

**EFL COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING
FONDI APPLICATION TO ENHANCE SPEAKING SKILL**

A THESIS

**Submitted to Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Sarjana Pendidikan in English Education**



**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHER TRAINING
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN**

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2025

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Saya menilai bahwa naskah skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan kepada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan untuk diajukan dalam sidang munaqasyah. Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatiannya, disampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

Pekalongan, 5 Maret 2025

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MOTTO

“Then you reach the point where you no longer need anything, but Allah”



ABSTRAK

Speaking adalah keterampilan yang penting dalam memperoleh kemahiran dalam suatu bahasa, khususnya bagi mahasiswa efl untuk mendukung skill dalam pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi mahasiswa Efl college students dalam menggunakan aplikasi Fondi untuk meningkatkan speaking skill dan mendeskripsikan bagaimana speaking activity di dalam aplikasi Fondi. Untuk mencapai tujuan pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dengan metode narative inquiry. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Mayoritas mahasiswa EFL memiliki persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan aplikasi Fondi dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara mereka. Hal ini dikarenakan konsep aplikasi yang unik, berbeda dengan platform pembelajaran bahasa pada umumnya, serta fitur-fitur interaktif yang mendukung praktik berbicara. Namun, mahasiswa juga menghadapi kendala, baik dari segi aspek teknis maupun interaksi saat berlatih berbicara. Terkait aktivitas berbicara mahasiswa Fondi, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mereka menggunakan aplikasi ini untuk melatih kemampuan berkomunikasi dan meningkatkan performa dalam konteks akademis. Jenis latihan berbicara yang dominan adalah responsif dan interaktif, sesuai dengan kebutuhan masing-masing pengguna. Selama praktik, mahasiswa juga memperhatikan komponen-komponen berbicara, baik secara mikro maupun makro. Fondi juga berperan dalam mengembangkan keterampilan berbicara melalui interaksi dengan pengguna lain, meskipun masih terdapat tantangan dalam menguasai setiap aspek berbicara.

Kata kunci : Speaking activity, Mahasiswa EFL, Fondi application



ABSTRACT

Speaking is an important skill in gaining proficiency in a language, especially for EFL students to support their skills in education. This study aims to explore the perceptions of EFL college students in using Fondi application to improve their speaking skills and describe how speaking activities are in Fondi application. To achieve the objectives, a qualitative approach was used with an analytical inquiry method. The results showed that most EFL students had a positive perception of using Fondi application in improving their speaking skills. This is because the application concept is unique, different from other language learning platforms in general, and interactive features that support speaking practice. However, students also face obstacles, both in terms of technical aspects and interactions when practicing speaking. Regarding Fondi students' speaking activities, the results showed that they used this application to practice their communication skills and improve their performance in an academic context. The dominant type of speaking practice is responsive and interactive, according to the needs of each user. During practice, students also pay attention to the components of speaking, both macro and macro. Fondi also participates in developing speaking skills through interaction with other users, although there are still challenges in mastering every aspect of speaking.

Keywords: Speaking activity, EFL students, Fondi application



PREFACE

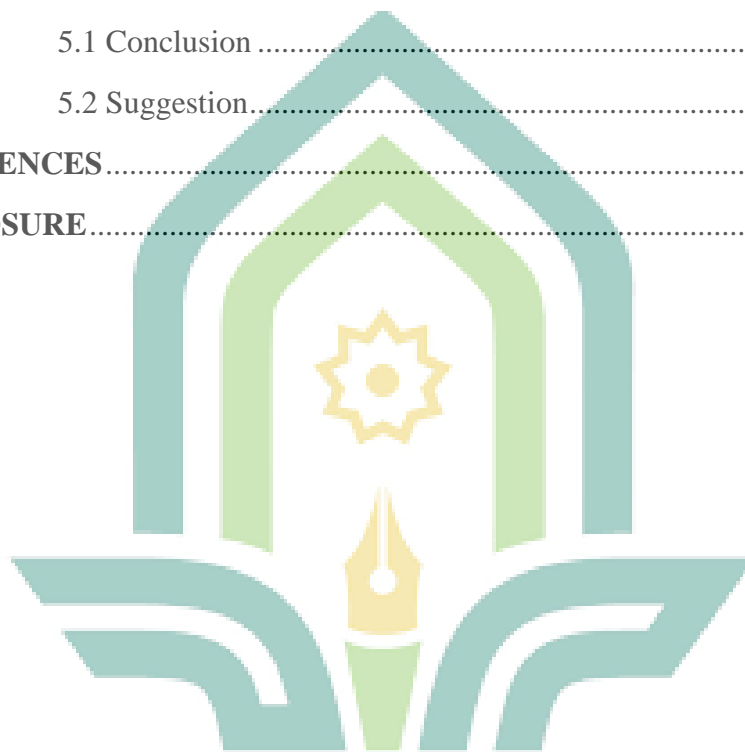
Praise and gratefulness are sent to Allah SWT, who has poured His grace and His gift and bestowed me guidance, health, and patience so that the writing process of my thesis research entitled **“EFL College Students’ Perception of Using Fondi Application to Enhance Speaking Skill”** can be completed. It is submitted to the English Education Department, UIN K.H Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, to fulfil one of the Thesis requirements. This proposed study can be accomplished because of the support of several people. Therefore, on this occasion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION


1.1 Background of the study

In today's world, speaking skills are fundamental for effective human communication. This ability encompasses expressing words, articulating opinions, engaging in arguments, and negotiating. Argawati (2014) states that speaking is a key means of interpersonal communication. Mart (2012), on the other hand, defines speaking as the ability to communicate orally and exchange ideas through language. In the educational context, speaking ability is a crucial aspect that needs to be developed early because it significantly influences a student's academic and social success. Learning a language involves four main skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Listening and reading are passive skills, where the learner receives input such as comprehension and pronunciation. Meanwhile, speaking and writing skills are active skills where students produce output or use input that has been obtained. English language learners, especially EFL students, must achieve these four skills. According to Parupali S.R. (2019), listening is a receptive or passive skill because students primarily receive information without producing anything. In contrast, speaking and writing are categorized as productive or active skills since students must create their sentences. These skills require significant practice and a strong understanding of grammar, vocabulary, structure, and appropriate use. In the world of language, speaking plays an important role because language is a tool for communicating or speaking. Islam (2021) defines

speaking as the most important of the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). However, many students find practising and developing their speaking skills challenging. This is particularly true for EFL college students, who often struggle to become proficient in speaking.

Students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) do so in nations where English is not the official or major language. EFL is defined by Norland (2006) as teaching and learning English in a setting where it is not the mother tongue. In an academic context, EFL college students have special needs for communication performance in their education. However, EFL college students often face challenges in improving their communication skills, especially speaking skills. Several significant obstacles often hinder the development of speaking skills, including psychological factors like lack of self-confidence, nervousness, and shyness. Xiao and Wong (2014) explain language anxiety as the negative feelings and psychological tension that students experience while learning a language. When English as a Foreign Language (EFL) college students feel incapable of speaking English, they often experience anxiety and fear, which can hinder their speaking abilities. In addition to psychological barriers, limited language knowledge, such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, is also a major challenge. Abrar et al. (2018) identified that these obstacles often make speaking difficult for students. On the other hand, low motivation to express themselves is also an obstacle often experienced by EFL college students. Ur (1996) stated that students often

feel less motivated to speak, ultimately impacting their speaking skills development. Although various English learning applications, such as Cake, Duolingo, and Elsa, are available, EFL students may need a more innovative approach to overcome these challenges. Applications that offer different styles and interactive features can be a solution to overcome the challenges faced by EFL college students. One example of an application that supports the development of speaking skills is Fondi, which is designed to help students practice speaking skills in a more interesting and interactive way.



Fondi is a relatively new app that serves as a global platform for users to learn English. It was first released on the Google Play Store on October 6, 2019, and has since been downloaded by over 500,000 users worldwide. As indicated by its name on the Google Play Store—“Fondi: Online English Practice”—this app is specifically designed to facilitate English language learning (Fondi: Talk in a virtual space, n.d.). Fondi can be said to be different from other English learning applications because of its innovative design. It is also supported by interactive features that can help students learn speaking skills. Fondi's virtual world concept, in contrast to typical social media, is centered on language learning, namely improving language proficiency through the use of internet-based software that allows users to communicate as though they were in the same place. Fondi's unique features allow users to explore new locations with others, communicate directly with others through personalized avatars, and use technology to improve their English. (Fondi. Inc, 2024)

Therefore, the researcher chose the title because speaking is a very important basic skill in communicating, especially for EFL college students. EFL college students often experience challenges such as a lack of self-confidence, limited space, motivational opportunities, and knowledge related to the language. EFL college students also have more complex learning needs than students at lower levels. As individuals with broader learning experiences and specific academic and professional needs, EFL college students must master speaking skills more thoroughly. In this context, Fondi application provides a technology-based solution by offering a global platform for learning English in a unique way. The main reasons for choosing this research title are the combination of the importance of speaking skills, the challenges faced by EFL college students, and the potential of Fondi application as an innovative learning tool.

1.2 Limitation of the Study

This study has several limitations that may affect the result and discussion. The small number of participants, namely three EFL college students in Indonesia who have been using the Fondi application for certain period of time, makes the result of this study not generalizable to a wider population. The methods used, namely semi-structured interviews and observations, provide insight into EFL college students' perception and their speaking activities when using Fondi. However, interviews only rely on data reported by participants, which may be subjective. Meanwhile, observations only cover certain development of speaking skill as a whole. This study also

did not include formal measurements of EFL college students' speaking skills improvement, so the effectiveness of Fondi in improving speaking skills cannot be measured quantitatively. In addition, time and resource long-term observations or comparisons with students who did not use Fondi.

1.3 Formulation of the problem

The problem can be formulated as:

1. How do EFL college students view Fondi application as a platform for improving speaking skills?
2. How do EFL college students' speaking activities in Fondi application for improving speaking skills?

1.4 Aims of Study

This research aims to explore EFL college students' perceptions of improving speaking skills and speaking activity using Fondi application. By understanding EFL college students' experiences and views on using this application, new insights can be found about Fondi application in the context of learning English speaking skills and can be recommended to potential users.

1.5 Operational definitions

The research provides the following explanations for the terms used in this study to clarify any misunderstandings :

1.5.1 EFL Students

Definition: Gebhard (2006) defines EFL (English as a Foreign Language) as the study of English by individuals who do not speak English as their first language.

1.5.2 Perception

Definition: According to Gibson (1986: 118), perception is not merely the result of conveying subjective information. Instead, perception occurs directly when individuals interact with their environment to comprehend the affordances or opportunities it presents.

1.5.3 Fondi:

Definition: Beyond conventional language study, Fondi is a remarkable virtual English learning tool. (Fondi. Inc, 2024)

1.5.4 Speaking :

Definition: Brown (2004) defined speaking as an interactive method of meaning-making that differs from writing in that it incorporates information creation, receiving, and processing.

1.6 Significance of the study

1.6.1 Theoretical significance

In addition to supporting hypotheses about the perception of EFL college students, this study will add to James J. Gibson's (1966) theory and speaking activity support theory by brown (2004).

1.6.2 Empirical significance

This study provides empirical insights into EFL college students' perceptions of improving their speaking skills with Fondi application.

1.6.3 Practical Significance

- a. For students: This study provides knowledge about applying Fondi to improve speaking skills.

- b. For lectures: This research provides information to teachers regarding new language learning technology that can be used in the learning process.
- c. For another research: The results of this study may serve as a guide for future investigations.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Literature review

2.1.1 EFL students

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students learn English in environments where it is not their primary or official language. According to Gebhard (2006), EFL refers to individuals learning English in countries where it is not the main language of communication. EFL students exhibit distinct learning styles. Isda et al. (2016) identified several common learning styles among EFL students, including kinesthetic, visual, auditory, and group learning styles. The following is an explanation of kinesthetic, visual, auditory, and group learning styles:

1) Kinesthetic learning style

Individuals with a kinesthetic learning style prefer an active "hands-on" approach. Interaction with the physical environment is preferred in this learning process. The majority of kinesthetic learners frequently struggle to maintain attention on goals or become easily distracted. (Ldpride, 2009.).

