

Libyan EFL Students' Perceptions and Challenges of Utilizing ChatGPT Voice Chat for Oral Practice

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Abstract

This study investigated Libyan English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' perceptions, attitudes, benefits, and challenges regarding the use of ChatGPT's voice chat feature for speaking practice. Framed within Vygotsky's Social Interactionism Theory and the Zone of Proximal Development, the research addressed geographical and methodological gaps by examining interactive communicative competence in a Libyan tertiary context. A mixed-methods survey design was used to gather data from a purposive sample of 32 undergraduate and postgraduate EFL students at the University of Tripoli via an online questionnaire comprising Likert-scale and open-ended items.

The findings revealed significantly positive attitudes toward the AI tool; 45.16% of participants agreed that ChatGPT voice chat improved their overall speaking skills, noting advancements in pronunciation (38.71%), vocabulary (45.16%), and confidence (35.48%). Qualitative analysis confirmed that the chatbot provided a safe, judgment-free environment that reduced anxiety and the fear of making mistakes. However, notable challenges emerged, including internet connectivity issues, a lack of conversational realism, and shallow feedback compared to human interaction. Despite sample-size limitations and the absence of an experimental design, this study underscores the pedagogical potential of integrating generative AI voice tools to support authentic language production.

Keywords: ChatGPT, voice chat, speaking skills, AI, EFL students.

المستخلص:

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تصورات ومواقف وفوائد وتحديات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية في ليبيا فيما يتعلق باستخدام ميزة الدردشة الصوتية في شات جي بي تي لممارسة المحادثة. هذه الدراسة مرتبطة بنظرية التفاعل الاجتماعي لفيغوتسكي ومنطقة التنمية القريبة، تناول البحث الفجوات الجغرافية والمنهجية من خلال دراسة الكفاءة التواصلية التفاعلية في سياق التعليم العالي الليبي. تم استخدام تصميم مختلط لجمع البيانات من عينة هادفة مكونة من 32 طالبا وطالبة من مرحلة البكالوريوس والدراسات العليا في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية بجامعة طرابلس عبر استبيان عبر الانترنت يتضمن عناصر مقياس ليكرت وعناصر مفتوحة.

كشفت النتائج عن مواقف إيجابية بشكل ملحوظ تجاه أداة الذكاء الاصطناعي، حيث وافق 45.16% من المشاركين على أن دردشة الصوت في شات جي بي تي حسنت مهارتهن في التحدث بشكل عام، مشيرين إلى تقدم في النطق (38.71%)، والمفردات (45.16%). وأكد التحليل النوعي أن ربورت الدردشة قدم بيئة آمنة وخالية من الأحكام، مما قلل من القلق والخوف من ارتكاب الأخطاء. ومع ذلك، ظهرت تحديات ملحوظة، بما في ذلك مشاكل الاتصال بالإنترنت، ونقص الواقعية في المحادثات، وردود الفعل السطحية مقارنة بالتفاعل البشري. على الرغم من قيود حجم العينة وغياب التصميم التجريبي، فإن هذه الدراسة تبرز الإمكانيات التربوية لدمج أدوات الصوت المدعومة بالذكاء الاصطناعي التوليدي لدعم إنتاج اللغة الأصلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: شات جي بي تي، الدردشة الصوتية، مهارات التحدث، الذكاء الاصطناعي، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة الأجنبية.

1. Introduction

English has become the primary global language of communication due to its widespread use. It is widely spoken and, as a result, English has begun to establish itself and is used extensively in various fields, including scientific research, education, business, the internet, tourism, and media. In addition, English is the fundamental language used in scientific research articles; within 85% of research publications are written in English. Furthermore, it is a global language employed for trade and commerce (Akhter, 2021; Rao, 2019).

