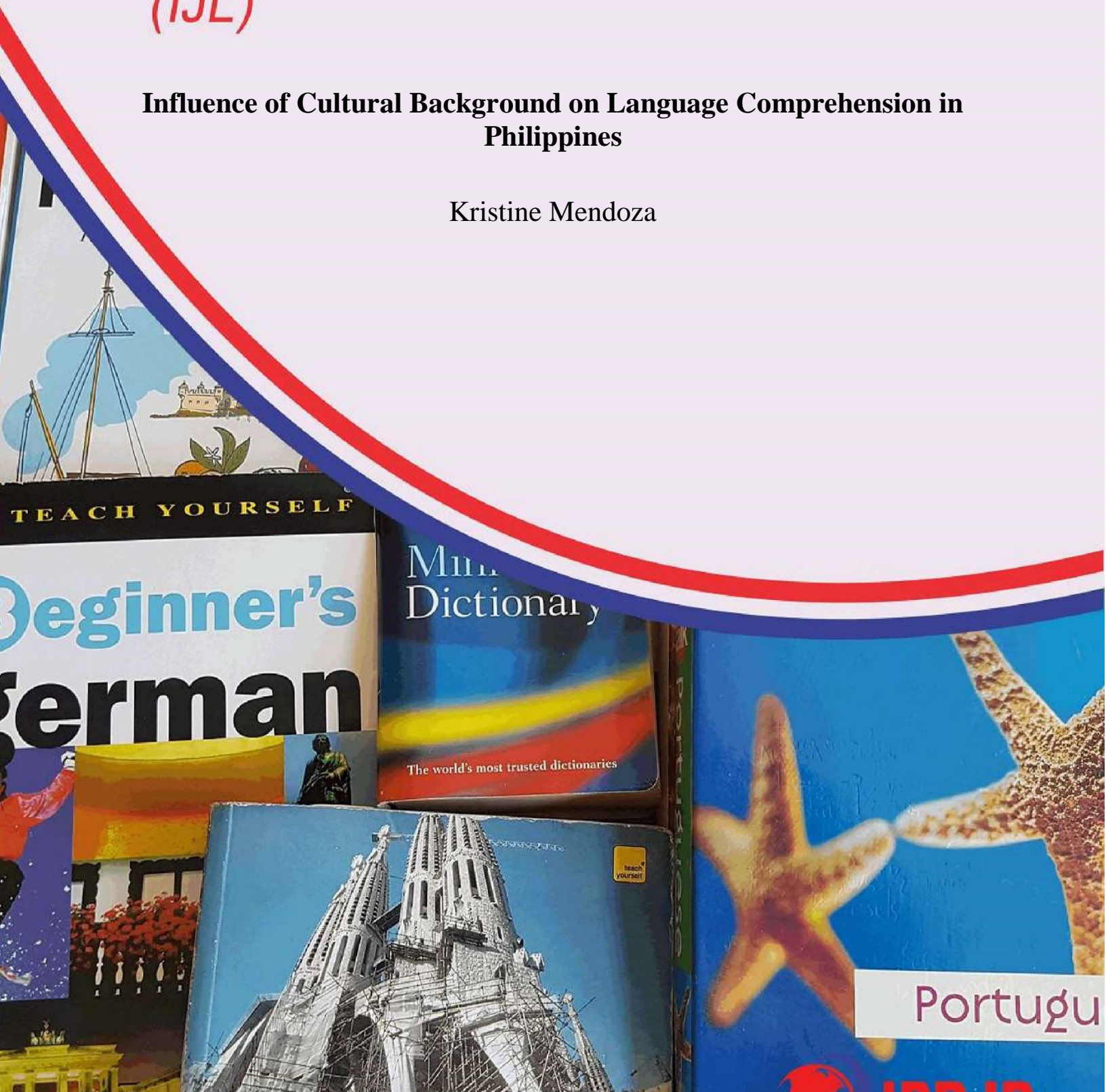


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**Influence of Cultural Background on Language Comprehension in
Philippines**

