



The Impact of Cultural Intelligence on English Learning

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Abstract

Cultural intelligence (CQ) has emerged as a critical factor in facilitating cross-cultural interactions and adaptability, yet its role in English language acquisition remains underexplored. This study investigates the impact of cultural intelligence on the proficiency of non-native English learners, focusing on how cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral aspects of CQ influence language learning outcomes. A quantitative, correlational survey design was used to collect data from 39 participants who were from outside English dominant countries and their self reported English proficiency and cultural intelligence was assessed. The results show that those with higher cultural intelligence are more confident in their ability to navigate linguistic and cultural complexity especially in speaking and listening. However, a large number of the participants experienced challenges in coping with cultural differences which means that low CQ may limit language learning achievement. The study also shows that there are advantages in incorporating cultural intelligence enhancing strategies such as reflective learning and intercultural exposure into language education. This research helps to build on the growing discourse on culturally responsive language instruction by addressing the interplay of CQ and language proficiency and thus offers valuable insights that educators and learners can use to improve English language acquisition in diverse cultural contexts.

Keywords: Cultural intelligence (CQ), English language acquisition, Non-native learners, Language proficiency, Intercultural exposure, Quantitative study, Speaking and listening skills, Culturally responsive education



تأثير الذكاء الثقافي على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية

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الملخص

برز الذكاء الثقافي (CQ) كعامل حاسم في تسهيل التفاعلات بين الثقافات والتكيف معها، ومع ذلك لا يزال دوره في اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية غير مستكشف بشكل كافٍ. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل تأثير الذكاء الثقافي على كفاءة المتعلمين غير الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية، مع التركيز على كيفية تأثير الجوانب المعرفية وما فوق المعرفية والدافعية والسلوكية للذكاء الثقافي على نتائج تعلم اللغة. تم استخدام تصميم دراسة كمية ارتباطية، وجمعت البيانات من 39 مشاركاً من دول لا تُعد اللغة الإنجليزية لغتهم الأم، وتم تقييم مدى إجادتهم للغة الإنجليزية والذكاء الثقافي الخاص بهم بناءً على تقاريرهم الذاتية. أظهرت النتائج أن الأفراد ذوي الذكاء الثقافي المرتفع يتمتعون بثقة أكبر في قدرتهم على التعامل مع التعقيدات اللغوية والثقافية، لا سيما في مهارات التحدث والاستماع. ومع ذلك، واجه عدد كبير من المشاركين صعوبات في التكيف مع الاختلافات الثقافية، مما يشير إلى أن انخفاض الذكاء الثقافي قد يحد من تحقيق النجاح في تعلم اللغة. كما تُظهر الدراسة أن هناك فوائد لإدماج استراتيجيات تعزيز الذكاء الثقافي، مثل التعلم التأملي والتعرض للتجارب بين الثقافات، في تعليم اللغة. تُسهم هذه الدراسة في إثراء النقاش المتزايد حول التعليم اللغوي المتجاوب ثقافياً من خلال تسليط الضوء على العلاقة بين الذكاء الثقافي وكفاءة اللغة، وثقافة رؤية ق ي مة يمكن للمعلمين والمتعلمين الاستفادة منها لتحسين اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية في السياقات الثقافية المتنوعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الثقافي (CQ) اكتساب اللغة الإنجليزية، المتعلمون غير الناطقين بها، الكفاءة اللغوية، التعرض بين الثقافات، دراسة كمية، مهارات التحدث والاستماع، التعليم المتجاوب ثقافياً..

Introduction

In today's day and age, English is one of the most prominently spoken languages around the entirety of the world. Around the world, thousands of people from different backgrounds and cultures strive to master this language. Years of research has been dedicated to attempting to understand what could possibly be a factor that may contribute to boosting the speed of language proficiency in foreign language learners. Researchers have strived to understand ways to increase the speed at which people are able to master languages. One of the things that these researchers believe has an impact on the speed of which people learn foreign languages is a concept known as Cultural Intelligence (CQ). Cultural Intelligence is usually defined as the capability of people to relate and work effectively across different cultures. However, the impact of cultural intelligence—a blend of cognitive, motivational, and behavioral skills—on English learning has been less explored, particularly in how it facilitates or hinders this process among non-native speakers. P. Christopher Earley and Soon Ang, in their 2003 study, define cultural intelligence (CQ) as a person's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts. They break it down into four components:

Cognitive CQ: Cognitive Cultural Intelligence tends to involve a persons knowledge about the norms, practices, and conventions of different cultures that



they do not particularly participate in (Earley & Ang, 2003). This type of cultural intelligence is primarily gained through a persons studies or education and their interpersonal experiences with other people (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Metacognitive CQ: Metacognitive Cultural Intelligence typically concerns an individuals awareness and mindfulness of others' cultural preferences and habits (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Metacognitive CQ also involves thinking about and reflecting on one's own cultural understanding and the culture of others during interactions (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Motivational CQ: Motivational Cultural Intelligence is another component defined by P. Christopher Earley and Soon Ang in their 2003 study, and they define it as the drive and energy to adapt to diverse cultures and cultural practices. This tends to also include an individuals motivation to learn from and function within other peoples cultural setting. This is typically known as the most impactful component of CQ when it comes to becoming proficient in and mastering another language.

