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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AI Chatbots in Speaking Classroom: A Study On Teacher and Student Perceptions

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Kata Kunci:
AI Chatbots, Latihan Percakapan Bahasa Inggris, Persepsi Siswa dan Guru

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji persepsi siswa dan guru terhadap penggunaan AI Chatbots dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di kelas. Studi ini menyoroti terhadap bagaimana penggunaan AI chatbots sebagai media latihan percakapan bahasa Inggris, serta dampaknya terhadap pengalaman belajar atau mengajar dari siswa dan guru. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur. Data dianalisis melalui analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola-pola utama yang muncul dari presepsi siswa dan guru. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan AI chatbots memberikan manfaat dan mendorong siswa dalam praktik berbicara. Di sisi lain, penggunaan teknologi kecerdasan buatan ini juga menghadirkan beberapa tantangan, terutama dalam memahami respon AI chatbots terhadap praktik percakapan berbicara bahasa Inggris. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan AI chatbots dapat menjadi alternatif media latihan percakapan berbicara bahasa Inggris serta memberikan pengalaman belajar ataupun mengajar yang interaktif bagi siswa dan guru.

Key Word:
AI Chatbots, English Conversation Practice, Students' and Teachers' Perceptions

Abstract

This study aims to examine students' and teachers' perceptions of the use of AI chatbots in English language learning in the classroom. This study highlights how AI chatbots are used as a medium for English conversation practice and their impact on the learning or teaching experiences of students and teacher. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection through semi-structured interviews. The data is analyzed through thematic analysis to identify the main patterns that emerge from the perceptions of students and teachers. The findings show that the use of AI chatbots provides benefits and encourages students in speaking practice. On the other hand, the use of artificial intelligence technology also presents several challenges, particularly in understanding the responses of AI chatbots to English conversation practice. Overall, this study shows that the use of AI chatbots can be an alternative medium for English conversation practice and provide an interactive learning or teaching experience for students and teacher.

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PENDAHULUAN

Speaking skills are an important aspect of English language learning because they are the primary means of communication. (Zaremba, 2006) states that speaking is the most essential skill in communication. According to (Kayi, 2006) speaking is the process of constructing and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols, such as gestures, facial expressions, and intonation, to create effective communication. This indicates that speaking competence is inseparable from interactive communication. However, many students still experience obstacles in developing their speaking skills, such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and limited vocabulary and grammar (Mai, 2015). This condition shows that learning media is needed to provide a more flexible and low-pressure practice environment.

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has led to more interactive and student-centered learning innovations. In the context of English language learning, particularly speaking, AI chatbots have become an alternative that enables responsive interaction through text and voice. Structured conversations allow users to explore topics in a more abstract and intuitive way, while providing a more personalized experience tailored to individual needs (Kuhail, 2023). Through dialogue, AI can guide, provide advice or feedback, and respond to various questions asked. AI conversation models combine speech recognition, language comprehension, dialogue management, language generation, and speech synthesis to respond to user requests (Fraser, 2023). Several studies show that AI chatbots can increase motivation, engagement, and fluency in speaking because they provide broader and more personalized practice

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opportunities (Kim et al., 2021; Azizimajd, 2023; Lee, 2018). In addition, the use of AI provides opportunities for practice without the social pressure that often arises in direct interactions, allowing students to practice speaking with more confidence.

From the teacher's perspective, AI chatbots are seen as an innovation that can help make the learning process more effective and flexible. Teacher can see that chatbots are capable of providing materials, exercises, and feedback tailored to student's needs (Kuhail, 2023). With quick and interactive responses from AI, students can practice more often, even outside of class hours. This helps teachers overcome the limitations of learning time in the classroom, especially in speaking lessons that require a lot of practice. In addition, the use of chatbots can also help save time through the automation of several tasks, such as compiling dialogue examples or providing initial feedback (Bateman, 2024).

On the other hand, teachers also have several concerns. The accuracy of information, consistency of answers, and suitability with the curriculum are important considerations in its use (Felipe, 2024). Teachers also realize that the unguided use of chatbots can make students overly dependent on technology. Therefore, the role of teachers remains very important in directing and adjusting the use of chatbots to suit learning objectives (Merelo, 2024). In other words, AI chatbots serve as a supporting tool, not a substitute for the role of teachers in the classroom.

