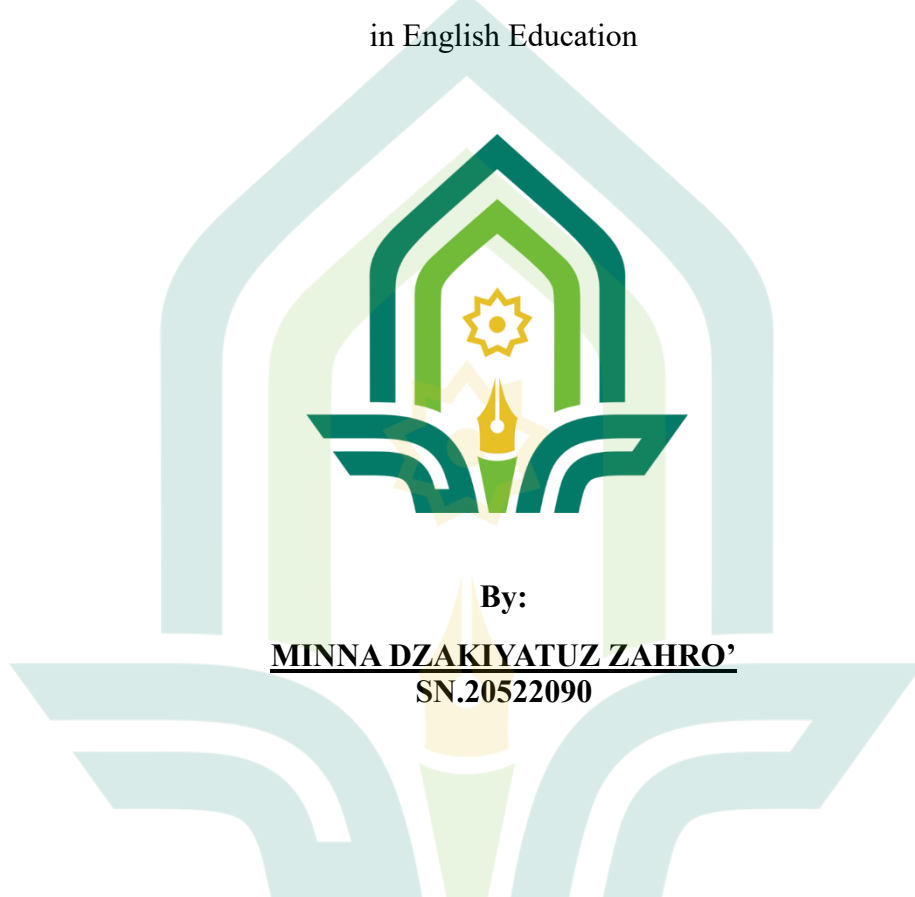


**AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGY SAY
NOTHING AND SAY SOMETHING IN HIGH SCHOOL
TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTION**

A THESIS

Submitted to fulfill one of the requirements for *Sarjana Pendidikan* Degree
in English Education



By:

MINNA DZAKIYATUZ ZAHRO'
SN.20522090

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
K.H ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
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2026

LEMBAR PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI

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Menyatakan bahwa yang tertulis dalam skripsi yang berjudul **“AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGY SAY NOTHING AND SAY SOMETHING IN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTION”** ini benar-benar karya saya sendiri, bukan jiplakan dari karya orang lain atau pengutipan yang melanggar etika keilmuan yang berlaku, baik sebagian atau seluruhnya. Pendapat atau temuan orang lain yang terdapat dalam skripsi ini dikutip berdasarkan kode etik ilmiah. Apabila skripsi ini terbukti ditemukan pelanggaran terhadap etika keilmuan, maka **saya secara pribadi** bersedia menerima sanksi hukum yang dijatuhkan.

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Yang membuat pernyataan,



Minna Dzakiyatuz Zahro'

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c/q. Ketua Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris

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Assalamu 'alaikum, Wr. Wb.

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Program Studi : Tadris Bahasa Inggris

Judul : AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGY SAY NOTHING
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STUDENT INTERACTION

Saya menilai bahwa naskah skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan kepada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan untuk diujikan dalam sidang munaqasyah.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatiannya, disampaikan terimakasih.

Wassalamu 'alaikum, Wr. Wb

Pekalongan, 23 Juni 2026
Pembimbing



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Has been examined and approved by the panel of examiners on 8st July 2026 as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.) in English Education.

