



ISSN: 2288-7709  
 JEMM website: <https://acoms.kisti.re.kr/jemm>  
 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20482/jemm.2026.14.1.43>

# Educational Effects of Culture-Text-Based English Learning: Coffee Culture and Advertising Slogans

Myeong Hee SHIN<sup>1</sup>

Received: January 12, 2026. Revised: January 21, 2026. Accepted: February 06, 2026.

## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study explores the educational potential of culture-text-based English learning by using coffee culture and advertising language as core instructional materials in a university liberal arts English course. It examines how such instruction shapes learners' motivation, participation, emotional engagement, and identity formation. **Research design, data and methodology:** A qualitatively driven mixed-methods design was implemented over a 15-week semester with 78 Korean EFL learners. Data were collected through pre- and post-course questionnaires, reflective journals, project artefacts, and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive statistics were used to examine motivational trends, and thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data. **Results:** Learners reported increased motivation, confidence, and willingness to participate. They came to reinterpret English not as a test-oriented subject but as a resource for expressing personal meaning. Coffee culture and advertising discourse functioned as symbolic resources for reflecting on lifestyle, values, and identity, while positive emotions such as enjoyment and familiarity supported sustained engagement. **Conclusions:** The findings suggest that culture-text-based English learning can meaningfully connect language study with learners' everyday lives and self-narratives. Incorporating culturally grounded and identity-relevant content into liberal arts English education may therefore promote more active, confident, and emotionally engaged English use.

**Keywords :** culture-text-based instruction; coffee culture; advertising discourse; learner identity; emotional engagement; learning motivation; university English education

**JEL Classification Code :** I20, I23, I29

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, university-level liberal arts English education has increasingly moved beyond the narrow goal of improving linguistic competence to supporting learners in using English to engage with the world and construct their identities (Kramsch, 2009; Norton, 2013). English is now widely viewed not only as a communicative tool but also as a cultural and symbolic resource through which learners

position themselves in relation to others and to global society. Within this paradigm, higher education is expected to provide learning environments in which students can use English to articulate their emotions, reflect on their values, and negotiate their sense of self.

However, many English courses in Korean higher education still remain predominantly test-oriented and evaluation-driven, frequently organized around decontextualized practice and de-personalized learning tasks. Such instructional contexts are often disconnected

\*This work was supported by 2025 Hannam University Research Fund.

<sup>1</sup> First Author. Associate Professor, General English, Hannam University, Republic of Korea. Email: [scindy@hnu.kr](mailto:scindy@hnu.kr)

© Copyright: The Author(s)  
 This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted noncommercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

from learners' daily lives, practices, and emotional realities, resulting in English being perceived primarily as a subject for grade attainment rather than as a living language with social and personal relevance. When learners' emotions, lived experiences, and cultural backgrounds are insufficiently incorporated into instruction, their motivation tends to become instrumental rather than intrinsic, and English is likely to be experienced merely as technical knowledge rather than as a meaningful communicative resource (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). This raises important questions regarding how liberal arts English education might more effectively connect with students' everyday worlds and identity work.

Coffee culture and advertising language are representative examples of contemporary cultural texts deeply embedded in everyday life. They constitute symbolic meaning systems through which identities, emotions, aspirations, and lifestyles are expressed, negotiated, and circulated in local and global contexts. University students encounter such texts continuously in their daily routines—through café practices, brand choices, lifestyle performances, and exposure to advertising discourse. These practices inevitably involve interaction with globalized English, which circulates as a commodity, a cultural symbol, and a communicative medium (Appadurai, 1996; Piller, 2001). Yet despite their relevance to youth identity and everyday communication, relatively few studies have explored how coffee culture and advertising language may be used as core pedagogical texts in liberal arts English education, nor how learners experience such instruction in affective and identity terms.

Previous research on Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and culture-based language education highlights that meaningful content supports learner engagement and contributes to deeper language learning (Krashen, 1982; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Approaches that foreground culture, identity, and emotion further suggest that English can be reimagined not as abstract linguistic knowledge, but as a resource for articulating lived experiences, positioning the self, and participating in meaning-making practices (Norton, 2013; Kramersch, 2009). From this perspective, advertising discourse may be understood as a form of emotional and semiotic design that constructs affect, values, and identity through language (Williamson, 1978; Cook, 2001), while coffee culture provides a sociocultural space in which everyday practices, community, lifestyle, and self-expression intersect. Cafés function not only as consumption spaces, but also as symbolic social arenas where modern urban subjectivities and aspirational identities are performed and recognized (Lyon, 2013).

Integrating these two cultural texts into English instruction may therefore create a learning environment that organically links language learning with learners' everyday

experiences, emotions, and identity work. Through engagement with familiar and personally meaningful texts, learners can encounter English not as an external and academic subject, but as a culturally situated communicative resource embedded in lived reality (Kramersch, 2009). Culture-text-based English learning centered on coffee culture and advertising language thus holds potential as an alternative pedagogical model that responds to the limitations of conventional liberal arts English instruction, particularly with respect to motivation, identity, and affect.

