

***Enhancing Oral Presentation Skills for Japanese EFL Students:
A Research-Based Approach Using AI-Driven Learning Tools***

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Abstract

This study explored the effectiveness of a blended approach of combining traditional instruction with AI technology in teaching presentation skills to Japanese university students. For the traditional instruction, *Deliver Your Message* was utilized, which was a textbook developed to enhance oral presentation skills for Japanese EFL students at the university level by offering step-by-step guidance in preparing and delivering presentations. For the AI technology, the AI system on the e-learning platform *EnglishCentral* was adopted, which provided real-time practice and feedback for students outside of class. 12 students participated in the study and filled in a questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale questions and open-ended questions. Quantitative data gathered from the former type of questions were on the students' satisfaction and confidence in public speaking, while qualitative data collected from the latter type of questions were on their engagement with both the blended approach. Initial findings indicated that the combination of structured learning and AI-driven practice helped the students gain confidence and improved their ability to organize and deliver presentations in English. These findings suggested that AI-based systems could be utilized to support language learning efficiently and effectively in higher education, especially in combination with structured textbook instruction to enhance students' presentation skills.

Keywords: Blended Approach, Oral Presentation Skills, AI Technology, English Language Education, Student Engagement

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Introduction and Background

The increasing necessity of effective communication skills in both academic and professional settings has highlighted the importance of developing oral presentation skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, particularly in higher education. As universities adopt digital and blended learning approaches to address this need, studies have shown that integrating technology, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), can significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Johler, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). This study explores the effectiveness of a blended approach to teaching English presentation skills to EFL students in Japan by using *Deliver Your Message* (Shishido et al., 2025) and AI tools provided by *EnglishCentral* (<https://www.englishcentral.com/>). The textbook was developed to enhance oral presentation skills specifically for Japanese university EFL students and offers structured, step-by-step guidance on organizing and delivering presentations. The *EnglishCentral* e-learning platform provides AI-driven real-time practice and feedback, allowing students to extend their learning experience beyond traditional classroom boundaries.

Oral presentation skills are essential for language learners even in settings where English is not the primary language outside of the classroom (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010). According to Makena and Feni (2023), presentation skills not only improve linguistic fluency but also enhance cognitive abilities such as organization, critical thinking, and confidence. In EFL contexts, these skills are integral to preparing students for academic and professional interactions where English is the medium of communication. However, students often face challenges in acquiring these skills because of limited opportunities for real-time practice and feedback in traditional classroom settings (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020).

Blended learning combines traditional instruction with digital tools, allowing instructors to bridge the gap between classroom teaching and autonomous learning. Research findings show that a blended approach can increase students' motivation and learning outcomes by introducing flexible and interactive learning options (Oweis, 2018). In EFL education, where consistent practice is essential for language acquisition, blended learning can become a practical solution by enabling students to engage with language in various contexts (Hockly, 2018).

In recent years, research has demonstrated that AI-enhanced learning platforms can potentially play a transformative role in language education (Holmes et al., 2019; Huang & Mizumoto, 2024). This is because AI can offer personalized and immediate feedback in simulated real-world scenarios, thus reinforcing language skills (Chan et al., 2024; Yesilyurt, 2023). AI has been shown to facilitate self-directed learning, a critical component in sustaining motivation and skill development among language learners (Li et al., 2024). In other words, AI-based tools have been particularly effective in fostering autonomous learning, encouraging students to practice in their own time, and providing consistent support in skill development (Yang et al., 2022). This means that AI-enabled English learning platforms that offer practice in speaking through interactive simulations resembling real-world scenarios could greatly help students enhance their English skills.

Building on the findings in the literature, *Deliver Your Message* utilizes *EnglishCentral*, an AI-powered English learning platform, as an additional resource to offer students real-time feedback on their pronunciation, fluency, and overall presentation skills, aiming to increase their confidence and proficiency in English public speaking. This integration of traditional

instruction with technology is intended to respond to the dual challenge of teaching complex language skills and fostering student engagement in an EFL environment.

