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DEVELOPING STUDENTS PROFESSION-ORIENTED SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH CHATGPT

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Abstract. This study addresses the growing need to develop profession-oriented speaking skills in foreign language education within the context of rapid digital transformation. The relevance of the research is determined by the increasing demand for integrating artificial intelligence tools, particularly ChatGPT, into the educational process to enhance students' communicative competence in information technology contexts. In modern higher education, students are expected to demonstrate not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to communicate effectively in professional situations related to their future careers. The study employed experimental design conducted at the International Information Technology University with 60 second-year students divided into control and experimental groups. Pre/posttest methods were used to assess students' speaking proficiency. The control groups practiced speaking through traditional audio-based activities and self-assessment techniques, while the experimental groups engaged in structured, profession-oriented speaking tasks using ChatGPT. The tasks were based on contemporary IT topics, including the digital age, cybercrime, data storage, computer networks, and

current trends in information technology. The use of AI tools allowed students to receive immediate feedback and engage in interactive dialogue-based learning. The results demonstrated statistically significant improvement in the speaking skills of students in experimental groups compared to those in the control groups. The findings highlight the effectiveness of interactive AI-supported learning, immediate criterion-based feedback, and contextualized professional communication practice in enhancing speaking performance, fluency, and confidence. The study confirms the pedagogical value of ChatGPT and suggests its practical application as an innovative tool for developing profession-oriented speaking skills in foreign language education, particularly in IT-focused academic programs, contributing to modern educational practices and student-centered learning approaches.

Keywords: teaching; learning, English language, speaking, artificial intelligence, ChatGPT

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СТУДЕНТТЕРДІҢ КӘСІБИ-БАҒДАРЛАНҒАН АЙТЫЛЫМ ДАҒДЫЛАРЫН CHATGPT АРҚЫЛЫ ДАМЫТУ

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Аннотация. Бұл зерттеу цифрлық трансформация жағдайында шетел тілін оқыту барысында кәсіби бағытталған айтылым дағдыларын дамыту мәселесіне арналған. Зерттеудің өзектілігі студенттердің ақпараттық технологиялар саласындағы коммуникативтік құзыреттілігін арттыру мақсатында, атап айтқанда ChatGPT сияқты жасанды интеллект құралдарын білім беру

үдерісіне енгізу қажеттілігінің артуымен негізделеді. Қазіргі жоғары білім беру жүйесінде студенттерден тек тілдік дұрыстық қана емес, сонымен қатар болашақ кәсіби қызметімен байланысты жағдайларда тиімді кәсіби коммуникацияны жүзеге асыру қабілеті талап етіледі. Зерттеу барысында эксперименттік әдіс қолданылды. Зерттеуге Халықаралық ақпараттық технологиялар университетінің екінші курсында оқитын 60 студент қатысып, олар бақылау және эксперименттік топтарға бөлінді. Айтылым дағдыларының қалыптасу деңгейін бағалау үшін алдын ала және қорытынды тестілеу әдістері пайдаланылды. Бақылау топтары дәстүрлі аудио тапсырмалар мен өзін-өзі бағалау элементтерін қолданса, эксперименттік топтар ChatGPT көмегімен кәсіби бағытталған айтылым дағдыларын дамытуға арналған құрылымдалған тапсырмаларды орындады. Тапсырмалар ақпараттық технологиялар саласының негізгі бағыттарын қамтыды, атап айтқанда цифрлық дәуір, киберқылмыс, деректерді сақтау, компьютерлік желілер және ақпараттық технологиялардың дамуының заманауи үрдістері. Жасанды интеллект құралдарын қолдану жедел кері байланыс алуға мүмкіндік беріп, интерактивті оқыту үдерісін ұйымдастыруға ықпал етті. Зерттеу нәтижелері эксперименттік топ студенттерінің айтылым дағдылары деңгейінің бақылау топтарына қарағанда статистикалық тұрғыдан айтарлықтай артқанын көрсетті. Жасанды интеллект негізіндегі интерактивті тапсырмалар, жедел критериалды кері байланыс және кәсіби бағытталған тілдік тәжірибенің тиімділігі анықталды. Сонымен қатар, сөйлеу жылдамдығының, сенімділіктің және кәсіби коммуникацияға дайындығының артқаны байқалды. Алынған нәтижелер ChatGPT құралын қолданудың педагогикалық тұрғыдан тиімділігін және оны шетел тілін оқыту үдерісіне, әсіресе ақпараттық технологияларға бағытталған білім беру бағдарламаларында енгізудің орындылығын дәлелдейді, сондай-ақ заманауи білім беру тәсілдері мен студентке бағытталған оқытуды дамытуға ықпал етеді.

