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Exploring AI-Powered Speaking Applications on Learning Styles Accommodation Among Indonesian Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines the interaction between students' diverse VARK learning styles (Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, Kinesthetic) and their engagement with Practica AI, an AI-powered speaking platform, within the Indonesian socio-cultural context. Motivated by observed differences in learning outcomes among students using the same AI tool, the study investigates how individual learning styles mediate AI-supported speaking practice. Conducted over three months at SMA Sukma Bangsa Lhokseumawe, the research employed a descriptive case study design involving six purposively selected tenth-grade students representing varied VARK profiles. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, reflective journals, and document analysis, including VARK questionnaires and application logs. Thematic analysis yielded three key findings. First, learning styles emerged not as fixed categories but as dynamic strategic identities, with students actively curating personalized learning pathways by combining Practica AI's multimodal features. Second, the study introduces the concept of an "affordance-accessibility gap," highlighting that technological features are effective only when aligned with learners' cognitive preferences. Third, students engaged in "socializing the interface," collaboratively transforming the AI tool into a shared learning space that reflects the local gotong royong ethos. Overall, the findings demonstrate that AI-supported speaking development is co-constructed through cognitive preferences, technological affordances, and socio-cultural practices. The study emphasizes the importance of metacognitive awareness and culturally responsive, multimodal instructional design in AI-assisted language learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of English-speaking skills remains a fundamental challenge in EFL education in Indonesia, particularly at the secondary school level. This condition constitutes a persistent research problem in Indonesian EFL pedagogy, especially regarding students' limited communicative competence in authentic speaking contexts. Data from the British Council [1] reveals that approximately 60% of Indonesian students are still at a 'minimal' or 'survival' level of competence in speaking, a figure that has stagnated over the past five years. This situation is further complicated by the limited opportunities for authentic practice in crowded, teacher-focused classrooms [2]. Amid these challenges, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based applications such as Practica AI have emerged as a promising solution by offering conversation simulations, adaptive feedback, and self-paced practice streaming [3].

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into language education has ushered in a paradigm shift towards more accessible, self-directed, and personalized learning environments [3]. This shift reflects ongoing efforts by educators and researchers to address the identified speaking skill problem through technology-supported learning innovations. In Indonesia, where developing English speaking skills remains a persistent challenge for secondary school students [4], AI-powered speaking applications like Practica AI are increasingly adopted. These tools promise scenario-based, interactive practice and adaptive feedback, theoretically capable of addressing individual learner needs. However, a practical problem persists: even when using the same application, student engagement and outcomes vary significantly. This variation points to a crucial yet often-overlooked mediating variable: students' individual learning styles [5].

However, implementing this technology does not automatically guarantee successful learning. Initial field observations show significant variation in learning outcomes among students using the same AI application, suggesting the presence of other mediating factors beyond technology access [6]. This is where the concept of learning styles, as in the VARK (Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, Kinesthetic) model, becomes relevant [7]. From a theoretical perspective, this study draws on learning style theory and the Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) framework to understand learner–technology interaction. While extensive literature in Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) examines the general effectiveness of AI applications [8], and educational psychology has long recognized the importance of learning styles [9], a significant research gap exists. Few studies qualitatively investigate how these differing cognitive preferences actively shape students' subjective experiences, meaning-making, and engagement strategies with specific features within an AI platform. Without this understanding, AI-based personalized approaches risk falling into a "one-size-fits-all" paradigm disguised as sophisticated technology.

Efforts to bridge this gap are particularly urgent in the Indonesian context. Indonesian students not only possess diverse learning style profiles with a strong propensity for visual and kinesthetic learning [10] but also thrive in a collectivist learning culture steeped in the values of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) [11]. These cultural values have the potential to transform or even clash with the inherently individualistic design of AI applications. Therefore, ignoring the role of learning styles and socio-cultural context in the application

of AI for speech learning poses more than an academic gap; it also threatens educational equity and effectiveness. Large investments in educational technology could yield suboptimal outcomes, and more frighteningly, the potential of Indonesia's native digital generation may not be fully tapped.

