

Students' Perceptions of the Episoden Application in Enhancing Speaking Skills

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i5.1404>

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates students' perceptions of using the *Episoden* application to enhance English speaking skills at MA Manba'ul Bayan. Speaking is often considered the most challenging skill for EFL learners due to limited opportunities for authentic practice, lack of confidence, and vocabulary constraints. To address this, *Episoden*, a mobile-based platform that enables real-time video conversations with international speakers, was introduced as a supplementary learning tool. The research employed a qualitative descriptive design, with data collected through classroom observations, interviews, and field notes involving eleventh-grade students. Findings revealed that students initially experienced anxiety and hesitation when using the application, but gradually developed greater confidence, fluency, and motivation after repeated practice. The application provided authentic communicative experiences, supported intercultural interaction, and allowed learners to practice beyond the classroom at their own pace. Despite technical challenges such as unstable internet connections and difficulties understanding accents, students expressed positive attitudes toward *Episoden* and considered it an effective tool for improving their speaking skills. Overall, this study highlights the potential of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) applications like *Episoden* in fostering more meaningful and engaging speaking practice for EFL learners.

Keywords: *Students' Perceptions, Episoden Application, Speaking Skills, EFL, MALL*

Article History:

Received 26th August 2025

Accepted 14th September 2025

Published 17th September 2025



INTRODUCTION

English is an important global language, yet speaking remains one of the most difficult skills for EFL learners, including students at MA Manba'ul Bayan, who often struggle with limited vocabulary, inaccurate pronunciation, anxiety, and lack of confidence. Classroom practice usually provides little chance for authentic communication, making students less fluent and hesitant to speak. To overcome these challenges, technology through Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) offers new opportunities for flexible and interactive practice. One such tool is *Episoden*, a mobile application that connects learners with international partners via real-time video calls, allowing them to practice authentic conversations and develop fluency, pronunciation, and confidence. This study explores students' perceptions of using *Episoden* in enhancing speaking skills, aiming to reveal both its benefits and challenges as a supplementary tool in English language learning.

The English language, as one of the most widely spoken and studied languages globally, serves as a crucial medium for international communication. It functions not only as the primary language in diplomacy, business, and academia, but also as a bridge to overcome cultural communication barriers and facilitate global collaboration. According to Crystal (2003), English has achieved the status of a global language due to its widespread use across continents and institutions. In countries like Indonesia, English is a mandatory subject in the

national curriculum, serving as a gateway to accessing global knowledge and career opportunities. One of the key components in mastering English is developing all four core language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing which equip learners to use the language confidently and appropriately in a wide range of real-life situations.

Mastering English involves developing four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are interconnected and play a crucial role in helping learners become competent language users. Hinkel (2006) suggests that language instruction should not separate these skills, as in real-life communication, they often occur simultaneously. Listening and reading allow learners to absorb language input, while speaking and writing enable them to produce and express ideas. Grabe (2009) also points out that teaching these skills in an integrated way is more effective than treating them in isolation. Among them, speaking tends to be the most difficult for learners, especially those in EFL settings where chances to practice real conversations are limited.

Speaking is often perceived as one of the most challenging aspects of learning English, particularly for students in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) environments. This is evident among third-grade students at MA Manba'ul Bayan, who commonly encounter several obstacles when attempting to speak English. They tend to experience anxiety when speaking, struggle with limited vocabulary, inaccurate pronunciation, and a general lack of confidence. Additionally, they have minimal opportunities to practice speaking in real life situations, which hinders their ability to improve fluency. In response to these difficulties, educators have begun incorporating mobile technology into language learning to create more dynamic and accessible speaking environments. One such tool is Episoden, a mobile based platform that enhances speaking practice through real time video communication, supporting the principles of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

Episoden is a mobile application that facilitates random video call connections between users, enabling them to communicate with individuals from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Within the realm of English language education, particularly for learners in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) environments, such a platform offers a rare chance to engage in genuine, real time conversations that go beyond the artificial settings of the classroom. By interacting spontaneously with both native and non-native speakers worldwide, students can actively develop their speaking skills, expand their vocabulary, increase fluency, and gain greater self-assurance in using English. Additionally, the implementation of Episoden aligns with experiential learning theory, as it encourages students to learn by doing through authentic communicative experiences and personal reflection. This makes Episoden a valuable and innovative resource for fostering more engaging and meaningful speaking practice.

