

Factors Influencing EFL University Students' Willingness to Communicate: A Case of A Speaking Class

Johan Ariel Suwito Banunaek^{1*}, Yohanis Nurak Siwa², Elvis Albertus Bin Toni³

¹English Education Study Program, Universitas Katolik Widya Mandira, Indonesia

*Corresponding Email: yohanisnuraksiwa@unwira.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received : June 6, 2026

Reviewed : July 4, 2026

Revised : July 4, 2026

Accepted : July 14, 2026

Available online : July 16, 2026

Keywords:

**Willingness to communicate;
EFL students; speaking
class; psychological factors;
situational factors**

Abstract

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is an important aspect of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it determines students' readiness to actively use English in classroom interaction. This study aimed to explore the factors influencing EFL university students' willingness to communicate in English and to examine their perceptions and experiences of communicating in a speaking class. This research employed a qualitative case study design involving second-semester students of the English Education Study Program at Widya Mandira Catholic University Kupang. Data were collected through classroom observation of all students in two intact speaking class (N=50 students; Class A= 25 students and Class B= 25 students) and semi-structured interviews with ten purposively selected students (five students from each class). The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns related to students' communication behavior, perceptions, and experiences. The findings revealed that students' willingness to communicate was influenced by two major factors: psychological and situational factors. Psychological factors included self-confidence, anxiety, motivation, and personality, while situational factors included classroom environment, lecturer support, teaching strategies, learning activities, and peer interaction. Students were more willing to speak English when they felt supported, motivated, and emotionally safe in the classroom. However, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, low confidence, and anxiety often reduced their willingness to participate. The study concludes that students' WTC is dynamic and shaped by the interaction between internal emotions and external classroom conditions. Therefore, lecturers need to create supportive, interactive, and non-judgmental speaking environments to encourage students' active participation in English communication.

INTRODUCTION

English speaking ability is an essential competence for students in the English Education Study Program because it reflects their readiness to use English for academic, professional, and global communication. In the era of globalization, English functions as an international language that connects people across countries, cultures, and professional communities. Riadil (2020) states that English proficiency is essential as a global communication medium, while Akhter (2020) emphasizes that English is widely learned around the world as an international language. For English Education

students, speaking ability is particularly important because they are expected not only to understand the language theoretically but also to demonstrate effective communication skills in real-life contexts. Furthermore, Dauyah and Yulinar (2018) highlight that strong English speaking ability can enhance students' competitiveness in the job market, particularly in professions that require interaction with international communities. Therefore, developing students' speaking competence becomes one of the primary goals of English language education programs.

Despite the importance of speaking skills, many students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts still experience difficulties in actively communicating in English during classroom interactions. In speaking classes, students often show limited participation, hesitation, or reluctance when asked to express their ideas in English. Utami and Rismadewi (2022) found that students' willingness to speak English in the classroom tends to be relatively low due to both psychological and situational factors. Similarly, Khan et al. (2018) and Tulgar (2018) report that speaking is frequently perceived as one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners because it requires spontaneous language production in real time. Many students feel anxious about making mistakes in pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, which may reduce their confidence to participate in classroom communication. As a result, some students prefer to remain silent rather than risk making errors while speaking English. These conditions indicate that speaking performance is not only influenced by linguistic competence but also by students' readiness and willingness to communicate.

In relation to this issue, the concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has become an important construct in second and foreign language learning. WTC refers to learners' readiness to initiate communication in a second or foreign language when opportunities arise. MacIntyre et al. (1998) explain that willingness to communicate is influenced by a complex interaction of psychological and situational factors, including self-confidence, motivation, anxiety, personality, classroom environment, and interaction opportunities. Learners who have higher willingness to communicate tend to participate more actively in speaking activities, which provides greater opportunities for language practice and development. Basöz et al. (2019) also argue that successful language acquisition is strongly influenced by learners' willingness to actively use the target language during communication. Similarly, Utami and Rismadewi (2022) explain that psychological factors such as motivation, confidence, and anxiety, as well as situational factors such as classroom topics, learning activities, and teacher roles, play an important role in shaping students' willingness to communicate. Supporting this view, Cameron (2020) states that both internal factors (such as self-confidence, motivation, and anxiety) and external factors (such as teachers, classroom atmosphere, and learning activities) significantly influence students' willingness to speak in the classroom.