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to analyze the influence of cultural background on language comprehension in Philippines.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: Research on the influence of cultural background on language comprehension in the Philippines reveals significant disparities in reading proficiency among students from diverse cultural contexts. Studies indicate that students who identify strongly with their cultural heritage often demonstrate better comprehension of texts that resonate with their cultural experiences, while those encountering unfamiliar cultural references face challenges in understanding materials. Factors such as socio-economic status, access to educational resources, and the prevalence of multilingualism also impact comprehension outcomes.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Cultural-historical activity theory, sociocultural theory & intercultural communication theory may be used to anchor future studies on the influence of cultural background on language comprehension in Philippines. Educators should implement culturally responsive teaching strategies that acknowledge and leverage students' cultural backgrounds in language instruction. Educational policymakers should prioritize the inclusion of cultural diversity in language education frameworks and curricula.

Keywords: *Cultural Background, Language Comprehension*

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INTRODUCTION

Comprehension test scores are metrics used to evaluate an individual's ability to understand and interpret written texts. In the United States, comprehension test scores have shown significant variations based on socio-economic and linguistic factors. According to a study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2019), students from low-income households scored, on average, 25 points lower in reading comprehension assessments compared to their higher-income peers. This gap highlights the impact of socio-economic status on literacy development and educational outcomes. Additionally, the report revealed that 37% of students in the fourth grade performed at or above the proficient level in reading comprehension, indicating a need for targeted interventions to improve literacy skills among younger learners. The findings underscore the importance of addressing educational inequalities to enhance comprehension scores across diverse student populations.

In Japan, a similar trend is observed regarding comprehension test scores among high school students. A study by Yamamoto (2021) indicated that Japanese students' reading comprehension scores have fluctuated over the years, with a notable decline in recent assessments. The research showed that, in 2020, only 52% of high school students achieved proficiency in reading comprehension, down from 60% in 2015. The study attributed this decline to shifts in educational practices and the increased emphasis on standardized testing over critical reading skills. These statistics emphasize the need for educational reforms that prioritize comprehension strategies to improve student performance in reading assessments. By focusing on effective teaching methods, educators can better support students in developing strong reading comprehension skills.

In Australia, comprehension test scores have been a focal point in assessing educational outcomes among students. A study by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA, 2020) revealed that approximately 30% of Year 9 students did not meet the minimum standard for reading comprehension in the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The results highlighted a concerning trend, particularly among disadvantaged schools, where students' reading comprehension skills were significantly lower than those in more affluent areas. The assessment indicated that the gap between high and low-performing students had widened over the years, underscoring the need for targeted interventions. Based on these findings, educators were encouraged to implement evidence-based literacy programs that address the specific needs of struggling readers, particularly in underserved communities.

In the United Kingdom, comprehension test scores are regularly monitored through assessments like the SATs in primary schools. A report by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted, 2021) noted that only 55% of Year 6 students achieved the expected standard in reading comprehension, a decline from previous years. The report pointed to factors such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, which disproportionately affected students from low-income backgrounds. Additionally, the findings revealed that students from minority ethnic backgrounds scored lower in comprehension assessments, highlighting existing educational inequalities. Recommendations included enhancing support for teachers to provide

effective reading instruction and promoting interventions tailored to meet the diverse needs of students, particularly those facing socio-economic challenges.

In Canada, comprehension test scores have become a significant focus in evaluating educational outcomes. A report by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC, 2022) indicated that approximately 36% of Grade 6 students did not meet the expected standard for reading comprehension in the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP). This assessment revealed that students from low-income families performed significantly worse than their higher-income peers, showcasing the impact of socio-economic factors on literacy development. The study emphasized the importance of implementing targeted reading interventions and providing additional support to at-risk students to enhance their comprehension skills. Furthermore, educators were encouraged to adopt inclusive teaching practices that cater to diverse learning needs, which could lead to improved literacy outcomes across the board.

