

Semprotulation as a Post-Thesis Celebration Culture: Meanings, Symbols, and Its Pedagogical Implications for Language Learning in Higher Education

Mandra Saragih¹, M Afiv Toni Suhendra Saragih², Khairul Anam³

¹Department of English Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

^{2,3}Department of Indonesian Education, Universitas of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara
email: mandrasaragih@umsu.ac.id (correspondence email)

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ABSTRACT

Post-thesis celebrations in higher education are often viewed as informal or peripheral activities, yet they constitute rich communicative spaces where language, identity, and culture intersect. This study investigates Semprotulation, a student-initiated celebratory ritual performed after thesis defenses, to examine its meanings, symbols, and interactional dynamics as well as its pedagogical implications for language learning. Employing a qualitative-dominant mixed-method design, the research integrates ethnographic observation, multimodal discourse analysis, interviews, and questionnaires involving 48 students and 10 academic staff at an Indonesian university. Data were collected through video recordings, field notes, and participant reflections, and analyzed thematically and interactionally to identify recurring linguistic and symbolic patterns. The findings reveal that Semprotulation operates as a structured multimodal genre characterized by humorous teasing, congratulatory formulas, code-switching practices, embodied gestures, and symbolic artifacts such as water and flour that index renewal and solidarity. These practices facilitate emotional release, strengthen peer cohesion, and create authentic opportunities for spontaneous language use and digital literacy through social media documentation. From a sociolinguistic and pedagogical perspective, the ritual functions as an informal site of language socialization that complements formal instruction by fostering communicative confidence, identity negotiation, and collaborative learning. The study contributes to applied linguistics and language education by reframing campus cultural traditions as meaningful educational resources and recommends integrating students' lived communicative practices into culturally responsive and multimodal language pedagogy.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Across higher education contexts worldwide, student-generated celebratory rituals have increasingly attracted scholarly attention as forms of cultural performance that mediate identity construction, affective release, and communal belonging (Kharisma et al, 2023). Practices

emerging after high-stakes academic milestones such as thesis defenses or final examinations are not merely recreational events but symbolic acts through which students negotiate success, solidarity, and institutional memory. Recent studies in applied linguistics and educational anthropology argue that campus rituals function as multimodal texts where language, gesture, and material artifacts co-create meaning systems that shape learning cultures (Anderson & Rymes, 2022; Widodo, 2021). In Southeast Asian universities, these practices often manifest through performative acts involving chants, playful teasing, and symbolic objects, revealing a complex semiotic ecology embedded in local values and peer dynamics. Such phenomena invite investigation because they demonstrate how informal practices contribute to language socialization beyond classrooms. Scholars have emphasized that understanding these extra-curricular communicative spaces is essential for connecting formal pedagogy with lived student experiences (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2023; Hadi & Nurkamto, 2020). Therefore, analyzing celebratory traditions such as “Semprotulation” offers an entry point for examining the intersection between language, culture, and educational practice in contemporary universities.

The rise of digitally mediated student cultures has further amplified the visibility of campus rituals, transforming them into shareable spectacles circulated through social media platforms (Ginting et al, 2025). These performances are often documented, captioned, and narrated in hybrid languages that blend slang, humor, and local dialects, thereby producing new registers of youth expression. Recent research indicates that such communicative practices operate as sites of linguistic innovation where identity, solidarity, and resistance to institutional formality are negotiated (Darvin & Norton, 2021; Lee, 2022). In Indonesian higher education specifically, post-defense celebrations have become increasingly elaborate, combining water spraying, powder throwing, and verbal joking that collectively form what students term “Semprotulation.” Despite their popularity, these practices are frequently viewed by administrators only as disciplinary concerns rather than pedagogical opportunities. Contemporary educational discourse, however, suggests that informal learning environments significantly shape students’ communicative competence and socio-emotional development (Siregar & Yusuf, 2020; Kessler, 2023). Consequently, understanding the linguistic and symbolic dimensions of these events may reveal how cultural practices contribute to broader educational outcomes, including collaborative learning, resilience, and identity affirmation within academic communities.

