

Exploring the Popular Culture in the Works of Young Philippine Novelists

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Abstract

This research paper will discuss the manifestation of popular culture in the works of young Filipino novelists. It will focus on the novels of three young Filipino novelists in the Philippines. The three Filipino novels are *Peksman (Mamatay Ka Man) Nagsisinungaling Ako (at Iba Pang Kuwentong Kasinungalingan na Di Dapat Paniwalaan)* by Eros S. Atalia, published in 2007; *Lumbay ng Dila* by Genevieve L. Asenjo, published in 2010 and *Sa Kasunod ng 909* by Edgar Calabia Samar, published in 2012. These three novels were prizewinners and received citations in the Philippines. All of the authors of these three novels became fellows of the International Writing Program (IWP) of the University of Iowa. The primary objectives of this research paper are: to explore the manifestations of popular culture in the selected three novels from the Philippines as works and practices of intellectual and incredibly artistic activity of young Filipino novelists and to build a new understanding and reading of the works of young novelists of the current generation in the Philippines. The methods in exploring and investigating the manifestations of popular culture will be based on the perspectives on popular culture of the Filipino scholar Rhoderick Nuncio that explains that the manifestation of popular culture is the enlivening with popular things, technology, images, symbols, signs, and commodities in people experiences to be awakened in the rapid changes of civilization. The presence of popular culture in the selected novels highlight their recurring nature and their impact on society. Finding showed that popular culture is a complex and ever-changing phenomenon that occurs uniquely in place and time, representing a complex of mutually interdependent perspectives and values. Selected Novels written by young Philippine novelists have a significant impact for both culture and language.

Keywords: Philippines, popular culture, Philippine novels, young Filipino novelist, language learning and development

1. Introduction

Background and Objectives

The dominating culture of a society is the mine of gold. Culture becomes for the masses. Most people lost their discernment of culture as used for aggregating ability, knowledge, and wealth. Culture is a universal search for excellence and progress (Rafique, Khan & Bilal, 2022). Before discussing popular culture in this research paper, it is essential first to discuss its meaning. Storey condensed three definitions of culture discussed in Keywords by Raymond Williams, "First, culture can be used to refer to a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development'.... A second use of 'culture' might suggest a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group'.... Finally, Williams suggests that culture can be used to refer to 'the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity'" (2009, 1-2).

My focus in this research paper is the third definition of culture. Culture refers to the works and practices of intellectual and incredible artistic activity. Storey clarified the third definition, and he said:

In other words, the culture here means the texts and practices whose principal function is to signify, to produce or to be the occasion for the production of meaning.... Using this definition, we would probably think of examples such as poetry, the novel, ballet, opera, and fine art. To speak of popular culture usually means to mobilize the second and third meanings of the word 'culture'....The third meaning—culture as signifying practices—would allow us to speak of soap operas, pop music, and comics as examples of culture. These are usually referred to as texts. (2009, 2)

By taking further explanation of Storey (2018), culture means the texts and practices whose principal function is to signify, produce or be the occasion for producing meaning. The primary objectives of this research paper are to explore the manifestations of popular culture in the selected three novels from the Philippines as works and practices of intellectual and incredible artistic activity of young novelists in the Philippines.

Literature Review

McKee explained that "popular culture was not invented by those who consume the forms of culture it designates but by those who took them as objects of study" (2022, 19). No one can reject the idea that popular culture is rampant. In monitoring this phenomenon, Tolentino remarked, "Popular ang kulturang popular dahil tila ito isang mekanismo ng liberal na demokrasya" (2001, 4). [Popular culture prevails because it is like a mechanism of liberal democracy]. In addition, Tolentino (2001) explained that there are five characteristics of popular culture: first, popular culture is made for profit; second, popular culture is transgressive in every category; third, popular culture is being

spread through technology; fourth, popular culture extends into notions of pseudo masochism; and fifth, popular culture comes from, primarily, in the centre.

