The Indonesian EFL Students' Memrise: Exploring Mobile Learning Games to Improve Academic Speaking Skills

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Abstract

This study investigates the use of *Memrise*, a mobile learning game, to improve EFL students' speaking performance in academic contexts. Grounded in gamification theory and interactionist theory, which explores how gamified vocabulary and pronunciation tasks could lead to speaking confidence and fluency. Qualitative descriptive research methods were used to thoroughly understand perspectives and points of view of the participants, consisting of thematically analyzed 20 multiple-choice and 6 interview questions. Seventeen Indonesian EFL students completed surveys and interviews. Results reveal that *Memrise* develops vocabulary retention, pronunciation, and motivation, though limitations persist in feedback mechanisms and academic speaking content. This study contributes to EAP digital pedagogy by providing qualitative insights of students who are unfamiliar with the app and answering how Indonesian EFL learners perceive the use of *Memrise* to boost speaking skills through academic speaking skill learning development. This study features direct opinions from Indonesian university education students—which is rarely covered in research—on how they use *Memrise* as a tool to learn speaking skills in an academic context. The findings suggest that while *Memrise* can facilitate foundational speaking practice and learner engagement, some limitations are found in its usage. Further adaptations are needed to maximize its relevance for academic speaking tasks in EFL classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the incorporation of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) into English language learning has gained popularity, especially in the post-pandemic Indonesian era when flexible, Rakhmanina (2021) explained that self-directed online learning has become solution to prevent the speard of Covid-19 virus. Technology has become a crucial part of education lately. Technology incorporation in learning has helped the learning process to be easier and more advanced. Technology encourages learners to go beyond the boundaries of traditional learning (El Sadik et al., 2021), improving students' learning experiences and facilitating open access to various information and resources with the ability to present content in numerous multimedia forms such as text, images, audio, and video (Aslam & Curry, 2021). According to Harmer (2021), in this era, technological advances in education have become very influential in the

learning process. Fryer (2019) stated that technology has and will continue to influence teaching and learning dramatically. Additionally, the use of technology-based learning has fundamentally transformed the educational landscape (Subhan et al., 2024; Di Vaio et al., 2020). Furthermore, the usage of technology has become influential towards educational processes such as online classes, digital dictionaries, and online-based assessments. These changes show that learning style has been changed recently.

In this context, the need English for Academic Purpose (EAP) has been increasingly recognized in higher education in Indonesia. English for Academic Purposes (EAP) aims to provide students with the English language skills required for academic success (Cao, F., & Hu, G. 2024). This includes proficiency in academic speaking, which is crucial for conversation, presentation, or expressing ideas through group discussion (Sihombing, A. A.. et al. 2023). Despite this, many students continue to struggle with these skills due to a lack of exposure and practice. There has been a variety mobile based app that sparks potential to be English skills learning. As a result, incorporating technology-based learning platforms that address both general and academic English speaking skills become essential.

One promising platform to learn English speaking skills is *Memrise*. Karanfil (2021) states that *Memrise* is a mobile learning game platform that is designed to offer more personalization and engaging learning experiences. In this platform, *Memrise* provides language learning such as English, namely British English. Moreover, *Memrise* also provides an interactive conversation with AI, which can provide benefits for learners to deepen their speaking skills and build realistic scenarios and AI feedback. Learners can listen to and watch English through audio or video of native speakers provided by *Memrise* to be able to better understand how to speak English properly. *Memrise* provides several learning ways for EFL students to learn English with flexibility according to the learners' needs. This supported Karanfil's (2021) statement that technology-based learning can provide more engaging, interactive, and relevant learning experiences to students' needs.

What makes *Memrise* unique is the variety of learning options that students can choose from. There are three options that *Memrise* provides. The first is "Learn words". This option introduce vocabulary (Aminatun & Oktaviani 2019) that allows students to learn different types of words that are displayed. It is narrated by showing the word, providing footage of someone saying the word, and providing the audio of the word. Moreover, it provides the "I already know this" option, where the learner can press the button and the system will analyze how well the learner understands English words or phrases. Secondly, *Memrise* has an option "Hear my words". This option provides another feature for English learners by showing a short video clip of native speakers, which after viewing and listening to the conversation from the video, students will be given the option to find out how well they understand the content they have just seen. Finally, "Use my words" button. In this section, students can talk directly to the AI. Students can have a conversation or simply using a microphone feature, which then records the student's conversation and will be answered back by the AI. This creates an interactive conversation between students and the AI to improve students' communication skills. Hence, these features make *Memrise* suitable for EFL learners to use to learn English speaking skills.

