studies on local or specific apps such as Fondi are still very limited, especially regarding students' perceptions of their effectiveness in improving speaking skills. Although many studies, such as those by Zhang and Zou (2021), have investigated the role of mobile apps in improving language skills, most have focused on reading, listening, or writing rather than speaking.

Meanwhile, research by Johnson and Brown (2019) highlighted the importance of student engagement in app-based learning but did not highlight student perceptions in depth. In app-based learning, student perceptions are often overlooked in studies

more oriented towards app effectiveness (Garcia, 2022). In fact, student perceptions can provide important insights into their user experience, emotional engagement, and learning motivation. Perception enables interpretation and meaning-making of sensory data. One factor that influences a person's success is their perspective on the people in their lives (Corbin et al., 2020).

This study addresses this gap by exploring students' perceptions of the Fondi application as a tool to improve speaking skills. By focusing on user experience, this research provides new insights into the pedagogical implications of mobile-assisted language learning tools. As suggested by Dörnyei (2005), understanding learner attitudes and motivation is essential for designing effective educational technology. Thus, this study not only provides practical recommendations for educators but also contributes to the development of more effective speaking-focused learning applications.

This study is expected to provide insight into the effectiveness of the application and contribute to the development of more innovative and interactive technology-based language learning methods. According to Warschauer (1996), technology has great potential to support language learning through more authentic interactions. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of the Fondi application with the hope of significantly contributing to developing more effective technology-based learning methods to improve students' speaking skills.

The difference between this research and previous research from (Athiyah A. & Dzulfikri 2023) is that it focused on some features of the Fondi application. They asked about junior high school students' perceptions of the experience of using Fondi, including benefits and constraints. Meanwhile, this research focuses on how high school students perceive themselves after using the fondi app to train their speaking skills. So this research question is what are the perceptions of students after using the fondi application to train their speaking skills?

Finally, this study contributes by examining the Fondi application's potential to close the speaking proficiency gap in Indonesian English education and highlighting the benefits and challenges students face when using Fondi for speaking practice. These findings can assist educators, decision-makers, and innovators improve English language training inside and outside the Indonesian educational system.

Method

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method. The descriptive qualitative approach with a case study to explore students' perceptions of the use of the Fondi app in improving their speaking skills. Yin (2018) defines case study as a research method used to explore phenomena in a real-life context by considering multiple sources of evidence. This method allows researchers to deeply understand students' experiences in using the Fondi app as an English speaking learning tool. According to Creswell (2014), case studies can be used to examine individuals or groups who have similar experiences of a phenomenon.

The subject of the study were 11th grade students at Bandung 1 Percut Sei Tuan Private High School, there were 30 participants, 28 female students and 2 male students. The researcher allowed the students to explore the features of the Fondi application. After using the Fondi app for about 10 days, the researcher gave them a questionnaire containing perceptions regarding the use of the Fondi app to train their speaking skills. The questionnaire contained ten statements designed to explore students' perceptions

of using the Fondi application for improving speaking skills, with responses recorded on a Likert scale. In addition, interviews were also conducted with five students to get deeper answers to students' experiences using the Fondi application. According to Kothari (2004), personal interviews follow a strict protocol in which the investigator seeks responses to a series of preconceived questions. This kind of data collection is typically carried out systematically, with the interviewer's ability playing a significant role in the outcome.

Results

The researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data. There were ten statements made to students about their perceptions of the use of Fondi Application for improving speaking learning. Here is the table that shows the results of the questionnaire.

Table 1. The Questionnaire of Using Fondi Application Improve Speaking Learning

No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The Fondi application is easy to use for novice users.	46,7%	26,7%	26,7%	0%	**0%**
2.	The appearance of the fondi application is attractive and easy to understand.	43,3%	33,3%	23,3%	0%	**0%**
3.	I find the Fondi app reliable in daily use.	50%	23,3%	26,7%	0%	**0%**
4.	The Fondi app makes me more confident in speaking English with many people.	33,3%	43,3%	20%	3,3%	**0%**
5.	I feel that the Fondi application is very relevant to use for learning English, especially practicing speaking.	40%	26,7%	33,3%	0%	**0%**
6.	The Fondi app provides benefits that suit my needs.	43,3%	16,7%	36,7%	3,3%	**0%**
7.	Overall I am satisfied with the Fondi application.	63,3%	23,3%	13,3%	0%	**0%**
8.	The Fondi app helps me speak directly with native speakers.	50%	26,7%	16,7%	6,7%	**0%**
9.	I feel that the Fondi application helps me overcome the difficulties and fears of speaking English with other people.	40%	26,7%	33,3%	0%	**0%**
10.	The Fondi application is very effective to use anytime without time limits.	40%	33,3%	33,3%	3,3%	**0%**

Based on the results of the questionnaire table above, the researcher found four findings of student perceptions of the Fondi application, namely Accessibility, Effectiveness, Interactivity, and Flexibility.

Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the ease with which users can access and utilise a system, service, or environment without barriers. In technology and education, accessibility ensures that all individuals, including those with disabilities, can use a tool or platform efficiently. Accessibility starts from questionnaire number one to three. In the first questionnaire, 26.7% of students strongly agreed with the statement, and 46.7% of students agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, only 26.7% of students chose neutral, and no one chose disagree or strongly disagree. Based on the questionnaire results, students agree that the Fondi app is easy for beginners like them. In the second questionnaire, 33.3% of students strongly agreed, and 43.3% chose to agree. Meanwhile, 23.3% of students answered neutral to the statement. Meanwhile, no one chose to disagree or strongly disagree. This shows that the Fondi app is exciting and easy for novice users to understand. In the third questionnaire, 23.3% of students strongly agreed, and 50% of students agreed with the statement. Then, 26.7% of students chose neutral. Meanwhile, no one chose to disagree and strongly disagree. Based on the questionnaires, students agree that the Fondi app can help them solve problems and improve their daily speaking skills.

The data above is supported by interviews that have been conducted by students; the results of the interviews are as follows:

> *"I find the Fondi app very easy to use, even for beginners just starting to learn English."* (S.1)
> *"The app's appearance is beautiful, so I can quickly understand its features."*(S.5)

Based on interviews with student 1 and student 5, with keywords: easy to use, attractive appearance, it can be concluded that Fondi is easy to use by novice users with an attractive appearance, allowing anyone to access it without obstacles.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to how an application or method achieves its intended goal, such as improving users' skills or knowledge. Fondi improves users' English speaking skills by providing interactive exercises and real-time feedback. Features such as conversational sessions with native speakers and practice modules tailored to the user's ability level help achieve optimal learning outcomes. Effectiveness was found in questionnaire numbers four to seven. In the fourth questionnaire, 43.3% of students strongly agreed, and 33.3% of students agreed with this statement. Then, 20% of students chose neutral, and only 3.3% chose disagree. No one chose to disagree. In the fifth questionnaire, 26.7% of students strongly agreed, and 40% agreed with the statement. A total of 33.3% of students chose neutral. Then, no students chose "disagree and strongly disagree." In the sixth questionnaire, 43.3% agreed with the statement, and 16.7% strongly agreed. 36.7% of students chose neutral and 3.3% chose disagree. In contrast, none of the students chose to strongly disagree. In the seventh questionnaire, 23.3%% of students strongly agreed, and 63.3% agreed. Then, as many as 13.3% of students answered neutral. Meanwhile, no one disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The data above is supported by interviews that have been conducted by students; the results of the interviews are as follows:

> *"I feel more confident in speaking English after using this app."* (S.2)

Based on interviews with student 2, it can be concluded that Fondi effectively increases users' confidence in speaking English and helping to overcome difficulties in communicating with others.

Interactivity

Interactivity refers to the degree to which users can actively participate and communicate with the system or environment, often through direct feedback. Fondi offers interactive features like live conversations with native speakers and real situation-based exercises. Interactivity starts from questionnaire eight to nine. The eighth questionnaire showed that 26.7% of students strongly agreed, and 50% agreed. Meanwhile, 16.7% of students chose neutral, and 6.7% of students disagreed with the statement. In the ninth questionnaire, 16.7% of students strongly agreed, and 73.3% agreed. Then, as many as 10% of students answered neutral. Meanwhile, no one disagreed or strongly disagreed. Based on the questionnaires, students agreed that fondi can overcome their fear of speaking English.

The data above is supported by interviews that have been conducted by students; the results of the interviews are as follows:

> *"Before, I was afraid of speaking in English, but with Fondi, I can be more comfortable and not hesitate to talk to others."*
> (S.3)

Based on interviews with student 3, Fondi allows users to interact directly with native speakers, creating a more real learning experience and supporting active learning.

Flexibility

Flexibility refers to the ability of an application or system to adapt to various user needs and preferences, including time, place, and learning method. Fondi allows users to learn English anytime and anywhere, according to their schedule and convenience. Flexibility comes in at number 10. In the tenth questionnaire, 33.3% of students strongly agreed and 40% of students agreed. Furthermore, 23.3% of students chose and 3.3% of students chose disagree. Meanwhile, no students chose to strongly disagree.