Many people patronize popular culture as a trend and the centre of attraction of the majority. Hudson (2022) believes that "Whether you're a fan of popular culture or not, there's no denying that it has a powerful influence on humanity's current trends." But in those trends arise some realizations that highlight spaces that become the bases of movement and perception of many people. Spaces where people soak, immerse, confide and riot in whatever activities can be seen, achieved and experienced. But these spaces significantly affect the learning and perception of the individual in the reality he copes with. The movement of being popular spreads because it is the culture being patronized by the majority in society. In every society and every period, it has a different form. What was popular before could be antiquated today, but many popular things before remain popular up to this day.

As social category, popular culture depends on the acuity of the society and politics. Hence Aistrophe declared, "Popular culture is widely understood to intersect with and shape our understanding of world politics" (2020, 163). It depends on the world politics in industries. This is where culture of the masses comes in. Industries create for the masses and whatever they create becomes the obsession of the people. This is where people spend their time. This is where popular culture springs, in things that most people muse. In defining this, Reyes stated, "Karaniwang iniugnay ang kulturang popular sa paglawak ng impluwensiya ng teknolohiya, sa matinding komersyalisasyon at madaliang reproduksiyon ng mga manipistasyon ng kultura tulad ng mga magasin, komiks, radyo, telebisyon, pelikula, at kahit na ang mga moda sa damit, mga grapiti, mga kanta, mga patalastas (advertisements), mga bagay sa isang maunlad na lipunan" (1997, 323). [Popular culture is commonly associated with the expansion of influence of technology, in the intense commercialization and massive reproduction of the manifestations of culture like magazines, comics, radio, television, movies, at even in the mode of dress, graphics, songs, advertisements, and things found in a developed society].

The popular culture within the Philippines is very much exposed. A culture that is widely spread in the environment of people today. Nobody can deny that the widespread culture undergoes popularization. Popularization of the many things that seduce, engross, grip, and dominate many of us. There is a great influence of popularization in the society we live in. Nuncio argued, "Mabisang aparato ng kolonyalismo at komersyalismo ang popularisasyon. Sa panahon ng pananakop ng Kastila ginamit ang krus, sandata at maskara. Pagdating ng mga bagong kolonyalistang Amerikano, ginamit naman ang teknolohiya at mass media. Sa diskursong ito ang popularisasyon ay pananakop bilang panghihimasok sa kasarinlan ng kamalayan at katawan" (2004, 53). [Popularization is an efficient apparatus of colonialism and commercialism. During Spanish colonization, the crucifix, sword, and mask were used. When the American colonizers came, they used technology and mass media. According to this discourse, popularization means colonization through interference in the independence of consciousness and body.] Both Americans and Spaniards used popularization as a means to implement their desire of inculcating religion and education in the consciousness of the Filipinos. They used symbols and innovations that would mark in the minds of the Filipinos.

The commercial aspect of popular culture projects to advance it and make most people obsessed. At present, as popular culture, many people are indulged in modern plazas or parks—shopping malls (Tolentino, 2001). Shopping malls were enriched and greatly expanded because of the need of the masses, following the idea of mass production for mass consumption by Goncalves (2008), which aims to make the masses happy. However, they struggle against their old problem—poverty. Many people are locked up in endless poverty from yesterday, today and maybe until tomorrow. Through mechanical pro-masses production, the majority perceive it as good. Still, the truth is that it makes them greatly engulfed in their social status as below the poverty line because the ruling class has a strong hold on production.

This study on popular culture's impact on young Filipino novelists' works has significant implications for language learning and development. Firstly, it allows language learners to engage with contemporary and authentic literary works authored by Filipino writers, enabling them to improve their reading and comprehension skills and gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and linguistic context within which the novels were written. Secondly, the study sheds light on using popular culture elements, including technology, symbols, images, and commodities, in contemporary Filipino literature. This can facilitate language learners' familiarity with the cultural references and linguistic subtleties unique to the Filipino context. Additionally, the research highlights the artistic and linguistic implications of popular culture in the context of rapid changes in civilization, which learners can use to reflect on the impact of popular culture on language and communication and how it influences people's expressions in different settings. Overall, this study is a valuable resource for language learners seeking to enhance their understanding of Filipino literature, culture, and language by exploring the intersection of popular culture and contemporary literature.

