

Article

Enhancing EFL Speaking Feedback with ChatGPT's Voice Prompts

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Abstract

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, fostering effective communication is paramount. Oral presentations can serve as a catalyst, nurturing speaking skills among learners. Surprisingly, scant attention has been directed toward studying the impact of feedback on oral presentations. Leveraging innovative tools like ChatGPT can be pivotal in addressing this gap. Utilizing ChatGPT allows students to actively practice and receive tailored feedback, positioning AI as an invaluable language assistant or tutor. Carefully crafted prompts not only elicit constructive feedback but also serve as a means to refine pronunciation. Integrating these strategies into EFL instruction promises to elevate the learning journey, enriching students' experiences and honing their linguistic prowess. This article will demonstrate voice prompts with practical sample outputs for speaking practices that elicit feedback on different parts of an oral presentation.

Keywords

ChatGPT, generative-AI, prompts, speaking, feedback

1. Introduction

Improving oral speaking skills in a foreign language is one of the most formidable challenges that dictate a person's ability to communicate face-to-face (Gani et al., 2015). Often, learners face limited exposure to the speakers of the language, particularly evident in contexts like English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Using oral presentations in the classroom can be a common strategy in addressing this limitation. This approach aims to actively engage learners in the target language, fostering natural language interaction and exposure while facilitating language acquisition (Gürbüz & Cabaroğlu, 2021). However, encouraging learners to speak is far from effortless. Anxiety becomes a prevalent hurdle, especially for EFL speakers hesitant to engage. Pronunciation concerns, immediate questioning, fear of errors, and apprehension about negative evaluation are significant contributors to EFL speaking anxiety (Öztürk & Gurbuz, 2014). Shyness, as noted by Kaur et al. (2016), is another factor affecting participation. Additionally, as Yangai and Baker (2015) highlighted, the Japanese context specifically grapples with the inadequacy of oral communication skill practice within its education system.

A notable link between pronunciation and learning anxiety has been identified, as highlighted by Baran-Lucarz (2011). One effective approach in alleviating this anxiety involves the integration of mini-speeches and presentations coupled with constructive feedback (Öztürk & Öztürk, 2021). For instance, Motallebzadeh et al. (2020) conducted an empirical study involving 50 upper-intermediate secondary EFL students, demonstrating a significant reduction in anxiety levels when peer feedback was incorporated into the classrooms. Another approach involves Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR), where students reported feeling less anxious speaking in front of an ASR-based interface than interacting with peers or individuals, as outlined in research by Bashori et al. (2020). Other studies show a positive impact on students' oral presentation skills from receiving formative feedback from teachers and peers, although teacher feedback is preferred (Jahromi, 2020). Another study also demonstrated the feasibility of using peer feedback, as students significantly improved their presentation skills (Lee, 2017). Furthermore, the additional benefits of feedback could foster students' critical thinking skills (Faridah et al., 2020). As most of the feedback studies are primarily focused on written feedback, there seems to be a scarcity of research on feedback on speaking, such as oral presentations (Sheen, 2010). One case study conducted by Bo et al. (2016) concluded that commentary on oral presentations not only consolidates students' linguistic knowledge but also aids in the development of communicative competence and discourse strategies.

In the digital age, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a crucial tool aiding learners in numerous ways. Its application, particularly in EFL writing, has showcased immense potential. Research studies employing AI, such as ChatGPT, have illustrated its effectiveness in writing classes (e.g., Kohnke et al., 2023; Dai et al., 2023). Through receiving feedback from ChatGPT, students benefit from its guidance in enhancing their writing skills and enriching their language proficiency (Dergaa et al., 2023; Schmidt-Fajlik, 2023). This signifies the inception of AI integration within the classroom environment. However, despite its promising capabilities, concerns have been raised regarding AI's limitations. Issues such as missing nuances, potential over-reliance, hindrance in fostering creativity and critical thinking, and the risk of plagiarism have been highlighted (Mar, 2023; Granados, 2022; Stewart, 2023). Additionally, there are apprehensions that the information generated by ChatGPT might lack depth or be insufficient (Barrot, 2023; Teng, 2023). Therefore, strategies must be implemented to address these concerns. Suggestions include utilizing ChatGPT as a supplementary resource rather than a sole solution (Barrot, 2023) and employing carefully crafted prompts to guide its use (Huang, 2023).