In addition to its interactive design, *Memrise* offers notable key strengths that is *Memrise* has integrity. *Memrise* can integrate several media, such as images and sound or video, into a learning process (Muscio & Ciffolilli, 2020; Subhan et al., 2024). *Memrise* also has customizable options. This mobile based learning application allows its users to choose their learning options freely. Unlike other media that require users to complete certain things for users to use what they user want, *Memrise* learning can be adjusted to students' needs. In addition, *Memrise* displays

how native speakers use certain words on certain occasions to make it easier for EFL students to remember and understand in more varied and efficient ways. It also provides EFL learners with speaking skills learning based on foreign native nature.

Moreover, another key strength of *Memrise* is that it uses spaced repetition. Explained by Jorgensen (2024), that space repetition is powerful technique for vocabulary acquisition that involves memory through strategically repeated reviews to increase long-term memory retention. *Memrises'* method involves reorganizing learning materials based on the user's forgetfulness level (Subhan et al. (2024). This means more difficult or un-memorized materials will appear more frequently than advanced materials. Additionally, to support this space repetition technology, as stated by Abarghoui & Taki (2018), *Memrise* uses a garden of metaphors for memory to increase vocabulary level. Furthermore, Abarghoui & Taki (2018) stated that when beginning a course, vocabulary items will be planted as 'seeds' then through typing and multiple choice quizzes, learners will transfer that information to the 'greenhouse' (short-term memory) and lastly, transfer it into the 'garden' (long-term memory).

Finally, *Memrise* employs gamification features. Defined by (Bennani et al., 2022; Deterding et al., 2011, in Abarghoui & Taki, 2018) that gamification is a technological advancement allows to create an interactive and engaging environments for students learning experience, furthermore motivate and increase *Memrise* user activity and retention with a reward and reputation system. Thus, learning English using *Memrise* is fun for the learners.

Although previous research has shown *Memrise's* pedagogical potential for EFL learners, most of existing research focuses on vocabulary development or general language learning outcomes. For instance, based on Nguyen et al. (2023) study, shows that *Memrise* was effective for improving vocabulary acquisition among Vietnamese students, hence focused on vocabulary skills rather than speaking skills. Similarly, while Karanfil et al. (2021) reviewed *Memrise* as a tool to support vocabulary growth and motivation among Turkish state school learners. Their study did not examine how *Memrise* contributes to learning language skills, particularly speaking. More relevantly, Sabhan et al. (2024) explored the effectiveness application of *Memrise* in improving EFL learners' speaking abilities, and its conducted through students who are already familiar with *Memrise*, while this study acknowledged students who are unfamiliar with the app.

This study addresses that gap by investigating how Indonesian EFL university students— especially those unfamiliar with Memrise—through perceptions and point of view on using Memrise as a mobile learning game specifically to support academic speaking learning, based on both questionnaire data and direct interview-based insights, perceive Memrises' role to help students develop academic speaking skills, offering direct insights in an underexplored Indonesian higher education context. Therefore, despite growing interest in mobile-assisted language learning, limited research has examined how Memrise supports the development of academic speaking skills, particularly from learners who unfamiliar with the app in Indonesian higher education contexts and shows only few literature focused on Indonesian EFL students.

The objective of this study is to seeks to answer the question of *How do Indonesian EFL learners perceive the use of Memrise for academic speaking learning development.* To answer this, researcher will explore participants' experiences, benefits gained, and challenges encountered while using *Memrise. Memrise* utilizes learning methods using game elements and native speaker audio model, there are two theoretical frameworks used in this study are:

1. **Gamification Theory (Detering et al., 2011)**

Memrise incorporation of game elements can improve the learning experience and lead to positive attitudes and continuous learning habits. This theoretical framework is suitable for the

study because it could address *Memrise's* mechanism (points, rewards, and options) that *Memrise* uses to attract learners, which could result to students' engagement to practice speaking.

2. Interactionist Theory of Second Language Acuisition (Long, 1996)

According to the theory, successful language learning occurs through meaningful interactions with native speakers, technology, or any kind of interactions. Allowing learners to identify language gaps, receive feedback, and modify their speaking, all of which are necessary for developing speaking skills. *Memrise* use interaction features that allow learners to interact in English through it's AI chat feature, Membot. This artificial dialogue mimic real live interaction which is suitable for this theory.