The aim of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of a blended model combining structured textbook instruction with AI-driven practice in developing oral presentation skills for Japanese EFL students. More specifically, there are three following objectives:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of blended learning by measuring the impact of combining an English textbook with AI tools on students' oral presentation skills.
2. To examine AI's role in EFL education by analyzing how AI-driven real-time feedback reinforces classroom learning and encourages self-study.
3. To assess the students' perception of the blended instructional model by analyzing their motivation, engagement, and satisfaction.

In the following, this paper will first describe the textbook used in the classroom and the AI tools used by the students. The research methodology will then be described, followed by the results and analysis of the data. This paper will then discuss the impact of blended learning instruction, with an emphasis on the role of AI-supported tools on students' learning experience.

Textbook

In this study, *Deliver Your Message* (Shishido et al., 2025) was used for English language instruction in the classroom. Presentations were chosen as the theme of the textbook because strong presentation skills are vital in today's academic, professional, and everyday communication contexts. The textbook serves as a comprehensive resource for students aiming to improve their oral presentation skills, catering to both beginners and those seeking to enhance existing abilities. It is designed to improve students' oral presentation skills by providing step-by-step guidance in organizing presentations and delivering content. This step-by-step approach enables students to acquire essential skills systematically and apply them in practice.

Figure 1: Warm-up

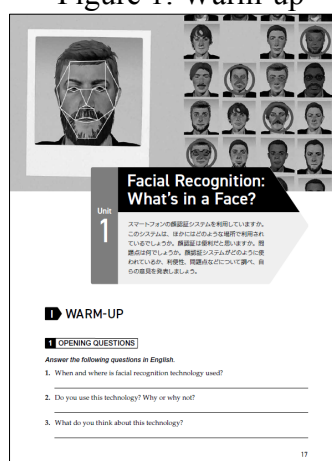


Figure 2: Listening 1

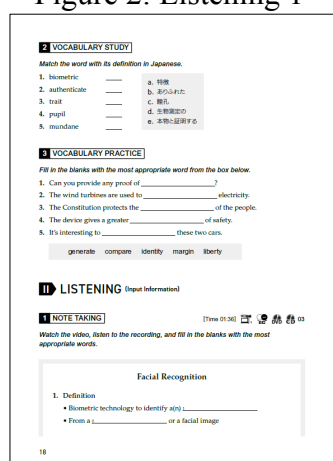
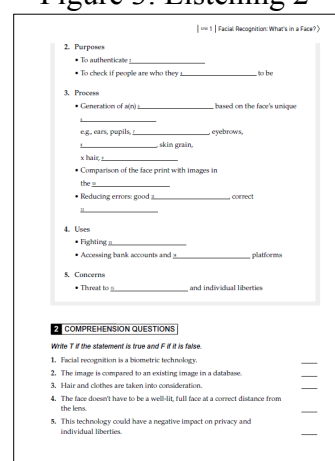


Figure 3: Listening 2



The textbook starts with a Pre-Unit to build foundational skills, covering aspects like setting objectives, audience analysis, organizing content, slide design, speech preparation, effective body language, and handling Q&A sessions. The main part of *Deliver Your Message* is organized into four sections: Warm-up (Figure 1), Listening (Figure 2, Figure 3), Speaking (Figure 4), and Presentation (Figure 5, Figure 6), each designed to progressively develop the

key competencies necessary for oral presentations. The Warm-up section introduces students to topic-related vocabulary and provides exercises in vocabulary recall and contextual application. In the Listening section, students watch videographic content on relevant social topics to practice note-taking and comprehension through true/false questions. The Speaking section encourages students to express opinions, engage in dialogues, and practice responding to questions and comments. Finally, the Presentation section guides students through researching, brainstorming, organizing, and delivering their presentations.

Additionally, the textbook includes practical columns on presentation tips and techniques, and an appendix with evaluation criteria and expressions for logical development, offering templates for various organizational patterns such as chronological order, problem-solution, and cause-effect approaches. This resource is designed to cultivate students' English proficiency while enhancing their confidence and capability to present in structured, impactful ways.

Figure 4: Speaking

III SPEAKING (Exchange Ideas)

1 SPEAKING PRACTICE

There are diverse opinions about the private use of facial recognition technology. Listen to the two dialogues and practice them with your partner. Then think about your own views of facial recognition technology. Which opinion is closer to your own?