Although various studies have discussed the benefits of AI chatbots in language learning, most studies still focus on improving learning outcomes, such as motivation, fluency, or vocabulary mastery, or only look at one perspective, either the student or the teacher. Research that specifically explores the perceptions of teachers and students simultaneously in the context of English speaking learning is still limited. In fact, understanding both perspective is important to provide a more comprehensive picture of the potential and challenges of using AI chatbots in English language learning practices in the classroom.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of the use of AI chatbots in English speaking classroom.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of the use of AI chatbots in English language learning. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aimed to explore the participants' views and experiences. Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as perceptions, motivations, and actions (Moleong, 2018). Descriptive design was used because this study focused on describing participants' perspectives without manipulating variables.

The research was conducted at a high school in Garut Regency, West Java. The research participants consisted of one English teacher and students from class XI-1 BIPA who had participated in English conversation practice using AI Gemini. All students in the class participated in the speaking practice activity, but for the purposes of in-depth interviews, six students were selected using purposive sampling. This technique was used because it allowed the researcher to determine participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Etikan, 2016). The criteria of selecting participants included students who participated in the entire series of speaking practice sessions using AI Gemini, actively interacted with the AI during the activities, and were able to reflect on their experiences in using the technology. Selection based on these criteria aimed to obtain in-depth data relevant to the research focus on perceptions of AI use in English speaking practice.

Research data was collected through semi-structured interviews as the main instrument. Interviews were conducted in person to explore information about the experiences, benefits, challenges, and perceptions of teachers and students regarding the use of AI in speaking learning. Semi-structured interviews allow for in-depth data collection and provide flexibility in exploring participants' experiences (Morse, 2015). The interview process was recorded using a voice recorder with the participants' consent, then transcribed into text to maintain data accuracy. The transcription data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The transcribed data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis was conducted through several stages, including reading the entire data, identifying statements, coding the data, organizing the codes into main themes, and drawing conclusions based on the patterns that emerged. Thematic analysis is employed to systematically identify and report patterns of meaning within qualitative data (Clarke, 2006). Through this procedure, a comprehensive understanding of teachers' and students' perceptions of the use of AI Gemini in speaking lessons was obtained.

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HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

This study involved six students who used the Gemini AI and one English teacher who had general experience using AI chatbots in teaching. It is important to note that the teacher did not specifically use the Gemini platform. Therefore, the teacher's perceptions reflect general experience with AI chatbots, while the students' perceptions are specific to Gemini.

All student participants in this study reported positive experiences when using the AI chatbot Gemini for speaking practice.

Table 1. Students' Experiences Using Gemini AI

Participant	Quotation
P1	"It was enjoyable because it was a new experience in using an AI chatbot. Besides practicing speaking, it also trains listening and reading because I try to understand what the AI's answer means."
P2	"It was fun and I felt something new when using the AI chatbot (Gemini)."
P3	"Very interesting and fun because it is very helpful for speaking practice."
P4	"I think it's fun, easier to interact, and not afraid of making mistakes. It's just that when using the AI, the voice I say and what the AI types are different."
P5	"Quite fun, because practicing with AI means I have to be serious to be able to speak English."
P6	"Pretty good because I can learn how to speak English with the AI."

The table below shows students' perceptions about their increased self-confidence after using Gemini AI for English speaking.

Table 2. Students' Increased Self-Confident

Participant	Quotation
P1	"The benefits are that it makes me more confident speaking English and helps me when there are sentences that I say incorrectly." "Of course, I feel confident and brave when using the AI because I can do it on my own. When practicing speaking English with friends, I feel awkward and afraid of being laughed at."
P2	"Of course, I feel confident and brave when using the AI because I can do it on my own. When practicing speaking English with friends, I feel awkward and afraid of being laughed at."
P3	"Confident. Rather than practicing with friends, I choose to use the AI to practice speaking English because I feel comfortable and not afraid."
P4	"Moderately confident."
P5	"Yes, I feel confident practicing with the AI because it feels freer."
P6	"I feel confident practicing with the AI because there is no one judging."

Students' responses concerning their motivation to practice English speaking using Gemini AI are displayed in the following table.

Table 3. Students' Increased Motivation

Participant	Quotation
P1	"There is motivation. I end up trying to practice with the AI more often."
P2	"There is motivation. I end up trying to practice with the AI more often."
P3	"I am motivated to practice with the AI because when practicing with friends I feel unconfident."
P4	"I feel motivated because I often practiced speaking with the AI before, so I feel more enthusiastic when practicing speaking English with the AI."
P5	"I am very motivated to practice speaking English because in the future it will definitely be very helpful and needed."
P6	"Moderately motivated."

