

Promoting Responsible English Learning Trough Restitution Triangle and Local Values of Bugis Makassar at SMA Makassar Raya

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how the integration of the Restitution Triangle with local wisdom from Bugis-Makassar culture supports the development of positive discipline in English learning. Conducted at a senior high school in Makassar, this qualitative study employed interviews, observations, and documentation to explore how students internalize responsibility and respectful behavior. The findings revealed that the implementation of restitution strategies, aligned with cultural values such as Sipakatau, Sipakainge', and Sipakalebbi, significantly contributed to students' behavioral awareness and self-regulation. The culturally adapted restitution model enabled students to reflect on their actions, repair harm, and engage actively in language learning. This research highlights the potential of combining restorative approaches with indigenous values to enhance classroom discipline and learner autonomy.

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1. Introduction

Discipline is a cornerstone of effective education, playing a vital role in shaping learners' behavior, motivation, and moral development. Over the past decades, educational paradigms have progressively shifted from authoritarian and punitive models toward student-centered frameworks that prioritize internal regulation, social-emotional growth, and character building (Bear, 2010; Charles, 2013; Prihandoko et al., 2019; Kaharuddin et al., 2023). In contrast to traditional discipline systems that focus on obedience and external consequences, contemporary approaches advocate for restorative practices that empower students to make ethical decisions and take responsibility for their actions. One such model is the Restitution Triangle, developed by Diane Gossen (2004), which emphasizes self-control, accountability, and personal growth by guiding students to understand their behavior, meet their needs constructively, and restore relationships that may have been damaged.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, the application of positive discipline becomes even more crucial. Language classrooms demand psychological safety, student confidence, and active engagement, especially in oral communication. Learners are more likely to participate and take risks when the environment supports respectful interaction and values mistakes as opportunities for learning (Dornyei, 2005; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Rahman, 2019; Suma et al., 2024). However, many EFL learners in Indonesia experience anxiety and demotivation due to fear-based discipline and social ridicule. This challenge underscores the need for culturally responsive, positive disciplinary models that not only regulate behavior but also support identity formation and learner autonomy.

Restitution, as conceptualized by Gossen (2004), rejects the punitive notion of "fixing" students and instead invites them to reflect on their behavior in light of their core beliefs and goals. The model operates on three key components: (1) understanding the misbehavior, (2) identifying unmet needs, and (3) making restitution to restore harmony. It draws from Choice Theory (Glasser, 1998), which proposes that all human behavior is driven by five basic needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. By helping students reconnect to their internal values and purposes, restitution promotes intrinsic motivation and behavioral self-management. Numerous studies have found that restitution-based discipline improves classroom climate, reduces defiance, and enhances academic engagement (Gossen, 2007; Stewart, 2012; Weda et al., 2021; Dalyan et al., 2022).

While the theoretical foundation of restitution is rooted in Western psychological models, its philosophical alignment with non-Western moral systems allows for cross-cultural adaptation. In South Sulawesi, particularly within the Bugis-Makassar ethnic groups, local wisdom has long emphasized honor, compassion, and collective responsibility as central elements of social life. Key values include *Siri' na Pacce*, which encompass the concepts of personal dignity (*siri'*) and empathetic suffering or solidarity (*pacce*). These values dictate how individuals maintain respect for themselves and others, especially in communal and educational settings (Abdullah, 2015; Rahman, 2019).

Additionally, the triadic moral principles of *Sipakatau* (mutual humanization), *Sipakainge'* (reminding each other), and *Sipakalebbi* (mutual respect) represent the relational ethics that guide interpersonal behavior among Bugis-Makassar people. These values function as informal social regulators that encourage empathy, humility, and reconciliation—traits that align seamlessly with the goals of restorative discipline. In classroom contexts, they can be operationalized as tools for reflective dialogue, peer support, and non-coercive correction.