Facial Recognition Technology for Private Use

DIALOG 1

Kai: Do you use facial recognition technology on your smartphone?

Emi: Yes, I use it every time I turn it on. It's very convenient.

Kai: Do you have any problem using it?

Emi: No, not at all. Do you think there are some problems?

Kai: Yes, if my face ID was stolen, it would be a big problem.

Emi: I think it is safer and easier than remembering my PIN.

DIALOG 2

Kai: Do you use facial recognition technology on your smartphone?

Emi: No, I don't use it. I think it is risky.

Kai: Why do you think so?

Emi: It would cause serious problems if my face ID was stolen.

Kai: Yes, it is as important as a PIN.

Emi: That's what I think, so I do not use it personally.

2 CREATE A DIALOG

Think about the public use of facial recognition technology based on your own opinions. Complete the following dialog and practice it with your partner.

Facial Recognition Technology for Public Use

You: Have you been to any event using facial recognition technology to check people at the entrance?

Your partner: Yes / No.

You: (Where did you go...)

Your partner:

Figure 5: Brainstorming

IV PRESENTATION (Output Your Ideas)

Argument Points The Convenience and Privacy Problems of Facial Recognition Technology

Process 1: Research

Search the internet or use other means to find where facial recognition technologies are being used and think about your own opinions on the subject.

Process 2: Brainstorming

What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of facial recognition technology? In the following diagram, summarize the information you have researched. Add your own ideas as needed.

Figure 6: Outline

Process 3: Organizing

Summarize what you have researched and the ideas you have come up with in Process 1 and 2 and compose a presentation according to the following outline.

Outline

I. Introduction

1. Greeting

2. Opening

3. Thesis Statement

4. Previewing

II. Body

1. Main Idea 1

2. Main Idea 2

Artificial Intelligence

The blended approach used in this study combined traditional instruction with AI technology. For the AI language support, the AI system on an e-learning platform *EnglishCentral* was utilized. This AI system allows students to practice speaking English by using two features on the platform outside of class. The first feature asks students to reproduce segments of a videographic orally, and the AI system offers real-time feedback on pronunciation and intonation by showing mistakes and giving scores on the screen. Students can repeat the question multiple times until they are satisfied with the score.

The second feature is a chatbot that responds to students' oral or textual input in simulated presentation scenarios. As Figure 7 illustrates, students can first choose a prompt they would like to work on and start a conversation with the system's chatbot. In response to the student's oral input, the system generates a response and feedback as shown in Figure 8. Students can continue the conversation with the chatbot as long as they want, and the feedback mechanism helps them quickly identify and correct mistakes, improving their fluency and presentation skills.

In short, the continuous and interactive practice provided by AI can help students improve their fluency, organization, and delivery of presentations. AI tools in this way offer additional

practice opportunities outside the traditional classroom setting in an interactive and engaging manner.

Figure 7: Chatbot Menu

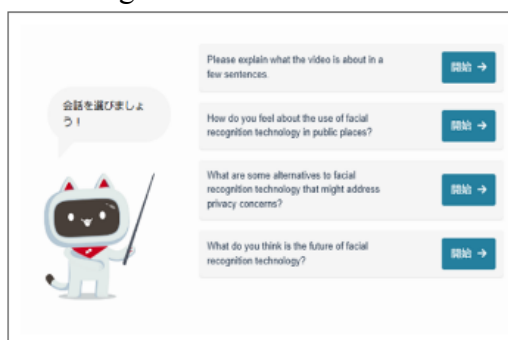
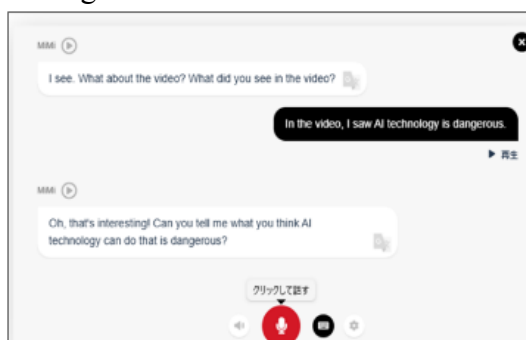


