

UNDERSTANDING SILENCE AND PARTICIPATION: WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH AMONG EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRAK

Kesediaan untuk Berkomunikasi (WTC) telah diakui sebagai faktor kunci yang mempengaruhi partisipasi mahasiswa di kelas Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi kesediaan mahasiswa jurusan non-Bahasa Inggris untuk berkomunikasi dalam bahasa Inggris dan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang membentuk perilaku komunikatif mereka. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan observasi kelas. Responden terdiri dari Data dianalisis secara tematis. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa WTC mahasiswa bersifat dinamis dan bergantung pada konteks. Hal ini didukung oleh faktor psikologis seperti kepercayaan diri dan kecemasan, lingkungan kelas dan dukungan dosen, interaksi teman sebaya, keterbatasan bahasa, dan faktor situasional. Studi ini juga menemukan bahwa mahasiswa lebih bersedia untuk berkomunikasi dalam kegiatan informal dan kelompok kecil dibandingkan dalam suasana formal yang melibatkan seluruh kelas. Temuan juga menunjukkan bahwa menciptakan lingkungan kelas yang suportif dan rendah tingkat kecemasan sangat penting terkait dengan meningkatkan kemauan siswa untuk berkomunikasi dalam bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi wawasan kualitatif terhadap literatur WTC dan menawarkan implikasi pedagogis untuk pengajaran bahasa Inggris dalam konteks departemen non-Bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing; Kesiediaan untuk Berkomunikasi; mahasiswa jurusan non-Bahasa Inggris

ABSTRACT

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has been recognized as a key factor influencing learners' participation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. However, research focusing on non-English department students in higher education, particularly from a qualitative perspective, remains limited. This study aimed to explore 15 non-English department students' willingness to communicate in English and to identify the factors shaping their communicative behavior. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations involving undergraduate students enrolled in compulsory English courses at an Islamic Indonesian university. The data were analyzed thematically using Willingness to Communicate framework. The findings reveal that students' WTC is dynamic and context-dependent, influenced by psychological factors such as self-confidence and anxiety, classroom environment and teacher support, peer interaction, linguistic limitations, and situational factors. The study also found that students were more willing to communicate in informal and small-group activities than in formal, whole-class settings. These findings suggest that creating a supportive and low-anxiety classroom environment is crucial for enhancing students' willingness to communicate in English. This study contributes qualitative insights to the WTC literature and offers pedagogical implications for English instruction in non-English department contexts.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language; non-English department students; Willingness to Communicate

INTRODUCTION

English is now a crucial communication tool in academic, professional, and global contexts. Students from non-English departments in higher education are increasingly expected to use English in order to participate in class discussions, access academic materials, and get ready for their future careers. Even when they have adequate language proficiency, many non-English department students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) situations are reluctant to speak English despite this growing significance. Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is a fundamental idea that contributes to the explanation of this phenomenon. It is the term used to describe learners' willingness to initiate conversations in a second or foreign language when given the opportunity. It is also a key factor in predicting whether students actively utilize English in authentic communication contexts, according to earlier research. High WTC students are more likely to engage in class activities that support language development, particularly speaking fluency and confidence (Anwar, I.W., et al., 2021; Chojimah, N; & Widodo, 2023; Rihardini, A.A., et al., 2021).

Students' desire to speak has been found to be influenced by a variety of factors in WTC research, including self-confidence, anxiety, motivation, teacher support, peer relationships, and classroom atmosphere. However, the majority of previous research has focused on English majors or students in English departments and has employed quantitative methods. These studies often fail to adequately capture students' unique experiences, emotions, and contextual challenges, despite providing valuable information on general trends and correlations. When it comes to students from departments other than English, the WTC issue becomes more complex. Because they often view English as a necessary subject rather than a personal or professional identity, these students might be less driven and confident. If they are afraid of making mistakes in front of their peers and have little exposure to English outside of the classroom, they might also be less likely to speak. However, research on students' own voices and opinions regarding the reasons behind their decision to speak or remain silent is still lacking, particularly in Indonesian higher education settings. These statements are supported by (Bergil,

