



Increasing student performance and satisfaction in a speaking course through AI-supported active learning activities

Ali Karakaş

Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Burdur, Türkiye

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of active learning techniques on oral communication skills and course satisfaction among English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher candidates in Türkiye. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researcher collected quantitative data from oral exams and qualitative data from a post-course satisfaction survey. Results revealed statistically significant improvement in oral communication performance, with AI-supported active learning activities showing a positive influence. Students reported increased confidence, fluency, and motivation to speak English. Particularly effective activities included student-chosen role-play scenarios, speaking in front of peers, and consistent language practice opportunities. The approach proved successful in both improving academic performance and fostering positive attitudes toward English speaking by helping these prospective teachers overcome communication anxiety and develop greater comfort with self-expression.

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1. Introduction

The development of effective communication skills in a foreign language has been a fundamental goal of foreign language education for a long time. However, the educational landscape in Türkiye presents a particular challenge in this domain, as state school

language teaching has traditionally prioritized grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills despite curricular statements focusing on equipping students with communicative competence (Özen et al., 2013; Solak & Bayar, 2015; Karakaş, 2021). This emphasis has created a noticeable gap in students' oral proficiency, with speaking, listening, and writing skills often receiving less attention due to the strong focus on high school and university entrance examinations (Özen et al., 2013; Çakır, 2017).

The importance of incorporating active learning strategies in developing oral communication skills has been widely recognized in recent years. Additionally, prior research has demonstrated the effectiveness of active learning strategies in promoting oral communication skills (e.g., Fitri & Aeni, 2022; Pektaş, 2024). The study by Fitri and Aeni (2022), for instance, identified three strategies – live interviews, short conversations, and long talks – as effective methods for enhancing learners' fluency, accuracy, and confidence in speaking English. This study builds on these findings by exploring how AI-supported active learning techniques further contribute to EFL teacher candidates' speaking performance and engagement.

The historical emphasis of the Turkish education system on teacher-centred methodologies has roots in traditional educational philosophies that prioritize the transmission of knowledge rather than the development of communicative competence (Karakaş, 2021). According to Kırkgöz (2007, 2008), despite multiple curriculum reforms aimed at implementing communicative language teaching approaches, classroom practices often remain dominated by grammar-translation methods and rote memorization techniques. This pedagogical tradition creates an environment where students develop strong theoretical knowledge of language structure but limited practical ability to use the language in authentic communication contexts (Ayaz et al., 2019).

This imbalance has noteworthy implications for English Language Teaching (ELT) departments, which frequently admit students with limited oral communication abilities. These limitations manifest in students as an inability to communicate effectively, a poor understanding of spoken language, an inadequate oral expression in the target language, and a lack of self-confidence that leads to an unwillingness to participate in discussions or extended conversations (TEPAV, 2015). As Arslan (2013) notes, Turkish ELT students often experience significant anxiety when required to speak English, a phenomenon attributed to their limited exposure to communicative language teaching approaches during their primary and secondary education. The challenges are compounded by what Pektaş (2024) identifies as a dearth of research on how active learning approaches might address these deficiencies in speaking skills. The present study thus addresses this research gap by investigating the impact of AI-supported active learning techniques on the development of oral communication skills among Turkish ELT students, i.e., prospective English teachers. By examining how these techniques can be effectively implemented in ELT programs, this research aims to contribute valuable insights into enhancing oral communication instruction, and ultimately improving students' speaking proficiency in a context where such skills have historically been under-emphasized. Against this backdrop, the following research questions were asked to meet the research objectives: (1) To what extent can AI-supported active learning

techniques improve the speaking proficiency of Turkish ELT students?, (2) How do Turkish ELT students perceive the role of AI-supported active learning techniques in improving their oral communication skills? and (3) How satisfied are Turkish ELT students with AI-supported active learning techniques used in courses aimed at improving oral communication skills, and what factors influence their satisfaction?

2. Literature review

2.1. *Active learning: theoretical framework and approaches*

The concept of active learning represents a shift from teacher-centred to student-centred educational paradigms. As Christensen et al. (1991: xiii) articulate, “[t]o teach is to engage students in learning.” This perspective emphasizes that effective learning occurs when students are actively involved in the educational process rather than passively receiving information. As for its conceptualization, Bonwell and Eison (1991) describe active learning as instructional activities that engage students in the learning process and require them to reflect on ideas and how they are applying them. Collins and O’Brien (2011) further expand this definition to encompass approaches that promote student engagement, critical thinking, and autonomous learning. These conceptualizations highlight the multidimensional nature of active learning, which encompasses cognitive, social, and physical dimensions of student engagement.

Active learning is grounded in constructivist learning theories, particularly the work of Vygotsky (1978) and his concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. In the context of language education, constructivist principles emphasize the importance of learners constructing meaning through authentic, contextualized use of language. This is especially relevant for oral communication development, where learners benefit from socially mediated tasks that require active negotiation of meaning, collaborative dialogue, and reflective interaction with peers and instructors (Lantolf, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Such tasks align well with classroom debates, role-plays, and problem-solving exercises often used in active learning. Similarly, Dewey’s (1986) experiential learning theory, which posits that genuine learning occurs through experience and reflection, provides a theoretical foundation for active learning approaches. In language education specifically, Krashen’s (1987) affective filter hypothesis suggests that active learning techniques may help reduce anxiety and increase motivation, thereby enhancing language acquisition. When learners feel emotionally secure and intellectually stimulated, the affective filter is lowered, allowing greater intake of comprehensible input. Active learning tasks – particularly those incorporating peer collaboration and low-stakes speaking opportunities – can foster a classroom environment where students feel safe to take risks. This emotional climate is especially critical in oral communication instruction, where fear of judgment or error can severely inhibit output (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Active learning has several key characteristics, including student-centred learning environments, engagement in higher-order thinking, development of self-regulation

and metacognitive skills, and both physical and cognitive involvement in the learning process (Ün Açıköz, 2014; Zhang & Hyland, 2022). These features collectively contribute to educational experiences that foster deeper understanding, enhanced retention, and more effective application of knowledge. Prince (2004) emphasizes that active learning includes a wide variety of teaching strategies, all of which involve engaging students in practical tasks and encouraging them to reflect on their actions during the learning process. This cognitive engagement is particularly important for language learning, as it requires students to process and produce language in meaningful contexts.

