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WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE (WTC) AMONG TERTIARY ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS: A SURVEY STUDY

Risma Dwi Mulyaningsih[1*], Banatul Murtafi'ah[2]

[1] English Education Department, Faculty of Psychology and Sociocultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia
[2] English Education Department, Faculty of Psychology and Sociocultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia

[*]Corresponding author: Jalan Kaliurang KM 14.5, Ngemplak, Kabupaten Sleman, 55584, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. E-mail addresses: 18322141@students.uii.ac.id

a r t i c l e i n f o

a b s t r a c t

Most of the research under the topic of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) was mostly found in the context of speaking outside the classroom and in everyday communication. Therefore, the researchers conducted a study on WTC among English Education students which focused on the classroom context. This is a survey study which is quantitative in nature. This study used the instrument from Khatib and Nourzadeh (2014). To obtain the data, questionnaires were distributed to students majoring in the English Education department. 169 students were involved in this study. The data then were analyzed by using descriptive statistics from SPSS. The results revealed that overall, the biggest reason for students' willingness to communicate is learning responsibility (*M*=4.06) while the lowest reason is the context of using English (*M*=3.77). Specifically, students are willing to communicate in several circumstances, such as: 1) students are more likely to want to talk when in group work; 2) students were more willing to speak when they discussed English and Indonesian culture as a group; 3) students will be willing to speak when it involves personal experience; 4) students prefer to talk about films and series rather than talking about sports; 5) students were more willing to ask their classmates about the correct pronunciation of a word than to raise their hands to ask the teacher; and 6) students are more willing to talk to students sitting next to them before the lecturer enters class than to talk to students from other classes.

INTRODUCTION

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is one of the communication frameworks that still attracts the attention of second language researchers today (MacIntyre, et al., 1998). Communication in English for the students in English majors is needed to help them acquire English speaking skills. To encourage the ability to speak English, students are expected to be willing to communicate in English. In terms of speaking a second language, McCroskey and Baer (1985) defines Willingness to Communicate (WTC) as the desire to communicate in which the speakers are free to choose to do that. In other studies, willingness to communicate (WTC) is defined as readiness to join in communication, at a predetermined time or with a designated person, using a second language (MacIntyre et al., 1998). While in the follow-up research, MacIntyre (2007) describes willingness to communicate (WTC) as an opportunity to speak and help direct the readiness to speak at a certain time and a certain interlocutor. In other studies,

as well, Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is defined as involvement in communication at a certain time and with a certain interlocutor (Wood, 2016).

Factors affecting Willingness to Communicate

Several factors that might affect WTC include: 1) self-confidence (MacIntrye et al., 1998); 2) interlocutor participation (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996); 3) L2 motivation (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996); 4) L2 anxiety (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996); and 5) network level associated with actual or required communication (MacIntyre & Chair, 1996).

Self-confidence can affect the willingness to communicate (WTC) temporarily because it is not permanent. When someone is down or insecure about her/himself, then she/he will no longer feel confident to communicate in a second language. Whereas personality and attitudes toward a second language have a lasting influence on willingness to communicate (WTC) because the personality and attitude are already attached to oneself. Personality and attitude towards second language will lead to a willingness to communicate. In the end, self-confidence is very influential on the willingness to communicate (WTC).

The participation of the interlocutor becomes one of the factors of willingness to communicate (WTC). When the other person does not participate or does not respond to someone who will communicate with him, unwillingness will occur because someone who will communicate feels that he or she is not being responded to so the willingness to communicate (WTC) will be low. On the other hand, if the interlocutor participates and is responsible, the willingness to communicate (WTC) will increase.

Another factor that could affect WTC is the realization of the personal significance of second language related activities such as motivation. Motivation is one of the tools that can move someone to be willing to communicate (WTC) in a second language. Motivation has a relationship with self-confidence. Motivation also has a direct relationship with willingness to communicate (WTC). Someone who is motivated will tend to be braver to communicate than someone who is not motivated.

