

## Teacher Communication Strategy in Teaching English at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng

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### ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research are to (1) To identify the types of communication strategy applied by English Teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng in teaching English. (2) To explore the reasons why English teachers at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng employ verbal. Non-verbal, technology-based, and interactive communication strategy in the teaching process. This study employed qualitative research design. The data were collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews with the English teacher, and documentation of teaching activities. The data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model which included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings of the study reveal that English teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng apply four types of communication strategies in teaching English, namely verbal-strategy, non-verbal strategy, technology strategy, and interactive strategy. Furthermore, the reason for applying these strategy are related to the varying levels of student "English proficiency and the teachers" efforts to create a more inclusive classroom, engaging, and effective learning environment. The implication of this study highlights that the implementation of effective communication strategies plays a crucial role in enhancing student participation, clarifying learning materials, and fostering a more interactive classroom atmosphere. Therefore, teacher need continuous professional development in communication strategies, to support the achievement of optimal learning outcomes. Moreover, the result of this study can be used as a reference for school in designing policies or programs to improve teacher competence in communication strategy.

**Keywords:** *Communication Strategy; Teaching English.*

### 1) INTRODUCTION

Brumfit(1981) stated that English is the most widely used language in the world, both in terms of the number of speakers and its geographical distribution. This is also reinforced by the fact that many non-native speakers use English as a means communication in an international context. Communication, both verbally and non-verbally, is an inseparable aspect of human behavior-both individually and in groups.

Since humans are born until the end of their lives, or since opening their eyes in the morning until falling asleep again at night, connectedness with other people is an unavoidable need. In this context, communication is the only means that allows humans to fulfill their social needs to interact. People

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interact with one another for a variety of reasons. Consequently, communication becomes a natural part of human existence in order to get high student quality, communication is crucial in all facets of life, including education.

Communication plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process, especially in English language classroom where interaction between teachers and students is highly needed. A teacher's ability to deliver material effectively depends not only on the mastery of the subject but also on the use of appropriate communication strategy.

At the junior high school level, communication strategy becomes an important element because students are still in the process of developing their English proficiency and require clear, engaging, and supportive ways of interaction. At SMPN 4 Watansoppeng, English teachers apply various communication strategies to ensure that students can understand the material and actively participate in learning. Teachers adopt multiple strategies that include verbal strategy, non-verbal strategy, technology strategy, and interactive strategy. These approaches are considered essential in overcoming barriers to communication, clarifying meaning, and making the classroom atmosphere more inclusive and effective.

The selection of these four types of communication strategy is not without reason. Teachers at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng are aware that their students have different levels of English proficiency, learning motivation, and participation skills. Therefore, teachers choose communication strategies that can maximize student understanding, improve classroom interaction, and foster a more engaging learning environment. By applying such strategies, teachers aim to enhance the overall quality of English learning and ensure that students are able to achieve learning objectives more effectively.

Building on the explanation above, this research centers on examining the English teacher's communication strategy in teaching at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng. The study aims to explore the various types of communication strategies utilized by the teacher, how these strategies are applied in practice, the underlying reasons for their use, and how students perceive these communication strategies and its primary theoretical framework. SMPN 4 Watansoppeng is a public school established in 1990 by Kaharuddin, S. Pd., M. Pd. who also serves as the headmaster. The school has one English teacher responsible for teaching students in grades 7 through 9. There are a total of six classes, each consisting of 20 to 30 students, and each class is composed of students of the same gender.

This research employs a Qualitative approach using the type of research known as non-experimental research. It emphasizes understanding meaning, process, and experiences rather than numbers. The data collected typically consist of words, narrative, description, documents, or behavior rather than numbers/statistics. Data analysis is conducted inductively, interpreting patterns, themes, and meanings. It is used to understand social, cultural communication, and human behavior phenomena in real world context.

### ***Literature Review***

#### **a. Communication Strategy**

Communication strategies are methods employed by teachers to overcome communication barriers and ensure the learning objectives are achieved (Tarone, 1983), these strategies may include verbal, non-verbal, and contextual techniques to support interaction in the classroom.