2. Methodology

The experiences and consciousness of man in his society can be traced in literary piece. Because the society is the laboratory of the writer where diverse experiences mix, it is important to investigate and scrutinize in the literary piece as the enlivening with popular culture in the experiences of people. Nuncio (2004) mentioned the relation between things, symbols, images and the operation of the machinery of popular culture. He added, "Ang kulturang popular ay realidad ng tao; inaangkin ito bago ang lahat at pinapalaganap mul sa sensibilidad ng tao dahil sa kanyang pagnanasa sa buhay patungo sa kamalayang naghahari ang makabago, mapusok, marangya at makapangyarihan. Ang kulturang popular ay pagsasabuhay ng bagay, imahe, simbulo, pananda, paninda at komoditi sa karanasan ng tao na namulat sa mabilisang pagbabago sa isang sibilisasyon" (Nuncio, 2004, 58). [Popular culture is the reality of man; it is being owned beforehand and

is being disseminated from man's sensibilities, because of his desire in life, to attain the modern, aggressive, luxurious, powerful, and ruling ideology. It is the enlivening with things, technology, images, symbols, signs and commodities in man's experiences to be awakened in the rapid changes of civilization.] Thus, this paper explored the manifestations of popular culture—the enlivening with things, technology, images, symbols, signs, and commodities to attain the modern, aggressive, luxurious, powerful, and ruling ideology in the selected works of three novelists from the Philippines. The three novels are: *Peksman (Mamatay Ka Man) Nagsisinungaling Ako* (at Iba Pang Kuwentong Kasinungalingan na Di Dapat Paniwalaan) published in 2007 by Eros S. Atalia; *Lumbay ng Dila* published in 2010 by Genevieve L. Asenjo and *Sa Kasunod ng 909* published in 2012 by Edgar Calabia Samar. These three novels were prizewinner and/or received citations in the Philippines. All the authors of these three novels became fellow at the International Writing Program (IWP) of the University of Iowa.



Figures 1-3. Cover pages of the three Philippine novels

3. Results and Discussion

Popular Culture in Eros Atalia's Novel

Popular culture is apparent in the works of Atalia. These works include *Peksman (Mamatay Ka Man) Nagsisinungaling Ako* (at Iba Pang Kuwentong Kasinungalingan na Di Dapat Paniwalaan). He observed the recurring culture of people in his environment, "During the old days, the rich were the only allowed persons to go to malls.... And malls at that time were few. In the heart of the centre of commerce.... Later on, a Chinese man thought that money was in the hands of the masses. It is like the saying, *number, not size, matters*. A mall was established whose products were made for the masses. Beautiful college girls, who couldn't get other decent jobs, were hired in sales ladies. They were asked to wear uniforms that couldn't be determined if those were guards', students', and waitpersons' uniforms. The masses falsely felt that they were rich. They felt the power to need to appease and pacify their fellow poor. They found a space to set their feet on the land of their lord. Today, in every city, there are malls. Tomorrow or the next day, we'll see them in every corner of the street. This industry has grown. Its pioneers were exalted and adored. This is not only a simple store (marketplace), but a promenade, park, and dreamland of the common person" (English Translation from the original in the Filipino Language). [Nooong araw daw, mayayaman lang ang pwedeng pumunta sa mall.... At iilan lang talaga ang mall nood. Nasa pusod ng sentro ng komersyo.... Di nagtagal, may isang intsik na nakaisip na nasa masa ang pera. Yun bang kasabihang di bale maliit, basta marami. Nagtayo ng mall na halos pangmasa ang presyo. Kumuha ng mga magagandang kolehiyala na walang mapasukang trabaho kundi bilang mga sales lady. Pinagsuot ng unipormeng alangang pang guard, estudyante at waitress... Nag-feeling mayaman ang masa. Nakaramdam ng kapangyarihan na kinakailangang amu-amuiin at uto-utoin ang kapwa nila mahirap. Nakahanap ng puwang ang masa na makatuntong kahit papaano sa daigdig ng kaniyang panginoon. Ngayon, sa bawat siyudad ay may mall na. Bukas makalawa, sa bawat kanto ay makikita na rin ang mga ito. Lumago ang industriyang ito. Pinapurihan at dinakila ang nagpasimuno nito. Di lang ito ngayon simpleng pamilihan, kundi tambayan, pasyalan at dream land ng mga karaniwang tao] (Atalia, 2007).

