

Exploring Students' Perspective about Lectures' teaching strategy to enhance Students' WTC in EFL Classroom

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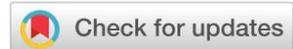
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ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors influencing students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms and examines teaching strategies that can effectively foster this willingness. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the research was conducted at an EFL Classroom in Indonesia, through classroom observations and in-depth interviews with selected EFL students. The study applies Macintyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of WTC as its theoretical foundation. The findings reveal that students' WTC is shaped by a dynamic interaction of internal, social, and instructional factors. Internally, communicative self-confidence, anxiety levels, and motivation (both instrumental and integrative) played a significant role. Socially, peer support, classroom atmosphere, and fear of negative evaluation were identified as crucial influences. The flexible use of both Bahasa Indonesia and English also helped reduce anxiety and increase participation. Pedagogically, students responded more positively to interactive strategies compared to traditional lectures. Approaches such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning, and project-based learning were found to be the most effective in encouraging active communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Overall, this research emphasizes that WTC is not fixed, but rather influenced by contextual and emotional readiness. Teachers are encouraged to implement student-centred and emotionally supportive strategies to create a classroom environment where learners feel confident to speak.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Published June 25th 2025



KEYWORDS

Willingness to Communicate, EFL Classroom, Teaching Strategies, Student Engagement, Classroom Interaction.

ARTICLE LICENCE

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1. Introduction

In the realm of second language acquisition (SLA), communication is not only an outcome of learning but also a vital tool that facilitates the language development process itself. Among various linguistic competencies, the ability and willingness to engage in verbal interaction have emerged as significant contributors to language proficiency. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings, where opportunities to communicate in English outside the classroom are often limited, students' willingness to speak in English within the classroom becomes a key determinant of their language development. Despite extensive classroom instruction, many learners remain reluctant to participate in communicative tasks, hindering their progress in acquiring practical language skills.

Willingness to Communicate, as conceptualized by Macintyre et al. (1998), refers to an individual's readiness to initiate discourse in a second language (L2) at a particular time with a specific person or persons. It is influenced by a multitude of variables, ranging from personal characteristics and affective states to situational and contextual factors. Unlike earlier theories that viewed WTC as a stable personality trait, contemporary models emphasize its dynamic nature. In the EFL classroom, WTC is influenced not only by individual psychological traits, such as confidence and anxiety, but also by social interactions, linguistic competence, and pedagogical approaches. These interrelated factors suggest that learners' willingness to communicate can be fostered or suppressed depending on the learning environment created by the teacher (Aswad et al., 2019; Junaid et al., 2024; Youngsun et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, as in many other non-English-speaking countries, English is taught primarily as a foreign language, and students often report anxiety and low confidence when required to speak in English. These emotional and psychological barriers are compounded by limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom and the dominant use of Bahasa Indonesia in most social contexts. Consequently, the responsibility to create a supportive, communicative

environment lies heavily on EFL teachers. Teachers not only transmit linguistic knowledge but also serve as key agents in shaping students' emotional and psychological readiness to speak (Prihandoko et al., 2021; Ritonga et al., 2020; Weda et al., 2018). Their teaching strategies, classroom interactions, and feedback mechanisms can either facilitate or inhibit students' WTC. The characteristics of the instructors can significantly influence students' motivation and their eagerness to engage in English conversation. Notable connections have been identified between the characteristics of lecturers and the motivational levels of students, with specific teaching strategies and methods proving to be more effective in fostering oral proficiency compared to others (Enongene, 2013; Gul & Noor, 2022; Sachiya et al., 2025)

Existing literature has identified various internal and external factors influencing students' willingness to communicate. Internally, communicative self-confidence, language anxiety, perceived competence, and motivation (both integrative and instrumental) are recurrent themes. Learners with high self-confidence and low anxiety tend to be more willing to initiate conversation in English. Motivation, particularly when it aligns with learners' goals and interests, serves as a driving force for communication. Instrumental motivation, such as academic achievement or career advancement, and integrative motivation, such as a desire to connect with English-speaking communities, both play crucial roles in determining learners' engagement. Furthermore, the university context and atmosphere may serve as an influencing element. When the classroom environment fosters students' achievement of their English learning objectives, it increases the likelihood of them cultivating favourable attitudes towards both the course and the language, as well as enhancing their willingness to participate in communication. (Łockiewicz, 2019) (Nair et al., 2014) (Gul & Noor, 2022)