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QS. An-Nisa, verse 63, talks of the blindness and ignorance of people toward Allah and how they will suffer as a result in the here after. This verse emphasizes the importance of self-control and faith in Allah and the consequences of disobedience:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

Meaning : “These are the people whom Allah knows what is in their hearts. Therefore, turn away from them, admonish them, and speak to them words that will be imprinted on their souls.”

Here is a summary of that verse: "They are people who are not obedient to Allah's commands and who do not understand what He has commanded of Rasulullah. They only have the ability to discern from a true path. Consequently, Allah would not grant favor to unbelievers." In the context

of the thesis titled "Teacher communication strategy in teaching", Researcher can relate this passage to the importance of effective communication and the strategy of education in providing accurate and appropriate feedback for existing problems.

b. Types Communication Strategy

- verbal strategy

involve the use of spoken or written language to explain, clarify, question, or provide feedback. Teachers often use repetition, paraphrasing and clear instructions to help students understand.

- non-verbal strategy

include gestures, facial expression, body language, and visual aids. These strategies help to emphasize meaning, provide context and support verbal messages.

- technology based strategy

the use of multimedia, digital platforms, and other technological tools is categorized as technology based strategy. Teachers may use powerpoint, videos, or online resources to make lessons more engaging and accessible.

- interactive strategy

involve active participation from both teacher and students. Examples include group discussions, question and answer sessions, role plays, and collaborative activities that encourage students to practice communication skills.

c. Teaching English

Richmond (2009:1) highlights that teaching involves establishing effective and affective communication relationship with students. In other words, the foundation of effective teaching lies in effective communication. Teaching essentially refers to the teacher's efforts to create conducive learning environments, where the strategy and methods employed are expected to stimulate a variety of student learning activities aligned with the teacher's instructional goals.

Therefore, effective teachers are also effective communicators. This implies that learning process is an educational interaction between the teacher-who shapes the learning environment and the students, who actively engage with that effort. Successful educators understand the interdependence of communication and learning. The knowledge and attitudes that students develop in the classroom are shaped by how they interpret complex verbal and non-verbal cues related to the subject matter, the teacher, and themselves.

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According to Brown (1994:283), the development of reading skills is most effective when integrated with writing, listening, and speaking activities. He views reading as a bottom-up process, where learners must first identify a variety of linguistic signals and then process them using their linguistic decoding abilities.

Blum (1984:3-6) identified twelve characteristics of effective teaching:

- 1) Instruction is guided by a preplanned curriculum.
- 2) There are high expectations for student learning.
- 3) Students are carefully oriented to lessons.
- 4) Instruction is clear and focused.
- 5) Learning progress is closely monitored.
- 6) When students do not understand, they are retaught.
- 7) Class teamwork is used for learning.
- 8) Class routines are smooth and efficient.
- 9) Instructional groups in the classroom are formed according to instructional needs.
- 10) Standards for classroom behavior are high.
- 11) Personal interactions between teachers and students are positive.
- 12) Incentives and rewards are used to promote student excellence..

. Based on the explanation above, teaching English is considered one of the most important subjects in school, and as such, novice teachers may find it both interesting and challenging. In teaching English, four language skills—listening, writing, reading, and speaking—are taught, alongside other aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. By employing effective communication strategies and teaching skills, students can better comprehend the material being taught during the learning process.