Behavioral CQ: Behavioral Cultural Intelligence is commonly defined as an individuals ability to adapt their own personal behaviors when interacting with other people from different cultures, as to be mindful of their actions with the purpose of respecting others cultures (Earley & Ang, 2003). This tends involve a person changing their own personal actions as to meet the expectations of the cultural setting in which they are present, being mindful of these expectations and changing individual mannerisms to meet said expectations.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of cultural intelligence as a holistic concept or as a whole on specifically English language learning among foreign speakers. This research paper explores cultural intelligence to determine whether competency in this concept can reduce the difficulty or time required to achieve proficiency in the English language.

This study is significant as it holds the potential to bridge a noticeable gap in knowledge.

Research has been extensive in covering cultural intelligence (CQ) and the effect it has on individual's capability to learn foreign languages as explained in the Overview of this introduction. Problematically however, much of this past research has been dedicated to exploring how cultural intelligence (CQ) influences foreign language learning across various contexts. However, there remains a distinct knowledge gap in the literature specifically concerning how CQ affects English language learning, particularly within the unique cultural landscape of the United States.

American culture is not one homogeneous entity. It is a melting pot of demographics, traditions, and social norms (Zong & Batalova, 2015). This makes CQ's application complex because the cultural dynamics of the U.S. are more complex than those of



culturally homogenous places. Thus, there is a pressing need for focused studies that examine the nuances of how CQ facilitates or hinders English language acquisition in an American context, where cultural interactions are complex and multifaceted. Further discussion on the current body of knowledge will ensue in the literature review section.

This research paper attempts to fill this gap by presenting empirical evidence of how the facets of cultural intelligence enable or hinder English language learning. The results may be useful for teachers and learners to improve learning strategies and achievements in culturally and linguistically diverse environments. Although cultural intelligence is now recognized as important in various fields, very little



work has been done to explore how it impacts English language learning specifically. This gap is significant because understanding the interplay between cultural intelligence and language acquisition could inform educational strategies and lead to more effective language learning experiences. To address these limitations, research needs to be conducted on how CQ impacts English language learning and whether or not it impedes or promotes the process.

Research Questions

This research paper seeks to explore and address one central research question: “How does a comprehensive understanding of cultural intelligence influence the proficiency of language learners in acquiring English as a foreign language?” Specifically, it aims to examine the extent to which cultural intelligence, as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral aspects, contributes to the efficiency, fluency, and overall success of non-native English speakers in their language-learning journey.

In addition, this study will attempt to examine how cultural awareness and adaptability can help overcome typical problems that learners face, such as cultural misunderstandings in interactions, problems with certain phrases and idioms, and differences in linguistic rules in various English-speaking regions. To this end, the research seeks to advance theoretical frameworks and practical applications in language education, which could offer ideas for teaching strategies that include cultural intelligence to enhance learning experiences.

Literature Review

The concept of cultural intelligence (CQ) has generated significant scholarly attention since Earley and Ang (2003) first defined it as an individual’s ability to function effectively in culturally diverse situations. CQ is commonly subdivided into four dimensions—cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral—that collectively capture a person’s cultural awareness, reflective thinking, drive to engage in cross-cultural contexts, and ability to adapt behavior when interacting with individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Earley & Ang, 2003). Although much of the foundational research on CQ has focused on organizational contexts and international business settings (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008; Thomas & Inkson, 2017), this theoretical framework has begun to influence



discussions of language acquisition. Specifically, as language learning entails exposure to linguistic norms, social values, and cultural expectations, CQ provides an integrative approach for understanding how these cultural elements might facilitate or hinder mastery of a foreign language (Ward, Fischer, Zaid Lam, & Hall, 2009).

Research on second language acquisition has focused on the role of motivation, self-regulation, and sociocultural knowledge as predictors of language proficiency. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) have pointed out that students who are metacognitive and have high levels of motivational commitment are more likely to learn a second language faster than their peers in learning environments. In parallel, the motivational component of CQ captures the readiness and willingness of an individual to acquire and interact with cultural norms and practices (Earley & Ang, 2003). This similarity of the two constructs indicates that people with high CQ might be more likely to engage in language related activities, have culturally appropriate goals, and persist when facing linguistic difficulties. In addition, since language cannot be fully understood without understanding the culture that goes with it, it means that the ability to recognise and work with different cultural practices may decrease the chances of cultural misunderstandings which may otherwise slow down the language learning process. Such adaptability can be especially valuable in contexts that require navigating idiomatic expressions, socio-pragmatic cues, and culturally embedded references (Leung, Ang, & Tan, 2014).

