PRAGMATIC FAILURE OF ARMY'S POSTS REACTING TO BTS V'S STATUSES

THESIS

By:

Dhalia Nadiahasna
NIM 18320197

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

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By:

Dhalia Nadiahasna

NIM 18320197

Advisor:

Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.

NIP 199107222023212036

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM

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Malang, 10 June 2025
The researcher

Dhalia Nadiahasna
NIM 18320197

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This to certify that Dhalia Nadiahasna's thesis entitled **Pragmatic Failure of ARMY's Posts Reacting to BTS V's Statuses** has been approved for thesis examination at Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.).
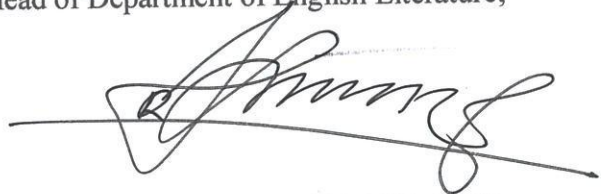
Malang, 10 June 2025

Approved by
Advisor,

Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.
NIP 199107222023212036

Head of Department of English Literature,

Ribut Wahyudi, M.Ed., Ph.D.
NIP 198112052011011007

Acknowledged by
Dean,

Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.
NIP 197411012003121003
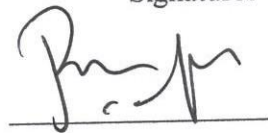
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1. Chair
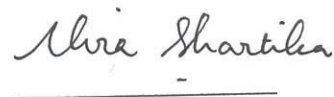   Prof Dr. Rohmani Nur Indah, M.Pd.
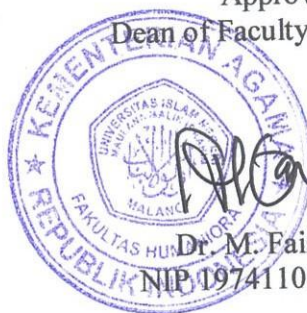   NIP 197609102003122011

2. First Examiner
   Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M. Pd.
   NIP 199107222023212036

3. Second Examiner
   Mira Shartika, M.A.
   NIP 197903082023212008

Approved by
Dean of Faculty of Humanities

Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.
NIP 197411012003121003

MOTTO

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا . إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

"Verily, with hardship comes ease."

Q.S Al Insyirah: 5-6

DEDICATION

I dedicated my thesis to my beloved parents,

Papa Dody and Bunda Lilik,

and my two brothers

Dyllan Naufal Azmi and Delfian Nur Fauzan

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The Researcher

Dhalia Nadiahasna
NIM 18320197

ABSTRACT

This study explores the phenomenon of pragmatic failure in the context of online communication among international fans of BTS (ARMY) on Twitter. Pragmatic failure refers to misunderstandings arising when language users fail to appropriately interpret or convey intended social meanings across cultural or contextual boundaries. While existing research often focuses on pragmatic issues in traditional classroom settings, this study investigates how such failures manifest in real-time digital discourse, particularly within fan interactions involving sensitive topics, such as political affiliations or humanitarian concerns. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the study analyzes 25 English-language Twitter statuses related to BTS member Taehyung's Instagram post and his association with controversial content. Drawing on Thomas's (1983) framework, the analysis identifies various types of pragmatic failures and categorizes them by misunderstanding level. The result shows there six from seven types such as inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, misinterpretation of pragmatic force, overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation and from two levels, the researcher frequently found misunderstanding level 2 occur in the online communication observed. Findings propose that direct speech acts, cultural misinterpretations, and emotional expression without contextual edition are primary contributors to miscommunication. This research contributes to the information of virtual pragmatics and gives insights into enhancing multicultural conversation in online environments.

مستخلص البحث

نادية حسنة، داليا. (٢٠٢٥). الفشل البراغماتي لمنشورات الجيش رداً على مواقف بي تي إس في. أطروحة جامعية، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة إسلام نيجري مولانا مالك إبراهيم.مالانج. المشرف: مزروعول إشلاحية، ماجستيرفي الإدارة العامة

الكلمة المفتاحية: براغماتية، فشل براغماتي، التواصل عبر الإنترنت

تستكشف هذه الدراسة ظاهرة الفشل البراغماتي في سياق التواصل عبر الإنترنت بين المعجبين الدوليين لفرقة على تويتر. يشير الفشل البراغماتي إلى BTS سوء الفهم الناشئ عندما يفشل مستخدمو اللغة في تفسير أو نقل المعاني (ARMY) الاجتماعية المقصودة بشكل مناسب عبر الحدود الثقافية أو السياقية. في حين أن الأبحاث الحالية تركز غالبًا على القضايا البراجماتية في بيئات الفصول الدراسية التقليدية، فإن هذه الدراسة تبحث في كيفية ظهور مثل هذه الإخفاقات في الخطاب الرقمي في الوقت الفعلي، وخاصة داخل تفاعلات المعجبين التي تتضمن مواضيع حساسة، مثل الانتماءات السياسية أو المخاوف تايهيونغ BTS الإنسانية. باستخدام نهج نوعي وصفي، تحلل الدراسة 25 حالة تويتر باللغة الإنجليزية تتعلق بمنشور عضو فرقة على إنستغرام وارتباطه بالمحتوى المثير للجدل. بالاعتماد على إطار عمل توماس (1983)، يحدد التحليل أنواعًا مختلفة من الإخفاقات البراغماتية ويصنفها حسب مستوى سوء الفهم. تُظهر النتيجة وجود ستة من أصل سبعة أنواع، مثل استراتيجيات النقل غير المناسبة لأفعال الكلام، وسوء تفسير القوة البراغماتية، والتعميم المفرط للقواعد البراغماتية، وسوء تقدير التكافؤ الدلالي أو النحوي، وعدم التعرض الكافي لأعراف الأدب، وعدم المرونة في التكيف البراغماتي. ومن مستويين، وجد الباحث أن سوء الفهم من المستوى الثاني يحدث بشكل متكرر في التواصل عبر الإنترنت. تشير النتائج إلى أن أفعال الكلام المباشرة، والتفسيرات الثقافية الخاطئة، والتعبير العاطفي دون سياق سياقي، هي عوامل رئيسية تساهم في سوء التواصل. يُسهم هذا البحث في تعزيز.علم البراغماتية الافتراضية، ويُقدم رؤئ حول تعزيز الحوار متعدد الثقافات في البيئات الإلكترونية

ABSTRAK

Nadiahasna, Dhalia (2025) *Kegagalan Pragmatis dari Postingan ARMY yang Bereaksi terhadap Status V BTS*. Skripsi, Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing: Mazroatul Ishlahiyah, M.Pd.

Kata kunci: Pragmatik, kesalahan pragmatik, komunikasi online

Studi ini mengeksplorasi fenomena kegagalan pragmatik dalam konteks komunikasi daring di antara penggemar internasional BTS (ARMY) di Twitter. Kegagalan pragmatik mengacu pada kesalahpahaman yang timbul ketika pengguna bahasa gagal menafsirkan atau menyampaikan makna sosial yang dimaksud dengan tepat melintasi batas budaya atau kontekstual. Sementara penelitian yang ada sering kali berfokus pada isu-isu pragmatik dalam pengaturan kelas tradisional, studi ini menyelidiki bagaimana kegagalan tersebut terwujud dalam wacana digital waktu nyata, khususnya dalam interaksi penggemar yang melibatkan topik-topik sensitif, seperti afiliasi politik atau masalah kemanusiaan. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, studi ini menganalisis 25 status Twitter berbahasa Inggris yang terkait dengan unggahan Instagram anggota BTS Taehyung dan hubungannya dengan konten kontroversial. Mengacu pada kerangka kerja Thomas (1983), analisis ini mengidentifikasi berbagai jenis kegagalan pragmatik dan mengkategorikannya berdasarkan tingkat kesalahpahaman. Hasilnya menunjukkan ada enam dari tujuh jenis seperti pengalihan strategi tindak tutur yang tidak tepat, salah tafsir terhadap kekuatan pragmatik, generalisasi aturan pragmatik yang berlebihan, kesalahan penilaian kesetaraan semantik atau sintaksis, paparan yang tidak memadai terhadap konvensi kesopanan, dan ketidakfleksibelan dalam adaptasi pragmatik dan dari dua tingkatan, peneliti sering menemukan kesalahpahaman tingkat 2 terjadi dalam komunikasi daring yang diamati. Temuan penelitian mengusulkan bahwa tindak tutur langsung, salah tafsir budaya, dan ekspresi emosional tanpa penyuntingan kontekstual merupakan kontributor utama terhadap miskomunikasi. Penelitian ini berkontribusi terhadap informasi pragmatik virtual dan memberikan wawasan untuk meningkatkan percakapan multikultural dalam lingkungan daring.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the background of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Many scholars have looked at the different areas and ideas of pragmatics. However, one of the crucial factors that might not be overlooked is pragmatic failure. Pragmatic failure is the inaccurate use of how language fails to encode social meaning through conscious reflection (Takashi, 2012). Pragmatic failure plays an important function typically in intercultural miscommunication, particularly in digital spaces wherein non-verbal cues are confined. According to Yao (2020), pragmatic failure occurs when speakers from distinctive cultural backgrounds misinterpret language due to variations in linguistic conventions and social norms. This pragmatics element can happen anywhere, even on social networking, or Social Networking Services (SNS), which is one of the internet-mediated communication platforms for another promising research tradition in pragmatics.

Several scholars who discuss social media and pragmatic elements emphasize the importance of developing pragmatic competence, a sense of community, and expanding opportunities for language practice through larger discourse. Social media offers real, real-time contexts in which inexperienced persons come across diverse speech acts, politeness techniques, and cultural

references which are often absent in traditional classrooms. This dynamic interaction fosters a greater intuitive understanding of pragmatic norms, allowing inexperienced persons to barter meaning and modify their language use accurately. As an end result, virtual platforms turn out to be no longer the most effective areas for communication but also effective tools for cultivating pragmatic sensitivity and intercultural competence. English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners can improve their pragmatic awareness and practice English (Khasanah, 2019; Bailey, 2021). What stays underexplored is the attention and reputation of pragmatic failure in verbal exchange among non-native English speakers on social media platforms which includes X.

In current years, BTS has received a large worldwide fanbase called ARMY, united through shared admiration no matter diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. On X (previously Twitter), English often serves as the number one language for fan communication, allowing discussions on BTS-related content and wider social issues. These interactions display the complexity of intercultural verbal exchange, in which misunderstandings frequently rise up due to neglected pragmatic cues like context, cultural nuance, and implied meaning. As Haugh (2020) explains, such pragmatic failures stem from differing cultural norms, particularly in digital areas. Further, Zeng (2020) notes that platforms like Weibo and X can make bigger or distort meaning when cultural assumptions conflict. This study explores those pragmatic failures in the BTS army on X to understand the dynamics of worldwide fan interaction.

Kim Taehyung, known as V of BTS, stands out for his powerful stage presence and soulful voice, attracting millions of fans from all over the world, referred to as ARMY. V's have an impact on goes beyond music, as his fashion style, social media posts on Instagram, and public appearances often create trends and spark conversations online. Many fans look up to him not simplest as an artist but also as a role model. Research on K-pop fan culture highlights how idols like V give a boost to fans' emotional ties, cultural identities, and regular choices through mediated studies (Sun & Shim, 2014; Agustiana & Kusuma, 2023). This shows the considerable attain of Hallyu, with fans growing deep connections beyond simply enjoying music. This strong emotional bond can result in extreme online support and sometimes disagreements among fans, particularly when the artist is involved in public problems or controversies.

BTS fans, known as ARMY, are one of the largest and most active fandoms globally. They are recognized for their robust dedication and loyalty to BTS. ARMY participants frequently show support by way of streaming songs, promoting BTS on social media, protecting the group from hate, and even organizing donations and charity activities in BTS's name. Those movements display how fandom is not just about enjoyment but also approximately community, shared identity, and social movement. The behavior of ARMY has attracted attention from researchers for its unique shape of digital activism and collective emotional guide (Chin and Morimoto, 2013; Yin, 2020). Those fans use on-line spaces not only to celebrate BTS but additionally to shield them and help

causes that align with BTS's values, making ARMY stand out amongst other global fandoms.

This study focuses on BTS fans, especially ARMY on X, stems from the group's international influence and the various cultural and linguistic makeup of its fandom, making it a strong case for analyzing cross-cultural communication challenges. Online interactions amongst ARMY frequently cause "fan wars," especially while sensitive subjects—including support for Palestine—are misunderstood. Those misinterpretations, rooted in pragmatic failure, can disrupt significant communication and highlight the need for cultural awareness. As Kamsinah et al. (2023) notice, pragmatic strategies in virtual conversation are shaped through cultural context, and a lack of cultural sensitivity can lead to miscommunication. Sarwari et al. (2024) further emphasize the importance of intercultural competence in worldwide interactions. This research aims to analyze pragmatic failures within ARMY's discourse on X, categorize the types, and explore how tweet misinterpretations contribute to those failures, to foster empathy, understanding, and powerful communication in a digital era.

There is a growing need for research that applies and tests language use concerning writing quality and pragmatic competency within social media contexts, such as in X, to keep pace with rapid technological development. Existing studies on pragmatic failure have largely drawn data from formal environments like offline or online classrooms, often overlooking informal digital communication spaces. This gap underscores the importance of investigating pragmatic issues in real-world social media interactions. As Kamsinah et al (2023)

point out, pragmatic strategies in digital communication are shaped by users' ability to adapt language and meaning within the cultural and contextual boundaries of social media. Analyzing these interactions on platforms like X can provide valuable insights into how pragmatic failures emerge and how communication can be improved in increasingly global and digitally mediated settings.

Within the modern-day virtual generation, platforms like X have grown to be fundamental to everyday communication, especially among more youthful demographics. The fast evolution of technology has facilitated quick facts dissemination; however, this acceleration additionally manner that incorrect information can unfold faster than ever before. Misinterpretations regularly stem not totally from the content's inaccuracy but from pragmatic failures—misunderstandings of context, purpose, or cultural nuances. As Kyriakidou et al. (2023) are aware, audiences regularly navigate information media through a lens of pragmatic skepticism, yet nonetheless fall prey to disinformation because of contextual misinterpretations. Furthermore, Nutsugah et al. (2025) highlight that during the pandemic, the spread of fake information on social media intensified through users' restricted virtual literacy and crucial thinking competencies, main to considerable attractiveness and sharing of fake information. Those findings underscore the need for greater pragmatic competence and digital literacy to mitigate the adverse effects of misinformation on social media systems.

