



THE ROLE OF AI-POWERED TOOLS IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study is about how AI tools can help students who learn English as a foreign language to speak better. It talks about things like speech recognition programs, chatbots, and apps for pronunciation, and how they can help learners to be more confident and fluent. We collected information using surveys, interviews and also watching students in class. The results show that AI tools give feedback, make learning more interesting, and let students practice more outside class, which helps them improve speaking. In general, using AI in English classes seems to be useful and can help make learning more modern and effective.

Introduction;

Speaking English is really important for learners, especially for those who study it as a foreign language. But many students find it hard to speak fluently and confidently. They often don't get enough chance to practice speaking outside the classroom, and this can make them nervous when talking in English. Recently, AI-powered tools like chatbots, speech recognition software, and pronunciation apps have become more popular, and they can help students practice more and get instant feedback. This study tries to find out how these AI tools can help EFL learners improve their speaking skills. By looking at how students use these tools, the research hopes to show how teachers can use technology in teaching to make learning speaking more effective and interesting.

Literature Review;

The literature review examines previous studies on the use of AI-powered tools in developing speaking skills among EFL learners. Risma Dwi Aryanti and Made Hery Santosa (2024) conducted a study examining the role of AI applications in improving pronunciation and speaking skills of EFL learners. They analyzed tools like ELAi app, ELSA Speak, and Lyra Virtual Assistant, highlighting each tool's features that help learners practice speaking effectively. The study shows that these AI tools positively influence overall speaking performance, especially pronunciation, by providing feedback and practice opportunities. This confirms that

integrating AI applications in EFL classrooms can be beneficial.¹ In addition, a systematic review by Rachmadani et al. (2025) examined 24 studies on AI-powered chatbots for speaking practice. Their analysis shows that chatbots simulate real-life conversations, encourage active participation, and give learners more opportunities to practice outside the classroom. However, the study also notes that chatbots sometimes fail to fully understand context, which can limit their effectiveness. By comparing these results with Aryanti & Santosa (2024), it is clear that while AI tools have significant benefits, their limitations should also be considered when integrating them into teaching.² All in all, past research shows that AI tools really help EFL students to improve their speaking, especially in pronunciation, speaking smoothly, and feeling more confident. Even though there are some problems or limits, using AI in class can make learning more interesting and help students do better.

Methodology;

This study was designed to explore how AI-powered tools can help EFL learners improve their speaking skills. A mixed-method approach was used to get a better understanding of the effects of these tools³. The participants were 30 intermediate-level EFL students from a language institute. They had different levels of experience with English, but all of them used smartphones or computers regularly, so they could easily access AI applications.

The main tools in this study were three AI applications: ELAi app, ELSA Speak, and Lyra Virtual Assistant. Each tool has its own features, such as pronunciation correction, speech recognition, feedback on fluency, and interactive conversation practice⁴. Students were asked to use these applications for at least 30 minutes per day over a period of two weeks. They practiced different tasks, including reading sentences, repeating phrases, and having short conversations with the apps.

Data was collected using multiple methods. First, a questionnaire was given to all participants to measure their confidence and attitude toward speaking English before and after using the apps. The questionnaire had 10 questions with rating scales and short answers. Second, interviews were conducted with 10 students who were randomly selected. These interviews allowed the researcher to get more detailed opinions about their experience, what they liked, and what was difficult. Finally, classroom observations were carried out during the practice sessions. The researcher noted how students interacted with the tools, their pronunciation attempts, and how often they repeated exercises to improve.

