

Exploring Factors Contributing to Students' Willingness to Communicate in English Class at The 11th Grade of Ma Nurul Islam Dasan Baru Murbaya Village Pringgarata Sub-District in The Academic Year 2022/2023

Alfia Rahmawati^{1*}, Syarifudin², Tuning Ridha Addhiny³

Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, UIN Mataram

¹190107045.mhs@uinmataram.ac.id, ²syarif@uinmataram.ac.id,

³tuningaddhiny@uinmataram.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research is aimed to find out the students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English class, and unveil the factors that contribute to students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English class. This research implemented qualitative descriptive method by conducting observation and interview. The informants were the 11th grade students at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru. The findings showed that most students have medium willingness to communicate in English class. Meanwhile, less of them have high willingness to communicate in English class. Furthermore, the researcher found some factors contributing to students' willingness to communicate (WTC), namely psychological factors and situational factors. Psychological factors include self-confidence, perceive communicate competence, learning anxiety, motivation, and personality. Meanwhile, situational factors include effect of task, effect of topics, teacher role, interlocutor, and classroom atmosphere.

Keywords: Willingness to Communicate, WTC, English Class.

INTRODUCTION

Modern second language (L2) pedagogy prioritized the development of students' communicative competence in the classroom. The 2013 National Curriculum for English Teaching is focused on fostering students' communicative skills. The 2013 curriculum is anticipated to enable students to be more involved in classroom communication by involving some improvements in instructional design and teaching approach (Hawwini, 2019). The widely accepted instructional method in teaching speaking is communicative language teaching, which emphasize that the goal of language learning is to increase learners' communicative competence (Syarifudin, 2019).

In responding to this, communicative learning becomes the fundamental goal of teaching English. In this case, students are expected to be able to produce and communicate in the target

language actively. In addition, students are also expected to have an awareness of the importance of communication practices so that they can take advantage of every opportunity available to practice communicating, both inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, students' willingness to communicate (WTC) plays an important role in supporting communicative English learning.

Literature shows that researchers have given several definitions of WTC. According to MacIntyre et al (2001), WTC is the "readiness to enter the discourse at a certain time with a specific person or persons, using L2". According to Kang (2005), WTC that refers to Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables.

Furthermore, researchers have identified two categories of characteristics that are thought to have an impact on students' WTC. They are psychological variables and contextual or situational variables. Psychological factors include self-confidence, perceive communicate competence, learning anxiety, motivation, and personality. Meanwhile, situational factors include effect of task, effect of topics, teacher role, interlocutor, and classroom atmosphere.

1. Psychological factors

Psychological or individual elements include the learner's personality traits, the social environment in which he or she lives, attitudes between groups of native speakers and those speaking the second language, general self-confidence, and motivation to learn English (Mardiana, 2020). This includes self-confidence, perceive communicate competence, learning anxiety, motivation, and personality.

Researchers have confirmed that L2 self-confidence has a number of effects on students' WTC. It, for instance, expresses perceived competence and fear. It is acknowledged as one of the factors that most accurately predicts WTC (Tuyen et al., 2019).

Perceived communicative competence can be thought of as their perception of their capacity to communicate in L2 with other L2 users. Students in L2 who believe they are weak communicators or strong communicators typically have less or more WTC (Tuyen et al., 2019). Research on reluctance has shown that a person's willingness to communicate can be affected by their perceived communication ability, which has been identified as one element determining WTC (Anwar et al., 2021).

Anxiety, which is directly tied to self-confidence, frequently occurs among students in the classroom. Inability to complete a task in a language lesson can cause language anxiety, which impacts students' perceptions of their communication skills and, in turn, their WTC (Mardiana, 2020). According to Baker and MacIntyre (2001), among the key elements affecting students' stated WTC level are language-use anxiety and positive or negative prior communication experiences.

Motivation is determined as the degree to which students work to learn the language out of a desire to do so and the satisfaction that comes from doing so. Unwillingness to communicate could result from low motivation (Tuyen et al., 2019). Motivation is classified into two categories, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation concerns behavior performed for its own sake in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction such as joy doing a particular activity. While extrinsic motivation involves performing a behavior as a means to receive some extrinsic reward or to avoid punishment (Syarifudin, 2019).