2) Visual learning style

A learning style in which individuals more easily understand, remember, and process information through visual representations such as pictures, graphs, diagrams, or videos. People with this

learning style tend to be more responsive to information presented visually than through verbal explanations or physical activity. (Ldpride, 2009.).

3) Auditory learning style

A learning style in which individuals find information through tone, emphasis, and speed. These students may struggle to comprehend written material and learn best when read aloud in class. (Ldpride, 2009).

4) Group learning style

A learning style that encourages discussion and consensus-building on subjects where there is no right or wrong solution emphasizes the contributions of each group member and focuses on the sharing of authority. Students continue to manage group processing and administration (Panitz, 1997). Individuals with this learning style tend to feel motivated and more easily understand concepts when sharing ideas, exchanging views, or solving problems.

2.1.2 Perception

Perception involves assigning meaning to sensory stimuli, and the relationship between sensation and perception is evident: sensation is a component of perception. However, interpreting sensory information requires not only sensation but also attention, expectation, motivation, and memory (Rachmat, 2005). Through

perception, individuals can understand a wide range of data, information, and events that constantly surround them. This process entails sensory messages or information being received by the human brain (Slameto, 2010).

A significant definition provided by an expert is crucial to understanding perception. According to Gibson (1986: 118), perception is not merely the result of conveying subjective information. Instead, perception occurs directly when individuals interact with their environment to comprehend the affordances or opportunities it presents. This means that individuals or students do not require advanced cognitive processes or prior beliefs to make sense of what they see. Gibson asserts that the actual environment provides ample context for understanding without relying on complex thought processes. One of Gibson's most renowned concepts is that of "affordance," which refers to the opportunities for action that the environment provides (Gibson, 1986: 127). Mark (1987) defines affordance as the functional benefits offered by a particular environmental object or a complex of objects to individuals in relation to their action capabilities. Gibson uses the concept of affordance to illustrate the relationship between living beings and their environments, emphasizing how they perceive the world through visual perception. This perspective is part of a broader ecological theory in psychology (Gibson, 1986). According to

Lindsay and Norman (1977), organisms utilize perception to organize and interpret sensations, creating meaningful experiences of the outside world. Elliot (1996) also states that perception encompasses recognising known individuals, objects, or events with significance and anticipation.

In conclusion, perception is the process of interpreting sensory stimuli through direct interaction with the environment, enabling individuals to understand their ability to act without solely relying on complex cognitive processes or prior beliefs.

Aspects Influencing Perception
 Gibson, Ivancevich, and Donnelly (1996) assert that internal and external influences impact perception.
 1. Internal Elements

Internal elements that impact perception are those that come from within the person and include:

a. Physiological

Information that arrives through the senses will impact and support attempts to interpret the surroundings. Everybody has a distinctive sense of what they can perceive, meaning everyone will interpret their surroundings differently.

b. Attention

Humans need a certain amount of energy to pay attention to or focus on the physical form and mental facilities that exist in an

object. Each person's energy will be different, so a person's attention to an object is also different, and this will affect the perception of an object.

c. Interest

Interest can be defined as a person's tendency to pay attention to a particular type of stimulus, which can also be called perceptual vigilance. Perception of an object varies depending on how much energy or perceptual vigilance is mobilized to perceive.

d. Needs

One Direction Individuals will look for objects or messages that can provide answers according to their needs. Experience and Memory Experience is created from the extent to which individuals can remember past events to find stimuli in the external sense.

e. Mood

Mood and emotions influence a person's behaviour. Mood can indicate how someone feels and affect how they receive, react to, and remember information.

1. Eksternal Elements

External factors are the characteristics of the environment and the objects involved in it. These elements can change a person's perspective on the world and influence how they feel or accept it.

Some external factors that influence perception are:

a. Size and Placement of objects or stimuli

This factor states that the greater the relationship of an object, the easier it is to understand. This form will affect individual perception, and by looking at the shape and size of an object, individuals will find it easy to pay attention, in turn, to form perception.

b. Colour

Colour is one of the determining factors of perception because objects with more light will be easier to understand (to be perceived) than those with little light.

c. Uniqueness and Contrast of Stimulus

Stimuli whose appearance and background and surroundings are completely different from what the individual has previously felt will attract much more attention.

d. Intensity and strength of the stimulus

The intensity to respond to external stimuli will give more meaning if it is noticed more often than if it is only seen once.

e. Movement

Individuals will consciously pay more attention to objects that move within sight than to objects that are still.

Based on Walgito in Arifin, Fuady & Kuswarno(2017) the process of perception occurs in the following stages:

- a. The first stage, which is known as the natural process or physical process, is the process of capturing a stimulus by the human senses.
- b. The second stage, a stage known as a stimulus that is a physiological by receptors (sensory organs) through sensory nerves.
- c. The third stage, which is known as the psychological process, is a process of arising individual awareness about the stimulus that received by receptor.
- d. The fourth stage is the results obtained from the process of perception, which is in the form of responses and behaviour.

2.1.3 Fondi

Fondi application is an innovative English learning platform founded by Tatsuto Nohara, a Japanese entrepreneur born on July 7, 1996. Tatsuto founded Fondi after his education at the Faculty of Management, University of Warwick in England. This application was first launched in October 2019 but only became popular among English learners in Indonesia in 2021. Until now, Fondi has been downloaded more than 500,000 times by users worldwide. Fondi is an app for virtual social networking that links individuals worldwide. Fondi's virtual world concept, in contrast to typical social media, is centred on language learning, namely improving language proficiency through internet-based software that allows users to communicate as

though they were in the same place. Fondi's unique features allow users to explore new locations with others, communicate directly with others through personalized avatars, and use technology to improve their English. According to its description on the Google Play Store, "Fondi: Online English Practice," this application aims to provide an interactive and fun English learning platform. (Fondi: Talk in a virtual space, n.d.). Fondi raises the slogan "Talk to the world and feel free to make mistakes", so Fondi provides a place for English learners to feel comfortable in the learning process, especially when making mistakes. The benefits obtained by users using Fondi application include being able to dive into social media or communicate various things with voice calls with avatar friends around the world, enjoying virtual life with English, and practising English without having to show their faces. Fondi offers several superior features that are the hallmark of this application, namely:

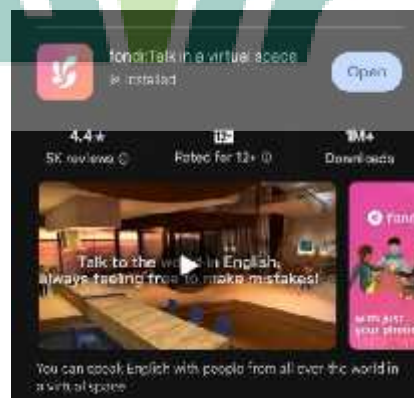
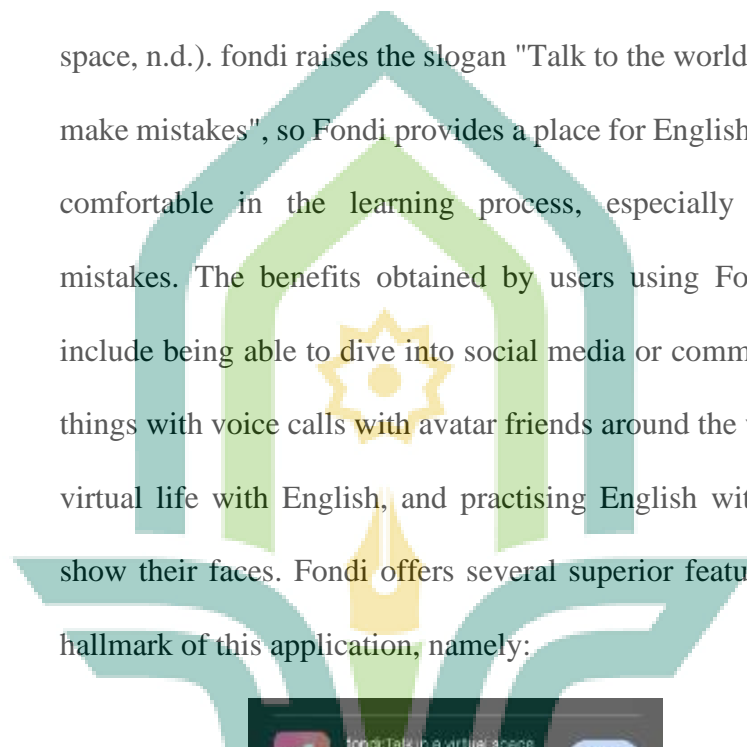


Figure 1. Icon of Fondi



Figure 2. The home menu on Fondi application

Upon entering the application, users will land on the home menu, where various icons are available to meet their needs. Each user receives three batteries, each providing 15 minutes for speaking practice. If a battery runs out, users can recharge it using the "Charge" feature in the screen's upper left corner. Additionally, users can obtain unlimited practice time by paying a predetermined fee.



Figure 3. Avatar customization

In the home menu, Fondi application offers an avatar feature that allows users to customize their avatars according to their preferences. An avatar is a character or creature representing a person in a virtual environment, such as an online chat room or computer game. Avatars can move around and interact with other characters. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)



Figure 4. Daily reward

Fondi application provides several daily rewards that users will get. Such as batteries and several games that can be played while talking to other users.



Figure 5. User biodata

Fondi provides users with biodata to display information about themselves.

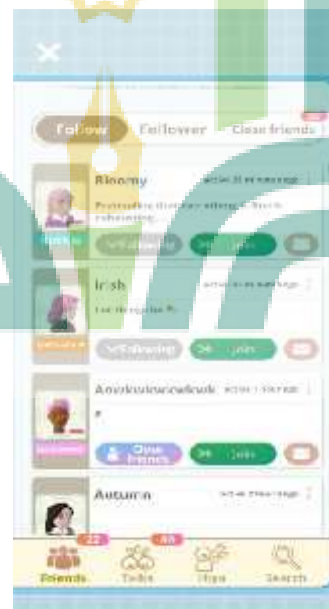


Figure 6.

Users can follow each other and chat with friends or other users to expand their relationships.



Figure 7. Map

Fondi provides places users can use to speak English, such as Plaza, Home Country, Study Board, Bar, Park, Lounge, and AI practice. Each place has its own capacity and function according to the needs and comfort of the user. Fondi provides several practice areas designed to resemble the real world but in virtual or metaverse form. Metaverse is collaborating, combining, or merging the physical and digital worlds through various technologies and programs (Park & Kim, 2022). Each area has a specific function to support speaking practice so that users can connect and interact with other users from various parts of the world.



Figure 8. Certificate reward

Fondi provides a career path feature where Fondi provides certificates for users who have completed the missions listed on each certificate. This career path has different mission levels.

2.1.4 Speaking

One of the abilities that learners of English must develop is speaking. Speaking abilities, however, are also difficult to teach and acquire. Understanding speaking abilities is challenging since students need to become proficient in several areas, including grammar, vocabulary, and proper pronunciation (Haruyudin & Jamilah, 2018). Speaking can be defined in various ways, according to specialists. According to Brown (2004), speaking is an interactive method of meaning-making that differs from writing in that it incorporates information creation, receiving, and processing. According to Fulcher (2013), speaking is using spoken language to interact with others. Speaking is "oral

communication between two or more people to express ideas by speaking together," according to Adam (2005: 78).

According to the description above, speaking can be an activity in which an individual or group uses oral communication to explain something. Speaking is also employed for various reasons, each requiring unique abilities, including persuasion, information clarification, and concept expression. In this study, the researcher will use Brown's speaking theory to analyse EFL College students' speaking activities in Fondi application.

