# Utilization of Blended Learning on Oral English Competence among Chinese EFL Undergraduate Students

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**Abstract**

Blended learning, which integrates face-to-face instruction with online learning tools, has emerged as an effective pedagogical approach in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Given the increasing importance of oral English competence in academic and professional communication, this paper conceptually explores how blended learning can enhance speaking skills among Chinese undergraduate students. Drawing upon theories of second language acquisition, digital learning frameworks, and empirical studies, this paper analyzes the potential benefits and challenges of implementing blended learning in oral English instruction. Key areas of discussion include the role of digital technologies in facilitating pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and communicative competence, as well as the pedagogical implications for curriculum design and instructor training. The paper also addresses barriers such as technological accessibility and learner autonomy. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on language education by providing a theoretical foundation for integrating blended learning into EFL speaking instruction in China.
**Keywords:** Blended Learning, Oral English, EFL, Chinese Undergraduate Students, Speaking Proficiency

**Introduction**

English proficiency has become an essential skill for Chinese university students, particularly in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world where effective communication in English is highly valued ( Rao , 2019). Whether for academic, professional, or social purposes, the ability to speak English fluently and confidently can provide significant advantages in both local and international contexts (Abdulaal et al., 2023) . However, despite years of English education, many Chinese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners struggle with oral communication(Abrar et al., 2018). The challenge is largely attributed to the traditional grammar-translation method and test-oriented instruction that dominate English education in China (Ahmed et al., 2017). While students develop strong reading and writing skills, they

often lack the necessary training and exposure to develop fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and interactive communication abilities (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019).

One major factor contributing to the low oral English competence among Chinese undergraduates is the limited exposure to authentic communicative settings. Classroom learning often adopts a teacher-centered approach. In such settings, students predominantly engage in rote memorization of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and preparation for standardized tests (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019). Even when speaking activities are included, they are frequently restricted to highly structured exercises, lacking the spontaneity of real-life conversational practice (Alsalhi, Eltahir, & Al-Qatawneh, 2019). Moreover, large class sizes hinder the provision of individualized feedback on students' spoken performance (Aycock et al., 2002). As a result, many students experience anxiety, a lack of confidence, or reluctance when it comes to speaking English. This creates a vicious cycle where their oral skills remain underdeveloped.

In recent years, the digital transformation in education has opened up new avenues for language learning (Aycock et al., 2002). The blended learning model, which combines digital learning resources with traditional face-to-face instruction, has emerged as an effective pedagogical strategy. Blended learning offers increased flexibility, personalized learning opportunities, and broader access to diverse linguistic input through multimedia content, interactive applications, and AI-powered feedback tools (Ayesha, 2020). For oral English learning, technologies like speech recognition software, virtual discussion forums, and AI-based pronunciation assessment tools can offer real-time feedback and interactive speaking practice, thus addressing many of the limitations inherent in traditional classroom instruction (Banditvilai, 2016).

Blended learning also aligns with contemporary language acquisition theories, notably Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982). These theories underscore the significance of interaction, meaningful communication, and comprehensible input in the language learning process (Barrett, 2016). The digital tools employed in blended learning environments enable students to engage with spoken English beyond the classroom. They can reinforce their skills through asynchronous speaking exercises, AI-powered fluency assessments, and peer-to-peer online discussions (Dziuban et al., 2018). This extended exposure to the language can assist students in overcoming speaking anxiety, building confidence, and achieving greater fluency.

However, the implementation of blended learning in EFL speaking instruction is not without its challenges. While digital tools can enhance oral practice, factors such as students' digital literacy, self-regulation skills, technological accessibility, and motivation levels are crucial in determining the effectiveness of blended learning environments (Ehsanifard et al., 2018). Furthermore, teachers must receive adequate training to effectively integrate digital tools into oral English instruction, ensuring that technology serves to support rather than replace meaningful human interaction and communicative practice (Graham, 2012).

Given these considerations, this paper aims to provide a theoretical and conceptual analysis of how blended learning can enhance oral English competence among Chinese undergraduate students. It specifically explores the pedagogical principles underlying blended learning, the

role of digital technologies in oral language development, and the potential implementation challenges in EFL contexts. Drawing on insights from second language acquisition (SLA) theories, digital pedagogy, and empirical studies, this paper offers practical recommendations for the effective adoption of blended learning in oral English instruction.