Figure 8: Chatbot Conversation



Methodology

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach by combining quantitative data and qualitative data obtained from questionnaires. 12 engineering students studying at a Japanese university in East Japan participated in this study: 3 junior students, 3 senior students, and 6 graduate students. The students first experienced traditional instruction by using a unit from *Delivery Your Message* in a class taught by one of the authors. They then engaged in additional learning by using the AI system on *EnglishCentral*. Participants then answered a Japanese questionnaire consisting of 10 five-point Likert scale questions and 5 open-ended questions (see Appendix for the English-translated version of the questionnaire). The Likert-scale questions were intended to measure students' satisfaction with the blended approach and AI feedback and their perceived improvement in presentation skills and confidence in public speaking. The open-ended questions were intended to elicit deeper insights into students' perceptions toward utilizing the AI system as language support in terms of their engagement and motivation. For the analysis of open-ended questions, KH-coder (<https://khcoder.net/>) was used for identification of keywords.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis of Questionnaire Responses

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaires provided insights into the participants' satisfaction with blended learning, their perception of the effectiveness of AI for improving pronunciation and fluency, their perceived improvement in presentation skills, and the overall impact of the blended approach on their motivation and engagement. Figure 1 summarizes the data explained in the first two sections below, and Figure 2 shows the data described in the latter two sections below.

Satisfaction With Blended Learning. The students rated their satisfaction with the combined use of the *Deliver Your Message* textbook and the *EnglishCentral* AI platform at 4.50 out of 5. They were satisfied with the organization of the textbook unit (4.08) for learning to organize and deliver presentations. The students were even more satisfied with the real-time feedback provided by AI (4.67). This high level of satisfaction reflected the effectiveness of the blended approach in meeting the participants' learning expectations.

Effectiveness of AI for Fluency and Pronunciation. The students agreed on the benefits of AI-based chat practice in enhancing their fluency and accuracy, with a score of 4.25 out of 5. As stated above, they found the real-time feedback highly helpful (4.67) although the score for the quality of the feedback was slightly lower compared to the immediacy of the feedback (4.17). This indicated that the students perceived the platform as having a strong potential for helping them improve their accuracy and fluency in English. These findings were in line with the claims in the literature regarding the advantages of real-time AI feedback in language education (e.g., Chan et al., 2024).

Perceived Improvement in Presentation Skills. Responses to the question on overall improvement in presentation skills showed an average score of 4.33 out of 5. This meant that the students perceived significant gains in their skills on organizing and delivering presentations through the blended learning experience. They also indicated that the materials helped them increase their confidence in doing presentations (4.00). The majority of the participants also indicated that their confidence in English speaking skills improved through the experience (3.92). The results underscored the positive impact of the integration of AI-supported practice into traditional presentation instructions on improving the students' ability to deliver presentations in English.

Impact on Motivation and Engagement. A positive outcome of the blended approach was also observed in the participants' responses regarding their perceived improvement in motivation and engagement. They responded that the blended approach of textbook instruction and the AI learning increased their motivation and willingness to learn (4.33). Notably, the participants expressed that the integration of the AI-based system improved their motivation to study English (4.58). This indicated that interactive and autonomous AI elements were helpful in boosting engagement levels in English learning.

Figure 9: Satisfaction

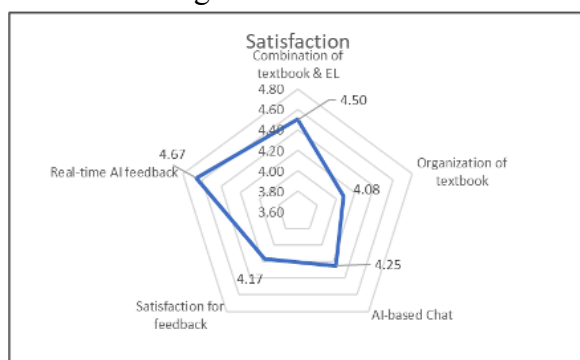
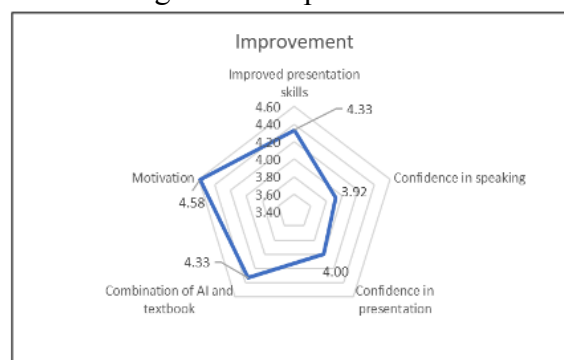