Existing scholarship on campus traditions has predominantly examined graduation ceremonies, hazing rituals, or orientation activities, leaving post-thesis celebrations underexplored. Anthropological studies have shown that ritualized performances serve as liminal spaces where participants transition from one social status to another, such as from student to graduate (Turner-inspired analyses revisited by Hammersley, 2020; Nugroho & Santosa, 2021). Yet, much of this work has prioritized macro-cultural interpretations and has paid limited attention to the linguistic micro-practices that animate these rituals. Within applied linguistics, investigations into language socialization in higher education have mostly focused on classroom discourse, academic writing, or digital literacies, overlooking spontaneous peer interactions occurring outside formal settings (Hyland, 2022; Setyowati & Widiati, 2020). This imbalance leaves unanswered questions regarding how informal talk, humor, and symbolic acts function pedagogically. Furthermore, the few Indonesian studies addressing student celebrations tend to employ descriptive ethnography without linking findings to language education frameworks. Therefore, a theoretically informed and empirically grounded study that bridges cultural ritual analysis with pedagogical implications remains necessary to advance interdisciplinary understanding of student communicative practices.

From a theoretical standpoint, the phenomenon of Semprotulation can be interpreted through multiple complementary lenses, including sociolinguistics, multimodality, and symbolic

interactionism. Sociolinguistic perspectives emphasize how language choices index group membership and stance, allowing participants to perform solidarity and hierarchy simultaneously (Bucholtz & Hall, 2021; Rampton, 2022). Multimodal theory further argues that meaning emerges not only from verbal expressions but also from embodied actions, objects, and spatial arrangements that co-construct communicative events (Kress & Bezemer, 2020; Lim, 2023). Meanwhile, symbolic interactionism views rituals as negotiated performances where shared meanings are constantly produced through interaction (Blumer-inspired updates in Yudarso & Putri, 2021; García & Li, 2022). Integrating these frameworks allows the analysis of Semprotulation not simply as playful behavior but as a semiotic assemblage that organizes relationships, emotions, and identities. Such integration is particularly relevant for language education research, which increasingly acknowledges that learning extends beyond formal instruction into everyday communicative ecologies. By situating the tradition within these theoretical approaches, the present study aims to provide a nuanced explanation of how ritual practices shape linguistic and pedagogical experiences.

Despite growing interest in student culture and informal learning, significant research gaps persist. First, empirical investigations that specifically document the linguistic features of post-defense celebrations in Indonesian universities are scarce (Hasnah et al, 2024). Second, few studies attempt to connect these cultural practices with language pedagogy, thereby missing opportunities to translate cultural insights into instructional innovation. Third, previous research often relies on short-term observation without triangulating interview, discourse, and multimodal data, limiting analytical depth (Rahmawati & Emaliana, 2020; Zhang & Pérez-Paredes, 2021). As educational systems increasingly promote culturally responsive teaching, the absence of data-driven accounts of local traditions constrains curriculum development. Moreover, administrators frequently perceive such celebrations as disruptive rather than potentially educative, leading to policy responses that suppress rather than harness their learning value. Addressing these gaps requires systematic, ethically grounded fieldwork that captures both the meanings attributed by participants and the observable communicative patterns embedded in the ritual. Therefore, a mixed-method study focusing on Semprotulation is warranted to generate evidence capable of informing both theory and practice.

In response to these gaps, the present research investigates Semprotulation as a post-thesis celebratory tradition among university students, examining its meanings, symbols, and interactional dynamics while exploring its pedagogical implications for language education. Specifically, the study seeks to analyze how participants employ verbal jokes, chants, and multilingual expressions; how material elements such as water, flour, and banners function symbolically; and how these practices contribute to collective identity formation and emotional regulation. By combining ethnographic observation, discourse analysis, and participant interviews, the study offers an integrated account of ritual communication in higher education. This approach aligns with recent calls for culturally sustaining pedagogy that incorporates students lived experiences into language learning processes (Paris & Alim, 2021; Fitriani & Hamied, 2022). The anticipated contribution is twofold: theoretically, it extends sociolinguistic and multimodal perspectives into the study of campus rituals; practically, it provides evidence-based recommendations for designing language classes that draw upon authentic student practices. Through this focus, the research aims to position Semprotulation as a meaningful cultural resource rather than a peripheral activity.

II. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative-dominant mixed-method design that integrated ethnographic observation, multimodal discourse analysis, and survey-based triangulation to capture the linguistic, symbolic, and pedagogical dimensions of Semprotulation as a post-thesis celebratory practice. The design was selected because contemporary language education research recommends combining interpretive and descriptive approaches to understand naturally

occurring communicative events within authentic contexts (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2022; Hyland, 2022). The research was conducted at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara where Semprotulation is routinely performed after undergraduate thesis defenses. Participants consisted of 48 final-year students, 6 thesis supervisors, and 4 administrative staff selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation of diverse programs and gender backgrounds. Data sources included video-recorded observations of ten celebratory events, field notes, semi-structured interviews, and a short perception questionnaire measuring students' views on identity, solidarity, and language use. Such multimodal data collection aligns with recent applied linguistics studies advocating the examination of gesture, space, and material artifacts alongside speech to understand meaning-making processes comprehensively (Kress & Bezemer, 2020; Widodo, 2021). Ethical approval was obtained, and all participants provided informed consent prior to participation.

Data collection occurred over three months and followed sequential procedures to ensure credibility and methodological rigor. First, non-participant observations documented the flow of events, linguistic exchanges, and symbolic actions during each celebration. Second, audiovisual recordings were transcribed using multimodal transcription conventions to capture verbal utterances, prosody, bodily movements, and the use of objects such as water sprays and banners. Third, interviews explored participants' interpretations of meanings, emotions, and perceived educational value, while questionnaires provided complementary quantitative indicators of group cohesion and communicative confidence. Data were analyzed through thematic coding and interactional sociolinguistic analysis, supported by frequency counts of recurrent lexical and symbolic patterns, thereby enabling both depth and systematic comparison (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Darvin & Norton, 2021). Triangulation across sources enhanced validity, and member checking was conducted to verify interpretations. To protect confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned and all recordings were stored securely. These procedures ensured that the analysis of Semprotulation as a cultural-linguistic phenomenon was ethically responsible, empirically grounded, and pedagogically relevant.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The overall findings indicate that Semprotulation constitutes a structured yet flexible communicative event characterized by patterned stages, recurrent linguistic forms, and symbolic material actions that together produce a shared celebratory narrative. Across ten recorded celebrations, the ritual consistently unfolded in three sequential phases: gathering and chanting, symbolic spraying or powdering, and collective documentation through photos and digital captions. Each phase displayed distinct discourse features, including teasing utterances, congratulatory formulas, and playful code-switching between Indonesian, English, and local dialects. These patterns suggest that the tradition operates as a recognizable genre within the campus speech community rather than as spontaneous behavior. Similar observations have been reported in recent studies emphasizing that youth rituals often stabilize into routinized communicative repertoires that index solidarity and belonging (Bucholtz & Hall, 2021; Lee, 2022). Furthermore, participants repeatedly described the event as “wajib” (obligatory), underscoring its normative status in peer culture. Such regularity supports the argument that Semprotulation functions as a socially sanctioned performance with predictable linguistic and symbolic structures that merit systematic analysis within language education research (Widodo, 2021; Kessler, 2023).

Quantitative coding of 1,276 recorded utterances revealed that congratulatory expressions comprised 34% of the corpus, humorous teasing accounted for 41%, and evaluative or reflective comments represented 25%. The predominance of humor indicates that affective

bonding was achieved through joking insults, mock exaggerations, and ironic praise, features consistent with youth peer talk described in sociolinguistic literature. Notably, teasing was rarely perceived as offensive; instead, it was interpreted as an index of intimacy and trust among group members. Such interactional norms correspond with findings that humor mediates relational closeness and reduces social distance in academic communities (Rampton, 2022; Siregar & Yusuf, 2020). Frequency analysis also showed that English lexical items such as “congrats,” “finally,” and “legend” were embedded within Indonesian sentences, signaling hybrid linguistic practices typical of urban student discourse. This hybridity illustrates how local rituals serve as sites of linguistic innovation, supporting recent claims that informal spaces promote flexible multilingual competence beyond formal curricula (Darvin & Norton, 2021; García & Li, 2022).

Multimodal transcription demonstrated that meaning-making extended beyond spoken language to include embodied gestures, spatial positioning, and material artifacts. Participants formed circular formations around the graduate, raised hands while chanting, and coordinated synchronized spraying of water or powder at climactic moments. These actions functioned as visual metaphors for cleansing, renewal, and transition, reinforcing the liminal nature of the post-defense status change. The semiotic orchestration of voice, movement, and objects aligns with multimodality research arguing that communication is distributed across modes rather than confined to speech alone (Kress & Bezemer, 2020; Lim, 2023). Importantly, the objects used were inexpensive and locally sourced, indicating that symbolic value outweighed material cost. Interviews confirmed that water symbolized “cooling stress,” while flour represented “starting fresh,” suggesting shared cultural interpretations. Such embodied symbolism underscores that Semprotulation operates as a pedagogical environment where meanings are collectively negotiated through action, highlighting the need for language studies to account for non-verbal dimensions of interaction (García & Li, 2022; Fitriani & Hamied, 2022).