Social factors, including peer relationships and the overall classroom climate, significantly impact WTC. Classrooms perceived as supportive, non-threatening, and inclusive are more likely to encourage communication. Conversely, fear of negative evaluation, especially from peers or instructors, can suppress students' desire to speak. These findings underscore the importance of fostering a positive classroom culture that normalizes mistakes as part of the learning process and values all students' contributions, regardless of language proficiency. Teachers must think about student engagement, a complex idea that includes abilities, performance, emotional attachment, and active participation, in addition to motivating students (Petersen et al., 2010; Ko et al., 2025).

Pedagogical factors are increasingly recognized as instrumental in enhancing students' WTC. Teaching strategies that emphasize interaction, collaboration, and student autonomy are particularly effective. Traditional lecturing, which positions students as passive recipients of information, often limits opportunities for meaningful communication. In contrast, strategies such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning (PBL), and project-based learning (PjBL) create more student-centred environments that promote verbal participation. These approaches not only offer learners more opportunities to use the language but also encourage critical thinking and active engagement with the material.

Cooperative learning involves structured group work that emphasizes mutual support and accountability. When students work together toward a common goal, they often feel more comfortable experimenting with language and taking communicative risks. PBL engages students in authentic, real-world problems that require critical thinking and active participation, providing meaningful contexts for language use. Similarly, PjBL allows learners to pursue extended tasks that result in a tangible product or outcome, encouraging both creative and practical use of the language. These strategies, when implemented effectively, help reduce language anxiety, improve self-confidence, and foster a sense of achievement and ownership over learning.

Despite growing awareness of the importance of teaching strategies in promoting WTC, many EFL classrooms still rely heavily on teacher-fronted instruction. This is partly due to institutional constraints, curriculum demands, and a lack of teacher training in alternative pedagogical approaches. As such, there is a need for empirical studies that explore the practical implementation of student-centred strategies and their impact on learners' communicative behaviours. Moreover, localized studies are essential to account for the cultural, linguistic, and institutional contexts that shape language learning experiences in specific settings, such as Indonesia.

This study seeks to fill that gap by examining both the internal and external factors affecting students' WTC in EFL classrooms and identifying teaching strategies that effectively enhance this willingness. Conducted at STKIP YPUP Makassar, the research focuses on the experiences and perceptions of Indonesian EFL students, drawing insights from classroom observations and in-depth interviews. The study applies Macintyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of WTC, which provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how various layers, ranging from personality and motivation to classroom conditions and linguistic ability, interact to influence communicative behaviour.

By investigating the interplay between individual, social, and pedagogical dimensions, the study aims to offer practical recommendations for EFL teachers seeking to create more communicative classrooms. It argues that WTC is not

an innate characteristic that learners either possess or lack, but rather a responsive, evolving construct shaped by context and experience. Therefore, teacher strategies that recognize and adapt to students' needs can make a significant difference in fostering communicative engagement.

In sum, understanding students' WTC and the role of teaching strategies is crucial for improving the effectiveness of language instruction in EFL settings. As English continues to serve as a global lingua franca, the ability to communicate confidently and competently is an essential skill for academic, professional, and personal success. Teachers, as facilitators of this process, must be equipped with the knowledge and tools to cultivate students' willingness to speak. This study contributes to that goal by providing evidence-based insights into the factors affecting WTC and offering pedagogical guidance to enhance communication in the EFL classroom.

2. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the factors influencing students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms and to identify teaching strategies that support and enhance this willingness. The research was framed using Macintyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of WTC, which guided the data collection, thematic categorisation, and analysis. This research was conducted at the EFL Classroom, Indonesia, during the academic year 2025/2026. A total of nine EFL students were purposively selected from the 4th and 6th semesters based on their levels of classroom participation and willingness to communicate, as identified through preliminary observations. These participants were chosen to provide diverse perspectives based on their observed communicative behaviours. To gain a comprehensive understanding of students' WTC and the instructional strategies used by teachers, three data collection techniques were employed, such as classroom Observation.