1) Function of speaking

Several linguists have attempted to classify the role that speech plays in interpersonal communication. According to Richards (2008), who cited Brown and Yule (2000), speaking functions can be classified into three categories: speaking as performance, speaking as transaction, and speaking as interaction. An explanation of each speaking function is provided below.

a) Speaking as an interaction

Speaking as interaction refers to what we usually mean by "conversation" and describes interactions that primarily serve a social function. When people meet, they greet each other, engage in small talk, recount recent experiences, and so on because they want to be friendly and establish a comfortable interaction zone. The focus is more on the speakers and how

they want to present themselves to each other than on the message. Such exchanges can be casual or more formal depending on the circumstances, and their nature has been described well by Brown and Yule (1983).

b) Speaking as a transaction

This type of talk refers to situations focusing on what is said or done. The message is the main focus here, making oneself understood clearly and accurately rather than the participants and how they interact socially with each other. In a transaction, talk is linked to other activities. For example, students might engage in a hands-on activity [e.g. in a science lesson] to explore concepts related to floating and sinking. In this type of spoken language, students and teachers usually focus on meaning or speak in their way to understand. (Jones, 1996)

c) Speaking as performance

A third type of speaking that can be usefully distinguished is called speaking as performance. This refers to public speaking, that is, speaking that conveys information to an audience, such as morning lectures, public announcements, and speeches. Speaking as performance tends to be a monologue rather than a dialogue, often follows a recognizable format (e.g., a welcoming speech), and is closer to written language than

conversational language. Likewise, speaking is often evaluated in terms of its effectiveness or impact on the listener, which is unlikely to occur with speaking as an interaction or transaction.

Examples of lectures as performances are:

- (1) Giving a class report on a school trip
- (2) Having a class debate
- (3) Giving a welcoming speech
- (4) Making a sales presentation
- (5) Giving a talk

2) Speaking components

According to Brown (2004: 142-143), speaking skills are classified into several components and guide important aspects in assessing and analyzing speaking activities, namely micro and macro. Brown (2004) claims that the term "micro-skills" refers to the ability to produce the smaller language components, including words, phonemes, morphemes, collocations, and phrasal units.

The speaker's emphasis on the most significant components—fluency, discourse, function, style, coherence, nonverbal communication, and strategic options—is implied by the macro skills. Microskills address more basic speaking units. We utilize words, the most basic units of communication that everyone is familiar with. Under words are phonemes and morphemes, and beyond words are collocations and phrases, which are more

sophisticated. Although macro skills are more intricate than micro-skills, they place greater emphasis on the speaker's linguistic influence. Speaking styles, discourse, fluency, and strategic alternatives vary from one speaker to the next. Below is a more specific explanation of the micro and macro speaking skills adopted by Brown (2004:142-143).

Micro skill

a) Words

A word is a unit of language that has meaning and can be written or spoken. Words are the basic building blocks of sentences, phrases, and clauses. For example, “I” is a word, “Is” is a word, and “Cat” is a word. (Cambridge Dictionary)

b) Phonemes

A phoneme is regarded as the smallest unit of sound in a language capable of causing a difference in meaning. As a distinctive sound unit at the level of language description (not a realized sound in speech), the phoneme has had a long life.

c) Morphemes

A morpheme is the smallest unit in English linguistics, which forms a word. A word can be formed by a morpheme or a combination of morphemes. Embick (2015)

defined that morpheme is the idea that grammar contains representations of sound and meaning in terms of features. So, a morpheme is not only about meaning but also contains the sound element of a word.

d) Collocations

The term "collocation" is frequently used in translation and linguistics. It alludes to a collection of words with a common meaning. For example, the phrase "to break a promise" is made up of the word "break" and its collocate, "a promise."

In English, the expression "break a promise" is permissible.

The phrase can be considered a collocation because its entire meaning makes sense to English speakers. Because the meaning of the verb break is acceptable to English speakers,

it can be used with a promise. A promise's collocate completes the combination, and language speakers will find the meaning acceptable. "Collocation is concerned with how

words go together, i.e. which words may occur in constructions with other words," claims Larson (1984:141).

Some word pairings are unlikely to occur, whereas others may appear frequently without ever occurring together.

5. Phrase

A phrase is defined in English grammar as a group of two or more words that work together as a coherent unit

inside a sentence or clause. Commonly, a phrase is defined as a grammatical unit situated between a word and a clause. A phrase (derived from the Greek *phrasis*, which means "declare" or "tell") consists of one or more optional modifiers and a head, or headword, which establishes the phrase's grammatical nature. Phrases can be composed of other phrases. Noun phrases (like "good friend"), verb phrases (like "drives carefully"), adjective phrases (like "extremely chilly and dark"), adverb phrases (like "very slowly"), and prepositional phrases (in the first place") are examples of common phrase forms.

Macro skills

1. Fluency

Fluency is the capacity to communicate with others by using language swiftly, confidently, without hesitation, natural pauses, false starts, or word searches. Fluency is the ability to write or speak naturally and effortlessly; it is not always necessary to sound like a native speaker (Broughton et al 2003: 219).

2. Discourse

It refers to a spoken conversation that involves the use of vocabulary that is pertinent to the situation, the implementation of fillers like "well," "oh," "I see," and "ok,"

the utilization of the reduced form in English sentences, and the application of intonation, rhythm, stress, and appropriate language phrases. Discourse is essentially the means by which language functions in certain circumstances to transmit ideas, create meanings, and aid in the creation of social realities. (Hewings, 2001; Moshinsky, 1959a; Richard J. Watts, 2003; Singh & Richards, 2006).. The way we communicate and engage in our daily lives is reflected and influenced by a complex interplay of linguistic factors, cultural influences, and social dynamics (Tan & Marissa, 2022; Tenbrink, 2020).

3. Function

Make proper use of the communicative depending on the participant, the situation, and the goals. Functional linguistics is an approach that emphasizes the significance of language use as a communication tool and focuses on the actual role of language in human behavior. It considers linguistic structures as modified to accomplish communicative goals.

4. Style

The term "style" describes the distinctive ways that people use language to communicate, which are influenced by social environment, cultural background, and individual

preferences. It influences both oral and written communication and includes components including sentence form, metaphorical language use, and vocabulary selection. Effective communication in a variety of contexts can be improved by being aware of and accommodating to various linguistic styles.

5. Coherence

Speaking coherently involves the flow and connections between your ideas. It also has to do with how simple or complex your ideas are to understand. Effective use of connectives and discourse markers in logical speech aids in the listener's comprehension.

6. nonverbal communication

According to Ottenheimer and Pine (2017), nonverbal communication is the process of conveying information without using spoken or sign language. Nonverbal communication, also known as "body language," is a category with slightly hazy boundaries. This typically includes facial expressions, gestures, gazes, and postures, but it can also include ways of communicating through the environment. Hairstyles, clothing, shoes, jewelry, cosmetics, and other communication aids may also be included, (wallets, briefcases, backpacks, etc)

7. Strategic Alternatives

Use speaking techniques like highlighting important words, giving the listener clear context, and assessing how well the other person understands you.

3) Types of Speaking

As Brown (2004: 141) states, building meaning through verbal or oral form describes five speaking skill areas. Those five categories are as follows:

a) Imitative

The ability to mimic words, phrases, or even sentences is known as imitation. Several prosodic, lexical, and grammatical aspects of language are included in imitation, a component of the phonetic and oral production levels.

b) Intensive

Producing brief oral language forms that show proficiency in specific grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationships—such as prosodic-intonation elements, emphasis, rhythm, and cutting points—is known as intensive. For instance, finishing dialogues and reading words out loud.

c) Responsive

Simple requests and remarks, small talk, brief talks, and customary greetings are all examples of responsiveness. Conversely, responsiveness involves evaluating comprehension and interacting with others.

d) Interactive

Speaking during complicated interactions, such as role-plays, games, interviews, and conversations, occasionally involving numerous players and/or exchanges, is known as interactive speaking.

e) Extensive (monologue)

Speeches, oral presentations, and storytelling are examples of extensive forms in which there are little or no chances for audience oral engagement. More activity and audience engagement are needed for this kind.

2.2 Previous Study

Several previous studies have examined the use of Fondi application, with the first being research conducted by Athiyah Arifiyana and Dzulfikri (2023), titled "Analysis of Students' Perceptions Toward the Use of Fondi Application to Learn English Speaking in Junior High School." This study aimed to understand students' perceptions of using Fondi application for English-speaking practice in junior high schools. Specifically, it sought to assess how effective students believe Fondi application is in improving their

speaking skills, identify the benefits they derive from using the application, and uncover any challenges they face.

Furthermore, this research contributes to the field of technology-enhanced learning and English language education by highlighting both the advantages and challenges associated with using Fondi for speaking practice. The researchers employed a qualitative descriptive method to explore students' perceptions of the application. Data was collected through interviews with five students who had used Fondi for speaking practice, and the analysis focused on organizing and categorizing the information obtained from these interviews. The study utilized a narrative inquiry approach to gain an in-depth understanding of students' perspectives and experiences with Fondi application.

The second research study by Yeni Erlita and Aryani Anna Putri (2024) entitled *Teaching Technology in the Learning Process of Speaking Ability by Using Fondi Application*. This research aims to investigate the use of technology in the teaching and learning process, specifically focusing on teaching speaking skills using Fondi application. The research explores how Fondi application can improve students' speaking abilities and communication skills by integrating technology into education. The study's main finding was that using Fondi application positively impacted students' speaking abilities, with significant improvements seen in the post-test. Students can improve their speaking skills by using apps to communicate with others, practice conversation, and engage in virtual interactions. Despite some challenges, such

as cost and internet access, the study concluded that Fondi app is a valuable tool for language learning, offering an interactive and engaging platform for students to improve their speaking skills. The research methodology is qualitative. Researchers used qualitative research methods to gain insight into using technology for speaking skills by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting comprehensive narrative and visual data. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and recordings to determine the implementation of speaking skills using Fondi application. This research uses Heinich's (1996) theory, which states that the teaching process requires many tools and techniques for successful implementation.

The third research study by Musyafa Syamil Arroyan and Desi Wijayanti Ma'rufah (2024) is entitled Perception of Indonesian Learners Using Fondi Application in Developing English Language Skills. The study aims to explore user perceptions of using Fondi application as a medium for learning to speak English. The main findings of this study indicate that users have a positive perception of Fondi application. Of the total respondents, 15 people (44.12%) were in the 'very high' category, while 19 others (55.88%) were in the 'high' category. In conclusion, general users rate Fondi application well. This study uses a mixed method methodology with the Concurrent Embedded Strategy approach. Two techniques were used in data collection, namely questionnaires and interviews.

Several previous studies have shown that Fondi application is positively assessed as a medium for learning to speak English. The first study by Athiyah

Arifiyana and Dzulfikri (2023) and Yeni Erlita and Aryani Anna Putri (2024) used qualitative methods focusing on junior high school students. Both studies collected data through interviews; however, the study by Yeni Erlita and Aryani Anna Putri added observation and recording techniques to the data collection process. On the other hand, the study by Musyafa Syamil Arroyan and Desi Wijayanti Ma'arufah used a different method, namely a mixed method with the Concurrent Embedded Strategy approach, and the participants were Indonesian students in general. Data collection techniques in this study included questionnaires and interviews. Of the several studies, most did not use theory in data analysis, except for the study by Yeni Erlita and Aryani Anna Putri (2024), which applied theory in its analysis, where the theoretical focus is on the use of technology in language learning.

Therefore, this study will differ from previous studies focusing on junior high school students and general users. This study will specifically focus on the perception of EFL college students and the speaking activity of EFL college students because, in addition to being in a more complex academic context and having a specific need for professional communication, they have better reflective and critical abilities than junior high school students or general users. Moreover, this research fills a gap in the literature, as most previous research focuses on school students or general users, so the result can significantly contribute to the development of higher education programs. This research will employ qualitative methods. In this context, the researcher will apply James J. Gibson's theory of direct perception and Brown (2004). This

theory will analyze how EFL college students perceive the opportunities Fondi application provides to enhance their speaking skills. Using this theoretical framework, the study aims not only to provide deeper insights into the experiences of EFL college students using Fondi application but also to offer a more structured and theory-based analysis. This approach will strengthen the validity and reliability of the research findings.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The research explains the perception of EFL college students using Fondi applications to improve speaking skills and speaking activity in Fondi application. The researchers employed interview techniques to gain in-depth insights into students' views using Fondi application and observation to observe the speaking activity of EFL college students using Fondi.



