

## User Perceptions of Fondi Application in Several Countries as a Learning Media for Speaking English

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**Abstract:** Learning media in the process of learning to speak English is an important component that can influence motivation, conditions, and learning outcomes. This research aims to determine the perceptions of Fondi users from various countries regarding using the Fondi application for speaking practice and research using the Fondi application because this application was still rarely used as a learning medium. The design of this research was qualitative. Data collection uses interviews with Fondi users online in the Fondi application itself. Five users have used the Fondi application for a long period, some up to two years, so that when using the Fondi program to practice speaking, these users can describe their perceptions, and improve the quality and fluency of their speaking. After conducting interviews, the results showed that students gave positive perceptions, such as they felt happy, enthusiastic, and increasingly enthusiastic about using the Fondi application to improve their speaking skills. However, negative perceptions are also given by users, including that Fondi still has a problem that can hinder the use of the Fondi application for speaking English.

**Keywords:** Perception; Speaking; Fondi; Learning Media

### Introduction

Media is any form of intermediary used to communicate. According to (Fatria, 2017:136) media is anything that can be used to convey messages and can stimulate the mind, can arouse enthusiasm, attention and willingness of students so that it can encourage the learning process in students. So from the various opinions it can be explained that media is an intermediary to convey messages or information in the communication process between the information provider and the message recipient. Media can be in the form of videos, images, books, texts, or television. Media can also function as a means of communication, a means to express opinions, help overcome limitations of space, time and senses, as a means of relaxation or entertainment, as a means of social communication, and also as a means of control or supervision for the community.

One of the subjects that should be studied in the media is English. English has become a Lingua Franca throughout the world (Oktavia et al., 2019). Because of the existence of English as an international language or the main language of education throughout the world, this language has become an important language in the world of education in Indonesia. There are many benefits of English in the academic world (Bun, 2021).

English is one of the foreign languages found in Indonesia. English was designated as the first foreign language by the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 096/1967 dated 12 December 1967 (Kartono, 1980: 126). The choice of English as the first foreign language in Indonesia among other foreign languages was based on several considerations as stated by Kartono (1980: 125) that our national language cannot currently be used as a means of communication with the outside world in the context of foreign policy and for establishing friendships with other nations, and the fact that English is the language of international communication, the language of science, modern technology, trade, politics, and is used in almost all fields, then English clearly must be given first priority to be studied among the languages another foreigner.

In other countries, for example, the United States, Australia, Great Britain, and others use English as their first language, while other countries such as Denmark, Sweden, Singapore, and others use English as their second language. Because of the importance of English in various countries, not only in countries that use English as a first language but also in countries that use English as a foreign language and second language, so it is necessary to have the ability to use English, not only for business or educational purposes. However, there are many things in various sectors that are of interest and need to be supported by skills in English.

Islam (2021) argues that speaking is the most important of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in the context of ESL (English as a second language). Then the question is why is speaking still difficult to implement in some countries? The answer Erling et al (2023) argue that schools still focus on providing language theory without putting it into practice. So, learning a language is not enough to just study the theory but must be practiced so that language becomes a good communication tool.

Hamka (2022) argues that making English an easily accessible language is very important to make learning English interesting and fun, and also makes it easier to solve problems by searching for information which is sometimes in English.

Technology has been introduced to support the learning process in the classroom since the 21st century and technology has become an important part of the language learning process (Slimane, 2019). ICT (Information and Communication Technology), which is now increasingly used in the learning process, can be an option to make learning English easy and fun, but still provides good results. Several studies were conducted in this area. Octavianita (2022) states that technology can make it easier for teachers to convey material and students to learn it.

The introduction of technology can increase efficiency in the teaching and learning process. (Rinanda, 2021) also believes that using the Learn English Conversation application can make speaking practice easier and provide fun learning during the learning process. Likewise, Kusmaryani et al (2019) found that students were very interested in exploring and practicing mobile learning applications and both teachers and students were able to improve their speaking english skills.

