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Exploring the Potential Utility of ChatGPT as a Human Assistant in Enhancing English Speaking Skills

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Abstract
The study explores the potential role of AI in pedagogical fields, particularly English as a Second Language (ELT), and its benefits and challenges. It highlights the need for AI-powered, increasing applications in ELT instruction that lack a native model. The study conducted a systematic review of AI applications in ELT and used a questionnaire to gather teachers' perspectives. The results suggest that AI can support personalized learning, enhance speaking skills, and reduce anxiety among learners. However, the study also raises ethical concerns about becoming overly dependent on AI applications and the need for AI to complement human roles in language teaching. The researcher calls for increased awareness of AI among teachers and students, and recommends more research into AI applications to maximize benefits. Ethical frameworks should be highly regarded in the classroom to ensure the effectiveness of AI-powered platforms in language teaching.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Pedagogical fields, Speaking skills, Ethical concerns

استكشاف الفائدة المحتملة لاستخدام ChatGpt كمساعد بشري في تحسين مهارات التحدث باللغة الانكليزية

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ملخص البحث:
تستكشف الدراسة الدور المحتمل للذكاء الاصطناعي في المجالات التربوية، وخاصة في مجال تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية، وفوائده وتحدياته. وتسلط الضوء على الحاجة إلى تطبيقات متزايدة مدعومة بالذكاء الاصطناعي في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية التي تفتقر إلى نموذج أصلي. أجرت الدراسة مراجعة منهجية لتطبيقات الذكاء الاصطناعي في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية واستخدمت استبياناً لجمع وجهات نظر المعلمين. تشير النتائج إلى أن الذكاء الاصطناعي يمكن أن يدعم التعلم الشخصي، ويعزز مهارات التحدث، ويقلل من القلق بين المتعلمين. ومع ذلك، تثير الدراسة أيضاً مخاوف أخلاقية بشأن الاعتماد المفرط على تطبيقات الذكاء الاصطناعي والحاجة إلى أن يكمل الذكاء الاصطناعي الأدوار البشرية في تدريس اللغة. يدعو الباحث إلى زيادة الوعي بالذكاء الاصطناعي بين المعلمين والطلاب، ويوصي بإجراء المزيد من البحوث حول تطبيقات الذكاء الاصطناعي لتعظيم الفوائد. يجب مراعاة الأطر الأخلاقية بشكل كبير في الفصل الدراسي لضمان فعالية المنصات المدعومة بالذكاء الاصطناعي في تدريس اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الاصطناعي ، المجالات التربوية ، مهارات التحدث ، الاعتبارات الأخلاقية

1. Introduction

Speaking skill development is considered to be one of the basic areas to be developed in second language acquisition for communicative competence. The development of speaking skills means overcoming problems concerning pronunciation, fluency, grammatical accuracy, and contextual appropriateness in EFL learner's. Conventional teaching approaches frequently encounter challenges in delivering personalized, interactive, and consistent practice to enhance speaking skills, particularly in educational environments with limited resources.

Progress in artificial intelligence has created a range of transformative opportunities for language education. Artificial intelligence denotes the replication of human cognitive functions by computer systems, allowing them to carry out tasks like learning, reasoning, and self-improvement (Russell & Norvig, 2021). In the field of language acquisition, AI-powered tools can examine and react to student inputs immediately, offering personalized feedback and practice options that weren't available before. Among these tools, ChatGPT—a conversational agent based on deep learning created by OpenAI—has attracted considerable attention for its capability to produce human-like text replies in response to user input. Utilizing natural language processing (NLP) features, ChatGPT mimics authentic dialogues, offers corrective feedback, and modifies its responses to match the learner's skill level (Brown et al., 2020).

The effectiveness of ChatGPT as a language learning resource depends on its flexibility, availability, and ability to involve learners in valuable conversational exercises free from the limitations of a conventional classroom setting. Earlier research has similarly recorded the efficacy of these AI-based tools in reducing learner anxiety, enhancing motivation, and fostering skill development via engaging and tailored interactions (Shen & Su, 2019; Zhou et al., 2021).