Learning styles, defined as an individual's characteristic approach to perceiving, processing, and storing information [9], are a well-established framework in educational psychology. The VARK model [7], categorizing preferences into Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic modalities, provides a practical lens for understanding this diversity. In language learning, particularly for an embodied skill like speaking, acknowledging these preferences is critical for designing effective instruction [12]. The Indonesian educational context adds a layer of complexity, where a collectivistic learning culture emphasizing gotong royong (mutual cooperation) intersects with diverse cognitive styles [11]. This theoretical foundation guides the analytical lens of the present study.

Despite the global momentum in AI for education, a significant research gap remains. Existing literature largely focuses on technological affordances and broad efficacy, with a limited, nuanced understanding of how these tools are experienced by diverse learners [13]. Specifically, there is a paucity of rich, qualitative, and contextually embedded investigations into how different learning styles shape engagement with integrated AI-speaking platforms in non-Western, collectivist settings such as Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to explore and describe students' lived experiences as a basis for developing more effective AI-supported speaking instruction. This study addresses this multi-layered gap by asking: How do 10th-grade students with diverse VARK learning styles at an Indonesian senior high school experience and make sense of their interactions with Practica AI for English speaking practice? The findings of this study are expected to provide pedagogical insights and practical benefits for teachers, instructional designers, and policymakers in implementing culturally responsive and learner-centered AI-based EFL instruction.

2. METHOD

This study was conducted using a qualitative research design, specifically an instrumental case study informed by a phenomenological perspective [14], [15]. This approach was chosen to facilitate an in-depth exploration of the complex, lived experiences of a specific group of learners as they interacted with technology in their authentic educational environment. The case was defined as the lived experience of tenth-grade students at SMA Sukma Bangsa Lhokseumawe in Aceh as they engaged with the AI-powered speaking application, Practica AI. This school was selected as it represents a context where high demands for English proficiency intersect with local socio-cultural dynamics, providing a rich setting for inquiry. Guided by a phenomenological interest in understanding the essence and personal meaning (lifeworld) students constructed from their interactions, the study did not seek generalized outcomes but a deep, descriptive account of personal experience [16].

The participants were six tenth-grade students (four female and two male, aged 15-16) whose learning style profiles, identified using the VARK framework [7], spanned a

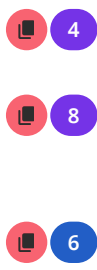
spectrum of preferences. This purposively curated group was central to understanding diverse engagements with the technology. Their profiles are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Profiles and Learning Style Characteristics

Participants	Dominant Learning Style (VARK)	VARK Profile Description	Characteristic Excerpt from Preliminary Data
I1-Female	Aural	Strong auditory preference	"I learn best through active discussion and by immersing myself in the sound of the language."
I2-Male	Read/Write	Strong read/write preference, with secondary auditory inclination	"I need to read the text and write notes first to understand and prepare for speaking."
I3-Female	Multimodal	Balanced visual, aural, read/write, and kinesthetic inclinations	"I get bored with one method. I like to mix listening, reading notes, and doing role-plays."
I4-Female	Visual	Strong visual preference	"I understand better when I see charts, the avatar's lip movements, and highlighted text."
I5-Male	Kinesthetic	Strong kinesthetic preference	"Just listening or reading is hard. I remember things when I move or act them out."
I6-Female	Kinesthetic	Strong kinesthetic preference	"For me, learning has to involve doing something physical, not just sitting."

Data were collected over three months through triangulated methods to ensure richness and validity. These included: (1) semi-structured interviews conducted twice with each participant (totaling 12 interviews) to explore their evolving experiences and strategies; (2) naturalistic observations of 12 practice sessions to document physical interaction, navigation patterns, and peer dialogue; (3) participant reflective journals maintained weekly to capture longitudinal reflections; and (4) document analysis of initial VARK questionnaires and anonymized application logs. All interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis within the study's phenomenological framework [17], a process designed to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within the data. The process began with immersive familiarization with all transcripts, notes, and journals. Initial codes were systematically generated across the dataset and subsequently collated into potential themes. These themes were reviewed,



refined, and clearly defined through an iterative process of checking against the original data. The final phase involved weaving the analytic narrative together with vivid, illustrative extracts from the data. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings [18], strategies of methodological triangulation, member checking with participants, and researcher reflexivity through journaling were employed throughout the research process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings derived from the thematic analysis of the data collected from six participants over three months. The analysis revealed three main themes that characterize the dynamic interplay between students' learning styles, their engagement with Practica AI, and the cultural context of their learning environment. Each theme is elaborated with sub-themes and illustrated with direct quotes from participants and observational notes. These findings resonate with prior qualitative research emphasizing learner–technology interaction as a situated and adaptive process in AI-assisted language learning [19].