To organize and synthesize previous research, the researcher organizes them through their thematic focus and the research contexts they deal with. In

advance studies often targeted pragmatic failures in fictional or media-based discourse, at the same time as more recent investigations have shifted toward real-world, culturally grounded communication. Latest worldwide research has specifically emphasized the role of cultural dimensions in shaping pragmatic effects. As an instance, Ezzaoua (2023) examined how Moroccan EFL university students' cultural values impact their manufacturing of speech acts, which includes complaints and refusals, showing how those variations can cause pragmatic failure in intercultural settings. Similarly, Liu and Liu (2023) explored cross-cultural variations in refusal patterns among Chinese and Australian college students, highlighting how pragmatic failure arises when people apply culturally particular norms in unusual contexts. Those modern-day findings display the significance of knowledge pragmatic failure no longer simply as a linguistic difficulty, but as one deeply intertwined with cultural focus and communicative competence in various environments.

Other studies focus on varying dimensions of English language education and acquisition, grouped by their research areas and methodologies. One study by Hendriks et al. (2023) explores how politeness modifications in English emails differ between native (L1) and non-native (L2) speakers. Their experimental design reveals that less politeness leads to more negative evaluations of the sender, with L1 writers being judged more harshly for deviations from politeness norms compared to L2 writers. This highlights the social and linguistic factors influencing communication in a globalized context. In another domain, research on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) investigates its effects on

university students' English skills. This systematic literature review emphasizes the uneven development of receptive (e.g., reading) versus productive skills (e.g., speaking) while also noting CLIL's motivational benefits and challenges, particularly in non-English speaking regions (Lyu, 2022). In parallel with this research, Xiang (2023) investigates the function of social media in enhancing intercultural communication competence among Chinese college students studying in Malaysia. The findings reveal that informal digital environments, such as social systems, provide newcomers with true exposure to numerous cultural expressions, which strengthens their pragmatic attention and flexibility. This enhances formal language education by way of highlighting the practical applications of cultural competence in actual global communication. Collectively, this research underscores the significance of integrating each pedagogical and contextual strategy to develop holistic language skill ability in multicultural settings.

The theoretical frameworks underpinning these studies provide valuable perspectives on their findings. Hendriks et al. utilize Language Expectancy Theory to explain how deviations from expected language norms impact perceptions of politeness, emphasizing the importance of aligning language use with social expectations (Hendriks et al., 2023). CLIL-related research integrates the 4C model, focusing on content, communication, cognition, and culture to create a holistic learning approach, supported by constructivist theories that prioritize social interaction in educational settings (Lyu, 2022). Xiang's study on cross-cultural teaching emphasizes the synergy between linguistic competence

and cultural awareness, leveraging computer-assisted methodologies to enhance learning outcomes. These theoretical approaches collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of language acquisition, bridging linguistic skills, social norms, and cultural insights to advance teaching practices (Xiang, 2022).

Some other category of studies investigates into language learning and translation, emphasizing pragmatic errors in these contexts. Mahniza (2020) explored pragmatic failures in translating movie dialogues, distinguishing between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic errors in Moonlight. Hutauruk (2020) focused on the challenges confronted by employing Indonesian EFL college students in translating idioms and maintaining pragmatic appropriateness in English-to-Indonesian translations. Moreover, Fitria (2020) studied pragmatic failures in EFL classroom settings, identifying errors in students' speech acts. McConachy and Spencer-Oatey (2020) built on this theme by studying the function of L2 pragmatic recognition and cultural competence in language learning, emphasizing its significance in heading off verbal exchange breakdowns.

Studies on cross-cultural pragmatic failure has been substantially explored by way of Peter McGee and Lan Ding, every contributing specific perspectives on communication breakdowns. McGee (2019)'s observe explores how variations in cultural norms and expectancies can cause misinterpretations in communication. His work emphasizes the role of sociopragmatics, which examines how social and cultural contexts shape language use. By using the use of examples from intercultural enterprise and academic interactions, McGee illustrates that pragmatic competence is critical for accomplishing mutual understanding, mainly

in high-context versus low-context cultural exchanges. His study builds on the politeness idea, which specializes in how various cultural definitions of politeness regularly result in unintentional offense or false impressions.

Lan Ding (2022) further expands on these ideas by offering practical strategies to minimize pragmatic errors. Ding categorizes pragmatic failures into pragmalinguistic failures, where language forms are used incorrectly, and sociopragmatic failures, where cultural norms clash. This study applies speech act theory to highlight how speech acts such as requests, apologies, and compliments are often misinterpreted across cultures. Ding suggests strategies like enhancing cultural awareness, practicing adaptive communication, and providing explicit instruction in pragmatic rules to overcome these challenges. Together, McGee and Ding's (Ding, 2022; Peter, 2019) research highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity and theoretical frameworks like politeness and speech act theories in understanding and addressing cross-cultural pragmatic failures.

Recent studies shifted focus to pragmatic issues in intercultural and social media contexts. Ren and Liu (2019) provided practical advice for Chinese English learners to address cross-cultural pragmatic failures, while Liu (2021) examined online communication between English and Chinese users, highlighting errors specific to digital interactions. Belahmar (2021) explored how the Tiaret speech community interprets meaning through the lens of social identity, adding a cultural perspective to the study of pragmatic failures. These studies underline the expanding relevance of pragmatic competence in multicultural and digital environments.

Overall, this synthesis reveals a progression in research, starting with traditional media and classroom settings and moving toward dynamic, intercultural, and social media contexts. This evolution highlights the increasing importance of understanding pragmatic failures in diverse digital spaces, such as X, which is the focus of this study on K-pop fan communities in verbal exchange among non-native English speakers on social media platforms which includes X. The focus on BTS fans, in particular the Army on X, stems from the group's profound worldwide impact and the expansive attain of its fandom. BTS's worldwide fanbase embodies a gathering of various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, interpreting it as an exemplary case for examining move-cultural communication challenges.

Considerably, the Army's online engagements frequently escalate into "fan wars," specifically while tweets or comments on sensitive topics are misinterpreted. A considerable concern in those interactions is the discourse surrounding global humanitarian issues, inclusive of the continued awareness campaigns for Palestine. Misinterpretations rooted in pragmatic failures can disrupt significant conversations, emphasize the importance of expertise, and address these communication boundaries. As Kamsinah et al. (2023) highlight, pragmatic techniques in virtual verbal exchange are deeply inspired by cultural contexts, and a lack of cultural recognition can lead to misinterpretations on social media systems. In addition, Sarwari et al. (2024) emphasize the necessity of intercultural communication competence in the 21st century, noting that cultural sensitivity and awareness are critical for powerful global interactions.

While present research provides useful insights into pragmatic competence and digital communication, most do now not recognize particularly on pragmatic failure among non-native English speakers. Several works are theoretical in nature or emphasize broader communication skills without analyzing specific failures. Others explore social media use but do not clearly categorize or interpret pragmatic breakdowns. This thesis fills that gap by providing an empirical analysis of pragmatic failure types in digital intercultural contexts. By way of investigating this phenomenon, the researcher aims to foster empathy, respect, and greater powerful conversation inside and beyond the BTS fan community. This research seeks to clarify the notice of pragmatic failures, categorize the types that arise, and explore how misinterpretations of tweets on social media contribute to those failures using Thomas theory (1983). In doing so, it aspires to enhance understanding of pragmatic failures in a generation where technological advancements have profoundly converted language teaching and learning environments, which includes social media.

B. Research Question

Based on the focus of the research above, the research questions are:

1. What are the types of pragmatic failures that occur in sentences of ARMY's X statuses?

2. How do ARMY's pragmatic failures contribute to the level of misunderstanding on X through their statuses?

C. **Significance of the Study**

This study holds theoretical significance by addressing the continued issue of pragmatic failures in social media conversation, that specialize in interactions among BTS fans (Army) on X, in which linguistic and cultural range frequently cause misunderstandings. By analyzing how these failures arise and how they might be mitigated, the research contributes to broader discussions in pragmatics and intercultural verbal exchange in digital contexts. It also offers practical insight for adapting communication strategies in online environments, particularly in managing miscommunication across cultures. For English literature students, the study bridges ideas and practical real-world applications, fostering essential considering the position of language, culture, and identity in digital interactions while equipping them with analytical tools to navigate and resolve cross-cultural communication challenges.

D. **Scope and Limitation**

This research studies pragmatic branches or components involved in pragmatic comprehension. This research focuses on analyzing the interactions of BTS fans, specifically ARMY, on X, with particular attention to their tweets, comments, and quote tweets. The researcher can know the identity of 'real' ARMY by exploring its displayed account information (e.g., username, profil picture, location, and tweets using the user's first language). The subject matter is narrowed to discussions surrounding V's (a BTS member) Instagram post featuring a McDonald's photo and his association with a brand or producer linked to Zionism. In detail, this research investigates pragmatic failures in propositions

of tweets or X status as the data, because the data are in the form of sentences and propositions.

This limitation was chosen to provide a focused lens on how pragmatic failures manifest in online discourse about sensitive and controversial topics. While this case offers valuable insights into fan dynamics and communication challenges, it does not encompass the entirety of ARMY's diverse interactions or perspectives. Additionally, the analysis is constrained to publicly available tweets, which may not fully capture the private or less prominent discussions within the fandom. The study also acknowledges that the discourse on Zionism involves complex socio-political and cultural contexts, which may influence interpretations beyond pragmatic elements. As a result, the findings should be viewed as reflective of this specific case rather than generalized to the broader ARMY community or other fan interactions. Lastly, the limitation of this research is how ARMY tweets show the process of pragmatic failure that happened on X and include which types of pragmatic failure are grouped. It is because there is no interview with the people related to tweets used as the data, so it cannot reach wider information about the reason behind the pragmatic failure of ARMY.

E. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and gain a better knowledge of unfamiliar terms and often terms used in this research, there are some key terms regarding this research:

1. Pragmatic failure: the inability to understand what is being said, which can regularly lead to misunderstanding or confusion in multi-cultural

communication. This research analyzes ARMY X's post based on pragmatic failure that happened in it, besides the pragmatic awareness implicated.

2. X: microblogging or social networking where users create simple website that posts messages or whatever they want, known as tweets or X (formerly Twitter) status. This research uses ARMY X statuses or tweets as the main source of the data.

3. Tweet: a common name for a brief status update posted on the social media platform Twitter, which in this research became used as the main source of data.

4. BTS: a famous and big K-pop group which have many fans from all around the world, including international fans who use English as one of their languages to communicate between fans. In this research, BTS fans were used as subject research.

5. Army: official name for BTS fans which is given by the BTS agency. This research used Army (BTS fans) as subject research.

6. Fanwar: a situation in which war or contradiction happens between fans that enhance because of fans' different opinion. It can happen in different fan groups or fandoms, or it can happen within the same fandom.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides some relevant theories that relate to this research topic. The researcher brings up some related topics, such as pragmatics, pragmatic failure, pragmatic failure types, and steps of pragmatic failure.

A. Pragmatics

Pragmatics, according to Leech (1989), is the study of meaning in relation to the situation of speech. Therefore, one of the requirements for performing a pragmatics analysis of speech, including speech that contains conversational implicature, is a speech situation that supports the existence of a speech in conversation. Furthermore, Searle (1987) contends that the speech act is supported by three kinds of acts. Those are, first, the act of uttering words such as morphemes, sentences, and utterance acts; second, reference and predication are called propositional acts; and last, statements, questions, orders, promises, and so on are called illocutionary acts. The illocutionary act plays an important role in pragmatic studies. Illocutions and propositions, also known as pragmatics units, are basic units of analysis or the smallest communication unit in linguistics according to pragmatic theory in speech acts (Searle, 1987). Pragmatics is the study of meanings that cannot be solved by semantics, i.e. meanings that appear in the context of sentences used in communication.

Pragmatics is a sub-field of linguistics that studies how language is linked to the contexts in which it is used (Fleming & Slotta, 2018). Pragmatics emerges

as a distinct and coherent domain of inquiry only concerning the study of language abstracted from its use in context. It's been the primary focus of both twentieth-century linguistics and the philosophy of language. Research on popular pragmatic issues, including deixis, presupposition, speech acts, implicature, politeness, and information structure, is motivated by a range of problems and impasses encountered in the analysis of language in a substantially decontextualized form.

There are also other experts who have proposed various definitions of Pragmatics. Pragmatics, according to Mey (1994), is a science concerned with language and its users. Pragmatics was founded in the 1930s by the philosophers Charles Morries, Carnap, and Pierce. They stated that Syntax addressed the formal relationships of signs to one another, Semantics addressed the relationship of signs to what they denote, and Pragmatics addressed the relationship of signs to their users and interpreters (Morris in Horn & Ward, 2007).

Furthermore, according to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by a listener or reader. This implies that Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning, as it focuses on what the speaker means by uttering rather than what the words or phrases in the utterance mean. It also implies that Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning because it deals with the interpretation of what people mean in a given context and how the context influences what is said. Furthermore, it implies that Pragmatics is the study of how more is communicated than is said because it investigates how listeners can make inferences about what is said or what the

speaker intends to say. Last but not least, Pragmatics is having a look at the expression of relative distance, because of this the speaker determines a whole lot to say based on how near or distant the listener is.

In summary, Pragmatics is the study of context-based components of meaning regardless of content or logical shape construction. To determine the meaning, people must consider how speakers come up with the words to express what they want to say about who they are speaking to, where, when, and under what circumstances. For example, when people say *"What time is it?"* to a person who comes late, it does not mean he or she asks about the time, but he or she asks why the person is late and it is already past the time.

B. Pragmatic Failure

People need to understand pragmatics and semantics and require pragmatic awareness to avoid pragmatics failure. According to Thomas (1983), pragmatic linguistics failure is defined as the inability to understand what is meant by what is said. It occurs when a language's pragmatic force is misunderstood. Therefore, what is said by someone is not always what it is meant. It might contain additional meaning that can only be understood if people have pragmatics awareness.

Pragmatic awareness is the recognition or understanding of how language is used to encode social meaning through conscious reflection on the relationships between factors involved in pragmatic comprehension and production (Takashi, 2012). There are two types of pragmatic awareness: pragmalinguistic awareness and sociopragmatic awareness. Pragmalinguistic awareness is explicit knowledge

of the form–function relationships relevant to particular sociocultural contexts. Sociopragmatic awareness is explicit knowledge of the relationships between communicative action and contextual factors such as social status, social distance, and imposition resulting from communicative action.

According to Takahashi (2012), awareness in pragmatic awareness at the level of understanding is required but should be considered as the minimum condition for substantial pragmatic development, emphasizing the importance of raising the level of this awareness to the point where learners can successfully and satisfactorily engage in communication in the L2 with greater confidence. Takahashi claimed that such a significantly higher level of awareness at the level of understanding is attained only when interventions, regardless of their explicitness, ensure parts or all of the following four conditions: (a) learners' analysis of their pragmatic deficiencies; (b) learners' active engagement in the cognitive comparison of their performance with the normative performance that appears in natural interactions; and (c) learners' discovery of the target pragmatic conventions; and (d) learners' experiences with immediate communicative needs concerning intervention tasks.

