



Volume 1 Issue 1 Year 2025 Pages 23-33  
e-ISSN XXXX-XXXX | DOI: 10.70152  
<https://journal.akademimerdeka.com/ojs/index.php/duites>

## Students' Perception of The Fondi Application in Improving Speaking and Listening Skills: Strengths and Challenges

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70152/duties.v1i1.170>

**Abstract:** This study explores students' perceptions of the Fondi app in enhancing their English speaking and listening skills using a qualitative descriptive method. The researcher conducted interviews with two students regarding their experiences with the application. Findings indicated significant improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and confidence, along with better listening comprehension. Both students found the Fondi app very helpful for improving their English skills, noting its attractive interface and user-friendly design as key strengths. However, they also encountered challenges, including server downtime and bugs. Despite these issues, the students held a positive view of the app, recognizing its potential for facilitating real-world English practice. This study offers valuable insights into the benefits and challenges of using the Fondi app and provides recommendations for further enhancements, highlighting the importance of addressing technical issues to maximize its effectiveness in language learning.

**Keywords:** Fondi Application, Listening, Speaking

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## INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on students' perceptions of the Fondi application and its effectiveness in enhancing their speaking and listening skills in English. It aims to identify the strengths and challenges students experience while using the application, as well as to assess how effectively it helps them overcome obstacles in their language learning. The main objective of this research is to explore how students perceive the Fondi application in improving their speaking and listening abilities while identifying factors that both support and inhibit its use. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educators and educational technology developers, helping them optimize the application for better results in improving students' English proficiency. By gaining an understanding of students' perceptions and experiences with the Fondi application, this study aims to contribute to the development of more effective, technology-based strategies for English learning in Indonesia. Ultimately, it is hoped that these strategies will help students overcome the challenges they face in learning English and enhance their communication skills on a global scale.

Communication skills have become essential in today's world. With the rapid advancements in technology and globalization, the ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing is crucial for facing challenges and seizing opportunities across different fields. Consequently, strong communication skills are particularly important, especially when it comes to proficiently communicating in English. The ability to communicate in English has become increasingly important in today's globalized world, where geographical boundaries no longer hinder cross-cultural and professional interactions. The advancement of information and communication technology has increased interaction among nations, establishing English as the primary tool for various international communication platforms (Darmayanti et al., 2024).

English has become the lingua franca in international communication. In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to communicate in English enables individuals to interact with people from various countries for business, academic, and social purposes. English serves as a bridge connecting diverse cultures and opens up broader career opportunities and networking prospects. Proficiency in English not only improves communication skills but also enhances cross-cultural communication, which is crucial in today's multicultural workplaces and social environments. According to (Sholihah et al., 2024) proficiency in a foreign language is now seen as a basic necessity that opens up various opportunities in both careers and social life. Being able to understand and communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds fosters better collaboration, promotes tolerance, and encourages adaptability. Overall, strong communication skills in English are a valuable asset that enables individuals to succeed in a dynamic and competitive global landscape.

The limited English communication skills in Indonesia present a major challenge in foreign language education. Although English is a required subject in most schools, many students struggle to communicate effectively due to several factors. Many schools rely on traditional teaching methods, such as lectures and rote memorization, which do not effectively develop speaking and listening skills. Emphasis on grammar and written tests leaves students unprepared for daily conversations and lacking confidence. The prevalent use of Indonesian and local languages limits students' exposure to English, while inadequate resources like language labs hinder skill development. Additionally, many English teachers may not have strong communication skills themselves, reducing instructional quality. Low motivation among students, especially in areas with little English exposure, further impacts their learning efforts. Finally, the underutilization of technology, such as language apps and online platforms, due to infrastructure issues restricts practice opportunities.

This situation suggests that English language teaching methods in schools need to be revised to better align with student's needs in the modern era. One effective approach is a communication-based learning method, which emphasizes active interaction and the use of English in real-life situations. Moreover, incorporating technology such as language learning applications and digital platforms can enhance students' motivation to learn English and provide opportunities for independent practice.

The use of technology in the learning process has been rapidly advancing, serving not only as a supplementary tool but also as a primary medium that facilitates more interactive, innovative, and flexible approaches to learning. The technology significantly impacts all aspects of human life, including education, in the 21st century (Merta et al., 2023). In the context of English language education, technology provides various solutions to help students develop essential language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It offers access to rich resources, opportunities for cross-cultural communication, and authentic language practice, all of which are crucial for enhancing students' English proficiency.