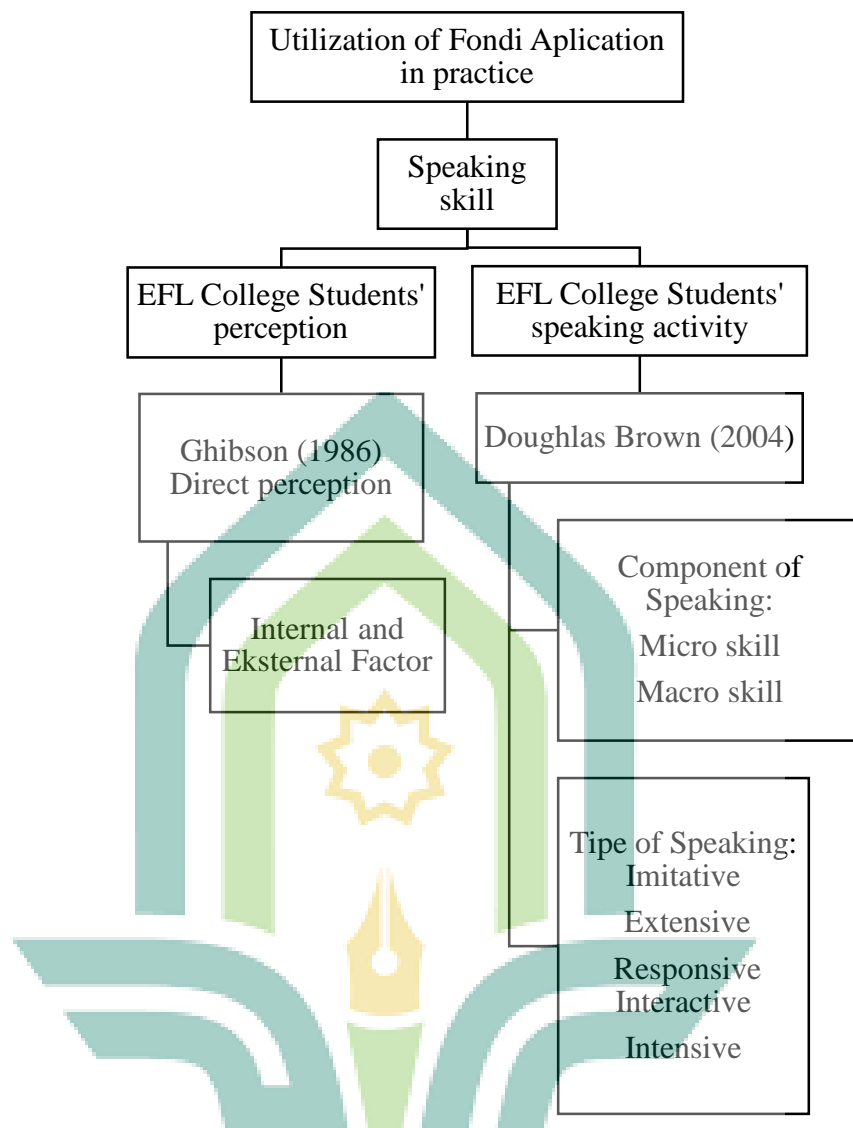


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.1 Research Design

This research uses qualitative methods. According to Sugiyono (2019), the qualitative research method is often called naturalistic because it is conducted in natural settings. This approach is grounded in the philosophy of postpositivism and is used to study the conditions of natural objects. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the key instrument, and data collection techniques involve triangulation, which combines multiple methods. Data analysis is inductive and qualitative, with the results emphasizing meaning rather than generalization. Meaning is derived from actual, definite data representing the visible data's underlying significance (Sugiyono, 2019). Then the approach to this research uses a narrative inquiry approach. Narrative inquiry is a narrative report that tells a sequence of events in detail. It usually focuses on studying one person or a single individual and how that individual gives meaning to their experiences through the stories told. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1990).

The researcher opted to employ a qualitative approach and narrative inquiry method to align with the research objectives, specifically exploring the perceptions of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) college students regarding the use of Fandi application to improve their speaking skills. The rationale for choosing qualitative research is that this method allows researchers to gain insights and understand the phenomena of interest. It serves to describe facts,

validate findings, and enhance knowledge, as researchers are able to engage directly in the field. This direct engagement enables them to observe how EFL college students practice speaking skills during their speaking activities.

3.2 Research Focus

Based on the identification of the problem, this research focuses on EFL college students' perceptions of using Fondi application to enhance their speaking skills and their speaking activities. The study aims to explore both their perceptions and the speaking activities they engage in while using the application.

3.3 Setting and Participants

The participant, in this study were Three EFL undergraduate students who could provide relevant information for the researcher. They were selected intentionally because they are students in the English department at the university and have been using Fondi application for a certain period. They were familiar with Fondi application and had learned to speak English using it so that they could provide adequate information. Researchers determine the sampling technique with purposive sampling, namely the technique of taking samples of data sources with certain considerations that are considered to know the most about what is expected so that it will make it easier for researchers to explore the social situation in the field. (Sugiyono, 2019). This research will be conducted online through voice notes on whatsapp and instagram for interview and observation in Fondi application. Before conducting the interview,

participants were asked to fill out a Google form to participate in this research, and their personal information will be kept confidential.

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher employed two data collection techniques: semi-structured interviews and observations. Data collection was conducted online. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with EFL students with prior experience using Fondi for a specific period. This approach allowed the researcher to understand their perceptions of using the application to enhance their speaking skills and analyse their speaking activities. This method enables respondents to provide detailed responses and explanations (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to prevent misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the questions. Additionally, observations were carried out to examine how EFL students' speaking activities contributed to improving their speaking skills.

3.5 Data validation

Data validation was carried out in this study using the member-checking technique. This technique aims to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data that has been collected and to avoid misinterpretation by researchers. According to Sugiyono (2019), The validation process was carried out by asking participants to review the interview transcripts or summaries of the analysis results to ensure that the information conveyed was according to their intentions. Participants were allowed to provide clarification or correction if there was a discrepancy or misinterpretation. With this method, the research

results became more reliable and could describe EFL college students' perceptions of using Fondi application more accurately.

3.6 Data analysis

The researchers transcribed the collected interview data to assist in detailed analysis. For a more detailed analysis, the researcher read the transcripts several times to identify significant themes. The methodology used is a thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke (2006). Below are the 6 phases in the thematic analysis according to Braun & Clark, which the researcher uses in analyzing the data:

1. Regocnizing the data

This stage involves transcribing interviews and reading the transcripts repeatedly. Transcribing is a time-consuming process, but it may be useful to become familiar with the data and offer the opportunity to begin to think about possible codes.

2. Generating initial code

The researcher identifies an initial list of codes. Codes enable the organization of the data into meaningful units, but they are not yet broader themes and may capture several codes.

3. Searching for themes

This stage involves considering how different codes may fit together into broader themes. Themes may be organized hierarchically, with higher-order themes and subthemes, or in the networks of interlocking ideas

4. Reviewing themes

Once a set of potential themes is identified, the researcher need to be reviewed and refind. Some potential themes may not eb relevant to the research question. While others might be combined into broader ideas or divided into separate themes

5. Defining and naming themes

The researcher identified the central idea in each theme and provided a name that concisely captures that idea. Subthemes may be described that capture the dimensions of a theme.

6. Producing the report

Once themes and their interrelationships are fully identified, a research report may be written

Then, the researcher interpreted all of the data collected through the lens of Ghibson's theory about direct perception and brown's theory about speaking activity.

3.7 Research Steps

a. Finding a unique problem or phenomenon

In this step, the researcher explored and observed a unique problem in an EFL college student's environment and learning English technology, which will be discussed in this study.

b. Conducting a literature review

The reseacrh looked for literature reviews related to the phenomenon to be studied.

- c. Determining the formulation of the problem and the research objectives

The researcher began to provide research question and determine the objectives of the research in order to make the research clear and directed.

- d. Collecting data

The researcher started to collect data from the participants in the step by conducting semi-structured interviews.

- e. Analyzing the data

The researcher analyzed the data obtained using the thematic analysis theory.

- f. Writing the research

After collecting all the data, the researcher wrote the research and reported the result as a thesis.

3.8 Research Schedule

Activity	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024 – Nov. 2024	Des. 2024	Jan. 2025	Feb. 2025	Mar ch 2025
Submission of Research Topic							
Research topic approval							
Writing research proposal							
Seminar proposal examination							
Conductiong and writing the research							

Excitation of thesis examination							
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CHAPTER IV

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

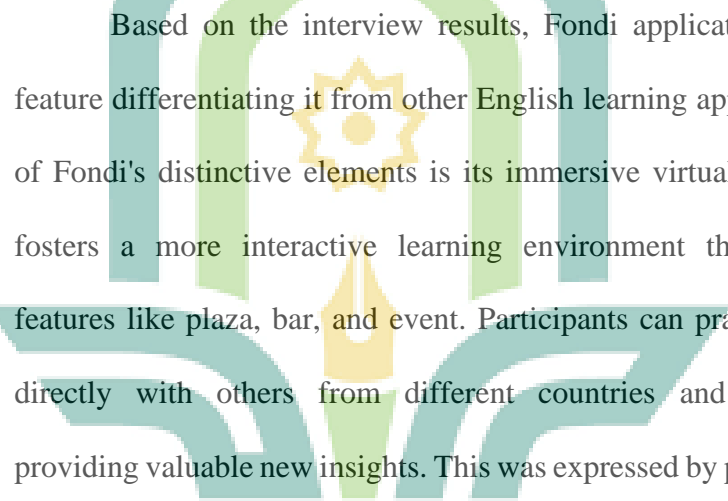
4.1 Result

This section presents the study's findings, which explore EFL college students' perceptions and speaking activities in enhancing their speaking skills using Fondi application. The findings are outlined in the following discussion.

4.1.1 EFL college students' perception

4.1.1.1 The Appeal of Fondi App

1. The unique concept of the virtual world Fondi application



Based on the interview results, Fondi application has a key feature differentiating it from other English learning applications. One of Fondi's distinctive elements is its immersive virtual world, which fosters a more interactive learning environment through various features like plaza, bar, and event. Participants can practice speaking directly with others from different countries and backgrounds, providing valuable new insights. This was expressed by participants P1, P2, and P3:

"The uniqueness of this concept lies in its integration with a game that simulates virtual life, allowing us to experience it as if we were avatars. Speaking involves real interactions with people, enabling us to learn significantly from these experiences. Additionally, daily conversation practice can effectively enhance our speaking skills." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)

"What caught my attention from Fondi application so that I wanted to practice speaking on the application is that I can meet people from other countries. So, I can communicate or do discussions about cultural things, we can exchange cultures, we

can exchange opinions, we can recommend interesting places if we want to visit there, and many other things that are very interesting on the application when we can talk to foreigners, many of them have experiences that can be shared with us. So that is very interesting in my opinion. So we do not just practice our English or speaking skills but also get knowledge, relationships and so on." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

"What caught my attention first was the appearance of the virtual world and the avatar. Then, the concept of a place to practice speaking resembles real life, for example, in a plaza, park, bar, and home country. Each place has its vibe. For example, the park is bustling, so there is no limit to the people who can join in the fun, like in the plaza, which is like a public park. That is what makes Fondi unique and a little different from usual English learning applications" (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

1. Fondi of Features for Interaction

The social interaction aspect attracts users' attention to Fondi application. The Plaza feature is generally in demand because it allows users to interact directly with individuals from various countries, thus creating an authentic and immersive learning environment. If the number of people joining the conversation is limited, it becomes more comfortable. As conveyed by P1 and P2:

"The first thing that caught my attention was the plaza feature because it was the most comfortable place to chat with people there compared to other features. Because the plaza feature is limited, unlike the park where many people are busy in their home country, on average, the people there chat in Indonesian, and rarely do they use English, so it can't help me improve my English skills. But, in the plaza, we can meet people from abroad, too, such as Bangladesh, India, and even Japan, and not a few from Vietnam. When I open Fondi application, I go to the plaza" (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025).