In addition to motivational and adaptive elements, the cognitive and metacognitive dimensions of CQ also have relevance for language learning. Metacognitive CQ involves a conscious awareness of how cultural context shapes communication (Earley & Ang, 2003), which closely parallels strategies used in effective language study. Learners who actively reflect on their interactions and cultural assumptions can adjust their approaches to vocabulary acquisition, grammar practice, and participation in target-language discourse. Such strategic reflection aligns with Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis, in which comprehensible input is vital for learning yet can be optimized if the learner understands the cultural as well as the linguistic context of communication. By contrast, it appears that many learners who are lacking in metacognitive CQ may struggle to interpret cultural subtleties embedded in everyday interactions, slowing their progress in mastering the language's nuances (Leung et al., 2014).



Empirical studies on CQ in language classrooms, while relatively recent, indicate that high CQ correlates positively with better intercultural communication skills, heightened intercultural sensitivity, and improved language outcomes (Ward et al., 2009). These findings suggest that incorporating

CQ-enhancing exercises—such as group discussions of cultural norms, reflective journaling, and role-playing cultural scenarios—may yield benefits in language courses. Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010)

further argue that surveys assessing both motivation and cultural attitudes help educators identify learner profiles that either facilitate or inhibit progress in language study.

Consequently, there is a distinct gap in research on how CQ shapes English acquisition among learners who are exposed to English primarily through formal instruction or digital resources rather than immersion in an English-dominant society.

Addressing this gap is critical because the complexity of English—ranging from its diverse accents and dialects to the cultural references embedded in its colloquial usage—often requires learners to engage with a broad spectrum of cultural cues. If higher CQ fosters a more open and adaptive orientation, learners might be better equipped to overcome barriers to communication, accurately interpret contextual clues, and integrate culturally specific expressions into their repertoire. Moreover, by understanding how different dimensions of CQ intersect with language-learning strategies, educators and learners alike can develop targeted interventions that promote not only linguistic competence but also cultural receptivity and empathy (Earley & Ang, 2003).

Such interventions could take the form of structured reflection on cultural values, exposure to multimedia resources from varied English-speaking cultures, or peer-interaction projects that encourage curiosity and mutual respect for cultural differences. As researchers continue to explore the intersection of CQ and language acquisition, it becomes increasingly apparent that a learner's cultural intelligence may be a critical, yet often under examined, factor in their path to English proficiency.

Methodology

This study's methodology is a quantitative, correlational survey design to explore the relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and English language proficiency among non-native speakers who are



not residing in the United States. Quantitative approach entails a systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to determine the extent of correlation between CQ and self-reported English proficiency (Creswell, 2014). The research uses a cross-sectional framework that entails collecting data at one point in time to capture participants' CQ and proficiency levels.

Participants will consist of non-native English learners aged 18 or older who currently study or have recently studied English and feel comfortable completing an online survey in English. They will be recruited through digital communities and social media groups focused on language learning, a strategy commonly used in linguistic and educational research (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). Eligibility is restricted to individuals residing outside the United States, thus avoiding the immersion factor that can otherwise confound the measurement of language proficiency. A sample size of approximately 100 to 200 respondents is targeted, balancing pragmatic feasibility with the goal of ensuring adequate statistical power (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). A larger sample would enhance generalizability and reduce the margin of error.

Data will be collected using a structured online survey that is divided into three main sections: demographic information, English proficiency, and cultural intelligence. The demographic section captures age, gender, and the length of time studying English. These questions provide important contextual data; for instance, the duration of study can be a significant moderator of proficiency (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The second section consists of four Likert-scale items measuring English proficiency, addressing reading and writing skills, listening skills, speaking skills, and overall proficiency. Each item uses a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Such Likert-scale methods are standard in educational and social science research (Likert, 1932). Responses across the four items will be averaged to form a composite measure of self-assessed English competence.

Cultural intelligence is then assessed through four Likert-scale statements, each measuring a

different facet of overall CQ, but treated holistically for this study. These statements probe participants' cultural awareness and adaptability, motivation to learn about other cultures, reflective thinking related to one's own background, and confidence in handling cross-cultural misunderstandings. This approach



aligns with the conceptual framework established by Earley and Ang (2003), who define CQ as an

individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse situations. Although Earley and Ang (2003) detail cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral components, the current study consolidates them into an overarching CQ score by averaging the four item responses.

Data for this study will be collected from a single group of 30 non-native English speakers, each of whom meets the following inclusion criteria: they are at least 18 years old, have been studying English for at least six months, and currently reside outside of English-dominant countries. The data collection period will remain open until 30 complete responses are obtained. All participants will answer a quantitative survey designed in accordance with established guidelines for second language research (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010), using a Likert scale to measure perceptions of cultural intelligence and English language proficiency. Upon receipt of the completed surveys, Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) will be used to evaluate the internal consistency of the survey items. Although the sample size of 30 is relatively modest, it is sufficient for the study's exploratory objective of examining how cultural intelligence relates to English language proficiency within this specific context. The full list of survey questions is provided in **Appendix A**.