The degree of fear is also associated with actual or anticipated communication. L2 anxiety greatly affects a person's interest in communicating (WTC). When someone is afraid or anxious to speak in front of people or in front of the class, then the level of willingness to communicate (WTC) will be low.

The learning atmosphere in the classroom can also affect the interest in communicating. When the teacher is able to liven up the class with good and responsible learning strategies, communication with students will go well, so that the willingness to communicate (WTC) of teachers in a second language will increase.

From these statements, we can find various linguistic, communicative and social interaction variables that affect the willingness to communicate in a second language. These variables include self-confidence, interlocutor participation, personal motivation, second language anxiety, and situations or atmosphere in the classroom.

Measuring Willingness to Communicate

A number of studies on Willingness to communicate (WTC) have been published in the context of learning English as a foreign language. The first two studies were conducted in 1990s and early 2000s. McCroskey and Richmond (1991) developed a Willingness to Communicate scale with 20-item Likert scale to measure nature or personality, this study focuses mainly on the development of communication. This scale has a Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.92 in the context of communication. Next was MacIntyre et al. (2001) who developed a scale of willingness to communicate in the classroom and willingness to communicate out the classroom. This scale focuses on L2 WTC inside and outside the classroom, in this measurement Maclintyre et al (2001) also combine the orientation scale of Clement and Kruidenier (1983) with social support from Ajzen 1988.

Then in the next four years, weaver (2005) uses the rasch model to measure WTC second language learning in the context of learning English at Japanese universities. The Willing to Communicate Scale for Second-Language consisted of 34 items. This scale model uses three parameters: (1) people's ability, (2) threshold, and (3) difficulties related to willingness to communicate in a second language. From the measurement using this scale, it shows that students are more willing to speak than write in a second language. This scale also shows a significant difference, namely the first year students are more willing to say words in English while the second year students are not as interested in saying words in English. with the assumption that the second student is more focused on the curriculum than speaking.

Then, another scale to measure WTC is Instructional Willingness to Communicate Scale (IWTC Scale) developed by Khatib and Nourzadeh (2014). Khatib and Nourzadeh (2014) developed McCroskey's (1991) willingness to communicate an instructional questionnaire consisting of 24 five-point Likert-style items. These items were divided into 6 dimensions including: communicative self-confidence, integrative orientation, situational context of L2 use, topical enticement, learning responsibility, and off-instruction communication. This study resulted in high internal consistency as evidenced by using Cronbach's alpha = .92.

Next, Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2016) conducted another culture-specific study into L2 WTC in Poland. The researchers tried to look at the WTC measurements of previous WTC researchers and related factors, with adjustments to be applied to the context of Education in Poland. This study aims to measure students' willingness to communicate entering and leaving advanced EFL classes and to see the relationship between WTC and contextual precursors. variables described as 'Antecedents'. In this study, there were 8 scales that were modified and combined in this questionnaire. This composite scale involves measuring WTC in the classroom, outside the classroom, communication beliefs, students' beliefs about behaviors that encourage and inhibit WTC, classroom environment, learning tasks. The total post-adoption questionnaire was 104 items on a Likert, using a six-point style scale from disagree to strongly agree.. However, there were some items that were omitted. Deleted items are items that have a correlation below 0.40. The researcher analyzed exploratory and confirmatory factor structure and eight variables were confirmed as necessary.

Next study was from Lo (2018) who examined ESL Teachers' willingness to communicate in English. One of the aims of this study was to determine the effect of gender and school location on the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among ESL teachers. in English about it. In this study, Lo (2018) has four research constructs including discussion in groups, interpersonal, public, and speaking in meetings. participation in this study through criteria and convenience sampling, as many as 250 ESL teachers from twenty-five schools.

Then, in 2018 Mystkowska-Wiertelak conducted another study on WTC, focusing on the fluctuations in the willingness to communicate (WTC) of EFL students during a semester. In the data collection stage through the self-test grid to the interview stage and filling out the questionnaire, it was found that in terms of communicating (WTC) to students, it fluctuated when students contributed to class discussions. In addition, the deepening of the display to communicate (WTC) embedded in the classroom will provide more knowledge about the influence of variables that comprise the context of formal instruction.

