

Students' Perspective and Challenge towards Utilization of Talkpal.AI in ESP Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been brought into English classroom to assist learning process. Many studies have been conducted to find out the effectiveness of AI in English language classroom. Yet, there is a few studies which discuss the use of AI in ESP classroom. This study presents the use of Talkpal.AI, AI language learning platform, in teaching ESP for the fourth semester students in Pratama Mulia Polytechnic. They are from Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Accounting, and Office Management program which consist of 40 students. The aims of this study is to find out students' perception in implementing Talkpal.AI in their ESP classroom, to find out challenges faced by students, and the effectiveness of Talkpal.AI. Qualitative method is applied in this study by gaining data from questionnaire and interview. The results of this study show that the students have positive and negative perception towards Talkpal.AI. They find out that: 1) it is a fun, helpful, and exciting application but some activities are boring; 2) it lacks of ESP materials; 3) it has daily progress check. Moreover, the students also describe some obstacles such as: 1) payment and subscription; 2) unstable internet connection; 3) cellphone storage. From the findings of this research, it can be concluded that Talkpal.AI is effectively able to assist students to practice English for their daily life yet it is less effective to be applied in ESP context. The researcher suggests the solution to overcome this problem is for developer to create a similar AI application specifically for ESP field which covers various ways to learn ESP.

KEYWORDS: artificial intelligence; esp; talkpal.ai; technology

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the crucial thing to be mastered by students because by mastering English, students are able to broader their experiences both in academic or non-academic field. For example they are able to join students' exchange programs, register scholarship abroad, join international conferences, writing English articles, travel abroad, and work abroad. To accommodate students to master in English is by optimizing learning process. It is believed that one of the way to optimize teaching English is by applying technology. As stated by Rintaningrum (2023), she explains that by integrating technology in the classroom, it significantly improves students' English language, it also allows students to practice English interactively and independently, and it enhances students' confidence in using English. Similarly, Istiara and Hastomo (2023) tell that utilizing technology in the classroom is essential to create a more effective atmosphere of learning process because it facilitates learning process by offering various learning resources and tools. Bui (2022) emphasizes that implementing digital technologies are able to address both teachers' and students' need. Therefore, technology navigates teachers to explore and optimize various tools and resources in order to create a successful learning process (Zubaidi and Velusamy, 2024).

Zhang and Yu (2021) see technology becomes a global trend in present education. They conclude that it is an effective tool to assist the process of learning in digital era. Furthermore, Mohamad et.al. (2020) implies that the 21st century mostly consists of Generation Z learners who utilize technology for their learning. It is a generation where the students were born in the digital era, they even have

been introduced technology since they were on belly. These generations are also known as multitasking generations since they are able to do different things at the same time such as chatting to friends, checking email, listening to music, talking on the phone, having discussion on Zoom with friends while doing school homework, and etc. They are skilled at using technology and social media activities because they do not want to miss the newest information. Wati et.al, (2025) add that technology in education field is as a component related to the development, application, and assessment of systems, techniques, and tools to increase human learning. It means that integration technology is able to support the effectiveness of teaching and learning process.

One of the latest innovation in technology that has been introduced is artificial intelligence (AI). AI has been implemented in teaching English and is significantly transformed teaching methodologies and enhanced learning experiences, learning outcomes, and enabling efficient assessments (Wafa and Eka, 2025). AI provides various tools to create interactive activities which support students to acquire language skills and educators present materials to make teaching and learning process more effective (AITwijri and Alghizzi, 2024). Li et.al (2023) also highlight that the use AI in education is becoming powerful tool. AI presents e-learning more engaging, efficient and tailored to individual learners, all of which contributes to better learning outcomes and broader access to technical education (Lakshmi et.al., 2023). Tapalova and Zhiyenbayeva (2022) add that AI provides several technologies such as speech recognition, chatbots, and personalized learning apps which make students practice English easily and independently. These tools are suited to the needs and level of students, offer instant feedback, and communicative and interactive ways to practice English language skills (Harry & Jati, 2023; Nuriati et.all, 2023).