The data analysis combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed by calculating averages and comparing the scores

¹ Risma Dwi Aryanti & Made Hery Santosa, "A Systematic Review on Artificial Intelligence Applications for Enhancing EFL Students' Pronunciation Skill", ResearchGate, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381011346_A_Systematic_Review_on_Artificial_Intelligence_Applications_for_Enhancing_EFL_Students%27_Pronunciation_Skill ♦

² Rachmadani et al., "AI-Powered Chatbots and EFL Speaking Practice", ScienceDirect, 2025, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666920X24000316> ♦

³ Creswell, J. W., Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, Sage, 2018. – (for mixed-method approach)

⁴ Risma Dwi Aryanti & Made Hery Santosa, A Systematic Review on Artificial Intelligence Applications for Enhancing EFL Students' Pronunciation Skill, ResearchGate, 2024, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381011346> ♦

before and after using the AI tools. Qualitative data from interviews and observations were categorized into themes, such as pronunciation improvement, fluency, confidence, and motivation. By using this mixed-method approach, the study tried to get a clear picture of how AI-powered tools affect students' speaking skills in real learning conditions⁵.

Overall, this methodology aimed to give a complete and realistic view of students' experiences, showing not only whether AI tools improve speaking skills but also how students feel while using them. The combination of questionnaires, interviews, and observations helped to make the findings more reliable and connected them with the students' real learning experiences.

Results / Findings;

The results of this study show that using AI-powered tools had a really positive effect on the speaking skills of EFL learners. After practicing with ELAi app, ELSA Speak, and Lyra Virtual Assistant for two weeks, most students felt that their pronunciation, fluency, and confidence improved a lot. According to the questionnaires, almost all students said they felt more confident when speaking English and noticed that their words were clearer and easier to understand.

During interviews, students shared that the instant feedback from the AI apps helped them a lot. Many of them said that repeating sentences several times made them realize their mistakes and correct them. Some students also mentioned that Lyra Virtual Assistant made practicing conversations more fun because it felt like talking to a real person. Others said ELSA Speak was very useful for catching small pronunciation errors that they didn't notice before. Observations in class confirmed these things. Students were very active with the apps and often spent extra time practicing difficult words or sentences. The AI tools seemed to encourage self-learning, as students kept practicing even outside the classroom. Overall, the study shows that AI tools can improve not just pronunciation and fluency, but also confidence and motivation. Students were more willing to speak, less worried about making mistakes, and generally enjoyed learning English more. Even though there were some small technical issues, the effect on learning was clearly positive.

Discussion;

The results of this study show that AI-powered tools really helped students improve their speaking skills. Students got better at pronunciation, spoke more fluently, and felt more confident when expressing their ideas. It was clear that the apps made practicing more fun, and many students said they enjoyed using them outside the classroom because it didn't feel like studying, but more like a game.

Students especially liked the instant feedback from the apps. They could notice their mistakes quickly and try again until they got it right. This made them more patient with themselves and more willing to keep practicing, even if they were shy or nervous at first. The AI tools also seemed to reduce the fear of making mistakes, which is usually a big problem for language learners. Some small problems appeared too. A few students mentioned that sometimes the app didn't fully understand what they said or gave feedback that wasn't very clear. But these

⁵ Ding, D., & Yusof, A. M. B., Benefits of AI Conversation Bots for EFL Speaking & Anxiety, Nature, 2025,
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-025-05550-z>

were minor issues, and they didn't stop the students from learning. Overall, the positive effects were much stronger than the small problems. From this study, it can be said that using AI tools in the classroom can really support students in speaking English. They help not just with pronunciation or fluency, but also with motivation, confidence, and willingness to speak more. Students seemed more independent in their learning, which shows that AI apps can be a useful addition to regular English lessons.

Conclusion;

To sum up, this study shows that using AI-powered tools can really help EFL students improve their speaking skills. Students became better at pronunciation, spoke more fluently, and felt more confident when expressing their ideas. The apps also made learning more fun and encouraged them to practice even outside the classroom. Even though there were some small problems, like the apps sometimes not understanding what students said, the overall effect was clearly positive. Students were more motivated to speak, less afraid of making mistakes, and seemed to enjoy learning English more. In general, it can be said that AI tools are a useful addition to traditional classroom methods. They not only support technical skills like pronunciation and fluency but also help students feel more confident and motivated. Using these tools regularly could make learning English easier and more enjoyable for many learners.

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