3.1. Theme 1: Learning Styles as Dynamic Strategic Identities in AI-Mediated Practice

The first major finding challenges the static notion of learning styles as fixed categories. Instead, the data revealed that students' VARK profiles functioned as *dynamic strategic identities* that they actively enacted and adapted when interacting with Practica AI. This theme encompasses two sub-themes: (1) the selective and strategic use of application features based on learning style, and (2) the evolution of strategies over time, reflecting growing metacognitive awareness. This dynamic interpretation aligns with contemporary views of learning styles as socially and contextually enacted practices rather than rigid traits [20].

3.1.1. Selective Feature Engagement Based on Cognitive Preferences

Each participant's dominant learning style acted as a cognitive compass, guiding them toward specific features of Practica AI while often ignoring others. This selective engagement was not random but a conscious strategy to align the tool with their preferred mode of information processing. Such modality-driven engagement reflects broader multimodal learning tendencies observed among Indonesian learners [21].

Table 2 summarizes the core alignment between learning styles and preferred Practica AI features, as observed and reported by participants.

Table 2. Manifestation of Learning Styles in Practica AI Feature Engagement

Learning Style (VARK)	Preferred Practica AI Features	Characteristics of Strategic Engagement
Visual	AI avatars with lip-sync, visual feedback highlights, progress graphs, and color-coded transcripts.	Reliance on graphical cues; systematic cycle of observe→perform→evaluate visually.
Auditory	Real-time conversational AI, varied voice accents and tones, and an audio repetition function.	Deep auditory immersion; frequent repetition of model audio; mimicking intonation and rhythm.
Read/Write	Interactive transcripts, vocabulary notes, and written session summaries.	Use of text as an analytical scaffold; methodical note-taking; pre- and post-task analysis of written materials.
Kinesthetic	Contextual role-play scenarios (e.g., restaurant, interview), free-talk mode on active topics.	Embodied and contextual engagement; use of gestures and posture changes; preference for scenarios simulating real-world action.
Multimodal	A strategic combination of all the above features, tailored to the goal.	Agentic curation of learning pathways; high metacognitive awareness; flexible sequencing of different feature types.

For example, *visual learners* like Participant I4 consistently used the transcript and avatar's lip movements as primary reference points. She stated, "*Saya lebih semangat karena ada avatar yang gerak bibirnya terlihat, dan ada teks langsung yang muncul setelah latihan bicara. Dengan begitu, saya bisa melihat kembali cara mengeja dan mengucapkannya kembali.*" (I am more motivated because there is an avatar whose lip movements are visible, and there is immediate text that appears after speaking practice. That way, I can review how to spell and pronounce it again). This reliance on visual scaffolding is consistent with findings on the pedagogical role of visual representation in EFL materials [22].

In contrast, *auditory learners* like Participant I1 minimized visual distractions to focus on sound. He noted, "*Kadang saya sengaja menyembunyikan transkripnya karena saya jadi tergantung baca, bukan mendengar dan merespons secara spontan.*" (Sometimes I intentionally hide the transcript because I become dependent on reading, not listening and responding spontaneously).

3.1.2. Evolution of Strategies and Metacognitive Development

Reflective journal entries revealed that students' strategies became more sophisticated over the three-month period. Initially, participants used features in a basic, exploratory manner. By the third month, they demonstrated advanced metacognitive orchestration.

For instance, a *multimodal learner* (Participant I3) documented an evolving routine: "*Now I have a routine: Mondays for new scenarios (adventure!), Wednesdays for*

repeating old ones to build fluency, Fridays for using the transcripts to write a short summary of what I discussed." This shows a conscious effort to balance different skills and modalities. This developmental trajectory mirrors research highlighting the gradual emergence of learner metacognition through sustained practice [23].

