

Driving Factors on Indonesian EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Using English: State of the Arts and Ways Forward

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Abstract. EFL students' communication ability is still far behind expectations due to their poor readiness to talk. It is unrealistic to expect students who are reluctant to speak in English to improve their communication abilities. The current study is undertaken to analyze the variables effect Indonesian EFL learners' WTC in English class at secondary school and the teaching techniques may be utilized to encourage Indonesian EFL learners' WTC in English class at secondary school. The current study offers a thorough literature evaluation of WTC research within the specific domain of EFL learners' of secondary school in Indonesia. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines were used in this review research to examine publications from Google Scholar. The papers included are 6 recognized journal articles identified in google scholar throughout the timeframe 2020 - 2024. The results shown that a number of variables, divided into situational and individual aspects, influence EFL learners' WTC. However, the tactics that EFL teachers might employ are: arranging the students' chairs in a U shape, practicing Out-of-class English communications, using technology in language learning, and following conversation club. It is anticipated that teachers would use a variety of strategies to encourage more student participation throughout the class after identifying the contributing elements.

Keywords : WTC, EFL Learners, State of the Arts, Ways Forward

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of science and technology has brought many changes in almost all aspects of life that demands a quality system of international scale. In this modern era, English is one of international languages that should be mastered by everyone. Students as early generations should have the capacity of foreign language to make them more competitive. According to MacIntyre and Charos (1996), communication is an important objective in itself, which focuses on the real use of

L2 as an integral aspect of L2 learning. It implies that for students who have learned English as a second language, communication is crucial.

According to Cook (2008, p. 156), around 70 per cent of the utterances in most of the classrooms come from the teacher. It implies that the classroom discourse must be initiated by the teacher. Whereas, the students have less conversation in the classroom. In facts, conversation in the classroom usually is started from the teacher. When the teacher asked something to the students, they are only giving shortly answer. Furthermore, many students have less confidence when conducting discussion in English, both with the teacher or other classmates. They are too nervous while speaking in English because they worry about what are the words that should be used, both of proper or bad ones. So, it suggests that many students still have a limited knowledge of English vocabulary.

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is one of the emotional elements thought to have an impact on learning performance in second and foreign languages. Willingness to communicate is characterized as “a learner’s readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons using an L2.” (McIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). Every individual has difficulties and varied conditions concerning learning a second language, and occasionally it becomes a substantial obstacle (Alavinia & Alikhani, 2014). In addition, the aim of learning languages might impact someone’s motivation and readiness to study language. Furthermore, according to Fallah (2014), motivation and self-assurance in L2 communication are two factors that may affect a person's WTC in L2.

A tremendous number of previous studies in accordance with factors affecting learners WTC and the strategies to motivate them have been conducted by some previous researchers. One of them was undertaken by Kurnia (2019) reporting that there are four factors of students’ teachers’ willingness to speak include motivation, self-beliefs, the person learners’ talking to, and object discussion. Mardiana (2020) conducted another study on WTC and found that the following factors affect EFL learners' WTC: Individual (long-lasting) factors include the students' personality, their social situation, their general self-confidence, and their willingness to learn English. The other aspect is situational (social) considerations, characterized as pupils wanting to speak with a certain person and one's level of self-confidence in a specified environment. In the following earlier study, Salam et al. (2021) discovered that students' linguistics (e.g., vocabulary achievement, sentence structure, concept building) and features of their personalities (self-confidence, motivating abilities) were the two key issues affecting learners' WTC.

However, numerous strategies may be adopted by EFL teachers to encourage the learners’ WTC. As mentioned by Van Tuyen (2019), that some tactics teachers’ may employ include giving adequate time for students to prepare assignments before speaking, allotting extra time for pair work, group work or team work to give students have chance to discuss, encouraging students to speak in a nice manner, making constructive corrections to errors, giving thoughtful and insightful remarks helps encourage pupils to discuss, Setting up more useful, significant, and genuine communication duties, putting together a range of activities, more engaging games, and role-playing exercises for students to participate in. Furthermore, Alimorad and Farahmand (2021) made it clear that educators might take use of various interactional patterns, such group projects. Students can overcome

psychological obstacles like nervousness and start conversations by being paired up into small groups.

