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The Influence of Luwu's S3 Cultural Values (Sipakatau', Sipakalebbi', Sipakainge') on Students' Neuro-Psycholinguistic Engagement in an English Classroom

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Abstract

The present study examines how locally rooted cultural principles drawn from the Luwu S3 tradition namely Sipakatau (the ethic of mutual respect), Sipakalebbi (the practice of mutual appreciation), and Sipakainge (the norm of mutual reminding) shape students' neuro-psycholinguistic engagement within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructional context at SMP Rante Damai. Neuro-psycholinguistic engagement is conceptualized across three interrelated dimensions: learners' dispositional orientation toward the target language, their capacity for sustained attentional focus during pedagogical interactions, and their readiness to initiate communicative acts, widely referred to as Willingness to Communicate (WTC). Employing a qualitative descriptive-interpretive methodology, empirical data were systematically gathered across a one-month observation period through triangulated instruments, encompassing participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and open-ended questionnaires administered to six student participants, one EFL practitioner, and one indigenous cultural authority (Puang Parengge Sikapa). Thematic analysis of the data yielded three principal findings: Sipakatau fostered a psychologically secure and respectful classroom climate that effectively reduced affective barriers and cultivated constructive learning orientations; Sipakalebbi functioned as an appreciative mechanism that strengthened learners' self-efficacy and directly elevated their communicative willingness; and Sipakainge reinforced collaborative accountability among peers, sustaining heightened attentiveness toward linguistic structures. Collectively, these findings substantiate the conclusion that S3 cultural values constitute an integrated ethnopedagogical framework whose influence meaningfully conditions the neuro-psychological preconditions fundamental to effective language acquisition. From a practical standpoint, these findings advocate for the deliberate embedding of S3 principles across classroom governance, instructional activity architecture, and formative feedback mechanisms to maximize the depth of learner engagement.

Keywords: S3 Values, Neuro-Psycholinguistic Engagement, Attentional Focus, Willingness to Communicate, Affective Filter, Ethnopedagogy, EFL Classroom

INTRODUCTION

Constructing a genuinely productive language learning environment demands more than the mere application of instructional strategies; it equally necessitates careful attention to the socio-cultural and psychological forces that quietly shape learners' internal cognitive and emotional states. Within the domain of English Language Teaching (ELT), persistent obstacles such as linguistic anxiety, fragmented attentional capacity, and an overall reluctance to initiate communicative interaction continue to compromise the quality and depth of language acquisition among learners. Simultaneously, the field of ethnopedagogy advances a compelling argument for the purposeful incorporation of indigenous cultural wisdom into formal educational practice, asserting that learning becomes substantially more meaningful and contextually grounded when it resonates with the lived cultural realities of students. The Luwu community of South Sulawesi embodies a deeply rooted philosophical heritage encapsulated in what is collectively termed the S3 framework, comprising three foundational values: *Sipakatau*, which represents the ethic of reciprocal human respect; *Sipakalebbi*, which reflects the practice of mutually affirming one another's dignity and worth; and *Sipakainge*, which embodies the cultural norm of collectively holding one another accountable through compassionate reminding. These values function not merely as abstract moral ideals but as active social principles that regulate interpersonal conduct, nurture communal harmony, and promote the shared dignity and growth of every individual within a community.

Examined through a neuro-psycholinguistic lens, the attainment of meaningful language competence is fundamentally contingent upon the presence of optimal cognitive and affective conditions within the learner. (Krashen, 2004) affective filter hypothesis provides a foundational theoretical anchor here, proposing that elevated anxiety levels and entrenched negative attitudes toward the target language effectively obstruct the flow of comprehensible input before it can reach the language acquisition device, thereby impeding internalization. Equally indispensable is the role of attention, a finite and highly selective cognitive resource whose allocation is decisive in determining whether learners successfully notice and subsequently process incoming linguistic forms (Robinson et al., 2012). Beyond cognition, Willingness to Communicate (WTC) emerges as another pivotal construct, capturing a learner's intrinsic readiness and dispositional inclination to actively participate in second language discourse a quality that has been consistently identified as a robust predictor of sustained language practice and long-term linguistic development (MacIntyre & Clément, 1998). Against this theoretical backdrop, the present study advances the proposition that the three S3 cultural values exert a direct and meaningful influence upon these interrelated neuro-psycholinguistic processes by cultivating a classroom atmosphere that organically diminishes perceived social threat, amplifies sustained cognitive focus, and emboldens learners to engage more freely in verbal participation.

