

Students' Perceptions of Chatgpt as a Speaking Partner in Tourism English Role-Play: Implications For AI-Enhanced Language Learning

*[Persepsi Mahasiswa tentang Chatgpt sebagai Mitra Berbicara dalam Permainan
Peran Bahasa Inggris Pariwisata: Implikasi Untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa yang
Ditingkatkan AI]*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions of 25 English for Tourism Industry students at the State Polytechnic of Malang on using ChatGPT as a speaking partner in tour guide role-plays. The research aimed to evaluate its effectiveness in improving fluency, vocabulary, and confidence, while noting challenges such as speech recognition errors, limited response variety, and technical issues. Data were gathered through Likert-scale questionnaires and open-ended responses and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results showed that students valued ChatGPT for vocabulary enrichment and fluency practice, though it was seen as a complement rather than a substitute for human interaction. The study highlighted the potential of integrating AI into Tourism English curricula while calling for enhanced feedback and conversational realism.

Keywords: *artificial intelligence, language learning, speaking practice, student's perceptions*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji persepsi 25 mahasiswa Program Studi English for Tourism Industry di Politeknik Negeri Malang terhadap penggunaan ChatGPT sebagai mitra percakapan dalam role-play pemandu wisata. Tujuannya adalah menilai efektivitas ChatGPT dalam meningkatkan kelancaran, kosa kata, dan kepercayaan diri, serta mengidentifikasi kendala seperti kesalahan pengenalan ucapan, variasi respons terbatas, dan masalah teknis. Data diperoleh melalui kuesioner skala Likert dan pertanyaan terbuka, kemudian dianalisis secara kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa ChatGPT membantu pengayaan kosa kata dan latihan kelancaran, meski dipandang hanya sebagai pelengkap, bukan pengganti, interaksi manusia. Studi ini menekankan potensi integrasi AI dalam kurikulum English for Tourism dengan rekomendasi peningkatan umpan balik dan realisme percakapan.

Kata Kunci: kecerdasan buatan, pembelajaran bahasa, latihan berbicara, persepsi mahasiswa

Introduction

Background

In the evolving landscape of education, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping traditional teaching paradigms. AI, particularly in the form of chatbots and speech recognition technologies, has been lauded for its potential to enhance the language learning process. Traditionally, language learners had to rely on in-person interactions or text-based resources to develop speaking skills. However, AI-driven tools have opened up unprecedented opportunities for learners to engage in dynamic, 24/7 conversations, offering instant feedback and real-time conversation simulations that were once exclusively available through human interaction (Nguyen, 2024). These innovations are especially promising in contexts where language practice has traditionally been limited by the availability of speaking partners or time constraints (Putri, Nurul, & Asdar, 2023).

One of the most significant breakthroughs in the AI landscape is the emergence of large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT. These tools offer learners an opportunity to engage in interactive dialogues, simulating real-world communication scenarios such as those faced by tour guides or tourists. The potential of AI tools to improve fluency, enhance vocabulary acquisition, and build confidence in learners is backed by several studies, particularly in the realm of Tourism English (TE) education (Wiboolyasarin et al., 2021). In Tourism English programs, where students are preparing for professional environments such as tourism agencies or hospitality services, real-world conversations are a central aspect of the curriculum. Here, AI tools that simulate tour guide scenarios can offer a valuable resource for building both language skills and cultural understanding.

Despite the promising benefits, AI tools have been met with some reservations. Notably, concerns persist about AI's limitations in offering personal engagement and context-specific learning (Nhan, 2023). While AI can simulate dialogue, it struggles to replicate the human touch—such as emotional engagement, cultural sensitivity, and the nuanced understanding of social contexts—elements that are vital for authentic language

learning experiences (Qiao & Zhao, 2022). AI systems also face recognition errors, especially when dealing with diverse accents and pronunciation variations that may hinder their effectiveness in language practice (Zou et al., 2023).

As the integration of AI in language education continues to expand, its application in Tourism English (TE) has received limited attention. This research addresses this gap by focusing on AI-based role-play simulations in TE programs, specifically examining how ChatGPT can be used as a speaking partner in tour guide simulations. The study aims to explore students' perceptions of ChatGPT's usefulness, engagement level, and its impact on confidence in speaking English.

