# Students' Perceptions of Using Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature in Improving English Speaking Ability

**Novi Yanti,[1] Emeliya Sukma Dara Damanik,[2]**
Corresponding author: novi0304213106@uinsu.ac.id
Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
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## Abstract

This study explores students' perceptions of using Cici AI's voice communication feature to improve their English speaking abilities. Using a qualitative approach with a descriptive phenomenological design, data was collected from 25 university students through a questionnaire and involved 5 selected students for in-depth interviews. The results of the study highlighted five main findings, namely: (1) Usefulness; (2) Easiness; (3) Students' Confidence; (4) Speaking Ability Improvement; and (5) Access Difficulties. The findings showed that students gave a positive perception of Cici AI's voice communication feature as a tool to improve their English speaking ability. This research contributes to the growing body of research on AI in language learning on how Cici AI can support students in improving English speaking ability. Future research would be valuable to explore the long-term impact of Cici AI in improving English speaking skills in various educational settings.

*Keywords:* Cici AI's, Speaking Ability, Students' Perception

## INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an important aspect of human life and has had a significant impact on many industries, including education. The rapid growth of technology has ushered in a new era in language acquisition, with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) as a transformational force. Among several emerging AI-powered language learning tools, one innovation is Cici AI, a virtual assistant designed to assist users in their daily activities. Cici AI is equipped with artificial intelligence that allows it to understand and answer questions quickly and accurately. This AI intelligence is very beneficial for education in the long term, an investment to make it easier for lecturers and students. Cici AI also has strong security features to ensure the protection of users' personal data (Syahputra, 2024). An interesting application of Cici AI is in English language learning, especially in improving speaking ability.

Speaking is widely regarded as the most important yet challenging skill in language learning. According to Brown (2001), speaking involves the cooperative construction of meaning through the generation, confirmation, and handling of information. For learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), especially in countries such as Indonesia where English is not widely spoken outside the classroom, the development of speaking skills is often hampered by low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and limited opportunities to practice. (Prayudha & Pradana, 2023; Fatimah et al., 2021). Traditional methods, such as conversation classes, provide a structured environment for practice but often fail to offer individualized attention or immediate feedback, which is critical for rapid language acquisition (Haenlaen & Kaplan, 2019).

These limitations have prompted the exploration of innovative solutions, including the integration of AI-based tools such as Cici AI. Equipped with advanced voice communication features, Cici AI offers an interactive platform for learners to practice speaking English. Its ability to provide real-time feedback and simulate natural conversations makes it a promising tool to address common challenges in developing

speaking skills. Leveraging natural language processing (NLP), machine learning, and speech recognition, Cici AI offers personalized, interactive, and efficient language practice opportunities (Rakya, 2023). Its features, such as daily conversations and topic-based speaking exercises, provide learners with a low-pressure environment to practice and receive constructive feedback, addressing gaps left by traditional methods.

Despite the growing interest in AI-powered language learning tools, research on students' perceptions of these technologies is still limited, particularly in the context of improving speaking skills. Previous studies have explored the effectiveness of AI tools such as ChatGPT and AI-CiciBot in language. For example, ChatGPT has been shown to improve speaking skills, although technical issues such as conversation stalls due to misunderstandings remain a challenge Éstünbaş (2024). Besides Cici AI, generative AI-based tools such as ChatGPT have also attracted the interest of language educators. The study by Taysy et al. (2025) of 153 EFL instructors in Turkey showed that while ChatGPT was seen as useful for material development and lesson planning, the main concerns lay in the accuracy of the information, ethical issues, and over-reliance. These findings underscore the need for more in-depth exploration of how AI features especially voice-based ones such as in Cici AI can overcome such limitations by providing more immersive interactions and real-time feedback. Unlike the text-focused ChatGPT, Cici AI offers live speaking practice, potentially reducing students' speaking anxiety while increasing engagement, as shown in Muthmainnah's study (2024). In line with previous research conducted by Syahputra (2024), revealing that Cici AI significantly helped students improve grammar, expand vocabulary, and increase confidence in speaking English, advanced features such as voice notes, phone capabilities, and the ability to record and review conversations provide practical and effective learning experiences.