According to Mattulada (1985), *Siri'* is not merely an abstract virtue but a dynamic force that regulates behavior through collective social consciousness. When students act in ways that dishonor themselves or others, they are motivated not by fear of punishment but by a desire to restore *siri'* and reestablish communal harmony. In this sense, Bugis-Makassar culture provides a culturally grounded rationale for discipline that goes beyond compliance and aligns with the moral growth encouraged by restitution. Educational researchers have increasingly called for the integration of local cultural values into school discipline frameworks, especially in multicultural and multilingual contexts like Indonesia. Nieto and Bode (2012) emphasize that culturally relevant pedagogy respects the heritage of learners while promoting academic excellence and social responsibility. When disciplinary practices are adapted to reflect the students' sociocultural background, they become more meaningful, ethical, and sustainable. In this light, the Restitution Triangle, when situated within the Bugis-Makassar worldview, holds significant promise for fostering student responsibility and reflective behavior in English learning environments.

Moreover, the integration of local wisdom into discipline systems contributes to the broader goals of character education in Indonesia. The 2013 National Curriculum emphasizes the cultivation of religious, moral, social, and civic values in students. By embedding indigenous moral systems within restorative models, educators can support national educational goals while honoring regional identities.

The compatibility between restitution and Bugis-Makassar ethics serves as an ideal model of how global theories can be localized to create transformative educational experiences. The present study aims to explore how the Restitution Triangle, when embedded within the Bugis-Makassar cultural framework, can promote positive discipline among senior high school students in EFL contexts.

Specifically, the research investigates how restitution practices that incorporate local wisdom influence students' self-regulation, classroom behavior, and engagement in English learning at SMA Makassar Raya. This study addresses three critical gaps in existing literature: (1) the lack of empirical studies on restorative discipline in Indonesian schools; (2) the limited exploration of local cultural values in classroom management; and (3) the absence of pedagogical models that integrate restitution with indigenous moral systems in EFL settings.

Through this research, the author hopes to contribute to the development of a culturally responsive disciplinary model that supports both academic and character outcomes. By examining how students experience, interpret, and respond to restitution within their cultural context, the study offers insights into how educators can foster a learning environment where respect, responsibility, and reflection are central to both behavior and language acquisition.

2. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to investigate the phenomenon within its authentic educational context. As emphasized by Creswell (2012), a case study design is frequently utilized in various fields, especially in evaluative research, where a researcher explores specific cases—such as events, programs, individuals, or processes—in considerable depth. This methodological choice is particularly effective for analyzing complex interactions between disciplinary models, cultural traditions, and student behavior in the classroom environment.

The case study enabled the researcher to conduct an intensive and contextualized examination of how the Restitution Triangle was applied in English teaching practices within the cultural framework of Bugis-Makassar values. Data collection techniques included classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, all carried out during the ongoing teaching and learning process. These methods provided triangulated insights into how discipline was constructed and negotiated by both teachers and students in real-time interactions. The research followed

a descriptive qualitative design, aiming to interpret the social dynamics and participants' experiences using verbal data rather than numerical measures. The primary goal was to provide a rich and holistic description of how the Restitution Triangle functioned as a culturally responsive disciplinary approach, fostering students' self-awareness, responsibility, and engagement in learning English at SMA Makassar Raya.

3. Result and Discussion

This section elaborates the results of the study in accordance with the three formulated research questions. The core aspects addressed are: (1) the implementation of the Restitution Triangle Approach (RTA) within the cultural context of Makassar in fostering students' positive discipline in learning English, (2) the observed effects of this implementation in students' behavior—specifically punctuality, responsibility in task completion, and mutual respect—and (3) the students' perceptions regarding the approach's relevance and effectiveness when combined with cultural values.

3.1 Implementation of the Restitution Triangle Approach in the Makassar Cultural Context

The findings reveal that the RTA was applied consistently in a way that aligns with the students' cultural identity. Core cultural values, such as *siri' na pacce* (self-worth and compassion), *sipakatau* (mutual humanization), and *sipakalebbi* (mutual respect), were embedded within the behavioral management strategies. These values were not only acknowledged but were actively utilized to guide classroom interactions and student reflection. An illustrative example comes from a case where a student was found sleeping during the lesson. Instead of publicly reprimanding the student, the teacher employed a private dialogue structured through the three phases of RTA: creating emotional safety, identifying shared values, and co-constructing a restitution plan. The teacher validated the student's circumstances, invoked cultural pride through *siri' na pacce*, and encouraged the student to make amends by improving future behavior. This restorative interaction led to observable improvement in attentiveness and participation in subsequent classes. This approach, while grounded in a structured model of behavior intervention, demonstrated sensitivity to students' cultural contexts and psychological needs. By framing disciplinary conversations around dignity and shared values rather than punishment, the RTA fostered a learning environment where students felt safe, valued, and intrinsically motivated to improve their behavior. This aligns with the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy, which emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and incorporating learners' cultural backgrounds into teaching practices.