By examining these issues, this paper contributes to the expanding body of research on technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) and provides educators, policymakers, and researchers with insights into how digital innovations can be harnessed to improve oral English proficiency among Chinese university students.

**Reviewing the Literature**
The significance of blended learning in fostering oral English competence has garnered growing acknowledgment within EFL education. With the advancement of digital learning tools, educators and researchers have delved into their potential to enhance fluency, pronunciation, and interactive communication skills among non - native English speakers. This section conducts a review of the existing literature, encompassing the challenges associated with oral English learning in Chinese EFL contexts, the theoretical underpinnings of blended learning, and empirical studies examining its efficacy in improving spoken English proficiency.

*Challenges in Oral English Learning Among Chinese EFL Undergraduate Students*
Even after years of English education, a considerable number of Chinese EFL undergraduate students face difficulties in achieving oral English proficiency. This is primarily attributed to their limited exposure to authentic communication, an educational focus on exam - oriented instruction, and speaking anxiety (Hrastinski, 2019). Multiple factors contribute to these challenges:

*Teacher-Centered Instruction and Exam-Oriented Learning*
Traditional English education in China emphasizes **reading, writing, and grammar-based instruction**, with oral communication often taking a secondary role. Classroom activities typically involve **rote memorization, translation exercises, and passive listening**, rather than active speaking practice (Hrastinski, 2019). **College English courses** provide limited opportunities for real-world communication, and many students graduate with strong reading and writing skills but weak oral fluency (Jaggars & Xu ,2016).

*Lack of Authentic Communicative Contexts*
Effective oral language learning requires exposure to **natural, interactive conversations** (Jamali Kivi et al., 2022). However, most Chinese EFL learners experience **limited real-life communication in English**. Classroom speaking activities, if conducted at all, are often **scripted and artificial**, failing to develop spontaneous speech and conversational strategies . **Outside the classroom**, students have **few opportunities to engage in meaningful English conversations**, which hinders their fluency and pronunciation improvement (Love et al., 2017).

*Speaking Anxiety and Psychological Barriers*
Many Chinese students experience **foreign language anxiety (FLA)** when speaking English, often due to fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and cultural expectations (Horwitz et al., 1986). **Oral exams and classroom presentations** often induce stress, discouraging

students from practicing spoken English ( Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). The **Confucian heritage in Chinese education** emphasizes humility and avoiding public embarrassment, further discouraging students from speaking up in class (Meng, 2022).

In light of these challenges, there is an escalating demand for innovative teaching methodologies that prioritize student - centered, interactive learning. Blended learning, which incorporates digital tools, AI - assisted speech assessment, and asynchronous speaking practice, has been put forward as a potential remedy to these problems (Murray & Christison, 2019).

*Theoretical Foundations of Blended Learning in Oral English Instruction*
Blended learning finds its basis in constructivist and communicative language learning theories. These theories place emphasis on active, interactive, and contextualized learning. The following theories provide support for its application in oral English education.

*Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*
The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach places greater importance on meaningful communication than on grammatical accuracy (Richards, 2006). It underscores interaction as the core objective of language learning, advocates task - based learning activities that replicate real - life communication scenarios, and prioritizes fluency and meaning over grammatical perfection. Blended learning is in line with CLT principles by integrating digital speech tools, online discussions, and AI - driven pronunciation feedback. These elements offer students real - time communicative experiences outside the classroom (O'Reilly et al., 2018).

*Sociocultural Theory and the Role of Interaction*
Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) underscores the significance of social interaction and scaffolding in language learning. According to this theory, language is acquired through meaningful interaction with others. Learners benefit from scaffolded support, such as teacher feedback, AI - assisted speech analysis, and peer collaboration. Technology can also function as a "more knowledgeable other" by offering guided practice and corrective feedback, thereby enhancing the learning process. Blended learning environments promote peer interaction through online discussion forums, AI - generated pronunciation corrections, and interactive speech practice, which are in harmony with Vygotskian scaffolding principles (Öztürk & Aydin, 2019).

*Krashen's Input and Output Hypotheses*
Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) and Swain's Output Hypothesis (1995) stress the necessity of comprehensible input (i + 1) for language acquisition, the significance of producing spoken language to develop fluency, and corrective feedback as a crucial factor in speaking improvement.