The term "personality" refers to the unique elements influencing a student's WTC. According to Liu (2005), personality is a significant factor in why certain students find it difficult to speak up in class. These students tend to be shy and introverted, which makes them reluctant to speak up. Since they are less sociable, more introverted, and prefer not to engage in dialogue, they make an effort to avoid doing so. Contrarily, according to Elwood (2011), students who exhibit personality qualities including adaptability, extroversion, sociability, and confidence typically have greater L2 WTC.

2. Situational factors

Another group of characteristics that seem to have an impact on students' WTC are situational variables. These factors show that students want to talk to a particular individual at a particular time. These elements include the impact of task types, topics, interlocutor, classroom atmosphere, teacher role, etc. (Tuyen et al., 2019).

Effect of Task Types; Tasks are characterized as learning activities planned in a classroom and aimed at either communicative or structural knowledge. Task types are thought to be observable factors that have an impact on students' levels of WTC. Student's L2 WTC may alter, depending on the nature of the task, its level of difficulty, and the amount of time allotted for completion (Tuyen et al., 2019).

Effect of Topics; Topic of the discussion had a role in the students' WTC as well. If they are introduced to familiar themes to discuss, students may be more eager to engage with one

another in English, boosting their practice opportunities. The three key components—topic familiarity, topic interest, and topic preparation—can improve students' linguistic self-confidence, which in turn raises their WTC. On the contrary, they avoid communicating since they have lack of knowledge about the topic (Tuyen et al., 2019).

Teacher Role; Another important factor also influences students' ability in English speaking is the teacher techniques. Researchers have found some factors created by teachers in the L2 classroom, including classroom procedures, teaching methods, verbal and nonverbal behavior, have a significant impact on students' perceived competence, motivation, anxiety, and WTC (Tuyen et al., 2019). A professional teacher needs the ability not only to create a humanistic classroom, but also to give students the opportunity to take part through classroom interaction (Syarifudin, 2021).

Classroom Atmosphere; The atmosphere of the classroom can either encourage or discourage student participation. The classroom atmosphere is referred to the feeling, attitude, or temperature created and enjoyed by the class group, demonstrating students' involvement and participation. Researchers have found that a positive classroom environment encourages L2 WTC, whereas a boring and silent environment demotivates it. According to research, students' L2 WTC may be higher in a cooperative working environment where all members of particular groups are permitted to participate equally and contribute to class activities (Tuyen et al., 2019).

Interlocutor; The function of the interlocutor has also been found to be a significant element influencing the learners' willingness to communicate. When speaking with someone they are familiar with and hence more comfortable with, language learners report greater willingness to do so. It seems sense that when students converse with someone they know well, they will feel less anxious about speaking and will gain more self-confidence, which will lead to a greater willingness to speak (Mardiana, 2020).

METHODS

The researcher used a qualitative approach with a qualitative descriptive method. According to Malik and Hamied in Zaikalina (2022), the goal of qualitative research is to gain a rich and complex understanding of a particular social context or phenomenon. This study's problem variable was to explore students' WTC levels and factors that influenced their WTC in English class. The source of data in this research was the students from the 11th grade of

MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru in the academic year 2022/2023. In this study, researcher chose 23 students as the informants by purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique with certain consideration.

To obtain data, researchers used two instruments, namely observation and interviews. First, the researcher made observations to see the context and overall situation of the class, so that a view would be obtained about the state of the class, especially the students' WTC. In this observation, the researcher used a checklist to focus on the part to be studied, namely regarding student WTC and the factors that influence student WTC. Next, the researcher conducted interviews to obtain detailed information about students' WTC and the factors that influenced their willingness to speak in English class. The researcher then recorded the students' voices in order to get data that was clear and easy to analyze.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was descriptive qualitative research that utilized observation and interviews for data collection. Researchers used observation as the first instrument to collect the data. The observation was conducted in two meetings. The observation scheme used was adopted from Xie Qiuxuan (2011). The item was divided into four categories, namely AS (All Students), MS (Most of Students), AvS (Average of Students), and LS (Less of Students).