The indicators of this study focus at *Memrise's* potential in supporting students' learning for academic speaking development using three primary indicators. The indicators are organized as follows:

1. *Pronunciation Improvement*
   Learners ability to produce English words more clearly, accurate, and similar with native speakers, as the result learning through audio, video, and AI conversation in *Memrise.*

2. *Vocabulary Acquisition*
   Learners ability to remember, understand, and learn new vocabulary in academic context or everyday words that influenced by the app, specifically repetition method in *Memrise.*

3. *Learning Motivation*
   Lerners' motivation to continue using *Memrise* for learning speaking skill. Some internal and external factors could influence continuation of using *Memrise* as an English speaking learning tool.

These indicators were derived from prior theoretical framework and will be used as a guide for themathic analysis to achieve students' insights with *Memrise.*

This research contributes to the growing literature on digital English for Academic Purposes (EAP) pedagogy, particularly in the context of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). While many studies have focused on vocabulary learning or language acquisition in general, there remains a lack of research that directly addresses how mobile apps such as *Memrise* support the development of academic speaking skills - especially from the perspectives and point of view of learners who are new to this platforms. By exploring the first-hand experiences of Indonesian EFL learners, this research offers valuable insights into how students perceive, adapt, and benefit from mobile learning tools for academic purposes. As such, this research not only extends the application of gamification and interactionist learning theory in academic settings, but also fills an important gap in higher education research in Indonesia, where digital EAP tools remain largely unexplored.

METHOD

Design and Rationale

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design to explore Indonesian EFL students' perspectives and point of view (POV) on the use of *Memrise* as a mobile learning game to developing academic speaking skills. A perspective is a broader lens shaped by learners' background, experiences, and opinions about language learning (Patton, 2002), whereas a point of view (POV) is a more specific stance or opinion on specific aspects of the learning experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Understanding both enables the study to capture not only general attitudes toward *Memrise*, but also specific responses to its tools and features.

The reason of qualitative approach was chosen as it allows the study to explore in in-depth, based on learners' experience, insights, and individual perception (Baniara et al., 2024).

A despciptive element is appropriate for this study because it aims to describe and understand the students' perceptions based on their natural experience through their perspectives and point of views without manipulating any variables or using experimental procedure

Participant

The study's participants consists of English Language Education students' program in Indonesia in the academic year 2022, with 17 students who are unfamiliar with *Memrise* prior to the study. This large-class context provided a relevant setting to examine how first time users engage with the mobile learning tools.

Instruments

Two instruments were used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire is to gain a broad perspective of all participants, and the individual interview is to achieve insights from each participant's POV.

1. *Questionnaire*

   This instrument administrated via Google Forms, which consisted 20 Items using 5-point Likert scale. Although, explained by Cresswell (2014), Likert scaling is traditionally associated with quantitative studies, yet it is possible to use Likert scaling for thematic analysis in qualitative research. The reason why questionnaire is choosen as primary data because it allows to gather broad perspectives of all participants.

   Furthermore, Creswell (2014) references guide how researchers collect qualitative data and how to analyze participant experiences. This reference provides a comprehensive guide on how to collect more in-depth qualitative data.

2. *Interview*

   A semi-structured interview was conducted individually with five purposively selected participants who had completed levels 16 (Intermediate, 11,500 points) to 20 (22,300 points) on *Memrise* within one week. The reason purposive sampling is used in this study because participants need to meet specific criteria for interviews to ensure that the participants provided rich and insightful data (Czernek-Marszalek & McCabe, 2024) When first accessing *Memrise,* participants could only choose level 15 (Elementary, 9,000 points) as the highest starting level. To reach the first intermediate level (level 16), they needed to earn an additional 2,500 points. All participants began from level 15, and their points progression was used as a basis for selecting interviewees—specifically those who achieved the highest levels. This data was verified through screenshots of their levels and points, which participants submitted via Google Drive. The interview, used as secondary data, aimed to explore EFL learners' experiences more deeply through detailed narratives.

   This study will refer to Creswell (2014) regarding interview technique. The interview occurs between two parties, the participant and the interviewer, and is conducted face-to-face, where one acts as an interviewer and the other as an interviewee. This approach enabled the researcher to gain insights into different points of view based on each participant's level of engagement and achievement.

