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Exploring the role of ChatGPT voice conversation feature in improving EFL students' speaking self-efficacy

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in improving EFL students' speaking self-efficacy. A qualitative design supported by quantitative data was employed, involving 21 students from the English Education department selected through purposive sampling. The data were collected through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire result revealed that students' speaking self-efficacy was at a moderate level across all five dimensions: linguistic, communicative, task-specific, interactional, and affective self-efficacy. Meanwhile, the interview findings indicated that the ChatGPT voice conversation feature significantly enhanced students' speaking confidence by providing real-time feedback, affirmative responses, and a natural human-like interaction. It also provided a non-judgmental environment that allowed students to practice speaking independently, serving as a motivating speaking partner. Hence, this study highlights the potential of the ChatGPT voice conversation feature as an AI-based digital tool that can be integrated into language learning to foster students' speaking confidence and improve their speaking self-efficacy.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly influenced various aspects of life, including education, particularly in the realm of language learning. AI systems facilitate students in personalizing their learning experiences to meet their specific needs, thereby improving understanding and memory retention (Songsiengchai et al., 2023). It also supports students by offering more efficient options for greater engagement and creativity than conventional methods (Ermağan & Ermağan, 2022). Thus, English teaching and learning can be done with the help of AI, machine learning, intelligent search, and natural language processing (Wang, 2019). One of the increasingly popular implementations of AI that can be used to support English teaching and learning is ChatGPT.

ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence that uses a generative pre-trained transformer (GPT) architecture developed by OpenAI. Some of the features offered by ChatGPT include providing a flexible and supportive learning environment. Its ability to deliver real-time feedback, simulate authentic conversations, and create interactive exercises has made it a valuable tool in language education(Bouzar et al., 2024; Eliasson & Herkules, 2024; Zhou, 2023) that is useful for supporting English students. Furthermore, ChatGPT's capacity to process natural language allows it to foster engagement that closely resembles human-to-human interaction (Yan et al., 2024).

Among its useful features, the voice conversation feature is an attractive feature to use for speaking practice. This feature allows students to practice speaking in a comfortable environment without fear of being judged by others (Xu et al., 2024). This feature provides a natural conversation that allows users to interact directly with ChatGPT and aligns with human-to-human communication (Atlas, 2023). In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL), this feature has great potential for training students' speaking skills so they can communicate directly with teachers or native speakers. Furthermore, the voice conversation feature on ChatGPT is a technological innovation, yet also a pedagogical tool relevant to the current development era.

There are many benefits to integrating the ChatGPT voice conversation feature for speaking practice for EFL students. First, it helps students practice fluency and pronunciation independently without any time or place restrictions (Huang, 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2024). Second, the rapid response and variation from ChatGPT make students feel like they are having a conversation in real-time, creating immersive learning environments (Zhou, 2023). In addition, corrections and clarifications provided by the ChatGPT voice conversation feature when language errors occur can be reviewed by students either during or after the practice session. Private conversations with ChatGPT are also suitable for students who are shy or still afraid of public speaking because they are free from social judgment. These advantages have the potential to increase students' confidence and self-efficacy when speaking English.

Some previous studies explored the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in speaking skill teaching and learning. Several studies reported that ChatGPT's voice conversation feature helped students improve their fluency, accuracy, confidence, vocabulary, and grammar (Carrera Nuñez et al., 2025; Karjagdi Çolak, 2024; Nhu, 2024). In addition, students feel comfortable and motivated when speaking English with the ChatGPT voice conversation feature, and there is a significant improvement in grammar and vocabulary skills (Yildiz, 2024). These results confirm that ChatGPT, with its voice conversation feature, has great potential as an effective and inclusive language learning tool. However, studies on the impact of ChatGPT on students' psychological aspects, especially in terms of self-efficacy, are still very limited.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to complete tasks or achieve certain goals (Bandura, 1977). It has an important role in the context of English learning and teaching by building students' confidence in using the target language. In speaking, students with high levels of self-efficacy will participate more actively, achieve good results, communicate fluently, and remain resilient even when encountering mistakes or challenges (Kurniarizki & Prasetyarini, 2023; Sumanti & Muljani, 2021; Zhang & Ardasheva, 2019). While students with low self-efficacy tend to avoid speaking tasks because they feel unable to do so, experience speaking anxiety, and are passive during learning (Afifah et al., 2024; Serasi & Fransiska, 2020). Simply put, students' belief in their ability significantly influences their performance in speaking English, making self-efficacy development crucial in today's technology-integrated and communicative learning environment.