According to (Wahyudin & Rido, 2020) incorporating technology into English learning can significantly boost students' motivation and engagement, while also providing a more personalized learning experience that aligns with individual needs. Digital technologies, such as language learning applications, interactive videos, and online learning platforms, can help overcome these challenges. Applications like Duolingo, Babbel, and Fondi enable students to learn independently, follow programs tailored to their proficiency levels, and interact with native speakers through direct communication features. This creates an immersive and flexible learning environment, allowing students to practice anytime and anywhere. With the rise of the internet, students can now access a vast array of educational resources from all over the world, creating once unimaginable opportunities (Siminto, 2023). Moreover, technology allows for the exploration of different learning styles visual, auditory, and kinesthetic making English language learning accessible to all types of learners.

Digital learning applications, like Fondi, offer innovative solutions for students to enhance their language skills. Fondi is a specially designed application that improves the learning experience through interactive features such as playing games using an avatar, playing games with an audio file, and automatic calculation. This technology provides students with the opportunity to learn independently and comprehensively, something that is often challenging to achieve in a traditional classroom. The use of Fondi in English learning activities in Indonesia has great potential for improving students' speaking abilities. This application provides access to various features that encourage speaking

practice, including live conversations, pronunciation exercises, and group discussions (Ramli et al., 2024). Fondi aims to help users enhance their speaking skills engagingly and interactively. Users can practice their conversation skills with people from around the world. However, the application's effectiveness may be limited due to the perception that only students are the primary users, which in turn limits the potential benefits of the application in terms of improving language proficiency.

Several studies have examined students' perceptions of using language learning applications to enhance English speaking skills. (Arifiyana & Dzulfikri, 2023) conducted a study on the Fondi application with junior high school students in Banyuwangi, finding that students had both positive and negative perceptions. While students enjoyed using Fondi for speaking practice and felt more motivated, they also expressed concerns about the app's subscription costs and internet requirements. Similarly, (Rambe & Amran, 2024) explored Fondi's effectiveness with high school students at MAN 1 Medan, noting that students felt more confident and motivated in their speaking practice. (Prayogo et al., 2024) expanded on this by investigating perceptions of Fondi users from various countries, with results indicating that users generally found the app engaging and motivational, though some cited technical challenges.

Other studies have explored alternative apps, such as (Damayanti et al., 2024), who examined Indonesian EFL students' perceptions of the Hellotalk app. The study revealed that students found Hellotalk beneficial for language practice, despite some difficulties with its usage and a preference for code-switching by the teacher. (Suyadi et al., 2024) researched the Hello English app, finding that English Education students at Batang Hari Jambi University viewed it positively, appreciating its interactive features like speaking practice with native speakers. Overall, these studies suggest that while language learning apps are generally well-received and effective in enhancing speaking skills, cost and technical issues can limit their accessibility.

Based on previous studies, several research projects have focused on the use of the Fondi application to improve English language skills. However, there are significant gaps that this research aims to address. Previous studies primarily focused on speaking skills and did not investigate the impact of the Fondi application on listening skills, creating a gap in the literature. This research aims to fill this gap by examining both speaking and listening skills simultaneously. Additionally, previous studies discussed general perceptions of the application but did not delve deeply into the specific challenges faced by users. In contrast, this research systematically categorizes the strengths and challenges of using Fondi, offering a more detailed understanding of its effectiveness for language learning. The novelty of this study lies in the exploration of listening skills, an area

underrepresented in previous studies. By offering a detailed analysis of the advantages and barriers users face when using Fondi, this study provides a new perspective.

The researcher hopes that this study will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Fondi application as a tool for improving both speaking and listening skills in English language learning. By identifying the strengths and challenges experienced by students, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how digital platforms like Fondi can be integrated into educational settings to enhance learning outcomes. Moreover, the researcher hopes this research will offer practical recommendations for educators, developers, and policymakers to improve the design and implementation of language learning applications. Ultimately, the researcher aspires for this study to serve as a foundation for future research in the field of technology-assisted language learning, promoting more comprehensive and accessible tools that cater to the diverse needs of learners.

## **METHODS**

This study utilizes a descriptive qualitative approach to understand students' perceptions regarding the use of the Fondi application in improving speaking and listening skills, as well as to identify the strengths and challenges faced in its use. Qualitative method is a research procedure that descriptive data in written or sentences and get the conclusion. The study's participants consist of 2 students who have been using the Fondi application to enhance their English speaking and listening skills for at least three months. These participants were deliberately selected based on their experience with the app to ensure that they could provide relevant and informed feedback.