Using the index formula that has been mentioned, the researcher found NS (0% -20%) with a range of 0-4 students, LS (21% -40%) with a range of 5-9 students, AvS (41% -60%) with a range of 10 -14 students, MS (61%-80%) with a range of 15-19 students, and AS (81%-100%) with a range of 20-23 students.

Furthermore, in determining students' WTC level, the researcher categorized students' WTC into three categories, namely low, medium and high.

1. Low

The researcher determined that students have a low WTC when answering questions or speaking in class when given instructions by the teacher. This shows that when students speak, they need external motivation in the form of the teacher's role (Sesriyani, 2020). In this case, the teacher gives instructions to students to speak. Based on the observation scheme used, students' low WTC rates were shown in indicators 1c (Answer with instruction) and 5b (Present own opinion with instruction).

2. Medium

The researcher determined that students have medium WTC if they answer, ask questions or speak according to their own will. This shows that they have their own initiative to speak (Sesriyani, 2020). Based on the observation scheme used, the medium level of students' WTC was shown in indicators 1a (Volunteer an answer), 2a (Ask the teacher a question), 2b (Ask the teacher for clarification), 4a (Talk in pairs), and 4b (Talk in group).

3. High

The researcher determined that students have high WTC when they express opinions, respond to opinions and speak in front of the class. This was considered a high level because it was difficult to achieve. Not only have the initiative to speak, students must also have the knowledge and experience to do so (Sesriyani, 2020). Based on the observation scheme used, high student WTC rates were shown in indicators 1b (Volunteer a comment), 3a (Guess the meaning of unknown words), 4c (Talk to the whole class), 5 (Present own opinion in class), and 6a (Respond to an opinion).

Based on the above categories, the researcher found the results of observation 1 as follows:

No	Indicators	Description				
		AS	Ms	AvS	LS	NS
Teacher-Student(s)/Student(s)-Teacher						
1	a	Volunteer an answer		✓		
	b	Volunteer a comment			✓	
	c	Answer with instructions	✓			
2	a	Ask the teacher a question		✓		
	b	Ask the teacher for clarification		✓		
3	a	Guess the meaning of unknown word				✓
Student-Student/Student-Class						
4	a	Talk in pairs		✓		
	b	Talk in groups		✓		
	c	Talk to whole class				✓
5	a	Present own opinion in class				✓
	b	Present own opinion with instructions	✓			

6	a	Respond to an opinion				✓	
---	---	-----------------------	--	--	--	---	--

The second observation shows the same result.

Based on the results of observations, students showed varying behavior, depending on the type of activity/observation indicator. The indicators in observation are classified into several categories, namely AS (All students), MS (Most Students), AvS (Average of Students), LS (Less Students) and NS (No Student). The following is a classification of observation results.

1. AS (All students)

Based on the table, from the several observational indicators, only two indicators showed the willingness of all students to speak English in class, namely indicators 1c (Answer with instruction) and 5b (Present own opinion with instruction). So, it can be concluded that all students (81%-100%) with a range of 20-23 students are willing to speak English in class if instructed one by one by the teacher.

2. MS (Most Students)

Based on the table, it can be seen that several indicators show that most students want to speak English in the following indicators. The indicators are 1a (Volunteer an answer), 2a (Ask the teacher a question), 2b (Ask the teacher for clarification), 4a (Talk in pairs), and 4b (Talk in group). So, it can be concluded that most students (61%-80%) with a range of 15-19 students have medium WTC. This was indicated that most students want to speak English in class when answering teacher questions, asking questions to the teacher, and speaking in pairs or in groups.

3. LS (Less Students)

The table shows that several indicators show that few students want to speak English in the following indicators. The indicators are 1b (Volunteer a comment), 3 (Guess the meaning of unknown words), 4c (Talk to the whole class), 5 (Present own opinion in class), and 6 (Respond to an opinion). So, it can be concluded that less students (21%-40%) with a range of 5-9 students have high WTC. This was shown that less students want to speak English in class when giving comments/responds to an opinion. In addition, less students want to speak and express opinions in front of the class. Lastly, less students also want to guess unknown words in class. This can be considered because students' mastery of vocabulary is still inadequate.