In the previous study, the problems when learning a foreign language are positively connected to learners' WTC in FLA (Chen & Chang, 2004). Despite being studied since the 1970s, WTC itself is still regarded as a complex and intricate phenomena (Anwar & Louis, 2017). There have been several researches on WTC as a problem that hinders learners' acquisition of foreign languages; however the variables influencing Indonesian EFL learners' WTC using English in secondary school are still seldom discussed. The majority of them have finished working with college students. Due to age differences, university students and secondary school students exhibit different emotional traits. Compared to older students or adults, teenagers in their senior year of high school often have lower levels of self-esteem (Wild & Schwartz, 2012). This lack of self-esteem may cause senior high school pupils to poor self-confidence and timidity, which may prevent them to communicate in English. Hence, the way teenage students experience English communication might be different from how adult students see it.

Therefore, the purposes of this study are formed as follows:

1. What are the driving factors affect Indonesian EFL learners' WTC in Using English?
2. What teaching strategies can be used to motivate EFL secondary learners' WTC in English class?

2. METHOD

This research was conducted by a method of systematic literature review (SLR) to focus on learners' foreign language WTC in English class. SLR is a method of collecting and systematically summarizing previous research. SLR assists the study in obtaining several literatures that meet the objectives of the study as well as seeing the phenomena that occur around the keywords of the study (Rahman et al., 2017). Meanwhile, systematic literature reviews, according to Ribbins and Gunter (2002), aim to optimize the advantages of procedural and analytical objectivity. "A systematic review aims to identify all empirical evidence that fits the pre-specified inclusion criteria to answer a particular research question or hypothesis," Synder (2019) states. Additionally, he says that a systematic literature review is probably the most reliable method for compiling articles since it guarantees that all pertinent content has been addressed. In addition to using a systematic search to determine the need for sustainable translation strategies in translating items required in the study, the SLR technique includes the study's year, background, research challenges, methodologies, and conclusions (Kamal & Hussin, 2020). The implementation of a review methodology, publication standard, or stated criteria can assist lead and keep researchers on the path while also enhancing the review's methodological openness (Haddaway et al., 2018).

Systematic literature reviews involve eight steps: (1) formulating the research problem; (2) developing and validating the review protocol; (3) searching the literature; (4) screening for inclusion; (5) evaluating quality; (6) extracting data; (7) analyzing and synthesizing data; and (8) reporting the findings (Xiao & Watson, 2019, p. 102). All of the stages were done systematically.

For this study, the data collection is obtained from 6 certified journal publications in Google Scholar from the year 2020 to 2024 which connected to learners' foreign language WTC in English class. The search terms used for this paper can be categorized as follows: "second language acquisition," "second language learning," and "foreign language learning"; terms related to learners' WTC in Indonesia, such as "Indonesian EFL learners' WTC" and "Indonesian EFL learners' WTC in secondary school"; and finally, terms related to secondary school learners' WTC in Indonesia, but concentrating on its factors, such as "Indonesian secondary school EFL learners' WTC factors" and "strategies to motivate Indonesian secondary school EFL learners." In terms of data analysis, this study uses theme analysis.