Bandura (1997) further identifies four main sources of self-efficacy: mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional states. Mastery experience refers to a person's past successes in performing tasks, which is the most influential source of self-confidence. In a speaking context, students are more likely to believe they can do the task again after they have completed a speaking task well, such as a presentation or dialogue. Vicarious experience is formed from seeing the success of others in finishing a similar task, for example, when students see their friends being able to have a dialogue in English. Furthermore, verbal persuasion can take the form of encouragement, support, feedback, or praise from others, such as teachers or friends. Lastly, emotional states are internal conditions, such as anxiety or comfort, that affect students' perception of their ability to speak English. Hence, the implementation of this theory is very useful for developing strategies to increase confidence and reduce anxiety in students when learning to speak.

The use of AI-based technology, such as ChatGPT, is in line with the development of students' self-efficacy in speaking skills. Students have the opportunity to learn English independently without social pressure or fear of being judged, which is in line with mastery experiences (Flores Limo et al., 2023). Students can also obtain vicarious experience through responsive dialogue simulations and realistic conversations (Kohnke, 2023). In addition, ChatGPT provides positive feedback, which acts as verbal

persuasion and creates a more relaxed and less anxious learning environment (Jeon et al., 2023). Therefore, ChatGPT's voice conversation feature can serve as a communication tool that supports psychological reinforcement in developing students' speaking self-efficacy in English.

In the context of English language learning in Indonesia, there are still many students who are anxious about speaking English (Riadil, 2020). Students are still hampered by linguistic factors (material mastery, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar), feeling anxious, nervous, and afraid of being viewed negatively by their peers (Fitriani et al., 2022; Syahfutra, 2021). Generally, previous studies on AI in language learning mainly focused in linguistic aspect improvement, such as vocabulary, speaking fluency, and pronunciation. However, attention towards the psychological aspect, specifically self-efficacy, is still relatively limited. Moreover, studies that specifically examine the ChatGPT voice conversation feature in improving students' speaking self-efficacy, especially in the Indonesian context, are still limited.

Hence, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the role of the ChatGPT voice conversation feature in improving EFL students' speaking self-efficacy. To achieve the objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated:

1) How does the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature relate to EFL students' speaking self-efficacy?

2) How do EFL students perceive the role of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in enhancing their self-efficacy and ability in speaking English?

By addressing these questions, the study is expected to provide new insights into the integration of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in learning to speak and offer innovative solutions to the challenges faced by students of English as a foreign language.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A qualitative design supported by quantitative data was employed in this study to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research issue (Creswell, 2014). In the initial phase, the researcher gathered numerical data using a questionnaire to measure students' self-efficacy in speaking English using ChatGPT's voice conversation feature through frequency and percentage analysis. Subsequently, a qualitative phase was conducted using a semi-structured interview to explore respondents' personal experiences and perspectives using the ChatGPT voice conversation feature. The reason for adopting this approach is that numerical data and subsequent analysis can provide a thorough understanding of the research issue. The qualitative findings enhance the interpretation of the statistical results, thereby allowing the researcher to gain a deeper and holistic understanding of the research issue.

Research Subject

The subjects in this study were students of the English Education department at one of the state Islamic universities in Indonesia who were actively attending lectures in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The population in this study amounted to around 164 students from the 3rd semester. The sample in this study amounted to 21 student who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. This technique was chosen because the researchers had special criteria in determining the sample. Although the sample size is small, purposive sampling focuses on selecting participants who meet certain criteria and are relevant to the research objectives. In qualitative research, a smaller sample size is still acceptable as long as it provides in-depth and meaningful data (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the data obtained from the participants is considered sufficient to present their experiences and perspectives towards the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature. The inclusion criteria for respondents are: being an active student in the English Education department, currently enrolled in the 3rd semester, and having used the ChatGPT voice conversation feature at least three times. In compliance with ethical issues, the respondents were informed of the research purpose and implementation, and were assured their participation would remain confidential.