The introduction of ChatGPT in 2022 sparked extensive research into its educational applications. Primarily explored in writing classes, previous studies have highlighted its invaluable role in providing students with immediate feedback on their work. Initially released in September 2023 for paid users only, the voice function marked a significant milestone. OpenAI's November 21, 2023 announcement, which expanded its availability to all free users, elevated its potential. This advancement enables users to utilize its text features and access its voice capabilities, amplifying its utility.

The ChatGPT app has a very user-friendly layout. To access the voice feature, users must tap the 'headphone' icon at the bottom right of the screen upon launching the app. Initial use involves selecting a preferred voice from five available options. Once selected, users can seamlessly engage in conversations using the voice feature by tapping the 'headphone' icon. ChatGPT's multilingual capabilities make it an excellent tool for language learners of all proficiency levels seeking speaking practice.

In this article, I will demonstrate how students can maximize the potential of ChatGPT by utilizing voice prompts to acquire valuable feedback on their oral presentations and for pronunciation practices. The no-cost version of ChatGPT 3.5 was utilized during the field-testing, although infrequent disruptions, typically lasting a few minutes, were experienced. Conversely, the paid ChatGPT 4.0 offers faster responses and priority access during peak times, accompanied by additional features. This study employs ChatGPT 3.5 to investigate an emerging trend in EFL education. It explores the ability

for readers to readily replicate prompts without cost, contributing to a broader and more accessible educational implementation. To explore its potentials, following questions were formulated:

RQ1: What voice prompts are useful for pronunciation and speaking practices?

RQ2: What voice prompts are helpful for receiving oral presentation feedback?

2. Prompt: Pronunciation and Speaking Practice

One commonly employed method in Large Language Model (LLM) prompting is the zero-shot style. This style serves as a personalized tutor, posing a question and generating an answer in a straightforward manner. It has proven to be efficient for information retrieval, making it ideal for language learners at all levels. Students can easily utilize voice prompts to access information about vocabulary, phrases, slang, and even colloquialisms. Moreover, ChatGPT's multilingual capability enables voice prompts in various languages, further enhancing its suitability for learners across proficiency levels. Thus, ChatGPT's voice assistance function is perfect for pronunciation practice. Students can simply ask for pronunciation guidance and repeat to check accuracy. To illustrate its versatility, here's an example showcasing its diverse functionalities:

Example 1



あなた

Hello, how do you say the Japanese word cho-o-cho in English? Please help me practice saying it.



ChatGPT

Oh, that's the word "butterfly" in English. Just say it like "buh-tuh-fly." Want to practice it a few times?



あなた

BUTTERFLY



ChatGPT

Great job! You nailed it! Keep practicing, it sounds perfect! Anything else you'd like to learn or practice?

The example voice prompt begins with a simple, optional greeting, immediately followed by a question about a word or phrase intended for practice. Phrasing the questions here is crucial; without defining the word or phrase's language of origin, learners may struggle to receive an immediate response. In this case, without setting the learner's language (i.e., Japanese), ChatGPT might start explaining the correct pronunciation of 'cho-o-cho' or its English meaning. The final part of the prompt asks for help with pronunciation practice, achieving the intended goal. This feature not only enables users to quickly access information in their target language, essentially functioning as a voice dictionary but also facilitates immediate pronunciation practice with corrections. Learners can comfortably utilize this tool to improve their language skills without worrying about public scrutiny or feelings of shyness. Not only is this prompt simple and concise, but it also maintains the integrity of communication, mirroring real-life

interactions by including ‘hello’ and ‘please’. This approach not only fosters learners’ intuition but also cultivates their politeness in real-world communication.

To enhance the speaking practice feature, it is essential to include additional instructions for specific tasks. One should start off with an optional greeting, followed by defining ChatGPT’s task. These pre-determined parameters will instruct ChatGPT what to do after the voice prompt. Additionally, incorporating what is expected in the speech, such as grading rubrics would further enhance the quality of the feedback. Below is an illustrative example.

Example 2

Hello, please listen to my speech about ‘my treasure’ and provide feedback and suggest improvements on these areas, grammar, pronunciation, coherence, and addressing the 5W1H questions.



あなた

Hello everyone. Today, I would like to talk about my treasure. Please look at this picture. This is a clock. Yes, it is my treasure. My father gave it to me when I was a second grade student. I kept it on my desk, and it helped me keep track time while I'm studying. Thank you for listening.