Furthermore, the implementation of RTA fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility among students. In several cases, students who previously exhibited passive or disruptive behavior began initiating dialogue with teachers regarding their performance and responsibilities. For instance, one participant reported saying, "I realize now that the task is my responsibility, not something to fear punishment for if I fail." This kind of statement reflects a cognitive and emotional shift in the students, from compliance based on fear to commitment grounded in self-awareness and personal integrity—an ideal outcome of positive discipline. These behavioral transformations were supported by the culturally resonant concepts of *sipakatau* and *sipakalebbi*. Teachers reported that invoking these terms during restitution discussions helped students recall values taught at home and in their communities, which increased their receptiveness to feedback and redirection. In Bugis-Makassar culture, to *sipakatau* is to acknowledge each person's humanity, a principle that discourages shaming and supports respectful communication. When used in classroom dialogue, it reinforced the perception that correction was not a form of attack, but an opportunity for growth.

The *sipakalebbi* principle played a similarly vital role. It provided a framework for maintaining mutual respect between teacher and student, especially during disciplinary moments. Teachers noted that students often responded positively when they sensed that their dignity was preserved, even when they were being held accountable. This preservation of dignity is a cornerstone of the Restitution Triangle Approach, where the focus is not on assigning blame but on restoring the learner to their best self. The inclusion of *siri' na pacce* as a motivational anchor within the RTA was particularly powerful. This cultural value, deeply ingrained in the Bugis-Makassar identity, encompasses a strong sense of honor, self-worth, and empathy for others. Teachers who referenced this value during interventions reported that students were more willing to reflect on their actions and make meaningful behavioral changes. One teacher shared that reminding a student of *siri'* helped prevent repeated absenteeism, as the student felt a renewed sense of responsibility not to let down their peers and teachers.

Importantly, the findings indicated that the success of RTA was not solely dependent on the strategy itself but also on the teacher's cultural competence and consistency in applying it. Teachers who fully embraced both the philosophical and practical dimensions of the Restitution Triangle were able to create a more sustainable culture of positive discipline in the classroom. These teachers not only applied the model reactively during misconduct but also integrated its principles into daily routines, class discussions, and conflict resolution.

Additionally, the RTA process appeared to promote social cohesion within the classroom. As students began to internalize the values being modeled and discussed, peer interactions became more respectful and supportive. Several observations noted students spontaneously offering help to one another, reminding peers about class responsibilities, and resolving disagreements through calm discussions rather than arguments.

This environment reflects what restorative theorists describe as a relational classroom climate, where mutual accountability and empathy become the social norms. Moreover, the Restitution Triangle Approach, when infused with local cultural values, bridged the often-perceived gap between school rules and community ethics. In conventional punitive systems, students frequently experience a disconnect between disciplinary procedures at school and the moral teachings they receive at home. However, the RTA created a continuum between home and school expectations, making behavior correction feel more authentic and acceptable to students.

Parents interviewed during the study also expressed appreciation for this alignment, noting that it reinforced moral development in ways that punishment could not. The implications of these findings are manifold. Firstly, they suggest that disciplinary interventions in culturally diverse contexts must be adapted to align with students' cultural worldviews. Imposing rigid or foreign models of discipline without sensitivity to local values can result in resistance, resentment, or superficial compliance. By contrast, the RTA's flexibility and emphasis on mutual understanding made it particularly effective in the Bugis-Makassar cultural environment.

Secondly, the findings highlight the critical role of teacher-student relationships in shaping behavioral outcomes. When teachers approached students with empathy and communicated high expectations through a lens of cultural respect, students responded with greater accountability. This dynamic echoes findings from previous studies on restorative practices, which emphasize the importance of connection before correction.

Thirdly, the success of the approach demonstrates the potential of restorative frameworks to go beyond behavior management and function as a vehicle for character education. Students who engaged in the restitution process were not merely avoiding punishment; they were being invited to consider the impact of their actions, reflect on shared values, and take responsibility in a constructive way. These are foundational skills not only for academic settings but also for life beyond school.