Similarly, a *kinesthetic learner* (Participant I5) progressed from simply acting out scenarios to using them as preparation for classroom activities: "*Hari ini di kelas, kami role-play percakapan di bandara berdasarkan skenario yang pernah saya coba di Practica. Karena sudah 'latihan dasar' dengan gerakan-gerakan di aplikasi, saya tidak grogi...*" (Today in class, we role-played an airport conversation based on a scenario I tried in Practica. Because I had done 'basic practice' with movements in the app, I wasn't nervous...). This progression reflects the embodied dimension of speaking practice emphasized in prior EFL studies [24].

This theme underscores that learning styles are not passive labels but active, evolving strategies. Students leveraged Practica AI's multimodal design not by using all features equally, but by curating a personalized pathway that resonated with their cognitive identity, demonstrating significant learner agency.

3.2. Theme 2: The Affordance-Accessibility Gap and Its Contribution to Speaking Skill Development

The study's second major finding introduces the concept of the "*affordance-accessibility gap*." This gap refers to the disconnect between a technological feature's designed pedagogical potential (its affordance) and a learner's ability to effectively access and benefit from that feature due to cognitive style misalignment. Consequently, the same feature could be perceived as a strength by one learner and a barrier by another. This notion extends existing discussions on learner-technology mismatch in AI-assisted language learning [25]. Importantly, understanding this gap helps elucidate how style-mediated experiences contribute indirectly to speaking skill improvement.

3.2.1 Divergent Perceptions of Core Features

The data highlighted starkly different perceptions of Practica AI's core features among learners with different styles.

- a. **Interactive Transcripts:** As noted, while visual and read/write learners found transcripts indispensable, auditory learners saw them as a crutch. Participant I1's perspective exemplifies this: hiding the transcript was necessary for his desired immersive practice.
- b. **Scenario-Based Conversations:** Open-ended scenarios were praised by auditory and kinesthetic learners for promoting fluency and creativity. However, read/write learners sometimes found them overwhelming. Participant I2 noted in her journal, "*Percakapan bebas itu seru, tapi saya sering kehabisan ide setelah beberapa menit. Saya lebih suka ada daftar topik atau pertanyaan panduan tertulis sebelum mulai.*" (Free conversation is fun, but I often run out of ideas after a few minutes. I prefer having a list of topics or written guiding questions before starting).
- c. **AI Feedback Style:** The AI's consistent, patient, and non-judgmental nature was universally appreciated as an *affective affordance* that reduced anxiety. Such affective

support echoes findings on the role of supportive learning environments in sustaining learner engagement [26]. Participant I4 called it a "*teman belajar yang tidak pernah capek*" (a study friend who never gets tired). However, this very consistency was also identified as a *pedagogical limitation*. Participant I3 critically observed, "*AI-nya tidak pernah terlihat bingung atau tersinggung. Itu bagus untuk percaya diri, tapi tidak mengajarkan kita bagaimana membaca reaksi lawan bicara yang sesungguhnya.*" (The AI never looks confused or offended. That's good for confidence, but it doesn't teach us how to read a real interlocutor's reaction).

3.2.2 The Mediated Pathway to Speaking Skill Improvement

Beyond engagement patterns, the study revealed that these style-mediated experiences contributed to the development of speaking skills through three indirect yet crucial pathways. When features aligned with a student's cognitive style (overcoming the affordance-accessibility gap), they enabled conditions conducive to improvement.

First, the style-aligned interaction served as an *affective bridge*, significantly reducing speaking anxiety and increasing Willingness to Communicate (WTC). The AI's non-judgmental nature, combined with the ability to practice through one's preferred modality, created a safe psychological space. As Participant I5 reflected, "*Di kelas, saya selalu takut ditunjuk guru untuk berbicara. Tapi dengan Practica, tidak ada yang menertawakan jika salah. Saya bisa ulangi scenario 'interview' sampai 5 kali sampai rasa grogi hilang.*" (In class, I'm always afraid of being called on by the teacher. But with Practica, no one laughs if I'm wrong. I can repeat the 'interview' scenario up to 5 times until the nervousness disappears). This lowered affective filter is a prerequisite for taking the risks necessary for language production.