Therefore, this topic was chosen because Episoden is a practical example of how mobile technology can support English learners, especially in improving their speaking skills. As explained earlier, speaking is one of the most important but also most difficult skills to master, particularly in EFL contexts where students have limited chances to practice real communication. With its real time video interaction feature, Episoden gives learners the opportunity to speak in more meaningful and authentic situations. It also aligns with communicative and task based teaching approaches, as well as the use of technology in education. For these reasons, the researcher interested in exploring how Episoden can help students learn English speaking practice more effective and enjoyable for learners.

Episoden Application

Episoden is a face-to-face English conversation service that enables users to practice speaking with people from various countries around the world. The application is designed in a one-on-one conversation format, ensuring that each participant has sufficient time to actively speak in English without competing for turns. Each session lasts for seven minutes and always pairs users with conversation partners from different countries, accompanied by new and engaging topics, making every interaction enjoyable and never monotonous. Episoden not only offers real-time speaking practice but also supports the comprehensive development of language skills, particularly in terms of fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary

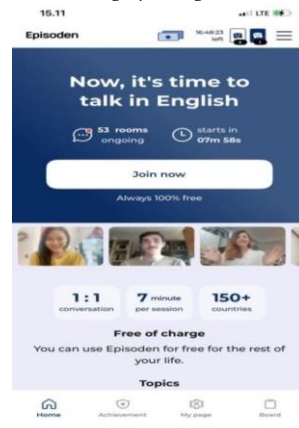


Figure 1. Episoden Home Page

This Application is also designed to be a relaxed and stress-free application, where users are not required to think too critically. The main goal is to respond in real time and speak spontaneously based on their current ability. With its informal and friendly conversation atmosphere, the app helps reduce anxiety or fear of making mistakes, making users feel more comfortable while practicing. This is especially helpful for learners who lack confidence, as it allows them to improve their fluency and speaking courage in a more casual and supportive environment.

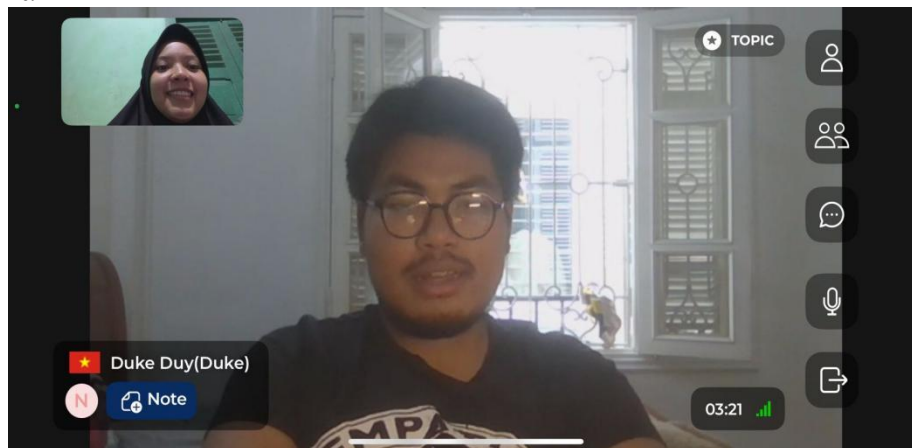


Figure 2. Speaking practice interface in Episoden with partner from Vietnam

With its global and interactive approach, this application serves as an innovative and relevant English learning tool in today's digital era. This reflects the perspective of Lin and Wang (2020), who emphasize that digital tools that integrate authentic communication can significantly enhance language proficiency and intercultural competence. Through its core feature of direct communication between users from diverse cultural backgrounds, Episoden also introduces elements of cross-cultural communication into the learning process. This adds further value, as students are not only practicing English in a practical way but are also becoming accustomed to different accents, speaking styles, and perspectives from foreign speakers. This aligns with the Transcultural Competence Theory as proposed by Baker (2019), which underlines the role of exposure to diverse communication styles in fostering global citizenship and communicative effectiveness.