Regarding the importance of the English language, Akhter (2021) highlighted the interest of EFL learners in gaining extensive knowledge of English, cooperating in this technological and skilled world. Consequently, among all four skills, speaking skills are considered a crucial skill because it occupies a dominant place in the communication process. Speaking skills are expressive, communicative, and performative. Therefore, EFL students need to communicate and express thoughts, and this purpose is fulfilled utilizing English, and it is an essential skill for learners to improve their lives and career opportunities, including participating in debates and presentations. However, it has been widely noticed that EFL students face many difficulties in mastering speaking skills. Al Hosni (2014) conducted a study that demonstrates the issues that students encounter, including insufficient vocabulary, the consistent use of the mother tongue language, and the fear of making mistakes. Therefore, these reasons lead to an inhibition of low participation in classrooms. The study also reported that teachers focus only on grammar and vocabulary items rather than teaching speaking; even if there is a chance of teaching speaking, teachers skip it and move on to applying other tasks like reading and writing, which limits the full use of the language and hinders their English level, because teachers believe that teaching grammar and vocabulary are enough to help students in speaking. Additionally, the study stated that students are not provided with external opportunities to practice speaking, meaning that students' exposure to language is limited to the classroom only, which lacks the use of English in authentic situations. This highlights the need to employ effective strategies and practices that assist students in fostering their speaking skills.

Recently, Artificial intelligence tools and applications have established themselves strongly across multiple fields, such as education, science, and business. As a result, AI tools have been widely used in educational institutions and on language-learning platforms. Dou et al. (2025). A study by Emma (ed) claimed that AI tools such as ChatGPT, Alexa, and Gemini provide personalized experiences by analyzing students' performance and offering immediate feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. In addition to the creation of a realistic, simulated environment for practising language skills.

In Libya, EFL teachers often struggle to provide opportunities and a suitable environment for students to practice speaking English authentically, which hinders students' fluency and communicative competence (Abusteen, 2015). This highlights the need for the integration of AI tools in students' speaking practice to maintain the development of this skill.

AI voice chatbots might be a solution for overcoming traditional language learning, which is shaped by learners' fear of using a language, the lack of opportunities for speaking practice, and the lack of high-quality feedback (Hoang & Ho, 2024).

According to Hoang & Ho (2024) stated in their study that AI chatbots can handle a diversity of conversations in a way that adapts to the learner's level. Making the language acquisition process an easy and smooth task.

ChatGPT is a type of generative model created by OpenAI that is designed to maintain the natural use of the language, which is designed to stimulate human conversations and enable a naturalistic communicative setting. Additionally, it excels in producing human-quality text and audio (Pratiwi et al., 2024; Poola, I., & Bozic, V., 2023).

This study seeks to investigate Libyan EFL students' perceptions and challenges toward using ChatGPT voice chat to improve their speaking skills and practices, as there has been no detailed research exploring EFL learners' perspectives on using ChatGPT voice chat as a practice tool to foster their speaking abilities in Libyan contexts.

1.1 Questions of the study

This study aims to answer the following questions, which were raised by the researcher:

1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of Libyan EFL students toward using ChatGPT Voice chat to enhance their speaking abilities?
2. What benefits do Libyan EFL students perceive from using ChatGPT voice chat in speaking practice?
3. What challenges do Libyan EFL students face when using ChatGPT voice chat in improving their speaking skills?

1.2 Objectives of the study:

1. To investigate Libyan EFL students' attitudes toward using ChatGPT voice chat for improving speaking skills.
2. To identify the perceived benefits of using ChatGPT voice chat in speaking practice among Libyan EFL students.
3. To explore the challenges faced by Libyan EFL students when using ChatGPT voice chat in speaking practice.

1.3 Significance of the study

This study provides an exciting opportunity to advance our knowledge of AI tools integration and their powerful impact on fostering students' linguistic skills, particularly speaking. So far, this concept has only been applied to international contexts, such as China and Vietnam. However, far too little attention has been paid to the Libyan context. Therefore, this study will provide an insightful overview of the Libyan EFL learners' perceptions of utilizing ChatGPT voice chat as a tool for speaking practices. Also, this study may serve as a reference for any future research concerning this topic.

In addition, the findings of this study may encourage establishing AI voice chat as a practical tool to foster students' communicative abilities by providing a natural setting for consuming the language.

1.4 Problem statement

Speaking skills are one of the most challenging skills to acquire and master in learning a language, which requires the opportunity to consume and use the language, as the majority of EFL educational systems, specifically in Libyan contexts, struggle to offer an authentic classroom environment to practice the language. However, with the emergence of AI tools, rapid development has led to many appearing, including ChatGPT, an artificial language model created by AI that represents natural language processing and generates human responses (Pratiwi, 2024).