Research Instruments

There were two research instruments used in this study: a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. To collect quantitative data, the researchers used the speaking self-efficacy questionnaire adapted from (Wang & Sun, 2024) to examine students' speaking self-efficacy. The scale consists of five sub-dimensions: linguistic self-efficacy, communicative self-efficacy, task-specific self-efficacy, interactional self-efficacy, and affective self-efficacy. The questionnaire consists of 25 statement items with a 5-point Likert scale.

Moreover, qualitative data to explore students' perception of the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature to enhance their speaking self-efficacy were gathered through semi-structured interviews. The interview guide consists of 10 questions based on self-efficacy dimension which include linguistic, communicative, task-specific, interactional, and affective dimensions. Each question explores students' experience and perception of how the ChatGPT voice conversation feature influences their self-efficacy in communicating using English.

Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to answer the research questions. The quantitative data were gathered using a speaking self-efficacy questionnaire. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would remain confidential. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale, adapted from the speaking self-efficacy questionnaire developed by. Before the main data collection, the questionnaire was piloted on a small group of students (n = 20) to evaluate clarity and reliability. After necessary revisions,

the final version of the questionnaire was distributed to all respondents via Google Forms. Data collection lasted for one week, during which respondents were allowed flexible time to complete the questionnaire. To ensure data quality, incomplete or suspicious responses were excluded from the analysis.

Qualitative data were collected through a semi-structured interview. A total of 7 respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique, namely 2 with the highest scores, 2 with medium scores, and 3 with the lowest scores on the questionnaire results. This selection aims to ensure that the qualitative data obtained can represent the experiences and views of students at various levels of confidence in speaking English. The interview lasted for approximately 15-20 minutes, using 10 questions in Indonesian so that respondents could more easily understand and express their opinions using their mother tongue. The topic focuses on respondents' experiences and views regarding the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in improving English speaking self-efficacy. All interview sessions were recorded as audio files for transcribing purposes. Transcripts will be bilingual, including respondent codes, Indonesian responses, and English translations.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data obtained from the self-efficacy questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics in IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. The analysis used frequency and percentage calculations for each answer option (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) for each question choice. This aimed to describe the distribution of students' confidence levels across the five dimensions of the scale. The data from the questionnaire results were then tabulated to clarify the interpretation of the data.

Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were analysed using thematic analysis based on the procedure described by Schreiber & Asner-Self (2011). First, the researchers read the interview transcripts repeatedly to familiarize themselves with and comprehensively understand the content. Then, they manually labelled relevant quotes as initial codes related to the five dimensions being studied. The codes were then collected and identified to find themes that emerged in each dimension to discover patterns. The next stage was to review and refine the themes to ensure their consistency and uniqueness across the dataset. The themes were named to reflect the respondents' perceptions of the use of ChatGPT's voice chat feature in increasing their confidence in speaking. Finally, the researchers presented a detailed report of each theme along with sample quotes from respondents.

RESULTS

In this section, the results of the study are presented based on students' perceptions of the use of the ChatGPT voice conversation feature in enhancing their speaking self-efficacy. To address the first research question on how the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature relates to students' speaking self-efficacy, the questionnaire

results are presented with five dimensions. The results are organized into five categories: linguistic self-efficacy, communicative self-efficacy, task-specific self-efficacy, interactional self-efficacy, and affective self-efficacy. In addition, to answer the second research question regarding students' perceptions, the interview results are included within each dimension to provide deeper insights.

Linguistic Self-Efficacy

In general, students responded positively to the use of the ChatGPT voice conversation feature as a digital tool that helps improve their linguistic self-efficacy (as seen in Table 1). 33% of the students agreed, and 48% remained neutral regarding their ability to use accurate grammar. Meanwhile, 47% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they could pronounce English words correctly.