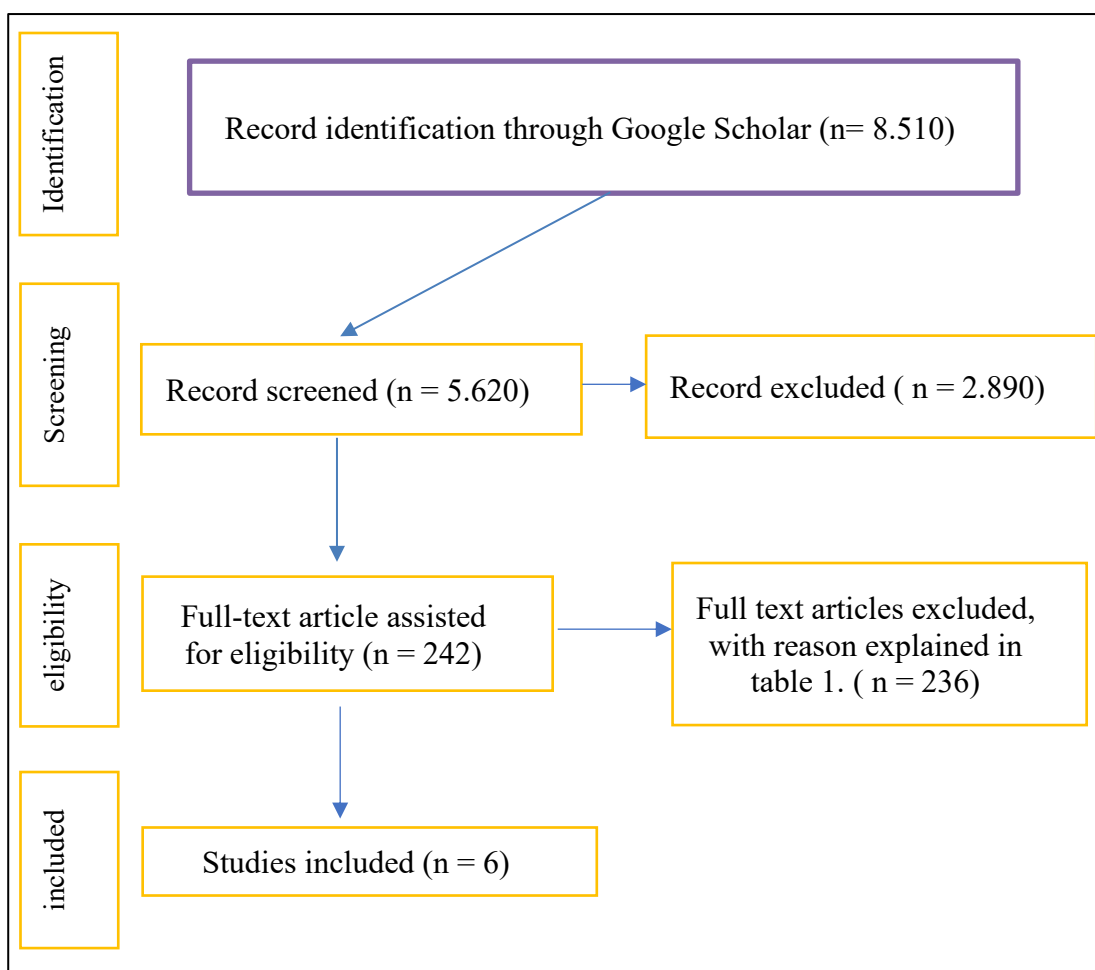
Both inclusion and exclusion criteria should be addressed in every systematic literature review, or SLR. The objectives and research questions dictate the inclusion and exclusion criteria, which are often justified in terms of the publication's quality, substance, or methodology (Kuckertz & Block, 2021). The subject of research, language proficiency, year of publication, setting, and journal article object are the factors that determine whether an article is accepted or rejected in this work. The table below illustrates the article's inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for this systematic review

Criteria focus of study	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Field of study	WTC in foreign language Learning	WTC in Bahasa, WTC in the first language
Language skill	Speaking skill (communicative competence)	Reading, writing, and listening skills.
Year of publication	2020-2024	Before 2020 and more than 2024
Setting	Indonesia	Other than Indonesia
Object	secondary school learners	Pre-school, Primary School learner, tertiary education, bachelor education, master education, Doctorate education.

A PRISMA flowchart was employed (see Figure 1 below) for the study selection approach. Data identification, data filtering, and data analysis are all included in the data collection and analysis flow diagram. The major database utilized in this research is Google Scholar. The initial search started on the 24th of November and finished on November 29. During the search, the author kept notes for note-taking, data bank, and combination of search terms used, as well as the number of clicks for each search. A spreadsheet was kept to list all articles found (N= 8.510 from Google Scholar). Next, the first selection was carried out, based on the title and screening of excluded abstract criteria listed above in table 1. Thus, 8.498 articles were excluded. The reasons for rejection revolved around research conducted in other countries, the research mentioned students as the object of the research, while the main object of the research itself was secondary school students, besides that,

The competency that is examined is students' speaking, not writing, reading, or listening. After ensuring that all articles met the requirements, the year the article was published was also taken into consideration, namely around 2020 - 2024. At this final stage, 242 articles were released. At this time, 242 articles have been published. The output was a collection of 6 full-text publications eligible for open access for study and review. The search and filtering processes used to locate papers for the literature review are depicted in Figure 1. Modified from Moher and colleagues (2009).



