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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**METHODS OF DEVELOPING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH  
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE****Ezoza Rakhmonova***Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages**Second-year student**Samarkand, Uzbekistan***ABOUT ARTICLE**

**Key words:** artificial intelligence, speaking skills, foreign language education, digital pedagogy, chatbot, pronunciation, communicative competence, adaptive learning, interactive method, English language.

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**Abstract:** This article examines scientifically and methodologically grounded ways of developing students' speaking skills through artificial intelligence technologies in foreign language education, particularly in the process of teaching English. In today's digital learning environment, the formation of oral communicative competence should not be limited to traditional classroom exercises. It needs to be enriched with individual, interactive and continuous technology-supported communication. From this perspective, AI-based chatbots, automatic speech recognition systems, pronunciation assessment applications, virtual interlocutors and adaptive learning platforms are becoming effective tools for improving students' speaking performance. The article discusses the didactic potential of these technologies, their methodological advantages, stages of integration into classroom practice, and the possible challenges that may arise in their use. Special attention is paid to teacher supervision, academic integrity, personal data protection and the need to preserve students' independent thinking when

**Introduction.** In the education system of the twenty-first century, digitalization is having a significant impact on the methodology of foreign language teaching. In learning English, students' oral communication skill, or speaking competence, is especially important in terms of modern communicative needs. Today, foreign language proficiency is no longer evaluated only by the ability to understand grammatical rules or translate a text. On the contrary, the ability to express ideas in real situations, respond appropriately to questions, maintain a conversation, and communicate with clear pronunciation, fluency and logical coherence is regarded as one of the main criteria of language competence.

In traditional education, the development of speaking skills is often restricted by classroom time. During a lesson, not all students have enough opportunity to speak. Some students are afraid of making mistakes, while others do not participate actively enough in oral tasks. As a result, the formation of oral communicative competence may become slow and uneven. Artificial intelligence technologies can reduce this problem because they allow students to practise speaking independently, at any time and at an individual pace.

The UNESCO guidance on generative artificial intelligence in education emphasizes that AI may broaden the opportunities of both teachers and learners, but its use without human supervision can be risky. Therefore, artificial intelligence should not be viewed as a force that replaces the foreign language teacher. It should rather be understood as an auxiliary tool that enriches the methodological process and expands the range of learning opportunities.

In recent years, AI-supported platforms such as ChatGPT, ELSA Speak, Duolingo, Google Assistant, TalkPal and Praktika have been actively used in foreign language learning. ELSA Speak, for example, presents itself as a personal speaking coach that helps users practise English through short dialogues and receive immediate AI-generated feedback. The British Council's AI speaking practice tools also focus on providing additional opportunities for speaking practice in real-life situations and giving personalized feedback. This demonstrates the practical importance of artificial intelligence in developing speaking skills.

**Relevance of the Topic.** The relevance of this topic is determined by several factors. First, speaking is one of the most difficult competences in foreign language learning. A student may know the grammatical system of the language but still find it difficult to express thoughts freely in real communication. This situation reveals the gap between passive knowledge and active oral competence.

Second, the time allocated to speaking practice in the classroom is limited. When a group consists of many students, it becomes difficult to provide every learner with sufficient speaking time. Artificial intelligence tools can partially solve this problem through individual practice, virtual dialogues and automatic feedback.

Third, the modern labour market requires specialists who are able to communicate orally in English and present their ideas clearly in an international environment. Therefore, the development of speaking skills is becoming not only a linguistic task but also an essential part of professional training.

Fourth, interest in digital technologies and artificial intelligence is also increasing in the education system of Uzbekistan. Local academic works note the role of digital technologies and innovative AI-based methods in modernizing foreign language teaching. Research devoted to the current state and development stages of artificial intelligence in the Uzbek education system is also growing. This shows that the issue is important not only globally but also within the national educational context.

#### Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this article is to analyse, from a scientific and methodological perspective, the ways in which artificial intelligence can be used to develop students' speaking skills and to formulate practical recommendations for using such tools in foreign language classes.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives are defined: to explain the theoretical role of speaking skills in foreign language education; to analyse the potential of artificial intelligence technologies in developing speaking competence; to show how AI-based tools can improve pronunciation, fluency, lexical range and communicative activity; to identify the advantages and possible problems of using AI; and to propose methodological recommendations for the effective use of AI tools in English language lessons.