This experience can boost students' speaking confidence, broaden their global awareness, and prepare them to communicate effectively in international settings. As noted by Gkonou et al. (2020), confidence in speaking is closely linked to learners' willingness to communicate, which is fostered in supportive and low-stress environments like Episoden. Moreover, Nguyen and Balakrishnan (2023) found that gamified and time-bound conversations can lead to better vocabulary retention and learner autonomy. Therefore, Episoden functions not only as a learning aid but also as a bridge that meaningfully connects language learners to the outside world, consistent with Reinders and Benson (2021) who argue

that technology-mediated language tools help learners move beyond the classroom and engage with real-world language use.

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) refers to the use of mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to support and enhance language learning. It provides flexibility in terms of time, place, and learning pace, allowing learners to study anytime and anywhere. Unlike traditional classroom methods, MALL emphasizes learner autonomy, interactivity, and accessibility. According to Miangah and Nezarat (2012), MALL enhances autonomy, motivation, and confidence by offering continuous access to learning materials and real-time interaction. Applications like Episoden reflect this by enabling spontaneous speaking practice with users from different countries in a relaxed environment. This helps learners improve fluency, build confidence, and develop intercultural communication skills.

Benefits of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) offers several benefits, including increased learner autonomy, motivation, and flexibility in learning (Hulme, 2009). It allows learners to access language materials anytime and anywhere, promoting continuous practice outside the traditional classroom setting. The interactive features of MALL, such as instant feedback and real-time communication, enhance engagement and support personalized learning (Stockwell, 2010). Furthermore, MALL facilitates authentic language use by connecting learners with native or fluent speakers, which improves fluency and cultural competence (Burston, 2015). These benefits contribute to more effective and meaningful language acquisition, especially in EFL contexts where exposure to the target language is limited. Overall, MALL supports a learner centered approach that adapts to individual needs and encourages active participation.

Challenges of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Technical issues such as limited battery life, poor internet connectivity, and device incompatibility often disrupt the learning process (Hulme, 2013). Learners may also face distractions from other mobile applications and notifications, which can reduce their focus and engagement (Traxler, 2009). Inequitable access to mobile devices and reliable internet creates a digital divide, limiting some learners' opportunities (Stockwell, 2012). Additionally, many educators feel unprepared or lack sufficient training to effectively incorporate mobile learning tools into their teaching (Burston, 2014). These obstacles highlight the importance of proper planning, technical support, and professional development. Overcoming these challenges is essential to fully realize the potential of mobile-assisted language learning in diverse educational settings.

This Study is relevant with a study conducted by Febrina and Hamdi (2023) examined the impact of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on grammar proficiency and student motivation among university learners. The researchers used a quasi-experimental design involving control and experimental groups to compare learning outcomes. Students in the experimental group were given access to mobile applications specifically designed for grammar practice and self-paced learning. Results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in grammar post-tests, with a mean score of 82.3 compared to 74.5. Additionally, survey data revealed that 83% of the participants felt more motivated to learn grammar using mobile tools, while 76% reported a better understanding of grammar concepts. These findings demonstrate that MALL can effectively combine practice and autonomy, which are crucial in language learning. The study is supported by Ellis's Second Language Acquisition Theory (2006), which emphasizes the importance of meaningful input and interaction in developing linguistic competence. Overall, the research provides strong evidence for the pedagogical value of mobile-based tools in improving both performance and learner engagement.

The second relevant study is the research Benlaghrissi and Ouahidi (2024) explored the integration of MALL and Project Based Learning (PBL) in developing EFL learners' speaking skills in Morocco. The study involved 91 students divided into three groups: MALL integrated PBL, PBL only, and a traditional teaching group. The MALL integrated group showed

significant improvement in fluency, coherence, vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation. The results support both Project Based Learning Theory, which promotes active learning through real world tasks, and Mobile Learning Theory, which highlights flexibility and accessibility as key benefits of mobile technologies in education.