Interview and documentation. In the observation, the researcher conducted eight classroom observations across four different subjects, such as Psycholinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Curriculum and Material Development, and Project IT on ELT. Observation sheets were developed based on Macintyre's WTC model, covering indicators such as L2 use, state communicative confidence, interpersonal and intergroup motivation, and the nature of teaching strategies applied. After that, the researcher also conducted In-Depth Interviews. Each participant was interviewed in a semi-structured interview to gather in-depth qualitative data. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions targeting students' personal experiences, emotional responses, interaction preferences, and perceptions of classroom strategies that encourage or inhibit their willingness to communicate.

While also documenting the process with data documentation to support the observational and interview data, additional documentation was collected, including class materials and student performance records. Audio recordings of interviews and field notes during classroom sessions were also included in the data corpus. The research Instruments, including two primary instruments, were used in this research. The first is Observation Sheets, constructed based on Macintyre's six-layer heuristic model, which included indicators such as communicative behaviour, linguistic confidence, motivation types, and perceived classroom environment. The interview Protocols followed a semi-structured format and included sections aligned with theoretical categories such as internal factors (e.g., confidence, anxiety), social environment (e.g., peer and teacher interaction), and pedagogical approaches (e.g., traditional vs. innovative strategies). Each instrument was piloted and refined before full implementation to ensure clarity and relevance. While in data analysis, it follows Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) three-step process for qualitative data analysis.

Data Condensation Interview transcripts and observation notes were reduced and coded based on thematic relevance to the research objectives. Recurring patterns, responses, and behavior were extracted and classified according to the theoretical framework. While data display condensed data was organized into matrices and charts, enabling cross-case comparison. Themes such as communicative self-confidence, anxiety, motivation, classroom atmosphere, and teaching strategies were visualized to show the interplay among factors influencing WTC. Drawing and Verifying Conclusions. In terms of Conclusions were drawn through pattern recognition and theory-guided interpretation. Triangulation between observation, interview, and document analysis ensured validity and depth. Findings were cross-checked and refined through iterative review and discussion with academic peers. This study also incorporated methodological triangulation (observation, interview, and documentation), prolonged engagement in the field, and peer debriefing to enhance credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. All interpretations were grounded in participant responses and observable classroom behaviors, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected students' lived experiences and learning contexts.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Key Factors Influencing Students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

This study reveals how different teaching strategies affect the dynamics of Willingness to communicate in the class. This study reveals several findings related to the teaching strategy and willingness to communicate in the classroom discussion. Drawing on the classroom observations, student interviews, and theoretical guidance from Macintyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model, the findings reveal a range of psychological, linguistic, social, and instructional factors that collectively shape students' readiness to speak.

While traditional lecturing remains a common instructional strategy in EFL classrooms, student responses in this study revealed that its effectiveness in promoting Willingness to Communicate (WTC) largely depends on the interactive elements embedded within it. Participants expressed appreciation for lectures that incorporated discussion, visuals, real-life examples, and student feedback, rather than one-way content delivery

a. Observation-Based Findings: How Teaching Strategies Played Out in Class

The classroom observations covered four different subjects: Project IT on ELT, Curriculum and Material Development, Discourse Analysis, and Psycholinguistics. Each class employed a distinct teaching strategy, and these differences had a noticeable effect on student engagement and WTC.

Subject	Teaching Strategy	Student Engagement	Task Type
Project IT on ELT	Problem-Based Learning, Use of Videos	High engagement; students eager to share thoughts	Open-ended
Curriculum & Material Development	Traditional Lecture with Q&A	Moderate engagement; mostly teacher-led	Open-ended
Discourse Analysis	Traditional Lecture + Visual Aids	Increased Q&A participation due to visuals	Open-ended
Psycholinguistics	Group Discussions + Problem-Based Learning	Strong engagement; students related the topics to real-life contexts	Open-ended

What stood out across all these classes was that open-ended tasks, ones without a single correct answer, led to higher levels of participation. When students were asked to share opinions, solve problems, or make presentations, they responded with more enthusiasm and confidence. Equally important was the teacher's role in reinforcing participation. Teachers who gave students equal chances to speak, used positive reinforcement, and allowed flexibility in language use created an environment that encouraged communication.

