



A Human–AI Interaction Model for Improving Speaking Skills in EFL Learning using ChatGPT

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of ChatGPT in enhancing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills. The primary aim is to explore whether integrating ChatGPT into language learning can effectively improve speaking proficiency. Using a controlled experimental design, participants were divided into treatment and control groups, with the treatment group utilizing ChatGPT for speaking practice. The results demonstrated significant improvements in speaking skills for the treatment group, with statistical analysis confirming the rejection of the null hypothesis. This study highlights the technical capabilities of ChatGPT in offering personalized, adaptive learning experiences, showcasing its potential in language education. The findings emphasize the importance of AI tools like ChatGPT in enhancing language learning outcomes. Furthermore, it calls for educator training to harness AI effectively in pedagogical strategies. Overall, the study affirms that ChatGPT is a powerful, accessible tool for improving speaking skills, offering scalable solutions in EFL education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Recent technological advancements have significantly transformed educational environments, particularly in language learning [1]. The EFL classroom presents specific pedagogical hurdles, particularly for advancing learners' speaking competence, where achieving fluency and confidence remains a persistent challenge. Students often find it difficult to practice speaking outside the classroom due to limited opportunities for authentic, meaningful conversation [2]. While traditional methods provide a necessary foundation, they frequently fall short in offering the sustained, interactive practice required for developing spontaneous oral proficiency [3]. This context necessitates innovative approaches to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-world language use [4]. In response, AI-powered tools, especially chatbots and conversational agents, offer innovative solutions to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-life language use. Specifically, ChatGPT, a sophisticated AI language model, leverages technologies such as speech-to-text and text-to-speech integration, natural language processing (NLP) pipelines, and adaptive feedback mechanisms, to facilitate personalized, interactive speaking practice. It offers promising solutions,

for instance, provide low-anxiety environments for repeated speaking practice and immediate feedback, effectively supplementing classroom time [5]. Furthermore, social media and online exchange platforms facilitate authentic communication with peers and native speakers globally, creating vital opportunities for interaction beyond the physical classroom walls [6]. The flexibility and accessibility of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) further extend practice opportunities, allowing learners to engage with speaking tasks anytime and anywhere, effectively blurring the boundaries between formal and informal learning contexts [7].

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as chatbots, offers a promising avenue for enhancing EFL learning experiences by providing accessible, interactive practice environments beyond traditional classroom constraints [8]. Among these tools, ChatGPT, a sophisticated large language model (LLM), has gained significant attention for its potential to act as an on-demand virtual conversation partner capable of simulating diverse communicative scenarios [9]. By facilitating interactive, low-stakes dialogue, ChatGPT enables learners to practice speaking fluency, pronunciation, and pragmatic skills at their convenience, thereby directly addressing critical limitations of traditional classroom settings, such as insufficient individual practice time and high affective barriers [10]. Crucially, AI chatbots like ChatGPT can provide immediate, adaptive feedback on vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and even pronunciation (supported by text-to-speech/speech-to-text integration), accelerating the development of linguistic competence [11]. Furthermore, their capacity for personalized interaction tailors the conversational difficulty and topics to the learner's level and interests, sustaining engagement and motivation [10]. This study specifically investigates the potential of ChatGPT in boosting EFL learners' speaking capabilities, focusing on its effectiveness in promoting English-speaking skills through the context of descriptive presentations, a task requiring coherent organization, specific vocabulary, and sustained monologue production areas where targeted conversational practice can yield significant benefits [12]. Accordingly, the research is guided by the following question: "To what extent does ChatGPT contribute to the improvement of students' speaking abilities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)?"

This investigation is essential for critically evaluating the pedagogical benefits and limitations of AI in language education. Although the potential of AI tools particularly ChatGPT has attracted increasing scholarly attention in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, the majority of prior research remains confined to Systematic Literature Reviews (SLRs). Such reviews primarily summarize trends and theoretical possibilities, offering broad insights but lacking concrete, empirical validation of ChatGPT's actual effectiveness in classroom practice. Consequently, while they highlight ChatGPT's promise, they leave unanswered the question of whether and to what extent ChatGPT measurably improves speaking proficiency. This study directly addresses that gap by moving beyond secondary analysis to a quasi-experimental investigation, providing first-hand, comparative evidence on the impact of ChatGPT use in EFL classrooms. By examining treatment and control groups, it offers robust, empirical data on learners' speaking outcomes, thereby advancing the discourse from theoretical speculation to evidence-based evaluation of AI's pedagogical utility. The research is guided by the following hypotheses:

- H₀: Gain scores show no statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups.
- H₁: The experimental group exhibits significantly greater improvement in speaking proficiency.