Furthermore, this research paper investigates Libyan EFL students' use of ChatGPT voice chat for speaking practice and aims to establish AI tools as an integrated, practical tool for speaking practice in classroom settings.

2. Literature review:

Much of the current literature on the utilization of the ChatGPT application pays particular attention to its use as a tool in enhancing students' speaking skills. In this literature, the research will cover the following: Speaking hurdles, the emergence of AI, the use of ChatGPT in EFL students, and previous studies that examine this concept. Therefore, this study aims to shine new light on these studies through an examination of ChatGPT voice chat to improve Libyan EFL students' speaking skills.

2.1 Speaking skills challenges:

Speaking skill has possessed an important area in language learning due to the requirements that every EFL student needs, which are presenting topics, expressing thoughts, sharing perspectives, and conveying information. However, students face some major hurdles in learning to master this skill. Alaraj (2015) highlighted these particular hurdles in his study, which include struggling to memorize vocabulary, a lack of authentic exposure to the language, and dependence on the mother tongue. Therefore, most EFL teachers keep diving into the cyclone of the grammar translation method in their teaching strategies and restrict any opportunity for students to practice the language authentically (Al-Hosni, 2014).

2.2 Artificial intelligence in learning languages:

Language learning applications have been popular among students due to their accessibility and downloadable software programs. These applications generally include a diverse range of educational activities that contain grammar and vocabulary enhancement, as well as speaking practices. Therefore, some language applications provide immediate pronunciation feedback. AI-Driven software applications employ interactive conversation with a language monitor that represents a virtual language instructor. Conversely, the virtual language instructor offers feedback on the learner's grammar and pronunciation, which is based on the learner's needs and goals. As a result, virtual language instructors can improve on and exceed traditional language teaching methods, allowing students to overcome fears in social contexts. (Saifi, 2024).

2.3 ChatGPT in Education:

ChatGPT is a type of Generative pre-trained transformer, and OpenAI created it. It is designed to generate human natural responses and activate normal human conversations. Additionally, it is used in a variety of applications, including Chatbots, virtual assistants, voice chats, and a language translation tool. Therefore, ChatGPT is an incredible tool that possesses the power to alter how students interact with technology by offering human communicative responses. As a result, its utilization in educational institutions may help to enhance students' learning and engagement. ChatGPT can be used to create chatbots and voice chats, and they are led by language virtual instructors, helping students practice their language skills and simulate real-life conversations. In addition to providing students with rapid feedback on their grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary (Božić, n.d).

Learners can access ChatGPT whenever they want, and it is affordable because it eliminates the need for physical tutors and private courses, especially for EFL learners with limited budgets. Therefore, ChatGPT's features can turn the learning process into a highly engaging, motivating, and private environment. Even learners lacking grammatical accuracy can benefit from ChatGPT by processing and rephrasing sentence structures correctly. Consequently, learners will be able to obtain real-time individual feedback and scaffold their competence and performance by exposing them to the correct linguistic form (Pratiwi, 2024).

However, ChatGPT is not free of limitations and challenges. Božić (n.d) illustrated in his study that overreliance on AI tools may simply kill students' creativity and critical thinking, and make them dependent on learning. The study also reported that using ChatGPT can lead to a lack of students' social interaction with other people, which occurs face-to-face, and this might lead to sabotaging their empathy and ability to socialize. The study noted a significant limitation, which is plagiarism by using ChatGPT to generate written work without proper attribution of its use. Therefore, it could lead to dishonesty and academic robbery.

2.4 Previous studies

There have been several longitudinal studies involving the use of ChatGPT that have reported supporting the quality of students' oral performance. For example, Askari and Rahim (2024) investigated the influence of AI chatbots, particularly ChatGPT, on fostering students' level of confidence during oral presentations. The study employed a mixed-methods design, and the quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-oral presentations that contained 46 students from different universities, while qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the study found a significant improvement in both presentation and the level of confidence, which increased from 2.85 to 3.8. Additionally, the participants stated that AI tools contributed effectively to reframing their skills through the reduction of anxiety.