Blended learning supports both input and output. It provides rich multimedia input, such as video - based English conversations and AI - modeled pronunciation. It also offers opportunities for structured speech output through voice recordings and interactive role - play tasks. Furthermore, AI - generated and instructor feedback aids in real - time error correction, facilitating language acquisition and fluency (Sun & Yang, 2021). By utilizing these

theoretical insights, blended learning can bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real - world communication, creating a more interactive and engaging oral learning experience for Chinese EFL students.

*Empirical Studies on Blended Learning and Oral English Development*
Recent studies have illustrated the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing oral English proficiency:

*Improvements in Pronunciation and Fluency*
Research indicates that AI - driven speech recognition tools assist students in refining their pronunciation and intonation. Parker (2019) discovered that EFL students utilizing speech recognition applications exhibited a 30% improvement in pronunciation accuracy compared to their peers in traditional classes. AI - based feedback serves to reduce pronunciation errors by pinpointing problematic areas in stress, rhythm, and articulation.

*Increased Speaking Confidence and Engagement*
Pu and Chang (2023) reported that students who used online discussion platforms and participated in virtual speaking exercises displayed higher levels of confidence in oral English. Asynchronous speaking tasks enable students to practice without the pressure of real - time interaction, thereby alleviating anxiety and encouraging active participation.

*Personalized and Self-Regulated Learning*
Blended learning supports adaptive learning paths, in which students receive customized AI - generated recommendations based on their speaking performance. Qu & Li (2022) found that students in AI - supported speaking courses progressed at their own pace, resulting in increased motivation and self - efficacy in oral English learning.

*Challenges in Implementation*
Despite its benefits, blended learning encounters challenges such as technological barriers, including issues related to internet access, digital literacy, and software usability. Additionally, there are problems concerning student motivation and self - discipline in asynchronous learning. Moreover, teachers must adapt to technology - enhanced pedagogy to effectively integrate digital tools into their instruction. Rajendran & Yunus (2021) highlight the need for structured guidance, technical support, and blended curriculum integration to optimize student engagement and learning outcomes.

**Summary of Key Findings**
The literature highlights **both the potential and challenges** of blended learning in oral English instruction:

| Key Aspect | Findings |
| --- | --- |
| Speaking Challenges | Exam-focused learning, lack of authentic communication, speaking anxiety |
| Theoretical Support | CLT (focus on interaction), Sociocultural Theory (scaffolding), Input-Output Hypothesis |
| Empirical Findings | AI tools enhance pronunciation, asynchronous tasks reduce anxiety, personalized learning improves motivation |
| Challenges | Technology access, student self-regulation, teacher training |

This review lays a robust theoretical and empirical groundwork for blended learning as an innovative approach to improving oral English competence among Chinese EFL undergraduates. The subsequent section will delve into practical strategies for implementing blended learning in speaking instruction.

**Underpinning Theory**
The application of blended learning in oral English instruction is rooted in several pivotal theories of second language acquisition (SLA), cognitive learning, and digital pedagogy. These theories elucidate how learners acquire spoken language, how technology can facilitate communication skills, and how interactive learning environments enhance fluency and pronunciation. This section examines four main theoretical foundations that substantiate the effectiveness of blended learning in cultivating oral English competence among Chinese EFL undergraduate students:

1. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Interaction Hypothesis
2. Sociocultural Theory and Scaffolding
3. Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Swain's Output Hypothesis
4. Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Digital Pedagogy

*Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Interaction Hypothesis*
The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach underscores the significance of meaningful communication in second language acquisition (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In contrast to traditional grammar - translation methods that emphasize rote memorization and isolated exercises, CLT promotes interactive, task - based learning, where students practice real - world speaking skills. Blended learning is in harmony with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) by integrating technology - enhanced communication tools. These tools facilitate peer - to - peer discussions through online forums and virtual meeting platforms, offer AI - driven pronunciation feedback to assist students in self - monitoring their spoken output, and encourage interactive speaking activities such as voice - based storytelling, digital debates, and role - play simulations.

The Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) further bolsters the role of digital communication tools in blended learning. It posits that learners acquire language more effectively through interactive exchanges in which they receive comprehensible input and corrective feedback. Online platforms and AI - powered speech assistants enable students to engage in conversational practice while receiving instant pronunciation corrections, thereby reinforcing their oral skills.

*Sociocultural Theory and Scaffolding*
Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) asserts that language learning occurs through social interaction and scaffolded support from teachers, peers, and learning tools. This theory highlights the importance of collaborative learning in oral language acquisition, which is a fundamental element of blended learning. In a blended learning environment, scaffolding occurs in multiple forms. These include teacher guidance, where instructors provide face - to - face coaching and structured speaking tasks during in - class sessions; peer interaction, where students collaborate in online discussion forums and voice - based activities to exchange feedback and refine pronunciation; and AI - based scaffolding, where speech

recognition software offers real - time corrections and targeted pronunciation exercises to enhance oral accuracy.