Upon closing the survey, all data will be exported from the online platform into a spreadsheet or statistical software package. Incomplete or invalid responses will be removed. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, will then be calculated to summarize demographic information and the distributions of both proficiency and CQ scores (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, & Barrett, 2019). The four English proficiency items will be combined into a single continuous measure, while the four CQ items will similarly be averaged to produce a total CQ score.

To address the primary research question—whether cultural intelligence is associated with

self-reported English proficiency—Pearson correlation coefficients will be calculated (or Spearman's rho if normality assumptions are not met) (Field, 2018). If the sample size is sufficient, multiple regression analyses may be conducted, incorporating demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, and length of study) to explore whether CQ remains a significant predictor of proficiency when controlling for these factors.

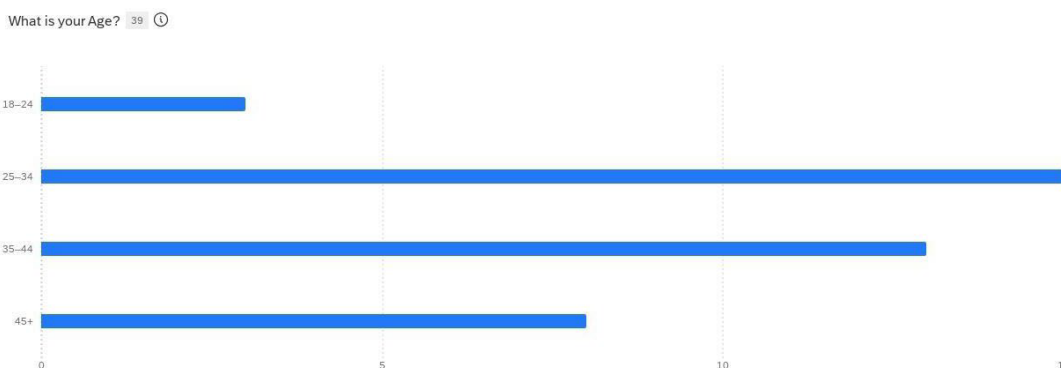


Ethical considerations include ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality in accordance with standard ethical guidelines (American Psychological Association, 2020). Participants will be explicitly informed that they may discontinue participation at any point without penalty. No personally identifying information will be collected, and all survey responses will be kept on secure, password-protected platforms accessible only to the research team. Adhering to these procedures, this study is set to explore the role of a holistic cultural intelligence model on English language learning among learners from outside of United States.

Results

Question number one of the survey asks all participants what age group they fit into. The choices were 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, and 45+. A majority of the participants stated that they are 25–34 years of age, with 39% of participants (15 out of 39) selecting this option. The second-largest group was 35–44 years old, with 34% of participants (13 out of 39). The least number of participants selected the 45+ age group, with only 21% (8 out of 39). This shows that the majority of participants are in their late 20s to early 40s, indicating that the survey results reflect the perspectives of adults in their prime working and learning years.

Figure 1: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 1



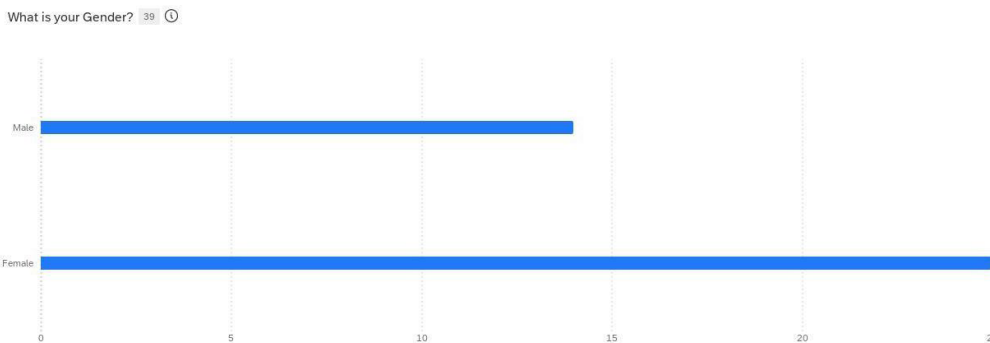
Question number two of the survey asks all participants their gender. The choices were Male, Female, Prefer not to say, and Other. A large majority of the participants, 66%, or 25 out of 39 of the total number of participants, responded to the first question stating that they were female, while 37% (14 out of



39) identified as male. The options “Prefer not to say” and “Other” were not selected by any participants.

This indicates that the survey results are more reflective of the female perspective, which may influence the overall findings of the study.