Edwards (2015) categorizes active learning techniques into three main domains, i.e., intellectually active learning, socially active learning, and physically active learning. Intellectually active approaches consist of concept maps, inquiry activities, problem-solving exercises, research synthesis, and multimedia presentations. Socially active methods include whole and small group discussions, collaborative projects, and peer teaching. Finally, laboratory experiments, hands-on projects, games, model building, and manipulatives are among the physically active techniques. This comprehensive framework provides a useful structure for considering how various active learning strategies might be employed to enhance specific language skills, especially oral skills.

A close inspection of the literature reveals the potential of active learning in promoting student engagement, enhancing cognitive skills, and fostering autonomous learning (e.g., Ün Açıköz, 2014; Zhang & Hyland, 2022). These outcomes align well with the goals of effective language instruction, particularly in developing intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 2021). Specific active learning techniques identified as potentially beneficial for language learning are group discussions, problem-solving exercises, case studies, role-playing, peer teaching, reflective writing and speaking activities, and impromptu presentations, to name a few. Despite the theoretical alignment between active learning principles and the development of oral communication skills, there remains limited empirical research examining this relationship in the specific context of Turkish ELT programs. The present study, thus, seeks to address this gap by investigating how active learning techniques can be effectively implemented to enhance the speaking abilities of ELT students. This way, it may contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical applications in language education.

Recent developments in AI-driven educational technologies offer an additional layer to active learning theory. AI tools enable personalized learning experiences by adapting content and feedback to the learner's pace, interests, and proficiency level (Chen & Wang, 2021; Bellarhmouch et al., 2023). This aligns with learner-centred pedagogies grounded in both constructivist and humanistic theories, which prioritize autonomy, relevance, and individual learner differences in the learning process.

2.2. Oral communication skills and active learning

Active learning strategies have been identified as an effective means of addressing the challenges students face during oral communication. For instance, Fitri and Aeni (2022) explored how active learning strategies facilitate oral communication by providing

structured opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful speaking activities. They highlighted the positive effects of live interviews, short conversations, and long talks on speaking accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility. These findings align with research emphasizing the role of active engagement in language learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Prince, 2004).

Moreover, the effectiveness of active learning strategies is not limited to EFL learners. Nurakhir et al. (2020) examined the impact of classroom debates on nursing students' oral communication and critical thinking skills, finding that structured speaking activities enhanced both students' professional and academic competencies. Similarly, Zare and Othman (2015) investigated classroom debates among ELF learners and found that debates significantly improved critical thinking, oral communication ability, confidence, and teamwork skills. Their study demonstrated that structured debating activities not only facilitate mastery of course content but also help students overcome stage fright and enhance their engagement with spoken English. These findings emphasize the value of active learning techniques, such as debates, across disciplines, in terms of equipping students with the necessary skills for effective communication and decision-making. This broader applicability further underscores the significance of integrating active learning approaches into various educational contexts beyond the Turkish setting.

Further supporting the value of oral assessment approaches, Karlton and Karlton (2014) provided additional support for oral assessment approaches by documenting a decade of oral examination methods in engineering education at Jönköping University. Albeit being underrepresented in practice and literature, these assessments generated active learning opportunities through student-student and student-teacher interactions. This way, students could connect detailed knowledge with system understanding, while teachers could better evaluate individual learning outcomes. Although conducted in engineering, the findings imply that structured oral assessments can serve as both evaluation tools and learning experiences—a model that could address the challenges in Turkish ELT classrooms where written assessments have historically dominated (Karakaş, 2021). Similarly, Agbatogun (2014) found that technology-enhanced active learning through clickers significantly improved ESL students' communicative competence compared to traditional lecture methods, with speaking skills emerging as the strongest predictor of overall communicative competence. Oros's (2007) study further supports the value of structured speaking activities, showing that structured classroom debates (SCDs) in political science courses increased participation, enhanced students' critical thinking and analysis skills.

2.3. Oral communication skills in Turkish ELT context

Research on language education in Türkiye has consistently documented the discrepancy between educational priorities and the development of comprehensive language skills (Karakaş, 2021). A report by TEPAV (Özen et al., 2013) notes that state school language teaching in Türkiye has historically emphasized grammar, vocabulary, and

reading skills at the expense of productive language abilities hitherto. At the tertiary level, this curricular focus appears to be driven largely by the structure of university entrance examinations, which typically assess receptive rather than productive language skills. However, the educational system in Türkiye has undergone several reforms in recent decades aimed at improving language education, as well. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) introduced a communicative curriculum in 1997, followed by additional reforms in 2005 and 2013 that sought to align Turkish language education with European standards (Kırkgöz, 2008; Sarıçoban & Sarıçoban, 2012). Despite these curricular changes, implementation at the classroom level has remained problematic. For instance, Özşevik (2010) identifies several factors contributing to this implementation gap, e.g., large class sizes, limited instructional time, inadequate teacher training in communicative methodologies, and the persistent influence of high-stakes testing that emphasizes grammatical knowledge over communicative competence (see also Ayaz et al., 2019; Karakaş, 2021).

The consequences of this educational approach are evident in ELT departments where prospective EFL teachers are trained. In these programs, students often demonstrate notable deficiencies in their speaking abilities. According to TEPAV (2015), these limitations include ineffective communication strategies, poor comprehension of spoken language, inadequate oral expression, and a marked lack of self-confidence that inhibits active participation in communicative activities. A study by Solak and Bayar (2015) found that Turkish university students frequently mention their prior educational experiences as a primary reason for their unwillingness to speak English, noting that many had never been required to engage in extended English conversations throughout their secondary education (see Özen et al., 2013). This educational background creates significant challenges for ELT programs, which must address not only skill deficiencies but also deeply ingrained attitudes and anxieties regarding oral communication.

In this respect, Pektaş (2024) identifies a significant gap in the research literature regarding effective interventions for improving speaking skills, particularly those that employ active learning methodologies. This gap is particularly articulated in the Turkish context, where traditional teaching approaches remain prevalent despite official curricular shifts toward more communicative methodologies. This research scarcity underscores the importance of the present study, which aims to explore how active learning techniques can be utilized to address the specific oral communication needs of Turkish ELT students.