From the definition above, it can be concluded that pragmatic failure is an error that happens on a pragmatic specific set of linguistic items or human speech patterns. Linguistic variety can be observed through different speech in communities. People may use different dialects of a language in different contexts. The way people talk is influenced by the social context in which they are talking. It matters who can hear them and where people are talking, as well as

how people are feeling.

C. Pragmatic Failure Types

Pragmatic and linguistic competencies are autonomous, according to many studies of second language acquisition. This means that a student must learn both talents in a variety of ways. Linguistic Failure is straightforward to understand. It is the inability to understand what is being stated. Alternatively, according to Thomas (1983), people can apply the pragmatic failure definition as pragmatic errors occur when an interactant applies the social rules of one culture to his communicative conduct in a context where the social rules of another culture would be more appropriate.

According to Thomas (1983), Based on Thomas' theory, pragmatic failure is classified into seven types : inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, misinterpretation of pragmatic force, teaching-induced errors, overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgements, inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. The description of each type will be explained below.

1. Inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies

The first type, pragmatic failure occurs when speakers fail to convey their intended meaning due to differences in cultural norms or linguistic conventions, often leading to miscommunication. According to Thomas (1983), one common cause of pragmatic failure is the inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one language or culture to another.

This happens when individuals apply the rules and strategies of their native language directly to a second language without considering the cultural or social norms of the target language. For example, in some cultures, refusing an invitation directly is seen as polite because it shows honesty, while in others, such directness may be perceived as rude or inconsiderate. This mismatch can cause confusion or offense, even though the speaker has no intention of being impolite.

An example of this can be seen in the way requests are made. A speaker from a culture where direct requests are normal, such as British English, might say, *"Can you X?"* is conventionally understood as a polite request to perform an action (e.g., *"Can you help me?"*). Meanwhile in languages like French or Russian, it may be interpreted more literally as a question about ability. Similarly, in Russian classrooms, the phrase *"Would you like to read?"* might be understood as a genuine inquiry into personal preference, often eliciting responses like *"No, I wouldn't,"* which can sound dismissive or rude in English contexts where the phrase functions as a polite directive. Another example involves the Russian word *konesno* ("of course"), which is used enthusiastically to affirm, but when directly transferred into English, it can convey unintended abruptness or even insult, depending on the context. Such examples highlight the subtle but significant ways semantic and syntactic equivalence can fail pragmatically due to differing cultural norms and interpretive biases between languages.

2.   Misinterpretation of Pragmatic Force

Another important cause of pragmatic failure, as explained by Thomas (1983), is the misinterpretation of pragmatic force. Force in pragmatic force refers to the speaker's intended meaning or purpose behind an utterance, such as making a request, giving an order, or offering help. Sometimes, a sentence can be grammatically correct, but the listener interprets the speaker's intention differently. So that intention which lead the speaker to do something, or understanding or misunderstanding called as force. This misunderstanding happens because different languages and cultures may assign different meanings or social functions to the same words or sentence structures. When speakers or listeners fail to recognize the intended meaning, it causes a breakdown in communication.

Thomas (1983) provides a clear example of this type of failure. In British English, the question *"Can you X?"* is commonly understood as a polite way to make a request, not as a question about ability. For example, *"Can you pass the salt?"* means the speaker is asking someone to pass the salt, not questioning their physical ability to do it. However, in other languages like French or Russian, this same structure may be taken literally, as asking about capability. So, if a Russian speaker hears this and responds *"Yes, I can,"* without passing the salt, it shows a misinterpretation of the pragmatic force of the sentence. The structure is understood differently due to cultural differences, leading to pragmatic failure.

3.   Teaching-induced Errors

The third type, pragmatic failure can arise from teaching-induced errors, where instructional methods or materials inadvertently lead learners to misunderstand or misuse pragmatic norms in the target language. Thomas (1983) highlights how some teaching techniques fail to account for the subtleties of pragmatic usage, leading to errors such as inappropriate use of modals or complete sentence responses. For example, teaching students to answer questions with complete sentences might encourage responses like *"Yes, I have brought my coat,"* instead of the pragmatically more natural *"Yes, I have."* While grammatically correct, such overly explicit answers may seem unnecessarily formal, petulant, or even testy in everyday English conversation. Similarly, teaching inappropriate propositional explicitness can result in awkward or tactless expressions. For instance, saying *"I was sorry to hear about your Grandma"* sounds empathetic, whereas a more explicit statement like *"I was sorry to hear your Grandma killed herself"* appears blunt and unfeeling, demonstrating the importance of teaching pragmatic nuance alongside linguistic structure.

Another source of teaching-induced pragmatic failure is the overemphasis on metalinguistic knowledge, which can mislead students into making simplistic assumptions about language use. For example, teaching students that imperatives are directly tied to giving orders can result in rigid or inappropriate usage. While imperatives like *"Close the door"* or *"Tell me the time"* are common in English, they are rarely used to command or

request in formal spoken contexts. Instead, polite strategies like *"Could you close the door?"* are preferred. Without exposure to these nuances, learners may transfer the literal understanding of imperatives from their first language, creating pragmatic failure in situations requiring politeness or subtlety. Such issues highlight the importance of integrating pragmatic competence into language teaching to ensure learners understand the grammar and cultural and situational appropriateness of their language use.

4. **Overgeneralization of Pragmatic Rules**

The fourth type, pragmatic failure can also result from the overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, where language learners apply a single structure too broadly without considering the nuances of the target language. Thomas (1983) explains that this often happens when a word or phrase in the learner's native language has multiple possible translations in the target language, leading to inappropriate usage. For example, Russian speakers frequently use *mozete* or *mozet byt'* as equivalents for *"perhaps (you could)"* in English. However, while *"perhaps you could"* is suitable in some contexts, such as addressing students (*"Perhaps you could read through this for Friday"*), it may sound too authoritative or even sarcastic when speaking to a superior. A more appropriate request in English would be *"Could you possibly read through this by Friday?"* This shows that while two expressions may seem interchangeable semantically, their pragmatic force differs based on the social relationship between speakers.

Another common case of overgeneralization is the misuse of obligation expressions in English. Foreign learners, especially Russian speakers, may struggle with the variety of English modal verbs such as must, ought, should, and have to. As a result, they may rely on one structure excessively, such as to be to *("You are to be here by eight")*. However, this phrase is pragmatically restricted to contexts with a strong power imbalance, such as military commands or parental instructions to children. When used in everyday conversations, it may come across as overly strict or unnatural. Such errors highlight the difficulty learners face in mastering pragmatics, as grammatical correctness alone is not enough to ensure appropriate communication. Overcoming these challenges requires exposure to varied contexts and explicit instruction on how different expressions function in real-life interactions.

5.   **Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgements**

The fifth type, pragmatic failure can also arise from the misjudgment of semantic and syntactic equivalence, where language learners assume that direct translations between their native language and the target language carry the same pragmatic force. According to Thomas (1983), certain words or phrases may appear to have direct equivalents across languages but can lead to unintended meanings when used in conversation. For instance, Russian speakers often use *konesno* ("of course") as an enthusiastic way to affirm something. In English, of course can have a similar meaning in some contexts, such as responding to an invitation: *"Are you coming to my*

party?" – *"Of course!"* However, when used to answer a neutral question like *"Is it a good restaurant?"* the phrase can imply that the question is unnecessary or foolish, making the response sound rude. This misjudgment occurs because the learner transfers a phrase that is semantically and syntactically correct but fails to consider how it is interpreted pragmatically by native speakers.

Another common issue arises when learners transfer expressions used for giving opinions. In Russian, phrases like *po moemu* ("in my opinion") or *kazetsja* ("it seems to me") are used similarly to I think in English. However, in English, these expressions tend to carry a more formal or careful tone and are often used for significant judgments, such as *"It seems to me that you have misunderstood the situation."* When Russian speakers apply these expressions to minor opinions—such as *"It seems to me there's someone at the door"* or *"In my opinion, the film begins at eight"*—their speech may sound overly formal or unnatural to native speakers. These examples highlight how assuming direct equivalence between two languages can lead to pragmatic failure. To communicate effectively, language learners need to be aware not only of vocabulary and grammar but also of the pragmatic context in which expressions are used.

6. Inadequate Exposure to Politeness Conventions

The sixth type of pragmatic failure, according to Jenny Thomas (1983), is inadequate exposure to politeness conventions. This happens when language learners or speakers are not familiar with the social rules and

norms of politeness in the target language. Every language has its way of showing politeness, such as being indirect, softening commands, or using polite expressions. When someone does not fully understand these rules, their speech may sound rude, strange, or overly direct, even if they do not mean to be impolite. The problem is not with the grammar or vocabulary, but with how the message is interpreted by the listener based on cultural expectations.

For example, in Thomas's reference, answering a simple question like *"Have you brought your coat?"* with *"Yes, I have brought my coat!"* may sound unusually strong or even annoying to native English speakers. This kind of response violates what Leech (1983) calls the "principle of economy," which means that speakers usually give short, simple answers unless more detail is needed. In this case, the speaker may have learned English in a classroom where full-sentence answers are encouraged, but in real communication, it sounds unnatural and impolite. This shows how a lack of exposure to actual polite usage in daily conversation can lead to pragmatic failure, even though the speaker's grammar is correct.

7. **Inflexibility in Pragmatic Adaptation.**

Another cause of pragmatic failure, as explained by Jenny Thomas (1983), is inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. This happens when language learners or speakers are unable to adjust their way of speaking based on the situation, the listener, or the social context. Even if someone knows polite forms or speech strategies, they might still use the same way of speaking in

every situation without adapting to the tone, formality, or relationship with the person they are talking to. This lack of flexibility often leads to a communication breakdown or unintended rudeness because the speaker sounds inappropriate for the given context.

An example mentioned in Thomas's work is about how direct commands or speech acts may be acceptable in one culture but sound impolite in another. In Russian, for example, it is normal to say something like *"Tell me how to get to the station"* as a way to ask for directions. But in English, this would be seen as too direct or even rude. English speakers usually use a more polite and indirect form such as *"Excuse me, could you tell me how to get to the station?"* If a Russian speaker uses the same direct form in English without adjusting their tone or structure, it shows inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation, leading to pragmatic failure even though the sentence is grammatically correct.

In conclusion, Thomas's (1983) theory points out various sources of pragmatic failures, such as inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, misinterpretation of pragmatic force, teaching-induced errors, overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. Each type highlights the challenges language learners face when cultural and contextual understanding does not align with grammatical knowledge. These failures do not result from incorrect language use in a technical sense but from misunderstandings of how language functions socially and culturally. From my

perspective, understanding pragmatic competence is just as important as mastering grammar and vocabulary, especially in a globalized world where communication across cultures is common. Language education should place greater emphasis on teaching learners how to use language appropriately in different situations, not just how to form correct sentences. This approach will help prevent pragmatic failure and miscommunication, and promote more respectful and effective interaction in real-world contexts.

D.   Pragmatic Failure Level

Pragmatic failure happens when someone understands the words in a sentence but misunderstands the speaker's real intention. Thomas (1983) explained that this kind of failure often causes problems in multi-cultural communication. He divided pragmatic failure into two levels of misunderstanding: Level 1, which is misunderstanding the meaning of the words (sense and reference), and Level 2, which is misunderstanding the intended force or purpose of the speaker's message (such as whether something is a request, a complaint, or a suggestion). Understanding these two levels is important to help language learners communicate more effectively and avoid confusion.

At **Level 1**, pragmatic failure happens when the listener does not understand what specific idea or information the speaker is talking about. This usually involves confusion about who or what the speaker is referring to. For example, if someone says, *"She missed it,"* this sentence could have many meanings depending on the situation. The listener must use context to figure out

what she and it mean, and what missed means in this case. Without context, the sentence is vague and could be misunderstood. So, a misunderstanding at Level 1 means the listener picks the wrong meaning or reference from the speaker's words.

Level 2 misunderstanding is deeper. It happens when the listener understands the words correctly, but not the speaker's intention. For example, if a person says, *"Is this coffee sugared?"* they might not just be asking for information. They could be indirectly complaining that the coffee is not sweet. But if the listener takes the question literally and answers, *"I don't think so. Does it taste like it is?"* the speaker's intention (to complain or ask for sugar) is missed. So, Level 2 misunderstanding is about missing the pragmatic force, like sarcasm, criticism, or a polite request, even when the literal meaning is understood.

Jenny Thomas gave several examples to show how Level 1 and Level 2 misunderstandings happen in real life. In one example, a passenger asked, *"Could you tell me when we get to Birmingham?"* and the driver replied, *"Don't worry, it's a big place—you won't miss it."* The driver misunderstood the meaning of when as how showing a Level 1 failure. In another case, a speaker asked, *"Is this coffee sugared?"* to complain politely, but the listener took it as a literal question, showing a Level 2 failure. Another example was when a lecturer asked, *"Have you seen Leo?"*—a sentence that could mean either *'Have you seen him today?'* or *'Have you spoken to him as I asked you?'* Depending on the meaning, the listener might fail to catch the intended force of the utterance.

In conclusion, Thomas's (1983) distinction between Level 1 and Level 2 pragmatic failure helps us understand how communication problems happen, even when grammar and vocabulary are correct. Level 1 problems are about misunderstanding the basic meaning of a sentence, while Level 2 problems are about misunderstanding the speaker's intention or message behind the words. Both types can lead to confusion, especially in multi-cultural situations. That's why it is important for language teachers to not only teach grammar but also raise learners' awareness of how language is used in different social contexts to avoid such failures.

E. Communication in Social Media

In recent years, communication on social media has become an important topic in many studies. Researchers have found that people communicate differently on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (now X), TikTok, and WhatsApp compared to face-to-face conversations. According to a study by Treem et al. (2021), social media allows people to share messages quickly and widely, but this can sometimes change how the message is understood. Social media communication often uses short texts, emojis, hashtags, and visuals, which can help express feelings or ideas but also cause misunderstandings if not used carefully.

Another important point is that people often build and manage their identity through social media communication. According to Marwick and Boyd (2014), users carefully choose what to post and how to present themselves to

create a certain image or impression online. This self-presentation is shaped by the audience, platform features, and social norms. For example, people may act more professionally on LinkedIn but more casually on Instagram. Researchers have also noted that communication on social media can be influenced by the number of likes, comments, or shares a post receives, which affects how people interact and respond to each other.

Recent studies also highlight that communication on social media can both help and harm relationships. On the positive side, it helps people stay connected across distances, build communities, and share information quickly. However, it can also lead to problems like online misunderstandings, cyberbullying, and fake news. According to Tandoc et al. (2018), the way people interpret messages on social media depends on context, tone, and cultural background, just like in face-to-face communication, but with more chances for confusion. Therefore, understanding how communication works on social media is important for improving digital interaction and reducing miscommunication.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter consists of the details of the research method, such as research design, research instrument, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

A. Research Design

This research focused on describing the pragmatic failure phenomenon in text. According to Given (2016), a descriptive qualitative approach aims to provide a comprehensive summary of events in everyday terms, making it suitable for studies focusing on naturally occurring language use and social communication phenomena. Therefore, this approach was appropriate for analyzing pragmatic failures in online discourse. It needed descriptive results as the way to analyze the data. This qualitative method took a descriptive approach to data analysis, focusing on describing in-depth situations in which the data were presented. Since the research topic focused on a phenomenon, it needed an in-depth description to describe the data presented. The qualitative method created patterns, categories, and themes by inductively organizing data (Creswell, 2009).