Түйін сөздер: оқыту, үйрену, ағылшын тілі, айтылым, жасанды интеллект, ChatGPT

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РАЗВИТИЕ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНО ОРИЕНТИРОВАННЫХ НАВЫКОВ УСТНОЙ РЕЧИ СТУДЕНТОВ С ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕМ CHATGPT

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Аннотация. Исследование посвящено актуальной проблеме развития профессионально-ориентированных навыков говорения при обучении иностранному языку в условиях цифровой трансформации образования. Актуальность обусловлена возрастающей необходимостью интеграции инструментов искусственного интеллекта, в частности ChatGPT, в образовательный процесс с целью повышения уровня коммуникативной компетенции студентов в сфере информационных технологий. В современных условиях высшего образования от обучающихся требуется не только языковая корректность, но и способность эффективно осуществлять профессионально-ориентированную коммуникацию в контекстах будущей профессиональной деятельности. В исследовании применён экспериментальный метод. В нём приняли участие 60 студентов второго курса Международный университет информационных технологий, распределённых на контрольные и экспериментальные группы. Для оценки уровня сформированности навыков говорения использовались методы пред- и посттестирования. Контрольные группы выполняли традиционные аудиозадания с элементами самооценки, тогда как экспериментальные группы работали с ChatGPT, выполняя структурированные задания, направленные на развитие профессионально-ориентированной речи. Тематика заданий охватывала ключевые направления в области информационных технологий, включая цифровую трансформацию, киберпреступность, хранение данных, компьютерные сети и современные тенденции развития IT-сферы. Использование инструментов искусственного интеллекта обеспечивало возможность получения мгновенной обратной связи и способствовало организации интерактивного обучения. Результаты исследования продемонстрировали статистически значимое повышение уровня владения навыками говорения у студентов экспериментальных групп по сравнению с контрольными. Установлена эффективность применения интерактивных заданий на основе искусственного интеллекта, мгновенной критериальной обратной связи и контекстуализированной профессионально-ориентированной речевой практики. Зафиксировано также повышение беглости речи, уровня уверенности и готовности к профессиональной коммуникации. Полученные результаты подтверждают педагогическую целесообразность использования ChatGPT и его потенциал для эффективного внедрения в процесс обучения иностранным языкам, особенно в рамках

информационно-технологически ориентированных образовательных программ, способствуя развитию современных образовательных подходов и принципов студентоцентрированного обучения.

Ключевые слова: обучение, изучение, английский язык, говорение, искусственный интеллект, ChatGPT

Introduction. Speaking competence has become a central objective of English language education in higher education. This emphasis reflects universities' growing focus on preparing graduates for effective academic and professional communication. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, developing speaking skills is often challenging due to limited exposure to authentic interaction, anxiety, insufficient feedback, and a lack of opportunities to practice profession-oriented discourse. These challenges are especially evident at the pre-intermediate level, where learners possess basic linguistic knowledge but struggle to express ideas coherently, accurately, and fluently in real-life and professional contexts. As a result, educators continue to search for innovative, technology-driven approaches that can provide sustained practice, individualized feedback, and realistic communicative scenarios to support speaking development.

Recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI), particularly large language models such as ChatGPT, have generated growing interest in language education research. ChatGPT offers interactive, dialogic, and adaptive features that simulate human-like conversation, making it a promising tool for speaking practice in EFL settings. Unlike traditional digital tools, ChatGPT enables learners to engage in extended dialogue, receive instant responses, and practice language use in context-specific situations. These features align well with the needs of learners aiming to develop professional-oriented speaking skills, which require not only grammatical accuracy but also coherence, appropriate vocabulary, fluency, and content relevance.

Empirical studies conducted in diverse educational contexts have begun to explore the effectiveness of ChatGPT in enhancing speaking skills. Ratnaningsih (2025) examined the use of ChatGPT in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), specifically maritime English, and found that structured interaction with the application significantly enhanced students' speaking performance. The study highlights that ChatGPT-supported tasks enabled learners to practice profession-related dialogues, improve vocabulary accuracy, and organize ideas more effectively. These findings suggest that AI-based conversational tools can bridge the gap between classroom instruction and the communicative demands of specific professional fields. Importantly, the value of integrating ChatGPT into speaking activities that are aligned with learners' future occupational needs, reinforcing the relevance of professional-oriented speaking instruction.

Similarly, Zulianingrum and Manggolo (2025) proposed a Human-AI Interaction Model that positions ChatGPT as a collaborative partner in EFL speaking development. Their model underscores the importance of guided interaction, where learners actively negotiate meaning with AI while teachers maintain a facilitative

role. The study demonstrates that when ChatGPT is used strategically, it can support learners in practicing turn-taking, elaborating responses, and maintaining coherence in spoken discourse. The authors argue that such interaction models enhance learner autonomy and confidence, both of which are critical for effective speaking. This perspective is particularly relevant for pre-intermediate learners, who often require structured yet flexible environments to develop fluency without fear of negative evaluation.

Learners' perceptions of AI-assisted speaking practice further support the pedagogical potential of ChatGPT. Pushpakumara (2025), in a study conducted at a Sri Lankan university, investigated students' perceptions of using ChatGPT to enhance English speaking skills. The findings reveal that learners generally viewed ChatGPT as a supportive and motivating tool that allowed them to practice speaking-related tasks without the pressure of face-to-face interaction. Students reported improvements in vocabulary use, sentence formation, and confidence when expressing ideas orally. These perceptions are significant, as positive learner attitudes toward technology are closely linked to engagement and learning outcomes. The study also indicates that ChatGPT can function as a supplementary practice environment, particularly beneficial in contexts where classroom speaking time is limited.

Beyond general EFL contexts, ChatGPT has also been examined in relation to professional and global communication demands. Mustafa, Siminto, and Ausat (2024) explored implementation strategies of ChatGPT in enhancing students' communication skills within a global business context. Their study highlights that AI-driven conversational practice can expose learners to professional registers, negotiation language, and task-oriented communication commonly used in international business settings. The authors argue that ChatGPT enables repeated rehearsal of professional scenarios, thereby improving learners' ability to convey content clearly, maintain cohesion, and use appropriate vocabulary. These findings reinforce the relevance of ChatGPT for developing professional-oriented speaking skills, particularly in higher education programs that aim to prepare students for globalized workplaces.

The integration of ChatGPT through mobile platforms has further expanded its accessibility and pedagogical impact. Behforouz et al. (2025) investigated the use of ChatGPT-4o in EFL classrooms, focusing on mobile interaction and AI tutoring. Their study demonstrates that mobile-based AI interaction provides flexible opportunities for speaking practice beyond classroom boundaries. Learners were able to engage in simulated conversations, receive immediate corrective feedback, and practice fluency at their own pace. The results indicate noticeable improvements in speaking performance, particularly in fluency and vocabulary usage. The study highlights the role of mobility and personalization in AI-supported speaking instruction, suggesting that ChatGPT can effectively complement formal teaching practices.