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MOTTO

“Today, I strive to be better than yesterday, for Allah does not change the condition of a person until they change what is within themselves”

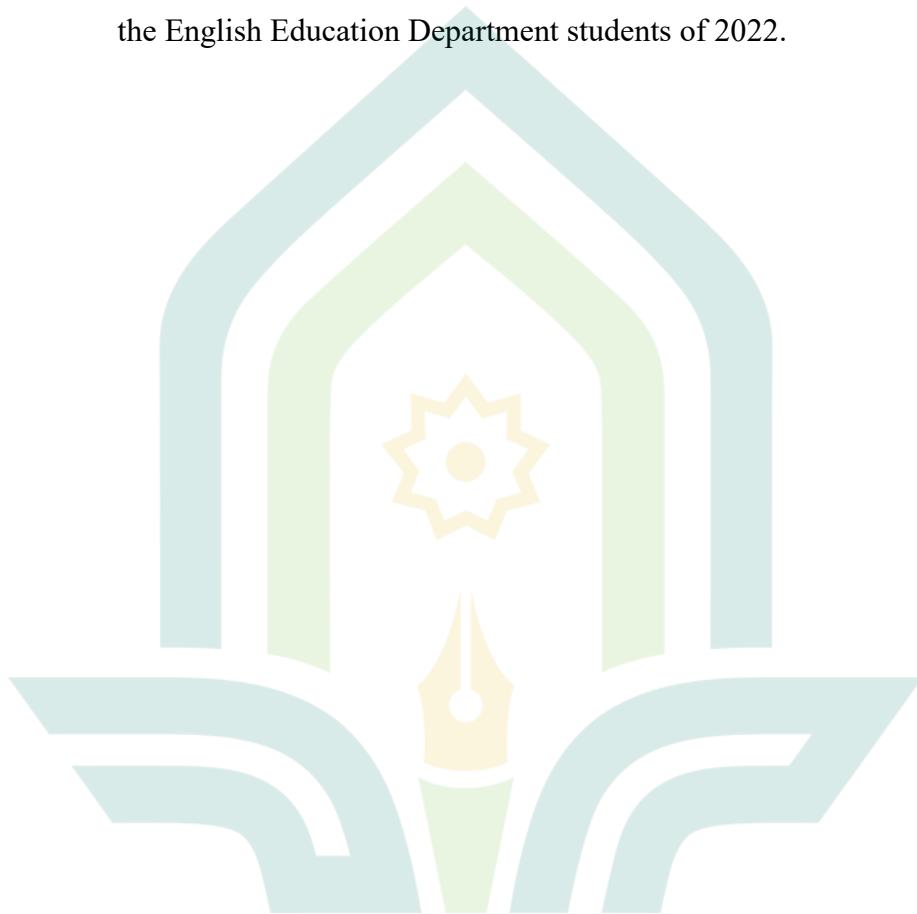


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All praise and gratitude are due to Allah SWT for his endless mercy and blessings. Without his guidance and grace, this academic achievement would not have been realized. Peace and blessings be upon my Prophet Muhammad SAW. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has provided support and contributed to my studies.

1. First and foremost, I would like to thanks to my beloved parents, Mr. Abdurrosyid and Mrs. Mu'allimah, who have continuously provided me with motivation, prayer, and support from the very beginning to the end of my academic journey.
2. Furthermore, I would like to thank my supervisor, Ahmad Burhanuddin, M.A., who has incredibly guided me in writing my thesis from the beginning of the proposal until the completion of the thesis.
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4. Special thanks to my best partner who has accompanied me from creating the title to completing my thesis.

5. Fourth, I am grateful to all the TBIG lecturers who taught me and shared their knowledge with me during my studies. Hopefully that this knowledge will be useful in the future.
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ABSTRAK

Zahro, Minna Dzakiyatuz. (2026). Analisis Strategi Kesopanan: Diam dan Berkata dalam Interaksi Guru dan Siswa SMP. Tesis. Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Pendidikan dan Keguruan, Universitas Islam Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Pembimbing: Ahmad Burhanuddin, M.A.