3. RESULT

A total of 6 publications in journals published between 2020 and 2024 were evaluated in this study. The results from the examined papers are reported using descriptive analysis in the form of a table. Discussions are carried out based on a table that outlines methodically starting with the most frequent variables influencing factors impacting Indonesian EFL learner's WTC and the EFL teacher' techniques to encourage them. Based on the evaluated publications, the research findings may be summed up as follows. They will answer the two research questions: (1) to find out the factors affect Indonesian EFL learners' WTC in English class at secondary school and (2) to investigate the teaching strategies can be used to motivate EFL learners' WTC in English class at secondary school.

Table 2. The research results on Factors Affecting Indonesian Secondary EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate using English and strategies can be used to motivate EFL learners' WTC

Researcher and Year	Title	Journal	Setting	Finding
Adinda Puteri Zulaika and Ririn Ovia (2022, p.13)	Analysis of Factors Influencing Students' Willingness to Speak English in Classroom Interaction	Journal of English Language Teaching	SMAN 10 Padang	Students' desire to communicate in class was impacted by both situational and personal variables. The Communication Behavior component, Behavioral Intention, Situated Antecedents, Motivation Propensities, Affective-Cognitive context, and Social-individual context all had an impact on the majority of students' high level willingness to utilize English in class interactions.
Irra Wahidiyati, Agus Husein As Sabiq, Maulidiya Handayani, Endang Sartika (2025, p.7)	Speak Up! How Attitudes, Motivation, And Beliefs Shape EFL Learners' Willingness To Communicate	UNIMAS Journal	State Senior High School in Purbalingga	The research highlights that positive attitudes, strong motivation, and constructive beliefs foster greater WTC in EFL classrooms, which directly impacts language development and classroom engagement. This study underscores the importance of fostering positive attitudes toward language learning to enhance students' WTC. While motivation and beliefs contribute to some extent, they may not be sufficient on their own to significantly impact WTC.
Nailin Nafisah et al. (2023, p.3)	Factors Influencing EFL Learners' Willingness to Speak English In The Classroom	Edulingua: Jurnal Linguistik Terapan dan Pendidikan Bahasa	Secondary school in Kudus	A. Factors Several elements impacting learners' WTC were discovered in this research, including

		Inggris		topic of conversation, task type, interlocutor, and teacher's role.
				B. Strategies In order to encourage students to participate more in class, teachers should adopt certain strategies.
Tian Havwini (2020, p.5)	Indonesian EFL Students' Willingness to Communicate In The 2013 Curriculum Implementation: A Case Study	TEFLIN (Teaching English as Foreign Language in Indonesia) Journal	a junior high school in Aceh Timur	A. Factors There are few chances for students to express themselves in a more complex and genuine way, and there aren't many engaging activities. B. Strategies Indonesian ELT teachers should think about rebuilding their methods for encouraging students' oral participation in the target language, using more referential questions instead of display questions, and offering more interactive activities that foster meaningful student interaction.
Muhammad Yunus et al. (2023, p.5)	Willingness to Communicate in English: An Interview Study with Indonesian Vocational High School Students	Journal of the Association for Arabic and English	Indonesian vocational high schools	A. Factors Lack of self-confidence, presence of fear, teacher's teaching method, and vocabulary provision. B. Strategies They need to communicate in English outside of class in order to overcome their communication barriers.
Endah Yulia Eka et al. (2022, p.3)	The Factors Affecting Students' Level Of Willingness To	International Journal of Education and Social Science	a private junior high school in Surabaya	A. Factors Self-confidence, communication competence, learning anxiety, students'

Communicate (WTC) In An English Class At A Private Junior High School In Surabaya	Research	motivation, personality, teacher role, classroom atmosphere, interlocutor, the impact of themes, and task kinds are some of the elements that influence students' level of willingness to communicate (WTC) in English.
		B. Strategies Following English conversation club and using technology in language learning.