Notwithstanding the compelling theoretical convergence between cultural values and psycholinguistic engagement, empirical investigations that rigorously examine how specific indigenous cultural principles concretely and measurably bear upon these simultaneously operating dimensions of learner engagement remain notably absent from the existing literature. The present study is therefore positioned to address this scholarly gap by pursuing the following central research question: **How do the**

internalized values of Luwu's S3 encompassing *Sipakatau*, *Sipakalebbi*, and *Sipakainge* shape the attitudinal orientations, attentional engagement, and communicative willingness of students within the English language classroom at SMP Rante Damai?

LITERATURE REVIEW, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHOD

1. Neuro-Psycholinguistic Foundations of Language Learning

The process of language acquisition is profoundly shaped by an intricate interplay between cognitive mechanisms and affective states. Three constructs stand as particularly central to this dynamic:

Attitude, as conceptualized within the language learning literature, refers to a learner's relatively enduring constellation of beliefs, emotional responses, and behavioral inclinations directed toward both the target language and the broader instructional environment in which learning unfolds. When learners cultivate a genuinely positive attitudinal orientation, the affective filter is correspondingly weakened, thereby enabling comprehensible input to be processed with greater efficiency and depth (Gardner, 1985).

Attention, in turn, constitutes the learner's capacity to selectively concentrate cognitive resources upon specific linguistic stimuli while simultaneously filtering out competing distractions. This selective allocation of attentional resources is indispensable for the act of noticing the critical psychological mechanism through which incoming linguistic input is transformed into intake and subsequently consolidated within long-term memory (Robinson et al., 2012).

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) captures a learner's immediate readiness to initiate or participate in discourse through a second language at any given moment (MacIntyre & Clément, 1998). This construct is simultaneously conditioned by stable dispositional characteristics and fluid situational factors, with learner self-confidence functioning as its most proximate and influential psychological antecedent.

2. Ethnopedagogy and the S3 Framework

Ethnopedagogy advances the foundational conviction that meaningful education must be organically embedded within learners' own cultural landscapes, drawing upon indigenous knowledge systems to strengthen both the relevance and the transformative potential of formal instruction (Fatah, 2018). The S3 values indigenous to the Luwu community present a coherent and actionable cultural framework through which this ethnopedagogical vision can be practically realized. *Sipakatau*, centered on the principle of mutual respect, cultivates an environment in which every individual is treated with unconditional dignity, thereby generating a deep sense of psychological safety. *Sipakalebbi*, grounded in mutual appreciation, actively honors and elevates the self-worth of others, functioning as a sustained source of learner self-esteem. *Sipakainge*, expressed through mutual reminding, reflects a shared communal commitment to growth, wherein supportive and constructive correction serves as an instrument of collective advancement.

This investigation argues that each of the three S3 cultural values operates through a distinct neuro-psycholinguistic pathway: *Sipakatau* engenders a psychologically secure and dignity-affirming classroom climate, which consequently cultivates more constructive learner attitudes by substantially reducing affective barriers to input processing; *Sipakalebbi* systematically nurtures learners' internal sense of self-worth and communicative confidence, thereby directly elevating their Willingness to Communicate (WTC); while *Sipakainge* instills a spirit of collaborative and mutually accountable vigilance among peers, which in turn sharpens and sustains learners' attentional orientation toward target linguistic forms.