Learning methods that involve technology mostly focus on learning the use of commonly used applications, such as Youtube, Whatsapp, ELSA Speaks, Duolingo, etc. This research focuses on the use of a speaking learning application called Fondi. Researchers chose the Fondi application because this application is still rarely used to improve speaking skills. So, researchers think it is necessary to study in more depth the use of the Fondi application. Fondi is a virtual application where there are several features to play this application by selecting several places on the map and in these places, users can meet and chat with other people using English. Fondi was developed by PT Digital Bahasa Teknologi, an educational technology company in Indonesia. Fondi is designed to help users who want to improve their English skills in a fun and interactive way. Fondi users can practice their conversation skills with people all over the world (Mildayanti, 2023). So why did the author choose the Fondi application? Because the

Fondi application can make it easier for beginners to learn to speak English, the majority of Fondi users are learning to speak English, and many countries that use the Fondi application are countries where English is a second language. On the other hand, the language structure of Fondi users is still easy for the interlocutor to understand and hear even though the user is from a foreign country. Of course, this makes it very easy for students in the class to have conversations with other people from all over the world.

The author includes several places that can be accessed in the Fondi application which can be used to practice speaking English:



Figure 1. Plaza



Figure 2. Park



Figure 3. Bar



Figure 4. AI Practice

In the Fondi application there are maps that can make it easier for users to choose which places they want to visit. Of the many places that can be visited, there are 2 places that are most frequently visited by users, the first place is the Plaza as in Figure 1, the Plaza is a place that can be used to chat with a maximum of four users, the Plaza is a favorite place for those who like a quiet atmosphere. The second place is the Park as in picture 2, the Park is a spacious place and has no limitations, for those who like to be busy, the Park is the right place to chat. Another place is the Bar as in Figure 3. The Bar is a place that can only be used by 2 people and the partner selection is determined by the application automatically so the user cannot choose. Practice AI as in Figure 4 is a place to practice talking between the user and the AI.

Based on what has been said above, this research focuses on the use of the Fondi application for speaking practice media. For this reason, there are three research questions in this study, as follows:

1. What is the main purpose of using the fondy application?

2. What is the user's perception of the Fondi application for practicing speaking english?
3. What difficulties do users experience when using the Fondi application to practice speaking english?

This research has had a big impact on the world of learning, especially on technology-based learning methods and english language learning. First, this research offers insightful information about technology as a learning medium. Which is information and communication technology that can improve academic performance and increase student interest in self-awareness, motivation, and comfort with the learning process. Especially the Fondi application, to improve your speaking english skills.

Second, the Fondi application is an underused platform for learning english in various countries. This research adds to the existing knowledge about language learning applications that are used by some people in various countries.

Third, this discussion focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of the Fondi application for practicing speaking based on the perceptions of users from different countries.

Through evaluation and Education developers can improve various features of the application and make it a more efficient and easier-to-use tool for improving english language skills by studying the benefits and obstacles faced by users.

In conclusion, this research contributes by examining the potential of the Fondi application to overcome the problems of learning to speak English in learning and by focusing on the benefits and difficulties faced by users when using the Fondi application for speaking practice. These results can help users, educators, decision-makers, and innovators in improving english language training in various countries.

## Metode

This research uses a qualitative method and uses a Narrative Inquiry approach. This approach is the strength of the qualitative method of Mawardi (2018) and Narrative Inquiry is the best approach to get stories from sources in detail by Clandinin and Connelly (Ford, 2020), thus the data obtained can be insightful and clear. In this research, data collection was carried out by interviewing five users from several countries. Interviews in research are important for obtaining information from sources which will later be used as research data. Fatchan (2016) stated that interviews have the advantage of being able to present broad and in-depth data, and interviews contain direct thoughts from participants. So you can get direct and pure data from the source. This can strengthen the data provided for further research. The five Fondi application users interviewed were users from Indonesia, China, India, Japan and Vietnam. The five users of the Fondi application are people who have a specific goal of improving their English speaking. Such as work needs, education and others.

To collect data, researchers conducted interviews with five users of the Fondi application from five different countries, the first being Indonesia with the username Lathi, she is a woman who lives in Jakarta, she is 26 years old and she has already worked.