The third relevant study is the research by Fathi and Derakhshan (2022) examined how MALL impacts learners' attitudes toward vocabulary learning and their self-regulatory capacity. In this quantitative study, participants reported significantly more positive attitudes toward vocabulary acquisition and demonstrated stronger self regulated learning behaviors after using MALL tools. This study is grounded in Engeström's Activity Theory (1987), which emphasizes the role of tools and social context in shaping learning activity. MALL, as a mediating tool, helped learners manage their learning processes more independently and effectively.

Thus, unlike previous studies that focused on the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) with quantitative approaches such as experiments and surveys, this research employs a qualitative approach using observation and interviews with several randomly selected students. Moreover, while earlier studies were conducted at the university level, this research takes place at MA Manba'ul Bayan, an institution that has not previously been the subject of similar studies. Additionally, this study is grounded in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, as the use of video call applications provides learners with direct, meaningful experiences in communicating with native or fluent speakers allowing them to learn through real interaction, reflection, and continuous practice. Therefore, this study is expected to offer a new perspective on language learning processes in a different educational context.

In this research, the researcher used Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984) as the theoretical framework. Kolb explains learning as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. He identifies four stages in the learning cycle: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. This theory emphasizes that effective learning occurs when a learner actively engages in experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and applying. In this research, the framework is used to identify how students learn through direct experience and reflection, especially in language learning activities involving interaction and communication. Thus, the researcher formulates the diagram underlying the theoretical framework in tabel 1:

Table 1 Types Kolb's Learning Stage

Kolb's Learning Stage	Application in Language Learning via Video Call
Concrete Experience	Students engage in direct conversations with native or fluent speakers through video calls.
Reflective Observation	Students reflect on their speaking experience by noting difficulties and successful moments.
Abstract Conceptualization	Students learn or review communication strategies and language rules based on their reflections
Active Experimentation	Students apply newly learned strategies in subsequent video call conversations to improve their skills

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design to explore the effectiveness of the Episoden application in improving students' English speaking skills. This design was chosen because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' subjective experiences through narrative data collection methods such as interviews and observations. Creswell (2020) states that qualitative descriptive research is effective for understanding individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences within a specific context, making it suitable for exploring how students respond to using the application in English language learning.

The participants in this study were students using the Episoden application for the first time as part of their learning process. Through interviews and observations, the researcher was able to identify the challenges students faced, such as speaking anxiety, limited

vocabulary, and difficulty understanding accents. According to Ghafar and Raheem (2023), speaking skills in English are influenced by internal factors, such as self-confidence and vocabulary mastery, as well as external factors, such as learning context and interaction with native speakers, which makes the qualitative descriptive design appropriate for capturing these experiences.

The qualitative descriptive approach also enables researchers to understand the broader context of using the Episoden application in English learning. Mhasakar et al. (2024) highlight that interactive, language-based applications can enhance students' speaking skills, although challenges such as accuracy limitations and adapting to conversational contexts may arise. These findings are relevant for understanding how applications like Episoden can help students develop practical speaking skills while still encountering real-life interaction challenges.

This research was conducted at MA Manba'ul Bayan, Located in Muncan Village, Kopang Sub-district, Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara province. The participants of this study were eleventh-grade students of MA Manba'ul Bayan in Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. A total of 12 students were selected through random sampling, which ensured representation of learners with different levels of English proficiency, motivation, and classroom engagement. Random selection was employed to minimize bias and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the varied experiences students might have in using the *Episoden* application.

The participants were between 16 and 17 years old, consisting of both male and female students, reflecting the demographic composition of the school. Most of them had studied English for more than four years as part of the national curriculum, but their exposure to real-life communication in English remained limited to classroom activities. Their socio-cultural background is predominantly rural, where opportunities to practice English outside school are scarce. This demographic context makes them a relevant group for exploring how technology, particularly *Episoden*, can support speaking practice in environments with minimal authentic exposure to English.

The participants in this study are 11th-grade students from MA Manba'ul Bayan. The researcher will collect data through interviews and direct observations using random sampling. This technique ensures a diverse representation of students with varying levels of language proficiency, learning engagement, and motivation. By randomly selecting participants, the study aims to capture a wide range of responses and experiences. This approach provides a more comprehensive evaluation of how the Episoden application supports English speaking skills. Furthermore, random sampling helps eliminate bias and allows the findings to be more generalizable to similar educational settings.