Purpose of the Study

The primary goal of this study is to investigate how students majoring in English for Tourism Industry at the State Polytechnic of Malang perceive ChatGPT as a speaking partner in a role-play activity designed to simulate a tour guide scenario. Specifically, the research will assess:

1. How students perceive the effectiveness, engagement, and usefulness of ChatGPT as a tool for improving speaking proficiency.
2. What challenges students encountered while interacting with ChatGPT in a tour guide context.
3. How the use of AI-based simulations influences students' confidence and motivation to speak English.
4. Whether students believe that AI should complement or replace human interaction in language practice.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions of using ChatGPT as a speaking partner in a tour guide role-play simulation?
2. What challenges did students face when using ChatGPT for the role-play task?

3. How did using ChatGPT as a speaking partner influence students' confidence and motivation in speaking English?
4. Do students believe that AI should complement or replace human interaction in language practice?

Significance of the Study

This research contributes to the growing literature on the integration of AI tools in language education, specifically in the Tourism English domain. By providing a context-specific examination of ChatGPT's role in language learning, the study explores the perceptions of learners and offers pedagogical insights into AI's potential for enhancing speaking skills. As AI tools like ChatGPT become more integrated into language education, this study aims to guide future curriculum development and AI tool integration strategies that focus on authentic language practice and the preservation of human-centered teaching (Joo, 2024; Du & Daniel, 2023).

Literature Review

The integration of AI tools in language education has gained significant attention over the past few years. AI-powered systems such as chatbots and speech recognition technologies are transforming how language learners engage with speaking practice. These tools offer personalized, interactive learning experiences that provide immediate feedback and the opportunity to practice real-world scenarios. This chapter will explore the role of AI chatbots and speech recognition systems in language education, particularly their impact on fluency, pronunciation, and self-regulated learning. It will also address the limitations of AI, emphasizing the need for human-AI complementarity in Tourism English (TE) contexts.

AI Chatbots in Language Education

AI chatbots have become a popular tool in language learning due to their ability to simulate authentic conversations and offer immediate, real-time feedback. Chatbots such as ChatGPT can be

programmed to engage in dynamic dialogues, providing students with the chance to practice language skills without the anxiety or pressure often associated with speaking in front of others (Wiboolyasarini et al., 2021). Recent studies have shown that AI chatbots are particularly effective in improving speaking proficiency, enhancing fluency, and reducing language anxiety (Putri, Nurul & Asdar, 2023). By interacting with AI, learners can gain confidence in speaking without the fear of judgment, which is a significant barrier in traditional classroom settings.

The personalization offered by chatbots is another key advantage. AI chatbots can provide feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary usage, allowing students to practice specific areas where they may need improvement (Joo, 2024). This is particularly beneficial in the context of self-regulated learning, where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by engaging with AI tools at their own pace (Li et al., 2022).

In Tourism English (TE), chatbots can simulate tour guide scenarios, such as interacting with a tourist or answering questions about local attractions. This provides students with the opportunity to practice professional language skills in a context-specific setting, mirroring real-world tasks they may encounter in their careers (Putri, Nurul & Asdar, 2023). For example, students can practice giving recommendations, explaining local culture, and handling tourist inquiries.

However, while the benefits of AI chatbots in promoting learner engagement and fluency are well documented, several limitations persist. One of the primary issues is the speech recognition ability of chatbots. AI systems often struggle with understanding non-native accents, varied speech patterns, and pronunciation variations, which can lead to misrecognition errors. Such challenges can frustrate students and limit the effectiveness of the chatbot (Nhan, 2023; Qiao & Zhao, 2022). Moreover, AI chatbots, while effective in providing structured feedback, often produce responses that lack the natural variety and depth of human interaction, which makes conversations feel monotonous and predictable (Zou et al., 2023).

This highlights the importance of a balanced approach, where AI tools serve as a complementary resource to human interaction rather than a replacement for it. As Joo (2024) and Nguyen (2024) argue, AI chatbots can facilitate practice opportunities but should be integrated alongside human instructors who can provide the emotional engagement and contextual understanding that AI lacks.

The Role of AI in Reducing Language Anxiety

One of the most cited advantages of using AI chatbots in language education is their ability to reduce language anxiety, a common barrier for language learners. Wiboolyasarini et al. (2021) found that students felt more comfortable practicing their speaking skills with a chatbot than with human partners, as AI provides a low-pressure environment free from the fear of judgment. This psychological safety allows learners to practice more frequently, leading to increased speaking fluency over time.