Figure 5. Interview with users from Indonesia

The second user from China with the username Ana, she is a woman who has worked in the world of online games, she lives in Beijing and she is 20 years old.



Figure 6. Interview with users from China

The third user from India with the username Fondi Janku, he is a man who is still studying at a university in India, he lives in the city of Hyderabad, and he is 20 years old.



Figure 7. Interview with users from India

The fourth user is from Japan with the username Sakura, she is a woman who has just worked at a company, she lives in the city of Osaka and she is 23 years old.



Figure 8. Interview with users from Japan

The last user from Vietnam with the username Mucevher, she is a girl who is still in high school, she lives in Da Nang, and she is 17 years old.



Figure 9. Interview with users from Vietnam

The interview was carried out online directly in the Fondi application. The questions asked in the interview with English, and they also answered with English. This interview was conducted over two days, the first day the interview was conducted with two users from Indonesia and China and the second day was conducted with three users from India, Japan, and Vietnam. And the average time for interviews is around 15-20 minutes for each user. Interviews do not take too much time because they focus on user perceptions and are carried out at certain times according to the target country.

In data analysis, to produce quality data, several stages are required in analyzing data in qualitative research, the first is data collection based on research questions. Data collection in this research was through interviews with users who were using the Fondi application for speaking practice. The second data analysis step is reducing and categorizing the data. This reduction process sorts the data obtained or simplifies the data in the field. After the data has been reduced, the researcher categorizes or groups the data according to needs, so that the data is not miscategorized and requires good interpretation skills for the researcher. The third stage is data display, this stage needs to be done after reducing and categorizing the data so that the data is easy to understand and allows conclusions to be drawn. And the final stage is concluding. This conclusion contains important information and new findings obtained from data processing.

## Results and Discussion

### *The main purpose of using the Fondi application*

Five users were interviewed with questions about the main purpose of using the Fondi application. And the answers of the five users are as follows:

First user: Lathi

*"Initially I just wanted to improve my English speaking because I used to think English was a cool language so I felt satisfied if I could speak English, but as time went by, I had many goals such as studying to learn the culture of other countries. different and increased my self-confidence to dare to speak English, even though I am not a person who is comfortable or suitable when chatting with other people on media that has video chat features such as OME TV, but this application is enough to help me increase my self-confidence."*

Second user: Ana

*"I don't have a specific purpose for using this application, I just fill my free time by playing this application, basically I really like and enjoy lots of games such as Valorat, PUBG Mobile, Mobile Legend and others, as well as the Fondi application, I like the Fondi application because The gameplay is like games in general with a user character who can walk and move to several places and it cannot be denied that I learned a lot about speaking English."*

Third user: Janku

*"I am a student majoring in information engineering to master my field I must master English, especially speaking skills, maybe that is my main goal, another goal is to make more friends from different countries."*

Fourth user: Sakura

*"My main goal in using the fondi application is to hone my ability to speak English, because the majority in my environment use that language and I also need a job at the company where I work."*

Fifth user: Muevher

*"I used the Fondi application because I wanted to learn English because at school, I had a lot of assignments related to English so I tried searching on YouTube for applications that could be used to learn English and I found this application, I hope this application can make it easier for me to complete assignments. me slowly."*

The four users interviewed stated that they had a goal in using the Fondi application. Their main goal in using the Fondi application was to improve their speaking english skills, apart from that they had other goals such as making friends, learning the culture of different countries, and increasing confidence. self. Only one user does not have the main goal of improving his English speaking, he uses the Fondi application because this application plays like a game in general.