Table 1. Students' Perception of ChatGPT Voice Feature for Linguistic Self-Efficacy

No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I can use accurate grammar when speaking English with ChatGPT	0%	33%	48%	14%	5%
2	I can pronounce English words correctly during conversations with ChatGPT's voice	14%	33%	29%	19%	5%
3	I can speak fluently without frequent pauses when using ChatGPT	10%	14%	48%	28%	0%
4	I can express my ideas with appropriate vocabulary when using ChatGPT	14%	43%	19%	19%	5%
5	I can organize my sentences logically when talking to ChatGPT	10%	38%	29%	23%	0%

**SA-Strongly agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree*

Furthermore, 24% of the students strongly agreed and agreed that they could speak fluently without frequent pauses, while 48% remained neutral. 57% students also agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to express ideas using appropriate vocabulary when using the ChatGPT voice conversation feature. Similarly, 48% of students strongly agreed and agreed to organize sentences logically during conversations with the ChatGPT voice conversation feature. Only a small portion, around 5–28%, disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements, suggesting that although most students perceived improvement, some still experienced hesitation or difficulty in maintaining linguistic accuracy while speaking.

These results were supported by the interview findings. Most respondents acknowledge improvement in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary after practicing with ChatGPT voice conversation. For example, Respondent 2 stated:

> *"Sometimes when I speak, I still get confused about my grammar, whether it's correct or not. But luckily, I'm helped by the transcript feature that I can read after interacting with ChatGPT. So, I can learn grammar through the transcript text."*

Similarly, Respondent 1 mentioned:

> *"I feel like my pronunciation when speaking English is still not perfect because of my thick Javanese accent. So, by practicing more often with ChatGPT Voice, I can practice and understand how to pronounce English vocabulary correctly."*

However, some respondents still felt hesitant when speaking. As Respondent 7 expressed,

> *"When I talk to the ChatGPT voice conversation feature, I still need time and a break to think about what else to say next. even though I'm talking to AI, not to a real person."*

These findings indicate that while the ChatGPT voice conversation feature effectively improves students' linguistic awareness and abilities, some students still have doubts about their fluency in speaking English.

Communicative Self-Efficacy

Students' responses toward their communicative self-efficacy when using the ChatGPT voice conversation feature revealed a generally positive perception (Table 2). About 52% of the students strongly agreed and agreed that they could maintain conversations naturally, and 39% of them strongly agreed and agreed could explain complex ideas using English. In addition, 47% of them strongly agreed and agreed that they were able to ask and answer questions effectively, also 66% strongly agreed and agreed that they could rephrase or clarify their ideas when misunderstandings occurred. However, a noticeable portion of students disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statements related to maintaining conversations and explaining complex ideas. This indicates that while ChatGPT's voice conversation feature encourages interaction and communication practice, some students still struggle with more demanding communicative tasks.

Table 2. Students' Perception of ChatGPT Voice Feature for Communicative Self-Efficacy

No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
6	I can maintain a conversation naturally with ChatGPT without getting lost	14%	38%	14%	29%	5%
7	I can explain complex ideas in English using ChatGPT's voice conversation	10%	29%	29%	22%	10%

8	I can ask and answer questions effectively when practicing with ChatGPT	14%	33%	38%	10%	5%
9	I can rephrase or clarify my ideas if ChatGPT doesn't understand me	33%	33%	24%	0%	10%

The interview data supported this finding. One respondent mentioned,

> *"I still find it difficult to speak, especially when I want to explain something complex. I usually pause first because my vocabulary is limited and my pronunciation is not quite right*." (Respondent 3)

This quote reflects the challenges when trying to express complex ideas in English. On the other hand, another respondent noted,

> *"Sometimes when my pronunciation isn't clear, there can be misunderstandings between me and the ChatGPT voice* conversation *feature. When that happens, I immediately clarify what I actually mean so that the context of the conversation doesn't change."* (Respondent 4)

This suggests that students have developed strategies to clarify their speech when misunderstandings occur, which aligns with the high percentage of agreement in rephrasing and clarification items. These findings imply that the ChatGPT voice conversation feature provides interactive conversation and immediate feedback, which can help students to enhance communicative self-efficacy. However, some students still face difficulties in expressing complex ideas due to a lack of vocabulary and pronunciation.

Task-Specific Self-Efficacy

The findings of task-specific self-efficacy when using ChatGPT voice conversation is demonstrated in the following Table 3. Most responses fell within the agree and neutral categories. It is suggested that the tool was generally helpful in preparing for speaking-related academic tasks, though some students still faced difficulties in transferring their practice to real-life contexts. The highest agreement, 48%, felt more prepared for speaking assignments after using the feature. It is also followed by 47% of students agreed that ChatGPT voice helped them prepare for oral presentations, and 43% of students were more confident complete speaking tasks in class after practicing with the ChatGPT voice feature. However, the items related to students' ability to respond better in speaking exams and handle topic-based discussions in class showed a slightly more varied pattern, with 28% and 29% of students disagreeing with each statement. This suggests that some students were still uncertain about the overall effectiveness of the feature.