In the context of Tourism English, where students may be required to engage with foreign tourists or customers in real-world situations, this reduction in anxiety is particularly beneficial. Students can practice tourism-related dialogues and customer service interactions without the pressure of performing in front of a live audience. This aligns with findings by Du & Daniel (2023), who suggest that AI tools like chatbots provide a safe space for learners to experiment with language, take risks, and make mistakes—all essential aspects of the learning process.

AI-Powered Speech Recognition in Language Education

In addition to chatbots, AI-powered speech recognition systems play an important role in language learning. Tools like ELSA Speak and Duolingo have demonstrated the ability to help students improve their pronunciation and fluency by offering real-time feedback on speech production (Li et al., 2022; Zou et al., 2023). These AI systems use automatic speech evaluation to track the accuracy of a learner's pronunciation, offering corrections and suggestions in real time. This

feedback is personalized to each learner, making it a powerful tool for improving pronunciation over time.

Impact on Pronunciation and Fluency

AI-driven speech recognition tools have been shown to have a positive impact on the accuracy of vowel and consonant production, intonation patterns, and overall speech fluency. In Tourism English settings, where clear and accurate communication is essential for success, AI tools can help students refine their speaking skills, ensuring that they can effectively articulate recommendations and respond to tourist inquiries. Research by Putri, Nurul & Asdar (2023) supports this, showing that AI-based pronunciation tools can significantly improve the phonetic accuracy of non-native speakers, particularly in the context of professional interactions.

However, despite their benefits, speech recognition systems are not without their limitations. Students have frequently reported frustration with misrecognition errors, particularly when dealing with non-native accents or complex pronunciation patterns (Qiao & Zhao, 2022). While these systems have made significant progress, they still struggle with contextual understanding, often failing to provide nuanced feedback on more complex language tasks.

This issue highlights the need for human mediation in language learning, especially in professional settings like tourism, where the subtleties of intonation, empathy, and cultural nuances are crucial (Nhan, 2023). As Zou et al. (2023) suggest, AI can provide structural support for improving basic pronunciation and fluency, but human interaction remains essential for developing context-specific communication skills.

The Complementary Role of AI in Tourism English

The findings from various studies underscore the idea that AI tools, such as chatbots and speech recognition systems, should complement human interaction rather than replace it. While AI can provide valuable practice opportunities, it lacks the emotional engagement and cultural understanding that human interlocutors can offer. For instance, in the context of Tourism English, students may need

to engage in personalized interactions, such as offering empathy or cultural insights, which are difficult for AI to replicate.

Nhan (2023) and Qiao & Zhao (2022) emphasize that learners view AI as a complementary tool that supports language learning but cannot replace the depth and authenticity of human communication. In this study, students expressed a clear preference for AI to complement human practice, providing additional opportunities for language production outside of class, rather than replacing face-to-face interactions with human teachers or peers.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to explore students' perceptions of using ChatGPT as a speaking partner. The mixed-methods approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of how AI tools like ChatGPT can impact speaking practice in an English for Tourism Industry context.

Quantitative Component

The quantitative aspect of this study involved the use of a 14-item Likert-scale questionnaire. This questionnaire was administered to students after they engaged in a 10-minute role-play conversation with ChatGPT acting as a tourist. The questions were designed to assess the following dimensions of their experience with ChatGPT:

1. Usefulness – How effective students found ChatGPT in helping them practice speaking.
2. Confidence – The extent to which ChatGPT improved students' confidence in speaking English.
3. Engagement – How engaging and motivating the conversation with ChatGPT was.
4. Challenges – Problems encountered, such as recognition errors or limited responses from the AI tool.

5. Preference – Whether students preferred using ChatGPT or human interaction for language practice.

The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to rate each statement. This scale provided quantitative data on students' perceptions and allowed for easy comparisons between different items, highlighting the areas where ChatGPT excelled and where it encountered challenges.

Qualitative Component

In addition to the quantitative survey, the study also included a qualitative component in the form of open-ended questions. These questions allowed students to reflect more deeply on their experiences with ChatGPT and provide more detailed, personal feedback. The open-ended questions included prompts such as:

- “What did you like most about using ChatGPT for speaking practice?”
- “What challenges did you encounter while using ChatGPT?”
- “How can ChatGPT be improved to better support your speaking practice?”

These qualitative responses offered valuable insights into students' emotional engagement, psychological safety, and perceived limitations of AI-driven language learning tools. The open-ended questions also helped identify recurring themes related to students' preferences, difficulties, and suggestions for improvement.