Second, Practica AI functioned as a *metacognitive mirror*, providing modality-specific feedback that allowed learners to engage in self-diagnosis and targeted micro-skill repair. For instance, read/write learners used transcripts to identify grammatical error patterns, while auditory learners focused on comparing their intonation to the AI model. This active, strategic process of noticing gaps and testing corrections fostered the metacognitive skills essential for autonomous learning. Participant I2's journal entry illustrates this: "*Dari transkrip, saya lihat pola kesalahan saya selalu pada tense present perfect. Saya lalu cari latihan khusus tentang itu di luar Practica, lalu uji coba kalimatnya lagi dalam percakapan AI.*" (From the transcript, I saw my error pattern was always with the present perfect tense. I then looked for specific exercises on that outside Practica, then tested the sentences again in an AI conversation).

Third, the AI established itself as a "*companionate agent*," a patient, always-available partner. This relational dynamic transformed practice from a chore into a sustainable habit, ensuring the repeated exposure necessary for developing procedural fluency and automaticity. Participant I4 captured this sentiment: "*Practica seperti teman belajar yang tidak pernah capek. Saya bisa ngobrol kapan saja, bahkan larut malam, untuk persiapan presentasi besok. Kepastian ini yang bikin saya terus kembali.*" (Practica is like a study friend who never gets tired. I can chat anytime, even late at night, to prepare for tomorrow's presentation. This certainty is what makes me keep coming back).

Therefore, the contribution to speaking skill improvement was not direct or automatic but mediated. The platform provided a safe, feedback-rich, and accessible practice environment. The learner's strategic, style-guided agency in navigating that environment, managing anxiety, engaging in self-correction, and maintaining regular practice was what ultimately translated technological interaction into linguistic gain.

3.2.3 Implications for Design and Pedagogy

The affordance-accessibility gap and the mediated pathway to skill improvement suggest that evaluating an edtech tool requires a relational, user-centered lens rather than a feature-centric checklist. Effectiveness is co-determined by the tool's design and the user's cognitive preferences. This has direct implications:

- a. For *developers*: Designing for flexibility is key. Features should be customizable (e.g., the ability to toggle transcripts on/off) or presented in multiple modalities (e.g., offering both visual waveform and verbal feedback for pronunciation) to accommodate different cognitive paths to the same learning objective.
- b. For *teachers*: They **play a crucial role in helping students bridge this gap and** maximize the mediated learning pathway. Instruction should include explicit guidance on how to use specific app features strategically based on one's learning style and goals, a process of "scaffolding strategic AI use." Furthermore, teachers should frame AI practice as one component of a broader communicative curriculum, emphasizing the need to transfer skills from AI-mediated practice to authentic human interaction.

3.3 Theme 3: Cultural Mediation: Socializing the Individualistic Interface

The third theme captures how the Indonesian collectivist learning culture, characterized by *gotong royong* (mutual assistance), actively reshaped the use of an AI tool designed for individual practice. Students consistently engaged in "*socializing the interface*," transforming solo activities into collaborative learning experiences. This finding reinforces the importance of community-oriented learning practices in Indonesian education [21].

3.3.1 Forms of Collaborative Practice

Students organically created social structures around Practica AI:

- a. Peer Comparison and Competition: They turned individual scenario practice into group challenges. Participant I6 described, "*Kami menjadikannya lomba. Siapa yang bisa dapat percakapan paling panjang dan lancar dengan AI tentang topik 'environmental issue'.*" (We turned it into a contest. Who could have the longest and smoothest conversation with the AI on the topic of 'environmental issue'.)
- b. Knowledge-Sharing Communities: They formed WhatsApp groups to share interesting AI interactions, effective phrases, and strategies. This allowed them to pool insights and learn from each other's experiences with the AI.
- c. Collaborative Analysis: After completing a scenario individually, students would meet to compare their performance, the AI's responses, and discuss alternative strategies. This added a layer of peer feedback that the AI itself could not provide.

3.3.2 Cultural Significance and Pedagogical Value

This socialization is not merely a side activity; it is a fundamental cultural adaptation. It aligns with the Indonesian educational values of harmony, community, and shared endeavor. Such collaborative appropriation reflects broader sociocultural dynamics of language use and learning [20]. By socializing the interface, students addressed two limitations of the AI: its lack of social dimension and its static feedback. They created a dynamic, human-driven layer of collaboration that enhanced motivation, provided diverse perspectives, and fostered a sense of shared purpose.