Interview data further revealed that students perceived Semprotulation as a critical emotional outlet after prolonged academic pressure. Many participants reported experiencing anxiety prior to thesis defense and described the celebration as a moment of cathartic release that restored confidence and belonging. This affective dimension influenced communicative behavior, as students used expressive language, laughter, and exaggerated intonation to dramatize relief and pride. Recent educational psychology studies note that emotional regulation significantly shapes communicative participation and learning engagement (Hadi & Nurkamto, 2020; Zhang & Pérez-Paredes, 2021). The ritual therefore functions not only as entertainment but also as a socio-emotional scaffold that prepares students for subsequent academic or professional transitions. Observational notes showed that quieter students became more verbally active during the celebration, suggesting that informal contexts can reduce interactional barriers. Such findings align with claims that low-stakes environments foster linguistic risk-taking and authentic expression, contributing to the development of communicative competence beyond structured classroom tasks (Hyland, 2022; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2023).

Another salient finding concerns the role of digital mediation in extending the ritual’s communicative reach. Almost every event concluded with group photographs and the creation of captions or short videos uploaded to social media platforms. These captions frequently combined humor, emotive emojis, and creative spelling, forming a written extension of the oral celebration. This practice demonstrates how offline rituals are recontextualized into online discourses, creating hybrid literacy practices that blend spoken and written modes. Scholars have argued that such translanguaging across digital spaces represents contemporary forms of youth literacy that merit pedagogical attention (Darvin & Norton, 2021; Kessler, 2023). The captions also served archival functions, preserving collective memory and reinforcing group identity over time. Consequently, Semprotulation can be conceptualized as a continuum of communication that moves fluidly from physical performance to digital narration, illustrating the interconnectedness of multimodal and multimedia literacies within higher education contexts (Widodo, 2021; Lee, 2022).

To summarize the structural patterns observed across the dataset, Table 1 presents the distribution of key communicative features identified during analysis. The table demonstrates the relative prominence of humor, symbolic actions, and multilingual expressions, supporting the argument that the ritual is characterized by both linguistic creativity and embodied performance. Such systematic mapping is recommended in recent mixed-method studies to enhance transparency and comparability of findings (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2022).

Table 1. Dominant Communicative Features of Semprotulation

| Feature | Frequency (%) | Primary Function |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Humorous teasing | 41 | Solidarity building |
| Congratulatory formulas | 34 | Recognition of achievement |
| Code-switching/multilingual use | 29 | Identity indexing |
| Symbolic spraying/powdering | 100 (events) | Ritual transition marker |
| Digital captions/documentation | 90 (events) | Memory and online identity |

The consistency of these features across events indicates that Semprotulation operates as a conventionalized genre within the campus speech community, reinforcing previous arguments that student rituals exhibit stables semiotic repertoires (Bucholtz & Hall, 2021; Lim, 2023).

Discourse analysis also uncovered recurrent lexical frames such as “akhirnya lulus,” “pejuang skripsi,” and “welcome to real life,” which functioned as narrative devices framing graduation as both struggle and triumph. These phrases circulated intertextually across different events, suggesting shared storytelling conventions that transcend individual cohorts. Such formulaic expressions resemble what interactional sociolinguistics terms “participation frameworks,” through which speakers align themselves with collective histories and expectations (Rampton, 2022; Nugroho & Santosa, 2021). The repetition of these frames created cohesion and enabled newcomers to quickly understand the ritual script. This finding highlights how linguistic patterns serve as cultural memory tools, encoding institutional experiences into recognizable speech acts. Consequently, Semprotulation not only celebrates individual achievement but also reproduces communal narratives that socialize members into shared meanings about perseverance, success, and transition within academic life (García & Li, 2022; Fitriani & Hamied, 2022).

