



The Influence of Emotional Engagement on Sentence Comprehension Process in a Second Language

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Abstract: *This study aims to uncover the influence of emotional engagement on sentence comprehension processes in second language learning. Qualitative methods were employed through observation, in-depth interviews, and thematic analysis with actively engaged participants. Results show that positive emotions, such as enthusiasm and curiosity, play a crucial role in facilitating cognitive processing and promoting collaborative participation. Negative emotions, on the other hand, can be a barrier, requiring appropriate emotion management strategies. The practical implication is the importance of affective learning design to improve motivation and sentence comprehension performance.*

Keywords: *emotional engagement, second language learning, sentence comprehension, affective strategies*

1. Introduction

Sentence comprehension in a second language often involves complex cognitive and affective processes. According to Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory and Vygotsky's Social Interaction Theory, mental processes are deeply intertwined with emotional factors, such as motivation and stress. Emotional engagement can affect how individuals absorb, store, and remember information in foreign language texts (Rahman, 2021). Various studies have shown that when learners have an emotional connection to learning materials, their comprehension ability improves significantly (Rahman, 2021). However, many second language learners remain unaware of the crucial role emotions play in supporting their cognitive processes (Sari & Putra, 2022). This condition warrants further investigation to determine the extent to which emotional engagement contributes to sentence comprehension. The need for this study is underscored by trends in second language education, where the shift toward communicative competence and fluency in real-world contexts increasingly emphasizes affective factors. Additionally, identifying factors that support and inhibit emotional engagement is expected to enrich language learning strategies. Thus, the topic of the influence of emotional involvement on sentence comprehension in a second language is a relevant area for in depth research (Huang, 2020).

The background of this problem is rooted in the second language acquisition process, which is influenced not only by linguistic factors but also by psychological factors. Gardner's Socio Educational Model and Schumann's Acculturation Theory suggest that emotional engagement, such as motivation and self-esteem, significantly affects language acquisition. In general, learners who feel motivated and confident are more likely to learn effectively, so emotional engagement plays a crucial role (Kim et al., 2021). In Indonesia, the context of learning English as a foreign language requires an approach that balances attention to both affective and cognitive aspects (Susanto, 2020). Approaches based solely on grammar or vocabulary memorization, without considering emotional factors, often yield suboptimal results. A recent survey by the Indonesian Ministry of Education revealed that students' emotional engagement is directly correlated with their academic performance in English. The limitations of learning models that incorporate emotional aspects have led educational researchers and practitioners to become increasingly interested in exploring them (Liu & Zhang, 2019). This situation suggests that emotional involvement cannot be overlooked, particularly in enhancing the quality of sentence comprehension. Therefore, an in-depth explanation of this background is important to understand the scientific foundation behind this study.

The specific issue addressed in this study is the direct impact of learners' emotions on the comprehension of sentences. According to the Cognitive-Affective Model of Learning, emotions such as stress and anxiety can interfere with cognitive functions, reducing comprehension efficiency (Garcia, 2021). Many learners struggle to understand the nuances of meaning or the details of information when they lack sufficient emotional engagement (Garcia, 2021). Factors such as stress, anxiety, or boredom can reduce concentration and the quality of information processing in learners (Wati & Santoso, 2022). On the other hand, positive emotions such as enthusiasm and curiosity can boost motivation to deepen the understanding of second-language texts. The challenge arises when educators lack effective strategies to foster and manage learners' emotional engagement (Park, 2020). As a result, the learning process is hampered due to the absence of adequate support in affective aspects. By identifying these problems, the research is expected to provide concrete solutions that are relevant to second language learning.