Kata kunci: *Strategi Kesopanan, Katakan Sesuatu, Diam, Keheningan Strategis, Interaksi di Kelas.*

Studi ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi strategi kesopanan *Say nothing* dan *Say something*, serta menganalisis faktor kontekstual yang memengaruhi pilihan tersebut dalam interaksi kelas Bahasa Inggris SMP. Berdasarkan kerangka kerja Brown dan Levinson (1987) dan konsep keheningan strategis Fadilah dkk. (2019), studi kasus deskriptif kualitatif ini meneliti implementasi dan faktor yang memengaruhi strategi kesopanan *Say nothing* dan *Say something* dalam interaksi guru dan siswa SMP. Data yang dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas dan wawancara semi terstruktur dengan seorang guru Bahasa Inggris dan tiga siswa dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa di bawah opsi *Say something*, guru sebagian besar menggunakan *Say nothing* untuk efisiensi pengajaran dan Kesopanan Positif untuk motivasi, sementara siswa menggunakan Kesopanan Negatif dan isyarat *Say nothing* untuk menjaga rasa hormat dan mengurangi tekanan komunikasi. Selain *Say something*, siswa secara strategis menggunakan keheningan mutlak dan Petunjuk *Say nothing* sebagai jendela kognitif adaptif untuk memproses tata bahasa dan kosakata. Selain itu, tantangan linguistik, rasa takut membuat kesalahan, dan penilaian teman sebaya yang keras merupakan faktor utama yang mendorong remaja awal untuk memilih diam daripada berbicara. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa interaksi di kelas adalah negosiasi kompleks di mana transisi dari diam yang melindungi diri ke dialog verbal aktif sangat bergantung pada validasi guru yang konsisten, waktu pemrosesan yang memadai, dan lingkungan umpan balik yang mendukung untuk menetralkan tekanan teman sebaya.

ABSTRACT

Zahro, Minna Dzakiyatuz. (2026). An Analysis of Politeness Strategy Say Nothing and Say Something in Junior High School Teacher and Student Interaction. Thesis. English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Pembimbing: Ahmad Burhanuddin, M.A.

Keywords: *Politeness Strategies, Say Something, Say Nothing, Strategic Silence, Classroom Interaction.*

This study aims to describe the implementation of Say and Say Nothing politeness strategies, and to analyze the contextual factors influencing these choices in junior high school English classroom interactions. Grounded in Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework and Fadilah et al.'s (2019) concept of strategic silence, this qualitative descriptive case study examines the implementation and influencing factors of Say Something and Say Nothing politeness strategies in junior high school teacher and student interactions. Data collected through classroom observations and semi structured interviews with an English teacher and three students were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that under the Say Something option, the teacher predominantly used Bald on Record for instructional efficiency and Positive Politeness for motivation, while students utilized Negative Politeness and Off Record cues to maintain respect and reduce communication pressure. Under the Say Nothing option, students strategically used absolute silence and Off Record Hinting as an adaptive cognitive window to process grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, linguistic challenges, fear of making mistakes, and severe peer judgment were the primary factors driving early adolescents to choose silence over speech. The study concludes that classroom interaction is a complex negotiation where transitioning from protective silence to active verbal dialogue heavily depends on consistent teacher validation, adequate processing time, and a supportive feedback environment to neutralize peer pressure.

PREFACE

Praise and gratitude to the presence of Allah SWT, who has provided His grace and blessings. His grace and blessings upon me, guidance, health, and patience throughout the writing process of my thesis entitled “An Analysis of Politeness Strategy Say Nothing and Say Something in High School Teacher and Student Interaction” can finished. This was conveyed to fulfill one of the Bachelor of Education degree requirements in Department of English Education, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training at UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. This is proposed because the researcher could be carried out due to the large amount of support from several parties. Because of that, on this occasion, I would like to express my sincere thanks to:

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3. Mr. Ahmad Burhanuddin, M.A. Head of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training at UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan.
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6. My beloved parents who has give me lot of support, motivation, prayer and advice during the writing process of my thesis.
7. Special thanks to my best partner who has accompanied me from creating the title to completing my thesis.
8. To all my beloved friends and fellow students, I would like to express my thanks and pride for having you all as companions in my academic journey, including all of the English Education Department students of 2022.