To avoid conceptual overlap, this study distinguishes Willingness to Communicate (WTC) from speaking anxiety and classroom participation. Recent WTC research shows that WTC should not be understood only as a stable learner tendency, but also as a dynamic and situation-sensitive construct that may change according to classroom conditions, interlocutors, tasks, topics, and teacher interaction (Zhang et al., 2018; Peng, 2020; Lee & Chiu, 2024). Therefore, WTC can be viewed as both a relatively stable learner disposition, or trait-like WTC, and a momentary readiness to speak in a particular situation, or situational/state WTC. Trait-like WTC refers to students' general tendency to communicate in English across contexts, whereas situational WTC refers to their immediate decision to speak during specific classroom tasks, with particular peers, topics, and lecturer responses. Speaking anxiety is not the same as WTC; rather, it is an affective condition that may reduce students' readiness to communicate, as recent EFL research shows that foreign language anxiety is negatively associated with learners' WTC (Bai, 2023). Classroom participation is also different from WTC because it refers to observable behavior, such as answering questions, joining discussions, or presenting ideas. In other words, WTC reflects students' readiness or intention to speak, while participation represents the visible classroom behavior that may result from such willingness. Recent

classroom-based WTC research also shows that willingness does not always automatically become learner talk because it can be enabled or constrained by learner-internal and learner-external classroom factors (Zhou, 2023). In this study, participation is treated as evidence through which situational WTC can be observed, while interviews are used to understand the psychological reasons behind students' willingness or reluctance to communicate.

Considering the complexity of willingness to communicate, it is important to explore students' experiences and perspectives within a specific learning environment. One context where WTC can be clearly observed is the speaking class, where students are expected to actively use English for communication. However, in many EFL speaking classrooms, not all students demonstrate the same level of participation. Some students are willing to communicate actively, while others tend to be reluctant or passive during classroom interactions. Understanding the factors behind these differences requires an in-depth exploration of students' experiences and perceptions. Therefore, a qualitative case study approach is considered appropriate to investigate how students experience communication in a speaking class and what factors influence their willingness to communicate. According to Utami and Rismadewi (2022), qualitative methods such as interviews and classroom observations can effectively reveal the psychological and situational factors that influence students' communication behavior.

This case study is conducted at a private university in Kupang city, focusing on students of the English Education Study Program who participate in a speaking class. This context is particularly relevant because students learn English as a foreign language and may have limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom environment. Weda et al. (2021) note that limited exposure to English communication in daily life can affect students' speaking confidence and willingness to communicate. As a result, the classroom becomes the primary environment where students practice and develop their speaking abilities. Factors such as classroom atmosphere, peer interaction, lecturer support, and learning activities may significantly influence students' willingness to communicate in English during speaking class interactions.

Although previous studies have examined factors influencing students' willingness to communicate in English, many of these studies have focused on general EFL contexts or used quantitative survey methods. As a result, there is still limited research that deeply explores university students' lived experiences of willingness to communicate within a specific speaking class using a qualitative case study approach. In addition, research focusing on English Education students remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore the factors influencing English Education students' willingness to communicate in English in a speaking class and to understand how psychological and situational factors shape their communication experiences during classroom interactions. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to a better understanding of willingness to communicate in EFL classrooms and provide insights for improving speaking instruction in higher education contexts. Hence, this study is conducted to address the following research questions:

1. What factors influence English education students' willingness to communicate in English in speaking class?
2. How do English Education students perceive their experiences of communicating in English in the speaking class?

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a case study to explore the factors influencing EFL university students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English classroom interactions. A qualitative approach was appropriate because the study aimed to understand students' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of communication in a natural classroom context rather

than measuring variables quantitatively. Since willingness to communicate involved psychological and situational dimensions, qualitative research allowed the researcher to obtain deeper insights into how students experienced and interpreted their participation in English communication.

A case study design was used because the research focused on a specific case within a bounded system, namely students in a speaking class of the English Education Study Program at Widya Mandira Catholic University Kupang. Case study research enabled an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon within its real-life context. According to Creswell (2014), a case study involved exploring a bounded system through detailed data collection from multiple sources such as interviews, observations, and documents, which helped researchers gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

In this study, the speaking class served as the bounded context in which students' willingness to communicate could be examined. This setting allowed the researcher to explore how psychological factors, such as confidence and anxiety, and situational factors, such as classroom atmosphere and learning activities, influenced students' willingness to communicate in English. Therefore, the qualitative case study design was considered suitable for providing an in-depth and contextualized understanding of students' willingness to communicate in an EFL speaking classroom.