ChatGPT presents a unique advantage by allowing learners to engage in human-like dialogue, offering both entertainment and informative content [13]. As a conversational agent, ChatGPT enables learners to practice speaking fluently, enhancing communicative competence and creating an immersive, accessible learning experience [14]. Unlike traditional language learning tools, ChatGPT fosters real-time, low-stakes conversations that simulate real-world interactions [15], thereby encouraging more frequent practice outside of class. Additionally, AI chatbots provide opportunities for autonomous, extramural language engagement, addressing temporal and spatial constraints, and serving as a strategic resource for developing oral proficiency [2], [16].

Although the educational potential of ChatGPT is significant, implementation barriers, such as concerns about cheating, remain [17]. To mitigate these risks, educators must guide students toward the responsible use of AI tools to ensure they enhance, rather than undermine, the learning experience [18]. Moreover, considering the diverse learner profiles, ChatGPT's integration into active learning frameworks holds great promise, enabling more personalized, learner-centered pedagogies that align with contemporary educational models [19], [20]. In conclusion, this study contributes to the underexplored area of AI-assisted language learning by examining ChatGPT's role in improving EFL learners' speaking skills, specifically in the context of descriptive presentations. By addressing the gaps in prior research, this study provides evidence-based insights into the integration of AI tools in language pedagogy, advancing our understanding of their potential to enhance educational practices [21]. As technological advancements continue to redefine the landscape of language education, this research will be essential for developing sustainable and effective teaching strategies [17].

2. METHODOLOGY

The present research employs a quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent groups to evaluate the impact of ChatGPT integration on the enhancement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' proficiency in descriptive oral presentations [22]. The methodological framework is systematically organized into four sections: Study Design, Participants, Materials and Instruments, and Experimental Procedure.

2.1. Study Design

This study adopts a pre-test/post-test quasi-experimental design to examine the effectiveness of ChatGPT integration in fostering English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' oral presentation proficiency. The independent variable (IV) is the use of ChatGPT as a tool for preparing students' descriptive presentations, whereas the dependent variable (DV) is the improvement in students' descriptive speaking proficiency. Participants were divided into two groups: an experimental group, which utilized ChatGPT during preparation, and a control group, which relied on traditional preparation methods.

2.2. Participants

The participants in this study were first-semester students from Nahdlatul Ulama University of Indonesia. A total of 30 students took part in the study, with 15 assigned to the experimental group and 15 to the control group. All participants demonstrated a lower-intermediate level of English proficiency, providing a common baseline for evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention. Participation was entirely voluntary, and all students provided their informed consent to be involved in the study.

2.3. Materials and Instruments

The evaluation of presentations was conducted using a comprehensive rubric-based assessment, where the rubrics consist of several critical dimensions: content clarity and structure, language accuracy and richness, pronunciation and intonation, and delivery confidence and engagement as detailed in Table 1. This standardized approach ensured a consistent and objective evaluation of the participants' speaking competencies. Complementing this assessment, self-reported surveys were administered to gather insights into the participants' preparation processes, capturing their perceived challenges and confidence levels. Notably, the experimental group offered reflections on their unique experiences with ChatGPT, providing valuable perspectives on its impact as a preparatory tool. Additionally, detailed observation notes were recorded by observers who documented participant behaviors during both the preparation phase and the presentations themselves, highlighting notable differences between the experimental and control groups. This multi-faceted evaluation approach provided a robust framework for understanding the effects of ChatGPT on enhancing EFL learners' descriptive speaking abilities.

