

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In this era, English is a powerful language used by people almost globally (Robbani & Khoirotunnisa, 2021). People worldwide are forced to study English because it positively impacts their lives. When people have good skills in English, it can help them interact with those from other countries and establish cooperation. Selimovic (2022) said that nowadays, English is considered a global language and a means of communication throughout the world. Therefore, the ability to speak English fluently is the required skill for communication and adaptation to the world.

According to Brown (2001), speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning, consisting of the production, reception, and processing of utterances using sound. Cameron (2003) also states that speaking is intended to express meaning so that others can understand it. In other words, speaking is a means to communicate with others. Guebba (2020) emphasizes that speaking is crucial in language learning and teaching. It is a very important component for teachers and students in schools. However, students still have difficulties in speaking because they have to master various aspects of English language skill such as pronunciation, fluency, intonation, and accuracy. Fitriah. et al. (2021) identified several specific difficulties that students face when learning to speak, including pronunciation, fluency, intonation, use of filler words, accuracy, shyness, and lack of confidence.

In reality, students hesitate to speak in class. They are afraid to speak because of their inadequate time to speak English. They cannot make sentences and they also lack English words. Speaking English is challenging for EFL students because of shyness, fear of criticism,

and anxiety about making mistakes. These factors further make it difficult for students to develop their speaking skills in English (Amoah et al. 2021).

Learning apps like Fondi have emerged as an innovative solution to address these challenges. Fondi is an app specifically designed to improve English language skills through direct interaction with others, including native speakers and fellow learners from different parts of the world Arifiyana, (2023). This app provides a platform where students can practice speaking in real-time, receive immediate feedback, and participate in various activities designed to develop their communication skills (Erlita & Putri, 2016). In addition, Fondi is equipped with features that allows students to record and review their conversations, enabling them to monitor their progress. Fondi makes the learning process more interesting and fun for students. make the learning process more interesting and fun for students (Arifiyana & Dzulfikri, 2023).

The use of Fondi in English language learning activities in Indonesia offers great potential to improve students' speaking skills. Through this apps, students can access various features that encourage speaking practice, such as live conversations, pronunciation exercises, group discussions (Ramli et al., 2021). In addition, Fondi influences the artificial intelligence technology to provide personalized feedback and recommendations that can help students correct mistakes and gradually improve their skills. Thus, students can learn independently and adjust their learning pace according to their individual needs (Cati, 2024). As has been proven through a study (Ramli et al., 2021), where in the results of his research he found that with the Fondi application, users can comfortably interact without having to show their real identity. Users can also be more confident to speak English without fear of making mistakes. And the best part is that you can make friends over the world!. Many people end up making friends from the Fondi app. Many people are even willing to use paid Fondi in order to talk longer there. Practice makes perfect. There is no other way to speak English other than

practicing it continuously. Fondi is a very suitable application to be a learning companion. In addition, the integration of gamification features in this application also provides additional motivation for students to continue practicing and improving their speaking skills. Through the use of apps like Fondi, students can develop their speaking skills more optimally and be better prepared to face communication challenges in the era of globalization.

However, based on the author's observations during the Field Experience Practices (PPL) at SMPK Rosa Mystica Kupang, the author noted that pupils continue to struggle with English as a course, moreover, when they struggle to speak the language they are learning. Although teachers have worked hard to create a conducive learning environment, limited time in class and a lack of opportunities for intensive speaking practice remain the primary problems that cause students not to be able to speak English, particularly outside of the formal learning context. Furthermore, pupils' abilities vary, making it difficult for teachers to provide appropriate individualized attention. Given this situation, the author is interested in examining how the integration of learning technology, such as the Fondi app, can be a promising option.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background above the researcher would like to address two questions that can be formulated as follows:

1. How do the students of Rosa Mystica Junior High School perceive of the use of Fondi application in learning speaking?
2. What are the difficulties students experience in learning to speak English using Fondi application?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The aims of this research are:

1. To find out the how students perceive on the use of Fondi apps
2. To find out the difficulties experienced by students in using the Fondi apps.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study can be formulated as follows:

1. Conceptual

This study offers a solution for junior high schools who wants to enhance their speaking skills by implementing the Fondi application.

2. In practical terms, the study's findings should be helpful to:

a. Students

It is anticipated that the Fondi application will help pupils' speaking abilities.

b. Instructors

It is anticipated that fondi applications will provide students with engaging and dynamic learning experiences. In order to keep the teaching and learning process interesting, it can also encourage and assist other educators in developing fresh approaches to instruction.

c. Future researchers

It is hoped that the findings of this study will serve as a guide for other researchers who wish to work on the same issue. While for the write herself, this study can enhance her expertise in doing research.