Atalia also noticed that the ones popular *thing* before was now no longer a piece of attraction today, "I regret that rarely I can find a place to buy comics. If there were, they were very few. At times I look at a stand, dates were no longer seen in the issue. Purely tomo like this and number like that remained. Before, I memorized the dates of release of some comics. There were ones released twice a week, there was once a week. I was very happy in the stories told in comics.... I had fun in comics because when I was in Grade two, I saw my classmate talking alone" (English Translation from the original in Filipino Language). [Sayang at wala na halos mabilhan ng komiks. Kung meron man, mangilan-ngilan na lang. Minsan tumingin ako sa stand, wala na ang petsa. Puro tomo ganito at bilang ganyan na lang. Dati, may mga komiks na saulado ko ang labas. May dalawang beses sa isang linggo, may isang beses sa isang linggo. Tuwang tuwa ako

sa mga kwento ng komiks.... Nahilig ako sa komiks kasi nakita ko yung kaeskwela ko noong grade two na nagsasalita mag-isa] (Atalia, 2007).

Though comics were top-rated in the Philippines during the seventies and were part of popular culture, they started to fade today because modern technology arose. Storey (2009) clarified that popular culture changes constantly and occurs uniquely in place and time. He added that it forms currents and eddies and represents a complex of mutually interdependent perspectives and values that influence society and its institutions in various ways. For example, certain currents of popular culture may originate from (or diverge into) a subculture, representing perspectives with which mainstream popular culture has only limited familiarity. Items of popular culture most typically appeal to a broad spectrum of the public.

As a famous novel, Atalia's work highlights the opium of the masses—popular culture. He dedicated much time and effort to the observation and experience of the widely spread, accessible, and patronized culture by most people in society. The truth hides in lies in the novel. We thought of truth as a lie because we failed to contemplate, speculate, and ponder it. Atalia's novel has accustomed much to various popular cultures. From going in and out of the house, signs that most people experience popular culture daily. Novels like this have a significant impact on their readers.

3.2 Popular Culture in Genevieve Asenjo's Novel

The integration of popular culture is also felt in the novel *Lumbay ng Dila* by Asenjo. There are parts of the novel which state, "Just like earlier in the morning. The fumes sprang up in the sinandomeng rice. It was placed on the table; on its side lays plates of fried *danggit*, boiledegg, and eggplant fritter. House Blends brews in the French Press of Starbucks" (English Translation from the original in Filipino Language). [Katulad kaninang umaga. Umaasu-aso ang kanin na sinandomeng. Nakalapag ito sa mesa sa kanyang gilid katabi ang pinggan ng piniritong danggit, nilagang itlog, tortang talong. Nagbu-brew sa French Press ang House Blend] (Asenjo, 2010).