B. Research Instrument

The researcher was the research instrument in this research. In this qualitative research, the researcher frequently acted as the main tool for gathering and analyzing data—a phenomenon referred to as "researcher-as-instrument." This method highlighted the importance of the researcher's perspectives,

experiences, and interpretations in capturing the variety and context of the research environment (Yoon and Uliassi, 2023). To ensure that their subjective ideas boost rather than mislead the results, the researcher must be aware of and control their biases in this dynamic role. This viewpoint was consistent with an interpretative point of view, which emphasized comprehending the complexities of social situations and the lived experiences of people. The researcher could provide a deeper understanding of human behavior and increase the accuracy of their judgments by exercising strict methodology and thoughtful thought.

C. Data and Data Source

The data source for this research was gathered through X posts, in the form of sentences and propositions made by ARMY who biased Taehyung or V and commented about V's Instagram post about McDonald's and a new song produced by a Zionist. ARMY brought V's Instagram post about McDonald's and a new song produced by a Zionist to X and discussed it on X by making some X posts. The data of this research are 25 ARMY's X statuses or posts from 27th March 2024 until October 2024. That number was obtained from 41 data related to the subject topic, but only 25 data met the category that refers to ARMY statuses, discussing about V, talking about V's Instagram post about McDonald's, and a new song produced by a Zionist, and likely having a pragmatic issue. The remaining data that was not included were data that did not fit those categories and that were repeated similarly to the data that had been taken as a representative. The Twitter statuses (tweets) were written in English and might include a mix of Korean which shown a template protest against V's Instagram

post. Template was a previously designed pattern or framework that could be reused as a basis for developing something new, and in this context, it had a similar function to a hashtag on X. It could be tweeted by Indonesian fans who wrote in English, or any other citizens who wrote in English. The researcher could know their identity or nationality by looking at the language used in their other tweets, their account, the username, and the location they attach. Besides, there were also data sources from comments or interactions section that interact with the intended X statuses (tweets). The form of these data was sentences and propositions including pragmatic issues.

D. Data Collection

The data collection procedure in this research was carried out in five stages. Firstly, searching ARMY's X stasuses commenting on V's Instagram post about McDonald and his new song produced by a Zionist that had a pragmatic component and leads to misinterpretation. Second, taking a screenshot to avoid data loss due to deleted tweets. Thirdly, converting the data into a script and taking note of the important points and other elements related to the research topic, for example, data that had a possibly pragmatic component and led to misinterpretation, data from the reply section, tweets' quotes, or other related tweets. Finally, storing all data forms of sentences and propositions was to be processed in data analysis.

E. Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data with the following steps. First, classifying the data that have been collected based on the types of pragmatic failure by the theory of Thomas (1983) that occur in sentences and propositions of Twitter status. Second, analyzing the meaning of the tweets concerning the context or situation of speech using pragmatics. Third, analyzing the level of misunderstanding based on the level of misunderstanding by Thomas's theory (1983). Finally, the researcher concluded the findings of the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter covers findings and discussion of the data that the researcher found in her research. This chapter presents the analysis of data collected in this study, focusing on instances of pragmatic failure within the BTS ARMY community on X (formerly Twitter). Using Thomas's (1983) framework of pragmatic failure, the researcher identifies, categorizes, and interprets the types of misunderstandings that emerge in fan discourse. This chapter aims to explain how cultural and linguistic differences contribute to these failures and what they reveal about intercultural digital communication. The findings are presented and discussed concerning relevant theories and previous studies.

A. Findings

The finding of this data was from Twitter status written by some fans of K-pop group member, Taehyung. The researcher found 41 data related to the subject topic, but only 25 data met the specific category. The remaining data that is not included were data that did not fit the category and that were repeated similarly to the data that had been taken as a representative.

The founded data below were analyzed by using Thomas's theory (1983) about types of pragmatic failure which was divided into seven types. The researcher could only find six of seven types such as inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, misinterpretation of pragmatic force, overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, inadequate

exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. The one type that researcher could not found is teaching-induced errors type. In displaying the data, the researcher also described the level of pragmatic failure.

Likewise, the step of pragmatic failure that occurred was analyzed by using Thomas's theory (1983) which divided its step into two levels of misunderstanding: Level 1, which is misunderstanding the meaning of the words (sense and reference), and Level 2, which is misunderstanding the intended force or purpose of the speaker's message (such as whether something is a request, a complaint, or a suggestion). From those two levels, the researcher frequently found misunderstanding level 2 and rarely found level 1.

Table 1. Pragmatic Failure and Level of Misunderstanding Used by ARMY

No.	Type of pragmatic failure	Total	Level of Misunderstanding Total	
			Level 1	Level 2
1	inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies	3	-	3
2	misinterpretation of pragmatic failure	8	-	8
3	teaching-induced errors	-	-	-
4	overgeneralization of pragmatic rules	1	-	1
5	semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments	4	4	-
6	inadequate exposure to politeness conventions	5	-	5
7	inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation	4	-	4
	Sum	25	5	20

The table above shows the total number of pragmatic failure types and the level of misunderstanding founded on X status. The researcher could only find six from seven types such as 3 data on inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, 8 data of misinterpretation of pragmatic force, 1 datum on overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, 4 data on semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, 5 data on inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic

adaptation. The one type that researcher could not found is teaching-induced errors type. There were two levels of misunderstanding. From those two levels, the researcher frequently found misunderstanding level 2 (20 data) and rarely found level 1 (5 data).

1.   Types of Pragmatic Failure

There were seven types of pragmatic failure: 1) inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, 2) misinterpretation of pragmatic force, 3) teaching-induced errors, 4) overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, 5) semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, 6) inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and 7) inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. The researcher could only found six from seven types such as inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, misinterpretation of pragmatic force, overgeneralization of pragmatic rules, semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. The one type that researcher could not found is teaching-induced errors type. There were two levels of misunderstanding: Level 1, which is misunderstanding the meaning of the words (sense and reference), and Level 2, which is misunderstanding the intended force or purpose of the speaker's message (such as whether something is a request, a complaint, or a suggestion). From those two levels, the researcher frequently found misunderstanding level 2 and rarely found level 1.

a. Inappropriate Transfer of Speech Act Strategies

Inappropriate Transfer of Speech Act Strategies type arose when strategies from a speaker's first language (L1) were directly applied in the target language (L2) without accounting for differences in how speech acts are performed. From this type of pragmatic failure, the researcher found 3 data which included in Inappropriate Transfer of Speech Act Strategies type, and all of the three data included in level 2 of misunderstanding.

Datum 1

X: "Unfoll dan delete anything of V!!"
*Y: "He probably doesn't know much about the topic, **that's no way to be harassing**, most of you are a hypocritical fandom, **instead we should inform him about the topic**"*
Z: "You don't have to be a Muslim to stand with the truth, just be a human being.
Free palastine"

Context:

The screenshot above showed three tweets related to a social media conflict involving a public figure, BTS boyband member named Taehyung or V. The comments reflected disagreement among users, who were ARMY, about how to respond to this public figure's actions or statements related to his post on Instagram about a product supported by the Zionists. One user harshly suggested

to *"Unfoll dan delete anything of V!!"*, another user criticized the fandom's behavior and suggested giving information rather than harassment, while the third tweet brought up the Palestine issue, promoting human solidarity. These tweets showed various communication intentions but also exposed pragmatic issues in how messages were expressed and understood.

Analysis:

The first tweet shows an example of **inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies**. The phrase *"Unfoll dan delete anything of V!!"* appears direct and forceful. This kind of direct imperative may be accepted in the speaker's native culture or language, but in English, such direct speech acts often sound aggressive or rude. According to Thomas (1983), using a direct imperative like this, when a more polite or indirect form is expected, can cause pragmatic failure. In this case, the speaker possibly transferred their native language's strategy of directness into English, without adjusting to the politeness norms expected by English-speaking audiences.

This failure falls under **Pragmatic Failure Level 2**, which refers to misunderstanding the pragmatic force of an utterance. Although the literal meaning *("unfollow and delete")* is clear (so it is not a Level 1 misunderstanding), the emotional and social force behind the message may be misunderstood by others. Instead of simply giving advice, the message can sound like a harsh command or even an attack, which may not be the speaker's true intention. Similarly, the second tweet *"..that's no way to be harassing.. instead we should inform him about the topic"* and third tweet *"You don't have to be a*

Muslim to stand with the truth, just be a human being. Free Palestine" included a statement that might be misunderstood in terms of intent—although it aims to promote empathy and solidarity, it may come across as a sudden shift of topic without clear connection, leading to misinterpretation of communicative purpose. Therefore, the data shows that even clear language can lead to pragmatic failure if cultural expectations and politeness norms are not aligned properly.

Datum 2

X: "McDonalds sends food to the iof killing children & people in Palestine.
Please apologize, delete this post & educate yourself.
We love you & want you to stand with humanity"

Context:

The tweet above was posted in response to a public figure's (Taehyung BTS) action involving McDonald's, likely in a politically sensitive context. The user who was ARMY accused McDonald's of supporting the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) but censoring it as IOF, and urges the celebrity to apologize, delete the post, and *"educate yourself."* The user added, *"We love you & want you to stand with humanity,"* showing emotional support but using language that can seem direct or forceful. The message blended activism with fandom, creating a tension between politeness and urgency. The tweet was intended as a call for

awareness and moral action, but the way the message is framed may lead to misinterpretation.

Analysis:

This tweet demonstrates a case of **Inappropriate Transfer of Speech Act Strategies**, as described by Thomas (1983). The speaker uses a direct imperative structure—*"Please apologize, delete this post & educate yourself"*—which, in many English-speaking cultural contexts, may sound too commanding or even confrontational. While the speaker's native language or online culture might allow or encourage directness when expressing strong emotions, English norms—especially when addressing a public figure—tend to favor more indirect, softened language (e.g., *"We hope you will consider apologizing..."*). The directness here reflects a transfer of strategies without adapting to the politeness conventions expected in English discourse, especially in public communication.

The level of pragmatic failure in this tweet is **Level 2**, which is a misunderstanding of pragmatic force. While the words are grammatically correct and the literal meaning is clear, the intended tone (a mix of concern and affection) could be misunderstood as aggressive or accusatory. The phrase *"educate yourself"* in particular might be interpreted as insulting rather than helpful, depending on the reader's perspective. This misalignment between intention and interpretation is aligned to Level 2 failure, where the speaker's communicative goal is not received as intended due to differences in sociocultural norms.

Datum 3

X: "Taehyung,
*We boycotting the MCD because they supported genocide in Palestine, **please remove the picture**
***and apologize.** We hope that after this you can be more concerned about what is happening in*
Palestine. "

Context:

The tweet was directed at BTS member Taehyung, urging him to delete a

photo of McDonald's fries on his Instagram and apologize. The user explained

that McDonald's was being boycotted due to its alleged support of genocide in

Palestine. The post included serious political content, such as images and videos

related to war crimes and the hashtag *"#mcgenocide."* The tone was urgent and

emotional, mixing personal appeal with political activism. This message tried to

hold a public figure accountable for a perceived ethical mistake, assuming the

celebrity understands and agrees with the boycott context.

Analysis:

The type of pragmatic failure in this case is **Inappropriate Transfer of**

Speech Act Strategies. The user applies direct speech strategies appropriate in

activist or peer-to-peer political contexts to a global pop celebrity, expecting him to respond like a peer in a political movement. In some cultures, directly demanding someone to *"remove the picture and apologize"* may be normal, but when transferred to an intercultural, public figure context without adaptation, the demand can be perceived as aggressive or disrespectful. The speaker does not adjust the formality or tone based on the celebrity's social distance or the cultural expectations of public discourse.

According to Thomas's framework, this is a **Level 2** Misunderstanding. The failure lies in the mismatch between the speaker's intention and how it might be perceived by the hearer or broader audience. Here, the literal meaning is understood, but the form of delivery (direct command to a celebrity) may not achieve the intended effect and could be ignored or misunderstood. The failure stems not from sarcasm or tone, but from cultural and situational inappropriateness in the strategy used to make the request.

b. Misinterpretation of pragmatic force

Misinterpretation of pragmatic force type arose because different languages often map distinct pragmatic forces onto similar linguistic forms, leading to misunderstanding. From this type of pragmatic failure, the researcher found 8 data which included in Misinterpretation of pragmatic force type, and all of the data included in level 2 of misunderstanding.

Datum 4

*X: "taehyung we love you, **please** listen to **"your biggest voice"**"*
태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!*
"thv 의 공식 계정*"*"

Context:

  The tweet in the image is a response to a public controversy involving V BTS and McDonald's, a brand linked in the tweet to political conflict. The user who was ARMY writes in English, *"taehyung we love you, please listen to 'your biggest voice,'"* followed by Korean template which said *"taehyungnim 'McDonalds' boikot jepum sajin-i pohamdoen inseutageulaem gesimul-eul sagjehasi go deo isang eung-wonhaji maseyo!!! thvui gongsig gyejeong"* means Taehyung, please delete your Instagram post with the product photo of 'McDonalds' boycott and stop cheering!!! Official account of thv. That text urged the celebrity to delete the Instagram post that contains McDonald's products and to stop supporting the brand. The tweet also includes an infographic listing companies accused of profiting from the oppression of Palestinian people. While the message expresses care and concern, the overall tone may be interpreted as

emotionally manipulative or indirect pressure, especially given the serious political content paired with fan language.

Analysis:

This example demonstrates a **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic Force**, as defined by Thomas (1983). Although the speaker uses polite words like *"please"* and expresses love, the underlying force of the message is more than a soft request—it functions as a strong appeal or indirect demand for action. The user likely intends to influence the celebrity's behavior through emotional language, assuming the tone will be seen as supportive. However, due to the serious nature of the topic and the moral pressure being placed, the message may come across differently to native English speakers, especially when emotional phrases like *"your biggest voice"* are not clearly understood in context. In this context *"your biggest voice"* actually refers to the BTS love phrase that explains their fans are their biggest voice. This mismatch between form and force can cause confusion or unintended discomfort.

The type of pragmatic failure here is at **Level 2**, which refers to misunderstanding or misusing the pragmatic force of an utterance. The literal meaning of the sentence is clear and grammatically correct (so it's not a Level 1 misunderstanding), but the speaker's intention may not be correctly received. The listener might interpret the message as emotionally manipulative or socially inappropriate, especially in a public setting. The speaker's attempt to soften the demand through affectionate language does not fully succeed because the strong

social and political expectations behind the message contradict the gentle tone. This makes it a clear example of Level 2 pragmatic failure.