Based on the observation results aforementioned, it was found that most of the students of the 11th grade at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru with a range of 15-19 students have medium willingness to communicate, while less of them with a range of 5-9 students have high willingness to communicate.

Interview Session

The researcher conducted the interview to obtain deeper information about the students' willingness to communicate in English class at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru. Based on the observation results, most students have medium willingness to communicate in English class, while less students have high willingness to communicate. It is in line with the interviews results. From 23 students that were interviewed, 5 students (Less Students) feel comfortable speaking English, 15 students (Most students) sometimes comfortable and sometimes uncomfortable speaking English, and only 3 (No Student) feel uncomfortable speaking English. Regarding students' motivation, almost all students are motivated to learn English. 21 out of 23 students said they were motivated to communicate using English in class, whereas only 2 out of 23 students stated that they lacked or did not have the motivation to communicate using English in class. Regarding students' confidence, 17 students (Most Students) feel confident speaking English in class. In contrast, only 6 students (Less Students) who lack confidence speak English in class. Regarding students' personality, 7 students (Less Students) are active in English class, 12 students (Average Students) are sometimes active and sometimes not active, and only 4 students (No Student) are not active in English class. Finally, regarding students' English proficiency, 6 students (Less Students) felt their English skills are sufficient. On the contrary, 17 students (Most Students) felt their English skills were lacking. However, it triggers them to study English even more actively.

The researcher conducted the interview to obtain deeper information about the factors that contribute to students' willingness to communicate in English class at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru. Based on the interview results, the researchers found some factors that contribute to students' willingness to communicate, namely psychological factors and situational factors.

The first psychological factor affecting students' WTC is self-confidence. Most students want to speak English when they feel confident. They feel confident because they believe they can express it and they are sure their answer is correct. This finding has the same point to Lisa in Mardiana's finding. She found out that 85% of the students in the study are more willing to talk if they are sure their answer is correct (Mardiana, 2020).

Conversely, the lack of confidence also leads to the presence of anxiety in classroom interactions. When students were asked about the reason they were worried about speaking English, some of them answered because they felt embarrassed. They felt embarrassed because they doubt their answers, and are afraid of being wrong. The results of this study support the theory of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) which categorized this type of anxiety as a communication apprehension which is categorized by the feeling of shyness or fear to talk to someone. Another source of anxiety is the fear of making mistakes in the classroom to avoid negative evaluations.

Furthermore, students' perceptions of their speaking ability are also an important factor in their WTC. Based on the results of interviews with students, most students assumed that they had poor English skills. They are reluctant to speak English due to their lack of English skills. They feel they are stammering in speaking English and not mastering vocabulary. This finding has the same point of view as Phillips in Indry Widyasti Anwar et. al (2021) which showed the lack of communication skills can reduce one's willingness to communicate.

Then, motivation also plays an important role in students' WTC. When asked about motivation, most students answered about extrinsic motivation, such as wanting to go abroad. With this motivation, they are encouraged to learn English more deeply, especially learning to speak English in class. Yashima (2002) argued that learners who are motivated to learn English in order to try to achieve their goals tend to have higher trust in their own ability in English communication.

Personality needs to be mentioned as another psychological factor. Literature shows that personality has been seen as an important part of WTC theory. Based on the results of observations and interviews, students are divided into 2 categories. Most students feel they are active/extroverted, although sometimes they are quiet in class due to several reasons. A small part of them feel they are quiet/introverted. Active students usually often ask, answer, comment, or express opinions. On the other hand, quiet students are more silent or listen, ask a few questions, answer and very rarely express opinions. This is supported by Liu's (2005) statement that personality as an important reason behind students' unwillingness to communicate, and that some students are shy and introverted and thus tend to keep quite in classes. On the contrary, Elwood (2011) stated that students with personality traits such as flexibility, extroversion, sociability, and confidence tend to have a higher L2 WTC. They are more likely to be willing to communicate. Therefore, they are identified as the ones who enjoy

being involved in communication.