3.1 Factors Affecting the Students' WTC in English Classrooms

3.1.1 Individual Factors Affecting the Students' WTC in English

3.1.1.1 Lack of Self-confidence and Self-perceived Communication Competence and Anxiety

The finding on this concern has revealed that the majority of the students tended to experience a lack of self-confidence to speak English. All the portrayed conditions regarding the students' unwillingness to speak English in some classroom English interactions represent the characteristics of foreign language students with low self-confidence. Rubio (2007) stated that foreign language students with low self-confidence suffer from insecurity and fear to use the target language in communication. On the contrary, students with a high level of self confidence tend to be active in class (Cao & Philip, 2006). They are commonly not afraid to ask a question, to utter their opinion, to speak in front of the class, and to make mistakes while speaking (Mubarok, 2018).

Further, the lack of self-confidence of the students here can also be the manifestation of these students' low perception of their English communication competence, and their high level of anxiety to speak English. Clement et al. (2003) have stated that high self-confidence in L2 is the manifestation of L2 learners' positive perception of their L2 communication competence and their low anxiety to use the L2. Thus, when students experience a low level of self-confidence to speak English, it can be an indication that these students have a low perception of their own competence in English, and also an indication that they experience a high level of anxiety to speak English.

Eventually, the results showed that the students' unwillingness to speak in English was caused by their low self-esteem, their poor opinion of their own English proficiency, and their high level of worry. Stated differently, students' desire to speak in English is influenced by their L2 anxiety, L2 self-perceived communication skill, and L2 self-confidence. This discovery agrees with other prior research which indicated comparable findings (Riasati, 2012; Fadilah, 2018; Başöz & Erten, 2019; Tuyen et al., 2019). The finding of the present study is also in agreement with MacIntyre et al. (2002) who said that students who have a low opinion of their own

ability in L2 and who have a high degree of anxiety prefer to avoid L2 communication.

3.1.1.2 Fear of Making Mistakes

The result of the items dealing with this factor indicated that the students tended to be afraid to make mistakes in speaking English. This finding here is in line with some previous studies which found that one of the factors causing students to be reluctant to speak English in class is because they are afraid to make mistakes (Riasati & Rahimi, 2018; Başöz & Erten, 2019; Azwar et al. 2021). Similarly, MacIntyre et al. (2001) succeeded to show that learners become afraid to speak in L2 if they knew they are officially graded. The reason why the kids tend to dread of making errors might be because they are worried of getting mocked by others, or getting an unfavorable rating. Wen and Clement (2003) noted that one of the reasons foreign language students are cautious to utilize the L2 is the fear of losing face if they make mistakes.

3.1.1.3 Lack of vocabulary provision

Vocabulary itself has challenges that are regularly faced by pupils in technical high schools. When asked to speak English in front of the class, there are still many pupils who are apprehensive because of the lack of remembered vocabulary. Apart from that, there were also other pupils who instantly talked enthusiastically since these children absorbed a lot of terminology. Willingness to speak English requires vocabulary, accurate pronunciation of letters, and knowledge of grammar (Henry & MacIntyre, 2023). Because of this, some students still struggle with speaking English, while others are proficient; it all depends on how they learn the language. To put it another way, outside assistance in the shape of family, friends, or English-speaking friends is required. Therefore, the information above shows that vocabulary has an impact on vocational high school students' communication. Nonetheless, some students believe that vocabulary is simple, allowing them to participate actively in class discussions in English.