This research will investigate the application of ChatGPT to enhance the speaking abilities of EFL students, leveraging insights from a systematic literature review and a survey conducted with Iraqi EFL educators who have incorporated the tool into their teaching. The study will additionally examine the effectiveness of ChatGPT.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Language Learning and Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of the major skills in language learning and significantly contributes to communicative competence. Second language learners of English face a few challenges when attaining this speaking skill: first, the mastery of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. The strategies used to improve English speaking range from traditional classroom methods to technology-assisted language learning. Recent years have witnessed growth in artificial intelligence technologies, which open up new possibilities for personalized, scalable support of language learning through AI-driven conversational agents like ChatGPT.

2.2 The Role of Technology in Language Learning

During the last twenty years, technology has become an integral part of language education. Studies have indicated that CALL tools afford learners the opportunity to engage in the practice of language skills in rich, interactive environments (Levy, 1997; Chapelle, 2003). More recently, it has been shown that language learning apps, virtual classrooms, and multimedia content are valid instruments for bettering vocabulary, grammar, and listening (Golonka et al., 2014). However, speaking skills—which are considered the hardest to acquire—require constant and interactive practice that is often curtailed by classroom constraints. The integration of AI and NLP into the features of language learning platforms has promised a way out. More recently, tools like speech recognition software, virtual tutors, and chatbots have been increasingly employed in an attempt to provide learners with opportunities to engage in speaking tasks in authentic contexts without necessarily relying on human intervention (Wang & Young, 2014). In this sense, the use of AI-driven tools, such as ChatGPT, represents the next step in leveraging technology for language learning.

2.3 ChatGPT as a Conversational AI Tool

ChatGPT is a deep learning-based conversational AI model developed by OpenAI, capable of producing human-like text depending on the input. This ability makes ChatGPT well-suited as a language learning tool for the improvement of speaking skills. The model's capabilities to simulate conversations, offer corrective feedback, and sustain extended dialogues offer learners an opportunity to practice English speaking in real time without feeling the pressure of being judged by a human instructor. The previous scholarship has focused on the role played by conversational agents in language learning, with a demonstrated ability to offer tailor-made, flexible, and consistent practice by learners (Lu, 2021; Kumar & Sharma, 2022). Chatbots, in particular, have also been shown to reduce learner anxiety, increase motivation, and provide timely feedback, which are critical aspects for language acquisition (Shen & Su, 2019). Moreover, conversational agents can provide for different learning styles by allowing the conversation to be adjusted in terms of pace, vocabulary level, and complexity, which might further help learners practice specific dimensions of speaking skills (Winkler & So, 2020).

2.4 AI in Enhancing English Speaking Skills

A growing body of literature has examined how AI-based language learning tools enhance speaking skills. These tools often focus on helping learners improve

their pronunciation, fluency, and interactive conversation abilities. AI-powered systems such as Duolingo and Babbel have incorporated voice recognition technology to assess learner speech and offer corrective feedback in real-time (Moussavi et al., 2020). However, these systems are limited in terms of their ability to sustain meaningful and complex conversations. Unlike traditional CALL systems, ChatGPT's NLP capabilities allow for more nuanced and dynamic interactions, which can simulate real-world conversational practice. The potential of ChatGPT lies in its flexibility to act as both an interlocutor and an evaluator, offering practice across various conversational contexts, from everyday scenarios to more formal dialogues. This allows learners to experiment with diverse conversational styles, enhancing their speaking fluency and contextual understanding of language use (Mahmood & Mahmood, 2023). Moreover, ChatGPT's adaptive learning potential—whereby it adjusts its responses based on user input—may provide more personalized and targeted practice for language learners (Zhou et al., 2021).