Procedure

Prior to data collection, participants will be introduced to *Memrise*, and given time to use it individually. They will then be given a week to reach at least level 16, followed by completing a questionnaire to gather their perspectives on *Memrise*. The final procedure involves conducting individual interviews with five participants, chosen based on their total level achievement and availability. The data collection process takes approximately two to three weeks, depending on participants' availability and schedule flexibility.

Data Analysis

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into four chategories: (1) Students' perspectives on using *Memrise* to develop speaking skills (Subhan et al. 2024); (2) Students' perspectives on using *Memrise* as a digital tool for learning speaking Skills (Sihombing et al. 2023); (3) Students' perspectives on both the advantages and disadvantages of *Memrise* (Li et al. 2024); and (4) Students' perspectives to the issues using *Memrise* for learning English (Kang, 2024).

Interview

6 interview questions covers different topics include: 1) Students' POV on their experience with *Memrise* (Sabhan et al. 2024); 2) Students' reasons for stopping at that current level (Rakhmanina et al. 2021); 3) Students view on the advantages and disadvantages of *Memrise* (Li et al. 2024); 4) Students' POV on the technology used by *Memrise* (Aprizal & Wachyudi, 2024); 5) Students' POV on using *Memrise* as a spoken learning tool (Dutton, 2021); and 6) Students' POV on using *Memrise* as a long-term learning tool (Mirdad 2022). At last, these interviews are expected to produce more insights from their POV and perspectives on *Memrise*. Students will be interviewed individually. This is done to obtain data from one participant without the involvement of other participants. The interview data is collected by audio-recorded transcription and thematically analyzed to detect patterns and themes in the participants' replies. Both the questionnaire and interview data will be analyzed using Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis framework as explained by Nguyen (2023), as follows: 1) Familiarizing with the data, 2) Transcribing and coding. 3) Generating initial code, 4) Searching for themes, 5) Reviewing themes, 6) Defining and naming themes, and lastly 7) Producing the report. By employing thematic analysis, researcher will able to address the research questions. This analysis allows researchers to interpret various insights about students' perspectives and points of view. In order to determine the descriptive analysis, the researcher in this study use QDA Miner Lite software to get structured results and ensured the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first section presents findings from the questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire data represent the general perspectives of all participants, whereas the interview insights reveal deeper points of view from five purposefully selected participants.

Questionnaire Findings

The questionnaire is categorized into 4 domains. The following are the findings from 17 participants regarding Indonesian EFL students' perspectives on using *Memrise* as a mobile learning application for developing their academic speaking skills learning.

Students' Perspective on Using Memrise to Develop Speaking Abilities

Table 1. Students' Perspective on Using *Memrise* to Develop Speaking Abilities

No	Statement Theme	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Using *Memrise* has considarably improved my speaking abilities in English	0	0	0	9	8
2	The pronunciation exercises in *Memrise* are influencing my speaking skills	0	0	2	6	9
3	I find the vocabulary presented in *Memrise* useful for everyday conversations	0	0	2	4	11
4	*Memrise* motivates me to be more confident in English speaking	0	0	3	10	4

| 5 | Using *Memrise* as a mobile-based learning game has improved my learning experience | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 10 |

Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4, Strongly Agree-5

Based on the result of the first domain, 9 agreed and 8 strongly agreed participants indicated notable improvements in their English-speaking abilities. Furthermore, 15 participants acknowledged the positive influence of pronunciation exercises on their speaking proficiency. Similarly, 15 students confirmed that *Memrise* facilitates vocabulary acquisition for everyday conversations. Additionally, 10 participants agree and 4 strongly agree that *Memrise* motivates them to communicate. Finally, 6 respondents agreed and 10 strongly agreed that the use of *Memrise* as a game-based learning medium has improved their overall learning experience.