The technical assistance provided by Gemini AI, including grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation support. These are summarized in the table below.

Table 4. Technical Assistance from Gemini AI

Participant	Quotation
P1	"The AI chatbot (Gemini) also helps with grammar. When there is incorrect grammar, the AI immediately corrects it and provides a solution, for example, it should be like this or should use a word like this."
P2	"The AI chatbot (Gemini) helps me with pronunciation when practicing speaking English."
P3	"Very helpful because using the AI makes speaking more fluent. Besides that, the AI also helps me with pronunciation when speaking English."
P4	"Yes, it helps. The AI also helps with pronunciation when speaking English."
P5	"Yes, it helps. The AI helps me practice speaking English, including helping with pronunciation

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	and vocabulary."
P6	"The AI helps me become more fluent in speaking English and also learn vocabulary."

The table below shows the challenges students faced when using Gemini AI for English speaking conversation practice.

Table 5. Challenges Faced by Students

Participant	Quotation
P1	"The obstacles are poor internet connection sometimes and misunderstandings, when I say something, but the AI captures my speech differently, causing a different meaning."
P2	"There are challenges. First, the internet connection, and then sometimes the AI's response doesn't match what I wanted."
P3	"The challenges is when the AI errors and doesn't connect with what I instructed."
P4	"Yes. Sometimes the AI answers differently from what we ask."
P5	"Yes. The challenge is that when practicing with the AI, misunderstandings often happen, like the question I give is sometimes answered with an irrelevant response."
P6	"The challenge is that the AI often answers incorrectly and misunderstandings what I ask or it doesn't match what I want when practicing speaking with the AI."

Students' experiences regarding feedback provided by Gemini AI are shown in the table below.

Table 6. Feedback from Gemini AI

Participant	Quotation
P1	"There is feedback. The AI corrects the wrong vocabulary."
P2	"The AI corrects or fixes which words are wrong or how to pronounce the sentence correctly."
P3	"There is. When I make a mistake in a voice note, the AI corrects the error I said."
P4	"The AI rarely gives feedback, unless I ask about my mistake, then the AI will answer and provide correction."
P5	"There is feedback, but I have to give a command to the AI first to get feedback."
P6	"I don't feel any feedback."

The table below displays students' perceptions of their speaking developed after using Gemini AI.

Table 7. Development of Speaking after Using Gemini AI

Participant	Quotation
P1	"Since I've only tried it a few times, I haven't felt any improvement in my speaking ability after using the AI. So I'm still exploring and practicing using the Gemini AI."
P2	"There is a little progress that I feel."
P3	"There is improvement, my English speaking has become more fluent."
P4	"Yes, but a little. The AI also helps me when I want to chat with virtual friends on social media, and that's an improvement I feel after using the AI."
P5	"I feel improvement after practicing speaking English with the AI, including in pronunciation and vocabulary, which makes my speaking ability more fluent."
P6	"I haven't felt any improvement in my English speaking ability after practicing with the Gemini AI."

Students' perceptions of the naturalness conversations with Gemini AI are following the table below.

Table 8. Naturalness of Conversation with Gemini AI

Participant	Quotation
P1	"Yes, practicing speaking with AI feels natural and comfortable."
P2	"Whether the AI's response is natural or not depends on the prompt we give."
P3	"Yes. I feel more enjoyment and it feels like talking to a friend when using the Gemini AI."
P4	"In my opinion, having a conversation with the AI doesn't feel natural, it feels like talking to a machine because the AI is always formal."
P5	"In my opinion, practicing speaking with AI feels natural, like chatting with a friend."
P6	"Practicing speaking with the AI is too formal, it doesn't feel natural."

The table summarizes students' perceptions of effectiveness of Gemini AI as a tool for English speaking practice.