In France, comprehension test scores have also been scrutinized, particularly in light of recent educational reforms. A study by the French Ministry of Education (2021) highlighted that 42% of students in the fifth grade achieved satisfactory levels in reading comprehension assessments, indicating room for improvement. The findings revealed disparities in performance based on geographic location, with students in rural areas scoring lower than their urban counterparts. Additionally, the report pointed to challenges such as large class sizes and inadequate access to reading materials as contributing factors to low comprehension levels. Recommendations included increasing funding for educational resources and implementing targeted reading programs to support students struggling with comprehension skills. The emphasis on improving reading outcomes is seen as vital to ensuring that all students in France can thrive academically.

In developing economies, comprehension test scores often reflect the challenges faced by educational systems in these regions. For instance, a study conducted in India by Dutta and Sharma (2020) revealed that only 45% of fifth-grade students demonstrated adequate reading comprehension skills. The research indicated that factors such as inadequate teacher training and limited access to resources significantly impacted students' performance in comprehension assessments. Furthermore, the study highlighted that rural students scored 15 points lower than their urban counterparts, showcasing the disparities in educational opportunities within the country. To address these challenges, the authors recommended implementing teacher training programs focused on effective reading strategies and providing more educational resources to underserved areas.

In Nigeria, comprehension test scores also reveal significant gaps in literacy development among students. A study by Olatunji and Ojo (2022) found that only 40% of primary school students met the minimum proficiency level in reading comprehension tests. The research attributed this low performance to factors such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of trained teachers, and insufficient reading materials. The study also highlighted that students from private schools scored significantly higher than those from public schools, indicating disparities in educational quality. To improve comprehension scores, the authors recommended policy interventions aimed at enhancing teacher training and providing equitable access to educational resources across different

school types. By addressing these challenges, stakeholders can work towards improving literacy outcomes in Nigeria.

In South Africa, comprehension test scores have raised concerns regarding literacy levels among schoolchildren. According to the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2021), South African Grade 4 learners had an average reading comprehension score of 320, significantly below the international average of 500. The study indicated that only 28% of learners could read at the expected level for their grade, revealing a substantial literacy crisis. Factors contributing to these low scores included inadequate instructional materials, poorly trained teachers, and socio-economic barriers. The authors recommended that the South African government invest in early childhood education programs and teacher training initiatives to improve literacy outcomes and reading comprehension skills.

In the Philippines, a study conducted by Dela Cruz and Santos (2022) assessed comprehension test scores among elementary school students. The findings revealed that only 42% of students met the minimum proficiency level in reading comprehension, with significant variations based on region and socio-economic status. Students from rural areas consistently performed lower than their urban counterparts, illustrating disparities in educational resources and access. The study attributed these low scores to factors such as overcrowded classrooms and a lack of trained reading teachers. Recommendations included implementing targeted literacy programs and providing professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their instructional strategies in reading comprehension.

In India, comprehension test scores have drawn attention to significant literacy challenges within the educational system. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2021), only 50% of Grade 5 students could read a Grade 2 level text, highlighting alarming gaps in reading comprehension skills. The report indicated that rural students performed notably worse than urban students, reflecting the disparities in educational quality and resources available in different regions. Furthermore, socio-economic factors, such as poverty and lack of access to quality education, were identified as major contributors to these low scores. To address these issues, the report recommended implementing community-based literacy programs that focus on engaging parents and local organizations in supporting children's reading development. Enhancing teacher training to improve instructional practices in reading comprehension was also emphasized as a crucial step.