Similarly, Chen (2024) analyzed the impact of artificial intelligence on the development of oral skills of EFL university students in China to gain a full picture of how students perceive technology use. Moreover, the study employed a qualitative approach by involving semi-structured interviews with 11 English students. However, the study lacked a quantitative approach, which is considered an important component for providing reliable results. Furthermore, the results highlighted that AI tools provide a customized learning environment compatible with students' speaking skills. In contrast, the participants showed a variety of responses. Some appreciated it, while others stated that AI use could weaken the authenticity of communication. The study involved only females, indicating that it might have hindered the reliability of the findings. However, the researcher claims that regarding gender differences may require justifications, as the participants shared a similar EFL background. Another key point that the researcher did not determine which AI tools were used, resulting in an obscure methodology. Therefore, the researcher should have considered the type of AI system that was being used.

In addition, Salsabil et al. (2025) examined the effect of ChatGPT AI, particularly the Voice Chat feature, on 60 eleventh-grade students. Next, the researchers divided the participants into an experimental and a control group. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, and data were collected through pre and post-speaking tests. For the qualitative section, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 participants and analyzed them thematically. Therefore, the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group, concluding that ChatGPT voice chat supported their speaking level by reducing anxiety and avoiding harsh judgments. It helped them to improve their fluency, grammar awareness, and pronunciation. The study also reported an issue, which is the instability of the internet connection.

On the other hand, Sa et al. (2025) investigated another AI- powered voice tool, which is ELSA Speak, supporting pronunciation and updating instructions for EFL learners. The study used a mixed-methods quasi-experimental design that involved 37 EFL first-year students. Accordingly, the researchers gathered data by implementing pre- and post- tests, systematic practice records, and focus group interviews. Consequently, the findings revealed a crucial connection between frequency and pronunciation, which fostered accuracy and some phonological features, such as stress and intonation. However, the researchers encountered technical issues, such as lagging, glitching, and poor recording quality. Additionally, the majority of the participants struggled with hindered self-discipline or confidence, and they hardly benefited from the utilization of technology. In contrast, the researchers might need to expand the data collection by conducting interviews with control groups as well to discover how traditional teaching affects their learning process and how it influences their linguistic improvement.

Instead, Pratiwi et al. (2024) investigated the concerning pedagogical potentials of using ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in language learning through a systematic literature review on technology. The researchers addressed AI capabilities and limitations in assessing pronunciation and capturing contextual differences. Hence, the findings concluded that technology's role offers instant access and enhances students' independence. Also, they highlighted that ChatGPT provides a collaborative, interactive learning environment, especially for speaking practice. Nevertheless, the study declared that ChatGPT lacks a genuine understanding which takes into account emotional matters and varying accents, due to the robotic language that AI tools possess, which might fail in managing real-life communication. It also lacks the pausing and pitch characteristics of human speech.

2.5 Theoretical framework

This study is governed by the social interactionism theory, which was proposed by Lev Vygotsky. The theory assumes that human mental mechanisms do not represent a biological maturation, but are formed through cultural and social interaction. Therefore, Vygotsky introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the distance between what a student can do independently and what they can do with the assistance of a more knowledgeable other. Additionally, Vygotsky claimed that effective teaching occurs by interacting with language users to stimulate linguistic functions and awareness of accuracy. This study is connected to Vygotsky's theory, which states that ChatGPT voice chat provides an interactive setting where students can engage with the conversation feature, which uses an AI-powered system within human vocals. Simultaneously, this system is knowledgeable and skilled, helping students receive constructive feedback and instructions. (Zavershneva & Der Veer, n.d.).

Despite the growing body of literature on AI-assisted language learning, several gaps remain. First, many previous studies examined AI tools generally, without concentrating on ChatGPT's voice chat features as a communicative and conversational model. Second, limited research has connected AI-supported practice to a theory, such as Vygotsky's social interactionist theory and ZPD. Furthermore, previous research mainly focused on separated speaking components, such as fluency, pronunciation, and oral presentation, while insufficient attention has been paid to interactive and communicative competence, as well as real-time communication. Additionally, several methodological limitations were discovered, involving small sample sizes, a lack of mixed-method designs, and vague descriptions of AI tools used. Another gap has been highlighted, which is the geographical gap, meaning that the previous studies were taking place in international countries, and there is limited detailed research in the Libyan context. Finally, there are limited gaps in investigating the role of ChatGPT's voice chat in fostering EFL students' communicative competence within a social interactionist framework. Shortly, this study will investigate the perceptions and challenges that Libyan EFL students face when using ChatGPT voice chat as a practical tool to foster their speaking capabilities.