Students' Perspective on Using Memrise as a Mobile Based Media for Learning Speaking

Table 2. Students' Perspective on Using *Memrise* as a Mobile Based Media for Learning Speaking

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
6	I enjoy using *Memrise* as a mobile-based media in learning English speaking	0	0	1	6	10
7	I find that *Memrise* options of exercices (Learn My Words, Hear My Words, and Use My Words) are a valuable way of learning compared to other digital learning tools	0	0	0	12	5
8	Learn English by watching native speakers in *Memrise* can improve my pronunciation	0	0	0	5	12
9	Short video clips of native speakers in *Memrise* can sharpen my ear for English speech	0	0	3	6	8
10	Having a conversation with Membot AI improves my English conversation skill	0	1	4	4	8

Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4, Strongly Agree-5

In the next domain of the questionnaire, students generally enjoy *Memrise* as a mobile learning tool, with the majority of respondents expressing satisfaction. A considerable number of students (12 agreed, 5 strongly agreed) considered the app's varied exercise options are advantageous in comparison to other digital learning tools. Additionally, watching short clips of native speakers was considered as advantageous for enhancing pronunciation, with 17 students expressing noticeable agreement, while 14 participants said the short video sharpened their sensitivity to speech. Moreover, a total of 12 participants also agreed that conversations with the AI Bot improved their speaking skills while 4 seems neutral about it.

Students' Perspective on Both the Advantages and Disadvantages of Memrise

Table 3. Students' Perspective on Both the Advantages and Disadvantages of *Memrise*

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
11	I appreciate the flexibility of learning in *Memrise*, dealing with the schedule and students' needs	0	0	0	11	6
12	There are some limitations in the content provided by *Memrise* for advanced speaking skill	0	1	1	10	5
13	I find several resources in *Memrise* such as text, audio and video which are benefitial for my speaking skill	0	0	1	6	10

| 14 | I find repetition of topics shown by *Memrise,* and it makes me memorized new vocabularies | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 7 |
| 15 | I find the gamification elements in *Memrise* motivate me to improve my speaking skill | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 7 |

*Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4, Strongly Agree-5

The results from Domain 3 show that most participants appreciated the learning flexibility offered by *Memrise,* with 11 participants agreeing and 6 strongly agreeing that the app made it easy to customize the learning schedule according to their needs. However, 15 out of 17 participants also recognized the limitations in *Memrise* content for advanced speaking skill development. In terms of learning resources, 16 participants found the presence of text, audio and video in the app very useful for improving their speaking skills. A total of 16 respondents also stated that the repetition of topics in *Memrise* helped them memorize new vocabulary more easily. In addition, 15 participants stated that the gamification element in the app motivated them to continue improving their speaking skills.

Students' Issues Using Memrise for Learning English

Table 4. Students' Issues Using *Memrise* for Learning English

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
16	There are some minor issues that disrupts my learning time using *Memrise*	0	2	11	1	3
17	I find it's bothersome for me to use Internet connection for learning English with *Memrise*	1	0	6	7	3
18	I find it challenging to stay motivated when using *Memrise* for long periods learning	1	1	5	5	5
19	The lack of real-time feedback on my speaking performance is a concern for me in learning English	0	0	5	10	2
20	I would prefer more structured guidance within the app to enhance my English learning experience rather than flexible learning	0	0	5	7	5

*Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4, Strongly Agree-5

In the last domain, a total of 11 participants were neutral and only 4 agreed or strongly agreed that there were minor disruptions during use, suggesting that these were not very significant for most users. However, 10 participants found using an internet connection to study with *Memrise* quite inconvenient. Regarding motivation, 10 participants agreed that they found it difficult to maintain motivation when studying for long durations. In addition, 12 participants expressed concern over the lack of immediate feedback on their speaking performance, which was one of the main drawbacks of the app. Finally, 12 participants also stated that they would prefer a more structured learning guide within the app rather than one that was too flexible.

Interview Findings

Two domains were found after analysing the questionnaire: (1) Students' Judgments About *Memrise* as an Application, and (2) Students' Opinions about *Memrise* for Learning Speaking. The following are the findings from 5 participants regarding Indonesian EFL students' point of view on using Memrise as a mobile learning application for developing their academic speaking skills learning.

Students' Judgments About Memrise as an Application

This section explores students' POVs about *Memrise* aplication, focusing on its value as a learning tool based on students' judgment about the app. This domain emerge from questions (1) How has your overall experience with the *Memrise* aplicaiton for learning speaking skill?, (3) What are the biggest advantages and disadvantages, in your opinion, of using *Memrise* to learn speaking?, and (4) How do you feel about technology used in *Memrise*? Do you have any favourites?. Four main themes emerged from several key themes that were found after coding participants' responses

1. **Experience with *Memrise***

   Engaging and enjoyable learning experience: Students generally reported a positive and enjoyable learning experience with Memrise. P2 stated *"very enjoyable for me"*. Followed by P4's response who mentioned *"I admit this it's kinda fun"* and *"it wont make us feel bored"*.