Figure 10: Improvement



These survey findings showed that the integration of AI-based tools with traditional learning approaches enhanced the students' confidence, fluency, and motivation toward English presentations, supporting the effectiveness of a blended learning strategy for EFL education.

Qualitative Analysis of Participant Feedback

The qualitative data collected from open-ended questions offered insights into the participants' personal experiences with and perceptions of blended learning. Specifically, the questions elicited detailed written responses on engagement in structured learning, benefits of AI-driven practice in a blended approach, challenges in AI usability, increased motivation through personalization and immediate feedback, and potential for AI-assisted learning to

supplement traditional learning. KH-coder was used to identify keywords and produce co-occurrence networks. The responses by the students included below were originally in Japanese and were translated into English.

Engagement in Structured Learning. The participants described the materials of *Deliver Your Message* as well-structured and instrumental in systematically improving their presentation skills. For example, Student #2 wrote, “It was good practice for me because I was able to experience the process of researching the topics in the material by myself, giving my opinions and ideas, and structuring them according to the outlines many times.” Student #7 also wrote, “I felt that using this material was good for me because I could go through the structure of the presentation at my own pace, which suited my learning style.”

Their responses indicated that the step-by-step guidance offered by the textbook helped practice and develop the skills necessary for organizing and delivering English presentations. In addition, the worksheet format of the Presentations section allowed them to prepare the presentation at their own pace. As the co-occurrence network in Figure 11 indicated, feedback from the participants emphasized that the materials not only helped them learn the pronunciation and meaning of words effectively but also enabled a gradual and deepening understanding of the content.

Benefits of AI-Driven Practice in a Blended Approach. The students emphasized that AI feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and content played an important role in developing their presentation skills. For instance, Student #3 wrote, “The AI gave me accurate advice, which made it easy to understand what I lacked. Through repetition of the material and AI, I feel that I have improved my basic communication skills in presentation.” Student #10 wrote, “I think it helped me to organize the content of my presentation and to improve my pronunciation. I felt that it was especially useful to be able to clarify areas in which I was lacking,” and Student #11 wrote, “I think chatting with the AI will help develop the content of the presentation in terms of how the conversation unfolds.”

These responses highlighted that real-time corrections in pronunciation and intonation were particularly helpful and that the AI system helped the participants to organize their ideas and thoughts into a presentation through chatting with the system. In addition, engaging in a conversation with AI in real-time helped to boost confidence in speaking and preparedness for live presentations. Figure 12 shows a co-occurrence network based on the responses for the second open-ended question. As can be seen in this figure, feedback focused on the usefulness of AI in improving the accuracy of pronunciation and intonation, organizing ideas for presentations, and practicing speaking English. The results indicated that the interactive and engaging nature of AI-driven practice was considered beneficial in enhancing presentation skills in a blended approach.