Asenjo wrote in her novel, "In her laptop, the website www.horoscope.com starts to open to Capricorn. She hears Seal's "Love's Divine" in a video sent by Priya via Youtube. Alaala ng Pagkabasa (Memory of Being Wet). This is the title of her blog in Multiply. She unintentionally wrote this: Memories are water that flows at the right time. Just like today, it rains, and I want to believe in the greenness of the field..... Her cell phone rang. The message was breaking news that she heard spontaneously from the people of the barrio from Bombo Radyo. This also greeted her at Inquirer7.net and Philstar.com. She was sure this was also the news being spread on TV stations. It could even have an exclusive mark" (English Translation from the original in the Filipino Language). [Sa kanyang laptop, nagssimulang bumukas sa Capricorn ang www.horoscope.com. Narinig na niya ang "Love's Divine" ni Seal sa video na pinadala sa kanya ni Priya sa YouTube. Alaala ng Pagkabasa. Ito ang pamagat ng kanyang blog sa Multiply. Naisulat niya ang ganito: Isang tubig ang alaala na humahagunos sa tamang panahon. Katulad ngayong umuulan at gusto kong maniwala sa muling pagkaluntian ng bukid.....Tumunog ang kanyang cellphone. Isang breaking news ang mensahe na kaagad din narinig ng buong baryo sa Bombo Radyo. Ito rin ang bumati sa kanya sa Inquirer7.net. at Philstar.com. nasisiguro niyang ito rin ang ibinabalita sa mga istasyon ng TV. Marahil may nakatatak pang eksklusibo] (Asenjo, 2010).

The majority of people are habituated to modern technology—cellphone, Ipad, computer, and many more. The internet and cellphone use is popular, devoting much time to social networking sites (facebook, twitter, etc.). Ipad, MP3 and the like are popular. Games which give entertainment exist too. Making society accept the prevalent culture becomes a quick and easy process. Modern technology has become the culture of the masses because of progress and development. Storey (2009) emphasized popular culture emerged from the urbanization of the industrial revolution.

We can examine some parts of Asenjo's work as proof, "It will be said that when her making of way to Teresa started last 2000. When chat was the trend, she, Sadyah Zapanta Lopez—was teresa_gwapa at Yahoo Messenger or YM..... They met at FilipinoFriendFinder.com. They exchanged numbers first, then email. That was it, and they entrusted their real names to each other. They agreed to log-in at YM during MWF@ 10 pm. They had been virtual buddies for more than a month since they agreed to meet. That was Friday evening, 9 o'clock, and October showed signs of the typhoon. It is in Starbucks at the intersection of the street near her house" (English Translation from the original in Filipino Language). [Masasabing nagsimula ang paghawan niya ng daan patungo sa kay Teresa noong 2000. Nang mauso ang pakikipag-chat at siya—si Sadyah Zapanta Lopez—ay si teresa_gwapa sa Yahoo Messenger o YM..... Nagkakilala sila sa FilipinoFriendFinder.com. Una silang nagpalitan ng numero, pagkaraan, ng email. Iyon lamang at ipinagkatiwala nila sa isa't isa ang kanilang tunay na pangalan. Nagkasundo sila sa MWF@10 ng gabi na iskediyul sa pag-log in sa YM. Higit sa isang buwan na silang virtual buddy nang magkasundong mag-eyeball. Biyernes iyon ng gabi, alas nuebe, at nagbabadya ng bagyo ang Oktubre. Sa Starbucks sa interseksyon ng kalyeng malapit sa kanyang tintirhan] (Asenjo, 2010).

In the novel of Asenjo, the integration of popular culture is very much seen. Popular culture is obviously clear to be associated in the parts of the novel—from Youtube, Multiply, Yahoo Messenger to Starbucks. In this society that only catches everything that reigns and everything the majority experience, it is very important to examine and scrutinize the common things that are popularized by the few prevailing changes in the world.