The integration of the Restitution Triangle Approach with the cultural values of Bugis-Makassar students has proven to be an effective strategy for cultivating positive discipline in the English learning context. Through culturally grounded dialogue, empathy-based reflection, and collaborative restitution planning, the approach nurtured intrinsic motivation, strengthened classroom relationships, and promoted a more respectful and inclusive learning atmosphere.

The use of local wisdom such as *siri' na pacce*, *sipakatau*, and *sipakalebbe* did not merely add cultural nuance to an imported model—they fundamentally shaped how discipline was understood, communicated, and internalized. Future research and educational practice would benefit from further exploration of how culturally embedded restorative practices can serve as a foundation for discipline, not only in Makassar but in diverse educational settings globally.

3.2 The Impact of RTA on Students' Discipline Indicators

The implementation of the Restitution Triangle Approach (RTA) resulted in notable improvements in three interrelated behavioral domains: punctuality, task responsibility, and respect toward others. These areas are central to building a culture of positive discipline in the classroom, particularly within the context of English language learning where sustained engagement, responsibility, and cooperation are critical to student success. By integrating the core cultural values of the Bugis-Makassar community into the RTA framework, behavioral change was not only achieved but also internalized, reflecting deep personal and cultural meaning for the students involved.

a. Punctuality: Reframing Time as a Moral Obligation

One of the most significant behavioral shifts observed was in the area of punctuality. Initially, many students treated lateness as a minor infraction, often rationalizing it with external excuses or showing indifference to its impact on classroom dynamics. However, as the RTA process was introduced and consistently applied, a noticeable change occurred in students' perceptions of time. Being on time was no longer regarded merely as compliance with school regulations but as a reflection of personal discipline and respect for others. The concept of *siri'*, a deeply rooted value in Bugis-Makassar culture that centers on honor, dignity, and self-worth, played a pivotal role in transforming students' understanding of punctuality. Through restorative dialogues, teachers connected punctual behavior with *siri'*, helping students see lateness not just as a procedural error but as a lapse in moral integrity. One student insightfully commented, "Being late now feels

like a personal shame, not just a broken rule.” This statement encapsulates the shift from externally imposed discipline to internalized self-regulation.

In classroom discussions, teachers often asked reflective questions such as, “What message do you think it sends to others when you arrive late?” or “How does your presence or absence impact the group’s learning?” These questions were not accusatory but framed within the cultural lens of communal responsibility and self-discipline. As students engaged in these conversations, many began voluntarily arriving earlier, organizing their schedules more carefully, and even reminding peers to be on time. This behavioral change indicates not only improved punctuality but also the development of time consciousness as an ethical and communal practice.

b. Task Responsibility: From Compliance to Integrity

The second behavioral domain that showed marked improvement was task completion and academic responsibility. Prior to the implementation of RTA, many students submitted assignments irregularly, often requiring repeated reminders or facing the threat of penalties.

After several cycles of restorative interactions, however, students began to exhibit a greater sense of ownership over their learning tasks. This shift was largely attributed to the strategic incorporation of the values *getteng* (perseverance) and *lambusu* (sincerity), both of which are central to Bugis-Makassar ethos. In restitution dialogues, teachers linked the act of completing assignments not only to grades or classroom expectations, but also to a student’s commitment to self-improvement and genuine effort. One participant expressed this mindset by saying, “Doing this task shows I’m being sincere in my learning, not just doing it for a score.”

Teachers encouraged students to view challenges not as excuses to disengage but as opportunities to persevere. This mindset reflects *getteng*, the cultural ideal of tenacity and steadfastness. One teacher recounted the case of a student who had previously skipped assignments but later began creating his own vocabulary flashcards and initiating peer study groups. This behavior was not directly instructed by the teacher but emerged from the student’s growing belief in the value of personal effort and consistency.