4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The research employed a mixed-methods design that covers qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather a full, comprehensive image and in-depth information on the research problem. Moreover, the study adopted a survey design. A survey was used to explore EFL students' attitudes and identify challenges that students struggle with by involving open and closed-ended questions, allowing the research to obtain a wide picture of students' perceptions and express their thoughts freely.

3.2. Participants and sampling type

The study was conducted in two faculties located at the University of Tripoli, which are the Languages and Arts and the Faculty of Education, Qaser Ben Gasher, English Department. Therefore, they study targeted EFL students, particularly undergraduate and postgraduate students. The sample type of this study is purposive sampling, which covers samples within specific criteria that the researcher relies on. The total population is 32 EFL students (30 females and 2 males).

3.4. Data collection and analysis tools

This study collected data through a Google Form questionnaire (Likert scale format), which was distributed online to both faculties' official groups on Facebook and Telegram platforms. The questionnaire covered personal information such as gender and academic level. Also, it included attitudes toward AI voice chat, the benefits of ChatGPT voice chat, and the challenges of AI voice chat. Moreover, the data were analyzed by the Google Form system automatically; open-ended questions were analyzed descriptively, while closed-ended questions were analyzed thematically.

3.5. Ethical consideration

Participation in this study was completely voluntary. The participants were informed about the guidelines and the purposes of this research. The researcher kept their identities anonymous and obtained their permission.

5. Results

In this chapter, the researcher will present the findings based on the data analysis of participants' responses in two sections: quantitative and qualitative.

Section one: Quantitative: Chart 4.1: Background information Gender

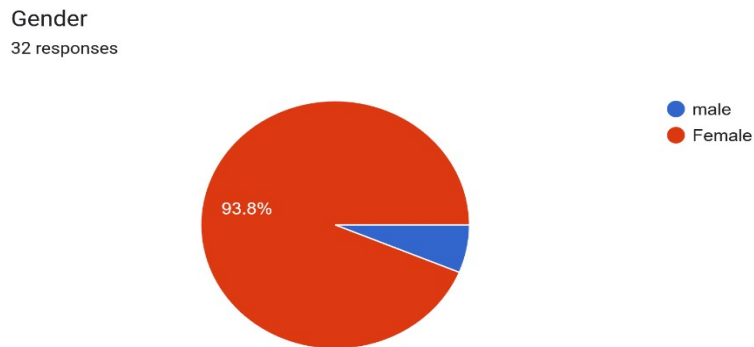


Chart 4.1 indicates the total number of participants, which is 32 responses, consisting of 30 females and 2 males.