Datum 5

X: *"**Please** he has done more deeds than **you loud folks**. At least he donates million of dollars to charity"*

Context:

The tweet in the image shows a user who was ARMY defending a public figure (Taehyung) by comparing him to his critics. The user writes, *"Please he has done more deeds than you loud folks. At least he donates million of dollars to charity."* The sentence appears to support the celebrity by pointing out his charitable actions, but it also attacks those who criticize him by calling them *"loud folks."* While the tweet intends to defend someone positively, the phrasing may be interpreted as dismissive or even aggressive by others, especially those being addressed.

Analysis:

This tweet is an example of **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic Force**, as described by Thomas (1983). The sentence starts with *"Please,"* which in English is usually used to make polite requests. However, in this context, it is used more as an interjection to emphasize frustration or disagreement, not as a request. The pragmatic force of *"Please"* here is not to ask for something politely, but to

express irritation or to shut down criticism. To readers who interpret *"please"* as a standard marker of politeness, this could be confusing and misleading. Thus, the speaker's intended tone (defensive and frustrated) may be misread as sarcastic or inappropriate because the word choice doesn't match conventional expectations.

The failure shown in this tweet is Pragmatic Failure **Level 2**, which involves misunderstanding or misusing the intended force of an utterance. The sentence is grammatically correct and easy to understand at the literal level (so it's not a Level 1 misunderstanding), but the social meaning or emotion behind the words may not be received as intended. The contrast between a polite-sounding word like *"please"* and the insulting phrase *"you loud folks"* creates a mismatch in tone. This leads to a possible breakdown in communication where readers might misunderstand the speaker's real intention, or view the message as rude or sarcastic.

Datum 6

*X: "We are not spreading hate towards Tae but **we have something to say to him**."*

태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!"*

Context:

The tweet above was posted by a user responding to V (Taehyung's) social media activity involving McDonald's, a brand that became controversial in a political context. The tweet says, *"We are not spreading hate towards Tae but we have something to say to him,"* followed by a Korean template message which said *"taehyungnim 'McDonalds' boikot jepum sajin-i pohamdoen inseutageulaem gesimul-eul sagjehasi go deo isang eung-wonhaji maseyo!!!"* means Taehyung, please delete your Instagram post with the product photo of 'McDonalds' boycott and stop cheering!!!. The message urged him to delete the post and not to support the brand anymore. The speaker likely intends to sound polite and respectful while expressing criticism. However, the English phrase *"we have something to say to him"* might appear vague or even confrontational to native speakers, depending on the context and tone perceived by the reader.

Analysis:

This tweet demonstrates a case of **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic Force**. Although the sentence appears grammatically correct, the choice of words—especially *"we have something to say to him"*—can be interpreted in different ways. It may sound neutral, serious, or even slightly threatening, depending on the reader's cultural and emotional interpretation. The speaker likely meant to express a concern or give advice, but the message risks being misunderstood due to unclear pragmatic force. The speaker's intention to be gentle or constructive might not be received that way by others, especially in a sensitive public situation.

This failure represents **level 2** of pragmatic failure, which involves misunderstanding the pragmatic force or the intended impact of the utterance. even as the literal which means of the sentence is obvious (so it is not a level 1 problem), the social or emotional which means may not be. The mismatch among the intended tone (respectful and being worried) and the perceived tone (indistinct or probably confrontational) can purpose miscommunication. this situation highlights how even well mannered-sounding phrases can result in pragmatic failure while their stress is interpreted in another way through audio system from distinct cultural or linguistic backgrounds.

Datum 7
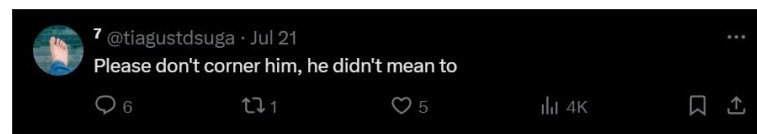
*X: "Please don't corner him, **he didn't mean to**"*

Context:

The tweet shown reads, *"Please don't corner him, he didn't mean to"* in reaction to public complaint directed at BTS V for a debatable post regarding McDonald's. As could be seen from its username showed that the user BTS fan, and the date around the rose of the related issue. The speaker was attempting to defend the celebrity by asking others not to pressure or attack him for the incident.

The sentence appeared to be short, grammatically simple, and emotionally supportive. but, the word *"he didn't mean to"* is probably vague to a few readers, as it did not honestly specify what the man or woman *"didn't mean"* to do. the

lack of elements could lead to confusion approximately the context or purpose of the message.

Analysis:

This example reflects **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic Force**. While the sentence is grammatically correct and polite in tone, the message can be interpreted otherwise relying on the audience's background knowledge and expectations. The speaker intends to explicit compassion and request empathy, but the force of the utterance might be weakened or misunderstood because of the indistinct language. Some readers may also perceive the message as minimizing the scenario or avoiding responsibility, even though that is not the speaker's purpose.

This case is an instance of Pragmatic Failure level 2, which includes a misconception of the pragmatic pressure in area of the literal meaning. The sentence is obvious at the surface, but the lack of specificity can cause distinct interpretations primarily based at the reader's expectations, emotions, or stance on the difficulty. The speaker possibly intended to de-escalate the struggle and guard the superstar from public backlash, however without clearer context or explanation, the message might not completely achieve delivering its intended force. This highlights how even polite and easy expressions can lead to pragmatic failure while the force of the message is not accurately understood.

Datum 8

X: *"Taehyung smoked (punch emoji)*

Other members smoked (smile angel emoji)

Taehyung dating rumor (punch emoji)

Other members dating rumor (smile angel emoji)

Taehyung posted Mcd fries (punch emoji)"

Y: *"Taehyung posting mcd fries from 2 **ya : let's educate him**!!!*

*members working with z who fund is****: mmmh let's get it to 1b (excited emoji)"*

Context:

The tweet above reacted to the controversy surrounding BTS member Taehyung's old Instagram post showing McDonald's fries. The user (ARMY) sarcastically said, *"Taehyung posting mcd fries from 2 ya : let's educate him!!!"* and contrasted it with different members running with controversial figures, suggesting hypocrisy in the fandom. The tweet covered humor and irony, the use of a mocking tone to highlight double standards among fanatics who were vital of Taehyung but ignore similar moves by others. At the same time as the message was probably clean to those inside the fandom, the sarcastic phrasing and

emotional exaggeration is probably misunderstood through outsiders or even misinterpreted by native speakers

Analysis:

This situation demonstrates **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic force**. The speaker intends to be sarcastic and critical of selective outrage, however, the use of casual slang, ironic punctuation (like *"ya"*(stands for *years ago*) and emojis), and exaggerated tone may additionally confuse readers unfamiliar with the internal context. The line *"let's educate him!!!"* may sound like a real suggestion at the surface however is surely supposed satirically. While sarcasm isn't absolutely signaled or understood, it can cause the message being taken literally or interpreted as offensive rather than essential.

This example represents Pragmatic Failure **level 2**, which includes a mismatch between the intended and interpreted pragmatic force. The speaker's actual goal—to criticize inconsistency—is masked through sarcasm that might not be universally recognized. although the tweet is grammatically acceptable and understandable in parts, the overall meaning can be misplaced or misunderstood because of how the sarcasm alters the force of the message. This highlights the mission of conveying irony successfully across linguistic and cultural obstacles, mainly in on-line environments where tone cues are limited.

Datum 9

*X:"Joon wearing Adidas for the mv **was wrong, but** your faves promoting Adidas is not, Taehyung sharing a photodump from early 2023 **is wrong but** your faves promoting mcd, coke & starbucks is not, Taekook visiting Hawaii **is wrong, but** your faves going there is not."*

Context:

The tweet posted critiques the double standards implemented through some ARMY towards the actions of BTS members such as Joon (Namjoon), Taehyung, Taekook (Taehyung and Jungkook). The tweet used repetition, comparison, and parallel structure to emphasize that behaviors considered "incorrect" by stating it with *"was wrong, but"* when finished by BTS members (e.g., wearing Adidas, traveling Hawaii, sharing picture dumps) have been seen as acceptable while carried out through different celebrities. The context of the post was within the K-pop fan lifestyle, especially within ARMY, in which fans regularly interact in relatively emotional and judgmental discourse approximately idol behavior. The ARMY in the post points out those inconsistencies to highlight perceived bias and unfair treatment of BTS members, especially RM, Taehyung, and the Taekook (Taehyung and Jungkook) pairing.

Analysis:

The type of pragmatic failure found in this tweet is **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic force**. The user intended a sarcastic tone to criticize the hypocrisy in

fan conduct. However, without understanding the social norms and fan dynamics in K-pop fandom, mainly concerning idol responsibility and favoritism, the sarcastic goal might be taken actually. The sarcastic list might be misunderstood by readers unfamiliar with this context, leading to miscommunication approximately the writer's real opinion. The deeper meaning—exposing double standards—is implicit and relies upon shared cultural understanding among K-pop fans.

In line with Thomas's (1983) framework, this case falls under level 2 misunderstanding, in which the listener (or reader) is aware of the literal meaning of the utterance, however fails to comprehend the speaker's intention. While the syntax and semantics are correct, the pragmatic force behind the sarcastic commentary may not be well interpreted by those outside the fandom context. As a result, the post might be misread as a true criticism of BTS's behavior in place of a critique of fan hypocrisy, causing the supposed social statement to fail in communication.

Datum 10

X:""but taehyung posted mcd" yes $3 fries that noone gaf about outside Twitter while your fav got into a irl accident that could've keel someone"

*"Y'all want bh to post **" sorry our artist ate 3$ fries 2 year ago, we apologize"**"*

Context:

The tweet responded sarcastically to criticism towards Taehyung or V for sharing a McDonald 's-related post. The user who was ARMY compared this minor issue to a more serious situation concerning every other idol allegedly causing a real-life coincidence. The tweet used casual internet language, abbreviations (*"gaf"* for *"give a f***"*, *"irl"* for *"in real life"*, *"keel"* for *"kill"*), and exaggeration to mock the overreaction closer to Taehyung. The follow-up tweet maintains this sarcastic tone, pretending to put in writing a fake apology from the company, BH (BigHit), for something as minor as consuming fries. This post reflected how some fans, either ARMY or other fandoms, perceived unfair judgment toward BTS idols as compared to others.

Analysis:

This situation reflects the **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic force**. The writer uses sarcasm and exaggeration to criticize the unrealistic expectations placed on BTS contributors and to spotlight the disproportionate response from fans. However, readers unfamiliar with this fan discourse or who leave out the sarcastic tone may also interpret the tweet as competitive or disrespectful. The pragmatic failure takes place while the reader does not understand that the speaker isn't always making a literal request or statement, but is instead mocking an unreasonable stance.

Based on Thomas's (1983) category, this example falls below **level 2** misunderstanding, in which the reader knows the phrases and grammar however fails to interpret the speaker's real purpose. The failure to discover sarcasm results in misunderstanding the speaker's communicative cause. In this example, the speaker targets to defend an artist through satire, but a reader who misses this might misjudge the message as offensive or overly emotional, thus failing to obtain the actual pragmatic that means behind the phrases.

Datum 11

X:" There is no conscience left. Don't dare take the moral high ground. There is almost **no support** for Taehyung from the larger fanbase and even worse active sabotage. And you want ppl who love him to **keep quiet and take the beating**. **I'm disgusted!**"

Context:

The datum had become a strongly worded tweet expressing an ARMY frustration towards the bigger fanbase for not supporting Taehyung or V. The person accused others of getting no judgment of right and wrong and actively sabotaging him. They were upset that people who nevertheless support Taehyung had been expected to stay silent and tolerate criticism. The tweet used emotional language, together with *"disgusted,"* *"no support,"* and *"take the beating,"* to show the speaker's anger and disappointment towards what they perceived as injustice in the fan community.

Analysis:

The kind of pragmatic failure in this tweet is **Misinterpretation of Pragmatic force**. The speaker's message is emotionally severe and dramatic, aiming to protect Taehyung. However, the tone can be misunderstood with the aid of others who see the post as overly aggressive or confrontational rather than defensive. This misinterpretation can confuse approximately the speaker's real reason—protecting an artist—due to the fact that robust language might cause protective reactions or be seen as an attack in preference of advocacy.

According to Thomas's (1983) theory, this is a **Level 2** Misunderstanding, where the literal meaning is understood (the speaker is upset), but the listener does not catch the true pragmatic force or emotional motivation behind the statement. Instead of recognizing the message as a plea for fairness and support, others might see it as hostility. This failure in communication arises because the speaker's passionate tone is not softened or balanced, which reduces the chance of their message being received as intended.

c. Overgeneralization of Pragmatic Rules

Overgeneralization of Pragmatic Rules type arose because learners might incorrectly generalize a specific form to all contexts based on limited exposure or insufficient instruction. From this type of pragmatic failure, the researcher only found 1 datum which included in Overgeneralization of Pragmatic Rules type, and the data included in level 2 of misunderstanding.

Datum 12

X: *"**Can U** ask your country to stop this product? And ask every Army not to buy this product? That's a more powerful way"*

Context:

The tweet in the image was posted in response to a controversial product supported by Taehyung BTS through his Instagram post. The user wrote, *"Can U ask your country to stop this product? And ask every Army not to buy this product? that's a more powerful way."* The message was directed toward the celebrity, asking them to take political action and influence their fans (referred to as "Army," the BTS fandom) to boycott the product. The tweet showed the speaker's strong desire for change, but the structure and tone used might lead to misinterpretation or unintended offense due to the directness and unclear assumptions about the celebrity's influence over national decisions.

Analysis:

This tweet is an example of **Overgeneralization of Pragmatic Rules**. The speaker uses question forms like *"Can U ask your country...?"* which may appear polite on the surface, but the context makes it a direct request that assumes the listener has political power. The overgeneralization occurs when the speaker applies the structure of a polite question (e.g., *"Can you...?"*) in a situation where it is socially inappropriate or unrealistic. The speaker might believe this structure is always acceptable for making polite requests, not realizing that using it in high-

stakes political contexts without softening language or showing awareness of power dynamics can come across as naive or demanding.

This kind of pragmatic failure falls under **Level 2**, which refers to misunderstanding the pragmatic force of the utterance. The sentence is grammatically clear (so not a Level 1 misunderstanding), but the intended force—as a respectful request—may not be received that way. Instead, it may be interpreted as overly simplistic, unrealistic, or even presumptuous. The speaker fails to consider how such a request might be viewed by native English speakers, especially when involving national-level actions. This misalignment between intent and perception illustrates how overgeneralizing polite structures can lead to pragmatic misunderstanding in intercultural communication.

d. Semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments

Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgements type arose because of translating phrases directly from L1 to L2 without considering the pragmatic context. From this type of pragmatic failure, the researcher found 4 data which included in Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgements type, and all the data included in level 1 of misunderstanding.