The RTA also fostered reflective discussions that helped students evaluate the reasons behind incomplete tasks. Rather than punishing missed deadlines, teachers engaged students in identifying obstacles and collaboratively developing realistic plans for task completion. This approach not only improved submission rates but also enhanced students’ planning skills, accountability, and resilience.

c. Respect: Building a Community of Mutual Regard

Perhaps the most transformative change occurred in the domain of respect toward others. At the beginning of the study, it was noted that classroom interactions were occasionally marked by teasing, interruptions during peer presentations, and minimal peer support. However, as restorative practices became embedded in classroom culture, students began to exhibit greater sensitivity to the feelings, efforts, and rights of their peers. The values of *sipakatau* (humanizing others) and *pacce* (compassion/empathy) were instrumental in this transformation. Restorative conversations routinely emphasized how one’s actions affect the broader community, and how mutual respect is a shared responsibility. Teachers created safe spaces for students to express how they felt when disrespected, and peers were guided to listen actively, validate others’ feelings, and offer sincere apologies when needed.

These practices bore fruit in the form of increased verbal encouragement during oral English tasks, offers of help during group activities, and spontaneous gestures of support such as lending materials or helping peers understand difficult content. One student who had previously been disruptive became known for calming tensions during group discussions, even saying, “Let’s be calm, remember we are *sipakatau*—what hurts them also hurts us.” Such statements reflect a deep internalization of cultural ethics in everyday classroom behavior.

Additionally, respect for teachers improved markedly. Rather than relying on formal authority alone, teachers earned relational authority through consistent modeling of respect, fairness, and restorative discipline. Students responded by addressing teachers with greater politeness, maintaining eye contact during interactions, and showing appreciation for feedback—even when it was critical. This mutual respect strengthened teacher-student relationships and created a more positive learning atmosphere.

d. Integration of Cultural and Pedagogical Practices

The success of these behavioral improvements cannot be divorced from the culturally responsive manner in which the RTA was implemented. By embedding Bugis-Makassar values into the restitution process, disciplinary practices were not experienced as foreign or imposed, but as familiar, meaningful, and relevant. Cultural terms like *siri'*, *getteng*, *sipakatau*, and *pacce* were not merely invoked rhetorically; they became the language through which expectations, feedback, and self-reflection were expressed.

Moreover, students began to see positive behavior not as obedience to school rules, but as an extension of their identity and values. They were not just complying with teachers' requests; they were striving to live in accordance with the principles that defined their community and family upbringing. This alignment between cultural identity and school discipline created coherence and authenticity in the learning environment. The RTA model's three phases—creating safety, clarifying values, and developing a restitution plan—proved highly compatible with the collectivist and relationship-centered worldview of the Bugis-Makassar culture. Rather than isolating misbehavior, the model brought it into the context of relationship repair and moral growth, both of which are deeply valued in the local tradition.

3.3 Students' Perception of the RTA and Cultural Values Integration

Survey responses and interview data suggest that students perceive the Restitution Triangle Approach (RTA) as both effective and culturally congruent. This perception is critical in determining the sustainability and authenticity of any behavioral framework applied in the classroom. The majority of students involved in the study reported experiencing a shift in how they viewed discipline, moving from fear of punishment toward a sense of personal growth and moral responsibility.

a. Emotional Safety and Willingness to Engage

One of the most frequently reported impacts of RTA was the creation of emotional safety in the classroom. Students expressed that the learning environment felt more inclusive and less judgmental. As a result, they became less afraid to make mistakes—especially in learning English, a subject often associated with high levels of anxiety due to its oral and performance-based nature. The absence of punitive reactions allowed students to participate more freely in speaking activities, ask questions without fear of ridicule, and admit confusion or misunderstanding openly.

A student noted during an interview, "Saya tidak lagi takut salah saat bicara Bahasa Inggris karena tahu bahwa guru akan membimbing, bukan memarahi." ("I'm no longer afraid of making mistakes when speaking English because I know the teacher will guide me, not scold me."). This statement illustrates the shift from a fear-based environment to a support-oriented one. In line with the first phase of the RTA—creating emotional safety—students experienced the classroom as a relational space where mistakes were not met with rejection but treated as part of the learning journey.

b. Being Treated with Dignity

Another recurring theme was the students' appreciation for being treated with dignity and respect during disciplinary moments. Unlike traditional punitive models that rely on public reprimands or punishment, the RTA focuses on private, respectful dialogue that preserves a student's self-worth. This practice resonated deeply with the cultural value of *sipakalebbi* (mutual respect), a core principle in Bugis-Makassar social life. Many students reported that even when they made mistakes, the way teachers spoke to them made them feel valued rather than humiliated. One participant shared, "Saya tetap merasa dihargai meskipun saya melakukan kesalahan. Guru tidak langsung menghukum, tapi mengajak saya bicara baik-baik." ("I still feel respected even when I make mistakes. The teacher doesn't punish right away but invites me to talk calmly."). This approach empowered students to take ownership of their behavior because they were not afraid of losing face or status in front of peers.