Against this backdrop, the present study investigates the educational meanings and experiential changes that emerge when everyday cultural texts are employed as core materials in a liberal arts English course. Rather than focusing solely on measurable linguistic outcomes, the study examines learners' motivation, emotional engagement, cultural interpretation, and identity formation processes (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). By foregrounding learners' voices and narratives, the study aims to contribute to current discussions on how liberal arts English education can foster meaningful, reflective, and life-connected learning experiences in higher education.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

**RQ1.** How does culture-text-based English instruction influence learners' motivation and class participation experiences?

**RQ2.** How do learners interpret coffee culture and advertising language as cultural texts, and how do these interpretations relate to their identity and emotions?

**RQ3.** How do learners make sense of their emotional and narrative learning experiences within culture-text-based English instruction?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Content-Based Instruction and Culture-Text-Based Learning

Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is an approach to language education in which instruction is organized around meaningful content rather than linguistic form. The underlying assumption is that learners acquire language more naturally and effectively when they are cognitively and personally engaged in exploring authentic topics (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989). This perspective aligns with communicative approaches that regard language primarily as a tool for meaning-making rather than as a static system of grammatical rules.

Within a similar paradigm, Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010) argue in the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated

Learning) framework that integrating content and language learning enhances cognitive engagement and motivation, thereby fostering a more learner-centered environment. Kramersch (1993) further conceptualizes foreign language learning as a process of interpreting and constructing cultural meaning, emphasizing that language use is inseparable from cultural context. From this perspective, language education is not merely the transmission of forms, but an experiential process in which discourse, culture, and identity are intertwined. This view is further supported by Shin (2024), who demonstrates that college general English learners develop greater communicative confidence and engagement when instruction is grounded in meaningful, experience-based activities rather than form-focused practice.

Accordingly, organizing English instruction around cultural texts that learners already encounter in everyday life can be seen as a practical enactment of CBI principles. Coffee culture and advertising discourse, central to the present study, are representative contemporary cultural texts that are continually consumed and reinterpreted in daily life. English instruction grounded in such texts thus holds strong potential to connect language learning with students' lived experience in meaningful and personally relevant ways.

## **2.2. Advertising Language and the Educational Potential of Emotional Design**

Advertising discourse is not merely a medium for conveying product information; rather, it strategically constructs emotions, images, and values that shape consumers' sense of identity. Norman (2003) explains that emotional design is deeply involved in cognition and decision-making, and that advertising messages are intentionally crafted to evoke affective responses. Cook (2001) similarly analyzes advertising discourse as a sociocultural arena in which identity is constructed, suggesting that slogans and brand narratives invite audiences to identify with the value systems encoded within advertisements. Williamson (1978) characterizes this as a process of "meaning transfer," whereby products become linked with symbolic identity images that influence self-perception.

When applied to language education, advertising discourse becomes more than a supplementary reading resource. Through analyzing advertising texts, learners explore how language constructs affect, value, and identity, thereby developing critical reading skills and discourse awareness. Moreover, engagement with familiar global brands and English-language advertising may enable learners to reconceptualize English not as an abstract academic subject, but as a cultural language embedded in everyday life. Advertising discourse therefore possesses

distinctive pedagogical value as a site where language, culture, and affect intersect.

## **2.3. Coffee Culture and Everyday Life as a Basis for Language Learning**

Coffee culture may be understood as a contemporary cultural practice situated at the intersection of everyday life, social interaction, and identity expression. Oldenburg (1999) conceptualizes cafés as "third places," social spaces that mediate between home and work while fostering informal interaction, a sense of belonging, and everyday sociability. For many university students, cafés are not simply consumption venues but symbolic spaces where lifestyle, taste, preference, and self-image are performed and negotiated in subtle ways. Choices such as preferred cafés, seating styles, beverage selections, and even the act of sharing coffee experiences on social media become part of how individuals position themselves within wider cultural narratives of youth, modernity, and cosmopolitan identity.

In this sense, coffee culture constitutes a powerful cultural text that is deeply intertwined with learners' lived realities. Because students routinely inhabit café spaces as part of their daily lives for studying, socializing, reflecting, and resting, coffee culture is embedded not only in social practice but also in emotional experience. When such familiar and personally meaningful contexts are incorporated into English instruction, they have the potential to enhance emotional comfort, engagement, and willingness to participate. Learners may feel less intimidated and more inclined to experiment with language when it is used to describe spaces, practices, and feelings that already resonate with their lives.