Pekalongan, 27 Juni 2026

The Researcher

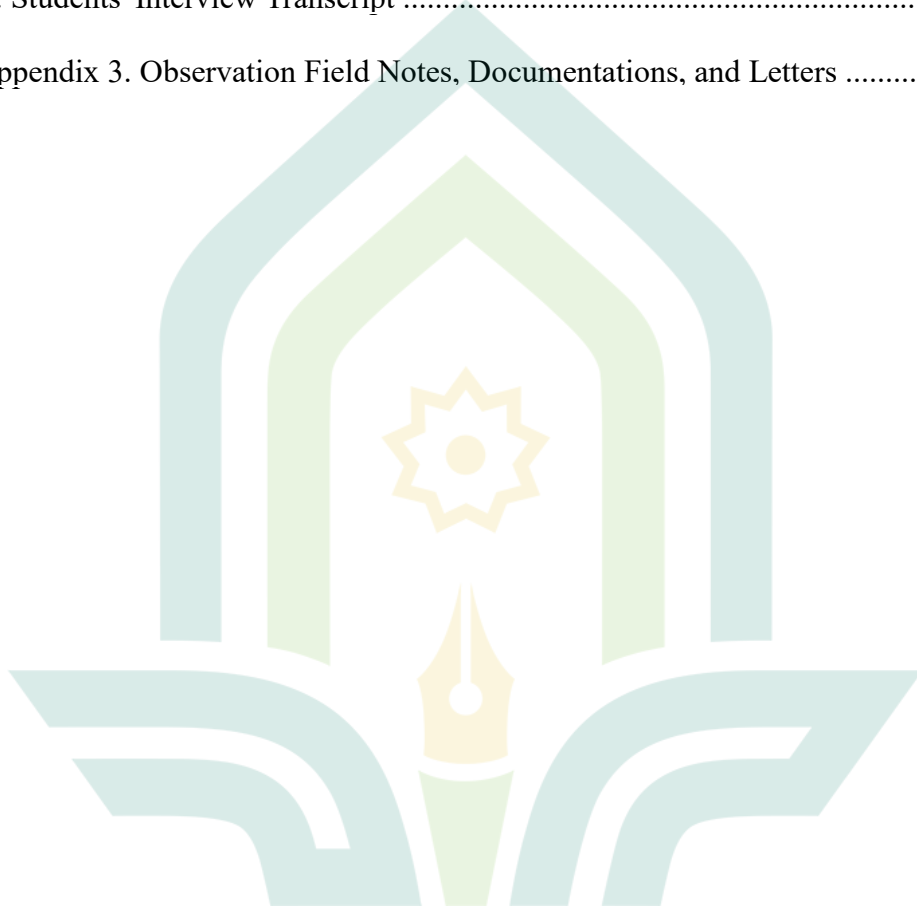
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Grammar and pragmatics are crucial aspects of second language learning and everyday communication because they provide the foundation for meaningful, accurate, and harmonious interaction. While structural competence allows learners to construct sentences, pragmatic competence dictates how language is used appropriately within social contexts to maintain interpersonal relationships. In the realm of pragmatics, politeness is an important aspect of communication, as it contributes to maintaining harmonious social relationships and creating effective interactions. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies are communication strategies that speakers employ to maintain social relationships, and ensure a smooth flow of conversation. Yule (1996) further notes that politeness is deeply related to an awareness of one's public selfimage and the constant desire to maintain positive interpersonal relationships.

Despite In an educational context, politeness is an essential element that influences the quality of interaction between teachers and students. The learning process essentially takes place through communication, which includes the exchange of information, giving instructions, expressing opinions, providing feedback, and various other forms of classroom interaction. Interaction between teachers and students

serves not only to impart knowledge but also to build positive relationships and create a conducive learning environment. Therefore, the use of politeness strategies in classroom communication is important for fostering an effective learning atmosphere characterized by mutual respect (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Yule, 1996).

Brown and Levinson (1987) identified several distinct politeness strategies that can be deployed in communication, namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record, and silence. This study examines these practical strategies through two overarching communication options: say something and say nothing. Say something refers to explicit verbal communication acts implemented through the strategies of bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. Conversely, say nothing refers to the deliberate use of silence as a communication option, which carries specific pragmatic weight and meaning during the interaction process in the classroom.

Junior high school provides a compelling and important context for examining these communication choices. Junior high school students are in an early adolescent developmental stage characterized by a rapid transition from primary education to more complex social interactions, shifting communication skills, and evolving social awareness. At this stage, early adolescents often face socio emotional challenges in balancing peer acceptance with teacher authority, which significantly affects their communicative confidence, willingness to speak, and linguistic choices.

These unique transitional and behavioral conditions heavily influence how students and teachers choose to communicate and why they select particular politeness strategies during daily classroom interaction.

Previous research has shown that teachers and students employ different politeness strategies in classroom communication. Fitriyani and Andriyanti (2020) found that teachers and students use positive and negative politeness strategies to maintain effective interaction in lessons. The findings of Ginting and Pasaribu's (2023) study further indicate that institutional power relations and social distance heavily influence the choice of politeness strategies in classroom discourse. Moreover, the study by Fadilah, Widiati, and Latief (2019) demonstrates that silence say nothing does not always indicate a lack of student participation or comprehension, but can function as a meaningful, strategic communication option in the classroom.