In Indonesia, a study by Setiawan and Supriyadi (2022) assessed comprehension test scores among elementary school students. The findings revealed that only 38% of participants demonstrated sufficient reading comprehension skills, with significant differences based on region and socio-economic status. The study identified factors such as inadequate teacher training and insufficient access to reading materials as critical barriers to improving comprehension levels. Students in urban areas performed better than their rural counterparts, illustrating the disparities in educational resources. The authors recommended that the Indonesian government invest in literacy programs and teacher professional development to enhance reading instruction and comprehension among students. By addressing these challenges, stakeholders can work towards improving literacy outcomes and fostering a culture of reading in Indonesia.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, comprehension test scores reflect the broader challenges faced by educational systems in the region. A report by the African Union (2021) indicated that, on average, only 30% of students in primary schools across several Sub-Saharan countries achieved proficiency in reading comprehension assessments. The report emphasized that factors such as inadequate funding for education, lack of qualified teachers, and insufficient instructional materials significantly hindered students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that girls' performance in reading comprehension was often lower than boys' in many countries, highlighting the need for gender-sensitive educational strategies. To improve comprehension scores, the report recommended targeted interventions that focus on enhancing teaching quality and increasing access to reading resources for all students.

In Kenya, a study by Mwangi and Waweru (2022) examined comprehension test scores among primary school students. The findings showed that only 38% of students achieved the expected proficiency level in reading comprehension, indicating a critical need for educational reforms. The study found that factors such as large class sizes and inadequate teacher training contributed to poor comprehension outcomes. Additionally, rural students scored lower than their urban peers, reflecting the disparities in educational resources and opportunities. The authors recommended implementing comprehensive literacy programs that provide teachers with training in effective reading instruction and equip schools with adequate reading materials to enhance students' comprehension skills. By addressing these challenges, educational stakeholders can work towards improving literacy outcomes in Kenya.

In Tanzania, comprehension test scores indicate substantial challenges in literacy education. A report by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2022) highlighted that only 38% of Standard Four students achieved satisfactory scores in reading comprehension assessments. The findings pointed to systemic issues, including inadequate training for teachers and a lack of instructional materials, particularly in rural areas. The report emphasized the need for educational reforms that prioritize literacy and reading comprehension, calling for the implementation of effective teaching strategies and resource allocation to support struggling learners. By addressing these challenges, stakeholders can work towards improving literacy outcomes and enhancing comprehension skills among students.

In Ghana, a study by Osei and Boateng (2023) investigated comprehension test scores among primary school students. The study revealed that only 36% of participants demonstrated adequate reading comprehension skills, with notable differences between urban and rural students. The researchers identified factors such as inadequate access to reading materials and a lack of trained teachers as significant contributors to low comprehension scores. Additionally, the study highlighted that girls often performed lower than boys in reading assessments, reflecting broader educational inequalities. The authors recommended targeted interventions to promote reading skills, including community literacy programs and teacher training initiatives aimed at improving instructional quality. By fostering a supportive environment for reading, Ghana can enhance comprehension outcomes for all students.

In Uganda, comprehension test scores reflect ongoing challenges in literacy education. According to a report by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB, 2022), only 45% of Primary

Leaving Examination (PLE) candidates achieved satisfactory scores in English comprehension. The report indicated that factors such as overcrowded classrooms and inadequate instructional materials contributed to these low scores, particularly in rural areas. Additionally, the findings revealed significant disparities in performance based on gender, with girls performing lower than boys in reading assessments. To improve these outcomes, the UNEB recommended targeted interventions, including teacher training programs focused on effective reading strategies and increased access to quality reading materials for all students.

In Zambia, a study by Moyo and Chanda (2023) assessed reading comprehension skills among primary school students. The findings indicated that only 40% of students met the minimum proficiency level in comprehension tests, reflecting significant challenges in literacy development. The research identified inadequate teacher training, lack of resources, and socio-economic factors as key barriers to improving comprehension outcomes. The authors emphasized the need for comprehensive literacy programs that focus on enhancing teachers' instructional practices and providing students with adequate reading materials. Furthermore, the study recommended engaging parents and communities in supporting children's literacy development to foster a more conducive learning environment. By addressing these challenges, stakeholders in Zambia can work towards improving comprehension scores and fostering a culture of reading.