The urgency of this research is increasingly apparent when considering the high demand for second language acquisition in the era of globalization. Recent reports from the United Nations and UNESCO highlight the growing demand for bilingual and multilingual individuals in the workforce, making proficiency in second languages essential for global communication. The success of communicating in a foreign language today is not only judged in terms of correct grammar, but also terms of fluency and complete understanding (Jones & Smith, 2019). Emotional engagement has been shown to increase motivation to learn and spur interest in exploring further

information, thus encouraging increased language competence (Yamada, 2020). In the context of formal education, learning approaches that emphasize emotional aspects can help create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Without emotional engagement, learners often experience a lack of motivation, resulting in lower levels of sentence comprehension. With emotional involvement, learners are expected to build personal connections with the material being learned, thereby deepening sentence comprehension (Kusuma, 2023). Without this approach, learners often experience boredom and struggle to maintain attention when processing second-language texts. Therefore, this research is considered urgent to be conducted in order to provide input for the development of effective learning strategies.

Previous studies have discussed the factors that influence the sentence comprehension process, including the role of motivation and cognitive approaches (Rodriguez & Chen, 2019). However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the direct role of emotional engagement in sentence comprehension. The few studies that have addressed emotional aspects have more often secondarily discussed them, without placing them as the primary focus (Hartono et al., 2021). Experimental research that combines emotional measures with sentence comprehension performance remains limited. Although correlational studies provide insight into the relationship, they fail to clarify causality, which this study aims to address (Feng & Li, 2022). Therefore, more comprehensive and in-depth research is needed to explore the mechanisms of emotional engagement. This research will fill a gap in the scientific literature on how emotional factors can catalyze the second language learning process.

In terms of research novelty, this study seeks to present an approach that integrates cognitive and emotional aspects in a balanced manner in sentence comprehension (Ismail & Dewi, 2023). This approach differs from previous studies that tend to emphasize one aspect only or discuss them separately. Furthermore, this study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative emotional assessments and quantitative sentence comprehension measures, thereby making it more robust than previous research. The proposed method will involve structured emotional measurement, ensuring that the research results are more valid and reliable (Baker, 2021). This research will highlight different types of emotions (e.g., anxiety, excitement, boredom) and analyze their effects on different types of texts, such as narrative versus expository texts, in a second language. This comprehensive approach will hopefully provide a broader understanding of how emotions can enhance information processing. By highlighting emotional engagement as an independent variable, this study is expected to reveal new dynamics in second language acquisition theory (Santana, 2022). The results of this study are expected to be an important reference for researchers and educational practitioners in designing more effective language learning programs.

This study aims to identify the extent to which emotional involvement affects the process of sentence comprehension in a second language. Through quantitative and qualitative approaches, a clear picture of the relationship between emotions and text comprehension effectiveness is expected. The expected outcomes will contribute to the development of instructional techniques that incorporate emotional engagement into sentence comprehension. The results of this study are expected to inform the design of language learning strategies that are more adaptive and responsive to learners' affective needs. Thus, educators can develop methods that stimulate optimal learning motivation and enthusiasm. Ultimately, this research seeks to establish emotional engagement as a crucial component in second language pedagogy. The implication is that educational institutions can enhance the quality of second language learning by incorporating emotional aspects as a key to success. Additionally, researchers and academics can utilize these findings to enhance the scientific literature in linguistics and education. In the long run, this effort is expected to contribute to the improvement of cross cultural communication competence, a skill that is increasingly urgent in the global era.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach to explore the influence of emotional involvement on sentence comprehension in a second language. The study examines explicitly how emotional engagement affects the cognitive processing of foreign language texts. The study's object includes both emotional and cognitive aspects involved in reading and comprehending foreign language texts. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the criteria of high and low emotional involvement, with an emphasis on learners who are actively engaged in language learning activities. Data sources consist of research subjects selected through purposive sampling, which involves a group of second language learners actively engaged in a particular learning program (Park, 2020). The participant selection criteria were based on learners' self-reported emotional engagement levels and their performance in reading comprehension tasks.

Research techniques and tools include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of teaching and learning activities to extract data on participants' emotional responses (Yamada, 2020). In-depth interviews were conducted using a standardized interview guide to ensure consistency across participants. The interviews focused on gathering information about the participants' emotional experiences while reading and their perceived impact on sentence comprehension. Data collection also included participant journaling to track emotional responses over time. Data collection focused on the process of learner interaction with the second language text, allowing the researcher to observe how emotions affect sentence comprehension.