3.2. Teaching strategy

The students themselves had clear opinions on what teaching methods helped them communicate more comfortably. Through interviews, they identified three strategies that consistently made a difference in their learning experience.

a. Lecturing

Lectures represent a conventional approach to education in which the instructor conveys information to learners (Fals, 2018). This style emphasizes the transmission of knowledge by the teacher, typically through lectures or presentations, while students engage by listening and taking notes (Tularam, 2018). In terms of traditional teaching strategy, Lecturing, students highlight several factors that are important regarding the respondent's view about the teaching and learning process inside the class. Some students reported that they like the lecturer's way when the lecturer interacts with the students, showing pictures, and also discusses certain topics. The evidence is presented as follows:

Data 1

"Teaching strategies yang di gunakan di kelas mungkin interaksi, karna itu juga sudah mencakup speaking, listening. karna apa, meningkatkan comprehension, jadi saya cukup suka dengan kita

misalnya langsung make a conversation karna tidak ada script yang kita baca, kita juga harus mikir out of the box sometime, mengkanya meningkatkan vocabulary dan lain-lain”

“The teaching strategies used in class are probably interaction, because it also includes speaking, listening, etc., increasing comprehension, so I quite like it when we, for example, directly make a conversation. After all, there is no script we read, we also have to think out of the box sometimes, increase our vocabulary, and others”.

(Maq, 16 April 2024)

Data 2

“Kalau teaching strategy yang paling saya sukai itu kak yang paling saya sukai ketika dosennya menjelaskan sambil menunjukkan gambar, saya suka ketika dosennya menunjukkan visual kemudian memberikan contoh lalu setelah itu memberikan kami waktu untuk melakukan hal yang sama dengan menggunakan hasil dari imajinasi tersendiri, saya suka hal itu.”

“The teaching strategy that I like the most is when the lecturer explains while showing pictures. I like it when the lecturer shows visuals, then gives examples, then gives us time to do the same thing using the results of our imagination. I like it. I also like it when the lecturer is inside and gives feedback to the students, and we know, oh, this is what we need to improve.”

(Ab, 22 April 2025)

Data 3

“Ya kita di kasi diskusi begitu kak bukan cuman kasih tugas saja.”

“We are discussing the topic, not only gave us the assignment.”

(Yul, interview 17 April 2025)

Data 4

“kalau menurut saya lebih banyak interaksinya saja, percuma kalau menjelaskan materinya saja tetapi kurang interaksinya”

“In my opinion, there should be more interaction, it's useless if the lecturer only explains the material but lacks interaction.”

(D, Interview 15 April 2024)

Data 5

“Bagusnya diskusi”

“The discussion is good.”

(I, Interview 16 April 2025)

“Maq” emphasized that engaging in spontaneous conversational tasks during lectures helped build comprehension and expand vocabulary: “The teaching strategies used in class are probably interaction... we have to think out of the box sometimes, increasing vocabulary, and others” (Interview, 16 April 2024).

Similarly, “Ab” appreciated when the lecturer used visual aids and imaginative tasks, stating, “I like it when the lecturer shows visuals, then gives examples, then gives us time to do the same thing using the results of our imagination... and gives feedback” (Interview, 22 April 2025). This suggests that even within a traditional lecture format, creativity and responsiveness can encourage more active student participation.

Other students highlighted the importance of dialogic teaching. “D” noted, “There should be more interaction... it's useless if the lecturer only explains the material but lacks interaction” (Interview, 15 April 2024). This reflects a demand for a student-centered approach in traditional instruction, where learners feel heard and involved in learning.

Moreover, “Yul” stated, “We are discussing the topic, not only giving us the assignment” (Interview, 17 April 2025), showing that students value in-depth discussions over task-based delivery alone. “D” supported this by simply affirming, “The discussion is good” (Interview, 16 April 2025).

These findings indicate that lecturing, when enriched with interactive techniques, can still serve as an effective strategy to enhance WTC, especially when combined with visualization, peer collaboration, feedback, and opportunities for spontaneous language use.

The student emphasized that engaging in spontaneous conversational tasks during lectures helped build comprehension and expand vocabulary. Similarly, the other student also appreciated when the lecturer used visual aids and imaginative tasks. This suggests that even within a traditional lecture format, creativity and responsiveness can encourage more active student participation.