This study was conducted at Widya Mandira Catholic University Kupang, specifically in the English Education Study Program of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Sciences. The research focused on a speaking class where students were required to actively use English in various classroom activities such as discussions, presentations, question-and-answer sessions, and group work. This setting was considered appropriate for examining students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) because speaking courses emphasized oral participation and interaction as the main learning objectives.

In this context, students learned English as a foreign language and generally had limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom. As a result, classroom interaction became the primary environment for practicing English communication. The researcher had academic access to the class, which allowed data collection through classroom observations and interviews in a natural learning setting. The research was conducted during the 2025/2026 academic year, and data were collected during regular class sessions without interfering with the teaching and learning process.

The observed participants consisted of all students enrolled in two intact second semester speaking classes of the English Education Study Program at Widya Mandira Catholic University Kupang (N = 50 students; Class A = 25 students and Class B = 25 students). These two classes were selected because they were taking a speaking course during the 2025/2026 academic year and provided a natural classroom setting in which students' WTC, speaking anxiety, and observable participation could be examined.

The interview participants consisted of ten students, with five students selected from each class. They were chosen through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) active enrollment in the observed speaking classes, (2) attendance during the observation sessions, (3) experience participating in speaking activities such as discussions, presentations, question-and-answer sessions, and group work, (4) variation in classroom participation levels, including active, moderately active, and reluctant speakers, and (5) willingness to be interviewed and provide consent. This sampling strategy enabled the researcher to obtain rich information from students with different communication experiences in the EFL speaking classroom.

The data for this study were collected through classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. These two techniques allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive information about students' willingness to communicate in the speaking class. Classroom observation was used to examine students' communication behaviors during speaking activities, while interviews provided

deeper insights into students' perceptions and experiences related to their willingness to communicate in English.

Classroom observation was conducted during regular speaking class sessions. The researcher observed how students participated in classroom activities such as discussions, presentations, and question-and-answer interactions. An observation checklist and field notes were used to record students' communication behaviors, including their participation, interaction with peers and the lecturer, and instances of willingness or reluctance to speak English in class.

In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the ten selected interview participants to explore the factors influencing their willingness to communicate in English. The interviews focused on students' experiences in speaking class, including psychological factors such as confidence, anxiety, and motivation, as well as situational factors such as classroom atmosphere, learning activities, and lecturer support. Each interview was conducted individually and recorded with participants' consent to ensure accurate data collection for further analysis.

The data in this study were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method was used to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns or themes related to students' willingness to communicate in English. Thematic analysis was appropriate for qualitative research because it allowed the researcher to systematically examine participants' experiences, perceptions, and communication behaviors. The data obtained from classroom observations and interviews were organized and analyzed to understand the psychological and situational factors influencing students' willingness to communicate in the speaking class.

The analysis process began with transcribing the interview recordings and organizing the observation notes. After that, the researcher read the data several times to become familiar with the content. The next step involved coding the data by identifying important statements, ideas, or patterns related to students' willingness to communicate. These codes were then grouped into broader categories to develop meaningful themes.

Finally, the researcher interpreted the identified themes to explain the factors influencing students' willingness to communicate in English and how these factors shaped their communication experiences in the speaking classroom. The results of the analysis were presented descriptively to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences and the factors affecting their willingness to communicate.

FINDINGS

In this part, the writer presents the findings of the study, which are related to factors influencing EFL students' willingness to communicate and the perceived experiences of student to communicate in EFL speaking class.

Factors Influencing EFL Students Willingness to Communicate

The research findings show that there are two factors influencing EFL students' willingness to communicate, they are psychological and situational factors. Psychological factors refer to students' feeling of confidence, anxiety, and motivation. Students stated that they are not confident when they would like to speak English in class. It is because they felt that they have low speaking ability. Student 2 stated:

Sometimes I felt unconfident to speak because less of English vocabulary and I'm affraid if my friends laugh of my uncorrect vocabulary spell. (S2)

Moreover, feeling of anxiety influences their willingness to speak English in speaking class. Some students' stated that they feel anxious when they have to speak in front of the class. One of the participants expressed:

She felt anxious when she speak English in front of class because she afraid of making mistake.
(S3)

Motivation is also a factor students' to speak. Some students' stated that they have strong goals when they are active and willing to practice speaking English in speaking class because they feel it is the time for them to practice their speaking skill, which can help the achieve their future goals. One of the participants said:

My motivation is I want to get a scholarship in Europe, so that she have to learn English hard.
(S4)

In addition to psychological factors, the research findings showed that situational factos also affect the students' willingness to speak in speaking class. The situational factors refer to classroom envirointment, teaching strategies, lecturer's personality, and learning activities.