This finding challenges the assumption that personalized learning with AI is inherently individualistic. It demonstrates that in collectivist contexts, *personalization may be achieved through collaborative appropriation*. The technology's value is amplified when it becomes a resource for social knowledge construction rather than just a private tutor. This collaborative layer also directly supported speaking skill development by providing authentic, peer-based feedback and creating social accountability for practice.

3.4 Synthesis and Theoretical Implications

The three themes together paint a complex picture of AI-assisted language learning. Theme 1 shows that learners are *active strategic agents*, not passive recipients. Theme 2 reveals that tool effectiveness and its contribution to skill development are *relationally co-constructed* between user and design, occurring through mediated pathways of affective safety, metacognitive growth, and habitual practice. Theme 3 demonstrates that this relationship is *culturally mediated* and can be enhanced through collective appropriation. Collectively, these insights contribute to ongoing theoretical discussions on multimodality, learner agency, and culturally responsive AI integration in EFL contexts [22].

These findings advance theoretical discourse by proposing a *triple alignment model* for effective AI integration in language learning: (1) *cognitive alignment* (between learner style and feature accessibility), (2) *pedagogical alignment* (between task design and learning objectives, recognizing the indirect pathways to skill gain), and (3) *socio-cultural alignment* (between tool use and local learning values). Future designs and implementations of AI speaking applications, particularly in contexts like Indonesia, must account for all three dimensions to move beyond a one-size-fits-all approach and truly support equitable, personalized, and effective language development.

4. CONCLUSION

This qualitative case study, grounded in the lived experiences of Indonesian senior high school students, concludes that **the integration of AI-powered speaking applications into language learning is not** a simple, deterministic process but a dynamic, co-constructed, and culturally-mediated phenomenon. The research, centered on the interplay between diverse VARK learning styles and the multimodal platform Practica AI, yields three definitive conclusions that collectively reframe our understanding of personalized, technology-enhanced learning.

Firstly, learning styles function as *dynamic strategic identities* rather than fixed labels. Students actively and metacognitively curated their engagement with Practica AI,

selectively navigating its features to build personalized learning pathways. This positions learner agency at the heart of effective technology use, moving beyond the outdated "matching hypothesis" toward a model in which students are architects of their own learning process.

Secondly, the study introduces and validates the critical concept of the "*affordance-accessibility gap*." The efficacy of a technological feature is not inherent but relational, determined by its alignment with the user's cognitive style. More importantly, when this alignment is achieved, it facilitates a mediated *pathway to improved speaking skills*. This pathway operates indirectly by reducing anxiety (building an affective bridge), fostering metacognitive awareness and self-correction (serving as a metacognitive mirror), and encouraging consistent practice through a "companionate agent" dynamic. This finding necessitates a paradigm shift in educational technology design and evaluation from a focus on features in isolation to a focus on their accessibility across diverse cognitive profiles and their role in enabling foundational conditions for learning.

Thirdly, the research empirically documents the powerful process of "*socializing the interface*," in which students imposed a layer of collaborative, peer-driven practice on an individually designed tool. This underscores that in collectivist learning cultures like Indonesia's, successful technology integration must account for and facilitate socio-cultural practices such as *gotong royong*. The ultimate personalization of an AI tool may be achieved not solely by its algorithm but by how learners collectively adapt it within their social context, thereby adding a crucial layer of human feedback and motivation.

The implications of these findings are multifaceted. For *EFL educators and curriculum designers*, it is imperative to foster students' metacognitive awareness of their learning styles and to strategically scaffold the use of AI tools, framing them as practice simulators within a broader communicative curriculum that explicitly connects AI practice to human interaction. For *educational technology developers*, the mandate is to design for flexibility and cognitive inclusivity, offering multimodal feedback options, customizable interfaces, and features that enable or complement social learning. For *policymakers and school leaders*, this study advocates supporting professional development that equips teachers to guide style-aware, blended learning, and investing in hybrid models that balance AI-driven practice with authentic human interaction.

In summary, **this study** affirms **that the** promise **of AI in language** education lies not in seeking an autonomous digital tutor but in leveraging its capabilities to empower agentic learners within their unique cognitive and cultural frameworks. The path forward requires a committed synergy between pedagogies that value diversity, technologies designed for accessibility and mediation, and practices that honor the irreplaceable human and social dimensions of authentic communication.

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