Observation of participant roles revealed implicit hierarchies and responsibilities during the ritual. Close friends often acted as initiators who organized the event and led chants, while others functioned as supporters or documenters. These roles were negotiated through talk, laughter, and gestures rather than formal instructions, illustrating distributed leadership within peer groups. Such interactional organization reflects findings that collaborative learning cultures rely on emergent coordination rather than top-down control (Anderson & Rymes, 2022; Hyland, 2022). Importantly, the graduate occupied a temporary central position, becoming both the focus of attention and the object of playful teasing. This role inversion resembles liminal dynamics described in ritual theory, where status boundaries are temporarily suspended to reinforce group cohesion. The interplay of hierarchy and egalitarianism suggests that Semprotulation functions as a social microcosm through which students rehearse negotiation, cooperation, and leadership skills competencies relevant to communicative and professional development (Hadi & Nurkamto, 2020; Lee, 2022).

Finally, the questionnaire results indicated that 87% of participants believed the celebration strengthened peer relationships, while 81% reported increased confidence in speaking informally in front of others. These perceptions corroborate observational findings that the ritual fosters communicative engagement and emotional support. Statistical cross-tabulation

further showed that students who frequently participated in such events reported higher self-rated oral fluency, suggesting a possible link between informal interaction and language development. Although causality cannot be assumed, the association aligns with research demonstrating that authentic social interaction enhances pragmatic competence and discourse flexibility (Kessler, 2023; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2023). Thus, beyond its symbolic significance, Semprotulation appears to provide tangible opportunities for practicing spontaneous language use. Collectively, these results position the tradition as an underrecognized yet meaningful site of experiential learning within the university's broader communicative ecology (Widodo, 2021; Darwin & Norton, 2021).

Discussion

Interpreting these findings through a sociolinguistic lens reveals that Semprotulation operates as a community of practice in which linguistic forms index membership and shared values. The frequent use of humor, teasing, and code-switching reflects what Bucholtz and Hall (2021) describe as identity work performed through interaction, where speakers signal solidarity and negotiate status simultaneously. The ritual's stable stages and recurrent lexical frames demonstrate that participants draw upon a shared repertoire, enabling mutual intelligibility and cohesion. This pattern resonates with contemporary studies of youth discourse showing that informal peer spaces often serve as incubators of linguistic creativity and social bonding (Lee, 2022; Rampton, 2022). Consequently, Semprotulation should be understood not merely as entertainment but as a structured sociolinguistic environment that sustains collective identity. Recognizing this dimension challenges deficit views that dismiss such practices as disruptive and instead reframes them as meaningful communicative ecosystems capable of supporting language development and social learning within higher education contexts (Widodo, 2021; García & Li, 2022).

From a multimodal perspective, the integration of bodily movement, spatial arrangement, and material objects confirms that meaning is co-constructed across semiotic resources. The symbolic use of water and flour as metaphors for renewal illustrates how physical artifacts carry culturally embedded meanings that complement verbal expressions. Kress and Bezemer (2020) argue that learning environments are fundamentally multimodal, and the present findings extend this claim to informal campus rituals. Students did not rely solely on speech; rather, they orchestrated voice, gesture, and space to produce a coherent narrative of transition. Such orchestration parallels classroom practices where visual aids, gestures, and artifacts enhance comprehension, suggesting continuity between ritual performance and pedagogical design (Lim, 2023; Fitriani & Hamied, 2022). Therefore, incorporating multimodal awareness into language instruction could bridge students' everyday communicative experiences with academic learning, validating their existing semiotic competencies. This interpretation positions Semprotulation as a resource for designing culturally responsive and multimodally rich teaching strategies rather than as a peripheral social activity.

The affective benefits reported by participants also support theories linking emotion and learning. The ritual's role in reducing stress and fostering confidence aligns with educational research indicating that positive emotional climates enhance participation and risk-taking in communication (Hadi & Nurkamto, 2020; Zhang & Pérez-Paredes, 2021). When students feel supported by peers, they are more willing to experiment with language and express themselves authentically. Semprotulation thus functions as an informal affective scaffold that complements formal instruction. This finding has pedagogical implications, suggesting that language classrooms should cultivate similar atmospheres of solidarity through collaborative tasks, humor, and celebratory practices. By acknowledging students' emotional experiences, educators can design activities that mirror the supportive dynamics observed in the ritual. Such alignment between affect and pedagogy may improve engagement and communicative competence,

reinforcing calls for holistic approaches that integrate cognitive and socio-emotional dimensions of learning (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2023; Kessler, 2023).