Table 9. Overall Effectiveness of Gemini AI

Participant	Quotation
P1	"Effective because it makes me more confident and adds new knowledge beyond speaking."
P2	"Not very effective. One reason is when there's no internet connection or the AI's response is sometimes wrong."
P3	"Yes. Using the AI feels effective because the AI responds quickly and there is no hesitation like when practicing with friends."
P4	"In my opinion, practicing speaking English using AI is less effective because sometimes what I

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	say doesn't match and leads to misunderstandings. But I still feel comfortable practicing with AI compared to with friends."
P5	"Not very effective because sometimes the AI often misunderstands or misinterprets when I practice speaking English. I also feel more comfortable practicing speaking with friends compared to AI because with friends I can chat spontaneously without having to give commands first."
P6	"Not very effective because the AI sometimes errors and gives wrong answers or responses. Compared to AI, I prefer practicing speaking with friends because it feels more familiar. While practicing with AI feels formal, so it's less comfortable."

The teacher's perceptions of using AI chatbots in teaching, based on her general experience are following the table below.

Table 10. Teacher's Perceptions of AI Chatbots

Theme	Teacher's Quotation
Positive experience	"My experience was good because it matched what I asked for, and there were step-by-step instructions for speaking materials."
Benefits	"The benefits are that AI can help with vocabulary and become a suitable conversation partner, especially in speaking."
Role of AI	"The role of AI in the teaching process is to help provide plans or ideas for speaking learning when it is really needed or when I suddenly have to make a lesson plan related to speaking."
Challenges	"The challenge is that sometimes there are errors from AI, one of which is in grammar. So the answers given by AI must be checked again."
Feedback	"The feedback provided by AI is very helpful, including when correcting pronunciation and grammar."
Confident	"Yes, there is. Starting from their pronunciation, which they didn't know before, they now know. Students also become more confident because they feel helped by AI."
Motivation	"Yes, students become motivated after doing speaking with AI."
Naturalness	"Yes. What I feel is that chatting with AI feels natural, like talking to a human."
Effectiveness	"It is quite effective and helpful, as long as AI doesn't respond too quickly. Because if it's too fast, students get confused and don't understand well. Additionally, AI is effective because it supports me in teaching in class, especially when I run out of ideas for teaching speaking."

This study involved six students who used the Gemini AI and one English teacher who had general experience using AI chatbots in teaching. It is important to note that the teacher did not specifically use the Gemini platform. In this section, the findings were discussed in light of relevant theories and highlighted a novel aspect of the study, namely the absence of automated feedback from Gemini AI. Therefore, the teacher's perceptions reflected general experience with AI chatbots, while the students' perceptions are specific to Gemini.

This study found that Gemini provided a positive experience for students practicing spoken English. Several students reported that practicing speaking with Gemini AI was enjoyable and engaging. These findings suggested that Gemini AI not only served as a learning tool but was also capable of creating a new and engaging learning experience for students. This novelty effect served as an initial draw that motivated students to try to use the AI chatbot. This aligned with the findings of Fryer and Carpenter (2006), who noted that technological novelty is a key factor in attracting user interest. Additionally, according to Participant 1, interacting with AI not only helped develop speaking skills but also indirectly improved listening and reading skills. This suggested that using AI chatbots for conversation offered additional benefits for students' overall language skills.

This study found that Gemini successfully created a comfortable learning environment for students. Some students compared their experiences practicing English speaking with the AI to those with peers. The students reported feeling more confident practicing with the AI because it allowed them to be more daring and free from judgment. These findings indicated that Gemini AI successfully created a comfortable, low-pressure learning environment for students. The fear of criticism and discomfort from peers, which had long been psychological barriers in speaking practice, was reduced thanks to the presence of AI. This aligned with the views of Shin and Lee (2021), who state that AI chatbots, as virtual companions, can provide a comfortable and pressure-free environment for speaking practice. Similarly, Littlewood (2007) identified that psychological factors such as fear of making mistakes and concern about criticism are major barriers to speaking practice. Therefore, the use of AI greatly helped students practice speaking, particularly by reducing their fear.

This study indicated that Gemini AI successfully created a comfortable learning environment for students. Some students compared their experiences practicing English speaking with the AI to those with peers. The students reported feeling more confident practicing with the AI because it allowed them to be more daring and free from judgment. These findings indicated that Gemini AI successfully created a comfortable, low-pressure learning environment for students. The findings of this study showed that student

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motivation stemmed from two sources: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation emerged in students who were motivated by their own belief that their English proficiency would impact their future. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation arose directly from the use of AI, which motivated students to practice more frequently after experiencing the positive results provided by the AI. In this case, Participants 2 and 5 demonstrated motivation stemming from their own beliefs regarding their future, so their motivation to continue practicing increased thanks to the AI chatbot. Meanwhile, Participants 1, 3, and 4 demonstrated motivation arising from their positive experiences with the AI chatbot. Based on these findings, Gemini AI not only functioned as a tool that provided new motivation but also reinforced the motivation students already possessed. This aligned with Lee (2018) research, which shows that the use of AI can enhance student engagement and motivation in language learning.