#### The Theoretical and Methodological Importance of Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of the central components of communicative competence in foreign language learning. It does not merely mean pronouncing words correctly. It also includes the ability to express ideas logically, respond appropriately to an interlocutor's questions, use grammatical and lexical units in context, and choose a suitable tone and style according to the communicative situation.

Speaking competence consists of several key components. The first is pronunciation competence. Students need to pronounce sounds correctly and use stress, intonation and rhythm appropriately. This is particularly important in English because phonetic differences

may change meaning. The second component is lexical competence. In oral communication, it is important to select suitable words and expressions quickly. A student may know topic-related vocabulary, but if he or she cannot use it in real conversation, speaking cannot be considered fully developed.

The third component is grammatical competence. Grammatical mistakes may naturally occur during speaking, but they should not seriously disturb communication. The fourth component is fluency, which refers to the ability to express thoughts without excessive pauses and with logical connection. The fifth component is interactive competence. A student should be able to start and maintain a conversation, ask questions, request clarification, agree, disagree and perform other communicative functions.

Traditional lessons usually develop these components through role-play, dialogues, discussions, debates, presentations, interviews and storytelling. However, the effectiveness of these methods depends on students' activity, classroom time and the teacher's ability to provide individual feedback. Artificial intelligence expands this process: students can practise beyond the classroom, see their mistakes, try again and gradually improve their speech.

#### The Influence of Artificial Intelligence Technologies on Speaking Skills

Artificial intelligence technologies can be used effectively in several directions to develop speaking skills.

##### 1. Automatic Speech Recognition Systems

Automatic Speech Recognition, or ASR, converts a learner's oral speech into written text, identifies pronunciation problems and, in many cases, suggests corrected forms. This technology is used in platforms such as ELSA Speak, Google Speech Recognition, Microsoft Reading Coach and other digital learning systems. A student pronounces a word or a sentence, and the system analyses the speech and shows which sounds or words were not pronounced accurately. Although such feedback cannot fully replace a teacher's explanation, it gives students a fast and individualized opportunity for practice.

##### 2. Dialogue Practice with AI Chatbots

Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT allow students to hold conversations on almost any topic. For example, a student may choose situations such as a job interview, travelling abroad, ordering food, academic presentation, or IELTS Speaking Part 2. The AI system can act as an interlocutor and continue the conversation by asking follow-up questions. The advantage of AI chatbots is that they allow students to practise without fear of making mistakes. Many learners feel shy when they speak in front of the class, whereas a virtual interlocutor reduces psychological pressure. This may help decrease speaking anxiety and increase confidence.

### 3. Individual Correction of Pronunciation

AI pronunciation tools can analyse a learner's speech at the phonemic level. English sounds such as /θ/, /ð/, /w/, /v/ and /æ/ are often difficult for Uzbek-speaking learners. Artificial intelligence can provide separate exercises for these sounds, present audio models and evaluate students' performance. Such individualized practice is especially useful because pronunciation problems differ from learner to learner.

### 4. Role-Play Based on Real-Life Situations

Artificial intelligence makes it possible to model real-life communicative situations in the classroom. For example, a student may practise buying a ticket at the airport, booking a hotel room, answering questions at an academic conference, or delivering a university presentation. The British Council's AI speaking practice activities are also designed to create opportunities for speaking in realistic situations and to provide feedback suited to the learner. This shows that AI tools can function not only as technical applications but also as methodological platforms for creating communicative contexts.

### 5. Strengthening Independent Learning

Speaking requires regular practice. Two or three lessons per week are not always enough to develop oral fluency. AI tools make it possible for students to practise every day for ten or fifteen minutes. Such short but regular practice may lead to noticeable progress over time. In this sense, artificial intelligence can support independent learning and encourage learners to take more responsibility for their own language development.

#### Ways of Using AI Tools to Develop Students' Speaking Skills

##### Method 1: Organizing Individual Dialogue with AI

In this method, students conduct a conversation with artificial intelligence on a topic connected with the lesson. The teacher provides a prompt according to the learning objective. For example: "Act as an IELTS Speaking examiner. Ask me Part 1 questions about education. After my answers, give me feedback on fluency, vocabulary and grammar." Another possible prompt is: "Act as a hotel receptionist. I am a tourist who wants to book a room. Ask me questions and correct my mistakes politely." This method helps students prepare for real communication. They do not simply memorize ready-made sentences; instead, they try to respond according to the situation. As a result, spontaneous speaking develops.