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a core concept in Sociocultural Theory, suggests that learners make greater progress when they receive support just beyond their current ability level (Sharma & Barrett, 2007). Blended learning bridges the ZPD gap by providing adaptive AI - driven speaking exercises tailored to individual proficiency levels. It offers gradual difficulty progression from structured speech drills to spontaneous conversation practice and encourages peer - assisted learning, where students with stronger oral skills support those at lower proficiency levels.

**Pedagogical Procedures**
The Blended Learning Model revolutionizes traditional oral English instruction by combining digital resources with interactive classroom experiences, ensuring continuous engagement and skill development. The following is a structured, sequential guide for implementing blended learning to enhance oral English competence among Chinese EFL undergraduate students.

*Preparing the Content*
1. Select the specific oral English skill to be developed, such as fluency, pronunciation, intonation, or spontaneous conversation.
2. Create instructional videos and digital resources covering key concepts in oral communication (e.g., phonetics, conversational strategies, speech fluency techniques).
3. Provide supplementary materials, including audio recordings, AI-powered pronunciation exercises, and sample conversational dialogues to expose students to authentic spoken English.
4. Develop interactive online modules where students can practice listening comprehension, stress patterns, and sentence rhythm before engaging in speaking tasks.

*Pre-Class Preparation*
1. Distribute instructional videos, pronunciation drills, and pre - recorded conversation samples to students before the next class.
2. Motivate students to record their responses to a specified speaking prompt and upload them to a learning platform for peer or instructor review.
3. Assign self - paced pronunciation correction exercises utilizing speech recognition software (e.g., ELSA Speak, Google Speech - to - Text).
4. Instruct students to complete listening tasks that expose them to native speech patterns, with a focus on intonation, stress, and fluency.
5. Require students to prepare discussion points or formulate questions about the pre - class materials to bring to the in - class session.

*In-Class Activities*
1. Begin the class with a quick review of key concepts covered in the pre-class materials.
2. Engage students in collaborative oral activities that encourage practical application of their learning. Examples include:
3. Pair discussions on real-life topics to build fluency and spontaneity.
4. Pronunciation clinics, where students practice stress and intonation with instructor

feedback.

5. Interactive storytelling, where students create and narrate a short personal story based on given prompts.
6. Role-play simulations, such as conducting mock interviews, ordering food, or negotiating in business settings.
7. Debate sessions, where students practice argumentation and critical thinking in English.
① Incorporate AI-powered speech analysis tools to provide real-time feedback on pronunciation, fluency, and stress patterns.
② Utilize peer review sessions, where students evaluate each other's speaking performance using structured rubrics.

*Individualized Support*

1. During in - class activities, move around among the students to provide personalized feedback, correct pronunciation errors, and address fluency issues.
2. Identify students who face difficulties with confidence, articulation, or stress patterns, and provide targeted exercises to improve their skills.
3. Offer one - on - one coaching sessions for students requiring additional support in specific areas such as intonation control or word stress.
4. Analyze the data from pre - class speaking exercises to track individual student progress and offer tailored recommendations.

*Assessment and Feedback*

1. Assign structured oral communication tasks that require students to apply what they have learned in class.
2. Use AI-based pronunciation feedback tools to evaluate accuracy, fluency, and word stress, allowing students to track their progress over time.
3. Conduct peer-assessed speaking exercises, where students use a rubric to evaluate fluency, pronunciation, and clarity.
4. Schedule one-on-one or small-group feedback sessions to discuss students' speaking progress and areas for improvement.
5. Implement formative assessments, such as short recorded speaking tests, conversational challenges, and real-time presentations.

*Post-Class Activities*

1. Encourage students to revise and re - record their oral responses based on the feedback received during in - class and one - on - one sessions.
2. Provide supplementary speech training materials for students requiring extra support.
3. Assign extended speaking challenges, such as:
4. Recording a daily one - minute speech on a chosen topic.
5. Participating in asynchronous voice discussions on an online learning platform.
6. Engaging in chatbot conversations to simulate real - world interactions.
7. Ask students to reflect on their progress, noting improvements and remaining challenges in their speaking abilities.

