

LIMITATIONS OF USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR EFL SPEAKING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Xusomiddinov Boboyor Nurmat o'g'li

PROFI UNIVERSITY

Teacher of Department of English Language

Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become increasingly common in English language education, particularly in speaking practice. AI-powered chatbots and speech-evaluation systems can provide learners with opportunities to practise English, receive immediate feedback, and communicate without the pressure of speaking in front of classmates. However, despite these advantages, the use of AI also has several limitations. This short thesis examines the major drawbacks of using AI for developing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills, focusing on inaccurate feedback, limited authentic interaction, technological limitations, and excessive dependence on AI. Recent research indicates that learners value AI speaking tools for convenience and additional practice, but problems with voice recognition, feedback accuracy, and the limited depth of feedback can reduce their effectiveness.

1. Introduction

Speaking is one of the most complex language skills because learners must use vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and interactional skills simultaneously. The development of speaking skills therefore requires not only repeated practice but also meaningful communication with other people.

AI has created new opportunities for learners to practise speaking outside the classroom. AI chatbots can simulate conversations, while speech-recognition systems can evaluate pronunciation and other aspects of oral production. Research has demonstrated positive effects of AI-mediated speaking activities, including improvements in speaking performance and willingness to communicate.

Nevertheless, the growing use of AI should not be interpreted as evidence that AI can completely replace teachers or human communication. Recent research has identified several limitations of AI-supported speaking practice, including speech-recognition problems, insufficient feedback, limited conversational content, and difficulties in reproducing authentic communication.

2. Major Drawbacks

2.1 Inaccurate Feedback

One important limitation is the possibility of inaccurate feedback. AI speech-evaluation systems depend on speech-recognition technology, which may have difficulties understanding particular accents, pronunciation patterns, background noise,

or unclear speech. A 2024 study involving 366 EFL learners found that concerns about voice-recognition accuracy and scoring affected learners' confidence in AI feedback.

Furthermore, AI feedback may identify an error without adequately explaining why it is problematic or how the learner should improve it. Human teachers can consider the learner's level, context, communicative intention, and previous difficulties when providing feedback.

2.2 Limited Authentic Human Interaction

Speaking competence involves much more than producing grammatically correct sentences. Real conversations include interruptions, hesitation, humour, emotional reactions, cultural references, gestures, and unexpected changes of topic.

AI can simulate some conversational situations, but research reviews have identified challenges involving disengagement, speech recognition, and the relatively monotonous nature of some AI-based content and formats.

Consequently, AI practice may provide useful preparation, but learners still require opportunities to communicate with teachers, classmates, and other real speakers.

2.3 Excessive Dependence on AI

Another potential drawback is learner dependence. When learners can immediately ask AI to correct their grammar, provide vocabulary, or complete a sentence, they may become less willing to solve communication problems independently.

In real-life communication, speakers frequently need to continue talking despite limited vocabulary or grammatical knowledge. Therefore, speaking instruction should encourage learners to develop communication strategies rather than depending on AI for every linguistic difficulty.

2.4 Limited Development of Higher-Level Communication

AI can support pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy, but developing broader communicative competence is more complicated. Recent research suggests that evidence for sustained development of higher-order communicative competence remains variable.

Learners need to understand not only what to say but also how, when, and to whom to say it. Pragmatic competence, turn-taking, negotiation of meaning, and sensitivity to social context are particularly important aspects of authentic communication.

3. Conclusion

AI can provide valuable additional opportunities for EFL speaking practice, but its limitations must be recognized. Inaccurate speech recognition, insufficient feedback, limited authentic interaction, possible learner dependency, and difficulties in

developing higher-level communicative competence demonstrate that AI should not be considered a complete substitute for human interaction.

The most appropriate approach is therefore to use AI as a **supplementary tool**. Learners can use AI for individual practice and preparation, while teachers and classmates provide authentic communication, contextualized feedback, and interpersonal interaction. In this way, the advantages of AI can be combined with the essential human dimensions of language learning.

References:

Crompton, H., & Burke, D. (2024). AI and English language teaching: Affordances and challenges. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 55(6), 2503–2529.

Du, J., & Daniel, B. K. (2024). Transforming language education: A systematic review of AI-powered chatbots for English as a foreign language speaking practice. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 6, 100230.

Zou, B., Liviero, S., Ma, Q., Zhang, W., & Du, Y. (2024). Exploring EFL learners' perceived promise and limitations of using an artificial intelligence speech evaluation system for speaking practice. *System*, 126, 103497.