Figure 11: Engagement and Structured Learning

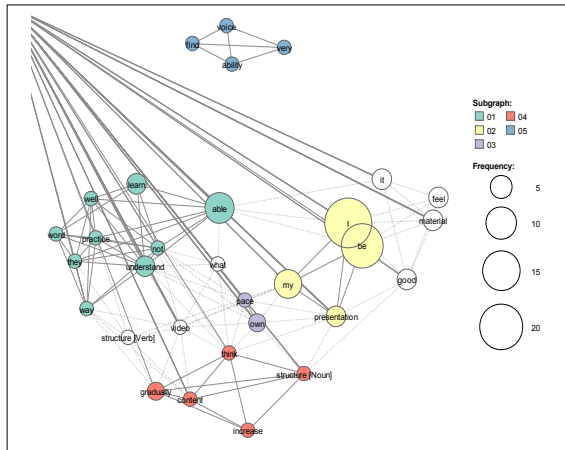
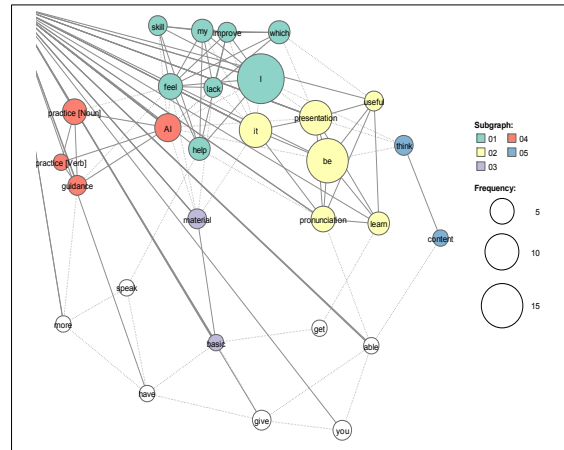


Figure 12: Benefits of AI-Driven Practice



Challenges in AI Usability. The participants' overall feedback to the AI language support was on the positive side as illustrated in the above sections. However, some students identified challenges and difficulties in using the AI system, particularly with regard to text recognition. Figure 13 shows a co-occurrence network for the open-ended question on challenges in AI usability. Student #1 wrote, "AI could not fully recognize the words I said, so I felt the text recognition technology was not good enough," and Student #7 wrote, "It might have been due to my pronunciation, but AI misinterpreted some of the words I said for different words." Student #5 also mentioned that "there were words I had mispronounced which were somehow evaluated as correct pronunciation." The results indicated that the students perceived that the text recognition system was not always accurate although it was difficult to tell whether that was an actual issue with the system or it was a result of inaccurate pronunciation.

In addition, Student #6 wrote, "Errors sometimes occurred in AI chat," pointing out that the system was somewhat unstable at times. As the participants were engineering students, a few students made suggestions on how to improve the system. Student #10 suggested that "it might be better to put a clear delimiter in the UI" because "the end of the AI chat was not clear," and Student #5 added that "it would be good to know how to produce that pronunciation by showing the movement of the mouth." Student #2 recommended that "assistance in creating and speaking English compositions would lower the learning hurdle, especially for beginner level students." These observations provided insightful comments regarding areas where AI design could be improved to better support EFL learners.

Increased Motivation Through Personalization and Immediate Feedback. The students reported that the AI platform's personalized feedback greatly enhanced their motivation to study English. Student #10 wrote, "The immediate feedback on what I didn't understand greatly reduced my tendency to leave things I didn't understand as they were, making it easier to learn. I felt it was easier to maintain motivation because the results were returned immediately." Student #5 also appreciated the immediacy of feedback by saying that "the fact that I could find out what I didn't understand immediately improved my motivation."

In addition, Student #3 wrote, "The AI was refreshing because it allowed me to learn in a way that I was not used to. As a result, my motivation was increased considerably."

These responses indicated that the real-time feedback provided by AI as well as its novelty helped to enhance the students' motivation toward practicing English. Moreover, AI enabled

to lower the psychological barrier to practicing speaking English for some students. For instance, Student #11 wrote, “Even when I feel insecure about my opinion, I think AI can give me a positive response so that I can continue learning without anxiety.”

These positive reactions were also clearly observed in the co-occurrence network illustrated in Figure 14. The expression “a personal teacher” used by Student #1 concisely summarized the students’ satisfaction with the AI learning system as it provided immediate and personalized feedback in an interactive manner. The results supported the potential of AI tools as motivating supplements to traditional teaching methods.