However, there are differences between previous studies and the research conducted by the researchers. While previous studies have focused on the direct application of AI tools by researchers or individual students, this study investigates students' perceptions of using Cici AI's voice communication feature to improve their English speaking abilities. The researchers emphasize understanding students' experiences and perspectives on how Cici AI's voice feature supports their speaking practice, rather than simply measuring proficiency outcomes. This approach provides unique insights into the role of AI in developing speaking skills from the students' perspective. Although previous research has explored the effectiveness of AI tools such as ChatGPT and AI-CiciBot, but no research has specifically focused on students' perceptions of the voice communication features in the Cici AI application. Therefore, the researchers were interested in examining students' perceptions of using Cici AI's voice communication feature to improve their English speaking ability.

Perception is an important factor that students must learn. It shapes the way students react to learning, and can be the deciding factor between success and failure. Positive factors contribute to success in education, while negative factors contribute to failure. According to Hazari (2014), students learn more effectively when they perceive the learning environment positively. A positive or negative attitude is rooted in an individual's perception of a particular object or thing. Individuals observe things and events around them through their sensory receptors such as eyes, ears, nose, etc. This is supported by Sarwono (2010) that perception can make inferences about what we see, hear, and try to make the best guess. So, it can be concluded that perception is the psychological process of students to respond, understand or want to understand about certain objects after receiving stimuli from outside.

The students' perception is important because of its influence on learning. It is also a major part of his learning life, being part of the lessons he must learn, how they observe and engage in the learning experience and how it affects them in their learning (Brookhart, 2003, p. 6). When students know about the benefits of Cici AI application to language learning, they will engage in the activity repeatedly, because they have a good perception of Cici AI voice communication feature, they will have a positive belief that Cici AI has a positive impact on English, especially in improving English speaking ability, so they will use Cici AI application repeatedly.

Understanding students' perceptions is critical, as it directly affects their engagement and learning outcomes. Perception, defined as the interpretation of information based on personal experience plays an important role in shaping students' attitudes towards technology (Nasrah, 2023). This study aims to fill the research gap by investigating the perception of college students in using Cici AI's voice communication feature to improve their English speaking ability and specifically, it addresses a research question: What are students' perceptions of Cici AI's voice communication features in improving their English speaking ability?

## METHODS

### Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive phenomenological design to explore students' perceptions of the Use of Cici AI Voice Communication Features in Improving English Speaking Ability. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2018), qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting with the intention of interpreting a phenomenon that occurs and is carried out by involving various existing methods. Qualitative research seeks to find and describe narratively the activities carried out and the impact of the actions taken on their lives the impact of the actions taken on their lives.

### Research Participants

The participants in this study were 25 students of the English Education Department at the State Islamic University of North Sumatera, who had used the Cici AI application to learn English, especially to improve speaking skills. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, ensuring that they had access to the app. Five students were then selected to be interviewed based on their willingness and ability to provide in-depth insights.

### Data Collection

The researcher collected data through questionnaires and interviews. The researcher used a questionnaire in the form of a google form to get participants' answers based on the statements given. There are 12 statements regarding the Cici AI application and there are 5 choices for each statement. This research uses a Likert scale to measure the answers to the questionnaire. "The Likert scale is a psychometric scale that has several categories where respondents choose to indicate their opinions, attitudes, or feelings about a particular issue" (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014). In this study, a Likert scale was used to measure students' perceptions of the use of language learning applications for a subject. This section is annotated with: (SA) for Strongly Agree, (A) for Agree, (N) for Neutral, (D) for Disagree, and (SD) for Strongly Disagree). Interviews, which lasted about 30 minutes, were conducted with five selected students to explore perspectives in more depth. Questions were categorized into five themes namely: Usability, Ease, Student Confidence, Improved Speaking Ability, Difficulty of Access.

### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used in this study for data analysis techniques. The questionnaire used in this study is a Likert scale, the researcher then analyzes the data descriptively based on the percentage calculation formula based on Sugiono's explanation, namely P = F / N x 100. Meanwhile, the interview data was analyzed using thematic content analysis. Thematic analysis is one way to analyze data with the aim to identify patterns or to find themes through the data that has been collected by researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## RESULTS

This section provides an explanation of the research findings. There are five main aspects of students' meaning when using the Cici AI voice communication feature application as a medium in improving English speaking ability. These aspects include the use of the Cici AI

voice communication feature in improving English speaking abilities, the ease of using the Cici AI application, student confidence after practicing with the Cici AI voice communication feature, improved speaking ability, and access difficulties when using the Cici AI voice communication feature application, which will be described below.

1. **Usefulness**

The table below shows students' perceptions of the usability of the application, including useful feedback, user-friendly features, and overall activity in improving English speaking ability.