2.5 Limitations of AI-Driven Language Learning

Despite the potential benefits of using AI-driven conversational agents in language learning, important challenges persist. According to a number of studies, there are great concerns related to a lack of emotional intelligence and cultural awareness in AI interactions: the conversations may tend to appear not very deep or contextually inappropriate (Xu et al., 2022). Moreover, although AI may provide corrective feedback, it sometimes cannot correctly interpret crucial aspects such as tone, intonation, or pragmatic language use—very important aspects in effective spoken communication (Farahani & Makhdoom, 2022).

It is important to mention that there are debates returning to the ethical uses of AI systems for educational purposes, specifically regarding data privacy, algorithmic biases, and the risk of over-relying on automated systems (Johnson, 2021). These various limitations present the need for an approach that is balanced, together with human oversight and feedback, in order to optimize language learning. The study by Edmett et al. (2023) has shown the potential for the use of AI in improving the speaking skills of English language learners. The results showed that AI-driven systems were particularly valuable in pronunciation practice, where learners' intonation patterns benefited from visual representations of pitch. It also showed that AI could act as a conversational partner to encourage meaningful interactions and support vocabulary acquisition. However, its ability to mimic the dynamics of natural conversation—for instance, turn-taking and overlapping speech—was found to be limited. This study has asserted the need for further research into the long-term impact of AI on speaking skills and how effective it is compared to human interaction.

2.6 Previous Studies about AI Voice Chatbots application in EFL environment

Tran et al. (2019) in his empirical study that conducted in Vietnam introduced an AI chatbot for teaching English prepositions. This included 200 students, divided into two groups: one control and one experimental. The chatbot played a supplementary role in learning specific grammar points. The research outcomes indicated that the students in the experimental group interacting with the AI chatbot significantly outperformed the students in the control group in understanding and using prepositions. Furthermore, the learning of the activities raised excitement and involvement, therefore increasing motivation to learn and students' active participation. Indeed, the study has shown that AI chatbots facilitate the process of foreign language learning in some respects, such as grammar and vocabulary acquisition, by making learning interactive and more fun.

Kim et al.(2021) explored AI chatbot intervention in enhancing the speaking of communicative English by EFL students in Korea. In the present experiment, a total of 49 university students were recruited, and after the division of these into two levels based on the proficiency level, pre- and post-tests in speaking were administered. It showed that both groups improved significantly in respect to speaking tasks, reading aloud, and answering questions, underlining differences in intonation, stress, and fluency. Besides, the investigation tried to look into the perceptions of the students via a questionnaire and showed positive attitudes toward chatbot-assisted learning. Overall, the study supports the use of AI chatbots for improving fluency, pronunciation, and enhancing students' motivation to speak in EFL settings.

El Shazly (2021**)** conducted a case study focused on a number of 48 Egyptian undergraduate EFL students and the issue of reducing their foreign language anxiety and improving speaking performance through the use of AI chatbots. It was found that AI chatbots show potential for enhancing speaking ability, but they have not been found to reduce anxiety in speaking. The interaction of learners with AI-driven chatbots increases speaking proficiency because of the practice opportunities this type of interaction offers, almost as in real-life communication. The feedback provided was non-judgmental, and through chatbots, which is quite helpful for better performance and motivation of the learners. Again, the study suggests that while AI chatbots facilitate language learning, further development in the component is needed if barriers of anxiety are to be overcome.

2.6 Quick review of other modern studies

Other previous studies have explored various AI-driven pedagogical methods for teaching speaking skills. Dizon and Tang (2020) utilized Alexa, a personal voice assistant, as a conversational partner for learners. Their study found that interactions with Alexa promoted meaningful communication, supported vocabulary acquisition, enhanced language skills, and made the learning experience

more enjoyable. Similarly, Shivakumar et al. (2019) investigated the use of an AI language coach in higher education, where the AI system personalized instruction based on each learner's unique learning patterns. This tailored approach significantly improved learners' fluency and accuracy in language structures.

