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Psychological Factors in the Development of Students' Reading Competence through Literary Education

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The development of students' reading competence is an important educational goal in contemporary literary education, particularly in contexts where learners are expected to engage critically, emotionally, and culturally with literary texts. This study aims to examine the psychological and cultural dimensions of developing students' reading competence through the teaching of literary works.

Methods and Materials: This study is based on a qualitative methodological and pedagogical analysis of literature teaching practices, with particular attention to the teaching of epic and prose works in secondary education. The research draws on psychological, pedagogical, and methodological literature related to reading competence, reader response, motivation, cognitive development, and literary interpretation. The study systematizes instructional strategies that support students' gradual movement from text comprehension to interpretation, reflection, critical thinking, and independent reading.

Findings: The findings indicate that psychologically informed and culturally responsive approaches to literary education can strengthen students' motivation to read, improve their understanding of literary texts, and develop interpretive and reflective thinking. Methods such as guided reading, question–answer strategies, problem-based tasks, level-based assignments, collective learning, modular learning, and the use of information and communication technologies help students engage more actively with literary texts. Literary education also supports empathy, value formation, cultural identity, and the development of students' independent reading culture.

Conclusion: Literary education can serve as an effective pedagogical and psychological tool for developing reading competence among students. When literary texts are taught through interactive, reflective, and culturally grounded methods, students become more competent, motivated, and culturally aware readers.

Keywords: Reading Competence, Literary Education, Psychological Development, Cultural Identity, Secondary Education.

Introduction

In contemporary secondary education, literature is not only a school subject through which students acquire knowledge about authors, genres, and literary history; it is also a pedagogical medium for developing reading competence, cultural awareness, emotional understanding, and reflective thinking. Literary texts place students in contact with human experiences, moral conflicts, social relationships, and cultural values that require interpretation rather than simple reproduction. Therefore, the teaching of literature can contribute simultaneously to cognitive development, emotional growth, and cultural identity formation among learners (Calafato & Simmonds, 2022; Heggernes, 2021; Aifang et al., 2024).

Reading competence is a multidimensional construct that includes comprehension, interpretation, reflection, evaluation, and engagement with texts. In literature lessons, this competence is not limited to decoding or retelling the content of a literary work. Rather, it involves understanding explicit and implicit meanings, recognizing narrative structure, interpreting figurative language, evaluating characters and events, and connecting textual experience with personal, social, and cultural contexts. Recent research confirms that reading literacy is shaped by several interacting factors, including motivation, metacognitive awareness, reading strategies, and opportunities for meaningful engagement with texts (Heyne et al., 2023; McBreen & Savage, 2021).

The psychological dimension of literary reading is especially important. When students read literary texts, they activate attention, memory, inference-making, imagination, emotional response, and perspective-taking. Literary reading requires students to enter the inner worlds of characters, follow the logic of events, interpret motives, and evaluate human actions. Recent studies on fiction reading and story-based interventions suggest that narrative texts can support students' ability to understand others' thoughts, emotions, and perspectives, particularly when reading is accompanied by discussion and reflection (Secora & Maples, 2025; Lenhart & Richter, 2025). Thus, literary education has psychological value because it develops not only textual comprehension but also empathy, self-reflection, and social understanding.

The development of reading competence has become more challenging in the contemporary educational environment. Digital media, multimedia learning resources, and fragmented online reading habits have changed how students interact with texts. Although digital tools may support access to information and create new learning opportunities, recent reviews and meta-analyses indicate that reading mode, screen use, and digital reading conditions can influence students' comprehension and engagement, especially when longer and more complex texts are involved (Li & Yan, 2024; Peras et al., 2023). This makes the role of the literature teacher even more important in guiding students toward sustained, reflective, and meaningful reading.

Motivation is another central factor in developing students' reading competence. Students are more likely to become competent readers when they read with interest, confidence, purpose, and personal involvement. A recent meta-analysis of reading motivation interventions showed that theory-driven interventions can positively affect students' reading motivation and reading comprehension, particularly when they are designed to trigger interest and active engagement (McBreen & Savage, 2021). Similarly, longitudinal research with secondary school students has shown that reading for enjoyment and declarative metacognition are important predictors of reading literacy development (Heyne et al., 2023). These findings suggest that literature lessons should create conditions in which students not only understand texts but also experience reading as personally meaningful and intellectually engaging.