**Table 1.** Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness to the Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature

| No | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD | Total |
|----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 1 | The Cici AI voice communication feature is useful for practicing speaking English in a convenient and flexible way | 28% | 64% | 8% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| 2 | Cici AI provides useful feedback to improve my English speaking ability | 36% | 60% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| 3 | I feel Cici AI's communication features useful for practicing my English speaking ability | 16% | 56% | 20% | 8% | 0% | 100% |

From table 1 above, it can be seen the combination of strongly agree and agree results obtained from the questionnaire, from the first statement it was found that 92% of students agreed that the Cici AI voice communication feature is useful for practicing speaking English in a comfortable and flexible way, 96% of students agreed that Cici AI provides useful feedback to improve my English speaking ability, and 72% of students agreed that the Cici AI communication feature is useful for practicing students' English speaking ability. So, overall the students have a positive perception of the usefulness of the Cici AI voice communication feature. The results of the questionnaire were also reinforced by the results of interviews with students, as conveyed by Student 1:

*"I totally agree that Cici AI is useful. The training features are complete, there are ones for pronunciation, fluency, and conversation. I use the daily conversation feature the most because the material is close to everyday life. So I don't just learn theory, but I practice speaking directly"* (S1)

Similarly, Student 4 highlighted by stating:

*"Cici AI is really helpful for practicing speaking, especially when there is no partner. The feedback immediately tells me if my English is wrong so I can correct it right away"* (S3)

Based on the interview results above, it confirms that most students feel that the Cici AI voice communication feature is useful for practicing speaking English in a comfortable and flexible way, and the feedback given when practicing is also very useful in speaking English. Although there are a small number of students who are neutral, maybe because they have not used the Cici AI voice communication feature for a long time to improve their English speaking ability.

## 2. Easiness

The Easiness of Cici AI Voice Communication Features for students, highlights its flexibility to learn anytime and anywhere, and easy-to-use features, as shown in the table below:

**Table 2.** Students' Perceptions of the Easiness to the Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature

| No | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD | Total |
|----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 4 | Cici AI's voice communication feature is easy to use and understand to practice speaking English | 36% | 52% | 0% | 12% | 0% | 100% |
| 5 | I can use the Cici AI communication feature anytime and anywhere | 24% | 68% | 8% | 0% | 0% | 100% |

Based on table 2 above, it can be seen that the combination of strongly agree and agree results obtained from the questionnaire, it was found that 88% of students agreed that the Cici AI voice communication feature is easy to use and understand to practice speaking English and 92% of students agreed that the Cici AI communication feature can be used anytime and anywhere. So, overall the students have a positive perception of the ease of the voice communication feature of the Cici AI application. These findings are in line with student responses, such as Student 2 stating:

> *"The application is very easy to use, just press the mic button and you can talk. I often use it during breaks from college to practice for a while"* (S2)

Based on the findings above, this confirms that students feel that the Cici AI voice communication feature is easy to use and can be used wherever and whenever the students want.

## 3. Students' Confidence

The impact of Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature on students' confidence in speaking English, as shown in the table below:

**Table 3.** Students' Perceptions of their Confidence in Using Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature

| No | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD | Total |
|----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 6 | I feel more confident speaking English after using Cici AI's voice communication feature. | 28% | 58% | 10% | 4% | 0% | 100% |

Based on table 3 above, it can be seen that the combination of strongly agree and agree results obtained from the questionnaire, it was found that 86% of students agreed that students felt more confident speaking English after using the Cici AI voice communication feature. So, overall the students have a positive perception of the voice communication feature of Cici AI in increasing students' confidence when speaking English. These findings are in line with student responses, such as Student 4 stating:

> *"I used to be shy to speak English, but now I'm more confident thanks to regular practice at Cici AI. I don't even shake when I present in class anymore"* (S4)

Similarly, Student 5 highlighted by stating:

*"I feel like Cici AI is like a training friend who doesn't judge. So I can freely speak without fear of being laughed at if I'm wrong. Over time I became more confident in speaking English, both in class and outside of class"* (S5)

Based on the interview results above, it confirms that students feel more confident in speaking English after using the Cici AI voice communication feature regularly.