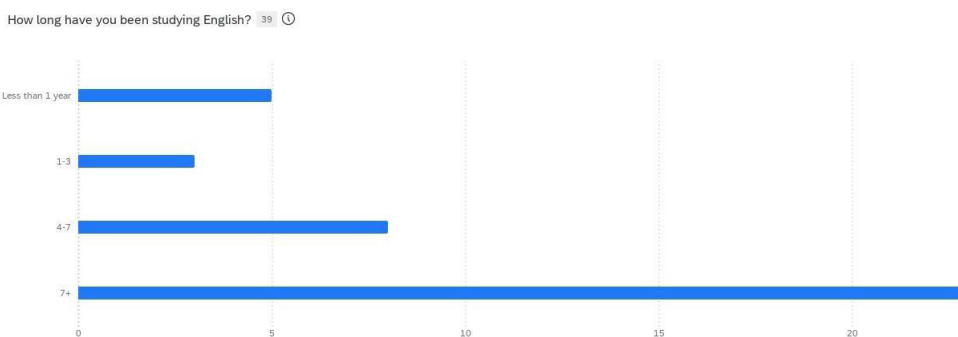
Figure 2: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 2



Question number three of the survey asks participants how long they have been studying English.

The choices were Less than 1 year, 1–3 years, 4–6 years, and 7+ years. A significant majority of participants, 61% (23 out of 39), stated that they have been studying English for 7+ years. The second-largest group, 21% (8 out of 39), reported studying English for 4–6 years. Only 13% (5 out of 39) of participants have been studying English for less than 1 year, and 8% (3 out of 39) have been studying for 1–3 years. This suggests that most participants have extensive experience with English learning, which may influence their self-reported proficiency levels.

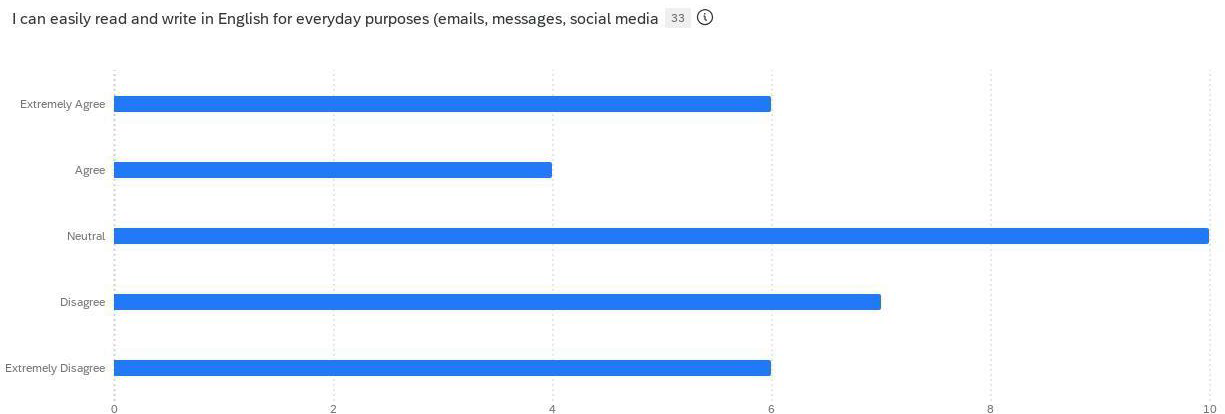
Figure 3: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 3





Question number four of the survey asks participants if they can easily read and write in English for everyday purposes (emails, messages, social media). The choices were Extremely Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Extremely Disagree. A majority of participants, 31% (10 out of 32), selected Neutral, indicating that they feel moderately confident in their reading and writing skills. However, 22% (7 out of 32) of participants disagreed, and 19% (6 out of 32) strongly disagreed, suggesting that a significant portion of participants struggle with everyday English reading and writing tasks. On the other hand, 19% (6 out of 32) strongly agreed, and 13% (4 out of 32) agreed, showing that some participants are highly confident in their abilities.