The data obtained were analyzed using the thematic analysis technique, in which qualitative data were categorized based on themes that emerged systematically (Wati & Santoso, 2022). Themes were identified through an iterative process, in which the researcher reviewed the interview transcripts, observational notes, and journal entries to identify recurring patterns related to emotional involvement and sentence comprehension. Once identified, themes were coded and grouped into broader categories to provide a comprehensive view of how emotional factors influenced comprehension. The research procedure began with the preparation stage, namely the development of observation and interview instruments, followed by data collection through observation of reading activities and focus group discussions. After the data was collected, the researcher transcribed and reviewed all observation and interview results to find patterns of emotional engagement related to sentence comprehension.

Furthermore, the researcher triangulated the data by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation to increase the validity of the findings. Triangulation in this study was done using data triangulation (source), where findings from different data sources were compared to check for consistency and to strengthen the validity of the results. The researcher also engaged in peer debriefing to ensure that personal biases were minimized during data collection and analysis. The researcher's role was regularly reflected upon, and steps were taken to address potential biases in data interpretation. Quantitative data were not directly used in this study; however, the qualitative data were enriched by quantitative metrics from comprehension tests, which were analyzed to assess the impact of emotional involvement on sentence comprehension.

3. Result & Discussion

Emotional Engagement in Sentence Comprehension Improvement

The study's results showed high emotional engagement among participants when reading texts in a second language. The influence of positive emotions such as enthusiasm, excitement, and curiosity was particularly evident in sentence comprehension performance. Participants who showed enthusiasm and curiosity tended to provide more precise answers related to the text's content. These findings directly address the research objectives by demonstrating that positive emotions enhance learners' cognitive processes, thus improving sentence comprehension. In-depth observations confirmed that sentence comprehension can be enhanced when learners feel an emotional connection with the content. Qualitative data from interviews also indicated a strong intrinsic drive in learners, characterized by positive emotions. Increased active participation in class is an indication that emotions can drive cognitive processes more optimally. This phenomenon is an important foundation for understanding how affective aspects shape the perception and interpretation of sentence meaning. Therefore, emotional engagement appears to play

a significant role in facilitating sentence comprehension in the second language domain.

Table 1 below illustrates the distribution of emotional engagement observed during the learning session. A total of 60 percent of participants' responses fell into the category of positive emotions, such as enthusiasm, excitement, and curiosity. About 20 percent showed negative emotions, including anxiety and hesitation, when facing complex texts. The rest were neutral, showing no prominent emotional reactions in the sentence comprehension process. The data suggest that positive emotions predominate in the learning experience, potentially enhancing cognitive performance. This finding also underscores the importance of learning strategies that can effectively manage negative emotions, thereby preventing them from hindering comprehension. Table 1 below provides a more detailed frequency distribution of emotional engagement.

Table 1. Emotional Engagement Distribution (N=30)

Emotion Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positive Emotions	18	60
Negative Emotions	6	20
Neutral	6	20

Table 1 below illustrates the distribution of emotional engagement observed during the learning session. A total of 60 percent of participants' responses fell into the category of positive emotions, such as enthusiasm, excitement, and curiosity. About 20 percent showed negative emotions, including anxiety and hesitation, when facing complex texts. The rest were neutral, showing no prominent emotional reactions in the sentence comprehension process. It is noteworthy that positive emotions significantly facilitated the comprehension process, while negative emotions, such as anxiety, appeared to hinder adequate comprehension. The data suggest that positive emotions predominate in the learning experience, potentially enhancing cognitive performance. This finding also underscores the importance of learning strategies that can effectively manage negative emotions, thereby preventing them from hindering comprehension. The need for such strategies is particularly crucial in maintaining emotional balance in learners, ensuring that negative emotions do not disrupt the flow of comprehension.