Definition of Key Terms

Episoden Application

According to Vygotsky (1978) that skill development, including speaking skills, is significantly influenced by communication with others in a social context.

Speaking Skill

Brown (2007) points out that speaking goes beyond just producing words; it involves conveying meaning, adjusting to different contexts, and engaging with others.

Instrument of Research

Observations

Observations will take place during the students' use of the Episoden application in live conversation sessions. The researcher will observe various aspects of the students' speaking skills, including fluency, pronunciation, and social interaction during the conversation. According to McCroskey (2006), communication competence involves not only fluency and pronunciation but also the confidence and comfort level of the speaker. This observation took place on July 29, 2025. During this initial session, the researcher gathered information through field notes to document key aspects of the learning process. The learning activities that day ran smoothly.

Interviews

Structured interviews will be conducted to explore the students' perceptions of using the Episoden application, the benefits they perceive, and the challenges they face during its use. According to Creswell (2014), interviews, especially open-ended ones, are valuable tools for gathering detailed information about individuals' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions.

Field Notes

Field notes will be used to record important details that may not be captured through interviews or observations, such as students' body language, facial expressions, and classroom atmosphere during the use of the Episoden application. According to Mulhall (2003), field notes are essential in qualitative research because they provide contextual insights and support the interpretation of observed behaviors.

Data Analysis

The research process begins with observations during students' use of the Episoden application in live conversation sessions, where various aspects of their speaking skills, such as fluency, pronunciation, and social interaction, are closely observed. Additionally, the level of comfort and confidence when speaking with international partners is noted, providing insight into their communication dynamics.

Following the observations and field notes, interviews are conducted to explore students' perceptions, the benefits they perceive, and the challenges they encounter while using the application. These interviews, based on open ended questions, allow for in-depth responses regarding their experiences, learning motivation, and obstacles faced.

After data collection, the data is analyzed using a holistic analysis approach, which involves understanding the data comprehensively within the context of students' lived experiences. According to Morse and Chung (2003), holistic analysis emphasizes the importance of examining the interrelation of parts within an experience to form a complete understanding, rather than focusing solely on isolated elements. This approach allows the researcher to consider not only the technical aspects of speaking skills but also subjective elements such as students' confidence, comfort, and social interaction throughout their use of the application. It provides a full and contextualized picture of how Episoden supports language learning.

Trustworthiness

According to Shimp (2014:260), trustworthiness refers to the honesty, integrity, and reliability of a source. Individuals are considered valuable assets when they are perceived as credible, dependable, and trustworthy. In qualitative research, the validity of findings is assessed using four key criteria:

Credibility

According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), a high level of credibility is achieved when participants confirm the truthfulness of the accounts they provided. This serves as the main foundation for assessing credibility.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study conducted on one group can be applied to other groups in similar contexts. To ensure the validity of qualitative research, the entire research process should be described in detail, allowing the context to be clearly conveyed and aligned with the researcher's expertise. A comprehensive description enables other researchers to use the findings as a reference for further studies.

Dependability

According to Brink (1991), dependability can be measured through three types of tests: stability, consistency, and equivalency. Stability is demonstrated when a participant gives consistent answers to the same question at different times. Consistency is shown when the interview guide produces coherent responses that align with the research topics.

Confirmability

Streubert and Carpenter (2003) define confirmability as the evaluation of how researchers validate their findings. This is typically done through peer-reviewed publications, consultations with more experienced researchers, or presenting findings at academic conferences to gain diverse feedback for refining the results.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Result

The study conducted at MA Manba'ul Bayan from July 29 to August 2, 2025, explored students' experiences in using the Episoden application to practice English speaking. Data from observations, interviews, and field notes showed that students generally found the app helpful and motivating, even though they faced initial nervousness, shyness, and vocabulary difficulties.

When asked, "What do you think about the Episoden application, from the first practice session until after several sessions?", Student A answered:

"This application is really good. It's my first time trying an English learning app, especially one that connects directly with people from other countries."

However, Student A also admitted:

"I felt nervous and shy. I was afraid I couldn't say the right words, and I didn't know if they would understand me."

After more practice, Student A reported progress:

"Yes, I tried again at home. At first, I still felt nervous, but after a few times, I became more comfortable and confident to speak."

