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The Impact of ChatGPT Voice on Non-Majored Students' Willingness to Communicate in a Vietnamese University

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ABSTRACT

ChatGPT represents a significant advancement in language education because it engages in natural and contextually appropriate conversations. This technology offers EFL students enhanced opportunities to practice speaking English in a relaxed environment. While most studies on AI-powered chatbots in higher education have demonstrated their positive effects on students' willingness to communicate (WTC), there has been a lack of research specifically focusing on ChatGPT Voice (CV) in Vietnamese universities. This study explores the impact of CV's conversational interface on the WTC of EFL students at a university in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. In three months, 30 non-English major students participated in ten speaking activities facilitated by CV, supplemented by ten worksheets. These activities were conducted in various formats: group work (four activities), pair work (four activities), and individual sessions (two activities). The impact of CV on students' WTC was assessed using a mixed-methods approach, including 2 questionnaires, one before and one after the intervention, and a semi-structured interview with seven students following the intervention. Preliminary findings indicate that the use of CV could enhance students' WTC. Among the factors influencing WTC, self-perceived competence emerged as the most significant factor affecting students' WTC (β = 0.630), surpassing the engagement and anxiety factors. The study recommends the integration of CV in EFL classrooms to stimulate students' motivation and improve their speaking skills.

Keywords: ChatGPT Voice, Willingness to communicate, non-majored students, speaking skills

Introduction

According to Macintyre et al. (1998), willingness to communicate (WTC) is considered to be a proper objective for L2 education. The ultimate objective of the learning process should be to

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encourage language learners to actively seek out communication opportunities and genuinely want to engage in them. L2 WTC serves as a tool as well as a goal. Learners readily use language to communicate, creating valuable language practice opportunities. The opportunities that extend beyond learning vocabulary and grammar allow learners to develop communication skills, which is the expected outcome of language learning. Just as WTC is vital in L2 education, it holds equal significance in the context of EFL learning. Moreover, successful outcomes in English as an EFL can be linked to students' high levels of WTC. This belief is supported by the findings of Baghaei et al. (2012) which suggest a possible relationship between WTC levels and academic success. They concluded that Korean students' lower levels of WTC in English may contribute to their less successful outcomes in English learning. Teachers, whose vital role is to widen learners' willingness to speak in the classroom through their practicing opportunities, must leverage technological advancements (Riasati & Noordin, 2011). This is because technology serves as a highly effective tool in supporting teachers in fulfilling this role.

Since the emergence of AI, language education has benefited and innovated from this cutting-edge advancement (Pham. N. N. H., 2025; Nguyen et al., 2025), leading to integration into teaching practices and reshaping how learners enhance their speaking skills. Hence, similar to other language skills, the impact of AI on learners' speaking skills has been the subject of research. The study of Fathi et al. (2024) showed that learners exhibit positive attitudes and perceptions toward AI-mediated speaking instruction. Research by Zhang et al. (2024), Fathi et al. (2024), and Dewi et al. (2022) has also concluded that AI has positive effects on learners' speaking skills, especially in enhancing WTC. However, the specific impact of CV has not yet been explored. Therefore, to address this gap, this study conducted an experiment on using CVs in EFL speaking classes for non-major students at Vietnamese universities. The study aims to investigate the influence of CV on learners' WTC and the factors affecting their WTC in this context. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of new methods for practicing speaking skills and provide valuable insights for EFL teachers and researchers.

Literature review

Conversational artificial intelligence in speaking skills

The development of conversational AI, such as chatbots like ChatGPT, has significantly improved language learners' speaking abilities. Early multimedia CALL systems laid the foundation for today's interactive approaches, where AI-driven tools are central to enhancing spoken language practice (Bardel, Erickson, & Österberg, 2019; Loewen & Sato, 2018). Chatbots have emerged as a particularly innovative approach to language learning, offering immersive experiences that mimic natural conversations. These AI-powered tools provide learners with a low-cost, stress-free environment for practicing speaking, helping them build confidence and fluency (Abarghoui & Taki, 2018).