c. Cultural Alignment: Discipline That Feels Familiar and Validating

Perhaps the most significant finding was the cultural resonance students felt with the RTA model. Many respondents indicated that the approach reminded them of the values and teachings they received at home. This cultural congruence made discipline feel less like an institutional imposition and more like an extension of familial and community norms.

A strong example comes from the statement, "Saya merasa bahwa ini cara mendidik yang sesuai dengan budaya kita." ("I feel this is a way of educating that aligns with our culture."). This sense of alignment reinforced the relevance and acceptability of the RTA. Rather than viewing classroom expectations as detached from their everyday values, students saw them as interconnected, forming a seamless moral framework that bridged school and home. The integration of *siri'* na *pacce*, *sipakatau*, and *getteng* into disciplinary conversations helped students recognize the moral foundation behind

behavioral expectations. For instance, when a student violated a rule, the conversation often involved not just what went wrong, but how the behavior may have violated communal values—how it might affect others, dishonor the class, or show a lack of perseverance. Because these are values students were already socialized into from childhood, the RTA served as a mirror rather than a mold—reflecting back to them what they already believed, but contextualizing those beliefs in a school setting.

d. Moral Engagement and Authentic Behavior Change

This cultural compatibility had a direct impact on students' moral engagement and the authenticity of their behavioral change. Many students began to demonstrate prosocial behaviors not because they were afraid of being punished, but because they felt a genuine responsibility to do what was right. This shift from external regulation to internal motivation is one of the most desirable outcomes in any educational discipline model.

One respondent said, "Saya belajar mengontrol diri karena saya sadar sendiri, bukan karena takut dimarahi." ("I've learned to control myself because I'm aware of it on my own, not because I'm afraid of being scolded."). This is a profound statement that reflects the essence of positive discipline—developing internalized values that guide behavior even when no authority figure is watching. In such contexts, discipline is not merely behavioral compliance but a form of character development.

Furthermore, teachers reported that many students began to model these values in their peer interactions. They reminded each other of deadlines, encouraged respectful dialogue, and even initiated restitution conversations among themselves after conflicts. This peer-led implementation of restorative principles indicates a cultural shift within the classroom climate, one where respect, empathy, and accountability become shared norms.

e. Personal Growth and Emotional Intelligence in English Learning

The application of RTA not only improved discipline but also enhanced emotional intelligence and personal development, particularly relevant in English learning contexts where communication, collaboration, and risk-taking are central. Students became more attuned to their emotions, learned to articulate feelings constructively, and developed the capacity to empathize with classmates. These skills, while not always formally assessed, are critical for long-term academic and social success.

For example, in group work or speaking activities, students began to offer supportive comments to struggling peers, patiently listened without interruption, and applauded efforts rather than results. This environment is conducive to second language acquisition, as it reduces anxiety, promotes engagement, and fosters a sense of belonging—factors shown by research to influence language proficiency development.

Additionally, by engaging in restitution dialogues in English, students simultaneously practiced their communication skills while processing their behavior. This dual focus—on language and values—created integrated learning opportunities, where English was not just a subject to be mastered, but a medium for real-life problem solving and relationship building.

From the perspective of teachers, the shift in students' attitudes and behavior was both observable and sustainable. Teachers noted that the overall atmosphere of the classroom became more respectful and cooperative. They spent less time addressing misbehavior and more time teaching, as students began to self-regulate and support each other. One teacher remarked, "Kami merasa lebih seperti pembimbing daripada pengontrol. Anak-anak tahu bagaimana memperbaiki kesalahan tanpa harus selalu diingatkan." ("We feel more like mentors than enforcers. Students know how to correct their mistakes without always being reminded.").

This change in the teacher's role—from disciplinarian to facilitator—also reflects a deeper pedagogical transformation. By using RTA, teachers modeled reflective practice, patience, and cultural responsiveness—skills that students mirrored in their own conduct. This relational dynamic created a virtuous cycle of mutual respect, where both parties were invested in creating a harmonious learning environment.