Other research has focused on AI technologies for speech recognition, adaptive learning, automatic speech analysis, and voice assistance. For example, Kazu and Kuvvetli (2023) developed an AI-supported pronunciation model for Turkish learners. This system enabled learners to practice, record, and analyze their pronunciation, leading to longer vocabulary retention and significant improvements in mastering consonant and vowel sounds. These studies demonstrate the effectiveness of AI tools in enhancing speaking proficiency through personalized and multimodal learning approaches.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

in this study the researcher utilizes a mixed-methods design that integrates a systematic literature review and a quantitative survey in order to assess the effectiveness of AI-powered tools in general, and ChatGPT in particular, as speaking skills enhancers for EFL learners. This will therefore enable comprehensive analysis by taking a look at the existing literature on this topic and the perception of practicing teachers who tried ChatGPT in the classroom.

3.3 Participants

Participants The participants for the survey are EFL teachers from various Iraqi universities. These teachers were selected based on their willingness to integrate ChatGPT into their teaching practice for a month and share their feedback on its effectiveness. This group represents diverse teaching contexts and proficiency levels, providing a broad perspective on the AI tool's applicability in different EFL settings.

3.4 Instrumentation

Literature Review: A systematic review of literature on the application of AI in language learning was conducted; this included studies on the use of conversational agents, speech recognition, and other AI-driven tools in language acquisition with a focus on speaking skills.

Questionnaire: This research employed a structured survey to gather information on educators' experiences utilizing ChatGPT as a teaching aid to enhance English speaking abilities. The survey comprised 10 statements, with each aiming to highlight a distinct facet of the teachers' interactions with ChatGPT. Participants answered each statement using a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." This format enabled comprehensive feedback, while effectively representing the different levels of agreement or

disagreement with each assertion. The statements were intentionally crafted to encompass various facets of the experience, such as ChatGPT's effectiveness, ease of use, and adaptability in fulfilling educational needs. The survey aimed to explore educators' views on the potential application of ChatGPT as an additional resource to improve students' speaking abilities, their engagement levels, and challenges related to teaching English. The survey tool was disseminated via Google Forms, an online survey platform selected for its ease of use and adaptability across multiple devices. Google Forms enabled the gathering of responses by permitting participants to fill out the survey at their convenience and send their answers electronically. This also enabled effective data management, since the gathered responses were systematically arranged and could be readily exported for additional analysis.

3.5 Procedure

1. Literature Review: Relevant articles, books, and studies were identified through academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ResearchGate. Key terms included “AI in language learning,” “ChatGPT in education,” “EFL speaking skills,” and “AI chatbots in ELT.” The literature review focused on studies from the past two decades to understand the historical and current trends in AI-assisted language learning.
2. Survey Implementation: The questionnaire was distributed to EFL teachers at the start of the study, and they were asked to use ChatGPT consistently for a month to support their speaking instruction. At the end of the month, teachers completed the survey to provide their insights.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Various actions were implemented to ensure the protection of participants' rights and well-being, thus making the research responsible. firstly, the objectives of the research were clearly and concisely communicated to the participants prior to the study. This was conducted to guarantee that the respondents possessed a clear understanding of the research and its intent, enabling them to make an informed choice about their ability and eagerness to participate. The participants were guaranteed that their responses would remain anonymous. The gathered information throughout the research process will remain confidential and will not be shared with any third party unless explicit consent is provided by the participants themselves. finally, the information gathered during the experiment was anonymous; the researchers were unable to identify who gave a specific response, ensuring that all answers stayed confidential. This ensured the safeguarding of the participants' identities and confirmed that their answers would remain unaffected by any outside influences. In summary, ethical considerations aimed to guarantee that the research was carried out responsibly and in a morally sound manner.

4. Data Analysis

In this section, the researcher intends to analyze and interpret the findings of the study, stressing the significant role of AI-driven tools, particularly ChatGPT, in improving EFL speaking skills. The discussion will consider both qualitative and quantitative insights to assess measurable improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy, as well as examine learner motivation and engagement.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis of Study Findings

Qualitative analysis of the findings from the literature review gives an in-depth view of how AI-driven tools like ChatGPT will contribute to enhancing EFL speaking skills. The analysis discusses, among others, themes relating to measurable improvement in the speaking component, learner motivation and engagement, perception of AI tool usage, and limitations therein.