The teaching of epic and prose works is particularly valuable for developing reading competence. Such works offer complex plots, culturally significant themes, symbolic language, moral dilemmas, and multidimensional characters. However, students often experience difficulty identifying the author's position, understanding figurative language, interpreting the motives of characters, and recognizing causal relationships within the plot. If literature teaching is limited to summarizing the plot or memorizing theoretical concepts, students may not develop deeper literary understanding. Therefore, effective literature instruction should include guided reading, interpretive questioning, prediction tasks, problem-based discussion, collaborative learning, creative response, and reflective writing.

Cultural responsiveness is also essential in literary education. Literary texts transmit cultural memory, national values, historical experience, ethical norms, and collective identity. Recent studies and reviews emphasize that culturally meaningful texts and multicultural literature can strengthen learners' intercultural awareness, identity development, and communicative competence (Aifang et al., 2024; Heggernes, 2021). In the context of teaching Kazakh literature, engagement with literary works can help students understand national worldview, cultural heritage, moral values, and the relationship between individual experience and collective memory. Therefore, reading competence should be understood not only as an academic skill but also as a culturally grounded ability to interpret texts, values, and human experience.

In addition to cultural identity, literary education supports aesthetic and interpretive competence. Students learn to recognize the artistic function of language, narrative structure, imagery, symbolism, conflict, character development, and authorial position. Recent research on literary competence suggests that students' response to literature is closely related to their aesthetic awareness and interpretive ability (Calafato & Simmonds, 2022). This is particularly important in secondary education, where students are expected to move from basic comprehension toward independent interpretation, critical judgment, and creative response.

Previous pedagogical and methodological studies have examined reading interest, reader perception, literary analysis, and the teaching of artistic texts from different perspectives. However, in the current educational context, there is a need to systematize instructional methods that integrate psychological, pedagogical, cultural, and technological dimensions in the development of students' reading competence. This need is especially relevant for teaching epic and prose works, where students must not only understand the plot but also interpret values, emotions, conflicts, and cultural meanings embedded in the text.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to identify and systematize methodological approaches for developing students' reading competence through the teaching of literary works. The study focuses on the psychological, pedagogical, and cultural foundations of reading competence and proposes instructional strategies that support students' gradual movement from basic comprehension to interpretation, reflection, critical thinking, and independent reading.

The objectives of the study are threefold: first, to clarify the psychological, pedagogical, and cultural foundations of developing students' reading competence in the teaching of prose and epic works; second, to examine instructional approaches that support students' motivation, comprehension, interpretation, and critical thinking; and third, to systematize effective methods and technologies for teaching literary works in ways that develop students' reading culture, cultural identity, and independent engagement with literature.

Methods and Materials

Study Design

This study employed a qualitative methodological and pedagogical research design. Since the purpose of the study was to identify and systematize instructional approaches for developing students' reading competence through literary education, the research was based on analytical review, theoretical synthesis, and methodological classification rather than experimental data collection. The study examined psychological, pedagogical, cultural, and methodological dimensions of literature teaching, with particular attention to the teaching of epic and prose works in secondary education.

The qualitative design was appropriate because the study focused on the conceptual and methodological foundations of reading competence, the pedagogical functions of literary texts, and the instructional strategies that may support students' motivation, interpretation, reflection, critical thinking, and independent reading. This approach allowed the study to connect recent findings on reading motivation, metacognition, literary response, digital reading, and culturally responsive teaching with practical methods used in literature classrooms (Aifang et al., 2024; Calafato & Simmonds, 2022; Heyne et al., 2023; McBreen & Savage, 2021).

Research Materials

The materials analyzed in this study included psychological, pedagogical, and methodological literature related to reading competence, reader motivation, literary interpretation, and the teaching of literary works. Particular attention was given to studies and methodological works addressing the formation of

reading interest, reader response, cognitive engagement, critical thinking, and culturally grounded literary education.

The study also considered the instructional content of secondary school literature education, especially the teaching of epic and prose works. These texts were examined as pedagogical materials that can develop students' comprehension, imagination, emotional response, cultural awareness, and interpretive ability. In this regard, literary texts were treated not only as objects of linguistic or literary analysis but also as educational tools for developing students' psychological, cultural, and cognitive engagement with reading.

