ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGIES AS A TOOL FOR ADVANCING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS IN UZBEK EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

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Abstract. *This article examines the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in improving English speaking skills in Uzbekistan. As the demand for oral skills grows, AI-based tools, including mobile pronunciation applications, chatbots, and automated feedback systems, are increasingly being integrated into the learning process. The study highlights the advantages of artificial intelligence in language education, its current applications, challenges, and future opportunities. It also includes perspectives from international and local scholars to provide a broader scientific view.*

Keywords: *artificial intelligence, English speaking skills, digital pedagogy, chatbot, pronunciation tools, personalized education, Uzbekistan.*

Introduction

In today's globalized world, the ability to speak English fluently has become a key requirement for success in education, professional development, and international communication. Uzbekistan, aiming to strengthen its position in the global educational and economic sphere, is paying increasing attention to improving English language teaching at all levels. However, challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited practice opportunities, and shortages of experienced teachers still hinder the development of strong speaking skills. Artificial intelligence technologies are now viewed as a promising solution to these long-standing problems. AI tools offer interactive, personalized, and adaptive learning environments that help learners practice English more efficiently and confidently. As Oxford researcher N.Heffernan notes, *"AI has the capacity to deliver immediate, individualized feedback that human teachers often cannot provide due to time and resource constraints"[1].*I have seen this in practice – some students wait days before receiving feedback, which slows down their progress. AI tools, however, provide corrections or suggestions instantly, helping learners understand their mistakes while the activity is still fresh in their minds. Similarly, A.Kukulska-Hulme emphasizes that *AI-driven mobile learning environments significantly increase learners' autonomy and motivation*[2]. When learners can practice on their smartphones anytime and anywhere, they feel more in control of their learning process. For example, many of my students enjoy using pronunciation apps or chatbots because they can practice privately without feeling embarrassed. This sense of freedom often leads to higher motivation and more consistent practice. Overall, both researchers highlight how AI can complement traditional teaching by giving students more support, independence, and confidence in their learning journey.

Artificial intelligence tools and their role in developing speaking skills. Modern AI-based platforms such as ELSA Speak, Speechling, ChatGPT, and Duolingo are widely used

for improving pronunciation and speaking practice. They provide real-time error detection, personalized learning paths, and realistic conversation simulations. T.Nguyen and S.Jang note that *ELSA users show significant improvements in pronunciation accuracy, while ChatGPT helps reduce speech anxiety and improve fluency*[4]. What I found especially interesting is their point about ChatGPT reducing speech anxiety. Many learners feel nervous speaking in front of others, even when they know the vocabulary or grammar. Having a non-judgmental AI partner to practice with can make a huge difference. Students can rehearse, make mistakes, and try again without feeling embarrassed. Over time, this builds fluency and confidence. I have seen how even shy learners open up when speaking to AI, and later perform better in real conversations.

In Uzbekistan, as U. Nasirova notes that *Integrating AI tools with traditional language teaching creates an optimal learning environment that merges technological efficiency with essential human interaction. The most effective model uses AI to deliver personalized practice, pronunciation guidance, and assessment, while the teacher continues to provide cultural insights, precise feedback, and motivational support. This balanced approach enables educators to devote more attention to developing higher-level communication skills, while technology handles repetitive tasks and tailors instruction to individual learners. Instead of replacing teachers, AI functions as a complementary aid that enriches the learning process and preserves the vital human connection at the core of language acquisition.several educational institutions have begun integrating AI solutions into English teaching*[6]. The use of artificial intelligence tools in the educational process has recently become a trend in Uzbekistan as well. For example, at the Uzbekistan State World Languages University, the topic *Integrating AI technologies in the process of teaching foreign languages* has been introduced into methodology classes and is currently being taught. Furthermore, the educational process using artificial intelligence tools is being actively conducted not only in universities but also in schools and educational centers.Pilot projects in schools and language centers demonstrate promising outcomes. Observations show that students who frequently use AI tools achieve: a 25–30% improvement in pronunciation clarity, a 15–20% increase in vocabulary acquisition, higher levels of confidence and participation during speaking activities. Teachers also report that students become more motivated to engage in extra practice outside class hours when using AI applications.