The digital extension of the ritual further highlights the importance of integrating new literacies into language education. Students' creation of captions and short videos demonstrates translanguaging practices that blur boundaries between spoken and written communication. Darvin and Norton (2021) contend that digital environments reshape identity and literacy, requiring pedagogical responses that acknowledge multimodal expression. The present study shows that these practices are already embedded in students' cultural routines, suggesting opportunities to leverage them for instructional purposes. For instance, reflective caption writing or digital storytelling tasks could transform celebratory narratives into learning artifacts. Such activities would legitimize students' vernacular creativity while fostering critical awareness of audience, genre, and style (Widodo, 2021; Lee, 2022). Therefore, the digital dimension of Semprotulation underscores the need for language curricula that embrace hybrid literacies rather than privileging exclusively formal registers. This perspective aligns with culturally sustaining pedagogy that values learners' existing communicative repertoires as foundations for academic growth (Paris & Alim, 2021; García & Li, 2022).

Taken together, the results and interpretations indicate that Semprotulation embodies a rich intersection of language, culture, and pedagogy. The tradition simultaneously enacts identity negotiation, emotional regulation, and multimodal communication, demonstrating that meaningful learning occurs beyond classroom walls. By situating the ritual within contemporary theories of sociolinguistics, multimodality, and culturally responsive education, this study contributes an integrated framework for understanding informal campus practices as educational resources. Similar arguments have been advanced in recent scholarship advocating the recognition of everyday discourse as legitimate learning spaces (Hyland, 2022; Fitriani & Hamied, 2022). Consequently, rather than restricting or prohibiting such celebrations, universities might develop policies that guide them safely while acknowledging their pedagogical value. This reconceptualization invites educators to collaborate with students in transforming cultural traditions into opportunities for reflective learning. Ultimately, the discussion highlights that Semprotulation is not peripheral to education but intrinsically connected to how students construct meaning, relationships, and communicative competence within academic life.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated that Semprotulation constitutes a structured, multimodal, and socially meaningful ritual through which students negotiate identity, solidarity, and emotional transition following thesis defense. Employing a mixed-method ethnographic design, the research revealed recurring linguistic patterns, symbolic actions, and digital extensions that collectively position the tradition as a dynamic site of informal language socialization. The findings substantiate theoretical claims that learning transcends formal classrooms and occurs within everyday communicative ecologies shaped by peer interaction and cultural performance (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2023; Lim, 2023). By foregrounding the pedagogical value of humor, multilingual practices, and embodied symbolism, the study contributes to applied linguistics and language education scholarship, particularly within the Indonesian higher education context where such traditions remain underexplored. Ultimately, Semprotulation should be understood not merely as celebration but as experiential learning that fosters communicative competence, resilience, and collective memory. Future research may expand this inquiry across institutions or employ longitudinal designs to examine long-term impacts on language development. Through these avenues, culturally grounded practices can continue to inform more inclusive, responsive, and contextually relevant language education.

Based on the empirical findings and theoretical interpretations, several pedagogical and institutional recommendations can be advanced to harness the educational potential of Semprotulation while maintaining safety and academic integrity. First, language educators should recognize post-thesis celebrations as authentic communicative events that can be integrated into classroom-based reflection tasks, such as narrative writing, discourse analysis, or multimodal storytelling projects. Transforming lived experiences into learning materials aligns with culturally sustaining pedagogy and experiential learning approaches, which emphasize connecting curriculum to students' sociocultural realities (Paris & Alim, 2021; Widodo, 2021). Second, instructors may design assignments that analyze humor, code-switching, and symbolic language observed during the ritual, thereby promoting metalinguistic awareness and pragmatic competence. Third, universities should develop facilitative policies rather than prohibitive ones, ensuring safe spaces and clear guidelines while acknowledging the tradition's role in strengthening peer cohesion and emotional well-being. Such supportive frameworks have been shown to enhance student engagement and institutional belonging (Kessler, 2023; Hyland, 2022). Additionally, integrating digital literacy tasks—such as reflective caption writing or collaborative video documentation—can extend learning into multimodal domains. These suggestions collectively advocate for a shift from viewing student celebrations as peripheral disruptions toward recognizing them as meaningful educational resources within higher education ecosystems (Darvin & Norton, 2021; García & Li, 2022).

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