Selection Criteria

The sources and teaching strategies included in the analysis were selected according to the following criteria: relevance to the development of students' reading competence; connection with the teaching of literary, epic, or prose works; attention to psychological factors such as motivation, perception, memory, imagination, emotional response, and critical thinking; relevance to cultural identity, literary values, and culturally responsive education; applicability to secondary education and classroom-based literature instruction; relevance to contemporary educational conditions, including digital reading, interactive learning, and learner-centered teaching.

Priority was given to sources that addressed reading competence as a multidimensional construct involving comprehension, interpretation, reflection, motivation, and cultural meaning-making. Recent studies published after 2020 were used where possible to strengthen the contemporary theoretical basis of the article.

Analytical Procedure

The analysis was conducted in several stages. First, theoretical and methodological sources on reading competence and literary education were reviewed to identify the main psychological, pedagogical, and cultural factors involved in students' reading development. These included motivation, metacognition, emotional engagement, aesthetic response, cultural awareness, and interpretive thinking.

Second, instructional methods used in literature teaching were classified according to their pedagogical function. These methods included guided reading, expressive reading, question–answer strategies, prediction tasks, problem-based learning, level-based assignments, collective learning, modular learning, creative response activities, and the use of information and communication technologies. Each method was examined in terms of how it supports students' movement from literal comprehension to deeper interpretation and independent reading.

Third, the selected methods were analyzed according to their psychological function in the reading process. For example, prediction tasks were considered in relation to imagination and inferential thinking; question–answer strategies were considered in relation to comprehension and critical reflection; collaborative learning was considered in relation to communication and social interaction; and problem-based tasks were considered in relation to independent thinking and interpretive judgment.

Fourth, the cultural function of literary education was examined. Literary texts were analyzed as carriers of cultural memory, national values, moral experience, and collective identity. This stage focused on how the teaching of Kazakh literature can contribute to students' cultural awareness, value formation, and understanding of national worldview while also supporting broader intercultural competence.

Finally, the findings from the theoretical and methodological analysis were synthesized into a structured pedagogical framework for developing students' reading competence through literary education. This framework emphasizes continuity, gradual progression from simple to complex texts, active student participation, reflective interpretation, and the integration of psychological and cultural dimensions in literature teaching.

Methodological Framework

The methodological framework of the study was based on the principle that reading competence develops gradually through active engagement with literary texts. The framework includes three interconnected levels.

At the first level, students develop basic comprehension of the literary text. This involves understanding the plot, identifying main events, recognizing characters, and following the sequence of actions. At this stage, methods such as expressive reading, guided reading, retelling, and teacher-supported explanation are useful.

At the second level, students move from comprehension to interpretation. They analyze

character motivation, identify conflicts, recognize figurative language, understand the author's position, and explain the relationship between events. At this stage, question–answer strategies, problem-based tasks, comparison, discussion, and level-based assignments are especially important.

At the third level, students develop reflective and independent reading competence. They connect the literary text with personal experience, cultural values, ethical questions, and contemporary social realities. At this stage, creative writing, interpretive essays, group discussion, project-based tasks, and independent reading activities can strengthen students' motivation, cultural identity, and critical thinking.

Trustworthiness of the Analysis

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the study, the analysis was based on triangulation of psychological, pedagogical, cultural, and methodological perspectives. The proposed strategies were not examined as isolated techniques but as interconnected components of a broader system for developing reading competence. The consistency of the analysis was maintained by linking each instructional method to specific reading-related outcomes, including comprehension, motivation, interpretation, reflection, creativity, and cultural awareness.

In addition, the study avoided reducing reading competence to a single skill. Instead, it treated reading as a multidimensional educational process involving cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural development. This approach helped ensure that the proposed methodological system remained consistent with the overall purpose of the study: to develop students as motivated, reflective, culturally aware, and independent readers.

Findings and Results

The methodological and pedagogical analysis showed that the development of students' reading competence through literary education depends on the interaction of psychological, pedagogical, cultural, and technological factors. The findings were organized into five main themes: psychological foundations of reading competence, instructional strategies for literary text comprehension, interactive and innovative teaching technologies, cultural identity formation through literature, and the role of teacher guidance in developing independent readers.