Classroom envirointment affect students' willingness to communicate, because it impacts to the level of students' anxiety to participate in speaking activities in their speaking class. A competitive or rigid class triggers the fear of making mistakes, whereas a supportive envirointment builds students self-confidence to try to speak in class.

The supportive class can encourage me to speak more freely because I feel accepted and not judged by others. (S6)

Moreover, teaching strategies also affects students' willingness to communicate. Teachers' ability to provide teaching strategies and learning topics which are relevant to students needs can support students to speak in class.

When teacher tells ask me about daily topic and it is interesting and connected to me, I feel free to speak. (S1)

Another situational factor affecting students' willingness to speak is learning activities. Some students stated that interactive class can promote their willingness to speak in class.

I am more active when work in group disscussion. Because if we work in pair, we can share our ideas each other. (S5)

Furthermore, lecturer's personality can also affect student's willingness to speak. Some students stated lecturers who are close and friendly to them would help them to be willing to speak in class as they are not afraid of being evaluated or judged.

Friendly lecturer can make me more comfortable to speak because they will not judge and they will give sopportive advice. (S7)

Students' Perceptions and Experiences of Speaking English in Speaking Class

The findings of the research revealed that students had different perceptions and experiences in communicating in English during speaking class. Some students perceived speaking class as an important opportunity to improve their English speaking ability, while others experienced difficulties and pressure when they had to communicate in English. Their experiences were influenced by psychological conditions, classroom situations, and interaction with lecturers and classmates.

Most students perceived that speaking class helped them develop their confidence and speaking ability. They believed that speaking activities such as discussions, presentations, and conversations gave them opportunities to practice English actively. One participant stated:

Speaking class help me improve my confidence because every meeting we practice to speak English with friends and lecturer, and the lecturer give us an opportunity to speak. (S2)

Similarly, another participant explained that speaking class encouraged students to become more active in communication:

I think speaking class is good because we can learn how to speak English directly and not only study theory. (S5)

However, although students considered speaking class beneficial, several participants admitted that they often experienced nervousness and fear when they had to speak English in front of the class. They worried about making grammatical mistakes, incorrect pronunciation, or forgetting vocabulary while speaking. One participant said:

When I speak in front of class, I feel nervous because I think my grammar and pronunciation are not good, and it affects my confidence level. (S3)

Another participant also shared a similar experience:

Sometimes I know what I want to say, but I am afraid if my friends laugh when I make mistake. because when their laugh of me, my cofident is broke. (S1)

The findings also showed that students' experiences in speaking class were influenced by classroom interaction and lecturer support. Some students felt more comfortable speaking English when they worked in pairs or small groups because they felt less pressure compared to speaking individually in front of the whole class. One student explained:

I feel more comfortable when discussion in small group because my friends can help me if I do not know vocabulary, and they always support me. (S6)

Furthermore, students perceived that supportive classmates and friendly lecturers positively influenced their willingness to communicate. Positive feedback and encouragement from lecturers made students feel safer and more confident to participate in speaking activities. One participant stated:

If lecturer give motivation and not angry when we make mistakes, I become more brave to speak English. (S4)

In addition, students experienced that interesting and familiar topics increased their willingness to communicate in English. Topics related to daily life, hobbies, or personal experiences helped students speak more naturally because they already had ideas to express. One participant stated:

I like when lecturer ask us discuss about daily activities because it is easier for me to explain my opinion. (S7)

On the other hand, some students perceived that formal presentations and sudden questions from lecturers created pressure and reduced their confidence. They needed more preparation time before speaking in front of the class. One participant stated:

I feel difficult when lecturer suddenly ask me to answer because I need time to prepare my ideas in English, and i have to think the correct vocabulary. (S2)

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students generally perceived speaking class as an important medium for improving their English communication skills. However, their experiences in speaking English were both positive and challenging. Positive experiences were related to supportive classroom environments, interactive activities, and lecturer encouragement, while negative experiences were associated with anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence. These findings indicate that students' perceptions and experiences in speaking class are strongly connected to both psychological and situational factors influencing their willingness to communicate in English.