2.4. Experimental Procedures

The evaluation of students' presentations was carried out using a comprehensive rubric-based assessment encompassing several key dimensions: content clarity and structure, language accuracy and richness, pronunciation and intonation, and delivery confidence and engagement (see Table 1 for details). This standardized rubric ensured a consistent and objective measure of participants' speaking competence. To complement the rubric scores, self-reported surveys were administered to capture insights into the participants' preparation processes, including their perceived challenges and levels of confidence. In addition, members of the experimental group provided reflections on their experiences using ChatGPT, offering valuable perspectives on its effectiveness as a preparatory tool. Furthermore, systematic observation notes were taken during both the preparation stage and the oral presentations, documenting participant behaviors and highlighting differences between the experimental and control groups. Taken together, this multi-method evaluation strategy established a robust framework for analyzing the impact of ChatGPT on enhancing EFL learners' descriptive speaking abilities.

2.5. Data Analysis

Statistical tests, including independent t-tests were employed to compare the performance of the two groups, testing the hypothesis either accepted or rejected. The analysis aimed to determine the significance of ChatGPT's impact on speaking competence.

Table 1. Speaking rubrics for Descriptive Presentation

Criteria	Content & Relevance	Organization & Structure	Language Use & Vocabulary	Pronunciation & Fluency	Engagement & Delivery	Time Management
Excellent (5)	The presentation is highly relevant, with detailed, vivid, and accurate descriptions that engage the audience.	Clear, logical flow with a strong introduction, body, and conclusion. Transitions enhance understanding.	Uses varied and precise vocabulary appropriate for description. Grammar and syntax enhance clarity.	Pronunciation is clear and accurate. Speech flows naturally, with excellent pacing and rhythm.	Highly engaging delivery with confident body language, appropriate eye contact, and vocal variety.	Presentation stays within the allocated time and covers all points thoroughly.
Good (4)	Relevant and mostly descriptive with adequate detail. Minor lapses in vividness or depth.	Well-organized with minor lapses in flow or transitions.	Adequate vocabulary with occasional minor grammar or syntax errors.	Generally clear pronunciation and good fluency with minor lapses.	Engaging with good body language and eye contact. Minor issues with vocal variety.	Slightly over or under time but covers most points adequately.
Satisfactory (3)	Descriptions are present but lack depth or vividness. May occasionally stray from the topic.	Some organization is evident, but transitions may be abrupt or confusing.	Vocabulary is simple and repetitive. Errors occasionally hinder understanding.	Understandable, though occasional pronunciation issues or hesitations may occur.	Some engagement but limited body language or inconsistent eye contact.	Noticeably over or under time, with some points insufficiently covered.
Needs Improvement (2)	Descriptions are vague, incomplete, or frequently off-topic.	Lacks a clear structure; ideas are presented randomly or without transitions.	Limited vocabulary with frequent grammar issues that impede understanding.	Frequent pronunciation issues and hesitations disrupt fluency.	Minimal engagement; weak body language or lack of vocal variety.	Poor time management; significant parts are rushed or omitted.
Unsatisfactory (1)	Content is unclear, irrelevant, or lacks descriptive elements.	No discernible organization; ideas are scattered and hard to follow.	Vocabulary is inadequate or inappropriate, with errors that severely hinder comprehension.	Pronunciation is unclear and disfluent, making the speech hard to understand.	Delivery is monotone or disengaged; little effort to connect with the audience.	Presentation is too short or excessively long, with major omissions.

3. FINDINGS

The findings from the experimental data on the integration of ChatGPT in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms demonstrate a statistically significant effect on learners' descriptive oral presentation skills. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the gain scores of the experimental and control groups. As shown in Table 2, the results revealed a significant difference in the gain scores between the two groups, $t(28) = 7.22$, $p < 0.001$. Since the p -value was far below the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. This indicates that the students who received ChatGPT-based preparation significantly outperformed those who prepared using traditional methods.

Table 2. Significance of ChatGPT on speaking competence

Group Comparison	<i>t</i>	Df	<i>p</i> -value	Decision ($\alpha = 0.05$)
Experimental vs Control (Gain Scores)	7.22	28	< 0.001	Reject H_0

To further illustrate the extent of improvement, descriptive statistics were analyzed. As presented in Table 3, the experimental group achieved a mean gain score of 5.13 ($SD = 1.25$), while the control group only reached 0.93 ($SD = 1.10$). These results indicate that students in the ChatGPT group demonstrated a substantially greater improvement in speaking competence compared to their peers in the control group.