Table 3. Students' Responses to ChatGPT Voice Feature for Task-Specific Self-Efficacy

No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
10	I can use ChatGPT to prepare for oral presentations in class.	14%	33%	33%	10%	10%
11	I can complete speaking tasks more confidently after practicing with ChatGPT	10%	33%	42%	10%	5%
12	I can respond better in speaking exams because of my ChatGPT practice	10%	29%	33%	23%	5%
13	I can handle topic-based discussions in class better after training with ChatGPT	0%	33%	38%	24%	5%
14	Practicing with ChatGPT makes me feel more prepared for speaking assignments	10%	38%	38%	9%	5%

This percentage result is further supported by the interview data, in which one respondent explained,

> *"I can learn and practice with the ChatGPT voice conversation feature by asking for suggestions about what I should say during a presentation and what things are unnecessary to mention. It helps me make my presentation more focused and less wordy."* (Respondent 7)

This implies that ChatGPT's voice conversation feature offering practical assistant and feedback for academic speaking tasks such as classroom presentations. Another respondent also acknowledged that ChatGPT's voice conversation feature helped her feel more confident and ready for real class speaking situations:

> *"While using the ChatGPT voice* conversation *feature, I feel that my speaking skills have improved. I practice often, so I feel more confident and better prepared to speak directly in class because I have already discussed the same topics with the ChatGPT voice* conversation *feature."* (Respondent 4)

This quote highlights repeated practice on similar topics with the ChatGPT voice conversation feature, which is the role of mastery experience. It increased the students' confidence in facing actual classroom speaking situations. However, not all respondents experienced the same level of improvement. One respondent admitted,

> *"Sometimes, I feel confused about what to say or how to continue the topic when speaking directly in class."* (Respondent 6)

This indicates that some students are still facing anxiety when speaking English in classroom discussions or speaking exams, while ChatGPT's voice feature helps them to build confidence. Overall, ChatGPT's voice feature is useful as a tool for preparing for specific speaking tasks by offering flexible feedback. However, its impact may be limited by students' confidence and readiness to perform under real communication.

Interactional Self-Efficacy

Based on Table 4, most of students responded neutrally across items, indicating that while the feature is beneficial, its impact may vary with individual experience. For instance, 42% of students reported feeling neutral about initiating English conversations, maintaining two-way conversations with peers, and responding to unexpected questions in class. Meanwhile, 52% strongly agreed and agreed that ChatGPT's voice feature helped them practice turn-taking and active listening, and 38% felt it supported spontaneous speech in real-life communication.

Table 4. Students' Responses to ChatGPT Voice Feature for Interactional Self-Efficacy

No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
15	I feel confident initiating conversations in English after using ChatGPT	14%	29%	42%	10%	5%
16	I can maintain a two-way conversation with peers more easily after using ChatGPT	5%	33%	42%	10%	10%
17	I am more confident responding to unexpected questions in class after using ChatGPT	10%	24%	42%	24%	0%
18	Practicing with ChatGPT helps me speak more spontaneously in real-life conversations	5%	33%	38%	14%	10%
19	ChatGPT voice conversations help me practice turn-taking and active listening	19%	33%	38%	5%	5%

The interview results supported these findings. One respondent shared,

> *"I feel more nervous when talking directly with people or spontaneously in class than when talking to ChatGPT's voice feature."* (Respondent 5)

This showed that ChatGPT's voice feature is a less intimidating tool for practicing spontaneous speaking compared to real-life interactions. Another respondent added,

> *"I also feel that my listening skills have improved during interactions with the ChatGPT voice* conversation *feature."* (Respondent 3)

This reflects the benefits of using AI to help train active listening and turn-taking skills during dialogue.

Thus, ChatGPT's voice feature plays a role in increasing students' confidence during interactions due to provides realistic speaking partner without pressure. This tool is

approved to foster listening comprehension actively and talking spontaneously supportive environment, while some students are still hesitant when it comes to the real-life context.