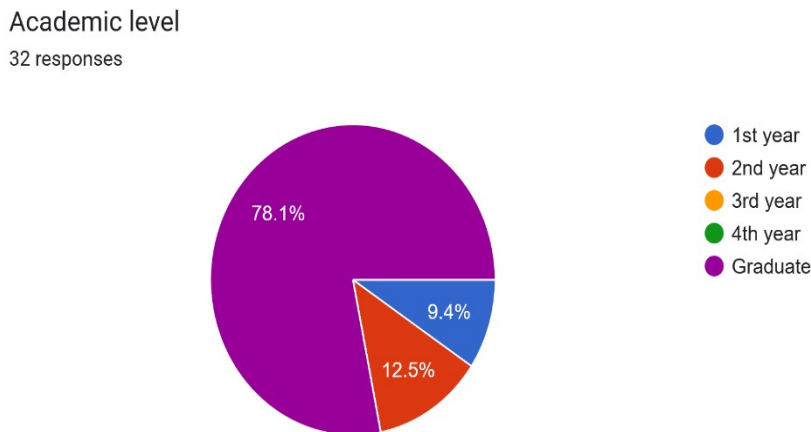


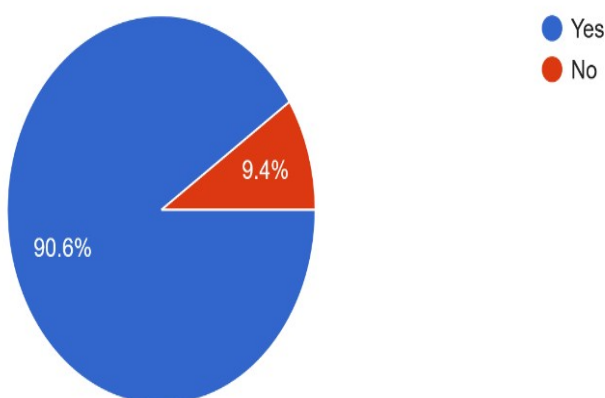
Chart 4.2: Academic level

Chart 4.2 demonstrates the academic level of the participants, since they are EFL students ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate levels. The chart determines which year they are in. Therefore, 78% of the respondents are graduates, meaning from undergraduate programs. While 12.5% are in the second year. Finally, 9.4% are in the first year.

Chart 4.3:

Have you ever used Chatgpt voice chat for speaking practice?

32 responses



ChatGPT's use

Chart 4.3 illustrates participants' use of ChatGPT's voice chat during speaking practice. Moreover, 90.6% of respondents reported using ChatGPT to practice their speaking skills, while 9.4% reported never using it.

Table 4.3: Student Perceptions on Core Skills and Practice Habits (Items 1–6)

Item	Survey Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	AI ChatGPT voice chat helps improve speaking skills	0.00%	9.68%	22.58%	45.16%	22.58%
2	Practice speaking regularly	0.00%	3.23%	38.71%	35.48%	22.58%
3	Improve pronunciation	3.23%	12.90%	19.35%	38.71%	25.81%
4	Improve fluency	0.00%	16.13%	29.03%	35.48%	19.35%
5	Increase vocabulary	0.00%	12.90%	22.58%	45.16%	19.35%
6	Increase confidence	0.00%	6.45%	32.26%	35.48%	25.81%

Table 4.3 shows that 45% of participants agreed that AI-Voice chat helped them improve their speaking skills. In addition to improving other speaking components such as pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. Also, it assists them in levelling up their self-esteem within 35% agreements.

Table 4.4: Affective and Communication Influences of AI ChatGPT’s Voice Chat Usage (Items 7–10)

Item	Survey Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	Reduce fear of mistakes	0.00%	16.13%	32.26%	35.48%	16.13%
8	Help communication	3.23%	6.45%	25.81%	32.26%	32.26%
9	Comfort using AI	3.23%	6.45%	9.68%	45.16%	35.48%
10	Express ideas clearly	6.45%	6.45%	12.90%	45.16%	29.03%

Table 4.4 clarifies the affective state of the participants when they use ChatGPT voice chat. Therefore, 35% of the respondents agreed that Voice chatting with ChatGPT helped them reduce mistakes, and 32% reported that it supported their communication. Additionally, 35% declared that using AI for speaking practice provides comfort and also eases their expression of ideas.

Table 4.5: Perceived Interactivity, Engagement, and Holistic Performance Outcomes (Items 11–15)

Item	Survey Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11	Provide useful feedback	3.23%	6.45%	38.71%	29.03%	22.58%
12	Practice anytime	3.23%	3.23%	16.13%	48.39%	29.03%
13	Simulate real-life conversations	3.23%	6.45%	41.94%	25.81%	22.58%
14	Make learning interesting	3.23%	3.23%	22.58%	48.39%	22.58%
15	Improve overall speaking performance	3.23%	6.45%	25.81%	41.94%	22.58%

Table 4.5 explains the outcomes that participants obtained from using ChatGPT voice chat. 29% of the respondents agreed that AI-voice chat provides instant feedback, and 48% showed agreement that ChatGPT's voice chat offers a free-time practice. 48% stated that it made their learning interesting, and 41% reported that Voice chat features enhanced their oral performance.