Table 3. Descriptive statistic

Group	N	Mean Gain Score	SD
Experimental (ChatGPT)	15	5.13	1.25
Control	15	0.93	1.10

To enhance clarity, Figure 1 provides a visual comparison of mean gain scores between the two groups. Overall, the statistical evidence underscores that ChatGPT integration effectively enhances EFL learners' oral presentation skills. The findings confirm that students who engaged with ChatGPT experienced more notable gains in content clarity, language accuracy, pronunciation, and delivery confidence. In addition, the reflections of experimental group participants highlighted ChatGPT's role as an accessible and adaptive learning tool, providing interactive practice and personalized feedback.

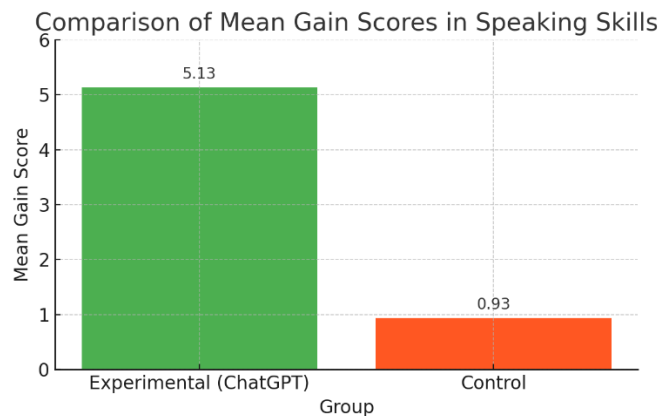


Figure 1. Mean gain scores of experimental and control groups

In summary, this study provides empirical support for the efficacy of ChatGPT in fostering EFL speaking competence. The significant mean differences, supported by robust statistical analysis, demonstrate that AI-based tools can substantially improve learners' oral communication skills. These results not only validate ChatGPT's pedagogical value but also highlight its potential as a scalable and innovative solution for enhancing language learning outcomes.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that integrating ChatGPT into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction substantially enhances learners' speaking proficiency, corroborating the statistical significance observed in gain score differences between the treatment and control groups [23], [24]. This improvement aligns closely with Jamshed et al. [4], who also reported marked gains in learners' oral fluency and accuracy when artificial intelligence (AI)-mediated feedback was incorporated into EFL pedagogy. From a theoretical perspective, these results can be explained through Swain's [25] Output Hypothesis, which posits that meaningful language production promotes deeper linguistic processing, and Long's [26] Interaction Hypothesis, which emphasizes that negotiation of meaning through interaction enhances language acquisition. ChatGPT facilitates both processes by offering constant opportunities for output production and interactive feedback, thereby fostering greater self-correction and communicative competence.

Moreover, the results extend prior work in technology-enhanced learning by confirming that AI-driven systems can create personalized and adaptive learning environments, echoing the findings of Kinder et al. [27] on intelligent tutoring systems and adaptive feedback mechanisms. In practical classroom settings, ChatGPT enables dynamic simulation of authentic communicative contexts, supporting project-based and task-based learning models. These findings parallel Zhou Wei [13], who observed that structured AI feedback significantly reduced learners' dependency on teachers for repetitive speaking practice. Similarly, L. Dong [28] emphasized that learners using ChatGPT developed stronger self-monitoring skills and autonomy in managing their oral proficiency, suggesting a shift toward self-directed learning models in EFL contexts. This study further strengthens the claim that ChatGPT not only supplements teacher instruction but also expands access to quality English practice particularly in remote or resource-constrained areas—aligning with Maia Japoshvili-Ghvinashvili and Dr. Nazia Suleman [20], who noted AI's role in freeing educators to emphasize higher-order skills such as cultural literacy and critical thinking.

Additionally, the current results affirm ChatGPT's utility beyond skill enhancement, extending to sociocultural and communicative competence. Learners gain exposure to idiomatic usage, cross-cultural interaction patterns,

and pragmatic norms, supporting the notion that AI-mediated interaction can bridge global communication barriers. This resonates with prior evidence from technology-mediated cultural learning frameworks, where AI-driven dialogue tools were shown to promote intercultural awareness and collaborative competence [27]. The study's implications are therefore particularly relevant for students preparing for international proficiency tests such as TOEFL or IELTS, as well as for professionals seeking pragmatic and culturally appropriate English communication skills.