3.3 Popular Culture in Edgar Samar's Novel

In the novel of Samar titled *Sa Kasunod ng 909*, the integration of popular culture as a detail of the novel can be observed. There is a part of the novel as such, "I tried to find Teresa, on Friendster, on Facebook. She might already have her own Facebook account. Though I

hardly believe (that) that was her real name. How could I convince her to tell her real name if I had introduced myself as Aaron?.....My unconscious, being its playful character, has its sudden predomination over me everytime I stop thinking rationally. This had happened as I realized I typed on the search engine, on Google, their names, the names of the persons who I think are intimately related, but I never admitted, I never accepted..... On a webpage, on a blog of female *masahistas* (masseurs), Teresa's picture is posted with her cellphone number..... Tropical Touch is the name of the blogsite and when I tried to browse the different pages, different fruits..... I have just seen one of the 226 comments on Teresa's page. A particular Aaron Santamaria, and in his name is a hyperlink leading to a blog: *Sa Kasunod ng 909* (Somewhere After 909).....I got irritated when I knew I couldn't post a comment on that photoblog, to assure myself if that was really Aaron, the one who is posting them" (English Translation from the original in Filipino Language). [Sinubok kong hanapin si Teresa, sa Friendster, sa Facebook. Baka sakaling may facebook na siya. Kahit mas naniniwala akong imposibleng iyon ang totoo niyang pangalan. Paano ko siya mapipilit na sabihin sa akin ang totoo niyang pangalan kung Aaron ang naging pakilala ko sa kaniya?.....Sa kung anong paglalaro ng unconscious ko, ang pangingibabaw nito sa sandaling hindi na ako nag-iisip, nakita ko na lang na ang na-type ko sa search engine, sa Google, mga pangalan nila, sila na noon ko pa nakikitang magkaugnay, pero ayaw ko ngang aminin, ayaw kong tanggapin..... Sa isang webpage sa blog ng mga masahistang babae, naroon ang larawan ni Teresa at numero ng cellphone..... Tropical Touch ang pangalan ng blogsite at nang sinubok ko ngang i-browse ang iba't ibang pahina, iba't ibang prutas.....Nakita ko ang isa sa 226 nang comment sa pahina ni Teresa. Isang Aaron Santamaria, at may hyperlink sa pangalan niya pantungo sa isang blog: *Sa Kasunod ng 909*.....Naiinis akong hindi rin maaaring magpost ng comment sa photoblog na iyon, para tiyakin kung si Aaron iyon, ang nagpopost ng mga iyon] (Samar, 2012).

In his work, the time for hurrying is explicit. All people are in haste in reaching and finding the people and the information they need. Changes in the environment happen so fast that one greatly needs to adapt to it. Like the primary character in Samar's novel, he made finding people and information an instant feat. He made it an instant feat through modern technology that originates from profit. Instant service emerges and continues to change but its consumers are the ones who are greatly affected.

The integration of popular culture in the work of Samar is clear, and has its likeness with Asenjo's novel, technology became the manifestation of popular culture embodied by friendster, facebook, google, blog and hyperlink.

The presence of popular culture in Eros Atalia's novel has language learning implications as it exposes learners to authentic and contemporary language use. Reading and analyzing works of literature that incorporate popular culture can help language learners understand the language and cultural aspects of the society in which the language is spoken. Additionally, the use of various forms of popular culture in the novel, such as comics and music, can introduce learners to different genres and styles of art and media, broadening their cultural horizons. Moreover, Atalia's novel offers a critical perspective on the influence of popular culture on society and its institutions, allowing learners to engage with complex and nuanced ideas and opinions about contemporary issues. By analyzing the portrayal of popular culture as the opium of the masses, learners can develop their critical thinking skills and cultural awareness, enabling them to participate in informed discussions and express their opinions on similar topics.

This study emphasizes the significant role of popular culture in shaping society and the power it holds to make individuals accept the ruling order as their reality. The language learning implications of the presence of popular culture in Eros Atalia's novel are significant, as it not only exposes learners to authentic language use but also broadens their cultural horizons and develops their critical thinking skills. As language learners engage with popular cultural elements, such as technology, symbols, images, and commodities, they can deepen their understanding of the cultural and linguistic context within which the novels were created. However, they should also be aware of the potential social crisis that popular culture can create. By reflecting on these issues, language learners can develop critical thinking skills and foster intercultural competence, crucial for language learning and development in a multicultural and globalized world.