**Strengths &Weaknesses**
***Strengths of the Blended Learning Approach***
*Increased Speaking Opportunities Beyond the Classroom*
Traditional EFL classrooms often fall short in providing sufficient oral practice due to large class sizes and time constraints (Wen, 2020). Blended learning expands speaking opportunities by incorporating:

- **Speech recognition software for real - time pronunciation feedback.**
- **Asynchronous speaking tasks, enabling students to practice at their own pace.**
- **Virtual discussion forums where students can engage in extended conversations.**

By offering additional platforms for oral engagement, blended learning reduces dependence on in - class speaking time and promotes continuous spoken English practice.

*Personalized Learning and Adaptive Feedback*
One of the greatest strengths of blended learning is its capacity to provide customized learning experiences based on individual student needs.

- **AI-driven pronunciation tools** detect **speech errors in real time**, allowing students to self-correct.
- **Adaptive learning paths** enable students to progress **at their own speed**, addressing **specific fluency or pronunciation issues**.
- **Personalized feedback mechanisms**, such as AI-generated pronunciation analytics, ensure targeted improvements.

This **individualized approach** helps **both struggling learners and advanced speakers** refine their oral English skills effectively.

*Enhanced Student Engagement and Motivation*
Blended learning incorporates **interactive digital tools, gamification, and real-world simulations**, making oral practice more **engaging** than traditional lecture-based teaching.

- **Gamified speech apps (e.g., Duolingo, ELSA Speak)** encourage **consistent speaking practice through rewards and challenges**.
- **AI-driven interactive chatbots** provide students with simulated **real-life conversations**, reducing their anxiety in real interactions.
- **Collaborative online speaking tasks** foster peer engagement and encourage students to **learn from each other**.

By **combining digital learning with communicative classroom activities**, blended learning maintains **high levels of motivation and participation**.

*Real-Time Corrective Feedback for Pronunciation and Fluency*
In traditional classrooms, **pronunciation feedback is often delayed or generalized** due to time limitations.

- Blended learning **integrates instant speech feedback** using AI technology, helping students correct **intonation, rhythm, and articulation** errors immediately.
- AI-based tools provide **automated speech scoring**, allowing students to **track their progress over time**.
- Digital voice recording exercises enable students to **self-monitor their pronunciation and fluency**.

This immediate, **data-driven feedback loop** accelerates **oral English proficiency development** more effectively than conventional methods.

*Increased Learner Autonomy and Self-Regulation*
Blended learning promotes **self-directed learning**, enabling students to **take ownership of their language development**.

- Students manage their **own speaking practice schedules** using online resources.
- AI-generated fluency analysis provides **goal-oriented progress tracking**.
- Learners receive **personalized pronunciation exercises** based on their weaknesses.

This approach encourages students to become **more independent and proactive** in **improving their speaking skills**, an essential trait for lifelong learning.

**Weaknesses of the Blended Learning Approach**
*Technological Barriers and Accessibility Issues*
One of the main challenges of blended learning is the **digital divide**, where some students may struggle with:

- **Limited access to high-speed internet**, affecting their ability to participate in real-time speaking exercises.
- **Unfamiliarity with AI-driven learning tools**, leading to difficulty navigating pronunciation feedback systems.
- **Device limitations**, as not all students have access to **smartphones or computers** with high-quality microphones.

Without proper **infrastructure support**, the benefits of blended learning may be **unevenly distributed** among students.

*Self-Regulation Challenges and Lack of Accountability*
While **self-directed learning** is an advantage, some students **struggle with self-discipline and time management** in blended learning environments.

- **Procrastination in completing speaking assignments** can hinder skill development.
- **Lack of teacher supervision in asynchronous tasks** may lead to **inconsistent engagement**.
- Some students may **avoid AI speech exercises**, relying only on in-class participation.

To mitigate this issue, blended learning requires **structured progress tracking, instructor intervention, and motivational reinforcement**.

*Potential Over-Reliance on Technology*
Blended learning **relies heavily on AI tools, digital resources, and automated feedback**, which may:

- **Reduce human interaction in language learning**, which is essential for developing conversational fluency.
- **Limit the effectiveness of non-verbal communication practice**, such as gestures and facial expressions, which are critical in spoken English.
- **Lead to misinterpretation of AI-generated feedback**, as automated tools may not fully understand **contextual pronunciation variations**.