Affective Self-Efficacy

This dimension focuses on students' emotional self-efficacy, which reflects their confidence in managing emotions related to speaking performance. Based on the questionnaire results, most students reported positive emotional changes after practicing with ChatGPT voice conversation (Table 5). A total of 34% of students strongly agreed and agreed that ChatGPT's voice feature helped reduce their anxiety and made them more prepared emotionally when speaking English in class. Furthermore, 52% of the respondents reported feeling more relaxed after regular practice sessions, and 47% enjoyed speaking English more after using the feature. Another 62% of students also stated that they felt more confident making mistakes because ChatGPT's voice feature did not judge them, while 57% agreed that the feature boosted their motivation to keep practicing. These responses indicate that the ChatGPT voice conversation feature contributed positively to students' emotional readiness and comfort in using English.

Table 5. Students' Responses to ChatGPT Voice Feature for Affective Self-Efficacy

No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
20	Practicing with ChatGPT reduces my anxiety when speaking English in class	5%	29%	38%	23%	5%
21	I feel more relaxed speaking English after regular ChatGPT voice practice	5%	47%	38%	10%	0%
22	I enjoy speaking English more after using ChatGPT's voice conversation feature	14%	33%	29%	24%	0%
23	I feel more confident making mistakes in English because ChatGPT does not judge	29%	33%	19%	14%	5%
24	ChatGPT voice conversation boosts my motivation to practice speaking English	19%	38%	28%	10%	5%
25	I feel more emotionally prepared to speak English in public after using ChatGPT	10%	24%	47%	14%	5%

These findings were supported by the interview data. One respondent stated,

> *"The feedback I get from the ChatGPT voice* conversation *feature is always positive and helps me feel confident. It gives me positive affirmations and compliments, so I don't feel insecure when speaking English. Now I enjoy the process more, even though I still make mistakes when speaking."* (Respondent 6)

However, around 28% of student still showed disagreement related to anxiety reduction. This indicates that ChatGPT's voice feature helps reduce speaking tension, and some students still experience nervousness in real-life classroom contexts. The qualitative findings supported this mixed response.

Respondent 1 explained,

> *"I feel more relaxed when talking to the ChatGPT voice* conversation *feature. Meanwhile, I still don't dare to speak fully in class because I'm still doubting my own abilities."*

Similarly, Respondent 5 expressed concerns about possible misunderstandings during real-life communication.

> *"I'm still worried that when I talk to people, my message won't be understood or maybe won't be conveyed properly, so I'm afraid there will be misunderstandings."*

These responses showed that the ChatGPT voice conversation feature could help students to build confidence in a more relaxed environment. However, some students still face anxiety and self-doubt when applying those skills in real-classroom interaction.

In general, the result of this study indicates that the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature could provide a supportive environment psychologically to students. It can be used as a speaking practice without the fear of being judged. The environment contributes to confidence improvement, enjoyment, emotional readiness, and students' motivation in speaking English. However, some students still face a certain anxiety, which shows the need for real-life communication exposure to complete AI-based practice.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore how the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature relates to students' speaking self-efficacy and how students perceive its role in enhancing their speaking ability. The findings clearly address the two research questions. Regarding the first research question, the results show that using ChatGPT's voice conversation feature generally had a positive influence on students' self-efficacy, including linguistic,

communicative, task-specific, interaction, and affective aspects. At the same time, regarding the second research question, the findings indicate that students perceive ChatGPT as a supportive, interactive, and low-pressure speaking partner that helps them to build their confidence, practice speaking, and keep the communication more natural. However, some challenges are still found when students are faced with real-life communication that triggers anxiety and self-doubt.

Improvement in students' language skills, such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, could be explained through real-time feedback and transcripts that allow students to review their dialogues. This helps students to notice mistakes and make corrections independently. This finding is in line with Bouzar et al., (2024) and Eliasson & Herkules (2024), who highlighted that real-time feedback and transcript features helped students increase grammar accuracy. It is also consistent with Nhu (2024) that an AI-based speaking tool, such as ChatGPT, supports students in improving their pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar awareness. This suggests that the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature can be integrated into language learning by promoting students' linguistic awareness and accuracy through independent practice.