Psychological Foundations of Reading Competence

The analysis indicated that reading competence is not limited to the ability to decode or reproduce the content of a literary text. Rather, it is a multidimensional competence that includes perception, memory, imagination, emotional response, motivation, critical thinking, and interpretive judgment. In literature lessons, students develop reading competence when they are encouraged to move from simple understanding of the plot toward deeper analysis of characters, conflicts, symbols, authorial position, and moral meaning.

The findings showed that students' motivation plays a central role in this process. When students are personally interested in the text and are given opportunities to express their own responses, they become more active participants in reading. Activities such as prediction, discussion, creative retelling, problem-based questions, and reflective writing help students engage with the literary text not only intellectually but also emotionally and imaginatively.

Instructional Strategies for Literary Text Comprehension

The analysis identified several instructional strategies that support the gradual development of reading competence. These strategies help students understand the content of literary works, identify their artistic structure, and interpret their deeper meanings.

Table 1

Instructional strategies for developing reading competence through literary texts

Strategy	Pedagogical function	Expected reading outcome
Expressive reading	Helps students perceive tone, rhythm, emotion, and artistic language	Improved aesthetic perception and emotional engagement
Guided reading	Supports comprehension through teacher guidance and questioning	Better understanding of plot, characters, and key events
Sequential retelling	Helps students reconstruct the storyline logically	Improved memory, coherence, and narrative comprehension
Question–answer method	Encourages students to explain, justify, and interpret ideas	Development of comprehension and critical thinking
Prediction tasks	Invites students to imagine possible continuation of the plot	Strengthening of imagination and inferential thinking
Problem-based tasks	Directs students to analyze conflicts, motives, and moral questions	Improved analytical and reflective thinking
Creative response	Allows students to rewrite, continue, or reinterpret the text	Development of creativity and personal engagement
Level-based assignments	Matches tasks to students' learning abilities	Differentiated development of comprehension and interpretation

Table 1 suggest that the most effective literature lessons are those that combine several of these strategies rather than relying only on teacher explanation or plot summary. When students are guided to read, analyze, compare, question, and respond creatively, they are more likely to develop sustainable reading competence.

Innovative and Interactive Teaching Technologies

The analysis showed that innovative teaching technologies can improve students' engagement with literary texts when they are used purposefully. The comparison between traditional teaching and new pedagogical technologies revealed a major shift in the role of the student and the teacher. In traditional instruction, the student often remains a passive listener, while the teacher explains the text and provides prepared knowledge. In learner-centered instruction, the student becomes an active participant, researcher, interpreter, and creator of meaning.

Table 2

Comparison of traditional and innovative approaches to literature instruction

Traditional literature instruction	Innovative literature instruction
The student mainly listens to the teacher	The student actively searches, interprets, and responds
The teacher explains new information	The teacher guides students toward understanding
The lesson is based mainly on explanation and demonstration	The lesson includes group work, individual tasks, discussion, and creative activities
Knowledge is prepared and transmitted by the teacher	Knowledge is constructed through students' inquiry and reflection
Students perform tasks according to a fixed model	Students solve problems, compare viewpoints, and produce independent interpretations
The focus is on remembering the content	The focus is on comprehension, analysis, reflection, and application

Table 2 showed that modular learning, collective learning, differentiated learning, developmental learning, critical thinking technology, and information and communication technologies can all contribute to the development of reading competence. However, these technologies are effective only when they are connected to the internal logic of the literary text and to students' psychological readiness, motivation, and interpretive ability.

Modular, Collective, and Differentiated Learning

The findings showed that modular learning is useful because it organizes literature instruction into three stages: introduction, dialogue, and conclusion. At the introductory stage, students become familiar with the topic, the aim of the lesson, and the main problem of the literary work. At the dialogue stage, they practice, discuss, interpret, and apply knowledge through repeated engagement with the text. At the conclusion stage, they demonstrate their understanding through independent tasks, reflection, assessment, or creative work.

Collective learning was also identified as an effective method for developing reading competence. It teaches students to cooperate, communicate, evaluate each other's ideas, and take responsibility for shared learning. Pair work, group work, and whole-class discussion help students compare interpretations and understand that literary meaning can be approached from different perspectives.