Cultural background plays a significant role in shaping individuals' cognitive processes, learning styles, and ultimately their comprehension test scores. In Western cultures, education often emphasizes individualism, critical thinking, and analytical skills, which can influence how students approach reading and comprehension tasks. Research indicates that students from Western backgrounds tend to excel in assessments that require inference and analysis due to their exposure to interactive and discussion-based learning environments (Nisbett, 2019). Conversely, Eastern cultures, which may prioritize collectivism and rote memorization, often foster different learning approaches. For instance, students from Eastern backgrounds might perform better on comprehension tasks that require recalling facts or following structured narratives, as these methods align with their educational practices (Zhang, 2020). Thus, comprehension test scores can reflect not only the content knowledge of students but also their cultural learning orientations and experiences.

The differences in comprehension test scores between students from Western and Eastern cultural backgrounds underscore the necessity for educators to consider these cultural influences when designing assessments and instructional strategies. For example, students from collectivist societies may benefit from collaborative learning environments that leverage their strengths in group work and mutual support. Additionally, educational systems must recognize and accommodate diverse learning styles associated with cultural backgrounds to improve comprehension outcomes across the board. Incorporating culturally responsive teaching methods can enhance engagement and comprehension skills among students from various backgrounds (Ladson-Billings, 2018). By understanding how cultural contexts shape learning and comprehension, educators can create more inclusive environments that facilitate better academic performance for all students, ultimately leading to improved comprehension test scores.

Problem Statement

The influence of cultural background on language comprehension has become an increasingly important area of study, as diverse educational and social contexts shape how individuals understand and process language. Despite growing awareness of these influences, many educational systems continue to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to language instruction, failing to recognize the distinct cognitive and linguistic strategies employed by learners from varying cultural backgrounds (Zhang & Chen, 2021). Research has shown that students from Western cultures, which often emphasize individualism and analytical thinking, may approach language comprehension differently than those from Eastern cultures, where collectivism and contextual understanding are prioritized (Nisbett, 2019). This discrepancy can lead to significant gaps in language comprehension skills, particularly in multicultural classrooms where diverse cultural backgrounds are present. Furthermore, existing studies often overlook the nuanced ways in which cultural values, beliefs, and practices affect language learning and comprehension, limiting the effectiveness of instructional strategies aimed at fostering language proficiency (Hwang, 2020). Addressing this gap is crucial for developing culturally responsive teaching methods that enhance comprehension and promote equitable learning outcomes for all students.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)

Developed by Lev Vygotsky, Cultural-Historical Activity Theory emphasizes the role of cultural and social contexts in cognitive development. The main theme of this theory posits that language comprehension is deeply embedded in cultural practices and social interactions. Vygotsky argued that learning is a social process, where individuals acquire language and cognitive skills through participation in culturally relevant activities. This theory is particularly relevant to the study of language comprehension as it highlights how cultural backgrounds influence the ways individuals interpret and understand language. By considering CHAT, researchers can explore how cultural practices shape comprehension skills in diverse contexts (Engeström, 2019).

Sociocultural Theory

Originating from Vygotsky's work, Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural context in the learning process. This theory posits that comprehension is not just an individual cognitive activity but is significantly shaped by cultural norms, values, and social interactions. The relevance to language comprehension lies in understanding how learners from different cultural backgrounds process language through social contexts, which can enhance or hinder comprehension. This perspective encourages researchers to investigate how cultural differences influence the ways individuals approach language learning and comprehension (Lantolf & Thorne, 2019).

Intercultural Communication Theory

Developed by Edward T. Hall and others, Intercultural Communication Theory explores how cultural differences affect communication styles and comprehension. The main theme revolves around understanding the nuances of communication across cultures, such as high-context versus low-context communication styles. This theory is relevant to language comprehension as it

provides insights into how individuals from different cultural backgrounds may interpret messages differently based on their cultural frames of reference. Researchers can use this theory to examine the challenges and strategies involved in language comprehension among speakers from diverse cultural contexts (Gudykunst, 2021).