"I believe the most effective features for practising speaking in Fondi are Plaza, Event, and Bar because each has a different function. I use Plaza and Event the most, while Bar only

occasionally, although it is still a good feature. In Plaza, users are given a space to talk with several choices of places, such as sitting and standing areas on the field. Usually, I also play while having conversations with people from various countries, including Indonesia. Most users in Plaza speak English, which suits my goal of practising speaking skills. In addition, I enjoy conversations in Plaza because the topics discussed are very diverse, and I can meet many people randomly, which I think is very fun.”(Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

In addition, there are Event and Bar features that are also in demand because they offer more structured and in-depth discussions, thus helping users improve their speaking skills more effectively. The statement of P2 and P3 supports this:

“I also often use the event feature because it has a host who leads the discussion. This host provides a topic of conversation and directs the conversation so that the discussion becomes more structured. One of the advantages of Event is that users do not need to recharge the battery to talk for more than an hour. Therefore, I highly recommend Event as the best place to practice conversation in English. In addition, because the topic has been determined, users do not need to look for their conversation ideas, so the discussion feels more comfortable and focused. Meanwhile, although I rarely use it, the Bar is also an effective place to practice speaking, mainly because the conversation is one-on-one. This makes the interaction more focused than Plaza or Event, where users talk to three to four people at once, sometimes making it difficult to get into the conversation. However, the disadvantage of the Bar is the limited duration, which is only 30 minutes. Users must return home after the time runs out, especially if the battery is dead. ” (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025).

"I think the most helpful feature is at Fondi's event because we intend to learn to speak, and there must be a speaking partner. At this event, Fondi provided a moderator who would lead the discussion. Moreover, there will be challenges for me when using vocabulary, which I rarely use. This is quite good for improvement." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

2. Avatar Concept

Apart from the attraction of the virtual world, the use of avatars in Fondi is also a unique attraction for users. This feature allows users to customize avatars according to their preferences and explore virtual worlds resembling real environments, such as Plaza, Park, Lounge, etc. As stated by P2:

“The avatar. When we first login to Fondi application, it turns out that we are asked to create an avatar that we will later use to have conversations with other people on Fondi. This avatar can also be customized according to our wishes; many types of hairstyles, clothes, shoes, and skin colours are adjusted to the many skin tones we have in real life, so it is really interesting. So, that is what makes this application interesting. Then apart from avatars, virtual worlds are also presented there, so the virtual world there is created in such a way as to attract attention and engage in conversation.”(Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

While the visual elements, including avatars that create movement, attract attention, most participants viewed them primarily as aesthetic features. They did not see these elements as the main factors that enhance speaking skills. This distinction makes the application unique and helps create a more engaging learning experience, as participants P1 and P3 noted.

"I do not think it affects improving my speaking skills. It is just the uniqueness of Fondi. It is not bad to use a display like that." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

"In my opinion, it is not very important because what truly matters is how we speak at Fondi. Therefore, it does not have much influence on our speaking practice.” (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)

3. Notification Feature That Encourages Motivation

The notification feature that shows which friends are online and alerts users about upcoming events is also a significant motivator for interviewees to continue using the application. This feature encourages Participants to rejoin conversation sessions, which in turn enhances their consistency in practising English speaking. As mentioned by participants P1 and P3:

"For me, fondi provides exposure to a very strong stimulus so that I am motivated to practice speaking at fondi. What stimulates me is the notification of online friends who are in the plaza in the application so that we can practice speaking together. That is what provides strong motivation for me. Because if we practice speaking with people we already know, there is a special motivation so I want to continue learning because once we get to know each other, the topic will continue to develop" Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)

"Yes. Fondi provides an opportunity for users to make friends with each other, and there is a friends list where we can follow each other so that if our friends are online, there will be notifications. Well, it cheers me up if that friend is a cool topic to chat with. "Then Fondi also gives event notifications when it opens, well that sometimes makes me want to join and be curious about the topics being discussed" (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

In short, Fondi has a primary concept that distinguishes it from other English learning applications, namely the concept of an immersive virtual world that creates a more interactive learning environment through various places such as plazas, bars, home country, lounges, Parks, and other and the addition of customizable avatar elements that add to the impression of involvement in the virtual world concept. The participants can immediately practice speaking with

people from various countries and backgrounds who can provide new insights. One of the features that attracts the most attention from users is Plaza. This feature is considered the most comfortable place to practice speaking compared to other features. In addition, the Event and Bar features are also favourite choices because they offer more structured and in-depth discussions. The event has a host who guides the discussion by providing topics of conversation so that the conversation becomes more focused and helps users develop their vocabulary. Meanwhile, Bar allows one-on-one interaction, providing a more focused and personal experience.. Although the concept of Fondi application with avatars is aesthetically appealing and engaging, most participants did not find it very influential in improving their speaking skills. They considered that the main aspect of speaking practice is the direct interaction in the application, not the visual display. The online friend notification feature is also a factor that encourages users to continue using Fondi. This helps improve their consistency in practising speaking English.

4.1.1.2 Convenience and Ease of Fondi Application

1. Visual And Sound Factors Influence Comfort and Motivation

The visual display in Fondi application has an important role in creating a more enjoyable and interactive learning experience. The application design that resembles a game makes users feel more comfortable and less bored when practising speaking English. On

the other hand, the sound aspect also contributes to the user's experience in practising speaking. The sound quality in the application varies depending on each user's internet connection. Nevertheless, sound remains important in supporting interaction and communication during conversation sessions. As stated by P1 and P2:

"The visual appearance and sound of Fondi application really influenced my desire to practice speaking there. Because first of all, its game-like features make me, as a user, enjoy it and don't get bored quickly, even though sometimes the voices of other users sometimes sound small or loud, but that's not a problem. "The most important thing is that the visuals make me, as a user, not get bored quickly and get addicted because it's fun. For me personally, the sound has no effect because it might depend on other users' connections or from me too, but the rest is safe." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)

"Personally, in my opinion, an attractive visual appearance or avatar influences our conversation mood. Usually, if the appearance is attractive, we will be interested in talking to our speaking partner. But sound is no less important. This voice is the main factor that we must prioritize. So when we practice speaking, we must understand what other people are saying clearly and hear the voices clearly so there are no misunderstandings in communication. Moreover, we use the audio call feature on our phones, so the voice is very important. The clear and clear voice helps us understand what our speaking partner is saying, and the communication goes well." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

The summarized, the visual appearance and sound aspects of Fondi application play an essential role in the user's experience when practising speaking English. The game-like application design makes participantd feel more comfortable and less likely to get bored. At the same time, an attractive visual appearance, including avatars, can

increase their interest and mood in practising. On the other hand, sound is also essential, although the quality varies depending on each user's internet connection. The visual aspect influences some users, while others emphasize the importance of voice clarity to ensure effective communication and avoid misunderstandings. Considering that this application uses an audio call feature, clear voice quality is very helpful in understanding the person you are talking to and maintaining a smooth conversation. Thus, the combination of attractive visuals and clear sound can increase the motivation and effectiveness of participants' speaking practice in Fondi application.

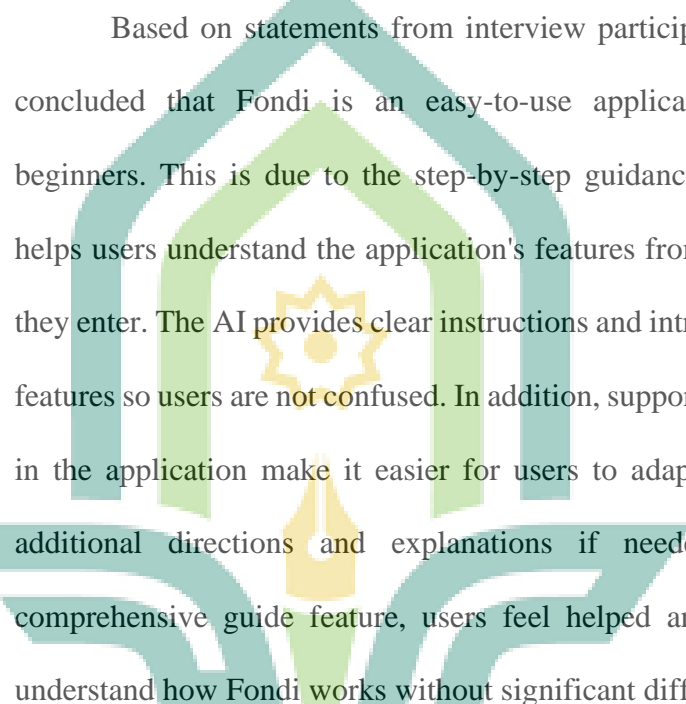
2. Ease of use of Fondi Application

The ease of using Fondi application significantly enhances the participant's learning experience. Most features within the app are designed to be user-friendly, particularly due to the accessible guides and support from other users. Additionally, the involvement of supporters and talents within the application helps users quickly grasp how the various features operate. The statement from P2 and P1 supports this:

"I think the features of Fondi are very easy to understand even though we are beginners or have just used the application, because when we enter or sign in to Fondi application, we will be guided step by step by the AI whose job is to guide us in using the application, giving instructions on how to use this application. The AI will also show us some of the features of the application. So, we are not clueless there; we have guidance and people who show us instructions on how the application works. Not only that, if we do not understand the instructions from the AI, we can also

meet supporters or talents in the application whose job is to give us directions and explain to beginners how to use Fondi application. So we will be significantly helped and made easier. So far, using Fondi features is not that difficult. " (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

"I think the features in Fondi application are easy to understand because there is already an explanation. What is this feature for, and what can we do there? So, for me, it is not too difficult, and when I first joined, I could immediately understand the features of Fondi application." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)



Based on statements from interview participants, it can be concluded that Fondi is an easy-to-use application, even for beginners. This is due to the step-by-step guidance from AI that helps users understand the application's features from the first time they enter. The AI provides clear instructions and introduces various features so users are not confused. In addition, supporters and talents in the application make it easier for users to adapt by providing additional directions and explanations if needed. With this comprehensive guide feature, users feel helped and can quickly understand how Fondi works without significant difficulty.

4.1.1.3 Obstacles in using fondi Application

In using Fondi application, the Participant faces obstacles, especially related to interference from other users and technical obstacles. Here are some of the obstacles faced by users from the interview.

1. Distraction From Other Users

In addition, some users sometimes interrupt the conversation or create noisy background sounds, which can reduce the comfort of the discussion. This causes users who do not subscribe to have to find solutions, such as moving, turning off the speaker, or turning off the sound of the disturbing user to stay focused on the conversation. As expressed by P1 and P2:

“Sometimes I can’t focus because there are different people there. We can’t chat with one person so that person can freely come and go to our table. So, it often gets distracted, especially by users from certain countries who can suddenly come in and interrupt the conversation. So that makes it less comfortable and less focused. Then sometimes, the background from some users is quite noisy, from the sound of horns and other people chatting. So if it’s in a plaza in my home country, I can’t focus. But if it’s in a bar, it’s still safe because we chat as if Fondi has been determined, especially those who want to improve their speaking skills. What I usually do is move from that room to another room” (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)

“Of course, I found distractions, especially distractions from other users. Because in the application, there are many from various countries and different characters. So some of them can speak well. Then, some users come to riot, talk poorly, or have their voices unclear; there is a noisy background. However, Fondi has a reporting system for those who feel disturbed or uncomfortable with some users, thereby blocking the users and reporting them for their actions so that they no longer disturb the comfort of people who study in the application. ” (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

2. Limit Feature For Free Users

Another obstacle is the limited features for free users, who have no control over who can join or speak in discussion sessions.