2.4. AI-supported active learning for oral communication

The integration of AI-powered tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude) has revolutionized the field of foreign language teaching as well as active learning approaches in oral communication instruction, as already evidenced by research on various aspects of Applied Linguistics, ranging from assessment to skills development (e.g., Yeşilyurt, 2023; Karakaş, 2024; Kartal & Yeşilyurt, 2024; Nykon, 2024). As for oral communication in practice, these AI tools hold the potential to facilitate immersive oral communication

practice by creating contextually rich scenarios that require spontaneous language production. As Nykon (2024) notes, AI-driven platforms are good at providing interactive simulations that allow learners to apply their language skills in practical contexts that mirror real-world communication challenges. The dynamic nature of these AI-generated prompts can encourage students to think critically, respond authentically, and develop greater fluency and adaptability in the target language. Furthermore, these tools can, as found earlier, provide immediate, personalized feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary usage (e.g., Kumar, 2019; Jaiswal & Arun, 2021; Cardona et al., 2023), by enabling students to identify specific areas for improvement in their oral production while tracking their progress over time. This iterative feedback loop, as highlighted in the existing scholarship (e.g., Eysenbach, 2023; Quintans-Júnior et al., 2023), supports data-driven enhancement of language performance through repeated practice and refinement.

Additionally, AI-facilitated interactions can expose students to diverse linguistic variations, accents, and communication styles (Jauregi et al., 2012). This way, students can effectively be prepared for authentic conversations in multicultural environments. By connecting students with AI conversational partners that could simulate various speaking contexts, learners can also gain confidence in navigating different communicative situations while developing greater cultural sensitivity in their language use (Karakaş, 2023). The resulting learning environment is likely to promote both linguistic competence and communicative autonomy, as students progressively take greater ownership of their oral communication development through these AI-enhanced active learning experiences.

To summarise, this study aims to explore the impact of AI-supported active learning techniques on the development of oral communication skills among prospective English language teachers in Türkiye. In line with this overarching aim, the research is guided by the following questions:

1. To what extent can AI-supported active learning techniques improve the speaking proficiency of Turkish ELT students?
2. How do Turkish ELT students perceive the role of AI-supported active learning techniques in improving their oral communication skills?
3. How satisfied are Turkish ELT students with AI-supported active learning techniques used in courses aimed at improving oral communication skills, and what factors influence their satisfaction?

3. Methods

3.1. Research design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach (QUAN + QUAL) to investigate the impact of active learning strategies on students' oral communication skills (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative component comprised mid-term and final exam scores along with closed-ended survey questionnaire items. The qualitative aspect included analysis

of open-ended items in the survey, which helped the researcher gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions. Specifically, this design allowed the researchers to provide follow-up interpretations of the patterns observed in the quantitative data.

3.2. Participants and settings

The study involved 57 first-year students (23 males and 34 females), all of whom were enrolled in the Oral Communication course – a compulsory, subject-specific component of the language teacher education program at the university. Participants were selected through purposive and convenience sampling. They were purposively chosen (Cohen et al., 2007) as they constituted the only pre-service teacher group required to attend the course at the time of data collection. The sampling was also convenient, as the researcher had prior acquaintanceship with the participants as their course tutor, which facilitated easy access to the group (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

3.3. Course description and implementation

3.3.1. Course overview

The Oral Communication course is a mandatory 2-credit course spanning 14 weeks, offered in fall terms. The course is structured in two sequential parts: Oral Communication Skills 1 and Oral Communication Skills 2. Oral Communication Skills 1 aims to develop students' ability to engage in oral communication by using appropriate expressions and strategies for various verbal communication situations. It aims to enhance students' skills to express feelings and thoughts effectively through activities such as conversations, presentations, and discussions. Additionally, it focuses on improving speaking and listening comprehension skills through contemporary original, auditory, and audiovisual materials.

3.3.2. Course structure and AI-supported active learning implementation

The course was designed around a progressive 14-week curriculum, with each week focusing on specific oral communication competencies as seen in Table 1. Active learning strategies were integrated throughout the course through various activities, e.g., group discussions, role-plays, impromptu speaking exercises, debates, presentations, storytelling sessions, and peer feedback opportunities. The purpose of these activities was to promote student engagement and provide practical experience in applying communication concepts in their practices.

Table 1. Weekly course syllabus

Week	Topics	Activities
1	Ice Breakers and Speaking Assessment	Introduction and course overview, Icebreaker activities to foster a positive learning environment, Speaking assessment to gauge individual proficiency levels
2	Public Speaking Basics	Understanding the fundamentals of public speaking, Techniques for managing anxiety and improving confidence, Impromptu speaking exercises
3	Persuasive Speaking	Crafting persuasive speeches and arguments, Delivering persuasive speeches in front of the class, Peer feedback and constructive criticism
4	Storytelling and Narrative Speaking	The art of storytelling and its significance in communication, Practicing personal and fictional narratives, Utilizing visuals and body language to enhance storytelling
5	Debates and Critical Thinking	Learning the structure of a debate, Conducting debates on various topics, Developing critical thinking skills through debate analysis
6	Vocal Variety and Tone	Understanding the importance of vocal variety
7	Group Discussions and Active Listening	Facilitating and participating in group discussions, Active listening techniques to promote effective communication, Debates on current events or relevant topics
8	Cross-Cultural Communication	Understanding cultural nuances in communication, Respecting diversity and avoiding communication barriers, Role-plays involving cross-cultural scenarios
9	Humour and Wit in Speaking	Incorporating humour in speeches and presentations, Analysing famous humorous speeches, Stand-up comedy exercises for light-hearted fun
10	Storytelling with Visuals	Combining storytelling with multimedia elements, Using presentation tools effectively, Students present stories with visual aids
11	Impromptu Speaking Revisited	Advanced impromptu speaking techniques, Quick-thinking exercises and games, Group improvisation activities
12	Effective Use of Body Language	Understanding non-verbal communication cues, Practicing impactful body language, Role-plays with a focus on non-verbal cues

13	Specialized Speaking Styles	Addressing different speaking situations (e.g., interviews, presentations), Guest speakers from various professions sharing their experiences, Students prepare and deliver speeches related to their career interests
14	Final Presentations and Extracurricular Activity	Students present a final prepared speech showcasing their progress, Feedback session and celebration of improvement, Extracurricular activity: Organize a public speaking event for the community

Several resources were utilized to support the implementation of active learning strategies over the 14-week term, including a coursepack prepared by the course tutor, weekly tasks aligned with specific learning objectives, useful language expressions reference materials, which were largely generated by various AI tools. Moreover, the AI systems, designed to be helpful and collaborative (OpenAI, 2025), were strategically deployed in the oral communication classrooms to generate customized role-play scenarios, improvisation exercises, and discussion prompts that aligned with students’ individual interests and proficiency levels. This personalization capability aimed to directly address what Bellarhouch et al. (2023) and Chen and Wang (2021) identify as crucial for effective language learning, i.e., learning experiences tailored to students’ unique preferences, development patterns, and learning styles.