Integrating technology in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction has expanded opportunities for language learning, particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse students in non-English major program (Gumartifa & Alfaresi, 2025). In the context of ESP, digital technologies provides chance for learners to acquire language skills based on their academic discipline or future professions. (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2020). Different with general English, which concern on broad language proficiency, ESP is based on goal-oriented and context-driven, aligning language instruction with the specific needs, discourse practices, and terminology of a given domain, such as business, engineering, law, health, sciences, or tourism (Fadlia et al., 2020; Rumalessin and Farah, 2021, Arroyyani et al., 2022; Dou et al., 2023). The main goal of ESP is to accommodate learners with the linguistic and communicative tools necessary to perform effectively in their target academic or workplace settings (Chaovanapricha and Champakaew, 2024). ESP aims to prepare students for a particular professional context, it is designed for specific disciplines, teaching situations, adult learners, and to fulfill the specific language demands of a certain group (Rosima et al, 2025).

This research concerns on integrating technology in teaching ESP. It focuses on the use of one of the kind AI, that is Talkpal. AI. Talkpal.AI is one AI-based application specifically designed to improve English speaking skills. This application offers speech recognition and natural language processing technologies to stimulate conversations and provide real-time feedback to users (Vigo and Chuzaimah, 2024). These features allow students to practice speaking English in various contexts, such as everyday conversations, professional situations, and academic scenarios (Zhai and Wibowo, 2023). Talkpal.AI allows learners to participate with AI and receive instant and targeted feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and grammar (Torkhani, 2025).

Several studies found out that the utilization of Talkpal. AI in teaching English language shows a great result. A previous research conducted by Vigo and Chuzaimah (2024) entitle How Effective is Talkpal.AI in Enhancing English Proficiency? The finding of this study showed that Talkpal.AI is effective in providing personalized and interactive learning experience, contributing to the enhancement of speaking skill. This research was conducted to the second semester students of English Education Study Program. A similar research was conducted by Torkhani (2025) with tittle AI-Enhanced Language Learning: The Impact of Talkpal.AI on EFL Undergraduate Students' English Speaking Skill. The result of her research showed that there is a significant improvement towards' students pronunciation, fluency, and ability to structure sentences accurately. Furthermore, Efendi (2024) presents The Impact of Talkpal.AI on English Speaking Proficiency: An Academic Inquiry. This

research was conducted to university students to investigate whether Talkpal.AI can improve students' English speaking ability or not. This study confirms that Talkpal.AI has given a huge impact to improve students' English speaking ability. He suggested that the use of technology, especially AI should be insight in language teaching curriculum.

This research is necessary to be done since there is still a limited research on how the use of Talkpal.AI in teaching ESP. The areas of this research are focus on the students' perception towards the implementation of Talkpal.AI in ESP classroom, the challenges faced by students, and the effectiveness of Talkpal.AI in ESP classroom.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative method adapted from Creswell & Creswell (2023). The focus of this research is to gain deep insight and understanding of the utilization Talkpal.AI in ESP classroom. The participants of this research are four semester students of Politeknik Pratama Mulia Surakarta which consist of 40 students from four study program (Mechanical Engineering Program, Electrical Engineering Program, Accounting Program, and Office Management Program). They practice English using Talkpal. AI for fourteen times in fourteen days. The lecturer observes students' progress by checking their daily progress on Talkpal.AI.

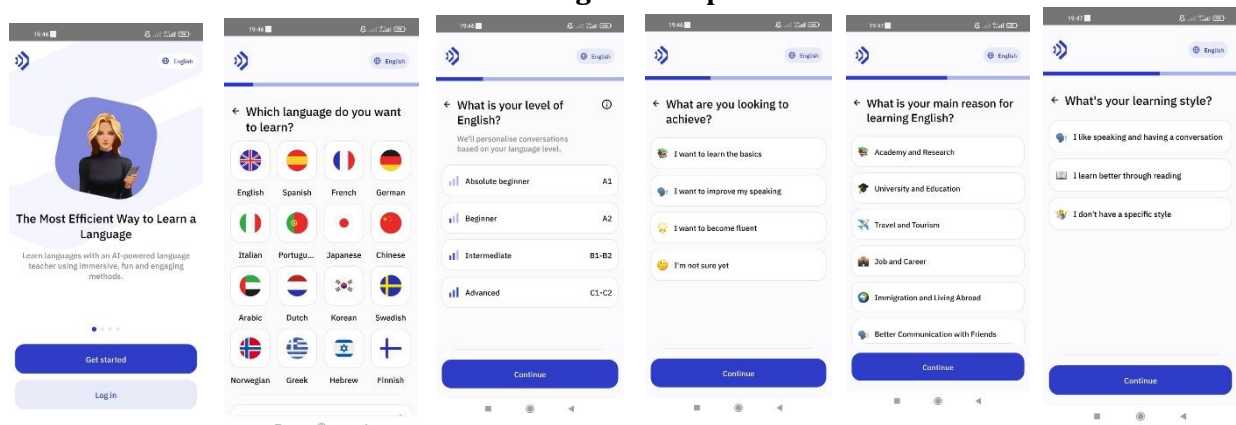
To gain a deeper data, questionnaires and interviews are delivered to students. This case study is derived to reveal the students' perception towards the utilization of Talkpal.AI in ESP classroom, the challenges, and the effectiveness of Talkpal.AI. Questionnaires are delivered to all participants to know students' perception towards utilization of Talkpal.AI in ESP classroom. Then a semi-structure interview is conducted to sixteen students which was taken randomly to follow up the answers from questionnaires. The data from interviews and questionnaires are analyzed by using three steps, organizing, coding, and summarizing and interpreting. The results of the research are explained in the form of descriptive analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Features of Talkpal.AI