As AI continues to evolve, it is increasingly integrated into educational tools, supporting various forms of interaction, including voice-based communication, which is crucial for developing speaking skills (Pataranutaporn et al., 2021). In addition to these benefits within the classroom, conversational AI has a positive impact on speaking proficiency, boosting students' confidence, motivation, and interest in language learning (Du & Daniel, 2024). By helping students overcome common psychological barriers, conversational AI is a vital advancement in language education that significantly enhances speaking skills.

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) with AI

The definition of WTC

The term "willingness to communicate" (WTC) describes a person's purpose and desire to start a conversation in a foreign or second language. In order to encourage students to utilize the language for meaningful and effective communication both within and outside of the classroom, this idea is essential to current language teaching and learning (Riasati & Noordin, 2011). WTC is an indicator of a learner's preparedness to engage in verbal interactions when given the chance, indicating their eagerness to talk in the target language.

According to MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998), WTC is defined as the propensity to communicate, which is essential to language learning. Research suggests that encouraging WTC ought to be the main goal of teaching second languages (L2) since it improves learning by giving students more chances to practice and use the language in real-world situations (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 1998).

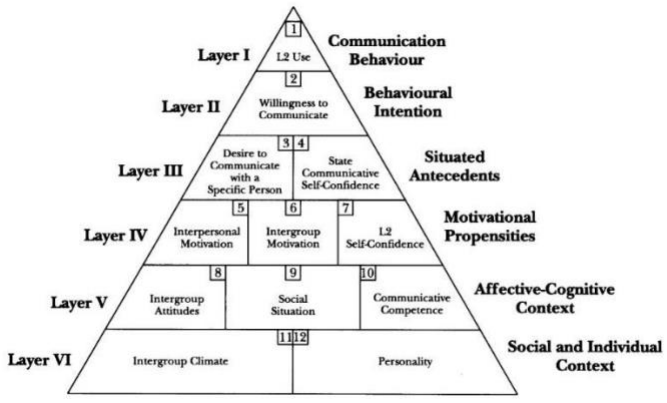
In the context of AI-based learning, WTC takes a new dimension. This refers to students' willingness to engage in communicative activities through AI tools. These tools provide EFL learners who experience reluctance or anxiety in face-to-face interactions with an alternative means to practice pronunciation and receive feedback. These tools create a low-pressure learning environment, allowing students to improve their speaking skills without concerns about potential difficulties or embarrassment that may occur in a traditional classroom setting (Huang & Zou, 2024).

WTC model

In order to characterize, explain, and forecast communication in a second or foreign language (L2), MacIntyre et al. (1998) developed the WTC model, which incorporates psychological, linguistic, and communicative characteristics. This model tries to explain the elements influencing an individual's readiness to speak in an L2 and emphasizes the importance of fostering communication skills. According to the WTC model, a learner's preparedness for communication is shaped by a variety of social, cognitive, affective, and environmental factors, all of which influence their actual language use.

Figure 1

Willingness to Communicate Model



In Figure 1, the six interconnected categories or "layers" that affect WTC are represented by a pyramid-shaped structure in the model. These layers are divided into situational and enduring influences. The base of the pyramid consists of enduring influences, which are stable, long-term

factors like personality traits and intergroup relations that apply across various contexts. In contrast, the upper layers are characterized by situational influences, which are more transient and context-dependent, such as the desire to speak with a specific person or familiarity with a particular topic. This pyramid structure illustrates how both immediate situational factors and stable, long-term influences work together to shape an individual's WTC in L2 contexts.