#### d. Teaching role and Teaching Process

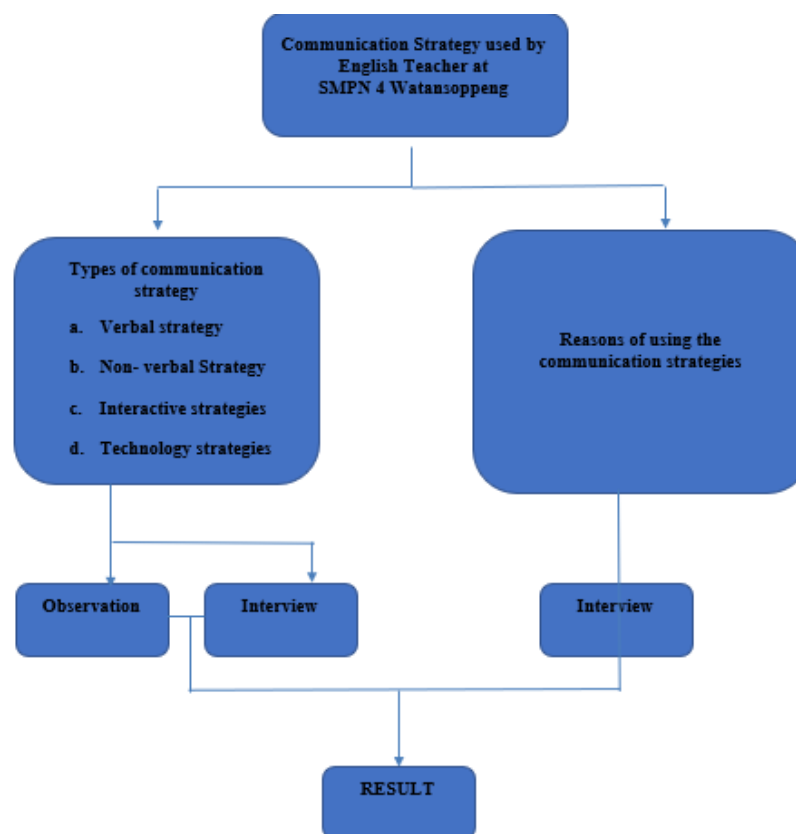
The teaching process lies at the heart of the entire educational system, with the teacher playing a central role. Teaching and learning activities are based on dynamic, reciprocal interactions between educators and students within structured educational contexts, all aimed at achieving specific learning objectives. These interactions go beyond mere instructional exchanges—they represent an ongoing

educational relationship. This relationship includes not only the transmission of subject matter but also the communication of values, attitudes, and behaviors to learners.

In this process, the teacher takes on multiple roles—not only as a knowledge provider but also as a mentor, facilitator, and guide responsible for overseeing and ensuring the success of the learning experience. This aligns with the expected functions of future educators. As facilitators, teachers are expected to equip students with the necessary learning tools, inspire motivation, and support them in striving for academic excellence. Thus, the teacher's presence is consistently crucial to the success of the teaching and learning process.

Within the educational system, the teacher remains a key component, although their specific role may vary depending on the structure and orientation of the system. In classroom practice, teachers function both as planners (directors) and as implementers (actors). This dual role highlights the complexity of their responsibilities, particularly in designing, managing, and executing effective learning experiences. And implementing educational activities in schools.

### ***Conceptual Framework***



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Jeremy Harmer (2007) in this theory of communication strategy English language Teaching discusses various communication strategies that teachers can use in teaching English. In the context of learning, teacher communication strategies are very important to improve the effectiveness of teaching and help students understand and use the target language well. The conceptual framework of Teacher Communication Strategies in Teaching English by Harmer (2007).

Types of communication strategies:

1. Verbal strategy
  - a. Language simplification (Krashen, 1982), teacher simplify language structures by using short sentences, basic vocabulary, and repetition to make it easier for student to understand.
  - b. Paraphrasing and repetition(Larsen-Freeman,2000), teacher paraphrase and repeat material to help student understand complex concepts.
  - c. Scaffolding (Vygotsky,1978), teacher provide support that is appropriate to student's needs to build language skills gradually.
2. Non-verbal strategy
  - a. Body language (Ellis,2008): Hand gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact are used to reinforce verbal messages.
  - b. Visual media (Harmer,2001): Use of pictures, diagrams, and visual aids to explain material.
3. Interactive strategy
  - a. Communication approach (Richard,2006), the teacher creates a learning situation in which students are encourages to interact actively in the target language.
  - b. Providing feedback (Hattie & Timperley,2007), constructive feedback is given to correct errors and motivate student.
4. Technology strategy
  - a. Multimedia (Chapelle,2003), the use of technology such as video, learning apps, and digital platforms to increase student engagement.
  - b. Online collaborative learning (Garrison,2011), teacher faciitiesdiscussion and interaction through online learning platforms.