The data above is supported by an interview conducted by a students, the result of the interview as follows:

> *"I can use the app anytime, even during my busy schedule, so my English practice is not hampered."* (S.4)

Based on interviews with student 4, it can be concluded that Fondi can be used anytime without a time limit, thus giving users the freedom to learn according to their own schedule.

Discussion

Accessibility in English learning apps allows students to access materials and interact with learning content anywhere and anytime. The study found that students perceive Fondi as an easy-to-access and easy-to-use app, especially for beginners. The study by Oktaviana & Ishlahiyah (2024) also revealed that accessibility in language learning apps can assist students in using a wider range of resources, such as video, audio, and other interactive materials, which support a more effective learning process.

The integration of technology in English language learning has been proven to increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The use of digital platforms can reduce students' fear of learning and increase their active class participation. The research findings show that Fondi effectively improves students' confidence, fluency, and engagement in speaking English. This is in accordance with Alqahtani (2020), who found that the MALL tool significantly improved speaking fluency and motivation.

The interactivity in the Fondi app, particularly the ability to have live conversations with native speakers, was highly praised by the students. Zhang and Zou (2021), found that interactive elements in language learning apps significantly improved students' speaking skills compared to traditional methods, which is consistent with the findings from this study where students expressed higher levels of confidence in speaking English after using Fondi.

Flexibility in English learning allows students to customize the time and place of learning according to their needs, making it easier to integrate learning into daily routines. One of the main advantages of Fondi, as identified in this study, is its flexibility, which allows students to practice speaking English without time constraints. Erling et al. (2023) state that technology in language learning provides flexibility and autonomy, allowing students to learn at their own pace.

Research by Arifiyana & Dzulfikri (2023) focused on junior high school students' perceptions of using Fondi in speaking practice. The results showed that students had a positive perception and felt more confident, enthusiastic, and motivated to practice speaking using this application. However, this study also found some obstacles, such as the subscription fee, which is quite expensive, so not all students can access the features to the fullest. In addition, the dependence on internet connection is an obstacle for students who live in areas with unstable internet access. Some students also experienced anxiety and fear when they first used the app because they had to talk directly to other people, albeit in a virtual environment.

The findings of this study show that students have a positive perception of the use of the Fondi application in practicing English speaking skills, especially in the aspects of accessibility, effectiveness, interactivity, and flexibility. Most students felt that the app was easy to use, especially for beginners, because logging in to the fondi app only requires entering an email, which is very convenient for early adopters. In addition, Fondi helps train students' confidence in speaking, overcome fear, and increase their engagement in language practice through the feedback feature, where students can speak as much as they want without feeling insecure because they are not face-to-face with the other person. Another advantage of Fondi is its interactivity, where students can practice speaking with native speakers and in real situations, students can speak with native speakers from various countries, because the Fondi application is used in several countries. The flexibility of the application is also an important factor, because it allows students to practice anytime and anywhere according to their schedule, without time limits students can practice at any time, but it is more effective if using fondi in the afternoon to evening because many users are active. However, challenges such as high subscription fees, dependence on internet connection, and initial anxiety in speaking to others remain barriers. Overall, this study confirms that Fondi is an effective tool in training students' speaking skills, although efforts need to be made to overcome technical and financial constraints to optimize its benefits.

Conclusion

Based on the research objective to determine students' perceptions of the use of the Fondi application in practicing speaking learning, this study found that most students have a positive perception of the application. The results showed that the Fondi app has four main aspects that contribute to improving students' speaking, namely accessibility, effectiveness, interactivity, and flexibility. Students rated Fondi as easy to use, because it only needs to enter an email for early users, Fondi is also interesting, and helps increase their confidence in speaking. The app also allows them to practice with native speakers and overcome the fear of speaking in front of others because it is not face-to-face. In addition, its flexibility allows students to learn at any time without time constraints. Fondi also comes with some free features.

However, there are some obstacles such as expensive subscription fees, dependence on internet connection, and anxiety when using the app for the first time. Nonetheless, overall, Fondi proved to be effective in improving students' speaking skills, and with further improvements, could become a more optimized language learning tool. In addition, further research can explore its long-term impact on students' speaking proficiency and compare it with other language learning apps. With continued development and integration, the Fondi app has the potential to be a valuable tool for improving English speaking skills in a variety of educational environments.

Acknowledgment

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