The WTC model is structured into six distinct layers. The top three layers represent situational influences on communication. Layer I (Communication Behavior) refers to the actual act of speaking or engaging in communication. Layer II (Behavioral Intention) reflects the individual's readiness or intention to communicate in a given moment. Layer III (Situated Antecedents) includes factors like the topic of conversation or the specific person being addressed, which shape communication behavior in the immediate context. The bottom three layers represent enduring influences. Layer IV (Motivational Propensities) encompasses long-term motivations, such as the desire to integrate into the language community. Layer V (Affective-Cognitive Context) includes more stable factors like self-confidence and attitudes toward the language. Finally, Layer VI (Social and Individual Context) consists of deep-rooted traits like personality and intergroup relations, which provide a lasting foundation for WTC across different contexts. These six layers interact to explain both momentary decisions to communicate and broader, long-term influences on language use (MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima, 2002).

The pyramid structure illustrates how these layers interact, with enduring influences forming the base and situational factors leading to actual communication behavior at the top. By focusing on both long-term and immediate variables, the WTC model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how learners' willingness to communicate evolves over time and in specific contexts. Ultimately, the model suggests that a central goal of language pedagogy should be to create conditions that foster WTC, ensuring learners develop both the confidence and desire to seek out and engage in communicative opportunities in their L2.

The impact of AI on WTC

The advancement of AI has gradually transformed the ways students interact and participate in communicative activities. Authors such as Ayedoun et al. (2015) and Carayannopoulos (2018) have found that AI has a positive impact on students' WTC, similar to the findings of Kim and Su (2024). Their findings supported the positive impacts of AI tools on students' WTC mainly due to a decrease in anxiety, increased confidence and a more relaxing learning environment.

In addition to these benefits, AI not only improves WTC but also enhances students' engagement in language learning (Ayedoun et al., 2015; Carayannopoulos, 2018). Especially, AI chatbots effectively reduce speech anxiety and improve pronunciation. According to Du and Daniel (2024), by offering real-time feedback, acting as conversational partners, and serving as resource providers and analysts, chatbots create a dynamic, continuous language-learning experience.

Furthermore, this personalized, accessible approach allows learners to practice speaking anytime and anywhere, encouraging independent learning and engagement beyond the traditional classroom (Dewi, Nur'Aini, & Suwarti, 2022).

The relationship between variables of WTC

WTC can be affected by various factors such as personal traits, motivation, and the learning environment. Firstly, self-confidence plays a very important role. Ghanbarpour (2016) noted that L2 self-confidence significantly predicts. In other words, students with high self-confidence will have a high level of WTC because they feel confident in communicative

activities. In contrast, communication anxiety is considered as a hindering factor. WTC is negatively correlated with communication anxiety (Ghonsooly et al., 2014). When students experience anxiety, they are less unwilling to communicate with others.

Additionally, Lee and Hsieh's research (2019) highlighted that students with higher levels of grit and L2 confidence exhibit greater WTC across various settings. This means these students are more willing and prepared to participate in communicative situations. Waluyo and Bakoko (2022) found positive correlations between self-confidence, motivation, and speaking performance, with motivation being the sole significant predictor of performance. Furthermore, Structural Equation Modelling supports these findings, revealing that WTC correlates positively with self-perceived communicative competence and negatively with communication apprehension and tolerance of ambiguity.

Thus, WTC can be impacted by some features such as self-confidence, perceived communicative competence, supportive learning environment, while communication anxiety and communication apprehension are barriers.

The studies on students WTC in AI-based and digital learning

Recent studies have explored the impact of AI and digital platforms on students' WTC in EFL. A key investigation by Tai and Chen (2023) focused on the Intelligent Personal Assistant, specifically Google Assistant, and its positive influence on adolescent EFL learners. The findings revealed that the IPA enhanced learners' WTC, communicative confidence, and reduced speaking anxiety, creating a less intimidating environment that fostered greater engagement and motivation. Similarly, Kartal and Balcikanli (2019) examined the effects of Second Life on EFL learners. The study demonstrated a significant increase in WTC and a decrease in communication anxiety, attributed to the immersive virtual environment that encouraged risk-taking and made learners feel more at ease. Participants noted that SL provided a natural communication setting, further boosting their willingness to engage in conversations.