Extracurricular activities were also designed to provide additional practice opportunities, such as shooting videos to be displayed on the department’s YouTube channel. Erasmus teaching staff and mobility students were also invited into the classes to increase students’ engagement and motivation. Additionally, to help students increase their theoretical knowledge in oral communication, weekly reading assignments based on Young and Travis’ (2017) book entitled ‘*Oral Communication: Skills, Choices and Consequences*’ were undertaken by the students. The authors of the book state that the book aims to help readers understand the significance of both verbal and nonverbal elements in the communication process. They note that the book explores various domains, including intrapersonal communication, language, nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication, presentational speaking, persuasion, interviewing, and team dynamics. Furthermore, each section is designed to enhance readers’ appreciation for effective communication in both personal and professional contexts. The activities in this coursebook were modified using AI tools to make them more relevant and meaningful for students in their immediate context during classes.

3.3.3. Assessment structure

The course employed both formative and summative assessment methods (Hanna & Dettmer, 2004) to evaluate student progress. Formative assessment involved ongoing evaluation based on overall participation, engagement in class activities, and improvement over time, which allowed the course instructor to provide timely feedback and

make necessary adjustments to instructional strategies. For summative assessment, rubrics were developed and utilized for both midterm and final exams to ensure objective evaluation of students' oral communication skills development.

3.4. Data collection and analysis

Data collection involved multiple instruments to gather comprehensive information on the effectiveness of active learning approaches. Mid-term and final exam scores were utilized to measure students' academic achievement and knowledge acquisition throughout the course duration. Additionally, a course satisfaction survey was administered, consisting of 20 closed-ended items and 3 open-ended items, which provided valuable insights into students' perceptions and experiences with the active learning approaches implemented in the oral communication course. This combination of quantitative performance metrics and qualitative feedback facilitated a thorough assessment of how AI-supported active learning strategies affected students' oral communication skill development.

Data analysis employed a comprehensive three-pronged approach to evaluate the effectiveness of active learning strategies. Inferential statistics were utilized to analyse students' success as measured by their exam performance, providing quantifiable evidence of academic achievement. Descriptive statistics were applied to the survey items, offering insights into students' perceptions and satisfaction with the active learning methodologies implemented in the course. Additionally, thematic content analysis was conducted on the responses to open-ended survey items (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which allowed the researcher to identify emerging patterns and themes related to students' experiences with active learning approaches in developing their oral communication skills. This multi-faceted analytical framework enabled a thorough examination of both the quantitative outcomes and qualitative experiences of students participating in the AI-supported active learning oral communication course.

4. Findings

4.1. Performance measures

The findings presented in Table 2 concerning the performance measures show that students significantly improved their achievement in the Oral Communication Skills Course. According to the paired t-test results comparing midterm versus final exam scores, a significant improvement was found in students' academic achievement over the course duration. The mean midterm score was 89.84 (SD = 5.47) for all 57 students, while the mean final score increased to 92.24 (SD = 3.76) for the same group by yielding a t-value of 4.96 with a p-value of 0.00067, which is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The significant improvement in scores from midterm to final exam (an increase of 2.4 points in the mean score) and the reduction in standard deviation (from 5.47 to 3.76) imply that not only did students perform better overall, but also the performance gap among

students narrowed. This case provides evidence for more consistent skill development across the entire group.

Table 2. Paired t-test Results for Midterm vs Final Exam Scores

Test	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Midterm scores	57	89.84	5.47	4.96	0.00067*
Final scores	57	92.24	3.76		

From the survey findings, as shown in Table 3, one can gain several key insights into students’ perceptions regarding the oral communication course. Concerning *overall course impact*, the vast majority reported positive outcomes, with nearly all students acknowledging enhanced speaking fluency (94.7%) and increased motivation to speak more frequently (91.2%). Drawing on this overwhelming positive response, it may be remarked that the course structure successfully addressed core confidence issues typically hindering students’ oral production.

Table 3. Students’ perceptions of the course

Theme	Items	A/SA (%)	N (%)	Di/SD (%)
Overall course impact	1. The course improved my confidence in speaking English.	86.0	8.8	5.2
	6. The course motivated me to speak English more often.	91.2	7.0	1.8
	7. I would recommend this course to others wanting to improve English speaking skills.	94.7	3.5	1.8
	20. The course increased my interest in continuing to improve my English speaking skills.	91.2	3.5	5.3
Speaking skills improvement	2. The course enhanced my fluency and pronunciation in speaking.	82.5	15.8	1.7
	5. I learned useful expressions to improve my speaking skills.	80.7	14.0	5.3
	11. The course improved my ability to express opinions confidently.	82.4	12.3	5.3
	15. The course strengthened my language exchange abilities.	79.0	17.5	3.5

Instructor and materials	17. I feel better prepared for professional speaking situations.	75.5	21.1	3.4
	3. The role-play scenarios were realistic and engaging.	75.5	19.3	5.2
	4. The instructor provided helpful feedback on my speaking.	84.2	12.3	3.5
	8. The course materials were well-designed and effective.	68.4	22.8	8.8
	9. The instructor was knowledgeable and approachable.	96.5	1.8	1.7
	10. I felt comfortable practicing speaking with my classmates.	63.1	28.1	8.8
Interpersonal and cultural skills	13. The course enhanced my cross-cultural communication skills.	77.2	14.0	8.8
	16. I enhanced my skills in conflict resolution.	80.7	14.0	5.3
Specific communication skills	12. I gained useful strategies for managing conversations.	72.0	21.1	7.0
	14. I improved my ability to give constructive feedback.	82.4	12.3	5.3
	18. I improved my active listening and clarification seeking skills.	80.7	14.0	5.3
	19. I gained valuable experience negotiating in English.	85.9	12.3	1.8

In terms of specific *speaking skill improvement*, most students reported gains in using useful expressions (80.7%) and expressing opinions confidently (82.4%), whereas a notable minority (approximately one-fourth, 24.5%) did not feel adequately prepared for professional speaking situations. This raises questions about the extent to which the course sufficiently bridges the gap between classroom practice and real-world professional communication demands. Concerning this discrepancy, a potential need arises to incorporate more authentic professional scenarios into the course curriculum. As for the evaluation of the *instructor and materials* category, a complex picture was observed in the data. This is because almost all students (96.5%) overwhelmingly praised the instructor’s knowledge and approachability; however, considerably less enthusiasm was voiced for the course materials, with nearly a third (31.6%) considering them deficient in engagement and effectiveness. More concerning, over a third of students (36.9%) reported discomfort practicing with particular classmates. This case signals potential issues with classroom dynamics or insufficient attention to creating a supportive learning environment.