Figure 4: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 4

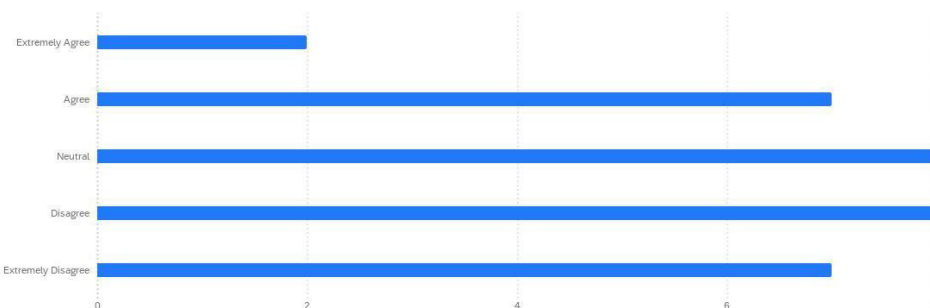


Question number five of the survey asks participants if they can understand most English conversations and audio materials (videos, lectures, TV shows). The choices were Extremely Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Extremely Disagree. A majority of participants, 27%, or 9 out of 37, disagreed with the statement. The second most commonly selected answer among the participants for this question, selected by 21%, or 7 out of 37 was strongly disagree. This indicates that many participants find it challenging to understand spoken English. On the contrary, 21%, or 7 out of 37 agreed, and 6%, or 2 out of 37 strongly agreed, showing that some participants are confident in their listening skills. The remaining 24%, or 8 out of 37, selected Neutral, suggesting moderate confidence in this area.

Figure 5: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 5



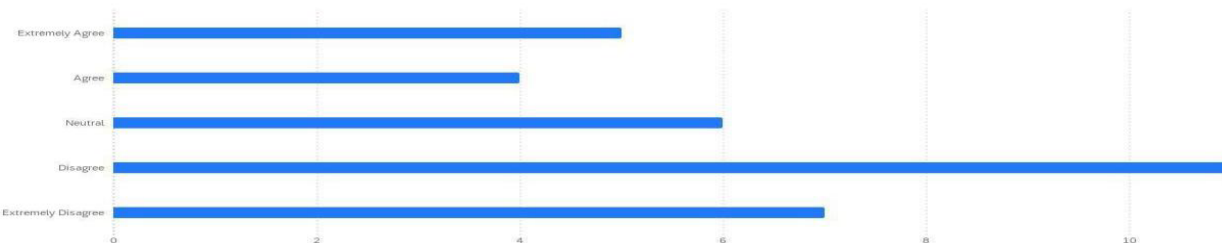
I can understand most English conversations and audio materials (videos, lectures, TV shows) 33 ①



Question number six of the survey asks participants if they feel confident speaking English in both formal and informal settings. The choices were Extremely Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Extremely Disagree. A significant portion of participants, 34% (11 out of 32), disagreed with the statement, and 22% (7 out of 32) strongly disagreed, indicating that many participants lack confidence in their spoken English skills. Only 16% (5 out of 32) strongly agreed, and 13% (4 out of 32) agreed, showing that a small portion of participants feel confident speaking English. The remaining 19% (6 out of 32) selected Neutral, suggesting moderate confidence.

Figure 6: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 6

I feel confident speaking English in both formal and informal settings 33 ①



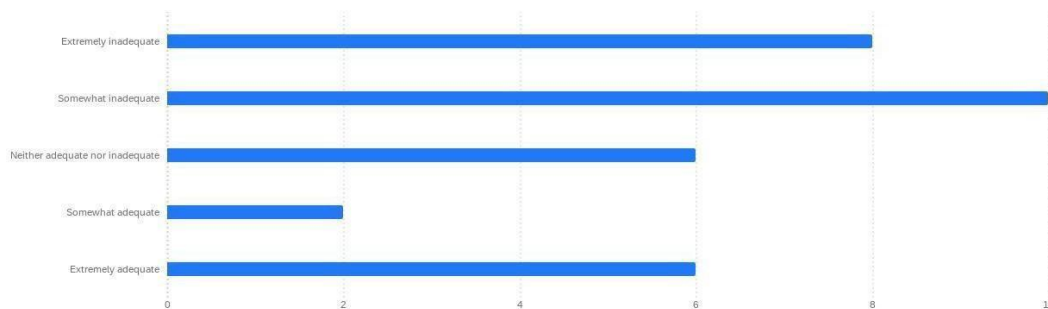
Question number seven of the survey asks participants to rate their overall English proficiency for daily interactions. The choices were Extremely Inadequate, Somewhat Inadequate, Neither Adequate nor Inadequate, Somewhat Adequate, and Extremely Adequate. A majority of participants, 32% (10 out of 31), stated that their proficiency is somewhat inadequate, while 26% (8 out of 31) said it is extremely inadequate. On the other hand, 19% (6 out of 31) selected Extremely Adequate, and 6% (2 out of 31) chose Somewhat Adequate. The remaining 19% (6 out of 31) selected Neither Adequate nor Inadequate.



This suggests that many participants feel their English proficiency is insufficient for daily interactions, while a smaller portion feels confident in their abilities.

Figure 7: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 7

Overall, I consider my current level of English proficiency to be adequate for daily interactions 32 ①



Question number eight of the survey asks participants if they are aware that cultural differences can affect how they communicate and if they can adapt accordingly. The choices were Extremely Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Extremely Disagree. A significant portion of participants, 26% (8 out of 31), disagreed with the statement, and 26% (8 out of 31) strongly disagreed, indicating that many participants struggle with adapting to cultural differences in communication. On the other hand, 16% (5 out of 31) strongly agreed, and 16% (5 out of 31) agreed, showing that some participants are confident in their ability to adapt. The remaining 19% (6 out of 31) selected Neutral, suggesting moderate awareness.