Table 4.6: Thematic Coding of Open-Ended Responses (Challenges and Benefits)

Category	Identified Theme	Operational Description
Perceived Challenges	Technical Issues	Disrupted connectivity or constraints regarding voice chat accuracy
	Lack of Realism	Interactions failing to closely mirror authentic human exchanges
	Limited Feedback	Evaluation and responses are lacking the necessary depth or detail.
	Language Difficulty	Barriers to understanding complex or structured AI outputs
Perceived Benefits	Confidence Building	Reduction in shyness; elevated comfort during spoken tasks
	Practice Freedom	On-demand access to practice sessions without risk of embarrassment
	Fluency Improvement	Growth in natural and frequent production of the target language
	Safe Environment	Total mitigation of negative evaluation or judgment for errors

Table 4.6 clarifies open-ended questions in which analyzed thematically. Consequently, the participants reported some challenges they encountered while using ChatGPT's conversational

tool, including technical issues such as low-quality internet connections, a lack of human-authentic interactions, limited feedback, and language difficulty. However, the participants also reported the benefits they received from using ChatGPT's voice chat. They responded by saying that voice chat helped them to increase their confidence and allowed them to practice language freely without any restrictions. In addition, they clarified that Voice Chatting also improves their fluency and prevents offering harsh judgments and negative talk about their performance.

6. Discussion

This section synthesizes the quantitative and qualitative results of the current study with existing empirical literature, while explicitly addressing established theoretical, methodological, and geographical gaps.

The findings demonstrated a positive shift in students' psychological comfort. Therefore, quantitative data show that 35% agreed that AI voice chat enhanced their speaking confidence, while 35% felt it reduced their fear of making mistakes. This matches the qualitative themes where students reported confidence-building and a safe environment as core benefits. Consequently, these outcomes align with Askari and Rahim (2024), who reported a significant improvement in students' oral presentation confidence from 2.85 to 3.8. In addition to anxiety reduction. Similarly, the results agreed with Salsabil et al. (2025), who found that ChatGPT's voice chat isolated students from harsh judgments. Conversely, this stands against Sa et al. (2025), where EFL students practising pronunciation with ELSA speak struggled with confidence and gained minimal benefit. However, beyond affective alterations, the data reflect explicitly on the growth of linguistic sub-skills, with 38% of respondents reporting fostered pronunciation. 35% achieved higher fluency, and 45% increased their vocabulary. Additionally, 29% acknowledged receiving useful feedback from AI.

A key point emerged regarding interactional authenticity: the students noted that ChatGPT supported general communication and that they felt comfortable using it. However, their study also highlighted that students experience a lack of effective human or real-life communication. This supports Chen's (2024) qualitative study of Chinese EFL students, in which participants expressed concern that relying on AI weakens the autonomy of communication. This limitation is theoretically explained by Pratiwi et al. (2024), who observed that despite its interactive features, ChatGPT lacks genuine understanding and fails to capture emotional human images.

The practical implementation of AI is heavily influenced by technical issues, such as unstable internet and ChatGPT errors, which are major hurdles. These barriers are flagged by Salsabil et al (2025) and the glitching and the poor audio recording by Sa et al. (2025).

6.1. Limitations of the study

The study was limited to small sample sizes, which may influence the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study also lacks an empirical approach due to the matter of insufficient time that the researcher struggles with. Therefore, the researcher employed a survey to collect the data.

7. Conclusion

This study explored University Tripoli EFL students' attitudes and perceptions toward using ChatGPT's voice chat feature as a tool for speaking practice. The findings of the study revealed that ChatGPT assists students' speaking improvement, particularly in fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Additionally, it positively increases their self-image by avoiding harsh judgments and negative talk, another key point, which is offering instant feedback. Therefore, students demonstrated a positive attitude toward AI voice chat features. However, the participants face several hurdles, such as technical issues relating to the instability of the internet connection and the lack of human communication. Therefore, the study highlighted the importance of integrating AI tools like ChatGPT within the educational process, especially in teaching and learning languages, as a practical tool where students can use them to practice and use the language effectively and freely due to their accessibility and flexibility in providing a learning environment and constructive feedback to EFL students. Despite the findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Second, due to the lack of empirical experiments, the researcher relied only on surveys as a data collection tool, which might hinder the reliability of the findings.

Further studies are encouraged to investigate the impact of AI voice chat tools, such as ChatGPT, empirically to examine their impact on EFL students' speaking skills within a bigger sample size to ensure that the findings are reliable and generalizable.

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