   Practicality and accessibility: *Memrise* convenience in accessing learning materials making it easy to integrate language practice into their daily routines and allowing users to study anytime and anywhere through their mobile . *"especially in their free time, you know, everyone now are using mobile phones quite often, almost all the time. So when we want to learn something, it would be more easier if we can do the learning from our mobile phone. It would be more easier for us. Just we open, click, and that simple."* Said P5. Furthermore, P2 said *"Especially after class, after class, if we face a question that is not suitable for us to ask the teacher, we can take notes in the book. For example, we can access it on Memrise"*, further provides benefits for participants to use *Memrise*.

   User satisfaction and efficiency: P1 and P2 praised *Memrise* as a good application for practicing speaking skills and an engaging learning interface. One said *"very good for practicing my speaking skills."*, indicating users are satisfied with its efficiency and user-friendly nature.

2. **Learning Features and Engagement**

   Preferred learning technology: Participants preferred the Membot AI for its interactive learning experience, allowing them to practice conversational English with artificial friends. P5 quote *"It is the artificial intelligence. That is one that uh… You know, the app developer trying to um… maximize the user experience by letting the user to try chatting with AI. That is fascinating."*

   Learning methods and tool: To participants (P4 and P1) noted that the audio made learning easier, contributing to listening and improving speaking abilities. One said *"Theres also the audio so it makes us easier to learn."*

   Useful tech and user perception: Participants praised the application's user-friendliness, repetitive exercises, and visually appealing design. Interactive animations and color combinations created a fun learning experience. *"I feel entertained when opening it. The first time when i open it, I can feel that this app is going to be good. Because, you know, every transition from From layer one to layer two, there is animation. And when we finish it- when we finish the uh… learning there is an animation that pops up. That will make the app feel like interactive for me. And also the color combination of the design on the app, is so fascinating."* said P5. The app's features were generally well-received and positively impacted the learning experience.

3. **Advantages of *Memrise***

   Interactive and engaging learning experience: Participants found the AI chat interactive feature helpful in practicing conversations and imitating native speakers. It allowed them to practice dialogue and improve conversational skills, as it allowed them to apply dialogue, not just individual words. Quote P4 *"Especially the part when we have to doing the conversation. Like training us how to apply-how to do dialogue. Not only word by word but in dialogue."*

Multimedia support for learning: Native speaker videos and audio support enhance learning experiences. P1 said "*watching native speaker videos through... the apps directly*" making learning more engaging by allowing participants to watch them directly through apps.

Accessibility and convinience: Participants appreciated *Memrise's* mobile app for its accessibility and convenience "*accesability anytime and anywhere*" said P2.

Structured and progressive learning approach: Users valued the structured levels and progressive challenges (P1 "*Because it's provided some level for English from beginner, intermediate, advanced, even native speakers*"), which helped track learning progress (P4 "*I can use it for a long time because there's a lot of levels that we can reach every day. So the... the level is also increasing.*"

Cost-efficient and wide range available contents: P4 appreciated that *Memrise* free content is already helped with the learning "*the free... like the contents have also been very helpful. It's very helpful.*"

4. **Disadvantages of *Memrise***

Accessibility and technical Issues: P1, P4, and P5 objected to the online learning application "*The disadvantages is for me is because the app is online*", which made them face difficulties such as lagging and "*Sometimes it contains lagging*".

Limited Features and Content: P5 mention that the app limited due to their preference for face-to-face learning "*I do like speaking directly to the people*", only availability British English "*I think it is only available in English. Sorry, British. British English.*", and the need for precise communication with its AI, all of which hinder accessibility and the natural learning process "*we need to convey our ideas clearly to make the app understand what our intention.*"

Students' Opinions about Memrise for Learning Speaking

This section explores students' POV on *Memrise* for using it for learning speaking skills. .This domain emerge from questions (2) What is the reason of you stoping/reaching at the current level in *Memrise*?, (5) In your opinion, how does *Memrise* serve as a useful spoken learning tool?, and (6) Do you view yourself using *Memrise* as a long-term tool for learning English speaking skills? Why?. 3 main themes emerged from several key themes were found after coding participants' responses.