Moreover, Hayashi and Sato (2024) investigated ChatGPT as an L2 interlocutor. Their research found that interaction with ChatGPT promoted a proactive learning attitude among participants, contrasting with the passive approach seen in those using YouTube for learning. The study suggested that ChatGPT could reduce L2 anxiety and enhance opportunities for practice, emphasizing the potential of AI-based interactions in language learning. In line with this, Dewi et al. (2022) explored students' perceptions of chatbots in enhancing language skills and WTC. Their qualitative findings indicated that chatbots, particularly from platforms like Memrise, provided personalized learning experiences that made language learning more engaging and motivational. Finally, Zhang, Meng, and Ma (2024) conducted a quasi-experimental study on the AI-speaking assistant Lora, which significantly improved foreign language enjoyment and WTC among Chinese EFL students while reducing foreign language anxiety. This study highlighted how AI tools can grant learners more control over their learning, thereby positively influencing their language experience.

Overall, these studies collectively underscore the transformative potential of AI-based and digital learning environments in enhancing students' WTC, reducing anxiety, and promoting a more engaging and effective language learning experience.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey was seeking to answer the following research questions:

1. Does the use of CV foster WTC in English among non-English majored students?
2. If so, among the influencing factors, which is the key factor that affects the students' WTC when using CV?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study was conducted at the Foreign Language and IT Center of a university in the Mekong Delta during the third semester of the 2023-2024 academic year, which offers English courses that non-majored students must pass to fulfill the language proficiency standards required for graduation. The study involved 30 students enrolling in the English 2 course, one of the three compulsory courses designed to help them achieve the requisite language outcomes. The participant distribution included a diverse range of academic levels, with a notable representation of sophomores. The curriculum focuses on the development of proficiency in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Design of the Study

Mixed-methods approach, as described by Creswell (2012), involves the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a more holistic and nuanced exploration of the research topic. The design was implemented in this current study to explore the impacts of CV's interactive conversational interface on the WTC among EFL learners in a university environment. The rationale for employing this design lies in its ability to offer a thorough analysis by combining the strengths of both methods, as well as its effectiveness in clarifying and confirming relationships between dependent and independent variables. By combining these two methodologies, the study aimed to capture diverse data about students' willingness to communicate, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing participants' WTC in higher education settings. The data for this study were sourced from two primary methods: online questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The data collection techniques will be discussed in the next section.

During the three-month intervention, student engagement with CV was assessed through multiple measures, including self-reported engagement levels in surveys and interviews, frequency of CV tool usage, and participation in class activities. Apart from oral communication activities in the classroom monitored by the instructor, students were encouraged to use CV for speaking practice at home. Interview responses provided further qualitative insights into how students perceived their involvement and whether CV influenced their willingness to participate in English-speaking activities.

Data Collection & Analysis

Online questionnaires and semi-structured interviews served as the data collection instruments for this research. To ensure the questionnaires' effectiveness, a pilot test was conducted prior to the official administration to identify and address any ambiguities in the instructions or questions.

Following the recommendations of Dörnyei and Taguchi (2009) and Mackey and Gass (2015), questionnaires were employed to collect factual, behavioral, and attitudinal data from the respondents. The versatility of questionnaires, as highlighted by Mackey and Gass (2015), made them a convenient choice for this research. The aims of the questionnaire were to gather some demographic information about the students, their level of willingness to communicate, and influencing factors.

The research questionnaire was divided into two sections with a total of 18 items. The first section of the questionnaire focused on collecting demographic information from participants, including their gender, age, and the number of years that they have learned English. The second section of the questionnaire employed a Likert scale with five points, ranging from 1 to 5. This section of the questionnaire comprised of 15 items and focused on the participants' engagement in communication activities, anxiety, and self-perceived competence.

Moreover, to gain a deeper understanding of students' WTC, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants. These interviews served to complement the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire, providing valuable insights into issues that might not have been fully captured in the survey. Data collection involved online surveys administered through Google Forms and semi-structured interviews conducted online at the participants' convenience. To ensure anonymity, interviewees were assigned pseudonyms: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, and S7.