The other recent studies are Lee (2019) and Sheybani (2019). Lee (2019) explores EFL students' views of the WTC outside of the school's digital context in Korea. Another study is from Sheybani (2019) who investigated the relationship between the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) of Iranian English Language (EFL) students and the direct attributes of their teachers. The data were analyzed by using a structural equation modeling (SEM) which showed that all parts of the willingness to communicate (WTC) are influenced by the teacher's verbal and nonverbal closeness behavior.

Although there have been many studies on willingness to communicate (WTC), most research has focused on willingness to communicate among students when speaking outside the classroom and in everyday communication, such as McCroskey and Richmond (1991), MacIntyre et al. (2001), and Lee (2019) who focused on WTC in extramural digital context in Korea. There is a limited number of studies conducting research on students' WTC in the classroom context in Indonesia. Therefore, the researchers are interested to conduct the study in this area.

In the context of learning English in Indonesia, especially at the level of higher education majoring in English education, language learners must be able to speak English in the classroom. However, what was found in learning English in the classroom, some students of English education had problems in their willingness to communicate in English. Based on preliminary interviews with the English education students, it appears that one of the problems that hinders the willingness to communicate is the students' lack of confidence when speaking English. Considering the identification of the problem, this research focused on investigating the willingness to communicate among English Language Education students in the classroom context. This research tries to answer the following questions: *What factors contribute to the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) among English Education students?*

METHOD

Research Design

This study was considered as a quantitative study which contained number and obtained numerical data from the survey by providing a questionnaire to the participants. This study examines the willingness to communicate (WTC) of English education students at the university level while studying English as a foreign language.

Population and Sample

The total population of this study were 269 university students from the English Education Department. All participants were students in one of the private universities in Yogyakarta. Here the researchers only took those from batch 2019 to 2021 because we wanted to examine the students who were actively learning in online and offline classes. In taking this sample, a non-probability sampling technique with a convenience sampling technique was used. Then, after being calculated, the number of samples need was around 160 students. Once the online survey was administered, there were 169 students in total that were willing to participate in the study.

Instrument

The instrument used in the data collection was in the form of questionnaires. To obtain the data, this questionnaire was distributed to students majoring in English Language Education at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta after being asked to fill in voluntarily. The questionnaire used for this research is adapted from Khatib and Nourzadeh (2014). The questionnaire consists of six constructs and 24 items that focus on the components that are factors of Willingness to Communicate. In calculating this, the Likert scale from 1 to 5 was used. The rating scale used is explained clearly in Table 1, while the outlines for the WTC questionnaire is shown in Table 2.

Table 1. The Likert Scale for the Questionnaire

Likert Scale	Score
Strongly unwilling	1
Unwilling	2
Neither	3
Willing	4
Strongly willing	5

Table 2. Outlines for the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Questionnaire

No	Constructs	Item(s) number	Number of items	Source
1.	Communication self-confident	1,2,3,4,5	5	
2.	Integrative orientation	6,7,8	3	
3.	Situational context of L2 use	9,10,11,12	4	
4.	Topical enticement	13,14,15,16	4	Khatib and Nourzadeh (2014)
5.	Learning responsibility	17,18,19,20	4	
6.	Off-instruction communication	21,22,23,24	4	

To analyze the data, the researchers used descriptive statistics features in SPSS to calculate the frequency, mean score, and standard deviation from each item. In addition, in terms of validity, the content validity was measured in this study by asking an expert judgment. Meanwhile, in terms of construct validity, Khatib and Nourzadeh (2014) employed factor analysis for the instrument which was then revealing the six factors of the instrument as seen in Table 2. Then, in measuring reliability, the researchers used Cronbach Alpha. From the result of the reliability test, the WTC questionnaire used in this study has a quite high score for the reliability with .935 for the result and is categorized as a high reliability instrument. The overall reliability and reliability from each dimension are presented in Table 3 and 4.