Communication Strategy is a method, tip or tactic that can be used in implementing communication planning (Cangara, 2014). Communication strategy is one part of communication planning. Observation: Observation has always been part of psychological research, it can take place

in laboratory context (experimental) as well as in natural contexts Patton (Poerwandari, 2017) emphasized that observation is an essential data collection method in research qualitative. For data to be accurate and useful, observations must be carried out by Matthew and Ross (2010) state that observation is a method data collection through human senses.

Observation in qualitative research is a data collection method that involves direct observation of behavior, interactions. Or phenomena in their natural context. This method aims to understand the meaning, patterns and social contact of the subject being studied. Observation in qualitative research are flexible and open, allowing researchers to capture details that may not be revealed through other methods such as interviews or questionnaires.

An interview is a form of structured interaction between two individuals that aims to exchange information and ideas through a series of questions and answers, thus allowing the formation of meaning around a particular topic. More specifically, an interview refers to a face-to-face encounter between an interviewer and a respondent, designed to gather targeted information. Its primary goal is to collect data from respondents with minimal bias and maximum efficiency.

## **2) METHODS**

This research employs a qualitative research design, specifically a descriptive qualitative method. This design is chosen because it allows the researcher to describe and analyze communication strategies applied by English teachers at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng in detail.

The study was conducted at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng, a junior high school located in Watansoppeng Regency. The school was selected because it has English teachers who actively use various communication strategies in their teaching process. The participant of this study is one English teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng. The teacher was chosen purposively based on their experience and active role in implementing communication strategies in the classroom.

## **3) RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Communication Strategy***

This research was conducted to examine the communication strategies employed by the English teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng in the process of teaching English, as well as to uncover the reasons

behind the teacher's choice of strategies. The findings were obtained through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation of teaching activities.

### 1. Types of Communication Strategies Used by the Teacher

Based on the results of observation and interviews, the English teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng applied four types of communication strategies in teaching English. These include:

#### a. Verbal Strategy

The teacher frequently used verbal strategies such as giving clear explanations, repeating important points, providing examples, asking guiding questions, and offering immediate feedback to students. This strategy helped students to easily understand the material and encouraged active participation.

#### b. Non-Verbal Strategy

The teacher also employed non-verbal communication such as body language, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact. These strategies were effective in reinforcing meaning, clarifying instructions, and managing classroom dynamics. Non-verbal strategies also helped in motivating students and maintaining their attention.

#### c. Technology-Based Strategy

The teacher integrated technology in the teaching process, such as using multimedia presentations, audio-visual aids, and online learning resources. This strategy made the lessons more engaging and interactive while supporting students with various learning preferences.

#### d. Interactive Strategy

The teacher created opportunities for student interaction through pair work, group discussions, and question-answer sessions. This strategy encouraged collaboration among students, developed their speaking ability, and increased their confidence in using English.

### 2. The Reasons for Using the Communication Strategies

From the interview results, it was found that the teacher applied these four types of communication strategies for several reasons:

a. Variation of Students' English Proficiency

Students at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng have different levels of English ability. By applying various strategies, the teacher aimed to address these differences and ensure all students could follow the lesson effectively.

b. To Create an Inclusive and Effective Learning Experience

The teacher's choice of communication strategies was intended to make the classroom environment more inclusive and supportive, so that every student had the opportunity to participate and develop their skills.

c. To Increase Student Participation and Motivation

Interactive and technology-based strategies were chosen to make students more active in the classroom and to stimulate their interest in learning English.

d. To Clarify and Reinforce Understanding of the Material

Verbal and non-verbal strategies were considered essential to ensure that students fully understood the learning material, especially when students encountered difficulties in grasping new concepts.

### ***Discussion***

The findings of this study revealed that the teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng employed a combination of verbal, non-verbal, technology-based, and interactive communication strategies. The use of multiple strategies in English teaching aligns with previous studies that emphasize the importance of communication strategies in supporting effective teaching and learning.

a. Verbal and Non-Verbal Strategies

The use of both verbal and non-verbal communication proved effective in clarifying material and managing the classroom. Non-verbal cues, such as gestures and facial expressions, complemented verbal explanations and helped bridge gaps in students' comprehension. This finding supports the notion that effective teaching requires the integration of both verbal and non-verbal communication.