This study identified that Gemini AI successfully created a comfortable learning environment for students. Some students compared their experiences practicing English speaking with the AI to those with peers. The students reported feeling more confident practicing with the AI because it allowed them to be more daring and free from judgment. These findings indicated that Gemini AI successfully created a comfortable, low-pressure learning environment for students. The findings of this study showed that student motivation stemmed from two sources: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation emerged in students who were motivated by their own belief that their English proficiency would impact their future. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation arose directly from the use of AI.

These findings indicated that each student's needs in learning to speak varied. Some students required more grammatical correction, such as Participant 1, while Participants 2, 3, 4, and 5 needed to improve their pronunciation and fluency. Meanwhile, Participant 6 needed to expand their vocabulary. The AI chatbot's ability to accommodate these diverse needs was one of its key strengths as a learning tool, particularly for personalized and adaptive speaking practice. This is supported by the findings of Chen and Lee (2020) as well as Rehman and Khan (2023), who noted that AI chatbots are capable of providing personalized feedback tailored to each individual's needs. Thus, Gemini AI served as a tool that could provide technical assistance according to each student's needs.

This study identified several challenges students faced when practicing with AI. These challenges included technical issues related to internet connectivity, inaccuracies in speech recognition, system errors, and responses that were irrelevant to the instructions given by students. These findings indicated that, although Gemini AI offered many benefits, the technology still had limitations. This aligned with Kanesci et al. (2023), who state that current AI technology still has various limitations. In other words, AI was still unable to fully understand the given context, leading to misunderstandings. In this study, Gemini AI was still unable to accurately capture or understand the given instructions, resulting in frequent irrelevant responses. Therefore, Gemini AI could not yet be considered a fully reliable tool; rather, it served only as a supplementary tool for practicing spoken English.

This study revealed that feedback from Gemini AI was not provided automatically. Some students reported that Gemini AI would provide feedback only if given instructions or commands first. In fact, some students stated that they did not receive any feedback at all from Gemini AI. Based on this, the findings indicated that Gemini AI played a passive role, requiring students to take the initiative to obtain the desired feedback. This aligned with the statement by Huang and Chang (2022) that AI chatbots provide corrective feedback, but further development is still needed so that the feedback becomes more contextually rich and natural.

Based on these research results, this was the novelty of this study. In practice, based on students' experiences and perceptions, Gemini AI did not provide automatic or spontaneous feedback; rather, it had to be prompted by the user. This meant that users had to take the initiative themselves to issue commands to the AI to receive the desired feedback.

This study revealed that improvements in speaking skills did not occur instantly. Participants 1 and 6 stated that they had not yet noticed any improvement because they had only tried using AI a few times and had not experienced significant changes. In contrast, Participants 3 and 5 felt significant improvements, particularly in terms of speaking fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary, as they practiced using AI more frequently. Interestingly, Participant 4 noted that the skills gained from practicing with AI could be applied in real-life situations, such as when chatting with virtual friends on social media. Based on these findings, Gemini AI served as a learning tool, but students also needed repeated and consistent practice to achieve optimal results. This aligned with the statement by Wang et al. (2020) that AI chatbots provide an adaptive learning pathway that allows students to improve their language skills more effectively. Thus, speaking skills could be enhanced using AI technology, provided that users were consistent and practiced regularly with the

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AI.

This study indicated that students' perceptions of the naturalness of conversations with Gemini AI varied. Some students reported that talking with Gemini AI felt natural. Others said that conversations with Gemini AI did not feel natural because the AI's language style was too formal. Meanwhile, other students stated that the naturalness of conversations with Gemini AI depended on the commands or instructions given. These findings indicated that the naturalness of conversations with Gemini AI did not occur automatically but was influenced by several factors. This aligned with the statement by Russell and Norvig (2016), who define AI chatbots as AI-powered virtual assistants designed to communicate like humans. However, based on the research results, this study showed that not all students felt the same way. Thus, the naturalness of the conversation depended on how users interacted with or gave instructions to the AI.