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Differentiated and level-based assignments are especially important because students do not develop reading competence at the same pace. The analysis showed that tasks can be organized according to different levels of complexity. For example, students at the first level may identify key events and retell the text in their own words. Students at the second level may prepare a visual outline or support diagram showing the main structure of the work. Students at the third level may complete creative and analytical tasks that connect the literary idea with contemporary life.

Cultural and Moral Development through Literary Education

The findings indicated that literary education plays a significant role in developing students' cultural identity, moral awareness, and value orientation. In the teaching of Kazakh literature, literary texts introduce students to national worldview, cultural memory, ethical values, historical experience, and artistic perception. Through engagement with literary works, students learn to recognize the relationship between individual life, national culture, and universal human questions.

The analysis showed that epic and prose works are especially valuable for this purpose because they contain complex moral conflicts, social relationships, character development, and culturally significant themes. When students analyze these works, they develop not only literary knowledge but also empathy, self-reflection, and awareness of human behavior. Thus, literature lessons can help students understand themselves, their culture, and the world around them.

Development of Critical and Independent Reading

Another important finding was that reading competence develops when students are gradually guided toward independent thinking. Problem-based learning, critical questions, literary analysis, reflective writing, and creative tasks help students move beyond passive reception of information. These methods encourage students to identify problems, propose interpretations, justify their views, and draw conclusions from the text.

The analysis showed that students' independent reading culture is formed through continuity. Reading competence cannot be developed in a single lesson or through occasional activities. It requires systematic work, regular feedback, age-appropriate tasks, and the gradual transition from simple comprehension to complex interpretation. Therefore, the development of reading competence should be understood as a continuous pedagogical process that includes classroom reading, extracurricular reading, discussion, writing, reflection, and creative response.

Integrated Framework for Developing Reading Competence

Based on the analysis, the study proposes an integrated framework for developing students' reading competence through literary education.

Table 3

Integrated framework for developing students' reading competence

Stage	Main focus	Teaching methods	Expected outcome
Stage 1: Comprehension	Understanding the plot, characters, and main events	Expressive reading, guided reading, retelling, teacher explanation	Basic textual understanding
Stage 2: Interpretation	Identifying conflict, authorial position, figurative language, and meaning	Question–answer method, problem-based tasks, discussion, comparison	Analytical and interpretive thinking
Stage 3: Reflection	Connecting the text with personal, cultural, and moral experience	Reflective writing, group discussion, creative response	Emotional engagement and value formation
Stage 4: Independent reading	Developing reading habit, motivation, and self-directed learning	Extracurricular reading, projects, presentations, book discussions	Independent reading culture and sustained motivation

Table 3 shows that reading competence develops progressively. Students first understand the text, then interpret its artistic and moral meanings, reflect on its personal and cultural significance, and finally become independent readers capable of engaging with literary works beyond the classroom.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the development of students' reading competence through literary education requires a systematic and psychologically informed methodology. Effective literature instruction should combine comprehension-based, interpretive, creative, collaborative, and

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culturally responsive strategies. The teacher's role is not merely to explain the text but to guide students toward active reading, independent thinking, emotional engagement, and cultural understanding.

The study found that literary education contributes to the development of reading competence when students are encouraged to participate actively in reading, analyze literary problems, express personal responses, cooperate with peers, and connect literary texts with cultural and moral values. Therefore, the development of reading competence should be viewed as an integrated pedagogical process involving cognition, emotion, motivation, culture, and independent learning.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that the development of students' reading competence through literary education is a multidimensional process that involves cognitive, psychological, cultural, and pedagogical factors. The analysis showed that reading competence cannot be limited to the ability to decode words or reproduce the plot of a literary text. Rather, it includes comprehension, interpretation, emotional engagement, critical reflection, aesthetic response, and the ability to connect literary meaning with personal and cultural experience. This understanding is consistent with recent studies emphasizing that reading literacy develops through the interaction of motivation, reading strategies, metacognitive awareness, and meaningful engagement with texts (Heyne et al., 2023; McBreen & Savage, 2021).