From a sociocultural perspective, language learning is understood as a process in which meaning is constructed through participation in social activity (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Learning therefore becomes most meaningful when it is embedded in authentic practices that matter to learners. Instruction grounded in everyday experience, such as coffee culture, can facilitate more natural, immersive, and emotionally resonant engagement, as learners recognize direct connections between classroom language use and their personal and social worlds. Rather than approaching English as an abstract system to be mastered, they encounter it as a resource for articulating who they are, how they live, and how they relate to others.

Using coffee culture as a learning theme thus provides a familiar bridge between life and language learning. It enables English to be experienced not merely as an examination subject, but as a lived language embedded in ordinary routines, memories, and interactions. Such integration of everyday culture into English education is significant because it reframes learning as an interpretive

and identity-related activity, supporting the development of both communicative competence and reflective self-understanding.

## **2.4. Language Learning Mediated through Identity, Emotion, and Participation**

Recent developments in language education increasingly conceptualize language learning as a dynamic process mediated by identity, affect, and participation rather than as the mechanical accumulation of linguistic forms. Norton (2013) views language learning as a fundamentally social practice through which learners negotiate, claim, and reconstruct their identities in relation to specific language communities and imagined futures. From this perspective, learning is inseparable from questions of who learners are, how they wish to be recognized, and who they aspire to become as language users. Dörnyei (2009) similarly links motivation to learners' "possible selves," arguing that images of an ideal or feared future self powerfully shape effort, persistence, and engagement in learning. Ushioda (2011) further emphasizes the importance of affect, relationality, and personal meaning, suggesting that learning becomes sustainable when it is integrated into a learner's broader sense of self and lived experience rather than driven solely by external demands.

Within this theoretical framework, language learning may be understood not simply as skill acquisition but as an identity practice embedded in emotional and narrative experience. Learners invest emotionally and symbolically in the languages they study, and their participation is shaped by how safe, valued, and personally meaningful learning environments feel to them. The cultural texts examined in this study, advertising discourse and coffee culture, are rich in symbolic meanings related to identity, value, aspiration, and affect. English instruction grounded in such texts therefore has the potential to create learning environments in which learners' lives, emotions, identities, and language experiences become meaningfully interconnected. Investigating how such instruction shapes learner motivation, identity negotiation, and emotional engagement is thus of substantial theoretical and pedagogical relevance, contributing to a more humanistic and socially grounded understanding of language education.

## **3. Research Methods and Materials**

### **3.1. Research Design**

This study adopted a qualitatively driven mixed-methods design to explore the educational meanings of culture-text-based English instruction, with particular attention to learners' motivation, identity interpretation, and emotional-

narrative learning experiences. Qualitative data analysis constituted the core of the research design, while questionnaire data were used in a supplementary manner to identify overall trends in motivational and attitudinal change. More specifically, this study adopted a qualitatively driven mixed-methods approach in which integration between qualitative and quantitative strands occurred primarily at the interpretation stage. While qualitative data formed the primary basis for thematic analysis, descriptive questionnaire results were examined alongside emergent qualitative themes to provide complementary contextual understanding of learners' motivational and experiential changes over time. This design enabled a holistic understanding of how learners engaged with the course over time. While this study employed pre- and post-course questionnaires, the quantitative data were used descriptively to contextualize and support the qualitative findings rather than to statistically test instructional effects.

The study was conducted during the fall semester of 2025 (September 1–December 31), and the research procedures were organically embedded within a regular liberal arts English course. The research process consisted of five interconnected phases forming a cyclical sequence from instructional implementation to data collection, interpretation, and verification. Rather than simply comparing pre- and post-course differences, the study sought to trace how learners gradually constructed meaning across the semester.

In Phase 1, a pre-course questionnaire was administered in order to establish a baseline regarding learners' English learning motivation, expectations of the course, and perceptions of culture-text-based learning. These data provided a reference point for examining subsequent changes.

In Phase 2, culture-text-based English instruction was implemented throughout the semester. Lessons were designed to connect English use with learners' existing experiences of coffee culture and advertising language, thereby creating a learning environment in which language use, identity reflection, and emotional response were closely interwoven.

Phase 3 focused on the collection of reflective journals and interview data. Students kept weekly journals in which they described their learning experiences, emotions, and changes in perception. In addition, several volunteers participated in mid-semester and end-of-semester semi-structured interviews, offering deeper narrative accounts of their learning trajectories. These qualitative data formed the primary foundation of the analysis.

In Phase 4, a post-course questionnaire was administered to examine changes in motivation, attitudes, and perceptions of participation. These data supported and contextualized the qualitative findings.