"Fondi provides privileges on membership, namely users who pay for a subscription have the power to lock tables or remove annoying people from tables or rooms because I don't subscribe, so the first thing I do is give a warning if it doesn't work, I leave the room and move to another room" (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

3. The Capacity Size of Fondi Application

In addition to social factors, technical barriers are also obstacles to using Fondi. Participants reported that Fondi application with a unique concept display feels heavy for certain devices, causing lag, which impacts the comfort of interaction. As expressed by P3:

"I don't think it affects my motivation or helps my speaking skills; it's just the uniqueness of Fondi application; it's not bad to use a display like that. But sometimes it's too heavy for my device so it often lags." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

4. User Connection Quality

In addition, the quality of communication in speaking practice is also affected by the stability of the internet connection. A poor connection can cause sound interference, thus hindering the smoothness of communication in speaking practice sessions. As expressed by P3:

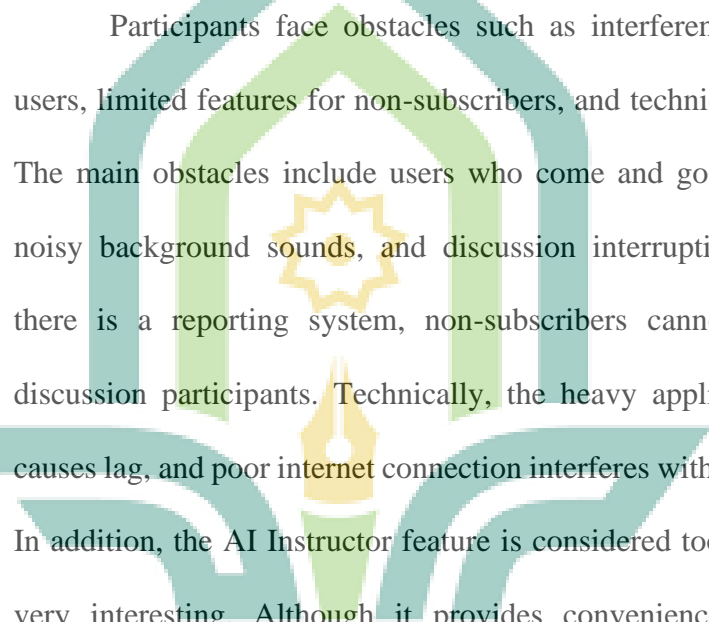
"Because in Fondi we practice speaking, so the quality of our speaking partner's voice must be clear. Some users whose internet connection is not very good will experience poor sound quality or intermittent." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

5. The quality of AI's Practice Features

On the other hand, the AI Instructor feature provided in the application is considered less interesting and confusing. This is due to

its characteristics which tend to be rigid, so it does not provide a natural interaction experience like in real communication. As a result, many users choose not to use this feature in their training sessions. As stated by P3:

“What still confuses me is the chat feature with AI, maybe because it’s quite boring for me because it’s too stiff, so I rarely use that feature” (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)



Participants face obstacles such as interference from other users, limited features for non-subscribers, and technical difficulties. The main obstacles include users who come and go without rules, noisy background sounds, and discussion interruptions. Although there is a reporting system, non-subscribers cannot control the discussion participants. Technically, the heavy application display causes lag, and poor internet connection interferes with sound quality. In addition, the AI Instructor feature is considered too rigid and not very interesting. Although it provides convenience in speaking practice.

4.1.1.5 Satisfaction with using Fondi application

Users' emotional experience using Fondi application is dynamic and influenced by the situations they face while interacting with it.

1. Feeling Happy and Satisfied

Participants generally feel happy and satisfied because they can improve their English speaking skills and gain new experiences, meet friends from various countries, and gain broader insights and knowledge. Interaction with other users provides an opportunity to exchange experiences and expand relationships, making the learning process more enjoyable and meaningful. As expressed by P1:

“I feel very happy because not only do I learn English there, but I can also get new experiences, friends, insights, and knowledge. So not only does my speaking improve, but my understanding of other things also improves.”(Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 7, 2025)

2. Combination of Feelings Depending on The Situation

However, this experience also comes with challenges. The interviewees need to adjust to the various characters of the individuals they meet and understand the boundaries in communication. In addition, in some situations, the interviewees can feel bored if they do not find a suitable conversation partner or an interesting discussion. On the contrary, when they see a pleasant conversation partner, the motivation to practice increases. Thus, the feelings of users when using Fondi are situational, depending on the interactions they experience in the application. Nevertheless, Fondi is still considered an effective and enjoyable platform for learning English through dynamic social interactions. As stated by interviewees P2 and P3:

“My feelings when using Fondi application are mixed. Sometimes I feel happy because I can meet fun people there. I want to meet people who can provide many lessons and can meet many relations from abroad or within the country. Also, we can exchange experiences. That is very happy for me even though sometimes when facing unpleasant things in the application, we must face people with various characters, so we must understand each other. We must not cross the boundaries that they have set. So, doing coverage is natural. But so far, I enjoy doing coverage there with many people from many countries, too. I think it's a fun way to learn English; I can say that.”(Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 8, 2025)

"For this feeling, it depends on the situation. Sometimes there is a phase of boredom when you don't find a fun chat partner, and you are happy when you find a fun chat partner and the chat is fun." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 10, 2025)

Participants' emotional experiences are dynamic and influenced by the interactions they experience. In general, participants feel happy and satisfied because they can improve their English speaking skills, meet friends from various countries, and gain new insights. However, challenges arise when they have to adjust to the character of other users and understand communication boundaries. Participants can also feel bored if they do not find a suitable discussion partner, but on the contrary, they feel motivated when interacting with pleasant interlocutors. Despite the challenges, Fondi is still considered an effective and enjoyable platform for learning English through dynamic social interactions.

4.1.2 Speaking activity

In this section, the researcher will discuss the findings regarding the speaking activity of EFL college students' using Fondi application through observations and interviews.

4.1.2.1 Type of Speaking

In the practice session based on observation and interview, the participants interacted with their friends and other users who joined the discussion room. In the observation, participants practice speaking by discussing certain topics, asking questions, or simply interacting with small talk. Supported by interview statements by P1 and P2:

"Personally, I prefer to have discussions or just chat. Because it's more comfortable for me, and the conversation can flow and not be tied to one thing. But if it's like the interactive type that uses role play while playing games, it's quite difficult to talk freely, in my opinion" (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

"Mostly, I talk more often with discussion type, like discussing a topic that is usually in an event. I think discussion at an event is more helpful than playing or role-playing. Because in an event our conversation is more focused" (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

From the interview from P3's statement, it was noted that participants often engage in responsive speaking activities such as discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and small talk. However, when a topic is unavailable, participants make use of existing game elements from Fondi app to enhance their speaking practice activities. This is supported by P3's statement.

"I often do responsive speaking in conversation because it is flexible and fun. But suppose there is no topic of conversation. In that case, I usually also use interactive ones, such as playing games already provided in Fondi, such as games with questions." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

in short, the participants use the responsive type when practising speaking in fondi, such as discussions and small talk interactions. And on the other hand, participants also use the interactive type if there is no topic to talk about such as using games available in fondi application.

4.1.2.2 Micro Skill Component of Speaking

Through observation, Through participant observation, it appears that they understand the components of micro-skills during speaking exercises, such as the use of phonemes, morpheme adjustments, discourse, functions, phrases and words. This is reinforced by statements from participants in the interview.:

"Yes, because sometimes when I am practising, I suddenly get stuck because I feel like there is something wrong with the language structure, especially the grammar, so I often pay attention to that aspect. If I am alone, I check Google or remember what I have learned, but if I am with a friend, I always ask for corrections, and if I am wrong, I ask my friend to show me the correct way" (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

"Yes, in speaking practice on fondi application, I really pay attention to the vocabs I use, word structure, collocation, phrases, sometimes I also use idioms that I think are suitable to use in the conversation." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

"Yes, I pay quite a lot of attention to that component. Because it is also related to my speaking progress. I check every time I feel awkward with the sentence I delivered whether it is right or wrong. But I often imitate phrases from movies then I apply them when practicing at Fondi. Not only phrases but also vocabulary, pronunciation, and other things." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

The majority of participants paid attention to the micro-skill components in the speaking activity. In addition, to support speaking activity and the use of appropriate micro skill components, participants utilized speaking partners in Fondi to correct. and some participants also utilized Google to correct.

1. Phoneme

Based on observation, the participants are quite fluent in pronouncing phonemes in each word. Participants demonstrated an understanding of consonant and vowel sounds in English vocabulary in each word spoken during speaking practice. This is supported by P2's statement in the interview.

"So during that session, Fondi helped me practice phoneme by giving me the opportunity to speak directly with partners from various backgrounds. When speaking, I became more aware of the pronunciation of certain words." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

However, sometimes phonemes are also a challenge for participants. Then, in the interview, in terms of phonemes, the P2 stated that using phonemes is one of the main challenges in speaking because some words in English have similar pronunciations, which can cause errors in pronunciation or understanding of meaning. As stated by P2:

"I think the most difficult aspect is phonemes because many words in English have similar pronunciations. So when we communicate, sometimes we misinterpret a word that turns out

to have a different meaning. Like the words 'too' and 'two'. The pronunciation is almost the same, sometimes it causes misinterpretation. Then sometimes I make sure to the person I'm talking to, whether the word is meant or not or by aligning it with the context.." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

The Participants are quite proficient in the sounds of letters in English and adjust them in words. However, P2 also said that the challenge in the micro speaking component itself is the use of phonemes where the sounds of words that sound the same sometimes need repetition in understanding or conveying them. In this case, P2 said that in understanding it, participants ask for the actual meaning or see it from the context of the sentence.

2. Morpheme

In observation, the participants understand the context of morphemes where the informants can adjust the word changes in the context of the sentence. For example, what is used in the exercise is "said" in the context of the past tense sentence and "previously" in the context of the sentence spoken. This word changes into an adverb. The participants can adjust the words with the function of the words in the sentence in speaking so that it does not seem stiff. This is supported by P3's statement:

"When practice speaking, I can use morphemes that are appropriate to the context of the sentence, such as words in the past tense and present tense and other tenses or other

language structures. Because I often practice speaking by interacting with users on fondi, I am more aware of the differences." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

3. Collocations

In speaking activities, based on observations, the resource person also uses collocations in the sentences spoken to add a natural impression. For example, "heavy rain", "spend time", "tell the truth". As conveyed by P1 in the interview:

"So, Fondi helps in recognizing some common collocations through interaction. I often hear my partner using phrases that are already common in English, such as "make a decision" or "have a conversation", so I start to get used to the pattern of words that are often used together. However, fondi application does not have a special feature that shows whether the collocation I use is correct or not. So it only depends on the speaking partner when talking." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

In short, the informants quite often use collocation in spoken sentences. However, P1 said that fondi application does not have a feature to correct language components such as collocations so fondi helps to recognize collocations through interaction with users in fondi to correct or add knowledge.

4. Phrase

Through observation, the participants imitated some common phrases such as, "Give me your hand" and "See you later".

This adds to the impression of natural speaking like a native speaker. This is supported by P2's statement in the interview:

"I also use phrases or even idioms, in using idioms or slang words I also see first whether the other person will understand or not. Don't let it happen that when we say something but the other person doesn't catch the meaning. So that there can be misunderstandings in communication. Then, to ensure the truth of course we can pay attention to the other person, when the other person catches what we mean and gives an appropriate response, it means that what we convey is in accordance with the rules. Both in terms of structure and vocabulary that we use or before we have a conversation, we have enriched ourselves with vocabulary and other aspects so that when we practice speaking we can minimize mistakes." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

Based on observations and interviews, participants are quite familiar with using phrases such as common phrases in conversation and even using idioms to add a more natural impression like a native speaker. In this regard, participants prefer idioms or phrases used with their conversation partners to avoid misunderstandings in understanding the meaning of the message. P2 said that through interaction, it can be used to find out whether the phrases or idioms used are correct. Then before practicing, it is also necessary to add phrases or idioms to be practiced later during practice.