DISCUSSION

This study explored English Education students' willingness to communicate in English speaking classes is influenced by both psychological and situational factors. The psychological factors identified in this study include motivation, self-confidence, anxiety, and personality, while the situational factors include classroom environment, lecturer support, learning activities, and peer interaction. These findings are consistent with recent studies on Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in EFL contexts.

Based on the findings, anxiety became one of the major barriers affecting students' willingness to communicate in English. Many students tended to feel nervous, afraid of making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes, and worried about being negatively judged by their classmates or lecturers. This finding supports the study conducted by Utami and Rismadewi (2022), which found that language anxiety significantly reduces students' participation in oral communication activities. Similarly, Rotjanawongchai (2023) explained that foreign language anxiety often prevents students from expressing their ideas confidently in EFL classrooms. These findings indicate that psychological pressure plays an important role in shaping students' communication behavior in speaking classes.

In contrast, self-confidence emerged as a positive factor that increased students' willingness to communicate. Students who believed in their speaking ability tended to participate more actively in discussions, presentations, and classroom interactions, as language self-confidence positively contributes to students' willingness to communicate in English (Banunaek et al., 2026; Basöz et al., 2019). Likewise, Sen and Oz (2021) emphasized that students with higher communicative confidence are generally more willing to speak and interact in EFL classrooms. Therefore, self-confidence becomes an important psychological foundation that encourages students to take communication risks despite making mistakes.

Motivation was also found to influence students' willingness to communicate. Students who had strong personal goals, such as improving their future career opportunities, communicating with foreigners, or becoming fluent English speakers, showed greater enthusiasm in speaking activities. In addition, students who enjoyed English media such as songs, movies, and social media content tended to feel more comfortable communicating in English. This finding supports Zhang et al. (2024), who found that language enjoyment and motivation positively affect students' willingness to communicate. Similarly, Siwa and Basthomi (2023) explained that students with strong intrinsic motivation are more likely to engage actively in EFL communication activities.

Another important psychological factor identified in this study was personality. Students with more extroverted personalities tended to speak more actively and confidently during classroom interactions, while introverted students often needed more preparation time and supportive conditions before speaking. This finding is supported by Cameron (2020), who stated that personality influences

students' communication preferences and readiness to speak in EFL settings. However, this study also found that introverted students were still willing to communicate when they felt emotionally safe and supported by the classroom environment.

Regarding situational factors, the classroom environment significantly influenced students' willingness to communicate. A supportive, friendly, and non-judgmental classroom atmosphere encouraged students to speak more confidently in English. Students tended to participate actively when they felt respected by lecturers and peers. This finding is consistent with Weda et al. (2021), who found that a positive classroom atmosphere can reduce anxiety and increase students' participation in oral communication. Similarly, Bozca and Koban Koç (2023) emphasized that supportive peer interaction positively affects students' willingness to communicate in EFL speaking activities.

Lecturer support and feedback practices also played a crucial role in shaping students' communication experiences. Students felt more comfortable speaking when lecturers provided encouragement, tolerated mistakes, and gave corrective feedback politely after students finished speaking. In contrast, direct interruption during speaking activities tended to increase students' anxiety. This finding aligns with Hejazi et al. (2023), who explained that positive lecturer feedback and supportive teacher behavior contribute significantly to students' willingness to speak in EFL classrooms. In addition, Zarrinabadi (2014) highlighted that lecturers' interaction styles and feedback timing strongly affect students' confidence and classroom participation.

Learning activities were another situational factor influencing students' willingness to communicate. Interactive and communicative activities such as group discussions, role plays, storytelling, and topic-based conversations increased students' participation because they created more natural opportunities for communication (Muer et al., 2026; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2017). Students were more willing to speak when the discussion topics were relevant to their interests and experiences. This finding supports Zhou (2023), who argued that meaningful and contextual speaking tasks can improve students' willingness to communicate in EFL classes. Likewise, Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2017) explained that communicative classroom tasks encourage greater oral participation and reduce students' speaking reluctance.