The quantitative data from the survey's closed-ended items was analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to assess the questionnaire's reliability, and the results (Table 1) indicate a high level of reliability, with all values surpassing 0.5.

Table 1

Reliability of the Questionnaire and Constructs

Constructs	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	
		Pre-implementation	Post-implementation
Willingness to communicate	5	0.897	0.762
Anxiety	4	0.707	0.725
Self-perceived competence	6	0.847	0.853

The qualitative data from the interviews were meticulously translated and transcribed in a verbatim manner, systematically categorized into themes, and subsequently delineated into three principal categories: (1) students' engagement, (2) students' decreased anxiety, and (3) students' self-confidence, thereafter, the data derived from the interviews were employed to substantiate the findings and assumptions from the survey, thereby facilitating the formulation of a comprehensive conclusion.

Findings and discussion

Students' WTC under the Use of CV

To investigate the impact of CV on students' WTC, the study focused on three key aspects: engagement, anxiety, and self-perceived competence. The following sections present the findings related to each of these areas. The findings from both the survey and semi-structured interviews consistently indicate a positive impact of CV on students' WTC.

Students' engagement in communication activities

The first five items of the questionnaire, ranging from 1 (Strongly Unwilling) to 5 (Strongly Willing), are associated with the students' engagement in communication activities during conventional class time and CV class time (E1-E5). Table 2 below presents a summary of those responses.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Students' Engagement in Communication Activities

Code	Items	M		SD		*p*
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post	
E1	Talk to classmates/ CV about a communication activity.	2.9355	4.1613	.77182	.63754	.000
E2	Communicate ideas, feelings, and opinions	2.9355	4.0968	.77182	.59749	.000
E3	Ask for clarification when you are confused about an activity you must complete.	3.0323	4.3226	.70635	.59928	.000
E4	Read activity description before you start completing.	3.4194	4.2903	.71992	.52874	.000
E5	Listen to what classmates/ CV says in English.	3.1290	4.2258	.61870	.49730	.000

Data from the table above revealed a significant increase in students' willingness to engage in communication activities after the implementation of CV. This positive impact was observed across all five items, indicating a broad improvement in participants' communication behavior after the implementation of CV.

The data in Table 2 reveals a noticeable change in item E1, which experienced the largest increase in mean score (M_{pre} = 2.93, M_{post} = 4.16). This means that CV was particularly effective in encouraging students' participation in communication activities. In addition, students also demonstrated a greater openness to sharing their thoughts and feelings with classmates and CV (E2; M_{post} = 4.09). This indicates a growing comfort level in using technology to communicate and express oneself among students. Furthermore, there was an increase in students' willingness to ask for clarification (E3, M_{post} = 4.32), suggesting increased confidence in their ability to seek assistance and engage in collaborative learning. Although there was an increase in reading activity descriptions (E4) and listening to their peers/CV says (E5), the willingness was less pronounced compared to other items. This suggests that students may still need additional guidance or support in this area.

Indeed, all the interviewees shared that CVs have a significant positive impact on their engagement in communicating activities. The majority of those who responded to the questions about their willingness to engage in speaking activities felt more motivated and enthusiastic about participating in activities with CV, attributing this to the personalized support and encouragement provided by CV. Furthermore, many students acknowledged their increased confidence in their communication abilities after the implementation of CV. Respondent S4 also shared:

> *"I used to be afraid of making mistakes and hesitant to express my thoughts when talking to my peers. But now, I feel more confident and can talk about what I think with CV."*

This suggests that CV offered a supportive and non-judgmental environment that fostered a greater willingness to engage in speaking activities. Furthermore, the interviewees perceived CVs as being more understanding of their pronunciation than their peers. This may contribute to their increased willingness to engage in speaking activities using CV. As S3 said:

> *"When I practice speaking with my peer, it can be a bit challenging, but when I talk to CV, it can understand me, so it's easier to have a conversation."*

The findings from the surveys, as shown in Table 2, and interviews provide compelling evidence that CV positively influenced students' willingness to engage in communication activities. By creating a supportive and engaging space for interaction, CV empowered students to become more active and confident in communicating in English. This AI-mediated interaction likely reduces fear of judgment while providing immediate feedback, which encourages students to take more risks in speaking and sustain engagement over time.