For students who are still struggling with vocabulary, the English dictionary is another helpful resource. Because of the speed at which technology is developing, we seldom ever utilize English dictionaries, making it easier for students to use Google Translate without having to learn or commit words to memory. Again, given that we live in a sophisticated age, many pupils still struggle with language due to a lack of remembered vocabulary. The advent of advanced technology in the modern period also makes pupils indolent when it comes to learning, much less English. Nonetheless, pupils continue to exercise discipline, a certain style of thinking, and punctuality. It's interesting to see that students who are already proficient in English continue to study the language using thickly written dictionaries. This statistic demonstrates that all pupils recognize that vocabulary is highly important. Students also have to constantly learning and memorizing English vocabulary and this applies to all students, both active and non-active. However, they also appear to disregard how crucial vocabulary is to learning English. In conclusion, we conclude that the vocabulary must be specially developed to grab the attention of the students whether the vocabulary is built like a song or a music they enjoy so that students would remember the vocabulary more readily.

3.1.2 Situational Factors Affecting the Students' WTC in English

3.1.2.1 Task Types

The finding on the influence of task types on the students' WTC in English suggested that task types affected the students' degree of WTC in English. The pupils were found to be more inclined to speak English in pairs or in groups than speaking singly. This is in accordance with other recent investigations (Azwar et al., 2021; Riasati & Rahimi, 2018) which indicated similar conclusions. Moreover, it also provides credence to Cao & Philip (2006) who indicated that pair works and group work classroom speaking activities might boost students' opportunity to talk more than in the case of solitary speaking assignments.

3.1.2.2 Interlocutors' Gender and Position

The finding related to interlocutors effect on the students' WTC in English indicated that the students were more willing to speak English with someone of the same gender than with the opposite one. This aligns with Riasati and Rahimi (2018) and Azwar et al. (2021) who also found that the individuals in their study expressed a higher degree of willingness to speak English to a person from the same gender than to a different gender. This condition might be due to the tendency of people to feel more relaxed and comfortable while speaking to someone from the same gender than to the opposite one. Jamshinejad (2010) stated that people tend to feel the need to speak more carefully while talking to someone from the opposite gender to show their proficiency.

Moreover, concerning the interlocutors' position, the students in the present study were indicated to be more willing to speak English with their teacher than with their classmates to discuss a certain topic. This finding lends support to the findings of a previous study by Riasati and Rahimi (2018), which revealed that the individual in their study stated that a teacher is more preferred as a talking partner than a classmate because a teacher is considered as a more reliable source of information to learn better. Further, such findings in the present study can be the reflection of the positive relationship between the students and their professors. A solid relationship between instructor and students is considered to boost students' desire to speak English in the classroom (Zarei et al., 2019). As a result, the kids in this research don't hesitate to speak with their teacher in English.

3.1.2.3 Topics of Discussion

Based on the finding regarding the effect of the topics of discussion on the students' WTC in English, the students were found to be willing to speak English if the topic is familiar and interesting, but unwilling if the topic is controversial, and even a topic that is trending in their society. The finding is in line with Riasati & Rahimi (2018) and Azwar et al. (2021) who found that topic familiarity and topic interest affect students' WTC in English in class. Besides, the finding also lends support to some experts who stated that the familiarity and the enticement of the topic of discussion are really important. For instance, Kang (2005) stated that lack of ideas and fear of comprehension issues lead learners to feel less secure to talk about an unfamiliar topic. Further, an interesting topic in which learners have adequate background knowledge and experience can increase the learners' level of excitement. Similarly, Cao and Philip (2006) also stated that an unfamiliar topic of discussion

can inhibit communication in the classroom because the learners do not have background knowledge about the topic.

3.1.2.4 Seating Locations

Regarding the seating positions, the study has showed that the students were more inclined to speak English if they sit in rear rows than in front rows. Put differently, it was discovered that the seating arrangements had an impact on the students' WTC in English during class. The results here corroborate those of Riasati & Rahimi (2018) and Azwar et al. (2021), who found that sitting arrangements had an impact on students' WTC in English. The degree of fear that the students in the current study felt may have influenced their degree of self-confidence to speak, which is why they were more inclined to speak English while seated in the rear rows than in the front. Students who sit in front rows have a larger chance to be watched directly by many other students and their instructor than those who sit in rear rows. These pupils may experience increased anxiety as a result of this condition, which lowers their confidence when speaking English. MacIntyre et al. (1998) claim that one of the things that enhance one's degree of anxiety is the increased quantity of the audience. Conversely, a greater degree of worry leads to a lesser degree of self-confidence, which is seen to be a significant contributing factor to a reluctance to speak English (Tong, 2010).