Furthermore, this study revealed that students' willingness to communicate was dynamic and closely related to their personal experiences and identity development as English learners. Some students viewed speaking English as a form of self-improvement and academic identity, while others still struggled with social pressure and fear of peer judgment. This finding supports Barkhuizen and Consoli (2021), who emphasized that students' communication behavior in EFL contexts is influenced by social experiences, identity negotiation, and personal meaning-making processes.

The findings of this study confirm that willingness to communicate is influenced by the interaction between internal psychological factors and external situational factors. These findings are consistent with recent perspectives on WTC in EFL learning, which view communication willingness as dynamic, contextual, and shaped by students' emotional, social, and classroom experiences. Therefore, creating supportive classroom environments, reducing students' anxiety, providing positive lecturer feedback, and designing meaningful communicative activities are important strategies for improving students' willingness to communicate in English speaking classes.

Comparison with recent studies clarifies the contribution of this study. The findings support previous research showing that WTC is shaped by anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, teacher support, classroom atmosphere, task type, and peer interaction (Bai, 2023; Mulyono & Saskia, 2021; Amalia et al., 2019). However, the present findings also differ from studies that report less clear differences between interaction modes. For example, Peng (2020) found that students' WTC in whole-class interaction did not significantly differ from their WTC in dyadic and group interaction, whereas the present study shows that students were more willing to speak in small-group or familiar-

topic activities but became reluctant during sudden questioning and formal presentations. This difference suggests that WTC in the present Indonesian EFL speaking class was strongly affected by immediate classroom pressure, preparation time, peer evaluation, and emotional safety. The findings are also consistent with recent dynamic views of WTC, which argue that WTC should not be treated only as a stable learner trait but as a state-like and situation-sensitive construct that may fluctuate across tasks, interlocutors, topics, and classroom moments (Zhang et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2022; Lee & Chiu, 2024). In addition, the findings challenge the assumption that classroom participation can be used as a direct and complete indicator of willingness. As Zhou (2023) explains, WTC does not automatically translate into learner talk because learner-internal and learner-external factors may enable or prevent students from speaking. In this study, silence did not necessarily indicate passivity or lack of motivation; rather, it was closely connected to fear of mistakes, peer judgment, limited vocabulary, and the perceived emotional safety of the classroom. This pattern can be explained by the Indonesian EFL context, where English is often practiced mainly in formal learning spaces and students have limited exposure to spontaneous English communication outside the classroom. Recent Indonesian studies also show that learners' WTC is influenced by classroom conditions, topic familiarity, group size, preparation, task types, confidence, anxiety, and motivation (Amalia et al., 2019; Havwini, 2019; Mulyono & Saskia, 2021). Therefore, compared with broader global WTC studies, the present study contributes a contextual explanation that WTC in Indonesian EFL speaking classes should be understood as locally situated readiness to communicate, not merely as a stable personality trait or as visible participation alone.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that EFL university students' willingness to communicate in English speaking classes is influenced by the interaction between psychological and situational factors. The psychological factors include self-confidence, anxiety, motivation, and personality, while the situational factors include classroom environment, lecturer support, teaching strategies, learning activities, and peer interaction. These factors shape how students perceive and experience English communication in the classroom.

The findings show that students are more willing to communicate when they feel confident, motivated, and supported by their lecturers and classmates. A friendly classroom atmosphere, meaningful topics, group discussions, and positive lecturer feedback encourage students to participate more actively in speaking activities. On the other hand, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, low self-confidence, sudden questions, and fear of negative peer judgment reduce students' willingness to speak English.

Therefore, willingness to communicate should not be understood only as an individual learner trait, but also as a dynamic condition that can change depending on classroom situations. Speaking lecturers need to create a supportive and non-threatening learning environment, provide encouraging feedback, use relevant and interactive speaking activities, and give students sufficient preparation time. By addressing both psychological and situational aspects, lecturers can help students become more confident, active, and willing to communicate in English.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, this study was limited to two intact speaking classes in one English Education Study Program at a private university in Kupang, so the findings cannot be generalized to all Indonesian EFL university students. Second, the interview data were collected from ten purposively selected students, which allowed in-depth exploration but did not provide statistical representativeness. Third, classroom observation captured students' participation during regular speaking sessions only; WTC may change across different courses, lecturers, speaking tasks, and assessment conditions. Finally, the study relied on students' self-reported experiences in interviews, so future research could combine qualitative data with WTC

scales, speaking anxiety measures, or longitudinal observation to examine how trait-like and situational WTC develop over time.