The presented findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating that after the experience of communicating with CV, the participants' willingness to engage in communicating activities was effectively enhanced. Particularly, it aligns with Ayedoun et al. (2015), Carayannopoulos (2018), and Dewi et al. (2022) about the communication environment that the AI-powered tools offer learners, which makes them feel engaged, encouraged, and comfortable when practicing English with the tools, ultimately increasing their motivation to communicate. This is further supported by MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model, which highlights engagement and confidence as crucial factors influencing students' WTC. By offering a personalized and adaptable interaction space, CV reinforces student autonomy, making speaking practice both accessible and engaging, which may lead to long-term improvements in oral communication skills.

Students' anxiety during communication activities

In addition to engagement, the next four items (A1-A4) of the questionnaire, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), explored how CV influenced students' anxiety levels during communication activities. Table 3 below presents the results of the pre- and post-implementation surveys, focusing on changes in students' reported anxiety levels.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Students' Anxiety During Communication Activities

Code	Items	M		SD		*p*
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post	
A1	I am not worried about making mistakes	2.1935	4.3871	.90992	.66720	.000
A2	It is not difficult to communicate in English	2.5484	4.2581	.50588	.72882	.000
A3	I am not worried that I will not understand what my classmates/ CV says in English	2.2581	4.5806	.72882	.56416	.000
A4	I am not nervous about using English while participating in conventional class/ CV activities	2.7419	4.2581	.85509	.68155	.000

Overall, there was a notable decline in the anxiety levels experienced by students after the implementation of CV. Students indicated diminished levels of anxiety across all four assessed dimensions, signifying a beneficial influence of CV on various facets of communication-related anxiety.

According to the data shown in Table 3, the most pronounced reduction in anxiety was noted in the item A3 (M_{pre} = 2.25, M_{post} = 4.58), implying the positive impacts of CV on students' learning experience, particularly in terms of fostering the learning environment that encourages active participation and reduces communication anxiety. Besides, there was a substantial reduction in anxiety about making mistakes among students (A1, M_{pre} = 2.19, M_{post} = 4.38), this suggests that CV contributed to enhancing students' confidence in their English language proficiency and reducing their apprehension regarding making mistakes. Participants also felt less anxious to communicate in English (A2). There was also a significant decrease in English anxiety for participating in English-language activities (A4). All these results imply that CV might have created a less stressful, safer space for students to learn.

In fact, all the respondents made the same point in the follow-up interviews that there was a significant reduction in their anxiety levels after the implementation of CV. The students also reported several reasons for feeling less anxious when communicating with CV. Respondent S4 acknowledged in the interview that:

> *"It was because that I just talked to CV, not somebody else. Also, it is AI, it doesn't judge me when I make mistakes."*

Student S6 justified:

> S6: *"Talking to an app is easier than talking to a real person. When I talk to someone, I need to use body language and eye contact. But when I talk to CV, it is easier, especially for me when I'm not confident."*

Student S7 also mentioned that unlike communicating with real people, when interacting with CV, any mistakes they make are corrected without causing discouragement. As a result, they feel less hesitant.

The quantitative data in Table 3 and qualitative data from interviews indicate that CV did improve students' anxiety during the communication activities. They were more self-assured of their ability to use the English language, less afraid of making mistakes in English, and helped

them from keeping themselves anxious whenever they participated for better performance. The results also demonstrate the advantages that CV can bring to the student to overcome their fears and build their confidence by providing tools that may offer personalized support and a less discouraged learning space. This might lead to increased engagement, participation, and overall language learning improvement.