ChatGPT

Your speech about your treasure, the clock, sounds nice! To enhance it, you could try adding more details about why this clock is special to you or how it impacted your life. Explaining how it connects to your experiences could make it even more interesting. Also, when describing the clock, try to focus on clearer pronunciation, especially on words like "treasure" and "studying." Lastly, addressing questions like who gave it to you, where it came from, and why it's important could make your speech more complete.

Using this voice prompt, ChatGPT is expected to help improve on various aspects of the learner’s example ‘show and tell’ speech. It is important to note that the initial instruction ‘listen’ will prompt ChatGPT to engage after confirming, while other phrases like ‘I would like to practice my speech’ will lead to follow-up questions. The latter part of the prompt specifies the aspects to address: correct grammar usage, clear pronunciation for articulation, coherent flow for easy understanding. Moreover, by addressing the 5W1H questions—Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How—the learner ensures comprehensive coverage of essential information. By incorporating the phrase ‘suggest improvements’ alongside ‘provide feedback’, ChatGPT offers a more constructive evaluation, furnishing both an overview of the speech and specific encouragement for enhancing requested features. Ultimately, this prompt aims to evaluate speakers practicing spoken English by narrating about a meaningful possession, ensuring a well-articulated response that covers the specified points comprehensively. The sample output suggested exploration into personal connection and experience related to the treasure, making it more engaging. Pronunciations of two vocabularies were pointed out for better clarity, further addressing the treasure’s origin, significance and the giver could possible the narrative more comprehensive. Overall, this prompt demonstrated the effectiveness of providing feedback in line with the expectation.

3. Prompt: Oral Presentation

The aforementioned examples demonstrate the fundamental features of ChatGPT in evaluating a learner’s pronunciation and short speech. By employing similar logic, voice prompts can also be

utilized for oral presentation practices. Just like writing, a presentation can be divided into three distinct sections: introduction, body, and conclusion. Presentations are typically lengthier and demand more preparation and practice. To simplify matters, employing three distinct prompts for each section of the presentation proves more effective in eliciting feedback. This separation also allows easier access for members, if the presentation is done collaboratively.

Example 3

Hello, please listen to the introduction part of my presentation and provide feedback, and suggest improvements on pronunciation, clearly stating the topic, purpose, outline, coherence, and transition to the next speaker.



あなた

Hello, everyone. Today, we would like to talk about a tool called ChatGPT. Here is a quick outline of our presentation. We will talk about how to use it, the reason for using it, who should use it, and what you can do with it. At the end of the presentation, we will talk about some problems with ChatGPT. Okay, we are going to start by talking about how to use this little tool.



ChatGPT

Your introduction was quite clear and concise. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Pronunciation: Your pronunciation was clear and understandable. No issues there.
2. Topic: You mentioned the tool, ChatGPT, but you might want to include a brief explanation of what it actually is. For example, you could say it's an AI-powered language model that assists in various tasks.
3. Purpose: Specify the purpose of your presentation. Are you discussing its benefits, limitations, or both? Clarifying this would add focus.
4. Outline: The outline was well-structured, mentioning the sections you'll cover, which is great for guiding the audience.
5. Coherence: The sequence of points seemed logical and flowed well from discussing how to use ChatGPT to addressing potential problems.
6. Transition: You might want to make a smoother transition to the next speaker by briefly summarizing the key points you just mentioned and then introducing the next topic, like saying, "Now that we understand how to use ChatGPT, let's delve into the reasons why it's beneficial."

Overall, it's a good start! Would you like suggestions for improvement on any specific aspect?

Similar to the speech practice prompts, this prompt requests an assessment of the introduction section in a presentation. It asks for feedback on various aspects, including pronunciation, the clear communication of the topic, the purpose of the presentation, the outline or structure of the content, coherence or how well the ideas flow together, and finally, how effectively the speaker transitions to the next part or the next speaker in the presentation. This feedback will likely help the presenter improve their delivery, ensuring a more impactful and organized introduction for their audience. The sample output effectively praises the clarity of the introduction while offering specific areas for


enhancement, including pronunciation, elaborating on definition, specifying the presentation's purpose, refining transitions, and suggesting a smoother segue to the next speaker. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the prompt by providing balanced feedback, positive reinforcement, and constructive suggestions.

Example 4

Hello, please listen to the body part of my presentation and provide feedback, and suggest improvements on pronunciation, relevance, comprehensiveness, depth, coherence, and transition to the next speaker.