One of the central findings of the study is the importance of motivation in developing students' reading competence. Literature lessons become more effective when students are not passive recipients of information but active participants in meaning-making. Strategies such as guided reading, prediction, question–answer activities, creative retelling, problem-based discussion, and reflective writing can increase students' personal involvement with the text. This finding is supported by recent evidence showing that theory-driven reading motivation interventions can improve both students' reading motivation and reading comprehension (McBreen & Savage, 2021). Therefore, motivation should be treated not as an additional element of literature teaching but as a core psychological condition for developing reading competence.

The study also highlights the importance of metacognitive and strategic reading. Students need to know not only what a literary text says, but also how to approach, question, analyze, and interpret it. The findings suggest that reading competence develops when teachers gradually guide students from literal comprehension to deeper interpretation and independent evaluation. This is in line with research showing that reading strategies and declarative metacognition are important predictors of adolescents' reading literacy (Heyne et al., 2023). In this sense, literary education should help students become aware of their own reading processes, including how they infer meaning, evaluate characters, recognize conflicts, and relate textual ideas to broader social and cultural contexts.

Another important finding concerns the role of literary response and aesthetic competence. Literary texts require students to respond not only cognitively but also emotionally and aesthetically. Students' ability to recognize imagery, symbolism, narrative structure, tone, conflict, and authorial position contributes to their literary competence. Recent research has shown that literary response and aesthetic competence are closely connected with students' literary competence, particularly when learners engage actively with textual and multimodal literary materials (Calafato & Simmonds, 2022). This supports the argument that literature lessons should not be reduced to plot explanation or theoretical memorization. Instead, students should be encouraged to experience literature as an artistic, emotional, and interpretive form of knowledge.

The findings further suggest that interactive and learner-centered teaching methods are more effective than purely traditional instruction. In traditional literature teaching, the teacher often explains the text while the student listens and memorizes. However, such an approach may limit students' interpretive independence and reduce their motivation to read. By contrast, innovative methods such as collective learning, modular learning, differentiated assignments, problem-based learning, and creative response activities allow students to participate actively in the reading process. These methods help students discuss, compare, justify, question, and defend their interpretations. As a result,

literary education becomes a process of inquiry rather than simple knowledge transmission.

The role of digital technologies should also be considered carefully. The findings of this study support the use of information and communication technologies in literature teaching, but only when these tools serve clear pedagogical purposes. Digital resources, multimedia materials, electronic textbooks, and visual aids can increase students' engagement and provide additional access to literary and cultural information. However, recent reviews suggest that digital and paper reading may affect comprehension differently, especially among students aged 6–18 and when longer or more complex texts are involved (Peras et al., 2023). Therefore, digital tools should not replace deep literary reading; rather, they should support guided interpretation, discussion, visualization, and independent exploration of texts.

A further contribution of this study is its emphasis on the cultural function of literary education. Literary texts are carriers of cultural memory, national values, moral experience, and collective identity. In the context of Kazakh literature education, students' engagement with epic and prose works can help them understand national worldview, historical experience, ethical values, and the relationship between individual and collective life. This is especially important in modern education, where students are expected to develop both national identity and intercultural awareness. Recent studies on multicultural and intercultural literary education also emphasize that literary texts can contribute to learners' intercultural communicative competence and cultural understanding (Aifang et al., 2024; Heggernes, 2021).

The findings also show that the development of reading competence requires continuity and gradual progression. Students cannot become competent readers through isolated lessons or occasional reading tasks. They need a systematic process that begins with comprehension, moves toward interpretation and reflection, and eventually supports independent reading. At the first stage, students learn to understand the plot, characters, and sequence of events. At the second stage, they interpret conflict, figurative language, authorial position, and moral meaning. At the third stage, they connect literary works with personal experience, cultural values, and contemporary life. Finally, they develop independent reading habits through extracurricular reading, projects, presentations, and book discussions.

The teacher's role is central in all stages of this process. The teacher should not act only as a transmitter of ready-made interpretations but as a guide who creates conditions for students' active engagement with literary texts. Effective teachers help students ask meaningful questions, compare viewpoints, identify problems, express personal responses, and justify their interpretations. They also provide feedback, select age-appropriate and culturally meaningful texts, and design tasks that correspond to students' different levels of readiness. In this way, the teacher supports not only reading comprehension but also students' confidence, autonomy, creativity, and reflective thinking.