“I” highlighted the importance of dialogic teaching. This reflects a demand for a student-centred approach within traditional instruction, where learners feel heard and involved in learning.

Moreover, it shows that students value in-depth discussions over task-based delivery alone, and the data ends by simply affirming that the discussion is good, which means that all the discussion processes in the class support the students' willingness to communicate.

These findings also indicate that when enriched with interactive techniques, lecturing can still serve as an effective strategy to enhance WTC, especially when combined with visualisation, peer collaboration, feedback, and opportunities for spontaneous language use.

b. Cooperative Learning

One prominent method is cooperative learning, which entails students collaborating in small groups to achieve defined objectives. This strategy promotes teamwork by encouraging students to work together on tasks or assignments, thereby fostering collaboration and the exchange of ideas (Sajidin & Ashadi, 2021). Students expressed strong appreciation for working in pairs or small groups. This format helped reduce pressure and made communication feel less risky. Because they were among peers, students felt freer to express ideas, ask questions, and even make mistakes without fear of embarrassment. In the sub-theme of effective teaching strategy, the cooperative Learning strategy, the students highlight that the most often used method by the lecturer is the cooperative learning strategy. The evidence is as follows:

Data 6

“kalau untuk pertanyaan itu lebih sering yang pertama (cooperative learning strategy)”

“If it is more often the first (cooperative learning strategy) for those questions.”

(D, interview 7 May 2025)

Some students recognized cooperative learning as a frequently used and effective approach in classroom instruction. This method, which emphasizes group work and peer-to-peer interaction, was seen as beneficial in encouraging participation and mutual support during learning activities. As “D” simply noted, “If it is more often the first (cooperative learning strategy) for those questions” (Interview, 7 May 2025), this indicates familiarity and a positive response to strategies involving group cooperation and shared responsibility.

c. Project-Based Learning (PjBL)

Project-based learning (PjBL) involves students defining educational goals to create tangible outputs or projects. In this model, learners engage in a project or a set of activities that require them to apply their knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems or challenges (Putri et al., 2017; Aghayani & Hajmohammadi, 2019). This method highlights the significance of their education while enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Putri et al., 2017) Activities like creating presentations, making videos, or working on group projects were described as fun, meaningful, and motivating. Students enjoyed having a say in the topic, how the final product looked, and how they worked together. These tasks encouraged creative thinking, collaboration, and, most importantly, authentic use of English. In the sub-theme of effective

teaching strategy, the students highlighted that the most liked by the students is project-based learning. Project-based learning (PjBL) emerged as one of the most favoured strategies among participants. Students expressed enthusiasm for tasks that allowed them to express creativity and autonomy while practicing English in a purposeful context. The evidence is as follows:

Data 7

"Metode mengajar yang paling saya suka itu adalah membuat project kak. Dimana kita diberikan tugas seperti membuat video atau apa saja itu sangat membuat saya bersemangat karna kita dapat berkreasi, mengedit sehingga nanti pada saat presentasi itu ada rasa kepuasan tersendiri kak. Karna kita mengerjakan project yang sesuai dengan minat dan kreativitas kita."

"The teaching method that I like the most is making projects. When we are given assignments such as creating videos or whatever, it excites me because we can be creative and edit so that later at the presentation, there is a sense of satisfaction. We work on projects that suit our interests and creativity."

(V, interview 15 April 2025)

Data 8

"Kalau saya, saya sangat suka pembelajaran yang berbasis project-based learning karna saya suka membuat sesuatu."

"I like project-based learning because I like to make things."

(L, Interview 7 May 2025)

Data 9

"Project-based learning kak mungkin yang lebih banyak."

"Project-based learning may be more."

(Ind, interview 7 May 2025)

Project-based learning (PBL) emerged as one of the most favoured strategies among participants. Students expressed enthusiasm for tasks that allowed them to express creativity and autonomy while practicing English in a purposeful context. "V" explained, "The teaching method that I like the most is making projects... it excites me because we can be creative... there is a sense of satisfaction" (Interview, 15 April 2025). This reflects how PBL can provide a platform for students to build confidence through creative production and presentation.