Empirical Review

Zhang & Chen (2021) explored the relationship between cultural experiences and the reading strategies employed by students from diverse backgrounds. The qualitative study involved in-depth interviews with 60 bilingual participants, allowing researchers to gather rich, detailed insights into their comprehension processes. Findings revealed that cultural background significantly influenced the reading strategies students used, with some relying on context-based interpretations while others emphasized analytical skills. Participants shared experiences that illustrated how their cultural identities shaped their approaches to understanding texts. Many indicated that they found it challenging to engage with materials that did not resonate with their cultural backgrounds. The authors recommended developing culturally responsive reading programs that acknowledge and cater to the diverse backgrounds of learners. These programs could enhance comprehension by connecting reading materials to students' lived experiences and cultural contexts. The study emphasized the importance of recognizing the interplay between culture and comprehension to improve educational outcomes. By integrating culturally relevant texts into the curriculum, educators can foster a deeper connection between students and the learning material. Furthermore, the research encourages future studies to explore how cultural background influences comprehension across different languages and contexts.

Hwang (2022) understood how these values influenced students' reading comprehension and learning outcomes. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research involved surveys and focus group discussions with 100 students from various cultural backgrounds. The findings indicated that students from collectivist cultures often relied on contextual cues for comprehension, emphasizing the importance of relationships and social context. Conversely, those from individualist cultures demonstrated a tendency to emphasize analytical skills and critical thinking in their reading practices. Participants expressed that their cultural backgrounds shaped their expectations and approaches to reading tasks, leading to varying levels of comprehension. The study recommended implementing teaching strategies that acknowledge and integrate cultural differences to enhance comprehension outcomes. By incorporating diverse perspectives into lesson plans, educators can create a more inclusive learning environment that caters to all students. The research highlights the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in fostering academic success among multicultural student populations. Additionally, future research should explore the long-term effects of culturally adapted teaching methods on students' comprehension skills.

Liu & Zhang (2020) assessed how cultural references in vocabulary affected students' comprehension skills. The quantitative study included a sample of 120 students who participated in a standardized vocabulary comprehension test. The results indicated that cultural references significantly impacted comprehension scores, with students struggling to understand words that were heavily tied to Western culture. Many participants reported feeling disconnected when encountering vocabulary that lacked cultural relevance to their experiences. The authors concluded

that integrating culturally relevant materials into EFL curricula could improve vocabulary comprehension. They suggested that educators provide context for vocabulary instruction, helping students bridge the gap between cultural references and language use. Furthermore, the study highlighted the need for teacher training to equip educators with strategies for addressing cultural differences in language instruction. By doing so, teachers can enhance students' engagement and understanding of the language being taught. Future research should also explore how different cultural contexts influence the comprehension of idiomatic expressions and phrases.

Davis & Lee (2023) explored how students' cultural identities influenced their comprehension skills in academic settings. The qualitative study utilized interviews with 40 immigrant students, allowing them to share their experiences and challenges related to language learning and comprehension. Findings revealed that students with strong cultural identities often found it easier to comprehend texts that referenced their cultural backgrounds, as they could relate personally to the material. Many participants expressed that their cultural narratives and experiences enhanced their understanding of specific concepts and themes in texts. However, students also noted challenges in comprehending materials that were culturally distant from their experiences, leading to feelings of alienation. The study recommended fostering a culturally inclusive environment in schools that recognizes and validates the cultural identities of immigrant students. By incorporating culturally relevant materials into the curriculum, educators can improve comprehension skills and boost student engagement. The research encourages schools to provide resources and support that celebrate students' diverse cultural backgrounds. Additionally, future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of cultural identity on language comprehension outcomes. Overall, this study emphasizes the critical role of cultural identity in shaping language learning experiences for immigrant students.