To run Talkpal.AI, users must register first. They should fill their identity to be able to use several features provided. Talkpal. The followings are the features of Talkpal. AI

Picture 1. Front Page of Talkpal.AI' Feature

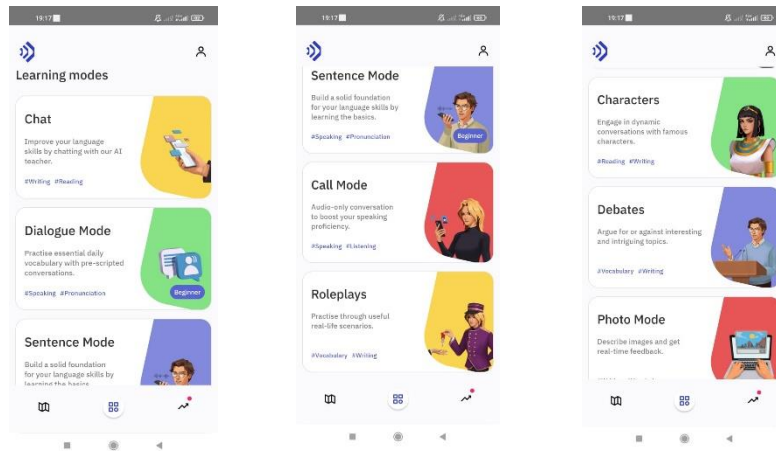


Those are the pictures of the first beginning of Talkpal.AI application. Users are asked to register then answering several questions before log in. The purposes of the questions are to know what language users would like to practice, users' language level, and users' purpose for leaning language, users' learning style, and users' achievement.

Then, various learning mode are served to users. There are eight learning modes which can be chosen by users. Unfortunately, not all those learning modes can be used for free. There is only one learning

mode which is free that is “chat”, while the rests are premium. However, users can try those premium learning modes for free for fourteen days.

Picture 2. Learning Modes of Talkpal.AI

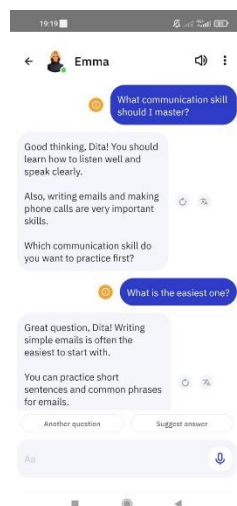


Those pictures above show nine learning modes provided by Talkpal.AI. Each learning modes has different learning style. For more explanation, the nine learning modes will be explained as follows:

a. Chat

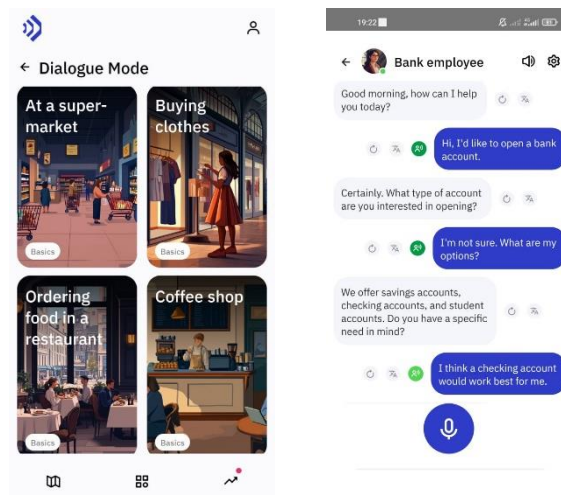
In this learning mode, users allow to ask any subjects to Talkpal.AI. Users will be guided by Emma. She will greet you by writing a message. Users' response can be in the form of voice note or written form. Basically, it is similar like other regular chatting platform. This mode focus on writing and reading.