Finally, in Phase 5, an integrated analysis was conducted

across all data sources, including questionnaires, journals, interviews, and observation notes, in order to identify salient themes. The analytical emphasis was not on measuring instructional “effects,” but rather on understanding how learners reconstructed meaning through their participation in the course in relation to the research questions. To summarize the overall structure of the research process, the five phases of the study are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Overview of Research Design

Phase	Class Activity	Research Purpose
1	Pre-course questionnaire	Establish baseline motivation and attitudes
2	Culture-text-based English instruction	Provide learning experience
3	Reflection journals and interviews	Explore experience, identity, and emotion
4	Post-course questionnaire	Examine patterns of change
5	Integrated analysis and interpretation	Address research questions

### 3.2. Research Context and Participants

The study was conducted in a university-level elective general English course (3 credits, 3 hours per week) designed to integrate communicative language use with cultural understanding. Participants consisted of 78 undergraduate students enrolled in the course during the fall semester of 2025 who voluntarily agreed to participate and submitted complete data sets, including pre- and post-course questionnaires, reflection journals, and coursework. The group represented a wide range of academic majors and included students from all four academic years.

Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. Students were fully informed of the research aims and procedures, and only those who provided written consent were included. All data were anonymized, and participation or non-participation had no influence on course grades.

As the purpose of the study was not to compare sub-groups but to explore the shared learning experience of a single cohort, the entire group of 78 students was treated as one analytical unit across all data sources.

### 3.3. Instructional Content and Tools

The course was designed according to a culture-text-based instructional approach, using coffee culture and advertising language as the primary learning resources over a 15-week semester. The overarching goal was to connect English learning with texts embedded in learners’ everyday lives so that linguistic expression and cultural interpretation could develop in tandem.

Instruction was organized into three thematic modules:

#### (1) Coffee Culture Module

This module explored the history and cultural significance of coffee, the social meanings of café spaces, and the relationship between coffee consumption and identity performance. Students engaged with visual and multimedia materials and then described and shared their personal coffee experiences in English. Speaking and writing activities were built around everyday expressions such as *coffee break*, *grab a coffee*, and *my go-to drink*, thereby linking language use with familiar life practices.

#### (2) Advertising Language & Emotion Module

In this module, students analyzed domestic and international advertising texts in order to examine how emotional design and identity-shaping narratives are constructed through language. Classroom tasks included interpreting headlines, slogans, and tone & manner, as well as re-writing or re-framing advertisements for different target audiences. Through these activities, students were encouraged to recognize English not merely as a grammatical system, but as a discourse resource for constructing meaning, emotion, and value.

#### (3) Creative Identity Project

Drawing on insights from the previous modules, students designed “an advertisement that represents myself.” Each student created an English slogan and a short narrative explanation reflecting their personal values and identity, accompanied by visual materials. Presentations were followed by peer feedback and reflective discussion, and students later submitted reflective essays synthesizing their learning experiences across the semester.

Overall, the course aimed to create an integrated learning environment in which language use, identity reflection, and emotional engagement interacted meaningfully, allowing learners to experience English as a cultural and expressive medium rather than solely an academic subject.

### 3.4. Data Collection

Consistent with the qualitatively driven mixed-methods design, qualitative data served as the primary source of evidence, while quantitative data functioned in a supporting role to identify broader trends.

At the beginning of the semester, a pre-course questionnaire employing a 5-point Likert scale was administered to examine learners’ prior English learning experiences, motivation, and expectations regarding the course.

Throughout the semester, weekly reflection journals were collected. Students were encouraged to write openly about

their emotions, participation experiences, and evolving self-perceptions in relation to the cultural texts explored in class. In addition, materials from the Creative Identity Project, including presentation slides and written texts, were collected and analyzed as narrative data representing students' self-constructions.

A subset of volunteer participants also took part in semi-structured interviews conducted during the middle and final stages of the course. These interviews provided deeper interpretive accounts of learners' developing experiences, identities, and attitudes toward English learning.

At the end of the semester, a post-course questionnaire containing parallel items to the pre-survey was administered in order to identify general trends in attitudinal and motivational change.

All data collection procedures adhered to institutional ethical guidelines. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, anonymity was ensured, and research participation was clearly separated from grading processes.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

Qualitative data served as the primary basis for interpretation. A thematic analysis approach was employed through iterative reading of reflection journals, interview transcripts, and project texts. Open coding was initially applied to identify meaningful units of experience, which were then clustered into categories and subsequently refined into overarching themes. Particular analytic attention was given to learners' identity negotiation, emotional responses, participation experiences, and interpretations of the cultural texts. Throughout the analysis, reflexive memo-writing and peer debriefing were used to enhance interpretive credibility and trustworthiness.

**Table 2:** Reliability Analysis

Assessment Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Learning Motivation	12	.89
English Self-Efficacy	10	.86
Participation Attitude	8	.84
Overall Questionnaire	30	.91

Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively in order to identify general tendencies in learners' motivation and participation perceptions. Means and standard deviations were calculated for pre- and post-course measures, and the internal consistency of the questionnaire scales was

examined using Cronbach's  $\alpha$ . The coefficients ranged from .84 to .91, indicating generally high internal consistency across all measures.