Datum 13

X: "3
WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG
BORAHAE *TAEHYUNG*
WE PURPLE YOU *TAEHYUNG*
LEAVE TAEHYUNG ALONE
WITH TAEHYUNG TILL THE END
WITH BTS TILL THE END BTS BTS BTS"

Context:

The tweet shown above expressed strong emotional support for the celebrity Taehyung (V from BTS). It covered repeated terms consisting of *"WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG"*, *"LEAVE TAEHYUNG ALONE"*, and *"WITH BTS TILL THE END"*. The message reflected deep fan loyalty and seemed to guard the artist from the latest complaint. The tone is passionate, repetitive, and emotionally charged. However, for audiences unfamiliar with ARMY fan culture, some of the expressions—like *"BORAHÁE"* or *"WE PURPLE YOU"*—might seem confusing or difficult to interpret which only can be understood by some people (inside language fans). Without shared cultural knowledge, the intended supportive message may be misunderstood.

Analysis:

This post is an example of **Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgement**, one of the causes of pragmatic failure identified by Thomas (1983). Although the grammar is simple and the words themselves are clear, phrases like *"WE PURPLE YOU"* or *"BORAHÁE"* (*borahae* stand for the Korean word *bora* which means purple and *hae* is shorter version from *saranghae*) are culturally specific and lack direct meaning in standard English. These expressions, while meaningful within the BTS fandom, do not follow the usual semantic or syntactic rules of the target language (English). A reader who is not

part of ARMY fandom or community might interpret the message as odd, childish, or unclear—missing the intended meaning of affection and solidarity that fans usually attach to such phrases.

This pragmatic failure falls under **Level 1**, which refers to a misunderstanding of sense and reference. In this case, the literal words are seen and read correctly, but their intended reference or cultural significance is not clear to those outside the fandom. For instance, *"WE PURPLE YOU"* is a unique fan phrase that means deep love and belief, but without that background knowledge, the reader might not assign the correct meaning to it. This shows how a lack of shared cultural expertise, in particular when specific words are invented or repurposed, can cause level 1 pragmatic failure regardless of accurate grammar and shape.

Datum 14

*X: "**He did not about this all matter**, why is he being dragged in all this matter, try to understand him also, **he is not acknowledged about this**"*
*Y: "Dont pull V into **this**!!!" and "V maybe didnt even post it, maybe his staff posted it."*
*Z: "V maybe didn't even post it, maybe his staff posted **it**."*

Context:

The tweets in the image defended V from BTS in response to criticism regarding a controversial post involving McDonald's. The users who were ARMYs expressed confusion and frustration about why V was being involved in boycotting issue. The first tweet said, *"He did not about this all matter... he is not acknowledged about this,"* which appeared to mean that the celebrity was might be unaware of the issue. The other tweets said suggested that V had to no longer be blamed and may not have posted the content himself. Those messages were intended to defend the celebrity and promote understanding; however, a number of the grammar and phrase selections made the meaning uncertain or awkward, especially for native English readers. Moreover, it was a kind of statement that could not be confirmed as a fact because it is private and could only be known from the first point of view.

Analysis:

These tweets illustrate a case of **Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgements**, as described by Thomas (1983). The speakers attempt to express their ideas in English but use sentence structures and word orders that reflect patterns from another language, likely their mother tongue. For example, phrases like *"he is not acknowledged about this"* are syntactically incorrect in English and lead to confusion. The meaning may be understood with effort, but it requires interpretation from context. This shows how learners may assume certain sentence forms are acceptable in English because they are direct translations from their first language, even though they do not function the same pragmatically.

This is a clear example of Pragmatic Failure **Level 1**, which occurs when there is a misunderstanding of sense and reference—in other words, the meaning of the words or sentence is not clear. The reader may struggle to understand what *"he did not about this all matter"* is trying to convey. These unclear or incorrect sentence constructions reduce the effectiveness of the communication and may prevent the message from being understood as intended. Although the speaker intends to defend and support the celebrity, the misunderstanding caused by poor structure results in pragmatic failure at the most basic level of interpretation. Moreover, the words "this" and "it" have uncleared references that may lead readers to a misunderstanding.

Datum 15

X:*" Dear V please listen to **ur biggest voice** we still care & love you!*

태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!*
"thv 의 공식 계정*""*

Context:

The tweet showed a fan addressing BTS V's following controversy around a post involving McDonald's. The English portion of the tweet said, *"Dear V please listen to ur biggest voice we still care & love you!"* and the Korean text

said "taehyungnim 'McDonalds' boikot jepum sajin-i pohamdoen inseutageulaem gesimul-eul sagjehasi go deo isang eung-wonhaji maseyo!!! thvui gongsig gyejeong" means Taehyung, please delete your Instagram post with the product photo of 'McDonalds' boycott and stop cheering!!! Official account of thv urged him to delete the Instagram post containing McDonald's products and stop supporting the brand. The speaker's intention seemed to be a mix of emotional support and a polite request for action. However, the expression *"listen to your biggest voice"* might not be immediately clear or meaningful to native English speakers, which could lead to confusion or misinterpretation of the intended message.

Analysis:

This example shows a case of **Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgement**, as described by Jenny Thomas (1983). The user likely translated an idiomatic phrase or expression from their native language directly into English. The phrase *"your biggest voice"* appears to be used metaphorically, perhaps to mean *"your fans' voice"* or *"public opinion,"* but this is not a common or recognized expression in English. As a result, although the sentence is grammatically correct, the specific phrase can be pragmatically confusing to native speakers, especially outside the fan community who may not share the same interpretive framework.

This pragmatic failure falls under **Level 1**, which involves a misunderstanding of sense and reference. The literal meaning of the sentence is

unclear because of the non-standard expression, making it difficult for the reader to understand what the speaker is referring to. Although the speaker's emotional tone and intention are generally positive and supportive, the unclear reference may prevent the message from being fully understood as intended. This highlights how even well-meaning communication can result in pragmatic failure when expressions are not pragmatically appropriate in the target language context.

Datum 16

X:" Bro, it's just a photo. Please

WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG **BORAHAE** TAEHYUNG

WE PURPLE YOU TAEHYUNG

 ARMYS ARE WITH TAEHYUNG

ARMYS LOVES TAEHYUNG WITH TAEHYUNG

TILL THE END WITH BTS

 TILL THE END

BTS BTS BTS"

Context:

The tweet above responded to the controversy surrounding Taehyung (V from BTS) posting a photo that included McDonald's products. The user writes, *"Bro, it's just a photo. Please,"* followed by repeated lines expressing love and loyalty to Taehyung, such as *"WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG"* and *"WITH BTS*

TILL THE END." The speaker intended to minimize the issue and defend the celebrity by emphasizing unity and support. While the message was emotionally strong, some parts—especially fan-created expressions like *"BORAHÆ"* and *"WE PURPLE YOU"*—might not be fully understood by outsiders unfamiliar with BTS fan culture.

Analysis:

This tweet demonstrates **Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgements**, one of the types of pragmatic failure identified by Jenny Thomas (1983). Phrases like *"WE PURPLE YOU" or "BORAHÆ"* (*borahae* stand for the Korean word *bora* which means purple and *hae* is shorter version from *saranghae*) are grammatically and semantically unclear in standard English. These expressions carry special emotional meanings within the BTS fandom, but for non-fans or native speakers unfamiliar with them, the intended message may be confusing or misunderstood. Furthermore, the sentence *"ARMYS LOVES TAEHYUNG"* contains a grammatical error ("Armies" as a plural noun with a singular verb, but has a different meaning context), which may slightly reduce clarity and credibility.

This case falls under Pragmatic Failure **Level 1**, which involves misunderstanding at the level of sense and reference. Although the tweet's general meaning—defending and supporting Taehyung—is somewhat clear from context, specific words and expressions may be difficult to interpret for a broader audience. The failure occurs not because the sentence structure is completely

wrong, but because the reference to certain ARMY terms does not transfer well into standard English usage. This example shows how subcultural language can cause communication breakdowns outside the intended group.

e. Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions

Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions type arose because of a lack of understanding of target-language politeness strategies, including indirectness or contextual markers. From this type of pragmatic failure, the researcher found 5 data which included in Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions type, and all the data included in level 2 of misunderstanding.

Datum 17
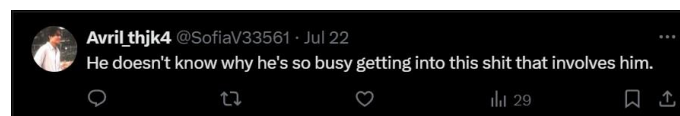
*X: "He doesn't know why he's so **busy getting into this shit** that involves him."*

Context:

The tweet above expressed frustration toward Taehyung's involvement in a controversial issue. The user who was ARMY wrote, "*He doesn't know why he's so busy getting into this shit that involves him.*" The sentence suggested that the speaker believes the celebrity was unknowingly or unnecessarily involved in an issue that directly affected him. The tone was casual and included slang or vulgar language (*"this shit"*), likely intended to reflect anger or disbelief. However, due to the emotionally charged and informal phrasing, the message could be easily misinterpreted by a broader audience as

offensive or disrespectful, rather than concerned or supportive. Moreover, it was a kind of statement that could not be confirmed as a fact because it was private and only could be known from the first point of view.

Analysis:

This tweet is an example of **Inadequate Exposure to Politeness Conventions**, as explained by Thomas (1983). The speaker's choice of informal, blunt language might reflect norms from their own social or linguistic background, where such expressions are common for showing frustration or solidarity. However, in broader or more formal English-speaking contexts, especially in public digital spaces, this kind of language may violate politeness expectations. The lack of softened tone or respectful phrasing can result in a message being perceived as rude, even when the speaker intends to sympathize or criticize the situation, not the person.

The type of pragmatic failure here is **Level 2**, which refers to a misunderstanding of the pragmatic force behind the utterance. The sentence is grammatically understandable, so there is no Level 1 issue, but the intended meaning or tone may not be interpreted as planned. The speaker likely intended to express concern or confusion about the celebrity's involvement, but because of the aggressive and vulgar tone, others may view it as an insult or attack. This mismatch between intention and interpretation demonstrates Level 2 pragmatic failure caused by limited awareness of how politeness norms function in public discourse.

Datum 18

*X:"IT IS FOOD FOOD, TAEHYUNG IS NOT TO BLAME AND IF **YOU SUCK SO MUCH** WITH YOUR PALESTINE DO NOT CONSUME YOURSELVES AND"*

Context:

The tweet strongly defended the celebrity (Taehyung) in a controversial situation regarding his association with McDonald's. The user wrote in all capital letters, *"IT IS FOOD FOOD, TAEHYUNG IS NOT TO BLAME AND IF YOU SUCK SO MUCH WITH YOUR PALESTINE DO NOT CONSUME YOURSELVES AND,"* ending abruptly. The tone was aggressive and emotionally charged. Although the speaker's intention appeared to be defending Taehyung and dismissing the criticism, the harsh language, capitalization, and unclear sentence structure could lead to significant misinterpretation, especially among international readers unfamiliar with the context or tone intended.

Analysis:

This tweet reflects a case of **Inadequate Exposure to Politeness Conventions**, as explained by Jenny Thomas (1983). The speaker uses informal, impolite expressions like *"YOU SUCK SO MUCH"* and lacks proper sentence structure, which violates English norms for public discourse—especially in sensitive political contexts. Rather than using polite disagreement or respectful defense, the speaker's aggressive tone may come off as offensive or hostile. This

suggests that the user may not be fully aware of the expectations around expressing disagreement politely in English, especially in multicultural, global discussions on social media.

The type of pragmatic failure seen here is **Level 2**, which involves misinterpreting or misusing pragmatic force. The literal meaning of some parts may be understood (so it is not Level 1), but the social force and emotional tone of the message are likely to be interpreted very differently than intended. While the speaker likely meant to defend a favorite celebrity, the force of the message—amplified by harsh language and capital letters—could be perceived as aggressive, disrespectful, or offensive. This example demonstrates how a lack of awareness of politeness norms in English can result in pragmatic failure and a breakdown in effective communication.

Datum 19

X:" ***Shut the fuck up.*** *You are a self centered human being. TAEHYUNG CAN EAT WHATEVER HE WANTS. You are no t paying anyway. HE HELPS A LOT PEOPLE WHO NEEDS HELP THAN YOU. You don't drag a good person down."*

Context:

The tweet above was a highly emotional and aggressive response from a user defending Taehyung (V from BTS) against criticism related to his association

with McDonald's. The post included statements such as *"Shut the fuck up," "You are a self-centered human being,"* and *"TAEHYUNG CAN EAT WHATEVER HE WANTS."* The speaker also emphasized that Taehyung helped others more than the critic. The tone was confrontational and disrespectful. While the writer aimed to defend a public figure, the harsh wording and profanity could escalate tension rather than create understanding or support their point of view.

Analysis:

This tweet demonstrates **Inadequate Exposure to Politeness Conventions**. The speaker uses offensive language and a highly aggressive tone that violates norms of polite communication in English, especially in public and cross-cultural digital spaces like Twitter. In contexts involving disagreement or emotional topics, English typically favors indirectness and softened criticism. By failing to adapt to these politeness conventions, the speaker's intended defense of the celebrity may instead be interpreted as an attack, reducing the effectiveness of the message.

This is a case of Pragmatic Failure **Level 2**, where the problem lies in the misuse of pragmatic force. Although the message is linguistically understandable (it is not Level 1), the emotional impact and social force of the words are likely interpreted differently than the speaker intends. Instead of defending Taehyung persuasively, the tweet may alienate readers due to its hostility and lack of civility. This highlights how poor control over tone and politeness can lead to miscommunication, especially in emotionally sensitive or public discourse.

Datum 20
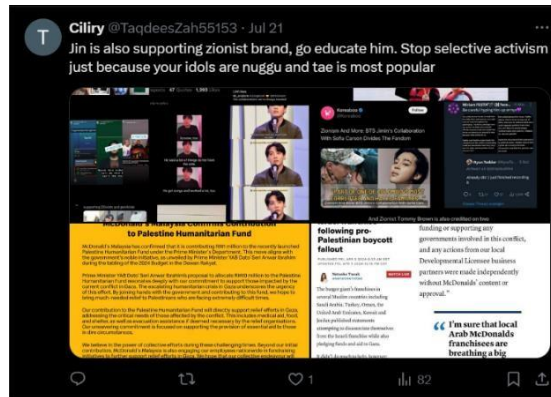
*X: "Jin is also supporting zionist brand, **go educate him**. Stop selective activism just because **your idols are nuggu** and tae is most popular"*

Context:

The tweet criticized selective activism within a fandom by stating, *"Jin is also supporting zionist brand, go educate him. Stop selective activism just because your idols are nuggu and tae is most popular."* The tweet was paired with an image collage providing evidence related to brand associations of various BTS members. The speaker seemed to aim at pointing out hypocrisy within the fanbase for criticizing only one member (Taehyung) and not others (like Jin). However, the choice of words, such as *"nuggu"* (a Korean slang meaning *"nobody"* or *"unknown"*) and the direct command *"go educate him,"* might come across as rude or dismissive, which could affect how the message was received.