Table 3. Reliability of all dimensions

Cronbach's Alpha	N of item
.935	24

Table 4. Reliability from each aspect

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	N of item
Communicative self-confidence	.795	5
integrative orientation	.670	3
Situation context of L2 use	.728	4
Topical enticement	.768	4
Learning responsibility	.811	4
Off-instruction communication	.807	4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

From the finding, it is reported that there were 169 respondents participated in this study. Most of the respondents were female, i.e. 124 or 73.4%. While male respondents were only 45 or 26.6%. In terms of year or batch, the students who filled out the most were from the 2020 batch, which was 69 people or 40.8%, while the least from the 2019 batch was 45 or 26.6% of the respondents. From the overall survey results as seen from the graph in Figure 1, we can see that the highest reason for students' willingness to communicate is learning responsibility (M=4.06) while the lowest reason is the context of using L2 (M=3.77).
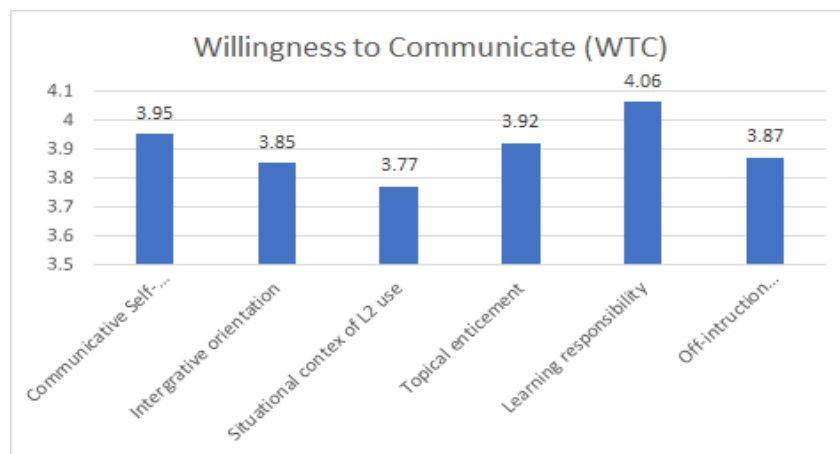

Figure 1. Overall results of WTC among Tertiary English Education students

1) Communicative self-confidence

From Table 5, in the context of communicative self-confidence, it shows that 169 respondents responded to the statements. From the sample taken, it turned out that they were most willing when they spoke in group work language learning activities (M= 4.07; SD=.810) and when they spoke even though they knew their classmates better than they spoke English (M= 4.06; SD=.836), while students were less willing to speak in English when other students laughed at their language mistakes (M= 3.64; ; SD=.910).

Table 5. Communicative Self-confidence

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
5. You are willing to talk in group-work language-learning activities	169	4.07	.810
2. You are willing to speak even if you know your classmates are better than you at speaking English	169	4.06	.836

3. You are willing to give a presentation in front of your classmates	169	4.01	.824
4. You are willing to speak even if your language mistakes are frequently corrected by the lecturer	169	3.95	.793
1. You are willing to speak even if other students laugh at your language mistakes.	169	3.64	.910
Valid N (listwise)	169		

2) Integrative orientation

From Table 6, in terms of integrative orientation, it shows that 169 respondents were participated in this study. From the sample taken, it turns out that they were the most willing to discuss cultural differences between English and Indonesia in groups (M=3.96; *SD*=.804). while students were less willing to speak in English when talked about the lifestyle of modern society in the overall class discussion (M=3.73; *SD*=.849).

Table 6. Integrative Orientation

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
7. You are willing to discuss cultural differences between English and Indonesia people in a group	169	3.96	.804
8. You are willing to talk to your lecturer about English	169	3.85	.802
6. You are willing to talk about modern people' lifestyle in a whole-class discussion	169	3.73	.849
Valid N (listwise)	169		

3) Situation context of L2 use

From Table 7, in the context of L2 use, it shows that 169 respondents answered the items. From the sample taken, it turns out that they were the most willing to speak more when a discussion was related to their own personal experiences (M=4.07; *SD*=.813). Meanwhile they were less willing to speak in English when they found opportunities to speak no matter how crowded the classroom (M=3.44; *SD*=1.029).