Rationale for Mixed-Methods Design

The mixed-methods approach was chosen for its ability to triangulate findings, ensuring that both the numerical data from the Likert-scale and the narrative feedback from the open-ended questions were integrated to form a comprehensive picture of the students' experiences. By combining quantitative measures of effectiveness (e.g., how much students felt ChatGPT helped improve their fluency) with qualitative insights into the personal challenges and suggestions for improvement, this study was able to capture both objective and

subjective dimensions of students' interactions with AI.

Participants

The study involved 25 students from the English for Tourism Industry (ETI) program at the State Polytechnic of Malang, Indonesia. The participants were primarily female (72%), with an age range of 18 to 22 years. All participants were enrolled in a specialized tourism English program designed to prepare them for careers in tourism and hospitality.

The participants were selected from the BIIP (Bahasa Inggris untuk Industri Pariwisata) program, which focuses on practical English skills required for the tourism sector. The sample was composed entirely of first-year students in the BIIP program. This selection was intentional, as these students were considered to be at the beginning stages of their language acquisition, providing a fresh perspective on how AI tools like ChatGPT might be integrated into their learning process.

Sampling Method

Convenience sampling was used to select participants for the study. This sampling method was chosen due to its practicality and the researchers' access to the participants through the ETI program. Although convenience sampling limits the generalizability of the findings to the broader population, it was appropriate for the purposes of this exploratory study, where the primary goal was to gain insights into the specific experiences of students within a controlled context. Demographically, the total number of participants was 25 students, 72% female and 28% male. The age Ranged from 18 to 22 years. All participants were from the BIIP program

Procedure

AI Interaction Phase

In this phase, students were asked to engage in a role-play conversation with ChatGPT. The task was designed to simulate a real-world scenario where the student would act as a tour guide providing information and recommendations to ChatGPT,

which would act as a tourist visiting Malang, Indonesia. The interaction was facilitated through ChatGPT's voice mode, allowing students to speak directly with the AI rather than relying on text-based input. This provided students with an opportunity to practice spoken English in a simulated, real-life context.

The task was structured as follows:

1. Prompt for Role-Play: Students were instructed to use the following prompt to initiate the conversation: *"Hello, ChatGPT. Act as my co-worker. We're on the committee for the upcoming townhall meeting. Let's discuss the agenda, key topics, logistics, and any potential challenges. Ask me questions, and we'll brainstorm ideas to ensure the meeting runs smoothly."*
2. Task Duration: The conversation was to last for a maximum of 7 minutes, allowing enough time for meaningful interaction while keeping the task manageable.
3. Submission: After completing the role-play, students were required to record their conversation and submit the audio file via a Google Form link by 19 June 2025.

This role-play scenario was intentionally chosen to be professionally relevant and context-specific to students in the Tourism English program. The task enabled them to practice specific language skills they would need as future tour guides, such as providing recommendations, answering questions, and engaging in real-time dialogue.

Data Collection Phase

Following the role-play, participants were asked to complete a 14-item Likert-scale questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to assess students' perceptions of the effectiveness of ChatGPT as a speaking partner, with a focus on areas such as usefulness, confidence, fluency improvement, and engagement. The questionnaire included both positive and negative items, rated on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

In addition to the Likert-scale questions, students were asked to respond to several open-ended questions that encouraged them to reflect on their experiences. These questions included prompts such as:

- “What did you like most about using ChatGPT for speaking practice?”
- “What challenges did you encounter during the role-play task?”
- “How can ChatGPT be improved to better support your speaking practice?”

Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the Likert-scale questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including the calculation of mean scores, standard deviations, and ranges. These statistics provided an overview of how students rated different aspects of their experience with ChatGPT, such as its usefulness for improving speaking fluency and its engagement level. The mean scores helped identify areas where ChatGPT performed well and where there were opportunities for improvement.

The open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method allowed the researcher to identify recurring themes and patterns in students’ reflections. Responses were coded based on emerging topics, such as recognition issues, confidence building, and suggestions for AI improvements. This qualitative analysis provided deeper insights into students’ emotional engagement, their perceived challenges, and their ideas for enhancing AI tools like ChatGPT.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The findings can be classified as quantitative and qualitative. Below is the first type of finding. See Table 1. It can be seen that in general the perception of ChatGPT as a speaking partner was moderately positive, with an overall mean of 3.47 (SD = 0.37), suggesting that students generally found ChatGPT useful for practice, though with notable challenges.