Figure 13: Challenges in AI Usability

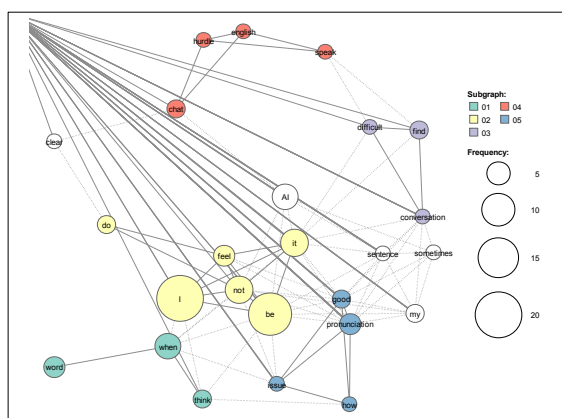


Figure 14: Increased Motivation

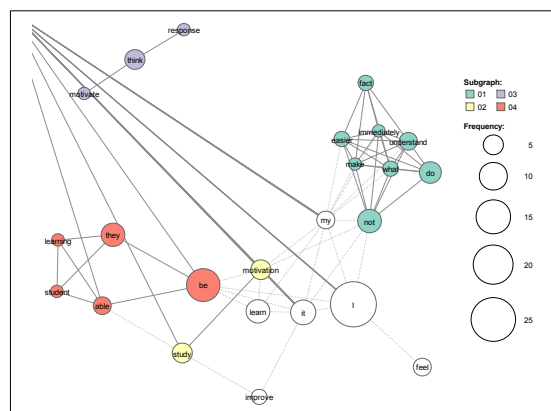
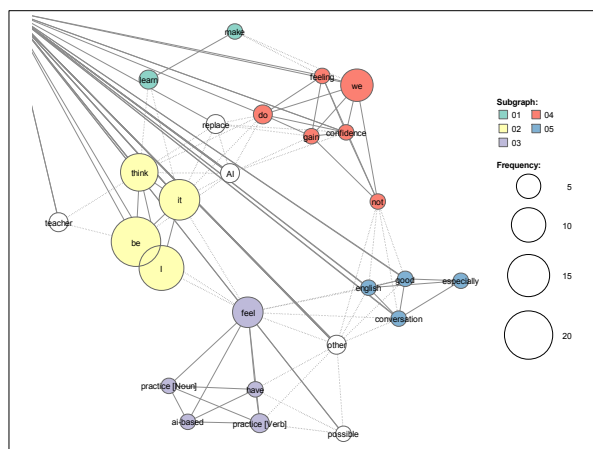


Figure 15: Potential for AI-Assisted Training



Potential for AI-Assisted Learning to Supplement Traditional Learning. In response to the question asking about AI’s potential to replace traditional teaching methods, the participants claimed that AI-based learning could supplement or partially replace traditional instruction. Figure 15 shows a co-occurrence network based on the responses given to this question. Student #4 wrote, “Currently, ALTs often assist English classes, but I think AI will be effective because one teacher is not enough to offer English conversation practice considering the number of students in the classroom.” Student #10 also referred to the shortage of teachers in today’s Japanese schools. In addition, Student #12 wrote, “I think it could be a good alternative especially to online English conversation.”

These comments indicated that the students felt that AI could be a good supplementary tool for practicing speaking English including presentations. Not everyone agreed, however, and Student #2 noted that “we cannot gain confidence in presentation and speaking unless it is done in-person.” Student #11 also emphasized the importance of a teacher by writing “I think it is possible to learn the general rules of grammar from AI, although detailed nuances require the guidance of a teacher.”

Overall, the participants observed that the AI language learning system could be utilized as a supplemental tool for practicing English. At the same time, they emphasized that it could not fully replace instructions offered by language teachers. These insights supported the view that AI could enhance traditional teaching but not become a substitute for it and that a balanced approach should be taken in integrating AI into language education.

Discussion

The quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data indicated that the blended approach of using *Deliver Your Message* alongside AI-driven tools on *EnglishCentral* greatly enhanced the Japanese EFL students’ self-perceived oral presentation skills. Regarding the first research objective of evaluating the effectiveness of blended learning, the study showed that the textbook and the AI system have different roles in developing presentation skills. The textbook can provide students with the opportunity to develop relevant skills necessary for organizing and delivering presentations in a structured manner. The teacher in the classroom can set the pace for initial language exercises and offer additional explanations as necessary. The worksheet format of the presentation section then enables students to work on developing their presentations at their own pace. The AI system offers the opportunities for students to organize their ideas and practice speaking outside of the classroom before giving the presentation to their classmates back in the classroom. In this way, the blended approach is effective in improving students’ skills and confidence in delivering presentations in English.