However, there is still a clear gap in focused research that explicitly categorizes and evaluates classroom interactions under the comprehensive framework of Say Something and Say Nothing options, particularly concerning how early adolescents navigate power dynamics in junior high school settings. Further research is needed to explore how teachers and students employ these verbal and non verbal choices and to identify the underlying factors influencing their decisions. Therefore, this study aims to explore the use of Say Something and Say Nothing strategies

in interactions between teachers and students and to identify the contextual factors influencing their choices in junior high school classrooms.

1.2. Problem Identification

Based on the explanation of the background above, the researcher formulates the problem identification as follows:

1. Learners require pragmatic competence to navigate social contexts appropriately and maintain harmonious relationships.
2. There is a clear research gap in explicitly categorizing and evaluating classroom interactions under the comprehensive framework of Say Something and Say Nothing options, particularly concerning how early adolescents navigate power dynamics.
3. Say Nothing is often incorrectly interpreted by educators as a lack of comprehension or passive non-participation, rather than being recognized as a meaningful, protective, and strategic communication option used by learners to manage uncertainty and self image.

1.3. Problem Restriction

This study is limited to analyzing the impression of strategies in communicative interactions between teachers and students at the junior high school level, with a focus on the choice of strategies between say something and say nothing as students' efforts to manage teacher authority, peer pressure, and fear of negative evaluation. This limitation

aims to explore the meaning behind silence as a form of protective response that is often misunderstood in classroom dynamics, without covering aspects of technical language competence or interactions outside the context of formal learning.

1.4. Formulation of the Problems

This research addressed two research questions:

1. What are the uses of the politeness strategies Say Something and Say Nothing in interactions between teacher and students in junior high school?
2. What factors influence the choice of politeness strategies in classroom learning interactions?

1.5. Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are:

1. To describe the uses of the politeness strategies Say Something and Say Nothing in interactions between teacher and students in junior high school classrooms.
2. To analyze the specific contextual and interpersonal factors that influence the choice of these politeness strategies during classroom learning interactions.

1.6. Operational Definitions

To avoid any misunderstanding about the terms used in this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to the study as follows:

1.6.1. Politeness Strategy

Communicative strategies used by speakers to maintain effective interaction, show respect and build harmonious social relationships in accordance with prevailing social norms (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

1.6.2. Say Something

Verbal communication choices and strategies used by teachers and students during classroom interaction, which include Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off Record strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

1.6.3. Say Nothing

The deliberate and conscious use of silence as a communicative strategy during classroom interaction, which may function as a form of respect, reflection, attentiveness, uncertainty management, or conflict avoidance rather than just a sign of non-participation (Fadilah, Widiati, & Latief, 2019).

1.6.4. Factors Influencing the Use of Politeness Strategies

Contextual and interpersonal elements that affect teachers' and students' linguistic choices, including power relations (authority), social distance (familiarity), classroom norms, institutional roles, and immediate communicative goals during the teaching and learning process.

1.6.5. Interaction between Teachers and Students

Communicative exchanges occurring between teachers and students during instructional activities, including asking questions, responding to instructions, providing feedback, expressing opinions, and participating in classroom discussions.

1.6.6. Junior High School

The intermediate educational level involving early adolescent students aged approximately 12 until 15 years old who are undergoing rapid socioemotional and cognitive transformations that heavily affect their communicative behaviors and linguistic choices.

1.7. Significances of the Study

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

This research provides theoretical contributions to the field of pragmatics and sociolinguistics by applying Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework within an educational setting. It expands on how say something and say nothing function, institutional boundaries, and authority roles during real time academic discourse.