Table 1. Positive Item Means and Standard Deviations

Categories	Mean	SD
Ease of use	4.32	0.57
Vocabulary growth	4.28	0.51
Fluency improvement	4.04	0.62
Confidence	3.68	0.77
Engagement	3.48	0.86

The positive item means were as follows:

- Ease of use (M = 4.32, SD = 0.57): Students found ChatGPT easy to interact with, indicating that the interface and instructions were accessible and user-friendly.
- Vocabulary growth (M = 4.28, SD = 0.51): Many students reported that they were able to learn and practice new vocabulary during their conversation with ChatGPT, which aligns with the AI’s role in facilitating language acquisition.
- Fluency improvement (M = 4.04, SD = 0.62): The majority of participants felt that using ChatGPT helped them improve their speaking fluency, suggesting that AI can be an effective tool for encouraging spoken language production.

However, some negative aspects emerged in the findings, as evidenced by the lower scores on certain items:

- AI misunderstood my speech (M = 3.72, SD = 0.82): Students reported that ChatGPT often misinterpreted their speech or provided incorrect feedback, highlighting the limitations of AI in speech recognition.
- Responses were limited (M = 3.24, SD = 0.93): Many participants felt that ChatGPT’s responses were somewhat basic and not sufficiently varied, which could make the conversation feel less authentic and engaging.

Other notable negative findings include students’ perception that interactions with

ChatGPT felt less personal than those with a human and some technical issues ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.92$).

Open-ended Responses

Students' open-ended responses provided deeper insight into their experiences. Common themes included:

- a. **Positive impression:** Most participants appreciated the accessibility and low-pressure environment that ChatGPT provided. Unlike face-to-face interactions, where they often worried about making mistakes, students found the tool to be a safe space where they could experiment with language use freely. Several participants highlighted that the absence of judgment allowed them to take more risks in speaking, which in turn helped them practice more consistently. Another frequently mentioned positive aspect was the authenticity of the tourism-based role-play. The real-world scenarios, such as booking hotels, asking for directions, or ordering food, made the activity feel practical and directly connected to situations they might actually face, especially when traveling abroad. This sense of authenticity added both relevance and motivation to their practice sessions.
- b. **Challenges faced:** Despite the overall positive reception, students encountered several challenges. A recurring issue was recognition errors, where the AI failed to accurately interpret their accents or pronunciation. This sometimes interrupted the flow of conversation and discouraged students from continuing. They also mentioned that the tool often produced limited responses, which made the interactions feel less natural and constrained the depth of conversation. Furthermore, technical difficulties such as slow connectivity or occasional disruptions added to the frustration. These issues mirror findings from previous studies, which have also identified recognition limitations and shallow dialogue structures as common drawbacks of AI-based language learning platforms (Nhan, 2023; Zou et al., 2023).
- c. **Suggested improvements:** Students provided several constructive suggestions for improving the learning experience. Many requested more natural conversations with varied sentence structures and responses that felt closer to real human dialogue. Another key improvement area was better recognition capabilities to accommodate different accents and levels of pronunciation accuracy. Students also emphasized the need for more detailed pronunciation feedback, ideally with specific guidance on stress, intonation, and articulation. Finally, they recommended greater contextual variety, suggesting that the system should be able to simulate a wider range of everyday situations, making the interactions more dynamic, engaging, and culturally relevant.
- d. **Confidence:** A striking outcome of the activity was its positive impact on students' confidence in speaking English. Most participants reported that they felt more willing to speak, even when they made mistakes, because the AI provided a non-judgmental practice partner. This sense of psychological safety helped reduce the anxiety that often accompanies oral language tasks in traditional classroom settings. Their experiences align with existing research (e.g., Zou et al., 2023), which has shown that AI tools can help alleviate learner anxiety and build confidence by providing opportunities to practice without the immediate social pressures of human audiences.
- e. **AI as a replacement or complement:** When asked about the role of AI in their learning journey, a significant number of students expressed the view that AI should serve as a complement to human interaction rather than a replacement. They recognized the value of AI for providing unlimited practice opportunities, instant feedback, and a low-stakes environment. However, they also acknowledged its limitations, particularly the lack of emotional and social cues such as body language, tone, and empathy, which are crucial in authentic human communication. This perspective reflects a balanced view: while AI is a valuable supplement that can enhance practice and support self-directed learning, it

cannot fully replicate the richness of interaction with human teachers or peers.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that ChatGPT has the potential to serve as an effective complementary tool for improving English-speaking skills in a tourism-specific context. Several key insights emerged from the data, including the benefits of AI-mediated speaking practice, the challenges students faced, and the perceived role of AI in language learning.