Analysis:

This tweet reflects a case **of Inadequate Exposure to Politeness Conventions**, a type of pragmatic failure identified by Jenny Thomas (1983). The speaker uses direct, confrontational language without softening strategies commonly used in English discourse to express criticism. Phrases like *"go educate him"* and *"your idols are nuggu"* ignore cultural norms of indirectness and respect, especially in public or cross-cultural communication. This leads to a higher risk of the message being interpreted as aggressive or disrespectful, even if the original intention was to call for fair treatment of all idols.

This is an example of Pragmatic Failure **Level 2**, where the issue lies in misunderstanding the pragmatic force of the message. The literal content of the tweet is understandable, so it is not a Level 1 failure. However, the force—the emotional and social impact of the statement—may be misread as hostile rather than informative or critical. The speaker might have intended to highlight bias and inconsistency, but the abrupt tone and lack of politeness conventions may cause readers to reject the message entirely. This shows how important it is to adapt one's language to match cultural expectations when engaging in online discourse.

Datum 21

*X:" Are you done **yapping** y'all need to do some research before you judge taehyung we have google it's free so go to google **and get your damn story straight!** And MacDonals doesn't support Israel but some franchises does and le'me tell you this taehyung don't know everything so **shut up**"*

Context:

The tweet above reacted defensively to criticism of Taehyung (V from BTS) over a post involving McDonald's. The user wrote, *"Are you done yapping y'all need to do some research before you judge taehyung... taehyung don't know everything so shut up."* The speaker's goal seemed to be to defend Taehyung by highlighting that he might not have been fully aware of the situation. However, the use of informal and aggressive phrases like *"yapping," "get your damn story straight,"* and *"shut up"* gave the tweet a harsh tone that might result in the message being viewed as hostile or disrespectful, regardless of its intended message.

Analysis:

This tweet demonstrates a case of **Inadequate Exposure to Politeness Conventions**, a type of pragmatic failure discussed by Jenny Thomas (1983). While the speaker clearly wants to express frustration and defend the celebrity, they fail to follow the social norms of polite and respectful language use in English, especially in public or intercultural contexts. In English-speaking norms, especially online where tone is easily misjudged, direct and impolite commands or insults can result in the speaker being misunderstood or ignored, even if their point is valid. This tweet lacks appropriate hedging, modal softeners, or indirectness that would typically make disagreement sound less confrontational.

This example represents Pragmatic Failure **Level 2**, where the issue lies in the misunderstanding of pragmatic force. The literal content is mostly clear, but the social impact or tone of the message may not match what the speaker intended. Instead of persuading readers or generating sympathy for Taehyung, the aggressive wording could be interpreted as combative or disrespectful, weakening the speaker's credibility. This shows how failing to align language use with politeness conventions leads to pragmatic failure, especially in emotionally charged digital discussions.

f. Inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation

Inflexibility in the pragmatic adaptation type arose because rigid use of linguistic forms learned in L1 or taught in early L2 learning without adapting to the pragmatic norms of the target language. From this type of pragmatic failure, the researcher found 4 data which included in Inflexibility in the pragmatic adaptation type, and all the data included in level 2 of misunderstanding.

Datum 22

X: "WE ARE NOT SPREADING HATE. WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO HIM."

태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!*

"thv 의 공식 계정""

Context:

      The tweet above showed a response from a user reacting to Taehyung's Instagram post involving McDonald's. The tweet included both English and Korean template text made by fans. In English, the user strongly states, *"WE ARE NOT SPREADING HATE. WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO HIM."* The Korean part said "taehyungnim 'McDonalds' boikot jepum sajin-i pohamdoen inseutageulaem gesimul-eul sagjehasi go deo isang eung-wonhaji maseyo!!! thvui gongsig gyejeong" means Taehyung, please delete your Instagram post with the product photo of 'McDonalds' boycott and stop cheering!!! Official account of thv urged Taehyung to delete the Instagram post that shows McDonald's products and to stop supporting the brand. The message appeared to be emotionally charged but framed as a demand rather than a polite request. While the user might aim to express concern and inform the celebrity about a sensitive issue, the tone and structure can be interpreted as confrontational or even forceful.

Analysis:

      This tweet demonstrates **Inflexibility in Pragmatic Adaptation**, a type of pragmatic failure described by Thomas (1983). The user uses a strong and direct imperative form in Korean, which might be acceptable in their cultural or social environment but may sound too aggressive or disrespectful in English-speaking contexts. The speaker does not adjust their language based on the public nature of the platform, the power difference between fans and celebrities, or the norms of polite discourse in English. The use of capital letters in the English sentence also intensifies the tone, adding to the perceived forcefulness. This shows the

speaker's difficulty in adapting their communication style to the expectations of different audiences.

The pragmatic failure in this case falls under **Level 2**, which is the misunderstanding of pragmatic force. The literal meaning of the tweet is clear (so it's not a Level 1 issue), but the way the message is expressed—especially through direct commands and strong tone—might be interpreted differently from what the speaker intended. The speaker likely wants to express concern and call for action, but their message may instead be seen as an attack or harsh criticism. This mismatch between intended meaning and perceived meaning illustrates Level 2 pragmatic failure, highlighting the importance of adapting language use to social and cultural contexts.

Datum 23
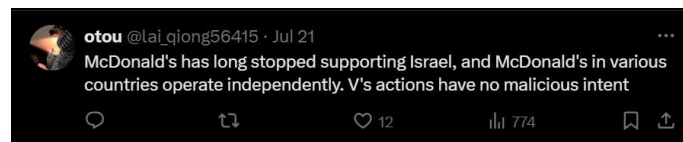
X: "McDonald's has long stopped supporting Israel, and McDonald's in various countries operate independently. V's actions have no malicious intent"

Context:

The tweet shown provided a factual defense in response to public criticism of Taehyung (V)'s association with McDonald's. The user wrote, *"McDonald's has long stopped supporting Israel, and McDonald's in various countries operate independently. V's actions have no malicious intent."* The post attempted to clarify misinformation and protect the celebrity from accusations of political insensitivity. While the intention was informative and rational, the tweet assumes

that all readers will interpret it as a neutral explanation, without considering the emotionally charged nature of the topic. Because of this, the message might be misread as dismissive or unsympathetic to the concerns of others.

Analysis:

This case illustrates **Inflexibility in Pragmatic Adaptation**. Although the tweet is fact-based and clear, the speaker does not adapt their language to the emotional context of the discussion. The conflict involves strong public emotions surrounding political and humanitarian issues, yet the speaker uses a formal, detached tone. In highly sensitive contexts, failing to acknowledge others' emotions while giving facts can lead to pragmatic failure. This inflexibility can cause the audience to view the speaker as cold or uncaring, even when their intention was simply to clarify the facts.

This kind of failure is categorized as **Level 2**, which involves a misunderstanding or misuse of pragmatic force. The literal meaning is fully clear and grammatically accurate, so it is not Level 1. However, the way the message is delivered may not align with what the situation calls for emotionally. The speaker intends to defend and clarify, but readers might feel that their concerns are being ignored or dismissed. This shows that even informative statements can lead to miscommunication if they lack emotional sensitivity or contextual awareness, which is central to Level 2 pragmatic failure.

Datum 24

*X:" Tae stans are mad about mistreatment of taehyung but are not willing to boycott the company. By streaming his album you're basically funding the company. Boycotters armys are loud as fuck since the day 1 but y'all are just ignoring it. For god sake **BOYCOTT HYBE**"*
Y:" If u want to boycott than just boycott! don't listen to it in any way cause it's the same way you enjoy the music created by the people you avoid!"
*Z:"as a taehyung-biased, I am disappointed and no, **NONE OF YOU have the right** to invalide my feelings. if you pull out excuses like "he doesn't know" "he is in military" there are many protests in SK about the boycott, **stop infantilizing him** ffs"*

Context:

The datum consisted of three tweets discussing the boycott of HYBE (BTS's label) in response to the perceived mistreatment of Taehyung. Each tweet expressed disappointment and frustration toward fans who continue to support the company by streaming music or making excuses for Taehyung's actions. The tweets used emotional and direct language, including capital letters, strong punctuation, and phrases like *"BOYCOTT HYBE," "stop infantilizing him,"* and *"NONE OF YOU have the right."* These posts reflected a tense conversation within the fandom, where users felt that the issue was being ignored or minimized by others.

Analysis:

The type of pragmatic failure shown here is **Inflexibility in Pragmatic** **Adaptation.** The speakers apply highly emotional and confrontational speech styles without adjusting their tone for a diverse online audience. Their language may reflect how they talk within close fan circles or protest communities, but they do not modify it for broader communication, especially on a global platform where tone can easily be misunderstood. Because the writers do not soften or frame their criticism more constructively, their intended message—calling for action and awareness—can come across as aggressive or alienating.

Based on Thomas's (1983) theory, this represents a **Level 2** Misunderstanding. While the literal meaning of each tweet is clear, the intended emotional force may be misunderstood. Rather than motivating or educating others, the tweets may trigger defensiveness or resistance because the language lacks pragmatic flexibility. The misalignment between intention (raising awareness and pushing for solidarity) and reception (being seen as attacking or guilt-tripping) leads to communicative failure.

Datum 25
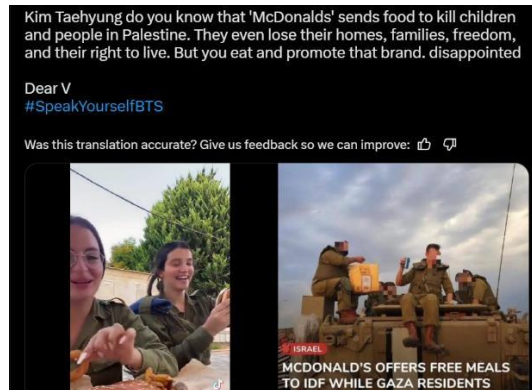
X : *"Kim Taehyung do you know that 'McDonalds' sends food to kill children and people in Palestine. They even lose their homes, families, freedom, and their right to live. But **you eat and promote that brand.** disappointed*

Dear V

#SpeakYourselfBTS"

Context:

The tweet expressed strong criticism toward Kim Taehyung (V) for allegedly promoting McDonald's, which the speaker claimed was associated with supporting Israeli military actions. The message read: *"Kim Taehyung do you know that 'McDonalds' sends food to kill children and people in Palestine... But you eat and promote that brand. disappointed."* This message was emotionally intense and accusatory, directly linking the celebrity's action with political violence. The speaker's likely intention was to raise awareness and pressure the celebrity to stop endorsing the brand. However, due to the direct and emotionally charged language, the message might be perceived as hostile, harsh, or disrespectful, especially by readers unfamiliar with the context or cause.

Analysis:

This is an example of **Inflexibility in Pragmatic Adaptation**. The speaker uses a blunt and accusatory tone without adjusting for the social relationship between the speaker (a fan or general public) and the addressee (a celebrity with a high status). In English-speaking norms, especially in public discourse, criticism toward a public figure is often expected to be framed politely or indirectly. The speaker fails to adapt their language to match the norms of respectful disagreement in English, leading to a communication style that may be interpreted as offensive or inappropriate, even if the speaker believes they are simply expressing moral concern.

This tweet reflects Pragmatic Failure **Level 2**, which involves misinterpreting or misusing pragmatic force. The message is clear in meaning (so it is not Level 1), but the intended force—perhaps a call for reflection or change—may be interpreted instead as blame or public shaming. The emotional vocabulary and direct accusations like *"you eat and promote that brand"* may overpower the intended message and lead to misunderstanding or rejection by the audience. This example shows how failure to adjust tone and politeness strategies can result in serious miscommunication, especially when addressing sensitive issues.

In short, the study found that pragmatic failure is a common phenomenon among EFL learners in social media such as X, particularly in speech acts like apology, request, suggestion, and refusal. This failure is often caused by limited

exposure to authentic English and the use of literal translations from the first language, leading to grammatically correct but pragmatically inappropriate expressions. Four main types frequently appeared: misinterpretation of pragmatic force, semantic or syntactic misjudgments, inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation—often resulting in a level 2 misunderstanding. On the other hand, pragmatic failure related to social issues was less frequent, especially in refusals and suggestions, with errors such as inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies, and overgeneralization occurring rarely. For semantic or syntactic misjudgments type of data resulted in a misunderstanding level 1. These acts were more formulaic and culturally transferable, making them easier for learners to manage, often resulting in only a low level (level 1) of misunderstanding.

B. Discussion

The researcher identified 25 instances of pragmatic failure in X statuses responding to BTS V's boycotting post, based on Thomas's (1983) framework. The findings indicate that pragmatic failure is a common phenomenon among EFL learners, particularly in speech act areas such as apologies, requests, suggestions, and refusals. Four dominant causes emerged: misinterpretation of pragmatic failure, semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments, inadequate exposure to politeness conventions, and inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. This failure often leads to a deeper level of misunderstanding (Level 2 of misunderstanding), except for semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments

type (Level 1 of misunderstanding). The prevalence of those pragmatic failure can be attributed to the beginners' restricted exposure to real English discourse and their overreliance on literal translations from their first language. As explained by Ding (2022), such failures often stem from incorrect language use and cultural misunderstandings, which can be addressed through cultural awareness training and explicit pragmatic instruction. Likewise, McGee (2019) highlights that speech acts like compliments, refusals, and complaints are frequent sources of cross-cultural miscommunication, emphasizing the importance of developing pragmatic competence in EFL education.

The most dominant type of pragmatic failure used by the fans in X is misinterpretation of pragmatic failure. The reason behind their usage of this type is because serious nature of the topic and the moral pressure being placed, the message may come across differently to native English speakers, especially when emotional phrases like *"your biggest voice"*, *"please"*, *"you loud folks"*, *"We are not spreading hate"*, *"Please don't corner him"*, *"disgusted"*, *"WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG"*, *"LEAVE TAEHYUNG ALONE"*, and *"WITH BTS TILL THE END"* are not clearly understood in context to express intended speech act such as requests, suggestions, and refusals. Sometimes the fans use phrases that seem polite yet at the same time insist on their desire to V to express their love as fans. This mismatch between form and force can cause confusion or unintended discomfort. As explained by Lan Ding (2022) in study applies speech act theory to highlight how speech acts such as requests, apologies, and compliments are often misinterpreted across cultures.