### 1. Technology-Based Strategies

Incorporating technology in teaching increased students' interest and engagement. Multimedia presentations and online resources provided additional support for visual and auditory learners, creating a more dynamic learning environment. This is consistent with modern teaching approaches that advocate the integration of digital tools in the classroom

### 2. Interactive Strategies

Encouraging students to work in groups or pairs helped to foster collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills. This strategy also allowed students to practice English more actively, reducing their fear of making mistakes. The finding highlights the role of interactive learning in improving students' confidence and language skills.

**Reasons Behind the Strategy Choice** The teacher's rationale for using these strategies reflects a student-centered approach, where different learning needs are acknowledged and addressed. By using diverse strategies, the teacher created an inclusive environment where students with varying proficiency levels could benefit. Overall, the findings demonstrate that communication strategies play a significant role in improving the quality of English learning at the junior high school level. Teachers need to be equipped with the skills and training to effectively use these strategies, which in turn contributes to the achievement of optimal learning outcomes.

Based on the observation results, it can be concluded that:

The communication strategies used by teachers (such as the use of simple language, visual media, and TPR methods) are effective in improving student understanding and participation. Two-way interaction and positive feedback from teachers help build student confidence.

Based on the observations made it can be seen that the communication strategy that are Communication Strategies Used by Teachers

- a) **Use of Simple and Clear Language:** Teachers tend to use simple and clear language when explaining material. This is done to ensure that students with different levels of understanding can follow the lesson. Example: Teachers avoid using overly complex vocabulary and provide examples of simple sentences.
- b) **Utilization of Visual and Audio Media:** Teachers use media such as images, video, and audio recording to facilitate student understanding. These media help students associate words with

their meanings. Example: Showing videos of conversations in English to practice listening skills.

- c) Implementation of the TPR (Total Physical Response) Method: Some teachers use the TPR method, where students respond to the teacher's instructions with physical movements. This method is effective for teaching vocabulary and sentence structure. Example: The teacher mentions the word "stand up" and students respond by standing up. Two-Way Interaction: The teacher encourages two-way interaction by asking questions and asking students to actively participate. Example: The teacher asks students to practice simple conversations in front of the class.
- d) Utilization of Facial Expressions and Body Movements: To help convey the meaning of words or instructions, teachers employ body movements and facial expressions, ensuring that their message is understood even when students might struggle with the language itself. Example: Teachers nod or shake their heads to confirm whether an answer is right or wrong.
- b. Impact of Communication Strategies on Learning
  - a) Improving Student Understanding:
  - b) Effective communication strategies, such as the use of visual media and the TPR method, help students understand the material better.
  - c) Increasing Learning Motivation: Two-way interaction and the use of interesting media make students more motivated to learn English.
  - d) Developing Communication Skills: Students become more confident in speaking and listening to English after teachers apply interactive communication strategies.

Based on the interview result above, it can be concluded that teacher at SMPN 4 WatanSoppeng used four types of communication strategy according by Harmer (2007) in the learning process, namely verbal strategy, non-verbal strategy, interactive strategy, and technology strategy. Verbal strategy, teacher used words and spoken language effectively to convey learning materials, provide instructions, and interact, with students. For example, explaining materials, questions and answers, and discussions.

- e) Non- verbal strategy, teacher use body language, facial expressions, movements, and visual cues to support communication and clarify the message being conveyed. This helps student understanding the material better and creates a more interactive learning atmosphere.

- f) Interactive strategy, teachers encourage two-way interaction between teachers and student and between student. Through activities such as group discussions, role-plays, and presentations, student are given the opportunity to practice active listening and speaking skills.
- g) Technology strategy, teacher use technology as a learning support tool, such as the use of projectors, learning videos, educational applications, or online platforms. This help increase student engagement and facilities the delivery of materials.

So, from the four types communication strategy teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng create a dynamic, effective, and enjoyable learning environment. The used of these diverse strategies also helps students develop communication skills, both verbally and non-verbally, interactive, technology, and prepares them to face the challenges of the digital age.