5. Word

Through observation, the words used were also varied and quite a lot by the participants. In the vocabulary of daily conversation, participants were quite proficient. P3 expressed that

interaction with more advanced users could provide new vocabulary knowledge. However, on the other hand in the interview, participants expressed their difficulties in word components. words. As expressed by P3:

“My difficulty lies in words. Although I am quite capable of speaking in daily conversation, when I want to explain something new, I have difficulty explaining it, such as vocabulary in political discussions. However, I still try my best because it is part of development.” (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

In the word component, the majority of students master the vocabulary in daily conversation. However, they also face obstacles in the word component in the context of unfamiliar discussions, for example, the context of words in political understanding. In this regard, interaction with users in Fondi application also helps participants in adding new vocabulary knowledge or through movies.

4.1.2.3 Macro Skill Component of Speaking

In addition to the micro skill components, through participant observation, we also paid enough attention to macro skill components such as fluency, discourse, coherency, style, function, non-verbal communication and strategic alternatives. This is supported by P1's statement through the interview.

“Yes, of course in speaking practice also pay attention to it because fluency and other aspects are the main part when we communicate with someone. Moreover, we use a foreign

language. Fluency (clarity) and other factors are the main factors in communicating well. If we are not clear or the words we say are not structured, or with the wrong intonation, it will cause miscommunication between the two. Both the communicant and the communicator do not understand how to communicate. Therefore, the above aspects are very much needed and considered when practising speaking. " (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

The following are findings in each component through observation and interviews:

1. Strategic Alternatives

From the observation, there are several difficulties faced by the participants when practicing speaking. Such as when they want to explain something that may be unfamiliar to the topic and forget vocabulary. In this case, the majority of participants overcame it by asking for help from the speaking partner to remind them so that their ideas could be conveyed and understood by their speaking partner. when participants do not know the words or forget to explain the idea they want to convey, they tend to ask their partner to speak. For example, in one of the observation sessions, the participant was involved in a discussion about a political issue that was being widely discussed. During the conversation, the participant actively responded by asking questions and responding to answers from other users quite well. When having difficulty remembering or saying a word in English, they asked in English, such as "How to say 'pesantren' in English?" to which other users responded. This

shows an effort to maintain the use of the target language during communication.

2. Discourse, Coherency and Function

In communication, the Participants use discourse, function, and coherency appropriate to the conversation's context so that the conveyed ideas can be connected. Through observation, participants pay attention to discourse, coherence and communication as in the exercise in the context of daily conversation. Participants convey information and opinions and describe something with a specific purpose or function. This can be seen from the understanding of the participant's interlocutor regarding the idea or intention conveyed. As conveyed by P3:

"Regarding discourse, function and coherency, I pay enough attention to see how my conversation partner understands my meaning. Because in Fondi, especially in training places like Plaza, we can only rely on our conversation partner to correct these components. Maybe if we use talking to AI, it can help correct it" (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

In short, in the speaking exercise, participants pay attention to the intent of the message or the purpose of the message conveyed and then the connectedness of the ideas conveyed. For the success of the message to be conveyed clearly and can be understood, participants rely on the response of the speaking partner. The Ai feature can also help in correcting the sequence of ideas conveyed to make it clearer.

3. Nonverbal Communication

Through observation, the participants rarely used nonverbal communication to carry out conversations in audio call-based discussions. Participants only use the basic features provided through avatars, such as gestures of greeting, excitement, thinking and others. Therefore, participants can only rely on intonation when speaking to express themselves. This was conveyed by P2 and P3 in their difficulty using nonverbal communication.

“The difficulty or challenge I face in this aspect is about gestures. Because in Fondi application, we only use voice, so we cannot show gestures as a support in communication. So, we can only rely on voice intonation to express our feelings. Maybe that, the rest, the other aspects are still easy to do.”(Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

"Yes, of course I pay attention to several factors, but not so much for gestures because in fondi we cannot gesture freely because we use avatars. But fondi provides gestures for several expressions, such as thinking, etc." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

4. Style

Based on the observation and interview, the Participants more often practised speaking in the Plaza area using a relaxed and informal communication style because they tended to talk to peers or friends they already knew, and in Fondi application, generally, people talked informally. As stated by P3, who often uses informal styles:

"I think the formal speaking style is what makes it difficult for me because in the past, most of us used informal language, so there was rarely an opportunity to practice informal language, but it

could also be for the intention of deliberately using formal language, but maybe only certain users can comfortably speak with formal language. So to practice a formal speaking style, I need to practice with intention, like going to an event, because the conversation will be more serious, and I practice more often in the plaza."(Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

In Short, the formal speaking style is rarely used by participants because, in general, they speak in an informal style, and it requires more intention to practice speaking in a formal style by going to an event space or finding a suitable partner to be able to speak formally with.

5. Fluency

The most participants are fluent in speaking in the context of daily conversation. This is supported by the statements of the participants regarding their speaking progress:

"For me, it's gotten to the point where when I'm having a conversation, I can follow them so I don't stay silent much. At first, I was often silent and afraid, but after using Fondi app, I was no longer afraid and could join in other conversations. I also feel that after using Fondi app, I feel more and more wasted when speaking English." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

"Before using fondi, my speaking ability was far from fluent. I still stuttered when speaking English even though I had a lot to say in my mind. However, after using fondi, I became accustomed to using English. Although at first I was hesitant to speak, little by little there was good progress. Especially to increase confidence when speaking English. The more we get used to speaking English, the more our brain gets used to remembering vocabulary or conversations in English. So you could say my fluency level is around 80% after using fondi. From being a beginner, now I have entered the advanced level." (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

“So far, I no longer need to translate Indonesian to English in my head to convey something. So I have trained myself to think in English. So it is comfortable enough to speak daily conversation.” (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18)

However, the participants had quite a bit of difficulty when discussing a particular topic that was less familiar to them due to limited vocabulary that was rarely used as seen in the observation of the informant discussing a hot social issue that was related to politics. Because of the limited knowledge of vocabulary such as politics, it made it quite difficult for the participants to explain. Supported by statements from P1 and P3:

"Yes, the difficulty is in vocabulary. If, for example, we are discussing a topic about the conditions in a country, I still find it difficult because there are still several vocabulary words that I have forgotten and do not know." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

"when I practice speaking in Fondi, if I want to discuss a topic whose vocabulary is unfamiliar to me, it will make it difficult for me." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

The majority of participants are fluent in speaking daily conversation. However, participants also have difficulties in speaking fluency in explaining unfamiliar topics due to limited vocabulary.

4.1.2.4 Function of speaking

Based on the interviews that have been conducted, it was found that EFL students have various goals in practicing speaking skills using Fondi application. First, in terms of academic and career aspects, EFL students use Fondi application as a means to improve their speaking

skills in academic and professional contexts. Several students stated that speaking practice through Fondi helped them in preparing for academic presentations, such as class presentations and thesis defenses. In addition, this application is also considered a useful tool in supporting plans for further study abroad, where the ability to speak English is one of the main competencies required. Not only in the academic world, the use of this application is also motivated by future career needs, especially for students who aspire to work in an international environment that requires good English communication skills. As expressed by the P1 and P2:

"The first goal is because my major is English education, so there is a demand for me to be fluent in speaking skills, so the goal is to improve speaking skills for presentations and because later there will be a thesis defence, and I want to continue studying abroad to Singapore. And the rest is to facilitate communication because English is a language used across countries." (Participant 1, Semi-structured interview, February 16, 2025)

"So I practice communication, of course, which can be useful not only in lectures but also in future careers and also for performances such as presentations in class." (Participant 3, Semi-structured interview, February 18, 2025)

Second, in terms of communication and socialization, EFL college students utilize Fondi application as a medium to interact with people from within and outside the country. This is based on the awareness that English is an international language that enables communication across cultures and countries. In addition, students also use this application to improve their speaking skills in the context of

everyday conversation so that they feel more confident in communicating with others in non-formal situations.

“To communicate and socialize with people from outside Indonesia, especially for those who use English as their main language. Also, to practice when we will have a presentation in class. There are also several groups in Fondi; we can practice presenting it there with friends. We can also ask for their opinions about the results of our presentation.” (Participant 2, Semi-structured interview, February 17, 2025)

Based on these findings, it can be summarize using Fondi application in speaking practice has broad benefits, both in academic, social, and professional aspects. This shows that this application can be an effective alternative in improving EFL students' speaking skills, especially in facing communication challenges in academic environments and the world of work in the future.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 EFL College Students' Perception of Using Fondi Application

The Findings showed that the visual display of Fondi application, which resembles a game with the additional avatar concept, is the main attraction for the participants. This appearance creates a different and enjoyable learning experience, thus increasing their interest in using the application. According to Gibson (1986), in the process of perception, individuals can distinguish various stimuli in their environment. They learn to detect the distinctive features of an object, which are then used to identify and categorize the object more effectively. In this context, Fondi users

recognize the unique appearance and features of the application as something that distinguishes it from other platforms, thus influencing their experience and interest in using it. In addition, visual display also plays a role in forming an attractive first impression for new users, which is related to physiological factors in perception. These physiological factors come from internal perception. In ecological optics, visual appearance is not just a passive stimulus but information in light that allows observers to recognize and respond to objects intuitively (Gibson, 1986). The visual appearance and features of Fondi application play a role in increasing the interest of the informants because they provide a more realistic interaction experience. This supports the development of their speaking skills by creating a more comfortable and interactive learning environment.

Another physiological factor influences sound quality, considering that Fondi is based on audio calls. The voice of the speaking partner greatly affects the effectiveness of learning. According to Gibson and Spelke (1983), sound is part of the ambient energy in the form of sound waves that function as information detected by observers through perception.

Participants expressed that the available fondi features for practicing speaking such as plaza, event, bar provide benefits for them to communicate with other users from various countries which provide new knowledge for them. These features also provide convenience for each user. In this case, the participants' perception shows that there is affordance offered by fondi

application with its features. This is in line with the perception of affordance expressed by In Gibson's view (1982), affordance is described as the relationship between an individual and their environment. Affordance allows a person to perceive whether an object can be used for eating, writing, sitting, or speaking so that users can understand the affordances and usefulness of features in the application according to their needs (Gibson, 1980). In this context, Fondi provides convenience for EFL students by providing features that allow them to practice speaking in a realistic and interactive environment. This makes this application an effective tool in supporting the development of students' speaking skills.

Then, based on the findings of the participants revealed that notifications from online friends in Fondi application provided a stimulus for them to practice speaking again. This shows that students' perceptions of the stimulus aspect make them interested in practising speaking again. This is in line with what was conveyed by Gibson (1960), the environment can be considered a source of potential stimuli that influence individual perceptions and actions. Various sensory modalities interact with these stimuli, creating a unique perceptual experience for each user. In this case, the stimuli presented by the application not only attract the user's attention but also contribute to increasing their involvement in the speaking learning process. Gibson and Spelke (1983) explain that individuals do not process all stimuli in their environment but only focus on information that is considered relevant according to their needs and goals.

In the findings, participants revealed that fondi is easy to use. Because fondi provides features that can help users understand fondi application. such as AI features or fondi users themselves. This is related to the perception of affordance. Fondi provides AI features or users to offer actions such as assistance to users. According to the ghibson (1986) perception with the concept of affordance where Affordance refers to the properties or characteristics of an object that allows individuals to perform certain actions with it.

Based on interview findings, the challenges faced by participants in using Fondi application include several factors, such as distractions from other users, limited features for free users, unstable connections, AI features that tend to be rigid, and the size of the application that is too heavy for certain devices. In this case, participants expressed negative perceptions of the application because these obstacles reduced their effectiveness in practising speaking. From Gibson's (1986) affordances perspective, different organisms have different perceptions based on their physical abilities and needs. Fondi application actually offers opportunities (affordances) for speaking practice through interaction with other users. However, because this feature is considered a distraction, the affordance turns into a limitation that hinders practice.

In addition, users feel mixed feelings when using fondi. Sometimes they feel happy when they meet a pleasant speaking partner and vice versa.