##### Method 2: Improving Speech on the Basis of AI Feedback

A student records a one- or two-minute answer on a particular topic or responds through an AI voice chat. Then the student asks the AI tool for feedback according to several criteria: grammatical accuracy, vocabulary range, pronunciation clarity, fluency, coherence and

naturalness. On the basis of this feedback, the student improves the answer and speaks again. The cycle “speak — receive feedback — improve — speak again” develops speaking skills step by step and turns error correction into an active learning process.

#### Method 3: Individualizing Pronunciation Practice through AI

The teacher first identifies common pronunciation problems among students, such as confusing /θ/ with /s/, placing word stress incorrectly, or speaking with monotonous intonation. Then suitable exercises are assigned through AI pronunciation applications. For instance, students may practise sentences such as: “I think this theory is useful,” “The three things are important,” or “They thought that the method was effective.” The AI system analyses pronunciation and shows which sounds require further practice. This approach can provide more precise individual feedback than a general classroom comment.

#### Method 4: AI-Based Role-Play and Simulation

Role-play is widely used in speaking classes, and artificial intelligence can make this method more dynamic because it can generate different questions, responses and unexpected situations each time. For example: “You are a student applying for a scholarship. I am a committee member. Answer my questions”; “You are presenting your startup project. I will ask critical questions”; or “You are at an international conference. Explain your research topic in simple English.” Such simulation tasks prepare students for real communicative situations. They are particularly useful for international competitions, conferences, grant interviews, IELTS Speaking and academic presentations.

#### Method 5: Vocabulary Activation through AI

Many students memorize new words but cannot use them actively in speaking. AI can help organize vocabulary activation tasks. For example, the teacher may give the following instruction: “Use the following words in a one-minute speech: digital education, opportunity, challenge, improve, communicate.” The student prepares a short speech, and the AI tool checks whether the words were used appropriately and suggests more natural alternatives. This method is important for transforming passive vocabulary into active oral language.

#### Method 6: IELTS Speaking Preparation with AI

IELTS Speaking is an important goal for many students. Artificial intelligence can be used to practise Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3. For Part 2, the AI tool may provide a cue card such as: “Describe a time when you achieved something important.” The student speaks for two minutes, and then the AI analyses coherence, vocabulary, grammar and fluency. However, such evaluation cannot replace the judgement of an official IELTS examiner. The teacher should review AI feedback and correct it where necessary.

## Method 7: Using AI as an Assistant in Group Speaking Activities

Artificial intelligence can be used not only for individual practice but also in group lessons. It can generate discussion questions, offer role-play situations and create follow-up questions based on students' answers. A possible classroom sequence may be as follows: the teacher announces the topic; AI helps prepare five or six discussion questions; students discuss the topic in pairs or groups; each group presents its ideas; AI helps prepare general vocabulary and grammar feedback; and finally the teacher gives the concluding feedback. This makes the lesson more interactive while keeping human communication at the centre.

### A Methodological Model of AI-Based Speaking Practice

To develop speaking skills through artificial intelligence, the following methodological model may be proposed.

The first stage is preparation. At this stage, the teacher defines the topic, communicative situation and speaking objective. For example, the objective may be: "Students will be able to express opinions about digital education." The teacher also provides the necessary vocabulary, useful expressions and sentence structures.

The second stage is initial practice with AI. Students conduct an individual dialogue with AI or prepare a short speech on the given topic. The main focus at this stage is to encourage students to speak and overcome hesitation. Mistakes should not be criticized too strictly at the beginning.

The third stage is feedback and analysis. The AI tool provides feedback on the student's speech, and the teacher supervises this feedback. If AI gives an incorrect or overly general comment, the teacher clarifies and corrects it.

The fourth stage is repeated speaking. The student improves the speech according to feedback and speaks again. This stage is essential because speaking develops not through a single attempt but through repeated and meaningful practice.

The fifth stage is real communicative activity. Students perform a dialogue, debate, presentation or role-play in pairs, groups or in front of the class. At this stage, AI acts as a preparatory tool, while real communication takes place between people.

### Advantages of AI Tools

The use of artificial intelligence in developing speaking skills has several advantages. First, AI gives students almost unlimited practice opportunities. Learners can continue speaking practice even when the teacher is not available. Second, AI strengthens an individual approach because tasks may be selected according to each student's level, mistakes and needs. Third, AI provides quick feedback. In a traditional lesson, a teacher cannot always evaluate

every student in detail at the same time, whereas AI can give an immediate response to each answer.