Based on the data in Table 1, it can be concluded that the dominance of positive emotions allows participants to process the meaning of sentences more easily. When learners feel energized, they tend to read texts at a controlled pace and comprehend vocabulary more effectively. In contrast, those who experience negative emotions often struggle with digesting complex information. This factor is closely related to the ability to maintain concentration and manage stress levels when facing linguistic challenges. Even participants who were neutral tended to show mediocre

comprehension results, with no significant increase or decrease in their scores. In terms of the learning process, positive emotional situations help learners to engage more actively in discussions and reading exercises. This highlights the importance of presenting a learning approach that consistently fosters a positive emotional atmosphere.

Positive emotional engagement appeared to contribute to a more accurate understanding of the sentences and rich contextual details. The use of reflective questions and group discussion activities encouraged participants to dive deeper into the text. This study highlights that feelings of enthusiasm and confidence can accelerate the mastery of grammatical aspects as well as sentence structure. In addition, the feeling of satisfaction that comes with successfully understanding complex sentences is a driving force for continuing to improve one's language skills. From an affective perspective, the internalization process of sentence meaning is influenced by the emotional situation experienced by learners. Through an approach that focuses on emotional comfort, teachers can help optimize material absorption. Based on these findings, the application of emotion management strategies in second language learning becomes more relevant.

The Dynamics of Emotional Interaction and Its Effect on Learner Focus

The emotional aspect not only affects individual understanding but also creates interaction dynamics among learners. Observations suggest that learners with positive emotions tend to act as discussion facilitators, inviting their colleagues to participate. They help maintain a conducive learning atmosphere, encouraging other participants to express their understanding. On the other hand, learners who are overwhelmed by negative emotions tend to hold back and hesitate to contribute their opinions or ask questions. This type of interaction fosters a learning ecosystem where emotional roles can either enhance or hinder collective engagement. Thus, the emotional state of individuals has a direct effect on classroom dynamics and the collaboration process. The findings underscore the importance of teaching approaches that take into account the emotional stability of each learner.

Figure 1 below illustrates a model of the emotional interactions that occur between learners when attempting to understand a text. The model features elements of emotional triggers, cognitive responses, and their effects on discussion engagement. The flow chart shows that when positive emotional triggers arise, cognitive responses become more open and receptive. Conversely, negative emotions produce cognitive responses that tend to be defensive and decrease engagement. This reciprocal process impacts the learners' level of focus and motivation in interacting with the text. Figure 1 also highlights the importance of moderation from the learning environment to manage potential emotional arousal. This proves that emotional interaction does not only occur at the intrapersonal level, but also at the interpersonal level.