Student B also shared positive views, saying:

"The app is great; it helps us as students practice at home whenever we want."

He explained the difference with classroom practice:

"In class, we mostly follow the book or repeat after the teacher. On Episoden, I had to make my own sentences and really use English to communicate. It felt more real and exciting."

Student B also emphasized persistence:

"I told myself not to give up. I also felt curious about the person I was talking to, so I tried my best to keep the conversation going, even if it was hard."

These conversations show that while students initially struggled, they later became more confident, motivated, and independent in using English. The real-time interaction with international speakers gave them authentic practice and cultural exposure, making English learning more engaging and meaningful than traditional classroom methods



Figure 5. Student A First Practice

In Figure 5, Student A appeared shy and tense when greeting the partner, shown by clasped palms, a forced smile, and rigid posture, reflecting nervousness and lack of confidence. Interviewer: What did you do after that? Did you keep trying?

Student A: Yes, I tried again at home. At first, I still felt nervous, but after a few times, I became more comfortable and confident to speak.

This shows that continuous practice at home helped Student A reduce anxiety, improve fluency, and build confidence. The student also explained that practicing in a supportive environment made speaking less intimidating.

Interviewer: What makes you feel more confident?

Student A: I think practicing more helped. I also realized that the people I talked to were kind and didn't judge me. I used my hands sometimes to help me explain when I forgot the words. Student A emphasized that repetition, supportive partners, and nonverbal strategies like hand gestures increased confidence and adaptability in real conversations.

Students' Perceptions of the Episoden Application in Enhancing Speaking Skills

Interviewer: What helped you keep going even when it was difficult?

Student B: I told myself not to give up. I also felt curious about the person I was talking to, so I tried my best to keep the conversation going, even if it was hard.

Student B's response shows resilience and curiosity as key motivators to maintain interaction despite challenges.

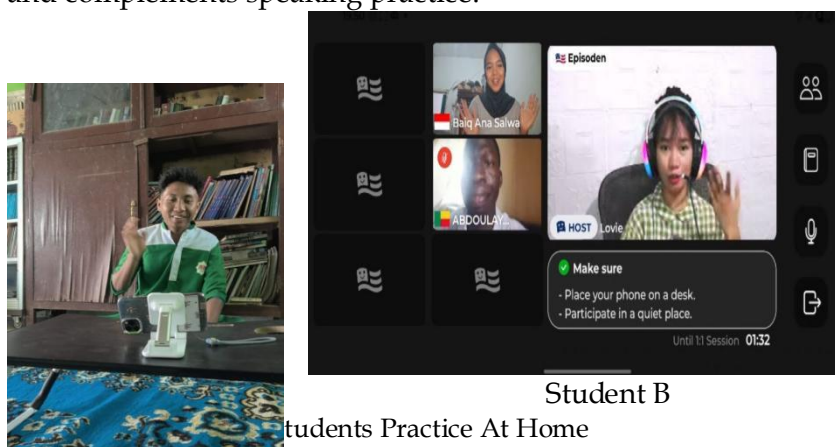
Student B: In class, we mostly follow the book or repeat after the teacher. On Episoden, I had to make my own sentences and really use English to communicate. It felt more real and exciting.

This highlights the difference between classroom drills and Episoden, where conversations are authentic, unpredictable, and more engaging, forcing students to think quickly and respond naturally.

During observation, Student C showed curiosity by asking:

Student C: How do I send a message to my partner in this application?

This question indicates that Student C wanted to explore more features to support communication. Using the message function not only helps clarify unclear words but also builds confidence and complements speaking practice.



Students Practice At Home

Figure 6 shows that after several practice sessions, Student A appeared more confident, using natural hand gestures to emphasize ideas and support communication. This shift indicated greater comfort and active engagement in speaking English. Similarly, Student B showed confidence and enjoyment when introducing themselves to other participants, including one from Benin, South Africa, smiling warmly and using gestures that reflected comfort in cross-cultural interaction. Positive responses from the Host and international partner created an authentic and supportive atmosphere, enriching the students' experience and boosting their confidence in global conversations.