This study indicated that students' perspectives on the effectiveness of Gemini AI were divided. Some students considered Gemini AI effective as a tool for practicing English speaking because it helped boost their confidence, provided new knowledge, and offered quick responses without any awkwardness. Meanwhile, other students stated that Gemini AI was less effective due to technical issues such as internet connectivity problems, incorrect responses, and even frequent misunderstandings. An interesting finding was that even though students considered Gemini AI to be less effective, they still felt more comfortable practicing with AI than practicing with friends.

This finding suggested that psychological comfort took precedence over the perfect effectiveness of the technology. However, on the other hand, some students preferred practicing with peers because they could engage in spontaneous conversations without having to issue commands. These findings aligned with those of Mahmoud (2022), Kim et al. (2021), and Azizimajd (2023), who state that AI is capable of simulating engaging and realistic conversations, thereby creating a more effective and interactive speaking practice experience.

Based on these research results, the researcher demonstrated that AI chatbots could not yet fully replace human interaction in conversations, but AI could serve as an appropriate and effective support tool for certain aspects, such as boosting self-confidence, reducing anxiety, and providing comfort.

This study showed that students' perspectives on the effectiveness of Gemini AI were divided. Some students considered Gemini AI effective as a tool for practicing English speaking because it helped boost their confidence, provided new knowledge, and offered quick responses without any awkwardness. Meanwhile, other students stated that Gemini AI was less effective due to technical issues such as internet connectivity problems, incorrect responses, and even frequent misunderstandings. An interesting finding was that even though students considered Gemini AI to be less effective, they still felt more comfortable practicing with AI than practicing with friends. This finding suggested that psychological comfort took precedence over the perfect effectiveness of the technology. However, on the other hand, some students preferred practicing with peers because they could engage in spontaneous conversations without having to issue commands. These findings aligned with those of Mahmoud (2022), Kim et al. (2021), and Azizimajd (2023), who state that AI is capable of simulating engaging and realistic conversations, thereby creating a more effective and interactive speaking practice experience. Based on these research results, the researcher demonstrated that AI chatbots could not yet fully replace human interaction in conversations, but AI could serve as an appropriate and effective support tool for certain aspects, such as boosting self-confidence, reducing anxiety, and providing comfort.

KESIMPULAN

Based on the findings and discussion presented, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of using the Gemini AI chatbot for English conversation practice are generally positive. Students have experienced various benefits, such as increased confidence in speaking, greater motivation to practice, and improvements in other areas—including vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar—through the feedback provided. Additionally, the AI chatbot serves as a comfortable and supportive medium for practicing speaking without pressure, allowing students to practice without fear of making mistakes. However, this study also identified several challenges. Unstable internet connections often disrupt the learning process, and the AI's voice recording feature is not yet fully accurate, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings. Additionally, feedback from the AI does not always appear automatically; instead, users must request it first. Some students also felt that conversations with the AI felt unnatural due to the use of overly formal language. From the teachers' perspective, AI chatbots are considered quite effective as tools for teaching speaking skills. Teachers find them helpful in preparing speaking materials and in generating new ideas for classroom activities. However, teachers also recognize that AI still has limitations, particularly in terms of accuracy;

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therefore, the information provided by AI needs to be double-checked before it is used and presented to students in class. This study has several limitations that should be noted. One of them is the use of different AI platforms by teachers and students, with students using Gemini AI while teachers use a different AI chatbot. This difference means that teachers' perceptions cannot be directly compared with students' experiences. In other words, teachers' opinions about AI chatbots are general in nature, while students' experiences are specific to Gemini. This study also focuses solely on exploring perceptions, rather than on objective measurements of the extent to which students' speaking skills have improved. In other words, this study does not quantify the improvements that have occurred, but rather explores the opinions and experiences of the participants. Nevertheless, the results of this study still indicate that AI has the potential to serve as a supportive tool in English-speaking instruction. AI not only helps students practice independently but also provides teachers with alternatives for developing more varied instructional materials. Therefore, the use of AI in instruction—particularly in speaking—must be balanced by the teacher's active role as a facilitator to ensure that its use remains focused, effective, and aligned with learning objectives. The researcher would like to express her sincere gratitude to the English teacher at SMA 19 Garut for granting permission and providing the facilities needed to carry out this study. The researcher also sincerely thanks the students who participated in this study for their time, cooperation, and willingness to share their experiences. Finally, the researcher would like to thank the Indonesia Institute of Education, Garut, for its support and encouragement during the conduct of this study

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