Table 7. Situation Context of L2 Use

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
9. You are willing to speak more when a discussion is related to your own personal experiences	169	4.07	.813
10. You are willing to speak more over several terms when you are in the class of the same lecturer	169	3.85	.802
12. You are willing to speak even if you are seated at	169	3.71	.896

the back of the classroom

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
11. You are willing to find opportunities to speak no matter how crowded the classroom	169	3.44	.1.029
Valid N (listwise)	169		

4) Topical Enticement

Topical enticement mostly discusses the topics in which the students might have the willingness to communicate. The topics might include when they have interaction with their peers. From Table 8, in the context of Topical Enticement, it shows that there were 169 respondents, in fact they were most appropriate when talking to their classmates about films and series ($M= 4.24$; $SD= .863$) while students were less willing to speak in English when they talked about their favorite sport in class discussions ($M= 3.66$; $SD=1.047$)

Table 8. Topical Enticement

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
13. You are willing to talk to your classmates about movies and series	169	4.24	.863
14. You are willing to talk about great artists you know in a group discussion	169	4.09	.934
15. You are willing to talk to your classmates about computer games	169	3.70	1.079
16. You are willing to talk about your favorite sport in a whole- class discussion	169	3.66	1.047
Valid N (listwise)	169		

5) Learning responsibility

From Table 9, in the context of learning responsibility shows that as many as 169 respondents, it turns out that they were most willing when asking their classmate about the correct pronunciation of a word ($M=4.19$; $SD=.816$), while students were less willing to speak when they had to raise their hands to ask or answer questions ($M=3.92$; $SD=.906$).

Table 9. Learning Responsibility

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
17. You are willing to ask your classmate about the correct pronunciation of a word.	169	4.19	.816
18. You are willing to ask another student to explain a	169	4.10	.828

grammatical point to you.

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
19. You are willing to ask your lecturer to repeat what he or she has just said if you did not understand it.	169	4.04	.875
20. You are willing to raise your hand to ask or answer questions	169	3.92	.906
Valid N (listwise)	169		

6) Off-instruction communication

From Table 10, in the context of communication outside of instruction shows that there were 169 respondents, even they were most willing to talk to students sitting next to them before the lecturer entered the class *(M = 3.95; SD=.837).* Meanwhile, students did not want to talk to strange students from other classes *(M = 3.68; SD=1.020).*

Table 10. Off-instruction Communication

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
21. You are willing to talk to the student sitting next to you before the lecturer enters the classroom.	169	3.95	.837
22. You are willing to talk to your classmates when the lecturer leaves the classroom for a few moments.	169	3.93	.884
23. You are willing to talk with your classmates about your weekends.	169	3.92	.972
24. You are willing to talk to strange students from other classrooms.	169	3.68	1.020
Valid N (listwise)	169		

Discussion

From the results, it is seen that the willingness to communicate in the classroom context happened in several conditions. The overall results of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) among tertiary English Education students showed that learning responsibility turned out to be the highest reason for the students to communicate. Learners use L2 knowledge in communication to develop further knowledge such as speaking for learning. This has also been proven by Kang (2005) who states that language learners feel responsible for generating and understanding L2 messages through communication as a result of personal, interpersonal and motivational communication between groups. Then, since they might feel responsible to participate in the learning, they tend to communicate with their friends and teacher in the classroom.

In terms of communicative self-confidence, it was found that the majority of the students were willing to communicate when they were involved in group-work activities. This finding

confirms the previous finding from Bensalem and Thompson (2021) stating that students tend to speak more when in groups. This is probably because students feel they have freedom and have space when speaking with their groups. For example, students during group discussions with peers in class are more active in communicating with their friends than when students have to discuss in front of the class which is seen directly by the lecturer.