For *interpersonal and cultural skills* development, although the reported improvements in cross-cultural communication (77.2%) and conflict resolution (80.7%) were noted by a great majority, the lower satisfaction rates compared to other categories suggest that this area might benefit from more focused attention. Approximately one-fifth of students (22.8%) did not perceive enhancement in their cross-cultural communication abilities, which is particularly noteworthy given the increasing importance of intercultural competence in global communication contexts. Regarding *specific communication skills*, while most students mentioned improvements in active listening (86.0%) and negotiation skills (85.9%), there remains a significant minority (23.0%) not perceiving gains in expressing disagreement, which is a crucial skill in advanced oral communication. From this finding, it becomes clear that while the course serves well in developing certain communication competencies, it may need refinement in addressing more nuanced and potentially confrontational aspects of communication.

Overall, these findings indicate a generally successful course with specific areas requiring targeted improvement. The divergence between extremely high satisfaction with instructor quality (96.5%) and lower satisfaction with materials (68.4%) and peer interaction (63.1%) underscores the critical role of well-designed resources and structured interpersonal activities in maximizing learning outcomes in oral communication courses.

4.2. Findings from open-ended items

4.2.1. Feedback on course helpfulness

The qualitative data regarding what students found most helpful about the course revealed important insights into the effective components of the oral communication course. The findings were organized into six thematic categories with varying levels of significance to students, as summarized in Table 4 together with sample quotes and key components.

Table 4. Students' perceptions of the utility of the course

Theme	f	%	Sample Quotes	Key Components
1. Public speaking experience	18	28.1%	- "Being on the stage" <> - "Having to go to the blackboard and talk every week"	- Speaking at board/stage <> - Mandatory participation <> - Impromptu speaking
2. Interactive learning activities	16	25.0%	- "Role plays" <> - "Making drama" <> - "The scenarios helped me"	- Role plays <> - Drama activities <> - Scenario practice
3. Confidence building	15	23.4%	- "The course increased my self-confidence" <> - "I don't	- Reduced anxiety <> - Increased self-

			feel so nervous while speaking”	expression <> - Better stress control
4. Peer interaction	8	12.5%	- “Speaking with different people about different topics” <> - “Interacting with our friends”	- Group work <> - Peer discussions <> - Partner activities
5. Pedagogical approach	5	7.8%	- “Patience and support of teacher” <> - “Always speaking English”	- Teaching style <> - English-only policy <> - Topic selection
6. Negative/Neutral responses	2	3.1%	- “Nothing” <> - “I liked the topics except for role plays”	- Dislike of activities <> - No perceived benefit

Public Speaking Experience emerged as the most valuable aspect (28.1%, $f=18$), as students particularly appreciated the authentic practice opportunities. Sample quotes such as “Being on the stage” and “Having to go to the blackboard and talk every week” highlight the importance of structured speaking requirements. Key components valued in this theme included speaking at the board/stage, mandatory participation, and impromptu speaking opportunities, which suggest that direct, practical experience with clear expectations significantly contributed to skill development. *Interactive Learning Activities* ranked as the second most helpful aspect (25.0%, $f=16$), with role-plays and dramatic scenarios receiving particular admiration. Student comments like “Role plays” and “The scenarios helped me” demonstrate the effectiveness of simulation-based learning. These activities provided contextualized practice opportunities that appeared to bridge classroom learning with real-world communication scenarios.

Confidence Building was identified as the third most valuable component (23.4%, $f=15$), with students specifically noting improved self-confidence and reduced anxiety. Sample quotes such as “The course increased my self-confidence” and “I don’t feel so nervous while speaking” indicate that the course successfully addressed the affective barriers to oral communication. The psychological benefits of reduced anxiety, increased self-expression, and better stress control represent crucial outcomes that extend beyond technical skill acquisition.

As for *Peer Interaction*, it was mentioned less frequently (12.5%, $f=8$) but still constituted a meaningful aspect for some students. Comments like “Speaking with different people about different topics” and “Interacting with our friends” are indicators of the value of diverse conversational partners. Group work, peer discussions, and partner activities provided valuable social learning opportunities, though their lower ranking may indicate that these were seen as supportive rather than primary learning mechanisms. However, *Pedagogical Approach* was found to receive relatively limited mention (7.8%, $f=5$), with some appreciation for instructional methods, e.g., “Patience and support of teacher” and “Always speaking English.” The teaching style, English-only policy, and topic

selection were noted, though the lower frequency implies that while important, specific teaching approaches were less salient to students than direct practice opportunities. When it comes to the final theme, i.e., *Negative/Neutral Responses*, responses were minimal (3.1%, f=2), with only a small minority reporting no perceived benefits or limited value in specific activities. Such remarks as “*I liked the topics except for role plays*” reveal that the course was generally well-received by students, with very few finding it unsupportive.

Taken together, this analysis revealed that students placed the highest value on authentic speaking opportunities, interactive scenarios, and confidence-building aspects of the course. The strong emphasis on direct practice and psychological readiness implies that effective oral communication instruction should prioritize structured speaking requirements and supportive environments that address communication anxiety, while incorporating interactive methodologies that simulate real-world communication contexts.

4.2.2. Course impact on students’ perceptions and attitudes

From the data given in Table 5 below, it became evident that participants reported significant transformations across several dimensions, with varying degrees of impact on their perceptions and attitudes.

