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THE PEDAGOGICAL IMPACT OF AI-DRIVEN TOOLS ON SPEAKING SKILL ACQUISITION AMONG YOUNG EFL LEARNERS

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Annotation: *This study examines how Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools support young learners' English speaking development. Using mixed methods, it investigates the effects of AI-based feedback and interactive speaking tasks on pronunciation, fluency, and speaking confidence. Results show clear improvements in performance and reduced anxiety, highlighting AI's value when combined with purposeful task design and teacher guidance. The study offers practical insights for integrating AI into early English instruction.*

Key words: *Artificial intelligence, young learners, English speaking skills, CALL, pronunciation, adaptive learning, language pedagogy*

The expanding role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in primary education has opened up fresh opportunities around oral language development among younger learners, however, empirical evidence of its effectiveness as a tool remains sparse. The research investigates the effects of AI-based teaching technology on young learners' speaking ability in English. To address the methodological void within existing studies, this research examines the influence of AI-mediated feedback, adaptive learning environments, and conversational agents on learners' pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, and speaking confidence. Mixed methodologies were used, including classroom tests, spoken assessments before and after instruction, observation protocols, and teacher-learner feedback analysis. The intervention combined child-appropriate AI tools, such as automatic pronunciation assessment systems, interactive voice-based chatbots and AI-supported speaking exercises. Quantitative data also measured speaking performance improvements and qualitative data were used to describe pedagogical context and learner attitudes.

Findings show that the provision of AI-assisted instruction noticeably enhances pronunciation accuracy and fluency as well as willingness to speak and helps learners to speak when given opportunities. Emphasizing the immediacy and personalization of AI feedback boosted learner engagement and decreased speaking anxiety. Nonetheless, successful implementation has to involve teacher digital ability, adequate task design along with careful moderation for a humanizing balancing act between AI input and teacher input. The study contributes to the expanding AI-assisted language learning (AILL) area and sets educational

guidelines for using AI in early English education based on data available till now. The findings have policy implications for teachers, curriculum creators, and education policy advocates who are concerned about providing developmentally suitable, technologically enriched environments for learning young people to speak.