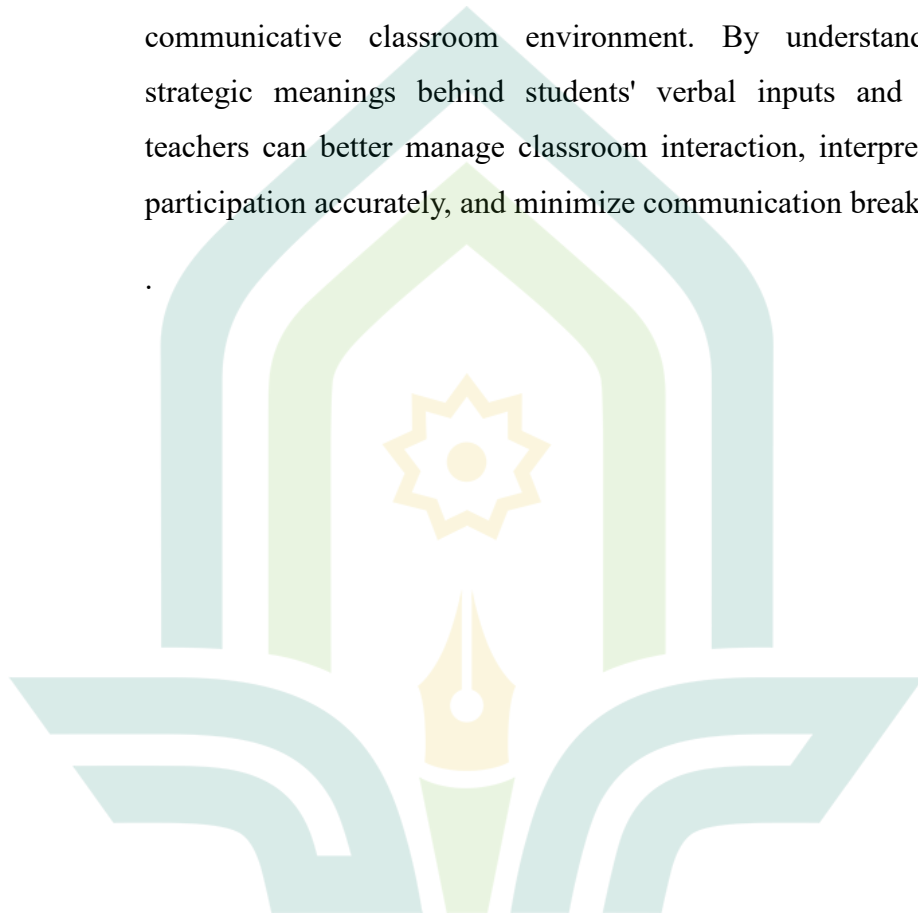
1.7.2 Empirical Significance

This study offers concrete evidence based on authentic classroom observations and participant reflections regarding how teachers and early adolescent students negotiate meaning. The findings demonstrate how power relations, social distance, and developmental

traits shape linguistic choices, offering a detailed empirical mapping of classroom interaction that goes beyond traditional rule based grammar descriptions.

1.7.3 Practical Significance

The findings can guide teachers in developing greater pragmatic awareness, helping them design a more encouraging, respectful, and communicative classroom environment. By understanding the strategic meanings behind students' verbal inputs and silences, teachers can better manage classroom interaction, interpret student participation accurately, and minimize communication breakdowns.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the the pragmatic dynamics of classroom interaction can be made based on the qualitative data analysis. First, when using the Say Something strategy in this junior high school setting, teachers actively use On Record to achieve teaching efficiency while students safely move to verbal participation through the teacher's use of Positive Politeness in the form of praise and recognition. When students speak out, they either use indirect Off Record cues to convey their uncertainty in the classroom or deliberately employ Negative Politeness through formal language to respect the teacher professional authority.

Second, teenagers use the Say Nothing approach or the decision to keep quiet as an intentional, deliberate, and highly flexible communication tactic. Silence has two pragmatic functions that are governed by various motivating factors: it provides a window for conquering urgent vocabulary and grammar problems and serves as a protective barrier against criticism from peers and the dread of making mistakes. In order to avoid criticism, students purposefully conceal their language skills, putting social acceptance within the group ahead of intellectual exposure. In the end, these interaction patterns show that student communication is a complicated negotiation in which the shift from protective silence to active

verbal conversation is largely dependent on teacher constant validation and praise as well as a positive feedback environment.

Based on the observations made in the classroom, the students' final communication behaviors fully supported these findings, demonstrating that both linguistic proficiency and teenage social dynamics systematically shaped their interacting decisions.

5.2. Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, According to the aforementioned conclusions, teachers should use clear feedback loops, frequent praise, and positive validation to create a friendly conversational atmosphere. Teachers should give students enough time to reflect instead of asking stressful, sudden questions because they understand that students' silence is frequently a cognitive processing phase or a reaction to peer pressure. Peer pressure can be lessened and open communication can be promoted by implementing cooperative group activities with clearly defined responsibilities.

Second, future researchers are urged to examine the evolution of Say Something and Say Nothing tactics in various junior high school grade levels. Examining how different teacher communication styles can assist pupils in moving from guarded silence to confident verbal interaction would be very helpful.