Picture 3. Chat Learning Mode's Feature



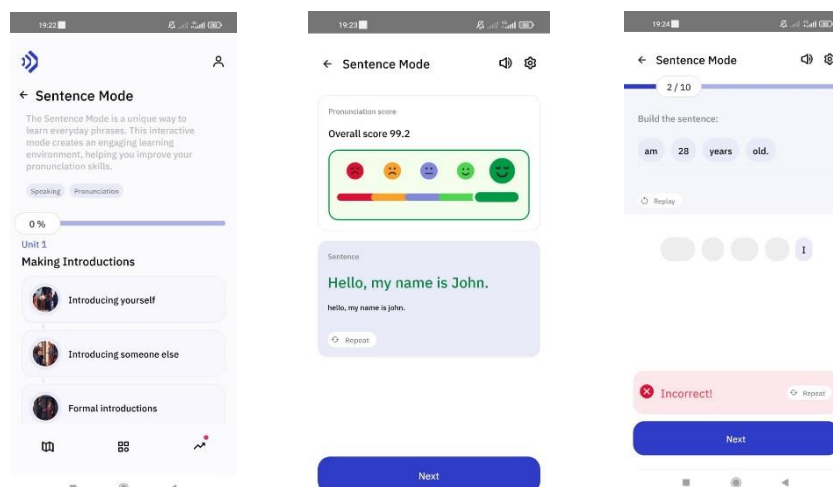
b. Dialogue mode

In dialogue mode, it is expected that users can practice essential daily vocabulary using pre-scripted conversation, and practicing speaking in various situation. Here, users choose one of topic served by Talkpal.AI then they will be directed to a scripted situations. Users will be greeted by Talkpal. AI and then users should response it by reading the script of conversation. The topics of conversation are provided by Talkpal.AI. It also states the levels of each topic, they are basics, intermediate, and professional. This mode concern on speaking and pronunciation.

Picture 4. Dialogue Learning Mode's Feature

c. Sentence mode

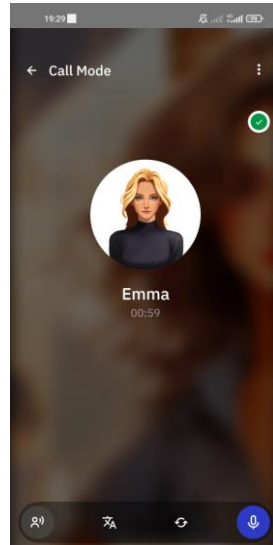
In sentence mode, users practice speaking and pronunciation. Here, users learn everyday phrases in an interactive way and learning environment. There will be around 30 units which are arranged based on the beginner to advanced level. Each unit consists of three sub topics. In each sub topics, users will be asked to re-read the provided sentence with correct pronunciation and will be scored at the end of each sentence. After finishing one sentence, users will be asked to re-arrange the scramble words into a correct sentence. Before continuing next sentence, users will be shown if their answer correct or incorrect.

Picture 4. Sentence Learning Mode's Feature

d. Call mode

Call mode presents audio-only conversation to enhance speaking proficiency. It focuses on speaking and listening. This mode is similar to talking on the phone. It allows users to decide topic of conversation.

Picture 5. Call Learning Mode's Feature



e. Role-plays

Role-plays offer practicing English speaking through useful real-life scenarios. It is expected that by doing role-play, practicing English language will be fun. Users can choose various setting provided by this mode. It is arranged from everyday conversations to creative and fantastic dialogues. Each conversations is labelled based on its level from basic to professional. In this method, users will be asked first by its platform then they can response it through their understanding.