While empirical findings generally support the effectiveness of ChatGPT

in speaking development, it is equally important to consider learners' perceived benefits and challenges. Okwin Hitokdana (2025) conducted a systematic review examining students' perceptions of using ChatGPT for English speaking. The review identifies several perceived benefits, including increased confidence, reduced speaking anxiety, and enhanced opportunities for practice. At the same time, challenges such as overreliance on AI responses and concerns about accuracy were also noted. These insights highlight the need for well-designed instructional frameworks that ensure ChatGPT is used as a pedagogical support rather than a replacement for human interaction. The review emphasizes that structured tasks and clear assessment criteria are essential to maximize learning outcomes.

Despite the growing body of research, several gaps remain. First, many studies focus on learners' perceptions or qualitative outcomes, while fewer employ strictly quantitative research designs to measure speaking improvement across defined criteria. Second, although professional and ESP contexts have been explored, there is limited research examining the development of professional-oriented speaking skills among pre-intermediate university students over a sustained instructional period. Third, while existing studies acknowledge improvements in speaking, fewer explicitly assess multiple speaking criteria such as content, cohesion, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency within a controlled pre/posttest framework.

Addressing these gaps is critical for establishing stronger empirical evidence regarding the instructional value of ChatGPT in higher education. Quantitative research designs, particularly those employing pre/posttest measures, allow for objective evaluation of learning gains and provide clearer insights into the effectiveness of AI-assisted interventions. Furthermore, focusing on professional-oriented speaking aligns with current educational priorities that emphasize employability, communication competence, and real-world language use.

In response to these needs, the present study investigates the development of professional-oriented speaking skills through ChatGPT among pre-intermediate university students using a quantitative research method only. Conducted over a 15-week semester, the study systematically examines changes in students' speaking. Building on prior research that highlights the pedagogical potential of ChatGPT, this study seeks to contribute robust empirical evidence to the growing discourse on AI-assisted speaking instruction. Ultimately, the findings aim to inform educators, curriculum designers, and researchers about the effective integration of ChatGPT for enhancing professional speaking skills in university EFL contexts.

Literature review. The rapid emergence of ChatGPT has generated significant scholarly interest in its applications for English language teaching, particularly in oral and speaking instruction. Existing literature emphasizes that ChatGPT represents a shift from traditional computer-assisted language learning tools toward more interactive, dialogic, and adaptive systems capable of simulating authentic communication. Researchers generally agree that its conversational capacity positions it as a potentially powerful resource for developing oral English skills, while also raising pedagogical, ethical, and practical considerations.

Shi (2023) provides one of the earliest focused discussions on the role of ChatGPT in oral English teaching by examining its advantages, challenges, and future prospects. A major advantage of ChatGPT lies in its ability to provide unlimited speaking opportunities, which is particularly valuable in EFL contexts where classroom interaction time is limited. The study highlights that learners can engage in simulated conversations, practice sentence construction, and receive immediate responses, which supports fluency development. However, it also identifies challenges such as potential inaccuracies in AI-generated responses and the risk of reduced human interaction. The author concludes that ChatGPT should be integrated as a supplementary tool rather than a replacement for teacher-led instruction, emphasizing the importance of pedagogical guidance in oral English teaching.

Expanding on classroom integration, Kostka and Toncelli (2023) explore a wide range of applications of ChatGPT in English language teaching, including speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary development. Their analysis underscores that ChatGPT offers opportunities for personalized learning, allowing students to practice oral language at their own pace and according to their individual needs. In terms of speaking skills, ChatGPT can support dialogue practice, role-plays, and pronunciation-related tasks through text-based interaction that scaffolds spoken production. At the same time, they caution against overreliance on AI outputs and stress the need for critical evaluation of generated language. Their recommendations highlight the importance of teacher mediation to ensure that speaking practice remains meaningful and aligned with instructional goals.

From a theoretical perspective, the alignment between language learning theories and the practical use of ChatGPT in English language teaching. Their work argues that ChatGPT aligns well with constructivist and communicative language teaching principles, as it encourages active learner engagement and meaning-focused interaction. In speaking instruction, ChatGPT enables learners to negotiate meaning, rehearse responses, and experiment with language forms in a low-anxiety environment. Hatmanto and Sari (2023) emphasize that effective implementation requires careful task design so that AI-mediated interaction supports communicative competence rather than mechanical repetition. This theoretical grounding reinforces the idea that ChatGPT's value in speaking development depends largely on how it is pedagogically framed.