This inquiry adopted a qualitative descriptive-interpretive paradigm, purposefully selected to illuminate the complex and nuanced relationship between indigenous cultural values and learner engagement dynamics. The participant constellation comprised six students deliberately chosen to represent a spectrum of engagement profiles alongside one practicing English educator and one indigenous cultural authority (*Puang Parengge Sikapa*) at SMP Rante Damai. Empirical data were systematically gathered across a one-month fieldwork period utilizing methodological triangulation, integrating structured classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and open-ended questionnaires. Thematic analysis following (Braun et al., 2008) established framework was subsequently applied to excavate recurring patterns connecting S3 behavioral manifestations to learners' attitudinal orientations, attentional engagement, and communicative willingness. Rigorous ethical protocols encompassing informed consent, participant anonymity, and strict data confidentiality were upheld throughout the entire research process.

FINDINGS

The findings of this investigation demonstrate that the deeply internalized S3 cultural values exerted a substantive and multidimensional influence upon students' neuro-psycholinguistic engagement across all three operationalized dimensions. This transformative influence manifested through three interconnected pathways: first, *Sipakatau* functioned as a foundational cultivator of constructive and enduring attitudinal orientations among learners; second, *Sipakalebbi* operated as a powerful catalytic force that meaningfully amplified students' intrinsic readiness and dispositional confidence to engage in communicative acts; and third, *Sipakainge* served as an instrumental mechanism through which collaborative attentiveness toward target linguistic forms was systematically strengthened and sustained throughout instructional interactions.

DISCUSSION

The present findings both corroborate and meaningfully extend established neuro-psycholinguistic theoretical frameworks. *Sipakatau* serves as a living embodiment of (Krashen, 2004), affective filter hypothesis, operationalizing it through the deliberate construction of a low-threat interpersonal environment that liberates learners' cognitive resources from emotional preoccupation, thereby redirecting them toward productive language processing. *Sipakalebbi* provides compelling empirical substantiation for the socio-psychological model of WTC advanced by (MacIntyre & Clément, 1998), demonstrating concretely how communicative confidence is not an innate individual trait but rather a socially constructed disposition, continuously nurtured and reinforced through acts of interpersonal affirmation. *Sipakainge*,

meanwhile, contributes a genuinely novel theoretical perspective by reconceptualizing attention not as a purely individualized cognitive faculty but as a socially distributed resource, wherein collaborative peer vigilance sustains collective focus without simultaneously triggering the counterproductive arousal associated with evaluative anxiety (Robinson et al., 2012).

The integrative synergy of the S3 framework reveals an elegantly complementary architecture: *Sipakatau* establishes the psychologically secure foundation upon which learning can safely unfold; *Sipakalebbi* supplies the affective and motivational energy that propels learners toward communicative risk-taking; and *Sipakainge* enables the precise, shared calibration of linguistic attention through collective accountability. Taken together, this tripartite cultural framework constitutes a culturally grounded and empirically supported model for systematically optimizing the psychological and behavioral preconditions that underpin effective language acquisition (Fatah, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The present study arrives at the substantive conclusion that the S3 cultural values indigenous to the Luwu community exert a demonstrably positive influence upon students' neuro-psycholinguistic engagement within the EFL classroom context. Specifically, *Sipakatau* establishes the dignified and respectful relational foundation from which constructive learning attitudes organically emerge; *Sipakalebbi* systematically cultivates the self-confidence that learners require to participate actively and fearlessly in communicative exchanges; and *Sipakainge* sustains a spirit of collaborative attentiveness that keeps learners collectively oriented toward the conscious processing of target linguistic forms. The deliberate embedding of these three values into everyday classroom practice therefore constitutes a potent and culturally grounded ethnopedagogical strategy for meaningfully elevating language learning outcomes.

Implications for Practice

Practitioners are encouraged to explicitly introduce and consistently model S3 values as foundational behavioral norms governing classroom interactions. Instructional activities should be architecturally designed to necessitate genuine peer support and mutual appreciation collaborative projects and structured peer feedback mechanisms serving as particularly effective vehicles. Furthermore, error correction ought to be reframed not as individual remediation but as a shared act of communal care, aligning naturally with the *Sipakainge* spirit of collective responsibility for one another's linguistic growth.

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