Finally, the qualitative findings were interpreted holistically, with the questionnaire results serving as contextual support rather than as the primary basis for claims. Integration was achieved by revisiting relevant questionnaire items after qualitative themes had been identified. Descriptive trends from the pre- and post-course surveys were used to examine whether they converged with, elaborated on, or nuanced the qualitative interpretations, particularly in relation to motivation, confidence, and participation. The analytic aim was not merely to document attitudinal change, but to illuminate how learners constructed emotional and narrative meanings through their engagement in culture-text-based English learning.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. How did culture-text-based English instruction influence learners' motivation and participation

The analysis revealed that learners experienced generally positive changes in their attitudes toward English learning and in the ways they participated in class. Reflection journals and interview data indicated that many students had initially perceived English classes primarily as test-oriented academic training requiring memorization and performance for assessment. However, as the semester progressed, they reported that the present course allowed them to reinterpret English as a means of expressing personal meaning, particularly through activities connected to their everyday lives, identities, and emotions. One participant stated:

"In the past, English class always felt like studying for exams and memorizing. But in this course, I could talk about cafés and advertisements from my own life, so for the first time I felt like I was really expressing myself in English." (Participant 07) To integrate qualitative and quantitative findings, learners' narrative accounts of increased willingness to speak and reduced anxiety were interpreted alongside descriptive increases in questionnaire scores related to learning motivation, confidence in English use, and perceived class participation.

Another participant similarly reflected: "I usually felt nervous speaking English because I didn't want to make mistakes. But in this course, it felt more important to express my own thoughts, so I started to speak even if I wasn't sure." (Participant 21)

Across the qualitative data, learners reported that anxiety about correctness gradually decreased, while their willingness to attempt spontaneous speaking increased. Participation also shifted in character: whereas earlier experiences of English learning had been described as

fulfilling externally defined tasks, students came to view participation as an opportunity to articulate their own perspectives. Several students additionally noted that the familiarity of the cultural texts used in class helped them feel more comfortable engaging in English, which contributed to a more positive orientation toward participation.

These qualitative tendencies were also reflected in the questionnaire results. As shown in Table 3, mean scores for learning motivation, confidence in English use, and perceived class participation all increased from pre- to post-course measurement. Although the present study did not aim to statistically test instructional effects, the descriptive results indicate an overall upward trend in students' motivational and affective engagement with English learning over the semester.

**Table 3:** Learning Motivation and Participation Perception

Assessment Scale	Pre M(SD)	Post M(SD)	Difference
Learning Motivation	3.21 (.62)	3.78 (.58)	+0.57
Confidence in English Use	2.98 (.71)	3.56 (.64)	+0.58
Class Participation Perception	3.09 (.65)	3.72 (.59)	+0.63

In order to better understand the nature of these observed changes, qualitative data were examined in greater depth to capture learners' own interpretations of their motivation, participation, and evolving sense of involvement in English learning. Thematic analysis identified three major themes summarizing how students described their learning experiences, as presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Thematic Analysis of RQ1: Motivation and Participation Changes

Theme	Description	Representative Expression
Shift from Test-Oriented to Meaning-Based Learning	English is reinterpreted not as a test-oriented subject but as a tool for expressing personal meaning	"I realized that I was not just studying English for tests, but using it to talk about myself."
Reduced Anxiety and Increased Willingness to Speak	Decreased fear of making mistakes and increased attempts to speak	"I felt that it was okay to make mistakes, so I started to speak first."
Increased Self-Relevance and Engagement	Higher engagement due to topics closely connected to everyday life and identity	"Talking about coffee and advertisements felt like talking about my own story."

These findings support previous research suggesting that when learners engage with texts that are personally

meaningful and self-relevant, their willingness to participate and intrinsic motivation are likely to be enhanced. In this sense, the present results indicate that the use of familiar cultural texts may help create learning conditions that encourage learners to engage more actively and confidently in English-medium communication

**4.2. How did learners interpret coffee culture and advertising language, and how did these interpretations relate to identity and emotion**

Analysis of the qualitative data showed that learners interpreted coffee culture and advertising language not simply as sources of product information, but as symbolic meaning systems associated with identity, lifestyle, and emotional experience. In classroom discussions and reflection journals, students frequently described cafés, coffee choices, and brand preferences as expressions of personality, mood, or social belonging, rather than as neutral consumption behaviors. Engagement with these texts provided opportunities for learners to reflect on their everyday practices and to articulate how these practices related to their sense of self.