3.4 Discussion

This chapter interprets the findings of the study by synthesizing the theoretical framework, cultural setting, and relevant literature to address the three central research questions. The discussion is organized into three thematic sections: (1) how the Restitution Triangle Approach (RTA) is enacted within the cultural landscape of Makassar, (2) how RTA influences students' behavior in terms of punctuality, responsibility, and mutual respect, and (3) how students perceive the role and relevance of RTA within their learning experience.

a. Enacting the Restitution Triangle Approach in the Cultural Landscape of Bugis-Makassar

The results demonstrate that the application of RTA at SMA Makassar Raya was deeply informed by the ethical and relational principles embedded in Bugis-Makassar culture. Cultural values such as *siri' na pacce*, *sipakatau*, *sipakainga*, and *sipakalebbi* were not merely acknowledged but became foundational components of classroom discipline. These values enriched the restorative process and facilitated the cultivation of internal discipline among students. Glasser (1998) emphasizes that students are more responsive to discipline when they experience emotional safety and respect—conditions made possible through culturally empathetic interactions.

Restorative strategies that incorporated cultural dialogue enabled students to engage in self-examination without experiencing shame or embarrassment. Gossen (2001) asserts that restitution is most effective when students are empowered to amend their behavior without compromising their sense of dignity. In this context, the concept of *siri'* (moral self-worth) served as a guiding compass. For example, the case of Rey, who slept during class, demonstrated how the teacher navigated the three stages of RTA—emotional safety, value clarification, and restitution—using empathy (*pacce*) rather than reprimand, leading to improved behavior the following day.

This dialogical process did more than regulate behavior; it affirmed students' cultural identities. Zehr (2002) notes that disciplinary approaches are most transformative when they reinforce the individual's cultural worldview. During moments of vulnerability—such as when Ricky expressed fear of ridicule—the teacher's use of *sipakatau* and *sipakainga* helped create a shared moral space. The classroom became not only a site for academic learning but also for cultural affirmation and emotional safety.

These findings align with Gay's (2010) concept of culturally responsive pedagogy, which argues that instruction must reflect students' sociocultural contexts. By embedding indigenous wisdom into classroom interactions, the teacher redefined discipline as a cultural and ethical practice. The approach also resonates with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, where development occurs through guided interaction. The teacher acted as a cultural mediator, helping students move from behavioral missteps to moral understanding.

In sum, the enactment of RTA within a Makassar cultural framework offered more than a behavioral intervention; it served as a moral ecosystem that reinforced students' sense of identity, accountability, and community. This supports Hopkins' (2011) view that enduring discipline is rooted in dialogue, culture, and relationship-building.

b. The Influence of RTA on Students' Punctuality, Task Ownership, and Interpersonal Respect

The study revealed that RTA contributed significantly to enhancing students' self-regulation in three key areas: time management, academic responsibility, and social interaction. These improvements stemmed not from external enforcement, but from culturally grounded reflection and internalization of values. Punctuality improved as students began to associate timeliness with *siri'*—a reflection of personal integrity rather than institutional obedience. Students described feeling “*malu*” (embarrassed) when late, not due to fear of punishment, but from a sense of moral accountability. This supports Gossen's (2001) claim that discipline rooted in self-awareness fosters intrinsic behavioral change.

In relation to task completion, students increasingly demonstrated autonomy and initiative. The cultural constructs of *getteng* (steadfastness) and *lempu'* (honesty) served as internal motivators for academic engagement. Rather than relying on reminders, students began planning and completing tasks independently. This behavioral shift reflects Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, which holds that intrinsic motivation leads to more sustainable and authentic actions. Respect for teachers and classmates was also enhanced through the restorative process. Students such as Andi and Bima, who initially disrupted class, were guided to recognize the social impact of their behavior through reflection on *sipakatau*. This led to sincere apologies and behavior change. The approach reflects Noddings' (2013) ethics of care, which prioritizes empathy and relationships in moral development. Therefore, the impact of RTA extended beyond surface behavior. It cultivated psychological maturity and social awareness by inviting students to manage themselves rather than be managed. This transformation was sustainable because it was rooted in values that students already held, making the process both familiar and empowering.

c. Students' Perceptions of RTA's Relevance and Effectiveness

The perception data confirmed that students regarded the RTA as a positive and culturally relevant discipline strategy. Responses from the questionnaire and interviews highlighted that students felt safe, respected, and more motivated to take responsibility. This echoes Gossen's (2004) belief that restitution creates environments where students feel dignified, not controlled. Cognitively, students demonstrated an enhanced understanding of why discipline matters.