### *User perceptions of the Fondi application for practicing speaking english*





The five users explained their perceptions of the Fondi application for practicing English speaking. The answers from five Fondi users were as follows:

First user: Lathi

*"Before I knew and learned speaking English on the Fondi application, I didn't dare to speak English virtually or face to face, it all started with the Fondi application starting with me just listening to people who were talking on the table in the plaza, learning their way of speaking, until I practiced it at various tables of the plaza in the Fondi application, this application really helped my self-confidence and my English speaking skills. I got a lot of vocabulary from this application. I think this fondi application is one of the best applications of all the English learning applications that I have ever tried to use."*

Second user: Ana

*"I have been using this application for 2 years, although sometimes I uninstall it and then install it again, I think this application is very good for improving my English, and the way to play it is quite easy, just go to the plaza or park and then immediately talk, and that's it. I like this application because most of them are beginners in learning English, so it makes it very easy for me to learn to speak English."*

Third user: Janku

*"I have only been using this application for 1 week, but I immediately fell in love with this application because I can improve my speaking english. I really like chatting at the Plaza because there we can change servers and it's easy to find friends to chat with and at the Plaza. We can also discuss a topic."*

Fourth user: Sakura

*"I used to study english at school, but I still found it difficult to speak until I started working and I couldn't speak English well until I found this application I started to be able to improve my English speaking, yes I think this application Suitable for people who are learning speaking english for everyday or general use."*

Fifth user: Mucevher

*"I have never used an application to learn speaking english before, I only studied at school, but after I played this application, I think this application is better than the application I learned at school, especially to improve my speaking english."*

Five users expressed their perception when using the Fondi application to practice speaking, that the Fondi application was a good application, easy to use, and supported improving speaking skills. Apart from that, in the Fondi application users can support each other and learn together by practicing their speaking skills.

### ***Difficulties experienced by users while using the Fondi application to practice speaking english.***

Apart from the positive statements expressed by users regarding the Fondi application, both perceptions and benefits regarding the Fondi application, there are also negative statements given by users, namely regarding the obstacles faced by students while using the Fondi application. Interview statements were answered by 5 users regarding the obstacles they faced while using the Fondi application. User answers are as follows:

First user: Lathi

*"I have been using the Fondi application for two years, as long as I use this application to learn speaking english, this application has several shortcomings or difficulties, such as exiting automatically from one room to another, whether the avatar bag is not visible or not. can move, even though it's easy to chat with people, it's hard to find the right person to practice speaking english, many people don't understand how to disturb me when I'm chatting with other people, and it's also hard to find people who I've met before, because I've Don't use fondi anymore or keep using fondi."*

Second user: Ana

*"The obstacles I feel when learning to speak english are that sometimes I find a group of people from a country, I can't say the name of the country, but they often use their own language instead of english, I often meet them in the park. Another difficulty is that sometimes there are bags, like currently I don't have a charger icon above my avatar's head."*

Third user: Janku

*"Maybe there are a lot of problems, but I don't care about the problems, I just enjoy speaking english with everyone I meet, because it cannot be denied that an application like this will definitely have a lot of problems, so I just focus."*

Fourth user: Sakura

*"My problem when learning speaking with this application might be that when I'm chatting with friends when someone disturbs me by shouting or speaking impolitely, it really annoys me."*

Fifth user: Mucevher

*"I'm having trouble speaking english on this network application, if I'm chatting in the plaza suddenly, I leave the room or go back to the home menu. And sometimes I can't see other people's avatars, so I can only hear them."*

The five users who were interviewed, they expressed problems that often occur when learning to speak English. The obstacles that often occur or are frequently encountered are that sometimes there are a group of users who speak their own country's language and do not use English, sometimes there are those who like to disturb them, such as not speaking. This is clear and loud, this often happens in Maps Park, another problem is that there is a problem that causes the avatar to not be visible and/or the application to get stuck.

## Conclusion

This research aims to investigate the perceptions of users from several countries regarding the use of the Fondi application as a tool to improve their speaking english skills. The aim of the research is to understand how users from different countries view the Fondi app, identify the main reasons why they use the app, and uncover any obstacles they encounter. This research also aims to contribute to existing knowledge about language learning applications by focusing on a relatively little-known and under-utilized platform.

This research makes several unique contributions to the fields of technology-enhanced learning and English language education. First, it highlights the application



potential of Fondi, a platform that has received limited attention in academic research. Second, the research emphasizes the importance of understanding user perceptions and experiences when using educational technology. By capturing users' voices and perspectives, this research provides valuable insights that can inform the development of language learning applications and teaching methodologies.

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