The study also confirms that the teaching of epic and prose works has strong pedagogical potential for developing students' analytical and emotional abilities. Epic and prose texts often include complex plots, moral dilemmas, symbolic images, and multidimensional characters. These features encourage students to analyze causality, predict events, understand motives, and evaluate human behavior. When such texts are taught through active and psychologically informed methods, they can develop imagination, empathy, cultural awareness, and critical thinking. Thus, literary education contributes to the formation of students not only as readers but also as reflective individuals capable of understanding human experience.

At the same time, several limitations should be acknowledged. This study is based on qualitative methodological and pedagogical analysis rather than empirical classroom observation or experimental measurement. Therefore, the proposed framework should be considered a theoretical and methodological contribution rather than evidence of measured classroom effectiveness. Future studies should empirically test the proposed strategies in literature classrooms, compare different instructional methods, and examine their effects on students' reading motivation, comprehension, literary interpretation, and cultural awareness. Longitudinal studies would also be useful for understanding how students' reading competence develops over time through continuous literary education.

Overall, the discussion confirms that the development of reading competence through literary education

requires an integrated approach. Cognitive comprehension, motivation, metacognitive awareness, emotional response, cultural identity, and instructional technology should not be treated separately. They interact within the classroom and shape how students understand, interpret, and value literary texts. Therefore, literature teaching should be organized as a psychologically informed, culturally responsive, and pedagogically systematic process that helps students become motivated, reflective, and independent readers.

Revised Conclusion

This study examined the psychological, pedagogical, and cultural dimensions of developing students' reading competence through literary education. The analysis showed that reading competence is not a narrow technical skill but a complex educational construct that includes comprehension, interpretation, reflection, motivation, aesthetic response, critical thinking, and cultural meaning-making. Literary education can therefore play an important role in shaping students' intellectual, emotional, and cultural development.

The study found that students' reading competence develops most effectively when literature teaching moves beyond plot retelling and theoretical memorization. Effective instruction should guide students toward active engagement with literary texts through expressive reading, guided reading, interpretive questioning, prediction tasks, problem-based discussion, collaborative learning, differentiated assignments, creative response, and reflective writing. These methods help students understand literary content, analyze artistic structure, evaluate characters and conflicts, and connect literary meaning with personal and cultural experience.

The findings also emphasize the importance of motivation and metacognitive awareness. Students become competent readers when they read with interest, purpose, confidence, and strategic awareness. Therefore, literature teachers should create learning environments in which students are encouraged to ask questions, express opinions, compare interpretations, and gradually take responsibility for their own reading. In this process, the teacher acts not only as a source of knowledge but also as a facilitator of interpretation, reflection, and independent learning.

Another important conclusion is that literary education contributes to cultural identity and moral development. In the context of teaching Kazakh literature, epic and prose works introduce students to national values, cultural memory, ethical questions, and collective experience. Through the analysis of literary texts, students learn to understand their cultural heritage while also developing broader intercultural awareness and sensitivity to human experience. Thus, reading competence should be understood as both an academic and cultural competence.

The study further concludes that modern pedagogical technologies can support the development of reading competence when they are used purposefully. Modular learning, collective learning, differentiated instruction, problem-based learning, and digital tools can increase student engagement and support deeper comprehension. However, technology should not replace sustained literary reading. Its value depends on how effectively it supports interpretation, discussion, reflection, and independent learning.

Based on the findings, the study proposes that reading competence should be developed through a continuous and gradual pedagogical process. Students should first be guided toward basic comprehension, then toward interpretation and reflection, and finally toward independent reading and cultural meaning-making. This process requires systematic instruction, age-appropriate tasks, regular feedback, and meaningful interaction between teacher, student, and literary text.

In conclusion, literary education can serve as an effective means of developing students' reading competence when it integrates psychological, pedagogical, cultural, and technological dimensions. Teaching epic and prose works through interactive and reflective methods helps students become more motivated, thoughtful, culturally aware, and independent readers. Future empirical studies are recommended to test the proposed methodological framework in classroom practice and to examine its effects on students' reading motivation, comprehension, interpretive ability, and cultural identity formation.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contribute to this study.

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