A **balanced approach** that maintains **face-to-face interaction alongside technology integration** is crucial to **maximizing learning outcomes**.

*Teacher Training and Pedagogical Adaptation*
Many instructors may **lack experience with AI-driven learning tools** and **blended learning methodologies**.

- Teachers need **specialized training** in **integrating digital speech tools effectively** into their curriculum.
- The transition from **traditional to blended learning models** requires **significant pedagogical adjustments**, which may be challenging for educators accustomed to conventional teaching.
- Instructors must learn how to **interpret AI-generated student speech data** and **use it to provide meaningful corrective feedback**.

Without **comprehensive faculty training**, the **potential of blended learning** may not be fully realized in oral English instruction.

*Speaking Anxiety and Psychological Barriers*
Some students may feel uncomfortable **recording their speech or using AI-based speaking tools**, leading to:

- **Increased speaking anxiety**, especially for those unaccustomed to listening to their own voice.
- **Over-dependence on digital tools**, where students hesitate to engage in **spontaneous, real-life conversations**.
- **Reduced willingness to participate in peer-speaking tasks**, as some students may feel self-conscious about **comparing their speaking ability to others**.

Blended learning should incorporate **gradual exposure strategies** to help students **build confidence in oral communication** while maintaining a **supportive learning environment**.

**Motivations & Contributions**
The motivations and contributions intertwined with the implementation of the Blended Learning Model underscore its profound potential to enhance the oral English competence of Chinese EFL undergraduate students (Shih, 2010). This innovative approach, which seamlessly integrates AI-driven pronunciation tools, digital speech exercises, and interactive in-class speaking activities, establishes a comprehensive and immersive learning experience that extends beyond conventional teaching methods (Shraim ,2012).

Through the strategic application of blended learning's core strengths, educators can foster a student-centered environment where learners not only develop fluency and pronunciation accuracy but also internalize the essential principles of effective spoken communication (Tawil, 2018) ). The pre-class digital preparation phase empowers students with the autonomy to engage in structured oral practice at their own pace, ensuring they enter the classroom well-prepared for communicative interaction. This preliminary exposure primes them for dynamic discussions, role-play simulations, and collaborative speaking tasks during in-class sessions, reinforcing spontaneous speech production and real-world conversational competence (Thorne, 2003).

This interactive learning cycle nurtures critical thinking, pronunciation refinement, and communicative confidence, equipping students with verbal articulation skills that extend beyond academic settings and into professional and social spheres (Tong, 2017). Moreover, real - time feedback from speech recognition tools ensures immediate corrective reinforcement, accelerating the improvement of intonation, stress, and fluency patterns.

However, the implementation of blended learning in oral English instruction is not without challenges. Barriers such as unequal access to digital resources, variations in student digital literacy, and resistance to independent learning necessitate a proactive and adaptable pedagogical approach (Turan & Akdag - Cimen, 2020). Addressing these challenges requires structured teacher support, guided integration of relevant technologies, and well - designed self - regulation strategies to ensure that students engage meaningfully with both digital and face - to - face speaking activities (Uddin & Nilsson, 2020). By mitigating these potential obstacles, educators can transform technological limitations into opportunities for personalized and data - driven learning growth.

Ultimately, the Blended Learning Model represents a transformative shift in oral English pedagogy (Zhou, 2021). This approach empowers students, fostering a sense of ownership over their learning journey while equipping them with the ability to confidently articulate ideas in English within academic, professional, and global contexts (Wang, 2014). As students advance through structured digital - immersive speaking experiences, they not only refine their oral proficiency but also develop lifelong communication skills, adaptability, and self - efficacy—attributes that are invaluable in both personal and professional spheres (Wang & Sun, 2024).

**Theoretical and Contextual Contributions**
This research offers both theoretical and contextual contributions to the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Theoretically, it synthesizes key principles from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Sociocultural Theory, and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) to construct a pedagogical framework for blended learning tailored to oral English development. By integrating self-regulated learning theory and digital pedagogy, the study enriches the conceptual understanding of how AI-driven tools can complement interactive classroom strategies to foster communicative competence. Contextually, this study addresses a critical gap in Chinese higher education by proposing a sustainable, scalable blended learning model that responds to systemic issues such as exam-oriented instruction, limited speaking practice, and speaking anxiety. In doing so, it offers a culturally responsive solution that aligns with the technological transformation of language education in China, providing educators and policymakers with actionable insights to improve oral English instruction among Chinese undergraduate EFL learners.

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