Second dominant type of pragmatic failure used by the fans in X is inadequate exposure to politeness conventions. The reason behind their usage of this type is to show fans disagreement, refusal, or strong support for V or Taehyung. The tone used is casual and includes slang or vulgar language *"this shit"*, *"YOU SUCK SO MUCH"*, *"Shut the fuck up"*, *"yapping"*, *"get your damn story straight"*, *"nuggu"* (a Korean slang meaning *"nobody"* or *"unknown"*), and the direct command *"go educate him,"* likely intended to reflect anger or disbelief. However, due to the emotionally charged and informal phrasing, the message could be easily misinterpreted by a broader audience as offensive or disrespectful, rather than concerned or supportive. It may come across as rude or dismissive, which could affect how the message is received. According to Hendriks et al. (2023) explores how politeness modifications in English emails differ between native (L1) and non-native (L2) speakers. Their experimental design reveals that less politeness leads to more negative evaluations of the sender, with L1 writers being judged more harshly for deviations from politeness norms compared to L2 writers.

The third dominant type of pragmatic failure used by the fans in X is inflexibility in pragmatic adaptation. The reason behind their usage to show fans disagreement, refusal, or strong support for V or Taehyung. The use of strong imperative forms, capital letters, and emotionally charged language in public posts—especially on global platforms—can lead to pragmatic failure. Speakers often fail to adjust their tone based on context, such as power dynamics, audience diversity, or the sensitivity of political and humanitarian issues. While their intent

may be to express urgency or demand action, the lack of politeness strategies and emotional sensitivity can make their message appear aggressive or uncaring, reducing its persuasive impact. As Xiang (2023) highlights, exposure to informal digital environments plays a crucial role in enhancing intercultural communication competence and pragmatic flexibility. Without this adaptive awareness, especially in diverse online spaces, messages are more likely to be misinterpreted or rejected by broader audiences.

The fourth dominant type of pragmatic failure utilized by fans on X is semantic or syntactic equivalence misjudgments. This happens when fans use phrases that seem meaningful or accurate to their own language or fan culture, but bring extraordinary or uncertain meanings in English. The motive behind this is that fans often use informal language, indirect references, or overly direct expressions that result in confusion or ambiguity for native speakers. As an example, phrases like *"WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG"*, *"LEAVE TAEHYUNG ALONE"*, *"WITH BTS TILL THE END"*, *"BORAHÁE"*, and *"WE PURPLE YOU"* are meant to express love and loyalty, however, can be misunderstood by way of outsiders surprising with the fan subculture. In addition, expressions like *"your biggest voice"* and *"he isn't acknowledged approximately this"* display how emotional phrases or direct translations can bring about unclear or awkward messages. These examples highlight how grammatical correctness does not usually guarantee clear conversation, in particular while cultural or contextual meaning is lost in translation.

When looking at the extent of misunderstanding, level 2 misunderstanding occurred the most, with 20 instances. Level 2 means the message changed into grammatically correct, however the listener or reader misunderstood the actual motive or feeling behind it. This took place plenty because of cultural variations and emotional tone. Level 1 misunderstanding, which is set misunderstanding the literal which means of words, occurred much less regularly, with only five cases. This suggests that most problems got here not from vocabulary or grammar mistakes, but from differences in how which means, emotion, or politeness are expressed in unique cultures. The findings suggest that online communication—especially about sensitive topics—can effortlessly cause pragmatic failure while human beings are not aware of cultural or contextual differences.

The findings also reflect and expand insights from in advance studies discussed within the historical past study. For instance, scholars like Haugh (2020), Zeng (2020), and Kamsinah et al. (2023) emphasize how digital environments intensify the potential for miscommunication because of reduced nonverbal cues and diverse cultural assumptions. Similar to Xiang (2023), who highlights social media as a fertile floor for intercultural competence improvement, this study suggests that although systems like X can reveal users to numerous speech acts, they also amplify the chance of false impression when pragmatic norms aren't explicitly taught or modeled. Compared to study room-primarily based pragmatic studies, the real-time and emotionally charged nature of fan discourse provides a layer of urgency that will increase the likelihood of pragmatic failure, especially round sensitive topics like political boycotts.

While previous studies focused on classroom or formal environments, this thesis fills a notable gap by applying pragmatic theory to informal, real-time digital interactions among non-native English speakers. A key distinction found in this study is that pragmatic failures often occur not because of complete misunderstanding (Level 1), but rather due to subtle misjudgments of speaker intention (Level 2), which are harder to detect and correct. Another unique point is the fusion of fan identity, political activism, and emotional expression—all of which influence how messages are framed and interpreted. Unlike in educational or workplace settings where communication norms are clearer, fan platforms are more spontaneous and emotionally driven, which may result in inflexible adaptation or misinterpretation even among seemingly fluent users.

This examine reveals that pragmatic failures in online fan discourse differ significantly from those found in previous, more formal research contexts. even as in advance studies which include Bailey (2021), Behlamar (2021), Ezzoua (2023), and Fitria (2020) focus on study room or based intercultural settings wherein pragmatic failure stems from limited focus or cultural misalignment in speech acts, this research highlights that in emotionally charged, informal digital areas like X, failure often arises from excessive fan identity expression, spontaneous language use, and sociopolitical engagement. In contrast to Xiang (2023) and Bailey (2021), who view digital environments as spaces that foster intercultural competence, this study shows that without proper guidance, those spaces can make bigger misunderstandings—particularly while users rely on emotionally loaded terms or direct translations. While researchers such as Ding (2022), McGee (2019), and

Ezzaoua (2023) operate from frameworks that implicitly treat cultural identity as relatively stable and group-bound, this study adopts more dynamic perspective. It considers cultural identification as fluid and shaped by real-time interaction digital spaces, particularly among fandom communities. Additionally, at the same time as Wulandari (2018) sees that communication can be influenced by emotion and pshycology. As a result, this research extends Thomas's (1983) framework to trendy social media discourse, demonstrating that even proficient users can experience pragmatic failure while cultural context, emotional tone, and digital conversation norms are not aligned.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this last chapter, the researcher will present the research conclusion and suggestions. In addition to the conclusion, the researcher will also provide suggestions for future researchers regarding the findings that have been investigated.

A.   Conclusion

Overall, this research concludes that pragmatic failure is the most dominant issue among EFL learners on X such what happened within BTS fans, Army, can be shown in result finding of this study, with medium-level misunderstanding being the most common outcome. This indicates a need for increased emphasis on the pragmatic aspects of language use in English language teaching, particularly in instructional materials and communication in social media. Although pragmatic awareness appears relatively more developed, it still requires attention, especially as learners advance and encounter more complex social interactions in English-speaking environments.

In conclusion, this examine validates Thomas's (1983) idea of pragmatic failure within the context of virtual, intercultural fan discourse. It reinforces the concept that pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication—not simply in formal getting to know contexts but additionally in globalized online systems. The high frequency of stage 2 failures suggests that users frequently understand the literal that means but fail to understand the intended force due to differences in cultural expectations, emotional expression, and politeness

techniques. these results underscore the significance of pragmatic awareness and versatility, particularly while carrying out sensitive subjects in multicultural virtual spaces. moving forward, greater interest must be given to teaching pragmatic techniques in real-world, socially dynamic environments like social media, in which intercultural misunderstandings frequently spread in real time.

B.   Suggestions

From the limited findings of this study, there is still a gap that can be explored. For future research, it is recommended that scholars further investigate types that rarely appear, the reason behind why people did pragmatic failure and pragmatic awareness in mitigating pragmatic failure. Additionally, a potential gap in this study is the lack of data from naturalistic spoken interactions, as responses were elicited through different tweets and indirect interactions even though with the same topic in conversation. Future studies could use discourse analysis of real-life conversations or interactions on other social media to explore pragmatic competice in more dynamic and authentic contexts.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Dhalia Nadiahasna was born in Mempawah on October 1, 2000. She graduated from SMAN 8 Malang in 2018. During her study at Senior High School, she actively participated in a journalistic club named BRAVO and got an achievement. She also joined badminton. She started her higher education in 2018 at the Department of English Literature UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and finished in 2025. During her study at the University, she studied well and had good grades. In her semester break, she attended writing and English courses. Outside of University she actively taught English in the course and participated in the Korean club known as Indrea. In addition, she was an active leader for four years in her Korean club and actively joined the annual cultural exchange program from Indrea.

APPENDIX

Classification Data of Type of Pragmatic Failure and Level of Misunderstanding
Used by ARMY Posts in X Reacting to BTS V's Stasuses

Table 1. Type of Pragmatic Failure and Level of Misunderstanding Used by ARMY

ARMY posts in X reacting to BTS V's Instagram post about McDonald and new song produced by a Zionist from 27th March 2024 until October 2024			
Datum	**Status**	**Types of Pragmatic Failure**	**Level of Misunderstanding**
1	X: *"Unfoll dan delete anything of V!!"* Y: *"He probably doesn't know much about the topic, **that's no way to be harassing**, most of you are a hypocritical fandom, **instead we should inform him about the topic**"* Z: ***"You don't have to be a Muslim to stand with the truth, just be a human being. Free palastine"***	Inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies	Level 2
2	X: *"McDonalds sends food to the iof killing children & people in Palestine.* ***Please apologize, delete this post & educate yourself.*** *We love you & want you to stand with humanity"*	Inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies	Level 2
3	X: *"Taehyung,* *We boycotting the MCD because they supported genocide in Palestine, **please remove the picture and apologize**. We hope that after this you can be more concerned about what is happening in Palestine. "*	Inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies	Level 2
4	X: *"taehyung we love you, **please** listen to "**your biggest voice**"* 태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!* *"thv 의 공식 계정""*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
5	X: *"**Please** he has done more deeds than **you loud folks**. At least he donates million of dollars to charity"*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
6	X: *"We are not spreading hate towards Tae but*	Misinterpretation of	Level 2

	we have something to say to him." 태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!"*	pragmatic force	
7	X: *"Please don't corner him, **he didn't mean to**"*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
8	X: *"Taehyung smoked (punch emoji)* *Other members smoked (smile angel emoji)* *Taehyung dating rumor (punch emoji)* *Other members dating rumor (smile angel emoji)* *Taehyung posted Mcd fries (punch emoji)"* Y: *"Taehyung posting mcd fries from 2 **ya: let's educate him**!!!* *members working with z who fund is****: mmmh let's get it to 1b (excited emoji)"*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
9	X:*"Joon wearing Adidas for the mv **was wrong, but** your faves promoting Adidas is not, Taehyung sharing a photodump from early 2023 **is wrong but** your faves promoting mcd, coke & starbucks is not, Taekook visiting Hawaii **is wrong, but** your faves going there is not."*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
10	X:*""but taehyung posted mcd" yes $3 fries that noone gaf about outside Twitter while your fav got into a irl accident that could've keel someone"* *"Y'all want bh to post **" sorry our artist ate 3$ fries 2 year ago, we apologize"**"*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
11	X:*" There is no conscience left. Don't dare take the moral high ground. There is almost **no support** for Taehyung from the larger fanbase and even worse active sabotage. And you want ppl who love him to **keep quiet and take the beating**. **I'm disgusted!**"*	Misinterpretation of pragmatic force	Level 2
12	X: *"**Can U** ask your country to stop this product? And ask every Army not to buy this product? That's a more powerful way"*	Overgeneralization of	Level 2

		Pragmatic Rules	
13	*X: "3* *WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG* **BORAHAE** *TAEHYUNG* **WE PURPLE YOU** *TAEHYUNG* *LEAVE TAEHYUNG ALONE* *WITH TAEHYUNG TILL THE END* *WITH BTS TILL THE END BTS BTS BTS"*	Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgement	Level 1
14	*X: "**He did not about this all matter**, why is he being dragged in all this matter, try to understand him also, **he is not acknowledged about this**"* *Y: "Dont pull V into **this**!!!" and "V maybe didnt even post it, maybe his staff posted it."* *Z: "V maybe didn't even post it, maybe his staff posted **it**."*	Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgement	Level 1
15	X:" *Dear V please listen to **ur biggest voice** we still care & love you!* 태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!* *"thv 의 공식 계정""*	Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgement	Level 1
16	X:" *Bro, it's just a photo. Please* *WE LOVE YOU TAEHYUNG **BORAHAE** TAEHYUNG* *WE PURPLE YOU TAEHYUNG* *** ARMYS** ARE WITH TAEHYUNG* *ARMYS LOVES TAEHYUNG WITH TAEHYUNG* *TILL THE END WITH BTS* *TILL THE END* *BTS BTS BTS"*	Semantic or Syntactic Equivalence Misjudgement	Level 1
17	*X: "He doesn't know why he's so **busy getting into this shit** that involves him."*	Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions	Level 2
18	*X:"IT IS FOOD FOOD, TAEHYUNG IS NOT TO BLAME AND IF **YOU SUCK SO MUCH** WITH YOUR PALESTINE DO NOT CONSUME YOURSELVES AND"*	Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions	Level 2
19	*X:" **Shut the fuck up.** You are a self centered human being. TAEHYUNG CAN EAT WHATEVER HE WANTS. You are no t paying anyway. HE HELPS A LOT PEOPLE WHO*	Inadequate exposure to politeness	Level 2

	NEEDS HELP THAN YOU. You don't drag a good person down."	conventions	
20	*X: "Jin is also supporting zionist brand, **go educate him**. Stop selective activism just because **your idols are nuggu** and tae is most popular"*	Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions	Level 2
21	*X:" Are you done **yapping** y'all need to do some research before you judge taehyung we have google it's free so go to google **and get your damn story straight!** And MacDonals doesn't support Israel but some franchises does and le'me tell you this taehyung don't know everything so **shut up**"*	Inadequate exposure to politeness conventions	Level 2
22	*X: "**WE ARE NOT SPREADING HATE. WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO HIM."*** 태형님 *'McDonalds'* 보이콧 제품 사진이 포함된 인스타그램 게시물을 삭제하시 고 더 이상 응원하지 마세요*!!!* *"thv 의 공식 계정""*	Inflexibility in the pragmatic adaptation	Level 2
23	*X: "**McDonald's has long stopped supporting Israel, and McDonald's in various countries operate independently.** V's actions have no malicious intent"*	Inflexibility in the pragmatic adaptation	Level 2
24	*X:" Tae stans are mad about mistreatment of taehyung but are not willing to boycott the company. By streaming his album you're basically funding the company. Boycotters armys are loud as fuck since the day 1 but y'all are just ignoring it. For god sake **BOYCOTT HYBE**"* *Y:" If u want to boycott than just boycott! don't listen to it in any way cause it's the same way you enjoy the music created by the people you avoid!"* *Z:"as a taehyung-biased, I am disappointed and no, **NONE OF YOU** have **the right** to invalide my feelings. if you pull out excuses like "he doesn't know" "he is in military" there are many protests in SK about the boycott, **stop infantilizing him** ffs"*	Inflexibility in the pragmatic adaptation	Level 2
25	X : *"Kim Taehyung do you know that 'McDonalds' sends food to kill children and people in Palestine. They even lose their*	Inflexibility in the pragmatic adaptation	Level 2

*homes, families, freedom, and their right to live. But **you eat and promote that brand.** disappointed* *Dear V* *#SpeakYourselfBTS''*		