Discussion

The findings of this study were obtained through classroom-based qualitative research at Madrasah Aliyah Manba'ul Bayan from July 29 to August 2, 2025. Data were collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and field notes. These instruments provided a holistic understanding of how students engaged with the Episoden application during their English speaking practice. The results indicated that Episoden offered students opportunities for authentic communication, helped them to overcome hesitation, and created a bridge between classroom practice and real-world communication experiences.

The analysis of these findings demonstrates that the students' learning process when using Episoden strongly reflects Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984). According to Kolb, effective learning occurs through a four-stage cycle consisting of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. In this study, students entered the stage of Concrete Experience by participating in live video conversations with native or fluent speakers. They then moved to Reflective Observation by critically evaluating their speaking performance, noting difficulties such as limited vocabulary or trouble with accents. At the stage of Abstract Conceptualization, students developed strategies such as paraphrasing, using fillers, or relying on contextual cues to sustain

communication. Finally, during Active Experimentation, these strategies were applied in subsequent interactions, which gradually improved their fluency, accuracy, and confidence.

The findings of this study are in line with several previous works on mobile-assisted language learning. Phetsut and Waemusa (2022) found that mobile-based speaking platforms foster oral fluency and motivation, supporting the results of this study during the Concrete Experience stage. Similarly, Ni (2012) highlighted the importance of reflection in communicative learning, which resonates with the Reflective Observation stage observed in Episoden users. Moreover, Natsir (2022) reported that mobile-based speaking activities encourage learners to develop personal strategies to overcome communication barriers, a finding that corresponds with the Abstract Conceptualization stage in this study. Furthermore, Ajisoko (2019) demonstrated that applications like Duolingo enhance speaking skills through continuous practice and adaptation, supporting the Active Experimentation process identified here.

When compared with these previous studies, the use of Episoden demonstrates a distinctive advantage in its alignment with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, especially due to its emphasis on authentic real-time communication. Episoden exposes learners directly to unpredictable, spontaneous conversation, making the experiential cycle more complete and realistic. However, this study also uncovered challenges that Kolb's model does not fully account for. These include technical issues such as unstable internet connections and affective factors like nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of initial confidence. These factors suggest the necessity of complementing Kolb's model with perspectives from Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), which directly considers the technological and emotional dimensions of digital language learning. Moreover, as Surayya and Asrobi (2020) highlight, teachers and learners often possess stronger pedagogical and content knowledge than technological knowledge, and high-achieving individuals demonstrate better TPK (Technological Pedagogical Knowledge) and TCK (Technological Content Knowledge). This implies that the successful implementation of Episoden depends not only on the features of the application itself but also on the users' ability to integrate technological aspects with pedagogical practices.

In conclusion, this study confirms that Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory provides a useful framework for analyzing how Episoden enhances students' English speaking skills. The theory explains how learners progress through experiential cycles that involve practice, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. At the same time, the findings also emphasize the importance of integrating Kolb's framework with MALL principles in order to address the external factors that affect language learning, thereby offering a more holistic pedagogical approach for mobile-based speaking practice.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the Episoden application is highly effective in improving EFL students' speaking skills by providing authentic, real-time interactions with international speakers, which help them gain exposure to diverse accents and cultural contexts. Although students initially experienced anxiety and faced challenges with vocabulary, pronunciation, and unstable internet connections, they gradually became more confident, fluent, and motivated to practice English both inside and outside the classroom. Its flexibility allows for self-directed learning, making language practice more enjoyable and practical. For teachers, Episoden can serve as a supplementary tool to create authentic speaking tasks, foster learner autonomy, and support communicative learning approaches without requiring complex technical training. Overall, Episoden offers an accessible, interactive, and motivating platform that significantly enhances students' English-speaking ability in both formal and informal settings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Above all, I am profoundly grateful to Allah SWT for His boundless blessings and guidance that have accompanied me throughout the process of completing this thesis. My

sincere thanks go to my thesis supervisors for their insightful advice, encouragement, and steadfast support. I also wish to convey my appreciation to the English teachers who willingly took part in this research, generously sharing their time and perspectives during data collection. Finally, my deepest gratitude is extended to my family and friends for their patience, motivation, and unwavering encouragement during my academic journey.

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