Table 5. The impact of the course on students’ perceptions and attitudes

Theme	f	%	Sample Quotes	Key Components
1. Increased confidence	32	52.5%	- <> - “I am more confident now, that’s why I can talk about anything with anyone became more confident” <> - “Made me confident about speaking”	- General confidence boost <> - Self-assurance in speaking <> - Reduced insecurity
2. Reduced anxiety/fear	11	18.0%	- “I’m not ashamed to speak in front of people anymore” <> - “Now I don’t afraid or hesitate while speaking” <> - “Actually I was so shy to speak English in front of people but I think I overcome my fear”	- Decreased nervousness <> - Overcoming shyness <> - Less embarrassment

3. Improved comfort/relaxation	8	13.1%	- "I feel more relaxed compared to the beginning" <> - "I feel relaxed when I speaking" <> - "The more I spoke in front of the class, the more relaxed I became"	- Increased comfort <> - More relaxed attitude <> - Better stress management
4. Enhanced speaking ability	5	8.2%	- "I can speak more fluently" <> - "It improved my flowness" <> - "When we start to speak without thinking Turkish, we speak more fluently in English"	- Improved fluency <> - Direct expression <> - Less reliance on L1
5. Changed perspective on speaking	3	4.9%	- "I realized that speaking is more important than I thought" <> - "I have come to a realization that you don't need to worry so much about the grammar while you're speaking"	- New understanding of speaking <> - Changed priorities <> - Different approach to errors
6. Negative/neutral responses	2	3.3%	- "It didn't" <> - "English is more difficult than I think"	- No perceived change <> - Increased difficulty perception

As illustrated above, *Increased Confidence* emerged overwhelmingly as the most substantial change (52.5%, $f=32$), with students reporting remarkable shifts in their self-confidence while communicating in English. Statements such as *"I'm more confident now, that's why I can talk about anything with anyone"* and *"Made me confident about speaking"* illustrate the profound impact on students' general confidence, self-assurance in speaking situations, and reduced insecurity. This majority response demonstrates that building confidence was the most significant achievement of the course, potentially unlocking students' willingness to engage in communication opportunities they might have previously avoided. The theme of *Reduced Anxiety/Fear* represented the second most reported change (18.0%, $f=11$), since most students noted substantial decreases in communication apprehension. Remarks like *"I'm not ashamed to speak in front of people anymore"* and *"Now I am not afraid or hesitate while speaking"* highlight decreased nervousness, reduced shyness, and less hesitation in public speaking contexts. One particularly revealing comment, *"Actually I was so shy to speak English in front of people but I think I overcome my fear,"* demonstrates the effectiveness of AI-supported active learning activities in helping students confront and overcome deeply entrenched communication anxieties.

Another affective dimension, *i.e.*, *Improved Comfort/Relaxation*, was identified by a smaller but significant portion of students (13.1%, $f=8$), who described increased ease during English communication. Comments such as “*I feel more relaxed compared to the beginning*” and “*The more I spoke in front of the class, the more relaxed I became*” indicate improved comfort, more relaxed attitudes, and better stress management when speaking English. This progressive comfort through repeated practice suggests the importance of consistent speaking opportunities throughout the course. As for skill development, *Enhanced Speaking Ability* was explicitly mentioned by fewer students (8.2%, $f=5$), with a focus on improved communication skills. Statements like “*I can speak more fluently*” and “*When we start to speak without thinking Turkish, we speak more fluently in English*” indicate improvements in fluency, directness of expression, and reduced reliance on first language processing. It should be noted that while less frequently mentioned than affective factors, these skill improvements represent tangible language development outcomes. Another theme, *Changed Perspective on Speaking*, constituted a small but intellectually significant category (4.9%, $f=3$), indicating deeper conceptual shifts in how students view the communication process. Reflective statements such as “*I realized that speaking is more important than I thought*” and “*I have come to a realization that you don’t need to worry so much about the grammar while you’re speaking*” reveal new understandings of speaking priorities, changed speaking priorities, and different approaches to errors. These metacognitive shifts, though mentioned by fewer students, represent sophisticated transformations in language learning mindsets. As for *Negative/Neutral Responses*, they were minimal (3.3%, $f=2$), with only a small minority reporting no perceived change or increased difficulty perception. Comments like “*English is more difficult than I think*” indicate that while the course was transformative for most students, a very small percentage did not experience significant attitudinal shifts.

Overall, this analysis reveals that the most profound impact of the activities was on students’ psychological readiness for oral communication, with confidence building and anxiety reduction accounting for over 70% of reported changes. The emphasis on affective factors over technical skill development suggests that addressing psychological barriers may be the essential first step in effective oral communication instruction. The findings indicate that future course iterations should continue to prioritize confidence-building while perhaps placing greater explicit emphasis on metacognitive understanding of the speaking process and specific skill development.

4.2.3. *Suggestions for course improvement*

The qualitative data regarding suggestions for course improvement showed varying perspectives, with a significant number of students expressing satisfaction, while others offered specific recommendations across five main categories, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Students’ suggestions for improving the course

Theme	f	%	Example Quotes	Key Components
1. No suggestions/satisfaction	20	37.7 %	- “Course is interesting enough we don’t need to add any new things” <> - “I have no suggestion. It was perfect!” <> - “I am satisfied with the course”	- Express contentment <> - Course deemed sufficient <> - Positive feedback
2. Activity modifications	12	22.6 %	- “Maybe we can playing games instead of role play” <> - “I think instead of doing role-plays in front of the class we can make some presentation about a topic” <> - “More role-play scenarios”	- Suggestions for different activities <> - Modifications to existing activities <> - Requests for variety
3. Social dynamics	7	13.2 %	- “Everybody can do these role plays or speeches with his or her favourite person or best friend” <> - “Randomized groups would be better” <> - “This is not improving things but I think everybody in our class sit nearby best friend”	- Partner selection <> - Group formation <> - Classroom arrangement
4. Course structure	6	11.3 %	- “Lesson hours can be increased” <> - “Could be done twice in a week” <> - “We can make more individual activities”	- Time allocation <> - Frequency of classes <> - Activity structure
5. Topic selection	5	9.4 %	- “We can discuss more interesting topics” <> - “The scenarios are seems each other. There should be more interesting topics” <> - “More acting about real life”	- Topic variety <> - Real-life scenarios <> - Interest level of topics
6. Environmental factors	3	5.7 %	- “While everyone is talking, there is so much noise” <> - “Respectful place” <> - “Everyone should pay attention to their accent”	- Noise level <> - Classroom atmosphere <> - Speaking quality

The most frequent response, somewhat surprisingly, was *No Suggestions/Satisfied* (37.7%, f=20), with a substantial portion of students expressing contentment with the

course as delivered. Comments such as “*Course is interesting enough we don’t need to add anything*” and “*I love the course (it was perfect!)*” indicated a high level of satisfaction among many participants. This positive feedback suggests that the course design successfully met the needs and expectations of a significant student cohort, though it should be noted that students sometimes hesitate to offer critical feedback even when improvements are possible.