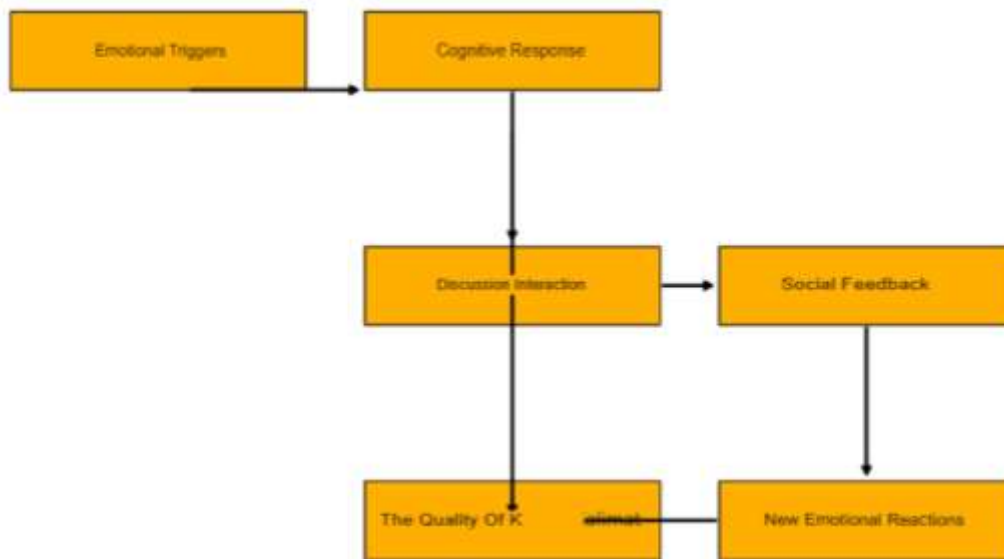


Figure 1. Emotional Interaction Model in Sentence Comprehension Process

The teacher's role in creating stimuli that trigger positive emotions is key in maintaining the quality of interaction. The inclusion of creative discussions and reflective questions proved effective in provoking participants' curiosity. At the same time, peer support strengthens confidence and minimizes the potential for negative emotions. This type of intervention provides learners with the space to actively manage their emotions in an atmosphere of mutual support. The harmonious collaboration demonstrates that emotions can be harnessed as a positive energy source in understanding complex sentences. In other words, collective emotional dynamics can encourage a cohesive and participatory learning environment. This is in line with the finding that learners' focus level is influenced by how much they feel comfortable in the group.

However, not all emotional interactions lead to improved sentence comprehension, especially for learners who are still hesitant to express themselves. There are indications that a small number of participants felt intimidated by their more emotionally expressive peers. In such situations, teachers need to ensure that there is no domination of specific learners that could potentially hinder the involvement of others. A well structured discussion group arrangement can help ensure that each learner has an equal opportunity to contribute. By managing such emotional dynamics, sentence comprehension can be optimized through complementary collaboration pathways. This confirms the importance of emotionally sensitive pedagogical interventions in structuring learning sessions. Ultimately,

proper utilization of emotions can strengthen group solidarity and promote better learning outcomes.

Effectiveness of Emotion-Based Learning Strategies

The results also highlighted several learning strategies that proved effective in triggering positive emotions. First, the use of authentic materials relevant to learners' interests increased enthusiasm. Secondly, giving participants the freedom to choose reading topics according to their preferences encouraged deeper engagement. Third, the emphasis on praise and constructive feedback helped to strengthen confidence, thus facilitating sentence processing. Fourth, group assignments facilitated social interactions that encouraged collaboration and teamwork. Ultimately, a personalized approach that understands each learner's unique concerns and emotional needs is essential in maintaining motivation. These five strategies were then tested for their impact on improving sentence comprehension skills in the experimental class.

Figure 2 below shows the comparison of sentence comprehension scores before and after the application of emotion-based learning strategies. This quantitative data is obtained from qualitative assessments converted into comprehension indicators on a specific scale. It can be observed that the group receiving the emotional strategy intervention experienced a consistent increase in scores. The control group, which did not receive the intervention, showed only minimal improvement in sentence comprehension. The difference indicates a significant positive impact of the learning approach that integrates emotional aspects. Graph 1 also confirms that the highest rate of progress occurred among participants who were initially low in motivation. This finding proves that emotion based learning strategies can help overcome initial barriers in comprehension.

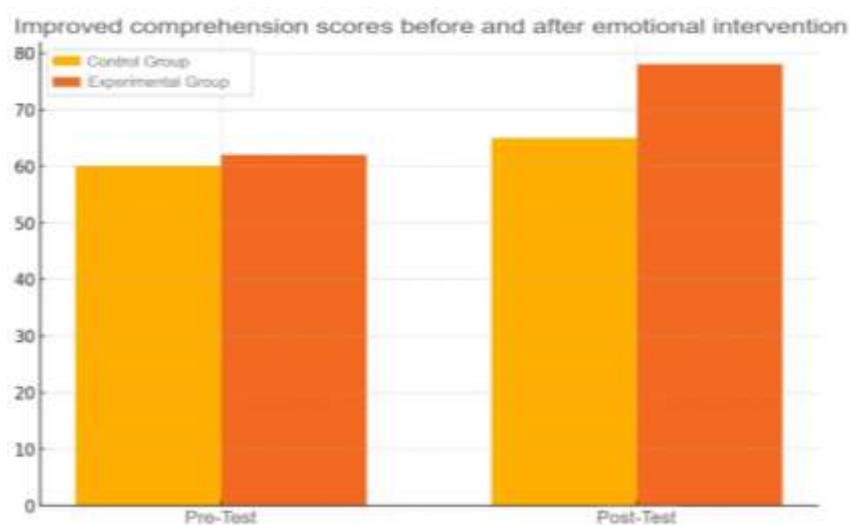


Figure 2. Improvement in Comprehension Score Before and After Emotional Intervention