Affordance refers to the possibilities that can be acted upon that the environment offers to an organism. This perception is shaped by the organism's abilities and the context of a particular environment. According to Gibson (1986), affordance is not just a property of an object; affordance is relational, involving the environment and the organism's interaction with it. This concept emphasizes that perception is inherently related to the context in which it occurs, indicating that mood can play an important role in how affordance is perceived and acted upon. In line with Gibson's theory (1960), emotions can direct a person's attention to certain stimuli or away from them. Positive emotions, such as joy, can increase the perception of pleasant experiences, while negative emotions can increase sensitivity to unpleasant experiences.

4.2.2 Speaking Activity EFL College Students' In Fondi Application

4.2.2.1 Speaking function

Based on the findings from observations and interviews. The majority of participants expressed that their educational background, namely English majors, required them to master speaking skills. This is for academic purposes such as presentations or thesis defence. This is in line with the function of speaking as equated by Brown & Yule (1983), which states that speaking as performance refers to public speaking activities where the speaker conveys information to an audience, such as in lectures, public announcements, or speeches. Speaking in this context tends to be a monologue, has a more formal structure, and is closer to written language

than everyday conversational language. Thus, EFL college students use Fondi not only to improve their everyday communication skills but also to prepare for various academic purposes requiring more formal and structured speaking skills.

On the other hand, participants also expressed that the purpose of practicing speaking was to socialize and interact with people in various countries because English is a cross-cultural language, as Richards in Brown & Yule (1983) explained. Speaking as an interaction refers to the concept of conversation in everyday life, where individuals engage in small talk, exchange experiences, and greet each other with the aim of building social relationships and creating comfortable interactions.

4.2.2.2 Type of speaking

Based on the findings, the participants tend to interact through question-and-answer patterns, discussions, and small talk. This communication pattern shows that the participants use responsive speaking in their conversations. According to Brown (2001), small talk, short conversations, and casual greetings are examples of responsiveness in speaking. Responsiveness in speaking not only includes conveying information briefly but also involves understanding and active interaction with the interlocutor. Thus, the informant responds spontaneously and evaluates the interlocutor's knowledge in the conversation. Through responsive speaking, interactions in Fondi application become more

dynamic, allowing users to develop their speaking skills in natural communication situations.

In addition to practising through Q&A conversations and discussions, the Participants also utilize the game features available in Fondi application, such as question quizzes. The use of this game aims to maintain the continuity of speaking practice and make interactions more interesting and dynamic. In this case, the resource persons apply the interactive speaking method in their practice. According to Brown (2004), speaking in the context of complex interactions, such as role-playing, conversation-based games, interviews, and conversations involving many participants, is categorized as interactive speaking. This method lets users practice speaking actively in more varied situations while improving communication skills through more natural and spontaneous interactions.

4.2.2.3 Speaking component

In speaking activities using Fondi application, participants demonstrated mastery of both micro-skill and macro-skill components. Based on the findings, participants actively paid attention to micro and macro skills in speaking practice. Participants showed their efforts in applying micro and macro speaking components. Participants understood the important components that must be trained to improve speaking skills. According to Brown (2004), mastery of micro skill and

macro skill aspects in speaking is very important in speaking. However, each participant has their own challenges in the speaking component.

in mastering micro-skills such as phonemes, morphemes, phrases, words, and collocations, participants also face various challenges. In phonemes, such as, some participants have difficulty in distinguishing the pronunciation of words with similar sounds, such as “too” and “two”. Mistakes in these phonemes sometimes cause misunderstandings in communication, especially when their speaking partners do not come from the same language background. English phonemes have subtle differences that can be difficult for non-native speakers to recognize. Some words have different spellings and meanings; it is not only non-native speakers who have difficulty spelling in English, and not all spelling errors can be attributed to language impairment. However, it is interesting to note that the list of most frequently misspelled words from native English speakers will have little overlap with a list of similarly common misspellings from non-native speakers (Nicholls, 2003).

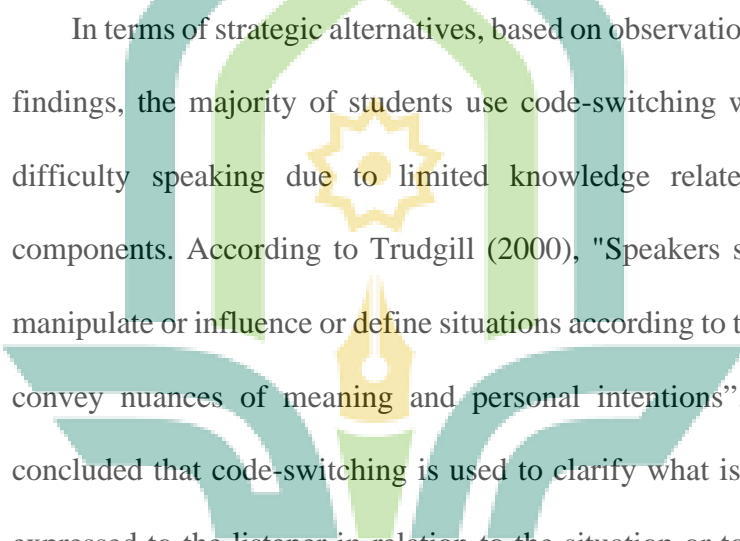
In addition, in terms of words, limited knowledge of certain words becomes an obstacle in speaking practice. Several participants expressed that they had difficulty finding the right words to explain a topic that was unfamiliar to them. This shows that vocabulary is an important element in speaking fluency. Darjdowidjodjo (2003) argues

that language use is related to the practice of language knowledge. The broader the knowledge of the language used in communication, the greater the ability to give meaning to a word or sentence.

Then, in the macro skill component, participants also face challenges in several components. In the fluency aspect, the majority of students were quite fluent in communicating, especially in the context of daily conversation. However, they still had difficulty when they had to explain unfamiliar topics, which was caused by limited vocabulary. This shows that their speaking fluency still depends on how broad their understanding of a topic is and how much vocabulary they have mastered. As expressed by Hatch (1978), learners may rely on familiar topics, but they also need to practice introducing new subjects into conversations to improve their fluency.

In non-verbal communication, students tend to rely on intonation and tone of voice to express meaning, considering that Fondi application is based on audio calls which do not allow them to use body language directly. Nonverbal communication in online learning environments is traditionally considered less common in online learning and, therefore, a consideration (McBrien et al., 2009). However, Fondi provides gesture features on avatars, such as greeting, thinking, jumping, or showing excited expressions, which can help convey the nuances of communication more expressively. This shows

that even though communication occurs without face-to-face, non-verbal elements can still be adapted in a digital format. Al Tawil (2019) coined the term “eNVC” for nonverbal online communication. eNVC can be seen in both text-based and non-text-based contexts. Text-based eNVC is based on the actual words and text used in communication. This includes word choice, sentence structure, and phrases. Emoticons and emojis are also considered text-based eNVC because they convey emotions or feelings (Gajadhar & Green, 2005).



In terms of strategic alternatives, based on observation and interview findings, the majority of students use code-switching when they have difficulty speaking due to limited knowledge related to speaking components. According to Trudgill (2000), "Speakers switch codes to manipulate or influence or define situations according to their wishes and convey nuances of meaning and personal intentions". So it can be concluded that code-switching is used to clarify what is intended to be expressed to the listener in relation to the situation or topic. What they do is ask for confirmation from the other person or look for phrases or synonyms to replace words that are not remembered, such as code-switching, while still trying to maintain the use of the target language and not completely switching to their mother tongue. This strategy shows that participants are aware of maintaining smooth communication despite experiencing limitations in vocabulary. In line with what was expressed by Brown (2004) in macro speaking skill strategic alternatives where

learners use ways to overcome difficulties in speaking so that the speaking process continues.

In terms of style, participants tend to use an informal speaking style, because the majority of users in Fondi interact in a relaxed and casual style. This reflects how the digital communication environment tends to be more flexible and resembles everyday conversation compared to academic or professional situations. Online learning has the advantage of reaching students to be more flexible and have freedom (Fitzgibbons 2009). However, this is a challenge for participants who want to practice speaking in a formal style, because they have to find partners who have a more academic or professional communication preference. Thus, the environment in Fondi is more supportive of developing speaking skills in everyday contexts compared to formal situations.

Regarding the mastery of speaking components, both micro and macro skills and their challenges, the majority of participants utilized interactions in Fondi application to correct mistakes and expand their understanding of various aspects of micro-speaking skills. This shows that Fondi provides participants with the opportunity to learn through direct feedback from their conversation partners.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the study results, most EFL students have a positive perception of using Fondi application to improve their speaking skills. This is due to the unique application concept, different from other language learning platforms in general, as well as the interactive features that support speaking practice. However, students also face obstacles, both in terms of technical aspects and interactions when practicing speaking. Regarding the speaking activities of students in Fondi, the results of the study show that they use this application to practice communication skills and improve performance in academic contexts. The types of speaking exercises that are dominant are responsive and interactive, according to the needs of each user. During the practice, students also pay attention to the speaking components, both in terms of micro and macro. Fondi also plays a role in developing speaking skills through interaction with other users, although there are still challenges in mastering each aspect of speaking.

This conclusion shows that Fondi application provides a solution for students' needs in improving their speaking skills through an interactive and realistic learning environment. However, the effectiveness of its use is still influenced by technical factors and individual experience in interacting within the application. Despite the challenges, students admitted that using Fondi helped them practice without fear of being judged by others, which increased

their confidence in speaking. This study shows that although not all aspects of speaking have developed equally, the application of fondi provides space for EFL students to explore speaking skills more freely. Therefore, this finding shows that speaking practice through fondi does not only involve technical aspects, but also psychological aspects such as self-confidence and willingness to communicate.

5.2 Suggestion

For Students:

Fondi can be an effective alternative for practicing English speaking skills, because it provides various features that are tailored to the needs of learners. However, students also need to consider the challenges that may arise, both in terms of interaction with other users and technical constraints that can affect the learning experience.

For the researcher:

Future research is recommended to conduct a long-term study to observe the development of participants' speaking skills while using Fondi. In addition, research can analyze speaking activities in each feature available in the application to find out the differences in experience and effectiveness in more depth.

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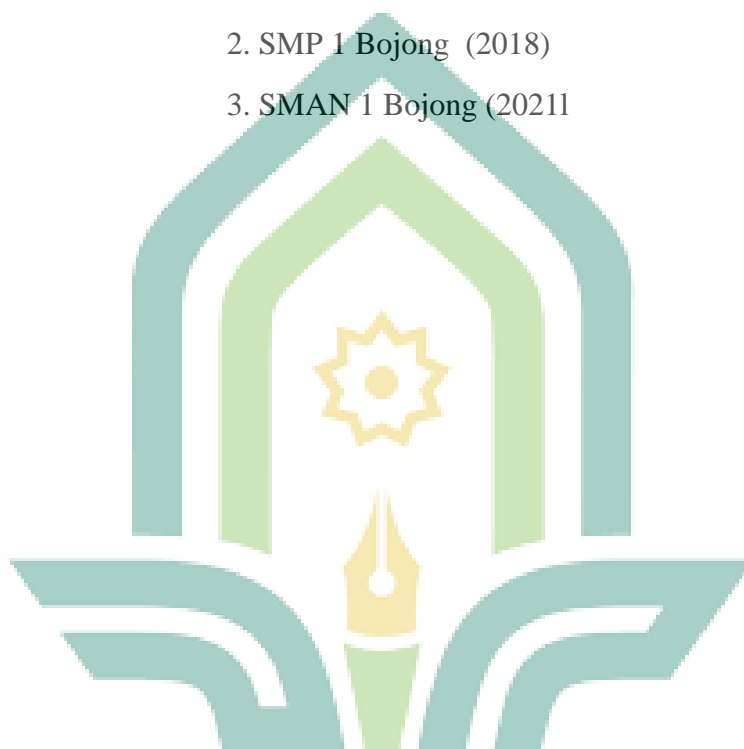
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