4. Conclusion

The prevailing popular culture has received significant attention and emphasis through Atalia's work. This is depicted by the main character and the critical comments in his observation of society, especially the shopping mall. In Asenjo's work, one encounters the main character's enlivening with manifestations of popular culture and modern technology. It goes with the flow of society to attract readers today. Likewise, the work of Samar wanders on the path of modern technology, but its discourse doesn't detach itself from the propagation of contradictions in society.

In the given novels, the characters were mere experiences. They were mere experiencers of popular culture. Why does popular culture behave like this? Lumbera (1997) made some remarks on it, "Contrary to the implications of the word popular, popular culture is not created by the populace. Rather it is the culture created either by the ruling elite or by members of the intelligentsia in the employ of that elite for the consumption of the populace. It is thus "packaged" entertainment or art intended for the profit of rulers, be they colonial administrators or native bureaucrats and businessmen." Clearly, popular culture has an extraordinary power. What is assumed to be popular emerges from a particular spring—it doesn't come from the people like technology, it is owned by the ruling order, particularly business and state, because it has the ability to make profit. Like what the young novelists from the Philippines had employed in their works, popular culture can make the individual accept the ruling order as his/her own reality.

People get accustomed to what they call popular culture. It always changes. It is the only thing that springs up from an exemplary time and event. And in that time and event, the society is the one which experiences it because from the society itself springs popularization. Moving as popular is prevalent because the majority in the society patronizes it. It is powerful, like in the words of Lumbera (1997), "popular culture

is power” but it has, in itself, the social crisis. Just like Powers argued, “that concept of popular culture, as conceptualized within the media/cultural studies tradition in the Anglophone West, is in crisis” (2022, 461).

Implication to Culture and Language

The exploration of popular culture in the works of young Filipino novelists has significant implications for both culture and language. Firstly, it sheds light on the role of popular culture in shaping contemporary Filipino literature and the cultural context in which it is written. This understanding can help language learners to develop familiarity with the cultural references and linguistic nuances unique to the Filipino context, thereby enhancing their language learning experience. Additionally, the study highlights the impact of popular culture on language use and communication and its role in shaping the artistic expression of young Filipino novelists. This can help readers understand how language and culture are interconnected and how they both influence and reflect each other. Finally, the study can help promote the preservation and celebration of Filipino culture, as it highlights how popular culture is a vital part of contemporary Filipino society and literature.

Implications to Language Learning in the Philippine Setting

The article highlights the significant role of popular culture in contemporary Filipino literature and its impact on language and communication. This study offers language learners an opportunity to engage with authentic and contemporary literary texts written by young Filipino novelists, which can enhance their reading and comprehension skills and deepen their understanding of the cultural and linguistic context within which the novels were created. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of developing familiarity with the cultural references and linguistic nuances unique to the Filipino context through exposure to popular culture elements, such as technology, symbols, images, and commodities. This can aid language learners in improving their language proficiency and communication skills in a multicultural and globalized world. Lastly, the research invites language learners to reflect on the artistic and linguistic implications of popular culture in the face of rapid changes in civilization, which can encourage critical thinking and foster intercultural competence.

Implications to Language Learning in the Post-COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed language learning, and studying popular culture in contemporary literature can have essential implications in this context. As language learning has shifted towards online and digital platforms, technology in popular culture can be utilized to engage learners in authentic and interactive language learning experiences. Furthermore, studying popular culture in literature can allow language learners to explore diverse perspectives and cultural practices, which can enhance their understanding and appreciation of different cultures. In a post-COVID-19 world, where virtual communication and multicultural understanding have become increasingly important, studying popular culture in literature can provide valuable insights into the interconnection between language, culture, and society.

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