REFERENCES

- Akhter, S. (2020). The role of English as an international language in global communication. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8(2), 45–52. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v8i2.109876>
- Bai, S. (2023). The predictive effects of foreign language anxiety and boredom on willingness to communicate among Chinese struggling EFL learners. *Heliyon*, 9(9), Article e19610. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19610>
- Banunaek, J. A. S., Siwa, Y. N., & Toni, E. A. B. (2026). Students' stories of speaking English in EFL classes: A narrative inquiry into factors affecting their willingness to speak. *Ebony-Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature*, 6(1) 2026, 26--36. <https://doi.org/10.37304/ebony.v6i1.23637>
- Basöz, T., Mede, E., & Akdemir, Ö. (2019). The relationship between willingness to communicate, language self-confidence, and anxiety in EFL context. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 15(2), 575–593. <https://doi.org/10.17263/jlls.586654>
- Cameron, D. (2020). Psychological and situational factors affecting willingness to communicate in second language learning. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 30(3), 412–428. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12290>
- Dauyah, E., & Yulinar. (2018). The importance of speaking skills for EFL students' competitiveness. *English Education Journal*, 9(1), 100–113.
- Khajavy, G. H., Ghonsooly, B., Hosseini Fatemi, A., & Choi, C. W. (2016). Willingness to communicate in English: The role of classroom environment and teacher support. *Language Teaching Research*, 20(4), 498–518. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168815590647>
- Khan, R. M. I., Radzuan, N. R. M., Shahbaz, M., Ibrahim, A. H., & Mustafa, G. (2018). The role of vocabulary knowledge in speaking development of EFL learners. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(1), 45–57. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.4>
- Lee, J. S., & Chiu, M. M. (2024). Modelling trait and state willingness to communicate in a second language: An experience sampling approach. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 14(3), 483–514. doi: 10.14746/sslt.37541
- Littlewood, W. (2007). Communicative language teaching and willingness to communicate. *Language Teaching Research*, 11(3), 243–267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168807077588>

- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545–562. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1998.tb05543.x>
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Legatto, J. J. (2011). A dynamic system approach to willingness to communicate. *Modern Language Journal*, 95(2), 149–164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01147.x>
- Muer, F., Aleksius, M., & Siwa, Y. N. (2026). The use of YouTube videos as a learning media to improve EFL students' speaking skill. *Journal of English Language and Education*, 11(1), 857–864. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i1.2029>
- Mystkowska-Wiertelak, A., & Pawlak, M. (2021). The dynamic nature of willingness to communicate in EFL classrooms. *System*, 99, 102503. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102503>
- Pawlak, M., Mystkowska-Wiertelak, A., & Bielak, J. (2016). Investigating the nature of classroom willingness to communicate. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 6(2), 245–272. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2016.6.2.4>
- Peng, J.-E. (2020). Teacher interaction strategies and situated willingness to communicate. *ELT Journal*, 74(3), 307–317. 10.1093/elt/ccaa012
- Riadil, I. G. (2020). English as a global language: Its impact on EFL learners. *Journal of English Language Studies*, 5(1), 12–21.
- Siwa, Y. N., & Basthomi, Y. (2023). Students' optimal engagement in EFL large classes: A qualitative phenomenological study in East Nusa Tenggara. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(12), 3572-3591. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.6073>
- Suksawas, W., & Kantasawut, P. (2014). Classroom factors influencing willingness to communicate of Thai EFL learners. *Asian EFL Journal*, 16(3), 130–160.
- Tulgar, A. T. (2018). Speaking anxiety of foreign language learners. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 14(4), 109–123.
- Utami, I. G. A. L. P., & Rismadewi, N. W. M. (2022). Students' willingness to communicate in English classroom interaction. *Journal of English Teaching*, 8(1), 35–47.
- Weda, S., Sakti, A. E. F., & Hamzah. (2021). Classroom environment and teacher role in shaping EFL students' willingness to communicate. *International Journal of Language Education*, 5(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v5i1.15209>
- Zhang, J., Beckmann, N., & Beckmann, J. F. (2018). To talk or not to talk: A review of situational antecedents of willingness to communicate in the second language classroom. *System*, 72, 226–239. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.01.003>

Zhou, Q. (2023). Translating willingness to communicate into learner talk in a Chinese as a foreign language classroom. *Language Teaching Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688231176035>