The data will be collected through in-depth interviews with students who have been actively using the Fondi app to learn English, particularly in the context of speaking and listening. The purposive sampling technique will be used to select respondents, specifically students who have experience using this application for a sufficient duration to provide in-depth insights into the advantages and obstacles faced. Additionally, data will be obtained through observation and documentation of the application's use to support the interview results. Observations will include how students use the app during learning sessions, while documentation will include notes related to the features used and student learning achievements.

Data analysis will be carried out using a thematic approach, which involves systematically coding the data to identify the main themes that emerge from the interviews. The transcribed interview data will be thoroughly examined and grouped into positive and negative perceptions of students related to the Fondi application. Furthermore, themes related to the app's strengths, such as increased learning motivation

and improved speaking and listening skills, will be compared to themes related to challenges, such as limited internet access or subscription fees. The triangulation process will also be used to validate the data by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. The final analysis will provide a comprehensive understanding of how the Fondi app contributes to the development of students' speaking and listening skills, as well as the challenges that must be overcome.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This study aims to investigate students' perception of the effectiveness of the Fondi application in improving English speaking and listening skills. The research aims to identify the strengths and challenges experienced by students when using the application as a language learning medium. Additionally, the study seeks to analyze how the app contributes to students' motivation to improve their speaking and listening skills, as well as the barriers that may affect its effectiveness.

The Fondi application is the main data source for this study. Fondi is specifically designed for practicing speaking and listening in English. The researchers selected this application because it is rarely discussed and offers a unique feature where users can have conversations with people in various settings. The application's attractive appearance and gamified features create an engaging learning experience, potentially increasing students' motivation to learn a language using the Fondi application. The findings and discussions will be presented in the following section.

### **Improvement in Speaking and Listening Skills**

Both students reported that using the Fondi application significantly improved their English-speaking skills. They mentioned improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and confidence when speaking English. One student stated,

"I think my English skills are improving while playing and studying on the Fondi application. I meet new people from various countries in the application and have conversations in English every day. After almost 2 years of using Fondi, I felt a significant change in my confidence when speaking in English. My pronunciation and accent are also better than before. My listening skills have improved, and I have gained insight into English vocabulary. I also feel more confident when listening to music or watching movies in English." Another student mentioned,

"Before I used the Fondi app, my English skills were at 0. I didn't have the confidence to have conversations in English with other people. However, after using the Fondi app for 3 years, I have felt a significant improvement, especially in my speaking and listening skills in English. My pronunciation and confidence have improved, and I no longer have trouble understanding conversations in English."

The students' reports indicate significant progress in both speaking and listening skills after consistent use of the Fondi application. Improvements in pronunciation, fluency,



and confidence are frequently mentioned, showing that Fondi provides an effective platform for real-world language practice. One notable aspect of these improvements is the opportunity to interact with people from various countries, which not only enhances conversational skills but also exposes users to diverse accents and vocabulary. This real-time conversational experience appears to foster a sense of comfort and familiarity with the language, ultimately boosting students' confidence in both speaking and listening.

Additionally, students also reported an improvement in their listening comprehension, an area often underexplored in similar studies. This finding aligns with the notion that practicing listening to a variety of English speakers helps users adapt to different accents and speech patterns. The student's ability to understand conversations in English, coupled with increased confidence in listening to music and watching English-language movies, underscores the potential of the Fondi app in providing immersive language experiences.

### **Strengths of the Fondi Application**

Students have highlighted several strengths of the Fondi app, including its user-friendly interface, engaging content, and interactive features. Most users found the app easy to navigate and appreciated its variety of speaking and listening activities tailored to different proficiency levels. One participant said,

"The Fondi app is very easy to use for beginners, which is its main strength. Additionally, the application offers interesting features and feels like playing a game, so users don't get bored quickly. On Fondi, we can have conversations anywhere and anytime via voice." Another student mentioned,

"The advantage of this application, in my opinion, is that it is different from other English learning platforms. On Fondi, it feels like playing games, and there are interesting places to have conversations such as plazas, parks, lounges, and bars. This can certainly be an attraction for Fondi users, and learning will be more fun and less likely to get boring."

The participants identified several strengths of the Fondi application, including its user-friendly interface, engaging features, and the variety of interactive activities that cater to different proficiency levels. One of the most appreciated aspects is the gamified approach of the platform, which allows users to engage in conversations in virtual settings like plazas, parks, and lounges. This unique feature helps users feel more relaxed and engaged during practice, reducing the stress often associated with language learning.

The ease of use for beginners is another strength, as it lowers the entry barrier for students who may initially lack confidence in using English. The accessibility of voice chat and real-time conversation with other users makes the application an appealing and dynamic tool for students at varying levels of proficiency. This gamification, combined with practical speaking and listening exercises, enhances the motivation to continue learning.