1. **_Memrise_ as useful tool for speaking**

For skill development: Participants generally agree that the app is a good tool for learning English speaking skills. "*It's a good tool for me to learn English Speaking.*", P3 stated. It's particularly helpful for improving pronunciation through repetition (P3 "*like when I want to know how the word is pronounced, you can just uh… redo it.*"). The app also aids in themed vocabulary for practicing everyday conversation (P1 "*So I learned a lot of new vocabulary through various themes.*") Finally, it enhances listening skills through native speaker videos (P1 "*I can practice my listening skills through watching videos of native speakers.*") and pronunciation practice through Membot (P5 "*if we pronounce wrong then the chat will not type there. So we need to pronounce it clearly.*")

Success as a learning tool: Participants recognized *Memrises'* value to help them learn speaking skill. "*I think Memrise is quite helpful for students to learn speaking.*" P5 stated. Furthermore stated "*So I think Memrise to… Memrise as a media to help students learning English, I think it's very helpful for students to do that*"

2. **Long-term Learning Commitment**

Agree with long-term Use: P1, P2, P3, and P4 expressed willingness to continue using *Memrise* as part of their long-term speaking skill learning. One said, "*the practically and easy to access anytime and anywhere are the reasons why I continue using Memrise to sharpen my skills.*"

Doubts and preference: Meanwhile, P5 shows disagreement for long-term use, with the reason being that offline learning is preferable. *"I do more, uh… love having offline learning rather than online learning."*

3. **Students' Reason's Stopped at the Current Level**

This secition explore students' reason for stopping at their current level. While they have level 16-20 level to achieve for this research, highest level that the participants achive are 16. This led to the following 3 key themes.

Satisfaction with Achieved Progress: Some students stopped using *Memrise* after feeling they had reached a satisfactory level of English proficiency. *"at level 16, I think for me that's enough."*, said P1

Desire for Further Learning: Others were interested in continuing to use the app to improve their level. One said "*Actually I want to improve my level more.*"

External Factors Influence Continuation: Time unavailability *"but sometimes I don't have any the time to play with it anymore."* (P1) and English level curiosity "*I want to know how how far my level is*" (P3) become factors for participants to stop.

DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings from both questionnaire and interviews, themathically organized across three key theme domains: pronunciation improvement, vocabulary acquisition, and learning motivation. Questionnaire data reflect the general perspectives from all participants, while interview insights reveal deeper point of view (POV) from five purposively selected students.

Theme 1. Memrise Boost Pronunciation

After participants' usage experience with the app, who are students of English education, the majority of the perspectives of 17 participants in Table 1 and 2 have widely agreed that *Memrise* contributed meaningfully towards their pronunciation skills. Likewise, P1 and P4 echoed through their POV, who mentioned the usefulness of native speaker videos, while P5 and P3 highlighted that Membot only accepted input if pronunciation was accurate, which trained them to speak more clearly.

This aligns with the Interactionist Theory of SLA (Long, 1996; Catherine et al., 2007), which asserts that that language development occurs through interaction and feedback that help learners recognize and correct their language gaps. While previous research by Subhan et al. (2024) has highlighted the general speaking benefits of *Memrise*, this study identified more specific pronunciation accuracy improvements driven by multimedia input. However, P5 note its British English bias- a limitation not addressed in prior research. This linguistic limitation may hinder students in preparing for wider academic contexts where varied English accents are encountered (e.g., in international webinars, research presentations, or academic discussions).

Therefore, while *Memrise* supports pronunciation development through interactive and authentic feedback, its use in EAP settings can be enhanced by offering exposure to a wider variety of English.

Theme 2. Memrise Vocabulary Acquisition

Questionnaire data indicate that the majority perspectives of the students appreciated the repetition system in *Memrise,* such as "Learn My Words" and "Use My Words" found useful for learning everyday vocabulary. Participants consistently found that *Memrise* helped improve their vocabulary acquisition and retention. Interviewees from P1, P3 and P5 POV further emphasized that spaced repetition and themed vocabulary exposure supported better retention and usage in conversation.

These features align with Gamification Theory (Deterding et al., 2011), where learners are kept engaged through levels, points and feedback. The repetition-based memory model in *Memrise* is in line with Karanfil (2021) and recent research by Jorgensen (2024), which showed that Spaced Repetition Software (SRS) significantly improved vocabulary acquisition and retention at the university level, demonstrates the usefulness of spaced repetition in promoting long-term vocabulary learning. Further reinforce with Susanto (2024) and Taebenu (2021), constant exposure of a variety of vocabulary help enhances English language skills .