3.1.2.5 Teacher's role

According to Cao and Philip (2009), students who liked their teachers were more likely to ask questions and engage in class. On the other hand, students' desire to talk in class may also be negatively impacted by the instructor. Students will become disinterested and not participate fully in class activities if the teacher is boring. Nazari and Allahyar (2012) also stated that instructors have been institutionally conferred the right to design, regulate and decide the many sorts of learners' interactions carried out in the classroom.

3.2 Teaching Strategies to Motivate EFL learners' WTC in English Class at Secondary School

Andika et al. (2019) suggested in the study that to improve learners' WTC, it is necessary for the teacher to be selective in choosing the topic of communication. The interesting and relatable topic for the learners can trigger their willingness to communicate. It is suggested also in the study that a teacher should design more collaborative learning and support the students even though they make mistakes. One strategy to improve WTC is by building and reinforcing connections among interlocutors in the classroom through the use of English (Tan et al. 2020). It requires teacher involvement, such as developing discussion topics, increasing opportunities for English-language communication in the classroom, and establishing the methodology to prepare students' WTC outside of the classroom. Additionally, teachers must encourage their pupils by reassuring them that errors are a common part of the language acquisition process (Nafisah et al., 2023).

In order to strengthen students' WTC, as well as extend the patterns of how students may use their WTC, it is proposed that teachers consider rebuilding their techniques in boosting students' oral engagement in the target language. Employing more referential questions rather than display questions and delivering more

interactive activities which stimulate meaningful contact among students should be taken into account by Indonesian ELT practitioners. Havwini (2019). Yunus et al. (2023) also provide several strategies for improving students' WTC. In order for the students to regain their confidence and want to speak English, especially during class activities, the teachers must bring the class to life. Even when pupils are apprehensive, teachers must inspire them to want to speak in English without fear or anxiety.

In order for kids to communicate more actively with one another, teachers must also be able to relate to their feelings. According to Yunus et al. (2023), in order to capture students' attention and help them recall the vocabulary more readily, the vocabulary has to be generated in a distinctive way, such as a song or music they enjoy. However, Eka et al. (2021) discovered in their study that students use technology to learn languages and participate in discussion clubs as part of their own techniques for building their WTC.

4. CONCLUSION

As indicated in the debate, readiness to talk is impacted by certain things. The variables found in this study fall into two categories. The first are individual factors, such as low self-esteem, low self-perceived communication skills, anxiety, a fear of making mistakes, and a lack of vocabulary. The second aspect is situational circumstances including: Task kinds, Interlocutor's impacts, Topics of conversation, Seating positions, and Teacher's involvement. As a result, it is imperative that language instructors support elements that encourage speaking and eliminate those that prevent it. When designing educational activities, they should also consider how students and teachers interact. Teachers need to realize that diverse learners learn the language differently and that there is no uniform teaching style that appeals to all learners. As a result, such variances need to be taken into consideration in planning teaching and learning activities.

By recognizing the factors, it is predicted that teachers will adopt various techniques at helping students to engage more throughout the lesson. Additionally, educators might use instructional techniques that encourage students to actively participate in class. It is advised that educators design activities that engage every student. Teachers need to excite the pupils by convincing them that making errors are something natural to happen in language learning process. In order to encourage students to speak boldly in class, the teacher must accept their mistakes. Further study has to be undertaken to examine techniques to help students minimize even remove hesitation to talk in the classroom.

Further, the findings of the study also revealed several instructional tactics that EFL teachers may employ to inspire students' WTC. They are : Supporting and persuading the pupils who make errors, Encoraging the entire pupils to aid and encourage each other, not to laugh if their buddies make blunders, Designing more collaborative learning activities such as group work with the optimal number of participants and role play, selecting the conversation topic with consideration. The pupils must have sufficient prior knowledge and experience, and the subject matter must be engaging. If at all feasible, arrange the pupils' seats in a horseshoe (U) form. Doing Out-of-class English communications, Using technology in language study, and Following conversation club.

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