The results of the observations and interviews concluded that the communication strategies employed by teachers during English lessons include various approaches aimed at enhancing understanding and engagement. The findings of this study are in line with previous theories and research on communication strategies in English language learning. The following is an in-depth discussion of the findings:

1. Relevance to Communication Theory, The Theory of Effective Communication (DeVito, 2009) emphasizes the importance of message clarity and feedback in the communication process. The findings of the study indicate that teachers use simple language and two-way interaction to ensure that messages are conveyed well. The TPR theory (Asher, 1969) supports the use of physical movement to facilitate language learning. The findings of the study confirm that this method is effective in improving student understanding.
2. Comparison with Previous Research, stated that the use of visual and audio media can improve student understanding. The findings of this study strengthen this statement. Richards showed that two-way interaction between teachers and students is important for developing communication skills. This is in accordance with the findings of this study.
3. Implications for Learning Practice

Teachers need to continue to develop innovative communication strategies, such as integrating technology into learning. Schools must provide adequate facilities to support teacher communication strategies. Teacher training on effective communication methods can improve the quality of English learning.

Based on the findings and discussions, it can be concluded that teacher communication strategies play an important role in English learning in junior high schools. The use of simple language, visual media, TPR methods, and two-way interactions have proven effective in improving students' understanding and motivation. However, These findings contribute to the development of more effective English learning methods that are relevant to the needs of students at the junior high school level.

**Communication Strategies Used by Teachers** The research findings show that teachers use various communication strategies to facilitate English learning. These strategies include:

a. Use of Simple and Clear Language

Teachers use language that is easy for students to understand, especially for beginners. This is in line with the theory of Effective Communication, which emphasizes the importance of clarity of messages in the communication process.

b. The use of simple language helps students with low basic abilities to follow the lesson without feeling burdened.

c. Utilization of Visual and Audio Media

Teachers use images, videos, and audio recordings to support learning. Multimedia Learning Theory states that the use of visual and audio media can improve student understanding by utilizing visual and auditory channels simultaneously. This media also makes learning more interesting and interactive, thereby increasing student motivation.

d. Two-Way Interaction

The teacher engages students in the learning process through questions and answers, discussions, and conversation practice. Interactive Communication Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process. Two-way interaction helps students develop speaking and listening skills simultaneously.

e. Use of Body Language and Facial Expressions.

The teacher uses body movements and facial expressions to clarify the meaning of words or instructions. This is in accordance with the Nonverbal Communication Theory (Harmer 2007), which states that nonverbal communication can strengthen verbal messages. Body language and facial expressions also help students who have difficulty understanding words in English.

#### **4) CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The English teacher at SMPN 4 Watansoppeng applied four types of communication strategies in teaching English:

- a) Verbal strategy: explaining, repeating, questioning, and giving feedback.
- b) Non-verbal strategy: gestures, facial expressions, and body language to support explanations and maintain classroom engagement.
- c) Technology-based strategy: using multimedia, audio-visual aids, and online resources to make learning more attractive and interactive.
- d) Interactive strategy: involving students in group work, discussions, and question–answer sessions to encourage active participation.

The reasons the teacher employed these communication strategies were:

- a. To address students' varying levels of English proficiency.
- b. To create an inclusive and effective learning environment.
- c. To increase student participation and motivation.
- d. To clarify material and reinforce understanding.

The use of these communication strategies has significant implications for improving the quality of English teaching and learning at the junior high school level. They contribute to building student confidence, increasing engagement, and supporting the achievement of learning objectives.

#### ***Recommendation***

Based on the conclusions, several suggestions are proposed for teachers, schools, and future researchers:

- a) For Teachers: Teachers are encouraged to continue using a variety of communication strategies in their classrooms to cater to students with different proficiency levels. Teachers should actively participate in training programs and workshops that focus on developing effective communication strategies in English teaching.

It is important for teachers to integrate technology in creative ways to make lessons more engaging and relevant to students' needs.

b) For school: Schools should provide facilities and resources that support the implementation of diverse communication strategies, especially technology-based learning tools. Schools are advised to design professional development programs that enhance teachers' competence in communication strategies to improve teaching quality.

For Future Researchers: Further studies can be conducted by involving more participants (teachers and students) to gain a broader perspective on communication strategies in English teaching. Future research may also explore the effectiveness of specific strategies in improving certain language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, or writing.

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