Despite these strengths, participants also noted limitations in the platform's ability to support more advanced academic vocabulary. Unlike general vocabulary, academic speaking needs special words and phrases used in specific subjects, as well as formal expressions (Cao & Hu, 2024). These findings suggest that while *Memrise* enhances foundational vocabulary learning, *Memrises* could be improved by adding a package of academic vocabulary for research, academic conversation, and formal phrases to enhance academic vocabulary for speaking readiness. This supports VanTassel-Baska's (2023) opinion, which explains that advanced learners often need specialized content to meet their educational needs.

Theme 3. Memrise Usage for Learning Motivation.

Memrise's gamification design - animations, rewards, flexible learning paths and visual tracking - was widely praised. more than 15 participants perspectives agreed that the platform motivated them to engage in learning and made the learning experience fun. Interview POV's also described the learning experience as "*fun*" and "*exciting*", mainly due to Membot AI, *Memrise's* design, customizable learning paths, and visual progress tracking.

This is supported by Alisoy and Sadiqzade (2024), which discusses how Mobile-MALL can transform language education by providing accessible and engaging learning opportunities, and previous claims from Deterding et al.'s (2011) gamification theory and Bennani et al. (2022) that gamified environments increase learner motivation and retention.

However, the findings shows motivational chalanges. Majority number of students expressed difficulty staying motivated for long-time period use of the app. Based on Perspectives' and POVs' of participants, reported frustrations technical issues, internet dependence, and lack of real-time feedback. These limitations hinder sustained engagement, especially when learners aim for long-term academic learning.

Additionally, students report that *Memrise's* unstructured design lacks the guided support that is often required in an EAP setting. Dutton (2021) explained that academic speaking tasks require more than just engagement, they demand goal-oriented practice, structured progress tracking, and feedback from teacher. Furthermore, a point emphasized by Dutton (2021) that motivation wanes without real-time feedback. All of which are currently limited in *Memrise*.

Therefore, to support long-term motivation and academic speaking development, *Memrise* could incorporate structured speaking modules for academic tasks, offline learning modes, and real-time or peer-based feedback tools.

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATION

The study aimed to answer how does Indonesian EFL learners percieve the use of *Memrise* for academic speaking learning development. The findings indicate that participants generally perceive *Memrise* positively. The majority of participants agreed that the platform helped them improve their pronunciation through native speaker audio, visuals, and Membot AI conversation, as well as vocabulary through themed repetition and gamified learning. Additionally, *Memrise's* game-based design which has animations, rewards, and flexible learning paths, motivated students to continue practicing their English speaking skills. Thus gives
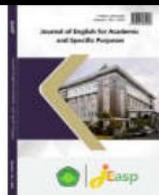
enhancement towards languages learning experience. However, participants also encounters several limitations such as language bias, limited advanced and academic content, and absence of real time feedback. Overall, Indonesian EFL learners perceive *Memrise* as a useful tool for learning and develop general speaking skills, yet it requires further development to fully support demands of academic speaking proficiency.

Practical Implication

Memrise can serve as a supplementary tool for academic speaking practice, whether individually or in an EFL classroom setting. The flexibility and mobile-friendly format make it suitable for independent learning anytime and anywhere. However, for more advanced academic speaking usage, *Memrise* should be integrated into structured academic activities. Such as presentations, discussions and debates. This integration can help bridge the gap between informal conversational practice and the formal speaking skills needed in academic English contexts.

Theoretical Implication

This study extends Gamification Theory (Deterding et al., 2011) in EFL mobile learning by illustrating how game-like features, such as rewards, levels, and visual progress, can sustain learner engagement in speaking practice. This study also reinforces Interactionist Second Language Acquisition Theory (Long, 1996) by showing how *Memrise's* AI interaction simulates real-time dialog and encourages self-correction and fluency development. Furthermore, contributes to the digital EAP pedagogy literature, especially by capturing the direct perspectives of learners in the under-explored context of Indonesian universities.

Future research suggests to explore how real-time feedback systems or peer feedback can be integrated into *Memrise* to improve speaking skill learning.

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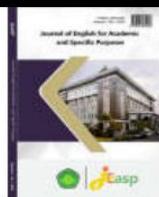
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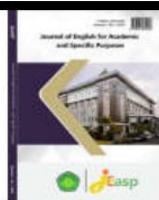
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