In terms of situational factors, this study's findings revealed that factors such as task types, topics, teacher roles, classroom atmosphere, and interlocutors partly influence students' WTC. Among these factors, teacher's manner, attitudes, as well as teaching techniques partly influence students' WTC. When interviewed about the way their English teacher teaches, the students answer that the teacher teaches classically. Even so, when asked whether they liked the way their teacher taught, on average they answered they liked it. They answer that their English teacher is humorous, teaches in a fun way, provides a lot of new vocabulary, and frequently conducts games in learning. It also affects their willingness to speak English in class. This is in line with the findings of Indry Widyasti Anwar et. al (2021) which shows that pre-service teachers expressed their interest towards teachers who actively seek opportunities to create an insightful learning situation, such as asking questions, doing games or small quizzes, and giving feedback.

Regarding the types of assignments, when students were interviewed about what types of assignments were usually given by the teacher, they answered that the assignments were according to the book. In addition, the teacher also often gives the task of translating and making sentences. When asked if they liked it, most of them said they liked it. They like the assignments given because the assignments are repetitive, so they are easy to complete. In addition, online assignments are easy to access, and reduce anxiety. This is in line with the findings of Nazemi and Rezvani (2019) who found that when a task is repeated, learners are more likely to engage because they have adequate prior knowledge and experience with it.

Regarding the effect of topics, when the researcher made observations, the researcher found that the students were quite interested in the topics presented by the teacher. At that time, the teacher taught topics related to songs. The students looked enthusiastic and familiar with the topic which promote their willingness to contribute in class. It is in line with Azwar et. al (2021) findings that learners are more willing to speak English about a topic they are familiar with, interested in, prepares, and comfortable with. The finding indicated that interesting topics contributed to a higher level of learners' willingness to speak. It also supports Kang's (2005) theory that interesting topics in which learners have adequate background knowledge and experiences enhance learners' feeling of excitement.

Then, the interlocutor is considered a factor that is quite influential. When students were asked in what situations they felt most comfortable speaking English, namely in pairs, in

small groups or with the teacher in front of the whole class, most students answered in pairs. They preferred to talk in pairs because they assume that they will have many opportunities to talk, they are easy to correct each other, and they know each other's abilities. In addition, some students also feel comfortable speaking in small group because they perceive that they will less anxious and will have wider conversation. This is in line with the results of research from Xie Qiuxuan (2011) which shows that most students choose to speak English in small groups. He stated that small group discussions are often seen as a means of reducing learners' anxiety, and providing greater opportunities for communicative interactions. They stated that learners seem to be more secure when they speak to a smaller number of interlocutors. However, some of them are not comfortable talking with the teacher in the whole class because they are shy, they feel embarrassed to be the center of attention, and are afraid of being wrong.

The last is the role of classroom environment. During the interview, most students reported that the class atmosphere influenced their willingness to speak English in class. If the class is active, they are motivated to be active. Conversely, if the class is quiet, they are also quiet. As with the previous study conducted by Indry Widyasti Anwar et. al (2021), revealed that pre-service teachers' WTC are affected by their classmates. Where there is no one showing active participation in class, others will also remain silent. Meanwhile, when the classroom flow becomes more interesting, others will be thrilled to speak up. It also supports the finding from Peng (2014) which revealed that a friendly classroom atmosphere helps promote L2 WTC, while a silent and boring atmosphere demotivates it.

CONCLUSION

The researcher revealed some findings according to the purpose of the research, namely the students' willingness to communicate at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru, and the factors that contribute to students' willingness to communicate at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru. After conducting the research and analyzing the data, the researcher found that most of the 11th grade students at MA Nurul Islam Dasan Baru have medium willingness to communicate in English class. Meanwhile, while less of them have high willingness to communicate in English class.