With regard to the second research objective of examining AI’s role in EFL education, the study indicated that the real-time and personalized feedback is the most useful feature of AI in developing students’ presentation skills. It is not possible for the teacher to provide personalized feedback to all the students in the classroom at the same time, and AI can perform a supplementary role in this aspect. Students can improve their pronunciation and intonation by receiving real-time feedback on their mistakes and by repeatedly practicing the same segment to achieve a better score. They can also practice speaking and organize their ideas for a presentation by utilizing the chatbot function. It is possible to spend as much time as they want with the AI learning tools, and thus it can reinforce classroom learning and encourage autonomous learning. There are rooms for improvement with the AI system as observed by the students in this study. However, the AI system overall has a positive impact on helping EFL students improve their presentation skills.

Finally, regarding the third objective of assessing students’ perception of the blended approach, this research found that the integration of AI-enhanced their motivation and satisfaction in practicing English presentations. The use of AI enables students to practice English in an interactive and engaging way outside of the classroom in a low-stakes environment. It helps them maintain and enhance their motivation because they can get immediate feedback from the system. Through practicing with the AI system, students can boost their confidence in speaking English accurately and clearly because they can visually

see the improvement in their pronunciation and intonation in the feedback. At the same time, it is necessary to offer additional support for beginner level students and to keep improving the system by listening to comments by the users.

Conclusion and Future Directions

This study has highlighted that the blended approach of utilizing a structured textbook and AI-driven language learning tools is highly effective in helping Japanese university students improve their English presentation skills. Students can practice speaking English outside of the classroom by using AI tools, and this helps them enhance their accuracy and confidence in delivering presentations. The promising results from this study suggest that the integration of AI into traditional teaching methods can be greatly beneficial for Japanese EFL students.

There are mainly two limitations in this study. First, the questionnaire focused on the participants' perceived improvement in presentation skills. This means that it would be necessary to assess students' English scores before and after the experience in a future study in order to evaluate if the blended approach can lead to an increase in test scores as well. Second, the participants were engineering students, meaning that they tended to have positive attitudes toward AI in the first place. As such, the inclusion of students from other majors would likely offer additional insights.

In addition, future research could investigate the long-term effects of the blended approach utilizing AI tools on university students' development of English speaking skills including presentation skills. Another aspect worth exploring would be the role of different types of feedback provided by AI in relation to specific language learning goals. AI tools have started to change English education, and English language instructors will have to stay aware of their impact whether they are in favor of AI or cautious about AI.

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Appendix

<Likert-scale questions>

1. How satisfied are you with the combination of the *Deliver Your Message* textbook and the *EnglishCentral* platform?
2. How satisfied are you with the way you organized and delivered your presentation using the *Deliver Your Message* materials?
3. To what extent do you feel this program has improved your presentation skills (fluency, organization, confidence, etc.)?
4. To what extent do you agree with the statement, “AI-based chat practice has improved my fluency and accuracy”?
5. How satisfied are you with the AI feedback feature on the *EnglishCentral* platform?
6. Do you find the real-time feedback from AI easy to understand and useful?
7. How much has your speaking confidence changed as a result of this program?
8. After using the learning materials and the AI platform, how much has your confidence in making presentations in English increased?
9. How do you think the combination of AI-based practice and traditional teaching styles affected your interest and motivation in learning?
10. How has your willingness to learn and motivation changed since you adopted the AI-based learning system?

<Open-ended questions>

1. What was your experience creating a presentation using the *Deliver Your Message* materials?
2. How did you feel the combination of the guidance from the learning materials and the AI practice helped you improve your presentation skills?
3. Did you encounter any difficulties or challenges in using the AI platform?
4. How has your willingness to learn and motivation changed since you adopted the AI-based learning system?
5. Do you think AI-assisted training could replace some of the traditional teaching?