One of the most striking findings from the quantitative data was the positive perception of ChatGPT's ease of use ($M = 4.32$). The participants appreciated the user-friendly interface and the immediate feedback it provided, suggesting that AI can be an accessible tool for English learners, especially those who might otherwise be hesitant to speak in front of others (Nhan, 2023). This aligns with previous studies that emphasize AI's low-stakes environment, which encourages learners to practice speaking without fear of embarrassment or judgment (Du & Daniel, 2023).

Additionally, students' responses indicated that ChatGPT enhanced their vocabulary and fluency, as they were able to engage in dialogues about Malang's tourism attractions. This finding suggests that AI can be an effective tool for building lexical knowledge in specific domains such as tourism (Putri, Nurul & Asdar, 2023). By engaging in real-world scenario practice, students were able to practice language in contexts that closely mirror the tasks they will face in their future careers as tour guides.

The students' increased confidence in speaking English was another positive outcome, with many participants expressing that their fear of making mistakes was reduced. This boost in confidence could be attributed to the low-pressure nature of interacting with AI, which enables students to make mistakes and learn from them without the anxiety that often accompanies human interaction (Qiao & Zhao, 2022).

Despite the overall positive findings, the study also revealed significant challenges that affected students' experiences with ChatGPT. The speech

recognition issues ($M = 3.72$) were a notable source of frustration. AI's inability to fully comprehend accents, misinterpret spoken words, and deliver accurate feedback diminished the quality of the interaction for some participants. These challenges are consistent with existing research that points to the limitations of speech recognition technology (Qiao & Zhao, 2022).

The limited conversational responses ($M = 3.24$) were another barrier to the effectiveness of ChatGPT. While AI is capable of processing and generating responses, students felt that the conversations were sometimes too basic and lacked the depth and natural progression of a conversation with a human. This limitation is a well-known issue in AI chatbot research, which emphasizes the need for increased AI adaptability to handle more complex interactions (Joo, 2024).

Technical issues, including connection problems, were also reported by some participants ($M = 3.12$), which highlights the importance of reliable infrastructure when using AI-based tools for language learning. Without stable internet access and functioning devices, the AI's effectiveness is severely compromised, and learners may experience frustration (Zou et al., 2023).

One of the most important findings was that the majority of students did not view AI as a replacement for human interaction. Instead, they believed that AI should complement human language practice. This perspective is consistent with recent studies on AI-assisted language learning, which suggest that AI tools, while valuable, cannot replicate the depth of human interaction (Nhan, 2023; Qiao & Zhao, 2022). Students recognized that emotional engagement and social cues. Such as empathy, encouragement, and non-verbal communication are critical components of language learning that AI currently cannot offer.

Many students also suggested that AI should provide additional practice opportunities outside of traditional classroom settings. This reinforces the view that AI can enhance the language learning experience but should be part of a broader language acquisition ecosystem that includes both AI-based practice and human interaction.

The findings suggest several pedagogical implications for the integration of AI tools like ChatGPT in language courses, particularly in English for Tourism programs:

1. Scenario-based role-plays should be used to simulate real-world tasks such as guiding tourists, providing an authentic and practical context for language use.
2. Human-AI integration should be prioritized, with AI used for vocabulary practice and fluency building, while human instructors provide personalized feedback and address more complex issues like pronunciation and grammar.
3. Improved AI recognition capabilities are essential for AI tools to be fully effective. AI tools should be designed to handle a variety of accents and dialects.
4. Extended practice times and stable technological infrastructure must be ensured to prevent interruptions and allow for richer interactions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the role of AI tools like ChatGPT in Tourism English education. The findings suggest that ChatGPT is a useful and engaging tool for language practice, particularly for fluency and vocabulary development. However, challenges remain in areas such as speech recognition, limited conversational depth, and technical issues. Overall, the study supports the idea that AI should complement human interaction rather than replace it. While AI can provide valuable speaking practice in low-pressure, scenario-based contexts, human teachers are still crucial for guiding students through nuanced language learning tasks that require emotional engagement and complex feedback. The results of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on AI-assisted language learning and have important implications for ESP curriculum development, particularly in Tourism English programs. Future research should explore long-term effects and the sustainability of AI-based learning tools, as well as examine more diverse

learner groups to validate the broader applicability of these findings.

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