### 4. Speaking Ability Improvement

The effectiveness of Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature in improving English speaking ability, especially through the voice communication feature, as shown in the table below:

**Table 4.** Students' Perceptions of the Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature in Improving Speaking Ability

| No | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD | Total |
|----|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| 7 | Cici AI's Voice Communication feature helps me improve my English speaking significantly | 20% | 72% | 8% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| 8 | Cici AI's voice communication feature is effective in improving my fluency in speaking English. | 0% | 68% | 24% | 8% | 0% | 100% |
| 9 | Cici AI's voice communication feature helped me improve my pronunciation in speaking English | 16% | 56% | 28% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| 10 | I can speak English more naturally and with higher accuracy in grammar and vocabulary after using Cici AI's speaking practice | 10% | 48% | 28% | 14% | 0% | 100% |

Based on table 4 above, it can be seen that the combination of strongly agree and agree results obtained from the questionnaire, it was found that 92% of students agreed that the Cici AI Voice Communication Feature helped students improve their English speaking abilities significantly, 68% of students agreed that the Cici AI voice communication feature was effective in improving students' fluency in speaking English, 72% of students agreed that the Cici AI voice communication feature helped students improve their pronunciation in speaking English and 58% of students agreed that students could speak English more naturally and with higher grammar and vocabulary accuracy after using the Cici AI speaking feature. Overall, students have a positive perception of the Cici AI voice communication feature in improving English speaking ability. The results of the questionnaire were also reinforced by the results of interviews with students, as conveyed by Student 1:

*"I feel my speaking ability has improved significantly. My pronunciation, which used to be messy, is now clearer"* (S1)

Similarly, Student 2 highlighted by stating:

*"I feel the most improvement in the fluency section. I used to often go blank and not know what to say. Now I am more fluent in chatting in English. My vocabulary has also increased a lot thanks to regular practice with Cici AI"* (S2)

Based on the interview results above, it confirms that students believe that the Cici AI voice communication feature can help students improve their English speaking ability. Students feel that their English speaking skills have improved significantly, both in terms of pronunciation and fluency in speaking English. However, some of students who chose neutral and disagreed because they had not used the Cici AI voice communication feature for too long, so they could not use the Cici AI voice communication feature properly, as expressed by Student 4, who said:

*"I haven't used Cici AI's voice communication feature for long, so I haven't felt its benefits yet. It's also a bit difficult to use because I'm not used to it. Maybe if I practice more often, the results will be better"* (S4)

### 5. Access Difficulties

Technical issues faced by students while using the application, such as network issues that can hinder the learning experience and Cici AI's difficulty in understanding the differences in student accents. As shown in the table below:

**Table 5.** Students' Perception of Access Difficulties with Cici AI's Voice Communication Feature

| No | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD | Total |
|----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 11 | I faced technical difficulties and internet connection issues while using Cici AI's voice communication feature | 12% | 76% | 12% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| 12 | Sometimes Cici AI has difficulty recognizing my accent or pronunciation accurately | 0% | 44% | 32% | 24% | 0% | 100% |

Based on table 5 above, it can be seen that the combination of strongly agree and agree results obtained from the questionnaire, it was found that 88% of students agreed that students faced technical difficulties such as internet connection problems when using the Cici AI voice communication feature and 44% of students agreed that sometimes Cici AI had difficulty recognizing students' accents or pronunciation accurately. The data shows that most students experience technical difficulties such as internet connection problems when using the Cici AI voice communication feature and Cici AI has difficulty recognizing students' accents or pronunciation accurately. These findings are in line with student responses, such as Student 5 stating:

*"There are some problems though. The most common one is the network problem. Sometimes my voice is not detected because the internet is slow. I usually have to find a place with a better signal before I start practicing"* (S5)

Based on the interview results above, students faced several technical obstacles such as internet network problems, so that students' voices were not detected properly. Although, there are several technical obstacles when using the Cici AI voice communication feature, these obstacles are not significant obstacles. Handling this problem such as finding a place with a fairly smooth internet network, so problems like this can still be minimized, so that they do not interfere too much with students' experience in using the Cici AI voice communication feature to improve their English speaking abilities.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that students have a positive perception of the communication voice feature in the Cici AI application in improving students' English speaking ability. According to the findings, the first is usefulness, students feel that the Cici AI communication voice feature is very useful for practicing speaking English and the feedback provided is also very helpful in improving English speaking ability and the second finding is easiness, students feel that the Cici AI communication voice feature is easy to use and understand the feedback provided by Cici AI. Students can also use the Cici AI voice communication feature where and when they want. This is in line with the research of Pratiwi et al. (2024) who found that the voice communication feature in AI provides extensive and varied opportunities to practice speaking English, AI technology offers several advantages, including accessibility, adaptability, and the potential for personalized feedback, which can significantly improve the language learning experience. Learners can benefit from increased opportunities to practice speaking in a non-pressurized environment, receive immediate feedback on pronunciation and fluency, and engage with the language in a more dynamic way.