J あなた

So we have talked about how to use ChatGPT. Next, we are going to talk about what you can use it for. There are three main points that you can use ChatGPT for. First, you can use it for work. Second, you can use it for education. Third, you can use it for composing emails. Okay, so for work, you can use it to help you to find ideas. For education, you can use it for helping you search for items, knowledge. And for mails, emails, it can help you compose proper email for different formats. Next, we will talk about who should use this ChatGPT tool.

 ChatGPT

Got it! You covered three main points: work, education, and composing emails. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Try to elaborate a bit more on each point to add depth. For work, you mentioned finding ideas, maybe you could also touch upon problem-solving or brainstorming support.
2. To improve coherence, consider using transitions between points like "Moving on to the second point," or "Now, let's discuss..."
3. When discussing who should use ChatGPT, consider different professions or roles where it might be particularly beneficial.

It's a good start! Is there any specific aspect you want more help with?


Continuing from the introduction, this prompt evaluates the body section of the presentation. In addition to pronunciation, relevant evaluation involves assessing how well the content aligns with the presentation's objectives. Comprehensiveness evaluates the breadth of information covered, while depth scrutinizes the level of detail provided. Furthermore, the prompt seeks feedback on the overall logical flow and coherence of the presentation, ensuring that ideas connect seamlessly. Lastly, it emphasizes the importance of transitioning smoothly to the subsequent speaker, enhancing the overall continuity and engagement of the presentation. The sample output acknowledges the three main areas covered and provides constructive suggestions for improvement within each category—points 1, 2, and 3, respectively: depth, coherence, and breadth. It is deemed effective as it offers specific actionable recommendations to enhance the content's quality and the scope of the presentation.

Example 5

Hello, please listen to the concluding part of my presentation and provide feedback, and suggest improvements on pronunciation, summarization, message reinforcement, and a memorable conclusion.

J あなた

So we have talked about all the different functions of ChatGPT. Let's do a quick overview. We talked about how to use it, and the purpose of using it, who should use it, and what it can do. And obviously we know the ChatGP is very powerful and useful, but there are also problems. There are problems such as people will use it for plagiarism. Also the information might be biased, and people might become lazy and unable to think on him or herself. So we should definitely use ChatGPT wisely.

 ChatGPT

Got it. You did a good job summarizing the key points of your presentation about ChatGPT. Your pronunciation was clear and easy to understand.

You effectively highlighted its various functions, how it's used, its purpose, and the target audience. You also brought attention to its strengths, being powerful and useful, while addressing potential issues like plagiarism, biased information, and dependency.

To reinforce your message, consider emphasizing specific examples of how to use ChatGPT responsibly and encouraging critical thinking despite its convenience. A memorable conclusion could involve a call to action or a thought-provoking statement, urging your audience to be mindful while leveraging this technology.

Great work overall! If you have any specific areas you'd like to refine or elaborate on further, feel free to let me know.

The closing phase of a presentation serves as the cornerstone for leaving a lasting impression. It is vital to focus on different elements than introduction and body, although pronunciation remains the central checkpoint. Other aspects, such as an effective summary and succinctly encapsulating the core points discussed, reinforce the audience's understanding. Furthermore, to fortify the main messages, repetition is key; reiterating crucial ideas bolsters their retention. Lastly, crafting a strong and memorable concluding statement not only leaves a lasting imprint but also encapsulates the essence of the entire presentation, resonating with the audience long after the session ends. Feedback on these aspects enriches the overall impact and effectiveness of the presentation's conclusion. The sample output recognizes the strength in delivering a comprehensive summary with clear pronunciation, while also encouraging further elaboration with specific examples and a memorable conclusion. Its effectiveness lies in meeting expectations by not only offering constructive suggestions but also highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. Overall, the positive tone fosters encouragement and provides guidance for enhancement, making it a impactful feedback.

The prompts mentioned were not provided by ChatGPT. Instead, the author carefully developed them through trial and error, aiming to meet precise teaching goals. Ongoing research is underway to analyze these prompts empirically, and the results will be shared in the future article. Meanwhile, from my own teaching experience, I've found these prompts to be useful in the classroom, having tested them with learners.