Teacher perspectives on ChatGPT integration provide further insight into its classroom role. Mimi Li et al. (2025) examine world language teachers' reported practices of integrating ChatGPT through a positioning analysis. Their findings indicate that teachers adopt varied stances toward ChatGPT, ranging from enthusiastic adopters to cautious users. Many teachers reported using ChatGPT to support speaking-related activities such as conversation modeling, prompt generation, and role-play design. Teachers who positioned ChatGPT as a collaborative assistant rather than an authoritative source were more likely to integrate it effectively into

oral language instruction. This study highlights the central role of teacher beliefs and agency in shaping how ChatGPT is used to enhance speaking skills.

Systematic reviews offer a broader synthesis of research findings related to ChatGPT and language skill development. Ar-Rahmah, Azkia, and Tarihoran (2025) conducted a systematic review examining the role of ChatGPT in enhancing English language skills across multiple studies. Their review identifies speaking as one of the skills most positively influenced by ChatGPT use, particularly in terms of fluency, vocabulary range, and learner confidence. The authors report that ChatGPT-supported speaking practice allows learners to rehearse responses repeatedly, which contributes to improved oral performance. Nevertheless, recurring concerns related to the authenticity of interaction and the need for clear assessment frameworks. These findings suggest that while ChatGPT is beneficial for speaking development, its effectiveness is maximized when combined with structured evaluation criteria.

While systematic reviews provide a macro-level synthesis of ChatGPT's effectiveness in language learning, recent classroom-based empirical studies offer more contextualized evidence of its impact on speaking skill development. Supporting these findings, Muniandy and Selvanathan (2024) investigated the use of ChatGPT as a partnering tool to improve ESL learners' speaking skills in a Malaysian public university. The study found that ChatGPT functions effectively as a conversational partner, enabling learners to practice oral production, reduce speaking anxiety, and improve fluency through continuous interaction. Students benefited from the opportunity to rehearse responses, experiment with language use, and receive immediate text-based feedback, which contributed to increased confidence in speaking tasks. However, the authors also emphasize that ChatGPT cannot fully replace authentic human interaction, particularly in developing spontaneous communication and pragmatic competence. Therefore, they recommend its integration as a supplementary tool alongside teacher-led speaking activities to maximize its pedagogical value.

In addition to AI-assisted speaking practice, technology-mediated learning tools have been shown to enhance broader aspects of skill development in higher education. For example, Daineko, Dmitriyev, and Ipalakova (2016) illustrate how virtual laboratories in physics courses allow students to interact with complex concepts through software simulations, promoting experiential learning and independent problem-solving. Similarly, Kaldarova, Vasquez, Baisbay, and Altayeva (2024) report that Quizlet supports vocabulary acquisition by enabling interactive and repeated practice, resulting in significantly higher retention among experimental groups compared to traditional instruction. Both studies demonstrate that technology can extend learning opportunities beyond conventional classroom limitations, offering structured, repeatable, and self-directed practice that enhances both knowledge and applied skills. These findings parallel the affordances of ChatGPT for speaking development, where learners can engage with guided oral tasks and receive immediate textual feedback, thereby reinforcing both micro-

level language features such as pronunciation and macro-level communicative competence.

Pronunciation and oral accuracy represent another important dimension of speaking skills addressed in literature. Ahmed and Lima (2025) explore innovative approaches to pronunciation and skill development using ChatGPT. Their study demonstrates that ChatGPT can support learners' awareness of pronunciation features by providing explanations, examples, and guided practice prompts. Although ChatGPT does not directly assess spoken output in real time, it can indirectly enhance pronunciation by strengthening learners' phonological knowledge and encouraging self-monitoring. This contribution expands the understanding of how AI tools can support speaking development beyond fluency and content, addressing micro-level aspects of oral proficiency.