Through qualitative analysis, it was also identified that participants with the highest improvement showed a strong emotional response to the material. They tended to express high curiosity and expressed satisfaction after understanding certain linguistic concepts. In addition, they actively sought additional explanations and did not hesitate to ask critical questions in discussions. This kind of openness leads to deeper learning, where participants can connect new knowledge with relevant contexts. On the other hand, participants with relatively low improvement were still hampered by some negative emotional factors. Some of them admitted that they were afraid of making mistakes, so they tended to hold back when faced with complex reading tasks. However, the supportive environment helped them slowly build their confidence.

Overall, the emotion based learning strategy proved effective in promoting sentence comprehension in the experimental class. The use of a holistic approach that integrates aspects of motivation, confidence, and learning satisfaction plays an important role in this result. The process of internalizing the material became faster as participants felt high emotional involvement. Additionally, this strategy helped reduce the level of anxiety that often hinders the smooth reading process. Thus, utilizing emotions as an integral part of learning design deserves wider consideration. The limitation of the strategy is that it requires extra time and effort from the teacher to facilitate the affective needs of each participant. However, this effort is worth the long-term benefit of creating a conducive learning culture that is oriented towards holistic development.

Comparison with Previous Research

When juxtaposed with the findings of previous research, these results reveal similarities in the importance of emotional engagement. Several previous studies highlighted that positive emotions play a role in strengthening motivation and cognitive engagement in language learners. The difference arises in the focus of this study, which focuses more on the variety of implementation strategies, including the selection of reading topics and the organization of discussions. In previous studies, emotional aspects have been discussed in general terms, without a detailed examination of the role of group dynamics. On the other hand, this study successfully maps how interactions between participants shape the emotional environment of the classroom. Some previous studies did not explicitly address the different responses of high- and low-motivated learners. These more specific findings enrich our understanding of how to develop adaptive learning methods.

Other studies have shown that emotional support from teachers has a significant impact on increasing participants' confidence in their communication skills. The results of this study confirm this, where learners feel more open to expressing their opinions after receiving appreciation. Some studies emphasize the role of positive

feedback as a confidence booster, and these findings align with the results of the current study. These similarities underline the importance of systematic efforts to foster an emotionally conducive classroom atmosphere. The new element presented in this study is an in-depth qualitative approach to exploring the range of emotions experienced by learners. Diverse data collection methods enable researchers to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of emotional dynamics. This approach adds a dimension to previous research that focused more on quantitative measurements.

Nonetheless, the results of this study also differ from some findings that tend to highlight negative emotions as a trigger for improved discipline. In the context of this study, negative emotions such as anxiety often hinder the sentence comprehension process. The difference may have arisen due to cultural differences and the learning context under study. Another explanation is that some previous studies have focused more on stress management strategies rather than enhancing positive emotions. In this study, attention is focused on maximizing the potential of positive emotions to facilitate comprehension. The two perspectives can complement each other effectively, depending on the research's purpose and background. Thus, the variety of research results reflects the diversity of approaches in understanding the role of emotions in the field of language education.

Overall, the comparison with previous research reveals that emotional engagement is a significant and relevant theme. This study adds empirical evidence that addressing emotional aspects needs to be seriously considered in curriculum design. The qualitative approach employed was successful in revealing new insights into the emotional dynamics of the classroom. Specific findings on the role of collaboration between participants and emotion-based learning strategies underscore the significance of these results. Differences and similarities with previous studies confirm that research on emotions still leaves much room for in-depth exploration. It is hoped that these results will serve as a foundation for further research that provides more detailed insights into cultural variables and the context of learning institutions. Thus, a comprehensive review of emotional aspects will further strengthen the contribution of this research to the development of language education theory and practice.