Similarly, "L" shared a personal preference: "I like project-based learning because I like to make things" (Interview, 7 May 2025), reinforcing the motivational aspect of hands-on learning. "Ind" also acknowledged, "Project-based learning may be more" (Interview, 7 May 2025), suggesting that this strategy is not only preferred but possibly more effective in promoting communication.

In conclusion, it reflects on how Project-based learning can provide a platform for students to build confidence through creative production and presentation. Similarly, other students shared a personal preference, reinforcing the motivational aspect of hands-on learning that motivates them to learn. It is in line with project-based learning, which suggests that this strategy is not only preferred but possibly more effective in promoting communication

d. Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional strategy in which students engage with authentic issues, promoting critical thinking and the practical application of their knowledge. This approach enhances students' comprehension of the significance of their education, rendering it more impactful (Ayuni & Susanti, 2018). Furthermore, it increases student engagement and interaction, encouraging collaborative efforts to generate ideas and solutions. In the realm of English language acquisition, problem-based teaching proves particularly beneficial in aiding students to cultivate language competencies within real-life scenarios (Ngadiso et al., 2021). Students were highly engaged when they were

asked to solve real-world problems or respond to challenging questions that required discussion. These types of tasks allowed them to think critically and exchange ideas in English, boosting both their cognitive involvement and their communication confidence. Even when traditional lectures were used, students noted that certain elements made a big difference. Teachers who added visual aids, gave real-world examples, encouraged interactive questioning, and provided positive feedback were able to keep students interested and willing to speak.

In the sub-theme of the effective teaching strategy, Problem-based learning was also identified as a strategy that stimulated curiosity and communication, with several evident as follows:

Data 10

"Kalau menurut say aitu mungkin dengan memecahkan masalah karna dengan kita memecahkan masalah banyak yang bisa dibicarakan, ada rasa ingin tahu begitu"

"If I think about it, it's probably by solving problems because solving problems allows us to talk about them a lot, and there is curiosity."

(I, interview 7 May 2025)

Data 11

"Kalau saya ya meningkatkan kak tapi lebih bagus lagi kalau yang berbasis problem kak."

"For me, it's improving, but it's even better if it's problem-based."

(M, interview 7 May 2025)

Data 12

"Iya problem-based learning itu kalau tidak salah. Memecahkan masalah secara bersamaan."

"Yes, problem-based learning, if I'm not mistaken. Solving problems simultaneously"

(Ab, interview 7 May 2025)

Problem-based learning (PBL) was also identified as a strategy that stimulated curiosity and communication. "I" highlighted the communicative benefit of solving real-world problems, saying, "Solving problems allows us to talk about them a lot, and there is curiosity" (Interview, 7 May 2025). This indicates that engaging with complex tasks encourages deeper interaction and spontaneous language use.

"M" added, "It's improving, but it's even better if it's problem-based" (Interview, 7 May 2025), showing that problem-solving not only enhances comprehension but also pushes students to express their ideas more clearly. "Ab" echoed this, confirming that collaborative problem-solving encourages simultaneous speaking and thinking: "Yes, problem-based learning... solving problems simultaneously" (Interview, 7 May 2025).

Student highlighted the communicative benefit of solving real-world problems, it is indicating that engaging with complex tasks encourages deeper interaction and spontaneous language use. Besides, problem-solving not only enhances comprehension but also pushes students to express their ideas more clearly. Other students also confirmed that collaborative problem-solving encourages simultaneous speaking and thinking

e. Core Insights from the Data

Several overarching themes emerged from the combination of classroom observations and student interviews. WTC is not a fixed trait. It fluctuates based on how the class is structured, how students feel emotionally, and how the teacher facilitates interaction. Peer support, emotional safety, and topic relevance are critical. Students want to feel safe and heard, and they're more likely to speak when the topic interests them. Student-centred teaching strategies, especially those that emphasize collaboration, discussion, and real-life communication, are far more effective than lecture-only approaches in promoting student talk

4. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the key factors that influence students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms and to investigate the teaching strategies that can effectively enhance student engagement in communicative activities. By combining classroom observations with in-depth student interviews and guided by Macintyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model, the research provided a comprehensive understanding of the psychological, social, linguistic, and pedagogical dimensions that shape learners' readiness to communicate.