Patel (2021) assessed how cultural relevance influenced children's understanding of stories with specific cultural themes. The researchers conducted a series of reading comprehension tests with 80 children, focusing on narratives that either reflected their cultural experiences or introduced unfamiliar themes. Findings indicated that children demonstrated better comprehension of narratives that aligned with their cultural backgrounds, showcasing their ability to connect personally with the content. Participants expressed that stories that resonated with their cultural experiences were more engaging and memorable. The study highlighted the importance of incorporating culturally relevant narratives into literacy programs to enhance comprehension skills in children. Additionally, the authors recommended training teachers to recognize the significance of cultural context in reading instruction. By doing so, educators can foster a more effective and relatable learning experience for their students. The research encourages further exploration of how cultural familiarity influences comprehension across various literary forms and genres. Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of the role of cultural context in children's language development and comprehension.

Kumar & Shukla (2022) assessed how cultural familiarity with academic texts impacted comprehension levels among students from various cultural backgrounds. Using a survey of 150 students, the research evaluated their comprehension skills through reading tasks and comprehension questions. Findings indicated that students felt more confident in comprehending texts that referenced their cultural backgrounds, leading to higher comprehension scores.

Participants reported that texts featuring familiar cultural contexts facilitated their understanding and engagement with the material. The authors suggested enhancing students' exposure to diverse cultural contexts to improve overall comprehension skills. They recommended incorporating texts from various cultures into the curriculum to broaden students' perspectives and enhance their reading comprehension abilities. Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices that consider students' backgrounds and experiences. Future research should explore the effects of cultural familiarity on comprehension in different academic disciplines. Overall, this study underscores the significance of cultural context in shaping academic language comprehension among students.

Mok & Yuen (2023) examined the strategies employed by students with different cultural backgrounds when approaching reading comprehension tasks. Utilizing a mixed-methods design, researchers collected data from 100 students through surveys and reading tasks. Findings indicated that students from Western-influenced cultures favored analytical strategies, such as breaking down texts and making inferences, while those influenced by Eastern cultures preferred holistic approaches, focusing on context and relationships within the text. Participants expressed that their cultural backgrounds significantly shaped their expectations and approaches to reading comprehension. The study recommended implementing teaching practices that accommodate diverse comprehension strategies to enhance learning outcomes. By recognizing and integrating students' cultural contexts into instruction, educators can foster a more inclusive learning environment that supports all students. The research encourages future studies to explore the implications of these findings on comprehension across various subjects.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: The existing studies, such as those by Zhang & Chen (2021) and Hwang (2022), underscore the influence of cultural background on language comprehension; however, they often fall short of providing comprehensive theoretical frameworks that integrate cultural dimensions with cognitive and linguistic theories. For instance, while Zhang & Chen highlight the connection between cultural identity and reading strategies, they do not explore the underlying cognitive processes that might differ across cultures. Similarly, Hwang's findings on the influence of collectivism and individualism on comprehension strategies prompt a need for theories that encompass social cognition and cultural psychology to fully explain these differences. Additionally, there is a lack of longitudinal studies examining how cultural influences evolve over time and their long-term impact on language comprehension. Future research would benefit from

interdisciplinary approaches that combine linguistics, psychology, and cultural studies to create more robust conceptual frameworks.

Contextual Gaps: The research primarily focuses on specific contexts, such as multicultural classrooms and immigrant experiences, yet it often overlooks other important settings where cultural background might influence comprehension. For example, while Liu & Zhang (2020) address the impact of cultural references in vocabulary comprehension, they do not consider how these factors manifest in informal or non-academic settings. Furthermore, the studies emphasize academic environments but often fail to explore the implications of cultural background on comprehension in everyday contexts, such as media consumption or community interactions. Additionally, while Patel (2021) highlights the importance of culturally relevant narratives for children's comprehension, further investigation into how different genres or formats affect understanding across cultural backgrounds is warranted. Expanding the contextual scope of research will provide a more nuanced understanding of the various influences on language comprehension.