Then, in the integrative orientation dimension, the students were also found to be more active when discussing cultural differences between English and Indonesian people in a group, rather than talking about modern people' lifestyle in a whole-class discussion. This finding confirms previous findings by Gallagher (2013) who proves that cultural integration has a considerable motivation. Thus being a very strong force on the positive attitudes of second language learners in their desire to identify themselves with native speakers and second language cultures. In addition, the fact that the students are more willing to speak in a group rather than in a whole-class discussion also reflects what usually happens in the online classroom. Students tend to speak more in the break-out room rather than in the main room, during Zoom meetings.

In the context of using L2, it can be seen that students are more active in speaking when discussing their personal experiences rather than looking for opportunities to speak when the class is busy. This finding is in accordance with the conditions experienced during the class lectures of both researchers and also when students meet their friends, they tend to speak more. This may be due to the freedom in communicating. This finding was also found by Cao and Philip (2006) who showed that students feel really engaged in communication when there are opportunities that they consider suitable for communication. The reason why students tend to speak more about their experiences is probably because it is their own experience, so that it is easier for them to tell about it with others.

In the context of topical seduction, students are more willing to communicate using English when students talk to their friends when discussing films and series. This is evidenced by Cao and Philip (2006) who state that knowing the topic of conversation will increase one's linguistic confidence whereas, if the learner lacks knowledge about the topic being discussed, the learner will be hampered in communicating. Students as the participants in this study probably tend to be fond of films and series. They are familiar with any topic related to them. Since it is something they know, then, they tend to be more willing to speak about it. On the other hand, probably not all students are interested in sport. Then, when the topic raised is about sport, they tend to be less willing to talk about it.

Then, in the context of learning responsibilities, it was found that students were more willing to communicate when they asked their classmates about the correct pronunciation of a word rather than having to raise their hand to ask or answer a question in private. Atkinson's (2005) states that students will gain knowledge of language from interactions that exist with each other. For example, students are more comfortable asking how to pronounce things they don't know to their classmates than having to raise their hands and ask the teacher in front of the class.

Last but not least, in terms of communication outside of instruction, it can be seen that students prefer to talk to friends who sit next to them before there is a lecturer in the class than

students have to talk to friends whom they do not know closely or those who come from other classes. It is possible that students from different classes feel less close and there is no topic to talk about other than greetings. As evidenced by Kang (2005) found that students prefer to talk with friends compared to strangers or acquaintances because if there is intimacy, participation, and cooperation with the other person, the conversation is relatively unambiguous.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to identify the level of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) among English Education students at one university in Yogyakarta. In addition, this study also identifies factors that contribute to willingness to communicate (WTC). The results of this study indicate that, overall, it was found that the biggest reason for students' willingness to communicate is learning responsibility (M=4.06) while the lowest reason is the context of using L2 (M=3.77). Then specifically it was found that the willingness to communicate happened due to some factors. First in terms of the communicative self-confidence factor, students were more likely to want to talk when in group work and did not want to when their friends laughed at them for their mistakes. In terms of integrative orientation variable, it was found that students were more willing to speak when they discussed English and Indonesian culture as a group than when talking about the lifestyle of modern society in the overall class discussion. Furthermore, in the context of L2 usage situations, students were more willing to speak when it involved personal experience rather than having to speak in a crowded classroom. Then in the context of topical enticement, students preferred to talk about films and series rather than talking about sports. In the context of learning responsibility, it was found that students were more willing to ask their classmates about the correct pronunciation of a word than to raise their hands to ask the teacher. Meanwhile, in the context of off-instruction communication, students were more willing to talk to students sitting next to them before the lecturer enters class than to talk to students from other classes.

The findings of this study reveal several characteristics of English Education Department students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. From these results, it can be used as a benchmark for English language learners in measuring the willingness to communicate in English, such as when students are more willing to communicate in groups, English lectures can provide or convey material through group discussion. In addition, using material that lives with life is actually the solution to this finding. For further research, it is important to investigate more about the factors that influence the willingness to communicate (WTC) in learning English and how to increase the confidence of language learners in communicating using a second language in the classroom.

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