Furthermore, from the data displayed aforementioned, the researcher found some factors that contribute to students' willingness to communicate, namely psychological factors and situational factors. Psychological factors include L2 self-confidence, perceived communication competence, L2 learning anxiety, students' motivation, and students'

Cordova Journal : language and culture studies

Terbit 2 kali setahun

Vol. 13, No. 1, 2023

<https://journal.uinmataram.ac.id/index.php/cordova/index>

personality. Meanwhile situational factors include effect of task types, effect of topics, teacher role, classroom atmosphere, and interlocutor.

REFERENCES

Alimorad, Z., Farahmand, M., & Square, E. (2021). A Case Study On Willingness To Communicate In English In The Iranian. *TEFLIN Journal*, 32(1), 1–28.

Anwar, W., Jee, M. J., Adam, S., & Sailuddin, S. (2021). Willingness To Communicate And Its Influencing Factors Among Indonesian Pre-Service Teachers. *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 9(4), 385–398.

Azwar, T. A., Harahap, A., & Azwandi. (2021). Factors Influencing Indonesian EFL Learners ' Willingness to Speak English in Classrooms. *Journal of English Teaching*, 7(2), 216–228.

Ebyary, K. El. (2021). *The Impact of Online Interactive Tasks on L2 Willingness to Communicate : the Case of Arabic Speaking Learners*. April. <https://doi.org/10.21608/mjat.2018.104636>

Elwood, JA (2011). Enriching structural models of L2 willingness to communicate: The role of personality, ego permeability, and perceived distance. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Temple University. Philadelphia. Retrieved from <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p245801coll10>

Hawwini, T. (2019). *Indonesian Efl Students ' Willingness To Communicate In The 2013 Curriculum Implementation : A Case Study* Tian Hawwini. 105–120.

Kang, S. (2005). *Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language*. 33, 277–292. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2004.10.004>

Liu, MH (2005). Reticence in oral English language classrooms: A case study in China. *TESL Reporter*, 38(1), 1-16.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Baker, S. C. (2001). *Willingness To Communicate . Social Language-Learning Orientations Of Immersion Students*. May 2014.

Cordova Journal : language and culture studies

Terbit 2 kali setahun

Vol. 13, No. 1, 2023

<https://journal.uinmataram.ac.id/index.php/cordova/index>

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263101003035>

Mardiana, D. (2020). *Investigating Students' Willingness To Communicate In English: A Case Study Of Senior High School 12 In Pekanbaru.*

Nazemi, M., & Rezvani, E. (2019). Effects of task familiarity and task repetition on Iranian EFL learners' engagement in L2 oral performance. *Contemporary Research in Education and English Language Teaching*, 1(1), 45-56.

Novawan, A., Aisyiyah, S., Miqawati, A. H., Wijayanti, F., & Indrastana, N. S. (2020). Exploring the Teachers' Perspective on Morality in an English as a Foreign Language Pedagogy. *Journal of ELT Research: The Academic Journal of Studies in English Language Teaching and Learning*, 5(1), 80–93. <https://doi.org/10.22236/JER>

Peng, J. (2014). Willingness to communicate in Chinese EFL university classroom: An ecological perspective. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Qiuixuan, X. (2011). *Willingness to Communicate in English Among Secondary School Students in the Rural Chineese English as a foreign Language (EFL) Classroom.*

Sesriyani, L. (2020). The Indonesian Students' Willingness To Communicate In Virtual Class : A Case Study. *Journal GEEJ*, 7(November). <https://doi.org/10.46244/geej.v7i2.1191>

Syarifudin. (2019). An Instrucational Model For Enhancing EFL Learners' Speaking Proficiency. *Journal of English Language Education*, 2(1), 86–97.

Syarifudin, H. R. (2021). Intercultural Communication of EFL Students with Foreigners as a Strategy of Teaching Speaking. *Journal of English Language Education*, 4(1), 65–89.

Tuyen, L. Van, Thị, T., & Loan, T. (2019). Factors Affecting EFL Students' Willingness to Communicate in Speaking Classes at the Vietnamese Tertiary Level. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS)*, 2.

Zaikalina, R. (2022). *Students Autonomy Learnig English As Foreign Language During Distance Learning.*