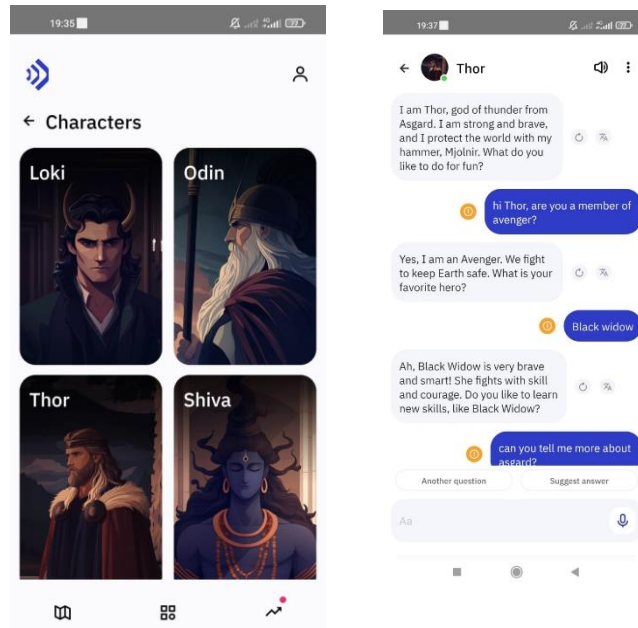
Picture 6. Role-Play Learning Mode's Feature



f. Characters

Characters provide various kind of famous characters such as characters of Greek Gods and Goddesses. Here, users focus on reading and writing skill. Actually, the concept of this mode as the same as in chat mode, the differences is the characters answer your questions in the form of text and spoken.

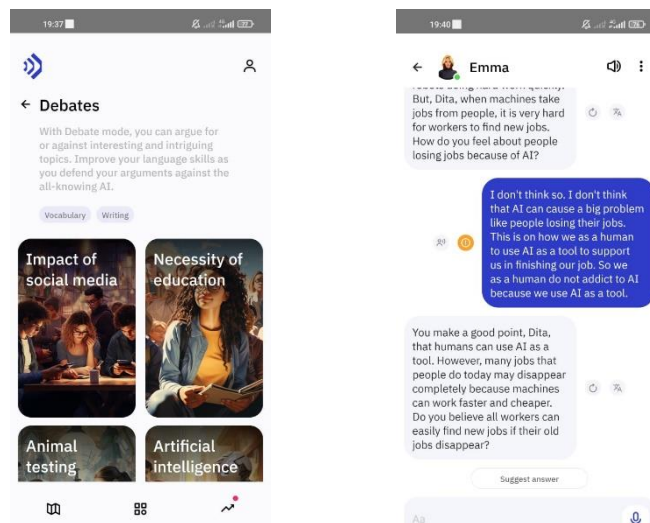
Picture 7. Characters Learning Mode's Feature



g. Debates

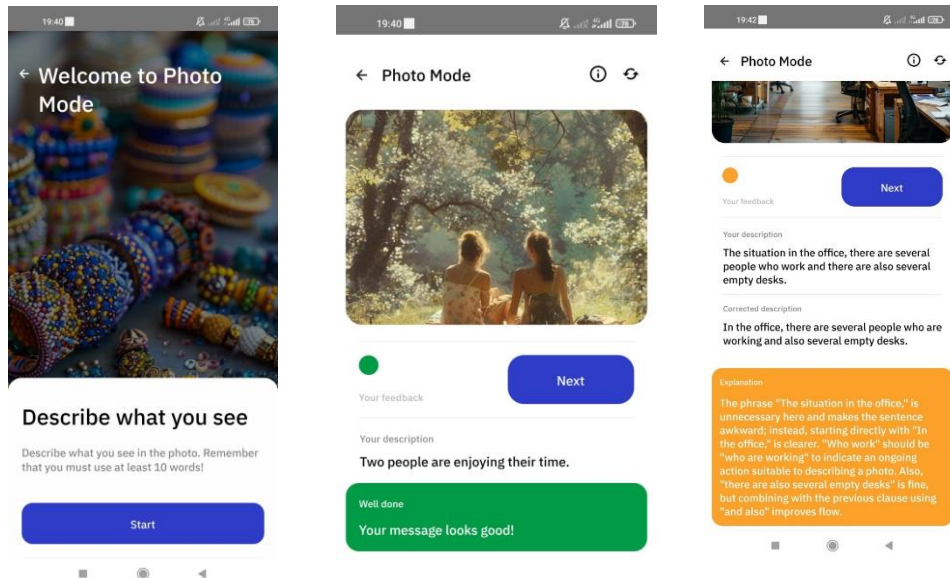
Debates offer interesting topics to be discussed. Users choose one topic they are interested in and choose their role whether as person who argue for or against. Both of users and this platform can give answers and responses in the form of spoken and written.