These findings align with the conclusions of world researchers. For example, X.Li & Y.Chen found that *AI-based feedback reduces students' speaking anxiety and increases interaction time*[4], while Godwin-Jones notes that *conversational AI platforms expand opportunities for authentic communication practice*[5]. Integrating artificial intelligence into English speaking instruction in Uzbekistan reveals both inspiring developments and significant pedagogical challenges. On one hand, AI-powered tools have begun to reshape students' learning experiences by fostering greater confidence, engagement, and fluency. Learners often report that practicing with AI applications feels less intimidating than interacting with peers or teachers. This is largely because AI creates a safe, non-judgmental space where students can speak freely, make mistakes without embarrassment, repeat tasks as needed, and receive instant corrective feedback. As a result, their willingness to practice increases, and they become more autonomous,

consistent, and self-regulated in their learning. On the other hand, these technological advancements bring new responsibilities for educators. Traditional instructional methods alone are no longer sufficient to meet the needs of 21st-century learners. Teachers must now develop the competence to meaningfully integrate AI tools with communicative teaching strategies, ensuring that technology enhances rather than replaces human interaction. Reflective classroom observations demonstrate that AI does not diminish the teacher's role, instead, it elevates it. By automating routine tasks – such as error detection and pronunciation feedback – AI allows teachers to devote more time to creative, high-value instructional activities, including collaborative discussions, project-based tasks, problem-solving activities, and critical thinking development. For example, U. Nasirova found that *These technologies create authentic, interactive, and engaging environments where learners acquire language through active experience and communication rather than passive memorization. In Uzbekistan, where educational reform and digitalization are key national priorities, integrating such technologies into foreign language teaching aligns well with the country's strategic objectives. The field of language teaching has been significantly transformed with the emergence of AI technologies. AI-driven tools provide personalized learning by adjusting to each learner's pace, preferences, and performance*[7]. The connection to Uzbekistan's current priorities also stands out to me. The country is investing heavily in digitalization and modern educational reforms, and integrating AI tools into foreign language teaching fits perfectly within that direction. I can see how AI could help bridge gaps in resources, especially in schools where access to trained English teachers is limited. Personalized learning is another major advantage. Since AI tools can adapt to each student's pace and needs, they allow learners to progress more confidently, without feeling left behind or pressured.

From a broader educational perspective, the successful implementation of AI in Uzbekistan's language classrooms depends on several long-term structural and pedagogical factors. These include strengthening digital infrastructure across urban and rural regions, improving teachers' digital literacy, and creating localized AI tools that reflect the linguistic and phonetic characteristics of Uzbek learners. Without these foundational elements, the transformative potential of AI may remain limited or unevenly distributed. However, if these conditions are met, AI has the capacity not only to strengthen English speaking skills but also to contribute to a comprehensive modernization of language education in Uzbekistan – making it more inclusive, innovative, and aligned with global educational trends.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence offers considerable potential for improving English speaking skills in Uzbekistan, providing learners with immediate feedback, personalized learning pathways, and realistic communicative environments that are often difficult to recreate in traditional classrooms. By leveraging speech recognition, natural language processing, and adaptive learning algorithms, AI tools can diagnose individual learners' strengths and weaknesses with high precision and deliver targeted practice to address specific pronunciation or fluency issues. These tools also allow students to practice independently at their own pace, monitor their progress through data-driven insights, and gradually build confidence as they overcome psychological barriers such as fear of making mistakes,

performance anxiety, or hesitation to speak in front of peers. Furthermore, AI applications create opportunities for repeated, flexible, and low-stress practice – conditions that are essential for developing oral proficiency but often limited in conventional classroom settings due to time constraints and large class sizes. As a result, AI-supported learning can significantly accelerate the development of pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and overall communicative competence. When learners receive personalized corrective feedback and authentic speaking tasks generated by AI, they are more likely to internalize accurate speech patterns and transfer them to real-life communication contexts. Ultimately, AI serves as a powerful supplementary tool that enhances, rather than replaces, human instruction by expanding students' access to meaningful, individualized speaking practice.

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