Despite these promising results, several limitations must be acknowledged. The study employed a relatively small sample size and was conducted within a single institutional context, which may restrict the generalizability of its findings. Moreover, the short duration of the intervention limited the ability to assess long-term retention or transfer of skills. Access to stable internet connectivity and digital devices also remains a persistent barrier, especially in rural or economically disadvantaged settings, as noted in the implementation process. As ChatGPT primarily provides generalized feedback, it may fail to address fine-grained phonetic or accent-specific errors. Integrating advanced speech recognition and phonological analysis tools could enhance its precision. Furthermore, while ChatGPT supports linguistic interaction, it lacks affective dimensions such as empathy and motivation that human teachers provide. Combining AI-based systems with human-mediated collaborative learning could help mitigate this limitation. Finally, ensuring that AI models include diverse and culturally inclusive datasets remains essential to prevent bias and to make feedback contextually relevant across linguistic communities.

By addressing these constraints, future research can broaden the scope of AI-mediated language learning. Longitudinal, multi-institutional studies employing mixed methods would provide stronger evidence of sustained improvement and contextual adaptability. Overall, this study contributes to a growing body of evidence confirming that ChatGPT, when integrated within communicative and interactionist learning frameworks, serves as an effective, accessible, and adaptive tool for enhancing EFL speaking performance[4], [20], [24], [27], [28], [29], [30].

5. CONCLUSION

This study presents compelling evidence of the effectiveness of ChatGPT in enhancing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills. The results show a significant improvement in speaking proficiency among students who used ChatGPT compared to the control group, with statistical analysis confirming the impact (p -value < 0.001). This finding supports the rejection of the null hypothesis, validating the positive role of ChatGPT in language learning. The integration of ChatGPT into language learning offers several key advantages, including immediate, structured feedback and supplementary speaking practice. This enables learners to self-monitor and refine their skills in real time. The approach aligns with key language learning theories, such as the Output Hypothesis and the Interaction Hypothesis, which emphasize the importance of interactive communication for language development.

This research makes a significant contribution by being among the first quasi-experimental studies on the use of ChatGPT for EFL speaking in Indonesian higher education. It highlights the potential of AI to personalize language learning and provides a clear pathway for integrating AI tools into both traditional and contemporary teaching methodologies. The findings also stress the importance of professional development for educators to effectively incorporate AI into their instructional strategies.

Future research should explore ways to overcome limitations, such as technological dependency, non-specific feedback, and the absence of cultural and emotional context. Further investigation into advanced speech recognition tools, local cultural integration, and combining AI with collaborative human learning could enhance ChatGPT's role in language education. In conclusion, this study confirms that ChatGPT is a valuable tool for improving EFL students' speaking skills, offering a personalized, adaptive, and immersive learning experience. Its implications suggest a transformative role for AI in language education, making learning more accessible, effective, and engaging.



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
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Noor Sahid Kusuma Hadi Manggolo   is a young educator currently working as a lecturer at Universitas Tidar. He has been involved in the field of education since 2011. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in English Education from STAIN (UIN) Salatiga, he taught English at MTs and MA Manba'ul Quran, and worked as an English tutor at UPTD SKB Ungaran. He is a certified Advanced Scout Leader who dedicates himself to the character development of young people through scouting activities. In 2017, he received a scholarship from the Indian government through the ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) program to pursue a Master's degree in English with a concentration in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language). During his time in India, he also served as the president of the Indonesian Student Association (PPI) India for the 2017-2018 period. Returning to Indonesia in 2019, he continued his service as a part-time teacher and tutor at a madrasa and Non-Formal Education (PNF) institution. In 2021, together with several alumni from universities in India, he co-authored a book titled "Warna-Warni Kisah di Tanah Gandhi" (The Colorful Stories in the Land of Gandhi) to share experiences and stories about the lives of diaspora students in the land of the Ganges River. In 2022, he had the opportunity to become a lecturer in English Education at the FKIP of Universitas Tidar. This opened up a great opportunity for him to extend his contributions to the world of education. He can be contacted at englishnoor@untidar.ac.id