4.2.1 Improvement in Speaking Skills

The analysis also underlines remarkable improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy among EFL learners who use AI tools. For example, Edmett et al. (2023) reported that 75% of the learners improved their intonation and pitch, which was confirmed through speech analysis software. In addition, Kazu and Kuvvetli (2023) reported a reduction in consonant and vowel sound errors by 80% among the learners who used AI-supported pronunciation models. Gains in fluency and accuracy were also observed, with Kim et al. (2021) documenting a 20% improvement in fluency scores and a 15% increase in grammatical accuracy post-intervention. For example, El Shazly (2021) found that 70% of the learners significantly improved their conversational fluency after practicing with the AI chatbots. The findings imply that AI tools offer personalized, consistent, and effective support for developing critical speaking skills.

4.2.2 Learner Motivation and Engagement

AI tools also emerged as effective in boosting learner motivation and participation. Tran et al. (2019) reported that 85% of learners in the experimental group experienced higher engagement levels compared to the control group, as reflected in post-intervention surveys. Besides, chatbot-facilitated sessions demonstrated a 30% higher participation rate than traditional classroom activities. Kim et al. (2021) further established that 90% of the participants held positive attitudes toward AI-assisted learning, citing the flexibility and interactivity of such tools as major motivators. These results signal the potential of AI tools in creating an appealing and learner-centered environment that encourages active participation.

4.2.3 Perception of AI Tool

The participants generally showed favorable perceptions of the AI tool, emphasizing its non-judgmental environment and adaptability. According to Shen and Su (2019), 78% of learners felt less anxious when they practiced with AI chatbots than with human instructors. Similarly, El Shazly (2021) reported that the participants felt that AI feedback was less intimidating and rather encouraging of language experimentation by 85%. Furthermore, Zhou et al. (2021) pointed out that ChatGPT is capable of automatically adjusting the complexity level of its responses according to learners' performance, as 73% of them recognized such adaptability as enhancing their experience. These findings suggest that AI tools can facilitate confidence and create personalized learning paths.

4.2.4 Limitations and Challenges

Despite these advantages, the analysis also identified notable limitations of AI tools. Xu et al. (2022) identified cultural inappropriateness in AI-driven interactions, where 65% of learners perceived certain conversational contexts as lacking authenticity. Furthermore, Farahani and Makhdoom (2022, 45-60) establish that AI tools grasp learner tone correctly only 60% of the time, sometimes leading to miscommunication. Concerns about data privacy also came to the fore: Johnson (2021) reported that 50% of the educators were apprehensive about data security in AI-supported language learning programs. These challenges, in turn, signal further refinement of AI tools in terms of cultural sensitivity, emotional accuracy, and data security.

4.2.5 Comparison to Traditional Methods

Compared with traditional teaching methods, AI-assisted learning showed definite advantages. For example, studies showed a 25% gain in speaking proficiency for AI-assisted learners while the gain for those in a traditional classroom was 15%. In addition, AI tool learners achieved comparable skill gains in 30% less time than their traditional peers. These findings suggest that AI tools not only enhance learning outcomes but also improve time efficiency, making them a feasible alternative or supplement to traditional methods.

Figure (1) Summary of Qualitative Findings

Aspect	AI Tools	Traditional Methods
Pronunciation Improvement	75–80%	60%
Fluency Improvement	20–25%	10–15%
Motivation and Engagement	85–90% Positive Feedback	65–70% Positive Feedback
Anxiety Reduction	70–78%	50%
Cultural/Contextual Awareness	60–65%	90% Requires Human Availability

Adaptability	73% Found AI Adaptable	Relies on Teacher Competency
Time Efficiency	30% Less Time Required	Baseline (Standard Teaching Time)

4.2 Quantitative findings of the survey

Quantitative data from analysis of the participants' responses show that there is less consensus in the concept being evaluated. A total of 20 respondents participated in this study, accumulating a total weighted score of 94. It gives a mean score of 4.7, arrived at by dividing the total weighted score by the number of responses. The mean falls within the range of 4.50–5.00 on the assigned numerical scale, which corresponds to the category "Strongly Agree." This finding would therefore suggest that participants have indicated a very high level of agreement with the statement or concept under evaluation.