### Challenges and Limitations of the Fondi Application

The Fondi application was generally well-received, but participants also identified several challenges. Some students experienced technical issues such as occasional glitches and connectivity problems, which hindered their learning experience. Additionally, a few participants felt that the content could become repetitive over time, making it less engaging. One student commented,

"While there are many advantages to this application, the only disadvantages are frequent bugs and server downtime. When I was having a conversation with a friend in the plaza, the application suddenly closed for no reason, and there were also frequent bugs such as server downtime. Even though my internet connection is good, I can't log in to the application. I hope that Fondi will fix these issues in the future to provide comfort to its users." Another student mentioned,

"I encounter a lot of problems with my connection network, such as suddenly switching to another server, not being able to hear other people's voices, and others not being able to hear my voice. I have faced this problem more than once when using Fondi. This is very disturbing to my comfort as a user. I hope that Fondi can fix the problem because this application has a lot of potential and is very helpful to me, especially in improving my English skills."

The app has been well-received overall, but students face several challenges that affect their learning experience. The most common issue is technical problems, such as server downtime, frequent bugs, and connectivity issues. These issues disrupt conversations and cause frustration, especially during important discussions or practice sessions. Some participants also noted that the content is repetitive, leading to reduced engagement over time. While the app's gamification and interactive features are initially appealing, continuous updates are needed to keep users engaged in the long term. Furthermore, the reliance on a stable internet connection is a significant challenge for users in regions with inconsistent or slow internet. This can severely impact real-time voice conversations and hinder students' ability to fully benefit from the app.

The research indicates that students have a positive perception of the Fondi application, particularly regarding its effectiveness in enhancing speaking and listening skills. They noted that the app motivated them to practice English more frequently and provided an interactive environment for real-time language exercises. These features align with the title's emphasis on "improving speaking and listening skills," as students reported feelings of increased confidence and engagement while using the app for these purposes.

Additionally, the study addresses the challenges that students face when using Fondi, a theme that is also reflected in the title. Students raised concerns about the subscription cost and the need for reliable internet access, which can limit usability, especially for those in areas with poor connectivity. These challenges highlight the title's dual focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the Fondi application. While the app offers significant benefits for language practice, practical obstacles can hinder its overall



effectiveness. The title effectively encapsulates the study's exploration of the positive impacts of the Fondi app alongside the real-world challenges that can affect its integration into language learning.

In conclusion, while the Fondi application is a strong language-learning tool, addressing these challenges could improve its overall effectiveness. Fixing technical issues, such as server reliability and reducing bugs, would make the platform more user- friendly and reliable. Additionally, expanding the range of activities and continuously updating content could help maintain user interest and provide more diverse opportunities for language practice. Overall, the Fondi application has clear benefits in improving students' speaking and listening skills, particularly through real-time interaction with diverse English speakers, but there is room for improvement in addressing technical challenges and content limitations.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research emphasizes the effectiveness of the Fondi application in improving students' English speaking and listening skills, while also discussing its strengths and challenges. The findings show that students make significant progress in pronunciation, fluency, and confidence when using the application regularly, particularly through real-time interactions with speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The immersive and gamified nature of Fondi not only encourages engagement but also provides a fun and informal environment for practicing English, resulting in better language acquisition outcomes.

Several strengths of the Fondi application were identified, including its user- friendly interface, interactive features, and diverse virtual settings for conversations. These aspects make the application accessible to students with varying levels of proficiency and motivation. The gamified experience, along with the opportunity for real- world conversations, plays a crucial role in keeping students engaged and motivated to improve their speaking and listening skills.

However, the research also highlights several challenges. Technical issues, such as frequent glitches, server downtime, and connectivity problems, often disrupt the learning experience and cause frustration for users. Additionally, some students reported that the content could become repetitive over time, reducing its long-term appeal. These limitations suggest that while Fondi has great potential, improvements in its technical infrastructure and content diversity are necessary to maximize its effectiveness.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of how digital platforms like Fondi can be integrated into educational settings to enhance language learning. By addressing the technical and content-related challenges, developers and educators can further leverage applications like Fondi to provide more effective, accessible, and engaging learning experiences. The results of this research offer valuable insights for improving both the design and implementation of technology-assisted language learning tools, benefiting future users and educators alike. After completing this research, it is important

to note that there are limitations to this study. To improve the quality of the research, several further developments are necessary. Future research could focus on examining the impact of the Fondi application on students with different levels of English proficiency, including beginner, intermediate, and advanced learners. By including learners at various stages, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the app caters to different learning needs and whether certain features are more beneficial for one group over another.

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