Fourth, AI may reduce speaking anxiety. Some students hesitate to speak in the classroom, but practising with a virtual interlocutor can help them build confidence. Fifth, AI can model real-life situations, which helps students learn the language not only as a theoretical system but also as a practical communicative tool. Sixth, AI can reduce the teacher's workload by helping to prepare role-play situations, discussion questions, speaking rubrics and examples of feedback.

#### Problems and Limitations

Although the possibilities of artificial intelligence are broad, it would be wrong to regard it as a perfect and unlimited solution. The first problem is that AI feedback is not always completely accurate. Sometimes the system may misunderstand a learner's speech or provide superficial recommendations.

The second problem is overdependence on AI. If a student uses artificial intelligence to prepare every answer, independent thinking and spontaneous speaking may decline. Some warnings about generative AI note that it can create a state of "false mastery", in which learners feel that they have acquired a skill even though real competence has not yet been formed.

The third problem is academic integrity. Students may memorize AI-generated answers and present them as their own speech. In that case, speaking is not developed; memorization is developed instead. The fourth problem is connected with technical access. Not all students have stable internet, modern devices or access to paid applications. The fifth problem concerns data security. Students' voices, personal information and learning results may be stored by online platforms. For this reason, teachers and educational institutions should pay attention to the privacy policies of the tools they use.

#### The Role of the Teacher

Even as artificial intelligence develops, the role of the foreign language teacher does not decrease; rather, it changes. The teacher is no longer only a transmitter of knowledge. He or she becomes a manager of the digital learning environment, a methodological guide and a person who develops students' critical thinking.

The teacher should perform several important functions: selecting AI tools according to the lesson objective; teaching students how to write effective prompts; analysing AI feedback; correcting inaccurate recommendations; supervising students' real speaking activity; and forming a culture of responsible AI use. The most effective model is therefore not "AI instead of the teacher" but "teacher + AI + student interaction".

## Practical Recommendations

Several practical recommendations can be proposed for developing speaking skills through artificial intelligence. AI tools should be used according to the main aim of the lesson. Technology should not be introduced only because it looks interesting; it must serve a clear pedagogical purpose. Students should be taught to use AI not for receiving ready-made answers but for practising, noticing mistakes and improving their speech. In addition, AI feedback becomes more effective when it is combined with teacher feedback.

A small speaking cycle can be used in each lesson: preparation — AI practice — feedback — real communication. Students may also keep their voice recordings and compare their progress at the end of the month. AI role-play tasks should be based on real-life situations. For pronunciation development, AI applications should be used regularly but for short periods. Teachers should introduce students to the rules of responsible AI use. In the classroom, human-to-human communication should be preserved together with individual AI practice. In assessment, the main focus should not be on whether a student has memorized a prepared text, but on whether he or she can respond spontaneously, react appropriately to a question and express ideas independently.

**Conclusion.** The development of speaking skills in foreign language education requires regular practice, individual feedback and a real communicative environment. Although the traditional lesson can fulfil this task to a certain extent, limitations of time, group size and individual feedback make it difficult to provide enough speaking opportunities for all students. Artificial intelligence technologies appear as modern methodological tools that can reduce these limitations.

AI-based chatbots, pronunciation analysis applications, automatic speech recognition systems and virtual interlocutors provide students with opportunities for independent, repeated and interactive practice. They can help develop pronunciation, fluency, lexical activity, spontaneous response and communicative confidence. In particular, artificial intelligence tools have considerable methodological value in reducing speaking anxiety, modelling real-life situations and providing fast feedback.

At the same time, it is not correct to consider artificial intelligence an absolute solution. AI feedback may not always be perfect; students may become too dependent on technology; and there are problems related to academic integrity and personal data security. Therefore, AI tools should be used under teacher supervision, on the basis of clear methodological aims and in combination with real human communication.

In general, developing speaking skills through artificial intelligence is one of the promising directions in foreign language education. Properly organized AI-integrated lessons can increase students' activity, strengthen independent learning skills and prepare them for an international communicative environment. Most importantly, artificial intelligence does not replace the teacher; on the contrary, it expands the teacher's methodological possibilities and makes the language learning process more personalized, effective and interactive.

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