The findings match those observed in earlier studies. It is in line with Tai and Chen (2023), Hayashi and Sato (2024), Galip Kartal (2024), Zhang et al. (2024), Du and Daniel (2024), which found that students feel not as worried when practicing speaking with AI-powered tools compared to communicating with peers, and that these tools effectively helped to reduce students' anxiety. The reduction in anxiety can be explained through Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, as CV creates a psychologically safe learning space that minimizes fear of errors, thereby encouraging participation and engagement. This finding supports MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model, which emphasizes learners' confidence in their linguistic abilities as a primary determinant of their willingness to communicate. While CV helped students overcome initial hesitation, those who perceived improvements in their pronunciation and fluency through AI interaction demonstrated the most significant gains in WTC. Nevertheless, while CV provides a valuable scaffold for reducing anxiety and enhancing confidence, it should be integrated with real-world communication activities to ensure that learners develop both fluency and autonomy in spoken English.

Students' self-perceived competence

In order to investigate the influence of CV on students' self-perceptions regarding their communicative competencies, the last six items of the questionnaire (SPC1-SPC6), ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), analyzed variations in self-efficacy scores recorded before and after the implementation. This section presents the results relevant to students' self-evaluated skills in English communication.

Table 4 below shows the summary statistics for the results of the pre- and post-implementation surveys, focusing on changes in students' self-perceived competence.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Students' Self-Perceived Competence

Code	Items	M		SD		*p*
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post	
SPC1	I can say what I want to say in English	2.5806	3.9032	.71992	.83086	.000
SPC2	I think my classmates/ CV can understand me	2.7419	4.0968	.72882	.65089	.000
SPC3	I feel comfortable sharing my ideas, feelings, and opinions with my classmates/ CV	2.5484	4.2258	.67521	.66881	.000
SPC4	I know the words required for each activity completion	2.5484	4.1290	.72290	.67042	.000
SPC5	In general, I find communicating in English in class relaxing	2.4839	4.0323	.72438	.65746	.000
SPC6	I think participating in class communicative/ CV activities develops my fluency	3.0000	4.3548	.72438	.60819	.000

Ultimately, a significant enhancement in students' self-assessed proficiency in communication was evident following the integration of CV. Students expressed more self-efficacy for all six evaluative items, which means that CV has a significant impact on different aspects of students' self-perception.

It is apparent from Table 4 that the clearest improvement was observed in the item SPC3, this means that students able to express what they wanted to say and how they felt with others, especially, after the implementation of CV (M_{pre} = 2.54, M_{post} = 4.22). Moreover, the increase in mean scores in item SPC1 suggested that CV has had the greatest impact on their ability to express themselves confidently (M_{pre} = 2.58, M_{post} = 3.90). In addition, students reported feeling more confident they would be understood when speaking to others and to CV (SPC2, M_{post} = 4.09), and were confident in their vocabulary knowledge and ability to use appropriate language (SPC4, M_{post} = 4.12). Students became more positive about their overall attitudes towards communicating in English became more positive (SPC5, M_{post} = 4.03) and also believed that using learning activities such as CV increased fluency (SCP6, M_{post} = 4.35).

The overall response to the interview was very positive. All the students claimed that they feel more confident in their communication abilities after using CV. Respondent S7 claimed that: *"CV helped me a lot in practicing English, thereby improving my proficiency, making me feel more interested in learning English and more confident."*

The data is indicative of an overall positive impact CV had in increasing student self-perceived confidence about communication skills. We also saw improvements in student confidence in expressing themselves more clearly, their understanding of others, and their involvement in English-language activities. The findings suggest that AI tools might help boost students' confidence and foster language development, enabling learners to engage more actively in communication.

This result is in agreement with Ghanbarpour (2016) and Lee & Hsieh (2019) findings, which found that CV enhance students' self-perceived competence, subsequently increasing their willingness to communicate (WTC). This relationship is consistent with MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model, which emphasizes self-confidence as a key predictor of communication readiness. The ability of AI tools like CV to provide real-time feedback and low-pressure speaking practice likely contributed to this confidence boost, reinforcing their potential as effective learning aids in EFL contexts.