Figure 8: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 8

I am aware that cultural differences can affect how I communicate, and I can adapt accordingly 32 ①



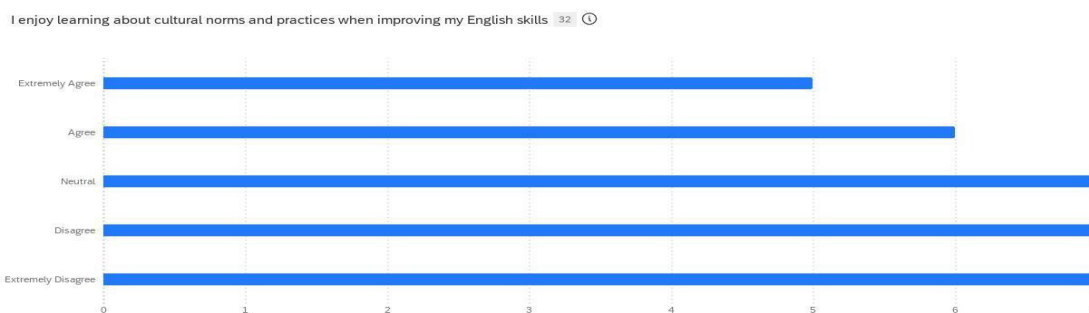
Question number nine of the survey asks participants if they enjoy learning about cultural norms and practices when improving their English skills. The choices were Extremely Agree, Agree, Neutral,



Disagree, and Extremely Disagree. A majority of participants, 23% (7 out of 31), selected Neutral, indicating moderate interest in learning about cultural norms. However, 23% (7 out of 31) disagreed, and 23% (7 out of 31) strongly disagreed, suggesting that a significant portion of participants do not enjoy learning about cultural norms. On the other hand, 16% (5 out of 31) strongly agreed, and 19% (6 out of 31) agreed, showing that some participants are highly motivated to learn about cultural practices.

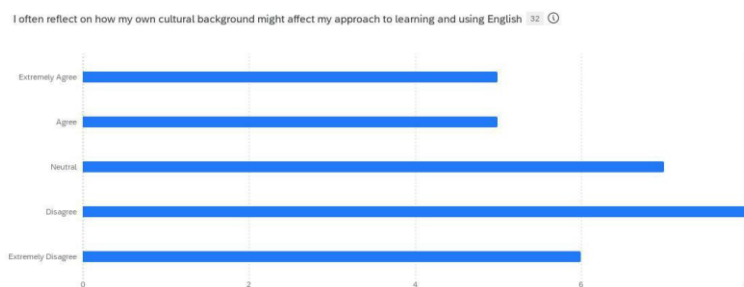
Figure 9: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 9

Question number ten of the survey asks participants if they often reflect on how their own cultural



background might affect their approach to learning and using English. The choices were Extremely Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Extremely Disagree. A significant portion of participants, 29% (9 out of 31), disagreed with the statement, and 19% (6 out of 31) strongly disagreed, indicating that many participants do not reflect on their cultural background when learning English. On the other hand, 16% (5 out of 31) strongly agreed, and 16% (5 out of 31) agreed, showing that some participants are highly reflective. The remaining 23% (7 out of 31) selected Neutral, suggesting moderate reflection.

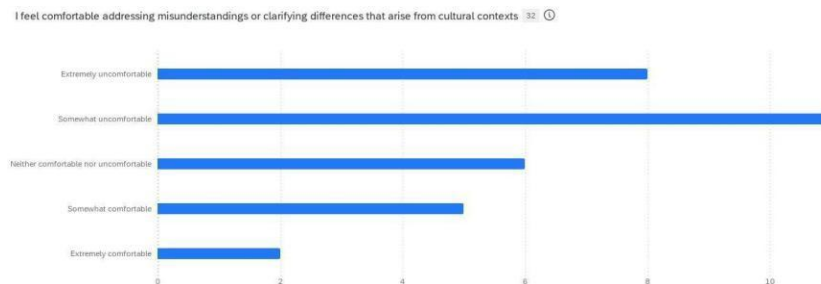
Figure 10: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 10





Question number eleven of the survey asks participants if they feel comfortable addressing misunderstandings or clarifying differences that arise from cultural contexts. The choices were Extremely Uncomfortable, Somewhat Uncomfortable, Neither Comfortable nor Uncomfortable, Somewhat Comfortable, and Extremely Comfortable. A significant portion of participants, 35% (11 out of 31), stated that they are somewhat uncomfortable, and 26% (8 out of 31) said they are extremely uncomfortable, indicating that many participants struggle with addressing cultural misunderstandings. On the other hand, 16% (5 out of 31) selected Somewhat Comfortable, and 6% (2 out of 31) chose Extremely Comfortable, showing that a small portion of participants feel confident in this area. The remaining 19% (6 out of 31) selected Neither Comfortable nor Uncomfortable, suggesting moderate comfort.