The theme of *Activity Modifications* emerged as the most substantial category of suggestions (22.6%, $f=12$), with students recommending adjustments to existing activities and proposing new ones. Statements like “*I think instead of doing role plays in front of the class we can make some presentation in a topic*” and “*More role play scenarios*” reflect somewhat contradictory desires – some students wanting alternatives to role-plays while others requested more of them. This divergence highlights the challenge of accommodating diverse learning preferences and suggests the potential benefit of offering more varied activity options. Unlike the preceding themes, *Social Dynamics* considerations were raised by a smaller but significant group (13.2%, $f=7$), focusing on how students interacted during learning activities. Comments such as “*Randomized groups would be better*” and “*This is not improving things but I think everybody in our class sit with their best friend*” indicated concerns about classroom social patterns potentially limiting diverse interactions. The suggestions for partner selection, group formation modifications, and classroom arrangement adjustments reflected awareness of how social factors influence speaking opportunities and learning outcomes.

Similarly, *Course Structure* recommendations (11.3%, $f=6$) focused on scheduling and organization aspects. Feedback like “*Lesson hours can be increased*” and “*Could be done twice in a week*” suggests that some students desired more frequent contact hours or different scheduling arrangements. These temporal suggestions, addressing time allocation, frequency of classes, and activity structure, indicated that some students felt constrained by the current schedule in developing their oral communication skills fully. Suggestions on *Topic Selection* (9.4%, $f=5$) addressed the content focus of speaking activities. Students proposed ideas such as “*We can discuss more interesting topics*” and “*There should be more interesting topics.*” These comments point to a desire for more engaging or relevant discussion topics, with requests for greater topic variety, more authentic scenarios, and a higher interest level in selected topics. Of all the categories, *Environmental Factors* received minimal mention (5.7%, $f=3$), with a few students noting physical or atmospheric concerns. Comments regarding noise levels, such as “*While everyone is talking, there is so much noise,*” and speaking quality suggest that classroom management and physical environment considerations affected some students’ learning experience, albeit to a lesser degree than other factors.

Overall, the findings revealed that while many students were satisfied with the course as delivered, specific improvements could enhance the experience for others. The suggestions primarily call for increasing activity variety, reconsidering social grouping strategies, potentially expanding course hours, and selecting more engaging topics. The divergent preferences regarding certain activities (particularly role-plays) suggest that incorporating greater choice and variety might accommodate diverse learning styles

more effectively. Moreover, the data indicate the importance of considering not just the AI-supported activities themselves, but also their implementation context—including social dynamics and environmental factors—while designing oral communication instruction.

5. Discussion

Obvious from the findings is that AI-supported active learning techniques significantly increased prospective EFL teachers' oral communication skills. The considerable improvement in students' midterm and final exam scores, coupled with overwhelmingly positive course satisfaction survey results, soundly shows the positive impact of active learning methodologies on fostering both students' linguistic and psychological development. This outcome resonates with the constructivist view that learning is most effective when learners are actively engaged in constructing their own understanding (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Collins & O'Brien, 2011). As Bonwell and Eison (1991) note, learning environments that promote active participation and reflection enhance students' comprehension and application of knowledge. In this study, AI-facilitated tasks required students to consistently process and produce language, aligning with Prince's (2004) argument that learning deepens through doing and thinking. Recent studies by Nykon (2024) and Karakaş (2024) have similarly demonstrated how AI tools have transformed language-teaching approaches, particularly in enhancing oral communication skills development through active learning methods.

Furthermore, the integration of role-plays, debates, and impromptu speaking exercises provided structured yet engaging opportunities for students to practice and refine their oral communication skills in a supportive environment. These activities not only reflect Edwards' (2015) three domains of active learning but also illustrate the cognitive, social, and physical dimensions of engagement outlined by Bonwell and Eison (1991) and Ün Açıkgöz (2014). The structured practice of speaking in context fostered higher-order thinking, social interaction, and physical engagement with language—each of which contributes to meaningful, sustained learning. These activities represent a balanced implementation of Edwards' (2015) three domains of active learning, i.e., intellectually active learning (through debates), socially active learning (through group discussions), and physically active learning (through role-plays and performance activities). Throughout the course, AI systems were employed to create personalized learning scenarios that matched students' interests and proficiency levels, addressing what researchers like Bellarhmouch et al. (2023) and Chen and Wang (2021) have identified as essential for effective language acquisition—customized learning experiences that accommodate individual learning preferences and developmental patterns. This comprehensive approach to active learning likely contributed to the holistic development of students' communication skills by addressing both students' cognitive and affective dimensions of language learning. These results are in parallel with previous studies, such as by Fitri and Aeni (2022), who found that students considerably improved their fluency, accuracy, and confidence via structured speaking activities.

Another notable finding of the study is the significant increase in students' confidence and willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. This aligns with Krashen's (1987) affective filter hypothesis, which posits that lowering anxiety levels facilitates language acquisition. The concept of WTC, which originated from Burgoon's (1976) work on unwillingness to communicate and was later reconceptualized by McCroskey and Richmond (1985), is particularly relevant here. MacIntyre et al. (1998: 547) defined WTC as "a readiness to enter discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using L2," which in this study was evidenced by students' increased eagerness to participate in communicative activities. The decrease in students' speaking anxiety reported in the qualitative responses further supports this claim. Additionally, the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978) provides a theoretical framework through which the benefits of active learning can be interpreted, as collaborative speaking tasks allowed learners to extend their linguistic capabilities beyond their initial proficiency levels. With these collaborative speaking tasks, learners achieved more through interaction with peers and tools that scaffold learning. Similarly, Dewey's (1986) experiential learning theory underscores how authentic experiences, when followed by critical reflection, facilitate deep learning. The AI-generated tasks in this study provided such experiences, supporting learners as they moved from guided practice toward greater independence.