Picture 8. Debates Learning Mode's Feature

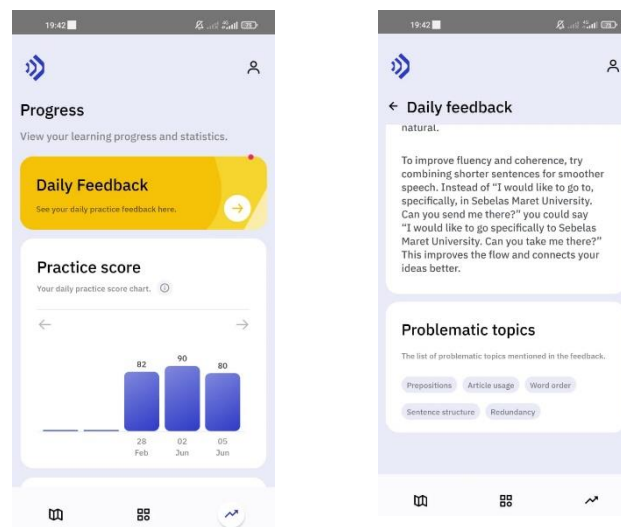


h. Photo mode

In photo mode, users will be shown a photo then are asked to describe it in at least 10 words. A good point of this mode is users' description will be given direct feedback from this platform.

Picture 9. Photo Mode Learning Mode's Feature

The last feature of Talkpal.AI is progress. In progress part, users can see their daily progress learning. This part includes practice daily score which is shown your daily score, explanation which explains specifically your mistake and gives correction to it, it also presents list of problematic topics you made such as prepositions, word order, sentence structure, and many more, level which shows your English level, and stats which describe you time to practice.

Picture 10. Daily Progress Feature

By analyzing Talkpal.AI's features, it can be summarized that the nine learning modes which are covered by this application have the similar style that is they invite students to speak. The concerns of this application are pronunciation, vocabulary, and simple structure. This application offers various topics for some learning modes and free topics for the rest. Topics which are provided by this application related to daily life such as introducing our self, how to order a taxi, how to handle job interview, how to interview famous people, and many others. The last, this application shows students' progress by recording their daily progress, giving explanation and correctness to students' mistake, and scoring their result.

Students' Perception and challenges towards utilization of Talkpal. AI in ESP classroom

After experiencing in utilizing Talkpal.AI, the students find it is fun, helpful, and exciting, providing by various learning modes which can be suited to their learning style. They also find that they feel more confident and brave to practice English language because they have a partner to practice English. These responses show a positive response towards the use of Talkpal. AI. It is supported by students' statements.

"I think, this AI is helpful, especially for me. I can practice English anytime and everywhere. I can practice speaking without being shy to be laughed by friends. Now, I am brave to speak English with friends". (student 1)

"This application is good and fun. I can ask and write anything I want (free topics). I also can choose to practice by calling, describing picture, or role-playing". (student 2)

"Talkpal.AI helps me to practice speaking. I can choose topics I would like to practice. The topics are based on daily life. I can practice it too in real life. I can also choose learning mode I like. My favorite learning mode is sentence mode" (student 3).

"For over years, I feel shy to speak English in front of the class. Honestly, I don't like English because it is hard to understand for me. I also have no chance to study at home. I tried actually but I still don't understand. I have no friends to be my practice partner. Thanks to this application, I now have a partner to practice English, especially speaking. Now, I feel more confident to speak English in the classroom though I am still afraid to make mistake. But it is better now" (student 4)

Different responses are given by students, they reflect that this application is less interesting. They find out most of features offer the same way that is asking students to speak, write, or read. They said that it is fun and exciting at the first but turn out it is boring. They suggested that this application should be added with games. These expressions show a negative response towards the use of Talkpal.AI.

"I am happy to practice English using this application. But I feel bored after practicing for several times. It doesn't give challenge to me. But, this application is actually good enough. I think it can be added games or video to make it more interesting". (student 5)

The response above describes that student doesn't feel satisfied enough to the learning modes provided by Talkpal.AI. It shows that this application is not effective enough to support them to practice English language. They need more various learning modes which based on game.