Geographical Gaps: The majority of studies, including those by Davis & Lee (2023) and Kumar & Shukla (2022), focus predominantly on specific regions, such as the United States and India, limiting the generalizability of their findings to other cultural contexts. For instance, while there is substantial research on comprehension among Asian and Western students, the dynamics of language comprehension in African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American contexts remain underexplored. Additionally, the implications of globalization and migration on language comprehension in multicultural societies have not been sufficiently addressed in the literature. Studies that examine the influence of cultural background on comprehension across diverse geographical settings would enrich the understanding of this phenomenon. By incorporating perspectives from a broader range of cultural contexts, researchers can better understand the complexities of language comprehension influenced by cultural factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The influence of cultural background on language comprehension is a multifaceted phenomenon that significantly shapes how individuals understand and engage with language. Research indicates that cultural experiences and values play a critical role in determining comprehension strategies, with variations observed between students from collectivist and individualist cultures. For instance, students from collectivist backgrounds may rely more on contextual cues and social relationships when interpreting texts, while those from individualist cultures often emphasize analytical thinking and critical analysis. This divergence underscores the necessity of culturally responsive pedagogy that acknowledges and integrates diverse cultural perspectives into language instruction.

As classrooms become increasingly multicultural, recognizing the interplay between culture and comprehension is vital for enhancing educational outcomes. Future educational practices should focus on developing culturally relevant curricula that resonate with students' lived experiences, thereby fostering deeper connections to learning materials. Moreover, ongoing research is essential to explore the evolving nature of cultural influences on language comprehension, particularly in

an era of globalization and increasing linguistic diversity. By embracing cultural backgrounds in the learning process, educators can create inclusive environments that not only improve comprehension skills but also validate the rich cultural identities of all learners. Ultimately, understanding and addressing the influence of cultural background on language comprehension can lead to more equitable educational practices and improved academic success for diverse student populations.

Recommendations

Theory

To deepen the understanding of the influence of cultural background on language comprehension, researchers should develop comprehensive theoretical frameworks that integrate insights from linguistics, psychology, and cultural studies. This interdisciplinary approach can illuminate the cognitive processes behind comprehension and the role of cultural context in shaping these processes. Additionally, future studies should focus on creating models that address the dynamics between cultural identity, comprehension strategies, and academic performance. By expanding existing theories, scholars can provide a more nuanced understanding of how culture impacts language learning, ultimately contributing to the body of knowledge in language education and applied linguistics. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are encouraged to assess how cultural influences evolve over time and their long-term effects on language comprehension.

Practice

Educators should implement culturally responsive teaching strategies that acknowledge and leverage students' cultural backgrounds in language instruction. This includes incorporating diverse reading materials that reflect the cultural experiences and identities of all students, thereby enhancing their engagement and comprehension. Teachers should also be trained in recognizing the different comprehension strategies employed by students from various cultural backgrounds, equipping them to tailor their instructional approaches accordingly. Collaborative learning environments that promote dialogue and exchange among students of diverse cultures can further enrich comprehension outcomes. Additionally, integrating culturally relevant assessment methods will help evaluate students' comprehension more accurately, ensuring that assessments are aligned with their cultural contexts and learning experiences.

Policy

Educational policymakers should prioritize the inclusion of cultural diversity in language education frameworks and curricula. This involves establishing guidelines that promote culturally responsive pedagogy across all educational institutions, ensuring that teaching practices reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds of students. Funding should be allocated to develop professional development programs for educators focused on culturally responsive teaching techniques. Furthermore, educational policies should support the integration of culturally relevant materials into language programs, facilitating a curriculum that resonates with students' experiences. Policies aimed at fostering inclusive environments in schools can significantly enhance language comprehension outcomes for students from diverse backgrounds. By addressing these cultural dimensions in educational policies, stakeholders can create more equitable and effective learning environments that recognize and celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity.

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