The process of expressing such reflections in English also led learners to construct and reorganize personal narratives. As one participant explained: "Talking about my favorite cafés and coffee tastes didn't just feel like small talk. It felt like I was explaining who I am. Speaking in English helped me organize my thoughts about myself." (Participant 12)

Similarly, the analysis of advertising language encouraged learners to reconsider how language proposes and shapes identities. Students reported becoming more aware of the ways in which slogans, imagery, and tone project particular lifestyles or values:

"I realized that advertising language doesn't just sell products. It suggests what kind of person you should be. When I made my own slogan, I first had to think about the kind of person I want to become." (Participant 33)

Across data sources, learners described English as functioning not only as an academic subject but as a narrative tool through which they could represent emotions, aspirations, and self-perceptions. Rather than translating fixed meanings, students engaged in selecting words and expressions that they felt appropriately reflected their identities and intentions. This tendency was most visible in the Creative Identity Project, where students deliberately crafted English slogans that aligned with their self-image.

Taken together, these patterns indicate that learners did not treat coffee culture and advertising discourse as neutral learning materials, but as symbolic resources for exploring who they are and how they wish to position themselves

through English. The thematic patterns that emerged from the data are summarized in Table 5.

These themes suggest that learners' engagement with cultural texts involved ongoing reflection on identity, emotion, and self-presentation, with English functioning as a key medium for such meaning-making.

**Table 5:** Interpretation of Coffee Culture and Advertising Language (RQ2)

Theme	Analytical Meaning
Coffee as Identity Marker	Learners interpreted their coffee preferences and café practices as part of their personal identity and lifestyle.
Advertising as Emotional Narrative	Advertising language was perceived as a narrative device that designs emotions and proposes particular identities and value orientations.
English as a Tool for Self-Narration	English was experienced not simply as a medium for conveying information, but as a means for constructing personal stories and self-expression.

### 4.3. How did learners experience culture-text-based English instruction as emotional and narrative learning

The analysis further revealed that learners experienced the culture-text-based English course not merely as an opportunity to develop linguistic competence, but as an emotionally meaningful and self-reflective learning process. Many students reported that English, which had previously been associated with pressure, difficulty, or assessment, became more approachable when they were invited to speak and write about their everyday experiences, preferences, and emotions. As one student reflected:

“English was always a difficult exam subject for me, but in this class I could talk about my day and feelings, so it felt more familiar.” (Participant 05)

Other students described the course as a space for self-reflection, in which they were encouraged to think consciously about how they wished to represent themselves in English:

“When I created my advertisement, I had to think about how I wanted to express myself. So the class was English learning, but also a chance to look back at who I am.” (Participant 41)

Across journals and interviews, students frequently commented that they felt emotionally supported and “recognized as individuals” rather than as test-takers. The classroom thus appeared to function as an affective space in which learners could articulate aspects of their lives and identities using English. In this way, English learning was reframed not as a purely technical or performative academic activity, but as a process of constructing personal meaning

grounded in lived experience.

These findings echo previous research that conceptualizes language learning as an emotional and narrative experience in which reflection, identity, and meaning-making are closely intertwined (Boud et al., 2013; Kramsch, 2009). The data suggest that the affective climate of the course, characterized by familiarity, psychological safety, and personal relevance, contributed to learners' willingness to participate and to engage more deeply with English as a communicative resource.

The key experiential dimensions identified through the thematic analysis are summarized in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Emotional and Narrative Learning Experiences (RQ3)

Learning Experience	Description
Emotional Engagement	Learners reported experiencing positive emotions such as familiarity, enjoyment, and comfort during the lessons.
Reflective Self-Understanding	The learning activities provided opportunities for learners to reflect on and reinterpret their own experiences and sense of self.
Re-positioning of Language Learning	English learning was re-framed not as an external academic task, but as a meaningful process embedded in everyday life.

These emotional and narrative dimensions suggest that the course functioned as an affective and reflective learning space in which students could connect English learning with their everyday lives, memories, and personal meanings. In doing so, culture text based instruction appeared to support the development of more durable and personally grounded forms of motivation, while also enabling learners to view themselves as active meaning makers within English rather than passive recipients of language instruction

## 5. Conclusions and Discussion

This study explored how a university liberal arts English course designed around everyday cultural texts, specifically coffee culture and advertising language, shaped learners' motivation, identity awareness, and emotional learning experiences. The findings indicate that culture-text-based English instruction functioned not merely as a site for linguistic skill development, but as a space in which learners' identities, emotions, and lived experiences were meaningfully integrated into language use. In this respect, the study supports sociocultural and meaning oriented perspectives that view language learning as an interpretive, relational, and identity infused practice rather than a purely cognitive or technical process (Kramsch, 2009; Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Norton, 2013).

First, learners came to reconceptualize English not primarily as a tool for exam preparation, but as a meaning-based resource for expressing personal thoughts and experiences. This shift was accompanied by observable behavioral changes, including increased willingness to speak, reduced anxiety, and broader participation. These findings resonate with research in Content-Based Instruction (CBI), which suggests that meaningful and personally relevant content supports sustained engagement and promotes authentic language use (Brown, 2007; Kaiser, 2011; Snow, 2014). They also align with studies indicating that when learning is connected to students' lived realities, motivation tends to become more enduring and self-directed (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Ryan, 2019). More specifically, these findings reflect Ushioda's (2011) view of motivation as relational and context sensitive, suggesting that learners' engagement emerged not from task completion but from their emotional connection to familiar cultural texts.