Another responses come up from students is talking about topic interest. Most of students agree that topics area are helpful to be applied in their daily life yet they do not represent students' study program or students' future workplace. It can be assumed that topics area represent daily life English language (general English). They are lack of ESP materials.

"When practicing English using Talkpal.AI, there are many topics I can choose. Unluckily, it is hard for me to find out topic which is related to my study program that is Mechanical Engineering. I just found out material in Automotive Engineering. I wish that topics for Mechanical Engineering can be put in so my friends and I are able to study mechanical vocabularies". (student 6)

"Talking about English topics in Talkpal.AI, I think they are good and this application is practical. The topics represent our daily life such as ordering food, opening bank account, job interview, and so on. Thus, when I have to use English language at the same context, I will be not confused. The problem is I cannot find materials or topics in electrical field". (student 7)

"Topics or materials for Office Management program can be found quite a lot. They are opening bank account, yearly review, negotiation at meeting, job interview, networking at event, and so on. I am pretty much happy to use this application. I can see the overview of my future workplace". (student 8)

"For Accounting program, topics or materials given are still broad. They do not specifically represent working area or English vocabulary in accounting field. They just give an overview in an office as general. I am quiet disappointed to the materials given in this application". (student 9)

Three students highlight that materials or topics are not relevance to their study program that are electrical and mechanical engineering, and accounting. They expect that they are able to learn about English terminology based on their study program in order to enhance their vocabulary mastery. They also wish that they can practice English language based on their future workplace context so that it can be applied when they work in the future. Besides, they are also able to predict the situation of their future workplace. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) focus on preparing students for a specific professional field such as law, medicine, engineer, accountant (Rosiam et.al, 2025)

The students also point out daily progress feature in this application. Daily progress feature is believed become one of the factor that motivates students to keep practicing English. They state that they feel challenged to get a higher score every day. They also emphasize to the explanation and correction feature of this application. Students' mistakes during practices are recorded, shown, and corrected. These activities are effective to make students more understand to English materials they learn.

"What motivates me to continuous practice English using this application is daily progress. It pushes me to be better every day" (student 10)

"Daily progress is awesome. I like it, I can see the part where I make a mistake and I get correction for it. On the other hand, it gives detail explanation for my mistakes, points out the mistake I made, and shows the correct answer" (student 11).

This research also finds that to continue study using Talkpal.AI, they have to subscribe for premium learning modes. From eight learning modes, there is only one learning mode which is free that is chat mode. It is hard for them since the payment is quiet expensive. Remembering that most of students come from different financial background, the lecturer is not allowed to push them to pay the subscription.

Besides the subscription, the students also state that it is need a stable internet connection to run this application. When the internet connection is unstable, their response cannot be processed or the feedback will be very late. Furthermore, the cellphone storage also becomes their problem since the storage capacity of their cellphone are different. The students whose cellphone storage is small complaint that when running this application,

CONCLUSION

This research findings emphasize to the students' perception and challenge towards the utilization of Talkpal. AI in ESP classroom. From results of this research it is found out that students give positive and negative responses as follows:

- a. Students find that Talkpal.AI is helpful, fun, and exciting application. It provides various learning modes and topics which can be suited to students' interest. Otherwise, some students find that it is boring because the nine learning modes apply similar way to practice.
- b. Students find that topics and materials provided by Talkpal.AI are beneficial for their daily life yet it lacks of ESP materials. Furthermore, the students come from vocational school

which need specific English materials (ESP) based on their study program. By having ESP materials, they are able to understand English terminology of their study program and to overview situation of their future workplace. It will be more beneficial for them.

- c. Students find that Talkpal.AI can be used to measure their process in practicing English. In some learning modes, it is given correction, score, and explanation for their responses. Additionally, there is a daily progress which can be checked by students. Daily progress is completed with daily score, explanation, correction, and allotment time.

Besides, the students also find some obstacles to utilize Talkpal.AI, they are:

- a. The payment and subscription. Talkpal.AI provides nine learning modes that can be accessed by students, but there is only one learning mode which is free that is chat mode. Luckily, there are free trial which can be used by them for fourteen days.
- b. Unstable internet connection. Talkpal.AI needs a stable internet connection since if the internet connection unstable, students' process cannot be processed or the feedback will be late.
- c. Cellphone storage. It causes some students' cellphone froze when running this application.

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher expects that there will be English researchers who will work together with software developer to create an ESP learning application based on AI.

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