The third finding is student confidence, students felt that they were more confident to speak English after using the Cici AI communication voice feature. This is in line with Muthmainnah's (2024) research, which found students who engaged in speaking activities for fear of being judged were now more confident and willing to participate after practicing with Cici AI's communication voice feature, suggesting a contribution to the potential of AI-driven tools such as Cici AI to overcome speaking anxiety and improve speaking proficiency. These findings are also supported by Simanungkalit & Likuayang's research (2023) which revealed a negative relationship between speaking anxiety and self-esteem. Their study showed that students with high levels of anxiety tend to have low self-esteem, which hinders their participation in speaking practice. In this context, Cici AI has the potential to break the cycle by providing a pressure-free practice environment, thereby reducing anxiety and indirectly improving students' self-esteem. This is reinforced by the statements of participants (S4 and S5) who felt more confident because they were not afraid of being judged when practicing with Cici AI.

The fourth is speaking ability improvement, students feel that the Cici AI communication voice feature is very helpful for them in improving their English speaking abilities significantly and effectively improving pronunciation and fluency in speaking English. This is in line with Muthmainnah's research (2024), revealing that Cici AI significantly improves students' English speaking skills while reducing nervousness when speaking in public, this result is also supported by Syahputra (2024), which is beneficial that Cici AI significantly helps students improve fluency, pronunciation, expand vocabulary and increase confidence in speaking English. The findings on improving speaking abilities through consistent practice are also in line with Nurarifah et al's research. (2025), who stated that habituation and a supportive environment are key to success. However, their study relied on passive media such as YouTube, whereas Cici AI offers a more dynamic two-way interaction through the voice communication feature. This difference shows the advantage of AI in providing realistic conversation simulation and instant feedback, which cannot be achieved by one-way media. Thus, the integration of Cici AI can complement the digital media-based strategy recommended by Nurarifah et al. (2025), particularly to address pronunciation and fluency issues.

The fifth is access difficulties, some students experience technical constraints, especially unstable internet networks so that student voices are not detected properly. This is in line with Üstünbaş's (2024) research which revealed that students experienced several problems when using it such as crashing in conversations caused by misunderstandings due to unstable internet connections. Overcoming these obstacles through the process of providing offline accessibility to improve user experience.

The researcher observed that students generally had positive perceptions towards the Cici AI voice communication feature in improving their English speaking ability, based on the responses from the questionnaire and interview results. The Cici AI application was widely

accepted by most students as an effective tool to improve students' English speaking ability. The voice communication feature in the Cici AI application offers an interesting learning opportunity that allows students to practice their English speaking ability independently. Thus, students perceive that the benefits of the Cici AI voice communication feature have a beneficial effect on improving students' English speaking ability.

Despite the positive perceptions of Cici AI, this study has several limitations. First, the small sample size (25 participants) and the homogeneous background of respondents (university students from one institution) may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires and interviews could introduce bias, as participants might overstate their confidence or improvement. Third, the short duration of the study did not allow for observing long-term impacts of Cici AI on speaking proficiency. Future research should address these gaps by involving diverse populations, combining quantitative assessments (e.g., pre-post speaking tests), and extending the study period.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the use of Cici AI's voice communication feature as a virtual assistant in learning to speak English provides significant benefits for students to improve their English speaking ability. Cici AI's voice communication feature effectively improves students' English speaking abilities through interactive and immersive interactions. The sophisticated voice feature with good voice detection capabilities provides a practical and effective learning experience. The results of the questionnaire and interviews with several students showed that Cici AI's voice communication feature not only improves English speaking ability but also increases self-confidence in speaking English. Students also appreciate the accessibility provided by Cici AI, allowing students to learn anytime and anywhere. Recommendations provided by students, such as improving good voice accent recognition technology, can be very valuable as input for the development of the next Cici AI voice communication feature. The integration of AI technology in language learning can offer a more dynamic and effective approach, adapting to the needs of students in this digital era.

For future research, it would be valuable to explore the long-term impact of Cici AI in improving English speaking skills. Future research could incorporate more human-like interaction qualities such as emotional sensitivity and empathy into Cici AI to enhance engagement with students. Researchers should also explore how Cici AI functions in listening and writing, as well as other aspects of language acquisition, for broader application among students. Research on teachers' perspectives and how strategies to integrate Cici AI as a tool in improving English speaking ability could also offer valuable insights.

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