4. Discussion

Speaking is one of the four essential skills for promoting communication. For EFL students, the hurdles are high due to the lack of context and the unavailability of language speaker checks, among

other factors that deter speaking. ChatGPT is here to fill this gap. As smartphones are ubiquitous, this handy tool is readily available for anyone with a stable internet connection to use. The voice feature of ChatGPT has been made available publicly, and for educators, it is crucial to be aware of its potential. The prompts discussed here are designed to harness the benefits of speaking practice. Learners can feel a sense of security while practicing without the presence of the language speaker. Furthermore, although it is an AI bot, ChatGPT is very encouraging in the process of practicing pronunciation (at least in the case of field testing). The grammar and structure feedback features were already available in text form. With this additional voice feature, ChatGPT can virtually act as a language tutor or speaking partner.

The examples presented here were meticulously crafted by the author through careful trial and error. These prompts were intentionally kept short and concise to focus on speaking, thereby taking full advantage of ASR. While there are many similarities in evaluating a presentation and a written piece, the primary source of input differs. Instead of typing, learners provide input via the microphone, essentially engaging in a form of speech. There's an additional benefit to this input method—learners can review the chat history to ensure ChatGPT accurately captures their voice. Requiring learners to submit the script as an assignment ensures independent practice. However, there are some caveats to this feature. Firstly, an unstable internet connection could lead to frustration. Secondly, background noise might disrupt the practice, resulting in unwanted text being picked up. Thirdly, prolonged silence triggers the termination of the 'listen' mode, disrupting the practice flow and potentially resulting in a choppy or incomplete script.

The current focus of research on ChatGPT primarily revolves around writing and feedback, as highlighted in studies by Kohnke et al. (2023) and Dai et al. (2023). However, this paper aims to showcase the potential integration of ChatGPT's capabilities into speaking and listening classes. By harnessing ChatGPT's dual functionality in providing feedback and utilizing ASR, it becomes a valuable tool in addressing learner anxiety. Within the classroom setting, ChatGPT can serve as a supportive intermediary for students who may feel uneasy using a foreign language among their peers. Moreover, utilizing ChatGPT for speech practice prior to actual presentations could potentially alleviate stage fright and bolster self-confidence. The voice feedback also enhances opportunities for students to refine their listening skills alongside provided scripts, addressing the inadequacy of oral communication practices in the Japanese education system (Yangai and Baker, 2015). For educators, this tool proves invaluable by enabling lower-level students to engage in more meaningful conversations. Additionally, it alleviates the pressure of providing individualized feedback before or after speeches or presentations. Teachers can rely on the voice scripts submitted by students for a preliminary assessment and offer further feedback as needed, streamlining the feedback process.

Despite ChatGPT excelling in providing feedback, it does have its limitations. Human oversight is invaluable when it comes to understanding real-world context. While ChatGPT offers feedback on pronunciation and structural aspects, it falls short in assessing elements like delivery and engagement in a speech or oral presentation. This is why ChatGPT serves as a valuable tool for learners to address concerns like pronunciation and structural errors, but it cannot replace human assistance. Although ChatGPT can help identify language and structural errors beforehand through proper prompts in text form, it is essential to note that learners must still engage in real-world interactions. Relying solely on ChatGPT for speaking practice is insufficient, as human interaction remains crucial for a comprehensive learning experience.

5. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the integration of ChatGPT into EFL speaking classes marks a significant stride towards AI-driven education. Its implementation empowers learners towards independent learning, offering an invaluable tool that caters to individual learning paces and styles. In today's educational landscape, the

utilization of AI tools has become unavoidable, offering a means to alleviate anxiety often associated with speaking/oral presentations by providing a supportive, non-judgmental environment. However, it is crucial to view ChatGPT not as a substitute for human interaction, but as an assistant or tutor that complements traditional learning methodologies. Harnessing its benefits relies on the appropriateness of the prompts, highlighting the importance of structured guidance to maximize its enriching potential in the students' learning journey.

Furthermore, the expeditious and efficient nature of ChatGPT significantly contributes to enhancing learning outcomes by enabling quick feedback and guidance. Yet, it is imperative to exercise caution and consider the necessity for supervision, specifically through prompt crafting as showcased in this paper, to ensure that students navigate these AI tools responsibly. Digital literacy emerges as a fundamental skill in this context, emphasizing the need to distinguish between biased or false information generated by AI. Encouraging critical thinking and a discerning approach to information becomes paramount, aligning with the broader goal of empowering students not only with language proficiency but also with the ability to navigate the intricacies of an AI-integrated educational landscape responsibly and effectively.

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