The findings reveal that students' WTC is a dynamic and context-sensitive construct, influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. Psychological readiness, such as communicative confidence, motivation, and anxiety levels, played a central role in determining whether students would participate in classroom interactions. Linguistic competence, particularly in grammar and vocabulary, also impacted students' willingness to speak, while code-switching emerged as a supportive strategy for bridging communication gaps. From a social perspective, peer relationships, classroom atmosphere, and perceived emotional safety significantly affected students' engagement. Learners were more willing to communicate when they felt respected, encouraged, and free from the fear of negative evaluation. Therefore, a non-threatening and supportive environment is essential in fostering communicative willingness.

One of the most important contributions of this study lies in its analysis of teaching strategies. The research found that student-centred approaches, such as cooperative learning, project-based learning (PjBL), and problem-based learning (PBL), were particularly effective in promoting WTC. These strategies gave students ownership of their learning, encouraged authentic communication, and supported risk-taking in using the target language. On the other hand, traditional lecturing, while still valuable, was shown to be more effective when integrated with interactive elements, visual supports, and real-world examples. The conclusion drawn from this research is that enhancing students' WTC is not solely about improving language proficiency; it is equally about addressing emotional and psychological barriers and adapting classroom practices to be more inclusive, interactive, and learner-oriented. Teachers play a crucial role in this process not just as content providers, but as facilitators of meaningful interaction and creators of a classroom culture where students feel confident and motivated to speak.

In essence, students' willingness to communicate can be cultivated through thoughtful pedagogy, emotional support, and a classroom environment that values participation over perfection. This study affirms that with the right strategies and support systems, all students can become more active, engaged, and willing participants in the EFL classroom, regardless of their initial confidence or language level. Based on the results of this study, several practical suggestions and recommendations are proposed for EFL teachers, curriculum developers, and future researchers to support and improve students' willingness to communicate in classroom settings.

Foster a supportive and low-anxiety classroom atmosphere. Teachers should prioritize building trust and emotional safety in their classrooms. When students feel respected and not judged for making mistakes, they are more likely to participate in communication. Simple actions such as smiling, encouraging responses, and giving constructive feedback can significantly increase students' confidence in speaking. Adopt student-centred and interactive teaching strategies. Rather than relying solely on traditional lectures, teachers are encouraged to implement cooperative learning, project-based learning (PjBL), and problem-based learning (PBL). These methods promote meaningful engagement, peer collaboration, and real-world language use, all of which help reduce anxiety and increase motivation to speak.

Design open-ended and authentic communicative tasks. Activities that allow for opinion sharing, debate, problem-solving, and creative expression should be incorporated regularly. These tasks promote spontaneous language use and help students see the relevance of English in real-life contexts. Allow strategic use of L1 (Bahasa Indonesia) when necessary. In early stages or complex discussions, allowing limited code-switching can help students stay engaged and reduce communication breakdowns. It should be used as a bridge, not a barrier, to developing fluency.

Provide professional development on communicative teaching methods. Institutions should support EFL instructors by offering workshops and training sessions focused on learner-centred approaches and methods to boost classroom interaction. Teachers need both theoretical understanding and practical tools to create communicative classrooms. Incorporate communicative competence as a core outcome. Curriculum planners should emphasize speaking and interaction skills, not just grammar and reading comprehension. This can be reflected in course objectives, assessments, and classroom activities. Encourage integration of multimedia and digital tools. Technology-based projects (e.g., video creation, online presentations, collaborative tasks) have been shown to increase student motivation and WTC. Supporting the use of such tools can make the language classroom more relevant and engaging.

Explore WTC across different age groups and contexts. While this study focused on university students, future research could examine how WTC develops among high school students, young learners, or adult learners in different types of institutions. Investigate the role of gender, personality, and cultural factors. Further studies could explore how variables such as extroversion/introversion, gender roles, or cultural norms influence WTC and how these intersect with teaching strategies. Conduct longitudinal studies. Future research could follow students over a longer period to examine how their WTC evolves in response to changes in instruction, classroom dynamics, or personal growth. Improving students' willingness to communicate is not a one-time effort—it requires consistent attention to classroom climate, thoughtful lesson design, and a deep understanding of learners' needs. By embracing student-centred strategies and creating inclusive, encouraging environments, teachers can transform passive learners into active communicators who are more confident, motivated, and capable of using English beyond the classroom.

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