Moreover, the use of voice conversation features also plays a role in helping students to prepare speaking tasks, such as question-and-answer practice and presentations. Students can practice independently, correcting mistakes, and also improve their preparedness before performing in the classroom. Similar results were found by Huang (2024)that practicing with ChatGPT's voice feature before presentations could enhance students' confidence and reduce stage anxiety. It reflects Bandura's concepts about mastery experience, which states that prior achievement enhances future performance expectations. Thus, using ChatGPT's voice conversation feature not only enhances linguistic skills but also fosters students' autonomous learning in improving their speaking ability.

Students' interaction skills have also improved, mainly in maintaining conversation and responding more naturally. It is explained by the interactive nature of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature, which can ask follow-up questions and keep the conversation engaged. This feature allows students to practice in more dynamic, contextualized conversational situations. This is supported by the findings of Yan et al., (2024), who reported that ChatGPT uses natural language processing (NLP) that makes it possible to create human-like conversations. Through these conversations, students learn to maintain natural conversation and respond appropriately. It is reflecting on vicarious experience as proposed by Bandura, which individuals learn by observation and indirect experiences. Therefore, this feature served as a speaking partner that helps students develop more natural communication skills.

In the affective aspect, the study showed that the use of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature has a significant impact on self-efficacy improvement, reducing anxiety, and boosting students' motivation in speaking English. This can be explained by the non-judgmental learning environment, so that students feel more comfortable and do not

fear making mistakes during practice sessions. This aligns with Xu et al., (2024), who stated ChatGPT provides a safe space to practice without fear of being judged. In addition, positive and supportive feedback from the ChatGPT voice conversation feature also plays an important role in building students' confidence. These findings are consistent with Jeon et al., (2023) which ChatGPT gave positive feedback and create relaxed learning environment and less anxiety. This is also similar to the verbal persuasive concept by Bandura, which highlights that supported feedback could strengthen students' self-confidence.

Despite the improvements in all dimensions, students continue to report anxiety and self-doubt when speaking in a real-life context. This reflects Bandura's concepts about emotional and physiological state, which emphasizes that emotions, stress, and mood influence self-efficacy. Thus, students' internal belief is still a crucial factor in improving higher self-efficacy, although sophisticated technology is provided. Authentic communication and teachers' guidance are also essential to strengthen emotional stability and students' confidence in a real-life context. Hence, this suggests integrating ChatGPT's voice feature in English language learning activities could function as a speaking tool that is accessible and low anxiety.

This research has some implications: practical, theoretical, and policy-related. Practically, these findings indicate that ChatGPT's voice conversation feature could be integrated as an innovation to support classroom interaction and speaking practice based on technology. Theoretically, it also fosters the framework of Bandura's self-efficacy concept that can be combined and developed with an AI tool. In addition, from a policy-related perspective, this study suggests that the education institute and curriculum developer should ensure students have chances to build confidence and promote autonomous learning by integrating an AI-based speaking tool.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the role of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature in improving EFL students' speaking self-efficacy. The findings showed that the use of this tool positively influenced students' self-efficacy, especially in linguistic, communicative, task-specific, interactional, and affective dimensions. By this feature, ChatGPT provides real-time feedback, emotional support, and chances for students to practice independently, as well which contributed to the development of speaking self-efficacy in various dimensions. These results highlight the potential of AI-based tools to support autonomous and confidence-building learning environments for EFL students. However, while technology enhances students' self-belief, real communication experiences and teacher guidance remain important to sustain long-term self-efficacy.

These findings provide several recommendations for students, teachers, and future research. For students, the ChatGPT voice conversation feature can be utilized as a self-learning tool to practice speaking independently and develop confidence through

autonomous learning. For teachers, it can be integrated into classroom activities as a supplementary medium to provide students with low-anxiety speaking practice and immediate feedback. For future research, further studies are encouraged to explore how AI interactions can be integrated more effectively into the classroom experience and to examine their impact on students' real-life speaking performance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declared no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

AUTHOR (S) CONTRIBUTION

Wahyuningtyas, R.T.: conceptualization (lead), methodology (lead), collected and analyzed the data (lead), writing-original draft (lead), review and editing (supporting); Suparmi: conceptualization (supporting), methodology (supporting), analyzed the data (supporting), writing-original draft (supporting), review and editing (lead).

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