Figure 11: Graphical representation of the participants answers to Question 11



This concludes the results section of the study. The findings suggest that while many participants are experienced in English learning, a number of the participants have low confidence in their language skills, especially in speaking and listening. Furthermore, cultural intelligence seems to be a factor in how participants navigate language learning, with several participants reporting challenges with cultural differences while also having issues with cultural understandings.

Discussion

In this study, the discussion section will be discussed in relation to the findings of the study and how these findings could answer the research question which is: “How does a comprehensive understanding of cultural intelligence influence the proficiency of language learners in acquiring English as a foreign language?”. The results of the survey are useful in understanding the link between cultural intelligence and English language learning among non-native speakers of English, who are not from



English speaking countries. A majority of the participants, 61% or 23 out of 39, stated that they have been studying English for 7+ years, which indicates that the participants have extensive experience with English learning.

One of the key findings of this study is the role of cultural intelligence in English language learning. The survey results show that many participants struggle with adapting to cultural differences and addressing misunderstandings that arise from cultural contexts, with 35% or 11 out of 31 of the participants stating that they are somewhat uncomfortable addressing cultural misunderstandings. This indicates that cultural intelligence, particularly the behavioral and motivational components, may play a significant role in how effectively learners can navigate the cultural aspects of language learning.

For example, participants who reported higher levels of cultural awareness and adaptability, such as the 16% or 5 out of 31 who strongly agreed that they are aware of cultural differences and can adapt accordingly, may be better equipped to overcome barriers to communication and integrate culturally specific expressions into their language use. This aligns with the work of Earley and Ang (2003), who define cultural intelligence as an individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse situations, including language learning contexts. Their research highlights the importance of cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral components of cultural intelligence in facilitating cross-cultural communication and adaptation.

Earley and Ang (2003) also discovered a relationship between motivation and cultural intelligence in learning. About a quarter of the participants in this study stated that they disagreed with the statement that they enjoyed learning about cultural norms and practices when trying to enhance their English skills. This goes on to show that for many of the participants of this study, cultural intelligence is not a motivating factor in their journey for English proficiency. However, the 16% or 5 out of 31 of participants who strongly agreed with the statement may demonstrate that for some learners, cultural intelligence can enhance motivation and engagement with the language learning process. This finding is consistent with the work of Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), who argue that motivation and cultural attitudes



are closely linked in language learning, and learners who demonstrate a strong interest in cultural norms and practices are more likely to set culturally informed goals and persist through linguistic challenges.

The results also show the difficulties of the participants in encoding and decoding cultural information in the process of communication. Only 2 participants, 6.5%, from the 31 participants, agreed that they are familiar with how cultural differences impact communication and can change their approach accordingly. This may indicate that many of the participants have problems with decoding the cultural connotations of various messages exchanged in the course of communication, which, in turn, affects their efficiency in learning the English language. This result is in line with Leung, Ang, and Tan (2014) who state that learners with low levels of metacognitive cultural intelligence may not be able to decipher cultural meanings and signs that are important in communication in another language.

Their study also highlights the need for critical thinking and cultural knowledge in language learning, especially in situations where students are confronted with various cultural experiences. For educators, the results suggest that incorporating cultural intelligence-enhancing exercises into language courses, such as group discussions of cultural norms, reflective journaling, and role-playing cultural scenarios, may help learners develop the skills needed to navigate the cultural aspects of language learning. This approach is backed up by Ward, Fischer, Zaid Lam, and Hall (2009) who argued that high cultural intelligence is associated with better intercultural communication skills and better language

outcomes. From the learners' perspective, the results of the study reveal that the participants' cultural intelligence is an essential predictor of their language proficiency and communication competence. In this way, learners may be more prepared to overcome common barriers to language acquisition and perform at increasingly higher levels by understanding the impact that cultural differences have on communication processes.

Despite the valuable insights of this study, there are many limitations that must be taken into consideration. A limitation is that the current study has a relatively small sample size of 39 participants, which may restrict the extent to which the findings can be generalized. Moreover, the study used

self-reported data, which could be inaccurate or biased in some way. To overcome these limitations, future



research could extend such studies to larger samples with more heterogeneous participants and include actual assessments of language proficiency and cultural intelligence.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that cultural intelligence is an important predictor of English language learning, especially in terms of how learners cope with cultural aspects of communication and how they cope with cultural diversity. While most participants experienced difficulties in building up their cultural intelligence and using it for language learning, the outcomes of the study also reveal the possibility of using cultural intelligence-enhancing strategies in language education. Thus, the concepts of cultural awareness, motivation, and adaptability should be encouraged by educators and learners in order to provide more meaningful and culturally responsive language learning experiences.



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