Second, through engagement with coffee culture and advertising discourse, learners critically reflected on their preferences, values, and identities. Advertising language was interpreted as an affective and narrative discourse that designs emotions and proposes particular identity orientations, while English functioned as a medium for constructing self-narratives rather than simply transmitting information. These findings support theoretical perspectives that emphasize the reciprocal relationship between language, identity, and social practice (Block, 2017; Norton, 2013; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). They also echo research showing that consumer and lifestyle texts invite learners to negotiate social meanings, belonging, and aspiration (Piller, 2001; Thompson & Arsel, 2004). From Norton's (2013) identity perspective, learners' engagement with coffee culture and advertising discourse can be interpreted as an investment in meaning-making rather than as mere language practice. Furthermore, drawing on Kramsch's (2009) notion of symbolic competence, these cultural texts functioned as semiotic resources through which learners negotiated identity positions, values, and emotional stances in English.

Third, learners perceived the course as an emotionally safe and meaningful learning experience. Positive emotions such as enjoyment, familiarity, and reassurance appeared to serve as affective foundations for sustained participation. This aligns with research highlighting the central role of affect, self-concept, and well-being in language learning (Mercer, 2016; Ushioda, 2011). In this sense, the course provided an integrated learning experience in which language learning, identity reflection, and emotional engagement were closely intertwined, suggesting that learning becomes deeper when students feel recognized and affectively supported. This finding aligns with Kramsch's (2009) view of language learning as an interpretive and affective practice, as well as with narrative approaches to

language learning that emphasize meaning-making through personal storytelling and reflection.

The results suggest that emotional engagement and narrative construction functioned as central mechanisms through which learning was sustained. Taken together, the findings suggest that cultural texts function not only as linguistic input but also as educational resources that connect learners' lives, emotions, and narrative self-understandings with language use. When instructional content resonates with learners' lived experiences, they may be repositioned as more agentive and reflective language users (Benson, 2011). This highlights the need to conceptualize liberal arts English education not merely as functional language training, but as a reflective learning community that contributes to meaning-making, identity work, and personal growth. The integration of qualitative narratives with descriptive quantitative trends enabled this study to capture not only the direction of motivational change but also the lived meanings through which such change was experienced. While questionnaire data indicated general patterns of increased motivation and participation, qualitative accounts illuminated how these changes were emotionally and narratively constructed within learners' everyday experiences. This integration strengthens the methodological coherence of the mixed-methods design.

### 5.1. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study provide several implications for the design and implementation of university English education.

First, cultural texts that are closely connected to learners' lives and identities can serve as powerful resources for enhancing motivation and engagement. Everyday texts such as coffee culture and advertising language, already embedded in learners' daily practices, allow English to be experienced as a familiar medium of meaning-making rather than as a distant academic subject. Such texts help reduce affective barriers, alleviate anxiety about errors, and expand opportunities for authentic language use. Liberal arts English curricula should therefore actively incorporate content that is meaningfully aligned with learners' lived experiences, interests, and identities.

In this regard, although this study focused on coffee culture and advertising discourse, these texts should be understood as illustrative examples of everyday cultural materials. The pedagogical approach can be extended to other cultural texts such as film, music, fashion, or digital media in liberal arts English courses.

Second, it is important to design language learning not merely as task completion, but as an emotional and narrative process. In the present course, learners reported experiencing enjoyment, comfort, and a sense of personal

relevance, emotions that supported sustained participation.

Third, when English is experienced as a tool for self-narration, learners are more likely to take ownership of their language use. Reflection journals, storytelling tasks, and personal narrative presentations can create pedagogical opportunities for students to reinterpret their identities and values through language. Such practices extend language learning beyond exam preparation and reposition it as a meaningful life practice.

## 5.2. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, it was conducted as a semester-long case study within a single university course, with participation limited to students who voluntarily consented to the research. Therefore, caution is needed in generalizing the findings. Future research should incorporate more diverse institutions and learner populations and examine how culture-text-based English instruction functions across different institutional contexts in order to explore its transferability beyond a single course setting.

Second, the analysis relied primarily on self-reported data such as reflection journals, interviews, and project submissions. While such data provide rich insight into learners' subjective experiences, interpretations of identity and affective change may also reflect learners' narrative positioning. Future studies should include multiple data sources, such as classroom observations, teacher journals, and discourse analysis, to strengthen triangulation and interpretive validity.

Third, this research focused on learning experiences within a single semester. It remains unclear whether changes in motivation, participation, and identity perception persist over time or transfer to different learning contexts. Longitudinal research will be necessary to explore the sustained impact of culture-text-based instruction on learners' broader language learning trajectories.