Across the reviewed studies, several recurring themes emerge. First, ChatGPT is consistently viewed as a tool that increases access to speaking practice, particularly outside the classroom. This aligns with assertion that AI-mediated interaction can compensate for limited instructional time. Second, learner autonomy is frequently highlighted, as ChatGPT allows students to control the pace, topic, and complexity of speaking-related tasks. Third, teacher guidance remains a critical factor, that effective integration depends on how educators position and frame the technology.

Despite these strengths, the literature also points to notable limitations. Concerns regarding accuracy, overdependence, and reduced human interaction are repeatedly mentioned. Additionally, while systematic reviews report positive outcomes, they also reveal a lack of consistency in research design and assessment methods. Many studies rely on qualitative perceptions rather than objective measurements of speaking improvement, indicating a need for more quantitative investigations with clearly defined speaking criteria.

The existing literature suggests that ChatGPT holds considerable potential for enhancing speaking skills in EFL contexts by providing interactive, flexible, and learner-centered practice opportunities. Studies highlight improvements in fluency, vocabulary, confidence, and overall communicative competence when ChatGPT is pedagogically integrated. However, scholars consistently emphasize that its effectiveness depends on thoughtful instructional design, teacher mediation, and alignment with learning objectives. The reviewed research establishes a strong conceptual and empirical foundation for further quantitative studies that systematically measure speaking development, particularly in professional-oriented contexts and across specific assessment criteria.

Hypothesis.

This study hypothesizes that integrating ChatGPT into speaking instruction will significantly improve professional-oriented speaking skills of pre-intermediate university students. It is expected that posttest scores will be statistically higher than pretest scores after a fifteen-week intervention using ChatGPT-based speaking activities implemented during the first academic semester within a quantitative pretest-posttest research design framework only applied.

Methods and materials.

The study employed a quasi-experimental pre/posttest control group design to investigate the effectiveness of ChatGPT in developing profession-oriented speaking skills among pre-intermediate English learners. The experiment was conducted over one academic semester (15 weeks).

The participants were 60 second-year university students enrolled in a pre-intermediate English course. At the time of the experiment, students were in their third semester of English language instruction. The participants were divided into four groups, each consisting of 15 students. Thus, the total sample included 30 students in experimental groups and 30 students in control groups.

All groups followed the same syllabus and studied identical profession-oriented topics related to Information Technology: Digital Age, Cybercrime, Data Storage, Networks, Current Trends in IT.

English classes were held twice a week, with a total of 3 academic hours per week (2 hours on one day and 1 hour on the following day). Classroom instruction was identical for all groups; the difference lay in the out-of-class speaking practice method.

Students in the experimental groups practiced speaking through individual out-of-class tasks supported by ChatGPT. The teacher created structured speaking tasks aligned with syllabus topics and shared clear instructions with students. Learners interacted with ChatGPT by speaking on assigned profession-oriented topics. After each speaking task, ChatGPT provided automated feedback based on predefined assessment criteria, focusing on content, cohesion, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency.

Students in the control groups practiced speaking using traditional instructional methods. Their speaking practice involved recording their oral responses, listening to the recordings, and conducting self-assessment based on the same evaluation criteria applied in the experimental groups. No AI-based tools or automated feedback systems were used in the control groups.

To measure speaking performance, a speaking pretest was administered in Week 1, followed by a posttest conducted in Week 15. The same criteria were used by the teacher during testing and by ChatGPT when providing feedback to experimental group students. This ensured consistency and reliability in evaluation.

Results. The analysis of the pretest results indicated that the experimental and control groups had generally comparable levels of speaking proficiency at the beginning of the study (Table 1). Although Experimental Group STEM #1 demonstrated a slightly higher initial score, the overall pretest data suggest that the groups started the intervention at a relatively similar proficiency level.