Practical Implications and Research Limitations

The findings of this study provide an opportunity to implement learning strategies that emphasize triggering positive emotions in the classroom. Teachers can consider using interesting topics relevant to learners' interests to generate enthusiasm. The implementation of diverse group discussions enables participants to motivate one another, thereby creating an energetic learning environment. Additionally, providing feedback that is appreciation oriented and constructive can support confidence-building. The use of technology, such as online discussion platforms, can also be

explored to facilitate more flexible emotional interactions. The aim is to maintain the continuity of social and emotional relationships, even outside of face-to-face hours. That way, learning materials are not only cognitively digested but also infused through meaningful emotional engagement.

Practically speaking, this approach requires teachers to be more sensitive to the emotional state of each learner. In large class sizes, teachers may need assistants or other support systems to monitor emotional development. Specialized training for educators on emotional management and simple psychological approaches can also be an effective solution. Curriculum development should incorporate elements that stimulate curiosity, promote happiness, and foster personal fulfillment. To ensure successful implementation, schools or language institutes can plan regular training and periodic evaluations. This will make it easier to identify problems and adjust teaching strategies that are relevant to classroom realities. It is also essential to establish a robust communication network among teachers, students, and institutional management to ensure overall support.

The limitations of this study lie in its relatively short observation period, which does not fully reflect the long-term dynamics. The limited sample size at one language learning institution also limits the generalizability of the results. Some participants may have been less open in expressing their emotions, which could result in partial interview data. The use of a purely qualitative approach also does not provide quantitative measures that can be compared in a more rigorous statistical manner. These limitations need to be addressed through further research involving a larger number of subjects and the use of combined methods. Longitudinal research can provide a more complete picture of emotional change and its impact on sentence comprehension. Despite these shortcomings, this study has offered a valuable foundation for the development of second language learning theory and practice.

Overall, the practical implications of the findings provide a new direction for the development of teaching methods that emphasize the importance of emotional aspects. The advantage of this approach is that it can provide a more meaningful learning experience and consistently increase motivation. On the other hand, its implementation requires teachers and institutions to adapt and undergo training in emotional management. Although there are still limitations, this does not reduce the relevance of the research results for various language learning contexts. Infrastructure and resource support need to be strengthened to ensure the effective integration of emotional aspects in the long run. Ultimately, this research contributes to the understanding that emotions are not just a supporting element but an integral part of the learning process. By involving emotions appropriately, the hope is to produce learners who are not only proficient in language but also have strong mental readiness.

The limitations of this study lie in its relatively short observation period, which does not fully reflect the long-term dynamics. Further research could investigate the long term effects of emotional engagement on sentence comprehension, particularly how emotional connections evolve over extended learning periods. The limited sample size at one language learning institution also limits the generalizability of the results. Some participants may have been less open in expressing their emotions, which could result in partial interview data. The use of a purely qualitative approach also does not provide quantitative measures that can be compared in a more rigorous statistical manner. These limitations need to be addressed through further research involving a larger number of subjects and the use of combined methods. Longitudinal research can provide a more complete picture of emotional change and its impact on sentence comprehension. Despite these shortcomings, this study has offered a valuable foundation for the development of second language learning theory and practice.

4. Conclusion

Based on the study's results, emotional engagement was found to play a crucial role in enhancing sentence comprehension in second language learning. Participants who exhibited positive emotions tended to be more enthusiastic and focused, enabling them to process information in depth. The emotion-based learning method successfully created a conducive environment for collaborative discussions and anxiety reduction. Collaboration between participants also influenced class dynamics, strengthened motivation, and encouraged active participation. These results confirm the need for integrating affective aspects into second language learning design to optimize comprehension.

The practical implications of these findings can be applied by developing learning strategies that trigger positive emotions and providing support for participants who experience emotional barriers. Increased emotional engagement is key to facilitating more effective and sustainable cognitive processes. This research also highlights the importance of the teacher's role in managing classroom dynamics, from selecting materials to providing feedback. Although the study has limitations in terms of time and sample size, the results obtained can serve as a basis for further studies. Thus, a holistic approach that incorporates emotional aspects in a planned manner has the potential to produce more competent and motivated second language learners.

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