Key Factors Affecting Students' WTC

To provide a more comprehensive analysis of students' WTC the study examined several factors that may have played a role. This section presents the findings related to these factors and their potential influence on student communication behaviours. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Standardized Coefficients for Key Factors Affecting Students' WTC

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Students' engagement	.415	102867120.695	.000
Students' anxiety	.397	101836959.245	.000
Students' self-perceived competence	.630	166077417.372	.000

In terms of students' engagement, the standardized coefficient for students' engagement is significantly positive ($\beta = 0.415$, $p < .001$), suggesting a strong positive relationship between engagement and willingness to communicate. This indicates that students who are more engaged in the learning process are also more likely to be willing to communicate.

Turning to students' decreased anxiety, the standardized coefficient for students' anxiety is significantly negative ($\beta = 0.397$, $p < .001$), suggesting a strong negative relationship between anxiety and willingness to communicate. This indicates that students who experience higher levels of anxiety are less likely to be willing to communicate.

Regarding students' self-perceived competence, the standardized coefficient for students' self-perceived competence is significantly positive ($\beta = 0.630$, $p < .001$), suggesting a very strong positive relationship between self-perceived competence and willingness to communicate. This indicates that students who feel more competent in their communication skills are more likely to be WTC

Overall, the results indicate that students' engagement, anxiety, and self-perceived competence all play a key role in predicting their readiness to communicate. Out of these elements, students' self-perceived competence seems to have the biggest impact on their readiness to communicate. The highest standardized coefficient and t-value back this up. This means that boosting students' confidence in their ability to communicate might be an effective way to get students more involved and talking in class.

Conclusion

The empirical findings of this research offer substantial evidence indicating that CV positively influences the willingness of non-majored students to engage in communication within a Vietnamese higher education institution. Through a comprehensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, several prominent insights emerged: CV provided a more interactive and motivating educational environment, leading to increased levels of engagement and enthusiasm among students. The participants reported experiencing diminished anxiety involving making mistakes and being judged by CV in that CV created a more supportive and comfortable communication environment. CV also enhanced students' self-efficacy in their communicative competencies, leading to an increased readiness to participate and express their thoughts. Furthermore, CV offered each student personalized feedback and assistance, customized to the unique needs of individual students, which significantly contributed to the students' willingness to communicate and the improvement of their communication skills. Among these factors, self-perceived competence emerges as the most significant factor, which affects and helps predict students' willingness to communicate. In general, the findings of this study indicate that AI-powered tools, such as ChatGPT, may serve as useful tools in the improvement of student communication when learning English. By establishing a supportive and engaging communication environment, CV can assist students in tackling obstacles, building their confidence, and honing their communicative abilities.

The findings provide initial insights into the use of CV in teaching English as an EFL in higher education. The study explores how CV can help create a supportive learning environment, offering students multiple opportunities for speaking practice, with an emphasis on personalized learning tailored to individual needs.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the three-month implementation period may pose a limitation, as WTC was assessed solely through

questionnaires and interviews, which may not fully capture the dynamic nature of communicative behavior over time. Longitudinal studies are recommended to provide a deeper understanding of the long-term development of WTC in second language learners. Additionally, the small sample size of 31 participants restricts the generalizability of the findings to wider educational contexts. While this study provides valuable preliminary insights into the impact of AI-powered tools on WTC, future research should involve larger and more diverse participant groups across different educational settings to enhance external validity. Furthermore, employing a broader range of data collection methods, such as classroom observations, speech analytics, or real-time tracking of learners' spoken interactions, could provide more nuanced insights into how students engage with AI-powered tools. Moreover, future research should explore whether learners can successfully transfer AI-assisted speaking gains to spontaneous conversations with peers and instructors. Additionally, investigating the comparative effectiveness of CV against other AI-powered tools, such as Google Assistant, Memrise chatbots, or Elsa Speak, would provide further insights into which AI-driven approaches best support communicative competence in EFL settings.

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