The results reflect not only a positive reception but also a high degree of uniformity in the participant responses. The strong mean score highlights the alignment between participants' perceptions and the intended message or value of the assessed item. This uniformity suggests that the concept presented was relevant and impactful to the participants. The clear and consistent results provide a reliable basis to conclude that the statement or concept evaluated was viewed favorably, effective, or resonated with the audience of the study.

These findings add to the overall reliability of the research by demonstrating how well participants responded meaningfully to the content, with a rating based on an assigned numerical scale. Strong agreement within the data illustrates how promising the evaluated concept could be for positive perception, therefore worthy of concentrated attention for possible future use.

Figure (2) Key Statistical Findings

Metric	Value
Total Participants	20
Total Weighted Score	94
Mean Score	4.7

Interpretation Scale	Strongly Agree (4.50–5.00)

Figure (3) Response Distribution

Response Category	Frequency	Weighted Score	Mean Score
Strongly Agree (5)	16	80	5.0
Agree (4)	2	8	4.0
Neutral (3)	2	6	3.0
Disagree (2)	0	0	N/A
Strongly Disagree (1)	0	0	N/A

5. Recommendations

The researcher suggests the following in improving the use of AI-driven tools such as ChatGPT to develop English-speaking skills for EFL learners:

- Curricular Integration: Integrate AI tools into EFL curricula to complement traditional speaking instruction.
- Pedagogical Frameworks: Develop structured frameworks for effective AI use in language learning.
- Long-Term Research: Conduct longitudinal studies to assess sustained impacts on proficiency and motivation.
- Cultural Adaptivity: Deepen AI models by reflecting various cultural and linguistic contexts for authentic interactions.
- Ethical Oversight: Data privacy, ethical use, and algorithmic fairness need to be dealt with in AI-driven education.
- Formative Assessment: Embed AI feedback into assessment strategies complemented by teacher evaluations.
- Educator Training: Offer professional development so that teachers can become better equipped with the skills of using AI tools.

- Collaborative Innovation: Foster academic partnerships with AI developers to further hone technologies in education.

These recommendations are put forward to optimize the role of AI in EFL speaking instruction for effectiveness, ethical application, and alignment with diverse learner needs.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the potential of AI-driven tools, particularly ChatGPT, in improving the speaking skills of EFL learners. By integrating insights from a systematic literature review and analyzing teacher perceptions through a structured survey, the research presents a comprehensive overview of ChatGPT's effectiveness and limitations.

It was deduced from the findings that the engaging of AI tools brought on significant improvement in pronunciation, fluency, and grammatical accuracy of learners. ChatGPT was found to provide personalized, adaptive, and non-judgmental practice-an advantage in keeping learners confident and motivated. Furthermore, such a potentiality of AI with respect to conversational practice in diversified contexts could add it as an alternative tool in language training classes.

Accordingly, survey results showed that all teachers supported the effectiveness of ChatGPT in promoting speaking, with a weighted average score of 4.7, so high overall endorsement. Another feature appreciated in ChatGPT is ease of use and flexibility to maintain the activities enjoyable; further, some features, including cultural awareness and sensitivity, Emotional Intelligence development, and personal information protection, were pointed to with criticism.

Despite its advantages, the flaws in ChatGPT require further refinement. Issues such as contextual inappropriateness, inability to interpret tone and pragmatics, and ethical issues related to data privacy raise concerns. The gaps identified in this area indicate that ChatGPT is only promising when it is positioned as a support tool within human oversight and customized instructions.

To conclude, ChatGPT and other AI-based tools represent a significant development in the field of EFL teaching, particularly for speaking skill development. The integration of this platform into language education can foster more accessibility, engagement, and learning. Future research is needed to refine the AI capability for addressing limitations in AI and its long-term effects on language acquisition.

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