Their responses revealed increasing moral reasoning and self-reflective capacity. One student noted that the RTA helped them view discipline as beneficial for themselves, not just for pleasing the teacher. This is consistent with Dewey's (1938) educational philosophy, which emphasizes moral reflection as a central aim of learning. Emotionally, students expressed reduced fear and greater confidence, particularly in speaking activities where grammar mistakes once triggered anxiety. The teacher's respectful and supportive stance helped lower students' affective filters—a key concept in Krashen's (1982) theory, which links emotional comfort with language acquisition.

Behaviorally, students became more proactive, engaging in tasks without coercion and initiating participation in class discussions. According to Bandura (1986), this self-regulated behavior is the result of social modeling and positive reinforcement—both of which were embedded in the RTA process. Culturally, the students emphasized that the RTA was in harmony with Makassar traditions. They recognized values like *siri' na pacce*, *sipakainga*, and *lambusu'* in the way the teacher interacted with them. This cultural resonance deepened their emotional investment and enhanced the relevance of discipline. As Ladson-Billings (1995) argues, culturally grounded instruction supports equity and engagement by making students' identities visible and valued. Students saw RTA not as an imposed system, but as an extension of their cultural and moral worldview. It functioned as a bridge between who they are and how they learn, fostering not only compliance but also character and commitment. These insights affirm that when discipline honors students' cultural roots, it becomes an empowering educational experience.

4. Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore the effectiveness of the Restitution Triangle Approach (RTA) in fostering students' positive discipline within the cultural context of Makassar, particularly in English language learning at the senior high school level. The investigation focused on three principal components: (1) the process of implementing RTA in the classroom, (2) its influence on key aspects of student behavior—namely punctuality, task responsibility, and mutual respect—and (3) students' perceptions regarding the efficacy and cultural alignment of the approach.

Based on the analysis of empirical data, the following conclusions can be drawn:

a. The RTA was effectively embedded in classroom practices through a combination of restorative dialogue, guided student reflection, and integration of indigenous values. This approach emphasized student agency, self-regulation, and mutual accountability. Core cultural principles such as *siri' na pacce*, *getteng*, *lempu'/lambusu'*, *sipakatau*, and *sipakainga* were central to shaping students' behavioral responses and moral reasoning during the learning process.

b. The application of RTA positively transformed student behavior. Observational evidence demonstrated notable improvements in punctuality, task submission, and respectful conduct. Students began to manage their responsibilities with greater independence and sincerity, driven not by fear of sanctions but by an internalized moral compass. This behavioral shift underscores the potential of value-based discipline to nurture responsible and engaged learners in EFL contexts.

c. Students expressed a strong sense of acceptance and appreciation for the RTA model. They described the approach as affirming and respectful, and acknowledged its compatibility with the cultural values they uphold. As a result, students felt more confident in taking academic risks, especially in speaking English, and showed enhanced motivation to take ownership of their learning journey. The cultural resonance of the approach made it more accessible, meaningful, and sustainable.

The survey and interview findings confirm that the Restitution Triangle Approach, when contextualized within the cultural values of Bugis-Makassar students, is not only effective in managing behavior but also transformative in shaping identity, values, and character. Students felt safe, respected, and motivated to grow—not through coercion, but through dialogue, reflection, and cultural affirmation. Discipline under the RTA framework became a shared journey rather than a hierarchical imposition. It was a process of becoming—becoming more reflective, responsible, and relational individuals. The success of this approach underscores the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy in disciplinary practices and offers a replicable model for other contexts where culture and character education intersect. Future directions may include

longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of RTA on students' academic and moral development, as well as training programs to help teachers adapt restorative practices within different cultural frameworks. Nonetheless, this study affirms that when discipline honors students' identities and roots, it not only corrects behavior—it nurtures human potential.

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