Finally, this study focused specifically on coffee culture and advertising language. Future research could meaningfully compare different cultural text types, such as film, music, fashion, and digital media, to examine how varied identity discourses shape learner experience. Such comparative and expanded studies would help clarify how culture-text-based pedagogy can be adapted across different learning modalities, including hybrid or online environments, and represent an important direction for future inquiry.

## 5.3. Final Reflection

This study also invited the instructor researcher to reflect on the broader meaning of liberal arts English education

within the university context. Integrating everyday cultural texts such as coffee culture and advertising language into classroom practice revealed that meaningful language learning begins not with structure or accuracy, but with learners' lived experiences, emotions, and identities, an understanding that is consistent with sociocultural and identity-oriented perspectives on language learning (Kramsch, 2009; Norton, 2013). When students were encouraged to speak and write from their own stories, English ceased to be merely an academic subject and instead became a medium through which they explored themselves in relation to the world.

At the same time, the study underscored that language learning is fundamentally relational and affective. The gradual increase in students' willingness to participate appeared closely linked to the creation of an emotionally secure learning environment, one in which mistakes were tolerated, personal meanings were welcomed, and students were recognized as individuals rather than simply as test takers. This experience reaffirmed that the role of the English instructor extends beyond transmitting linguistic knowledge to facilitating reflective, dialogic, and humanizing learning encounters (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 2013; Ushioda, 2011).

Finally, the study highlighted the ways in which cultural texts operate as subtle bridges between language and life. Coffee culture and advertising discourse, as ordinary elements of everyday experience, opened pathways for students to question, reinterpret, and narrate who they are and who they may become as English users. In this sense, language education emerges not only as a technical enterprise, but as an ethical and interpretive practice grounded in meaning, identity, and connection (Block, 2017; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000).

It is hoped that continued exploration of culture-text-based pedagogy will contribute to the development of English classrooms that value learners' voices, cultivate emotional engagement, and sustain learning experiences that are both intellectually rigorous and personally meaningful.

## References

- Aksoy, B. N. Ç., & Takkaç Tulgar, A. (2023). The effects of flipped classroom on EFL students' autonomy and motivation. *GIST – Education and Learning Research Journal*, 27, 9–38. <https://doi.org/10.26817/16925777.1727>
- Appadurai, A. (1998). Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization. *International Migration Review*, 32(4), 1073–1074. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2547675>
- Benson, P. (2011). *Teaching and researching autonomy* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315833767>

- Block, D. (2017). *Political economy in applied linguistics*. Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s0261444816000288>
- Blumenfeld, P. C., Soloway, E., Marx, R. W., Krajcik, J. S., Guzdial, M., & Palincsar, A. (1991). Motivating project-based learning: Sustaining the doing, supporting the learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 26(3–4), 369–398.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.1991.9653139>
- Boud, D., Keogh, R., & Walker, D. (Eds.). (2013). *Reflection: Turning experience into learning*. Routledge.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Longman.
- Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2015). *Multilingual education*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cook, G. (1992). *The discourse of advertising* (2nd ed.). Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203978153>
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Multilingual Matters.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.30945943.21>
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315779553>
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2021). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351006743>
- Herron, C., Hanley, J., & Cole, S. (1995). A comparison study of two advance organizers for introducing beginning foreign language students to video. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79(3), 387–395.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb01116.x>
- Kaiser, M. (2011). New approaches to exploiting film in the foreign language classroom. *L2 Journal*, 3(2), 232–249.  
<https://doi.org/10.5070/l23210005>
- Kinginger, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (2009). *The multilingual subject: What foreign language learners say about their experience and why it matters*. Oxford University Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford University Press.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2015). Saying what we mean: Meaning, understanding, and language learning. *Language Teaching*, 48(4), 491–505.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s0261444814000019>
- Lyon, S. (2011). *Coffee and community: Maya farmers and fair-trade markets*. University Press of Colorado.
- Mercer, S., & Ryan, S. (2016). *Psychology for language learning: Lessons from research and practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Pavlenko, A., & Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Second language learning as participation and the reconstruction of selves. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 155–177). Oxford University Press.
- Piller, I. (2001). Identity constructions in multilingual advertising. *Language in Society*, 30(2), 153–186.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404501002019>
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2022). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009024532>
- Shin, M. H. (2024). Improving English speaking skills in a college general English course using metacognitive strategies. *English Teaching*, 79(3), 99–121.  
<https://doi.org/10.15858/engtea.79.3.202409.99>
- Thompson, C. J., & Arsel, Z. (2004). The Starbucks brandscape and consumers' (anticorporate) experiences of glocalization. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(3), 631–642.  
<https://doi.org/10.1086/425098>
- Williamson, J. (1978). *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising*. Marion Boyars.