The findings also support the argument that enhancing students' WTC should be a primary goal of language teaching, as advocated by MacIntyre et al. (1998). In the context of a paradigm shift from teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to English as a lingua franca (ELF), developing intercultural communicative competence (Alptekin, 2002; Byram, 2021) and intercultural awareness (Baker, 2016) has become increasingly important. The AI-supported active learning techniques employed in this study addressed what Kang (2005: 291) identified as "an individual's volitional inclination towards active engagement in communication," influenced by situational and individual factors such as characteristics of interlocutors, topics, and conversational contexts. By creating diverse communicative scenarios and reducing anxiety through structured yet engaging activities, the intervention in the study successfully increased students' WTC, preparing them for authentic communication in real-world contexts. This finding is also theoretically underpinned by Krashen's (1987) affective filter hypothesis, which suggests that learners acquire language more effectively when anxiety is low and motivation is high. The engaging nature of active learning, supported by AI personalization, likely contributed to reduced anxiety and increased learner confidence—key variables in lowering the affective filter. This is particularly significant, as the ultimate purpose of language teaching has evolved to equip learners with the ability to engage meaningfully in intercultural communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Additionally, the integration of AI technology substantially enhanced the intervention by creating authentic communicative contexts requiring real-time language production. These AI-powered interactions, as Nykon (2024) has observed, simulated genuine conversational environments where students could apply practical language skills. The AI platforms also provided students with instant feedback on various linguistic aspects, including pronunciation and grammar usage, as documented by researchers such as

Cardona et al. (2023), Jaiswal and Arun (2021), and Kumar (2019). This continuous feedback mechanism established what Eysenbach (2023) and Quintans-Júnior et al. (2023) describe as an evidence-based approach to improving language abilities through consistent practice and adjustment. Comparing these findings to prior research, the results corroborate the findings of Pektaş' (2024) study, which showed that active learning increases WTC and reduces speaking anxiety in EFL contexts. Similarly, Zare and Othman (2015) and Oros (2007) found that classroom debates and structured discussions not only improved fluency and speaking proficiency but also enhanced critical thinking skills. The present study extends these findings by incorporating AI-supported elements, which provide additional scaffolding and feedback to learners, thereby strengthening their speaking competence. Moreover, the integration of intellectually active tasks, such as problem-solving and inquiry-based discussions, promoted critical thinking and learner autonomy, as emphasized by Collins and O'Brien (2011). These skills are especially relevant for future educators, who must be able to think analytically about language use and pedagogical approaches. The AI systems also introduced students to a range of linguistic variations and communication styles, preparing them for diverse conversational settings as suggested by Jauregi et al. (2012). This approach fostered greater independence in language learning, with students gradually developing more autonomy in their communication skills through AI-enhanced activities, supporting Karakaş's (2023) findings regarding the development of communicative self-reliance.

It should also be noted that despite the success of the intervention, several challenges emerged. A small group of students expressed dissatisfaction with certain classroom activities, particularly role-plays, and suggested incorporating more diverse forms of interactive engagement. This indicates that while active learning strategies are generally effective, individual learner preferences and personal traits must be taken into account, which aligns with Faria et al.'s (2015: 63) findings that "students, as individuals, differ in their social, intellectual, physical, psychological, [and] emotional" characteristics and "differ in their learning rates, objectives and motivation" while engaged in speaking tasks. Furthermore, some students noted that they did not feel fully prepared for professional speaking situations, which suggests, as also documented in recent research (e.g., Pham & Ngo, 2025), that additional real-world speaking tasks and industry-relevant communication scenarios should be integrated into the course curricula, especially that of ESP.

Despite the promising results, alternative explanations for the observed improvements should be considered. While AI-supported active learning strategies appeared effective, the progress in students' oral communication skills might also be attributed to their increased exposure to spoken English throughout the course. Of particular significance was the instructor's implementation of humanistic teaching approaches, which created a supportive and encouraging learning environment. These approaches included personalized speaking topics, ice-breaking activities, allowing learners autonomy in topic selection, and evaluating aspects beyond linguistic accuracy – such as confidence, creativity, mutual intelligibility, and emotional engagement during speaking tasks. This aligns with Arnold and Foncubierta's (2021) claim that humanistic pedagogy

in language education recognizes how psychological factors, such as emotional states, self-perception, motivation levels, and material engagement, considerably influence language-learning outcomes.

Despite these alternative explanations, it should be noted that several vital conclusions about the effectiveness of the active learning approach could still be inferred from these findings. Various instructional materials throughout the 14-week course, including instructor-developed course-packs, objective-aligned weekly assignments, and language reference materials, supported the implementation of active learning strategies—many of which were developed with AI assistance as advocated by OpenAI (2025). Students demonstrably attained more knowledge and skills throughout the course, as evidenced by their improved performance. As the course progressed, they likely became more familiar with the active learning tasks and activities, which may have increased their comfort with these techniques. Additionally, the supportive atmosphere fostered by the humanistic approaches likely enhanced their confidence and WTC. Students also benefited from instructor feedback on their midterm performance, which most likely helped them to address specific areas for improvement in their oral communication skills before the final assessment. Over time, as students became more familiar with the demands and formats of active learning, they likely developed metacognitive awareness and self-regulation—hallmarks of effective, autonomous learners (Ün Açıkgöz, 2014; Zhang & Hyland, 2022). These outcomes not only validate the pedagogical efficacy of AI-supported active learning but also align with broader educational objectives of fostering lifelong, reflective learners.

6. Conclusion

This study provides compelling evidence that AI-supported active learning strategies significantly enhanced prospective EFL teachers' oral communication skills. The quantitative results demonstrated a clear improvement in students' oral proficiency, while qualitative feedback highlighted increased confidence, reduced anxiety, and greater engagement with spoken English. These findings reinforce the theoretical principles of active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991), constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and communicative language teaching (Krashen, 1987), all of which emphasize the importance of interactive, student-centred approaches in language acquisition. The implications of this study appear substantial for EFL education. By incorporating AI-supported active learning strategies, language teachers can create dynamic and immersive learning environments that better equip students with the communicative skills required for academic and professional success. Furthermore, it is evident from the findings that a shift away from traditional teacher-centred methodologies toward more interactive, student-led activities can effectively address the long-standing deficiencies in oral proficiency observed in Turkish ELT programs (Kırkgöz, 2007).

Future research should explore the long-term effects of AI-supported active learning on oral communication skills and investigate how these strategies can be adapted to different learning contexts. Additionally, more studies are needed to examine the

integration of real-world professional communication scenarios to bridge the gap between classroom practice and workplace expectations. By continuing to refine and expand active learning methodologies, language educators can ensure that students develop not only linguistic proficiency but also the confidence and motivation to engage in meaningful communication in English.

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Author's Address:

Ali Karakaş

Faculty of Education, Department of Foreign Language Education

Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University

Burdur, Türkiye

E-mail: akarakas@mehmetakif.edu.tr