Following the 15-week instructional period, all groups demonstrated improvement in their speaking performance, as reflected in the posttest results. However, the experimental groups showed higher overall gains compared to the control groups. Experimental Group STEM #1 achieved the greatest improvement, with a gain of 5,1%, while Experimental Group STEM #2 showed a gain of 4,5%.

In the control groups, Control Group STEM #3 demonstrated a gain of 4,4%, whereas Control Group STEM #4 showed a more moderate improvement of 3,6%. Although progress was observed in both instructional conditions, the magnitude of improvement was more consistent and pronounced in the experimental groups.

Table 1 – Pre/posttest results

Groups	Pretest results 100%	Posttest results 100%	Gain %
Experimental group STEM #1	80,1	85,2	5,1
Experimental group STEM #2	74,2	78,7	4,5
Control group STEM #3	74,4	78,8	4,4
Control group STEM #4	74,5	78,1	3,6

Discussion. The results confirm that ChatGPT-supported speaking practice contributes positively to the development of profession-oriented speaking skills among pre-intermediate STEM students. The higher gains observed in the experimental groups can be attributed to the interactive nature of AI-mediated speaking tasks and the availability of immediate, criterion-based feedback.

ChatGPT provided students with individualized feedback aligned with the same assessment criteria used in formal testing, which likely enhanced learners' metacognitive awareness of their speaking performance. This continuous formative feedback may have facilitated more focused improvement in content organization, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary use, and fluency.

Moreover, the use of profession-oriented topics derived directly from the syllabus ensured that speaking practice was contextually relevant and professionally meaningful. Repeated engagement with IT-related themes may have strengthened students' ability to articulate ideas using appropriate technical vocabulary and cohesive discourse structures.

While the control groups also demonstrated improvement, differences in the consistency of progress were observed. Traditional recording-based speaking practice relies heavily on learners' ability to self-diagnose errors, which may limit the effectiveness of feedback for pre-intermediate students.

The findings suggest that integrating ChatGPT as a supplementary instructional tool can enhance speaking outcomes when combined with regular classroom instruction. AI-supported speaking practice appears to increase practice opportunities, support learner autonomy, and promote measurable improvement in profession-oriented speaking skills.

Conclusion. The findings of this study demonstrate that the integration of ChatGPT into speaking instruction positively contributed to the development of professional-oriented speaking skills among pre-intermediate university students. Quantitative analysis of pretest and posttest results indicates measurable improvement in students' speaking skills. These results align with prior research

suggesting that AI-supported conversational tools provide increased opportunities for structured practice, immediate feedback, and reduced anxiety, all of which facilitate speaking development. The study further confirms that systematic integration of ChatGPT into a semester-long instructional framework enables it to function as an effective pedagogical support tool. This approach contributes to the development of oral communication skills that are essential for both academic and professional contexts. Overall, the findings provide empirical support for the educational value of ChatGPT in EFL speaking instruction.

Recommendations:

Based on the study results, it is recommended that higher education institutions consider integrating ChatGPT into speaking courses, particularly those emphasizing professional communication. Teachers should design guided, task-based speaking activities that align AI interaction with clear learning objectives and assessment criteria. Professional-oriented prompts, role-plays, and scenario-based discussions should be prioritized to enhance relevance and transferability of speaking skills. Teacher training is also essential to ensure effective and ethical use of AI tools, supporting the positioning of ChatGPT as a learning assistant rather than a replacement for instruction. Future classroom implementation should maintain a balance between AI-supported practice and human interaction to maximize learning outcomes.

Limitations:

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research employed a quantitative method only, which limits deeper insight into learners' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences with ChatGPT, as highlighted in previous reviews. Second, the sample size was limited to 60 pre-intermediate university students, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other proficiency levels or educational contexts. Third, the study focused exclusively on short-term outcomes within a single 15-week semester, and therefore does not capture long-term retention or transfer of speaking skills. Finally, reliance on AI-generated interaction may pose risks if not carefully monitored, underscoring the need for pedagogical control and critical evaluation in future research.

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