2016; Lo, 2018; Ubaid, U.U., et al., 2021). Therefore, the goal of this study is to find out how willing non-English department students are to communicate in English using a qualitative methodology. By examining students' viewpoints, experiences, and classroom realities, this study seeks to provide a better understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder students' willingness to communicate. By giving teachers practical guidance on how to create more supportive and engaging learning environments for students from non-English departments, the results are expected to improve EFL instruction. There are still several gaps in the body of research on willingness to communicate (WTC), despite the fact that it has been thoroughly examined in second and foreign language acquisition contexts.

First, most prior research on WTC has used quantitative research designs, concentrating on measuring WTC levels and finding statistical correlations between WTC and characteristics like motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. Although these studies yield significant, broadly applicable results, they provide little understanding of the real-world experiences and individual factors that influence students' readiness or unwillingness to interact in English.

Second, a large portion of the study that has already been done has focused on English majors or department students, who usually have stronger linguistic backgrounds and more exposure to the language. Therefore, experiences of non-English department students, who frequently view English as an elective or required course, are therefore still underrepresented. Particularly in situations when students' academic identities are not directly linked to their use of the English language, this lack of concentration results in an insufficient grasp of WTC. Third, there are currently not many studies that examine WTC in Indonesian higher education, particularly those that use a qualitative methodology that emphasizes student perspectives. The ways that peer interaction, classroom dynamics, and emotional aspects influence non-English department students' propensity to converse in English in EFL contexts need to be thoroughly investigated. These are in line with (Lee, J.S., et al., 2021; Lee, n.d.; Mudra, 2024).

In order to close these gaps, the current study uses a qualitative methodology to investigate the

willingness of non-English department students to communicate in English, paying close attention to their perspectives, experiences, and classroom realities. By doing this, the study aims to supplement current quantitative findings and offer context-sensitive insights that can guide more inclusive and successful English teaching methods in non-English departments.

This study adds to the body of knowledge on Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English in a number of new ways. First, this study takes a qualitative approach to investigate WTC from the viewpoints of the students, in contrast to the majority of earlier studies that mostly relied on quantitative survey data. This study offers a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of the emotional, social, and environmental aspects that influence students' propensity to speak in English by elevating their voices. Second, non-English department students—a group that has not gotten much scholarly attention in WTC research—are the particular focus of this study. This study sheds insight on the experiences of students for whom English is not essential to their academic identity, whereas previous research has mostly concentrated on English majors or language-oriented learners. This focus allows the study to reveal unique challenges, such as instrumental motivation, limited exposure, and fear of negative evaluation, which may not be fully captured in studies involving English department students.

Third, this study, which was carried out in an Indonesian EFL higher education setting, offers context-sensitive insights on how peer dynamics, classroom procedures, and cultural norms affect students' desire to speak. There is still a dearth of such localized qualitative evidence in the literature, especially in national journal articles. Lastly, by identifying classroom activities that either support or impede students' willingness to speak, the study's findings have useful educational implications. English instructors in non-English departments can use these insights to create more encouraging, inclusive, and interactive learning environments. In this approach, the study connects research and classroom practice while also expanding theoretical understanding of WTC.

1. Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in Second Language Learning

A crucial concept in second and foreign language learning is Willingness to Communicate (WTC), which describes students' preparedness to start conversations in a target language when given the chance. The idea was first presented by (Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021) who put forth a pyramid model of WTC and emphasized that both situational factors and stable individual attributes have an impact on communication behaviour. Because students frequently have little exposure to English outside of the classroom, classroom interaction is a critical setting for language use, which makes WTC especially significant in EFL situations. Higher WTC students are more likely to participate in speaking activities, which increases their chances for language development, according to numerous studies. As such, WTC is often regarded as a strong predictor of actual language use rather than merely language competence.

2. Psychological Factors Influencing WTC

Prior research has demonstrated the important influence of psychological factors on students' communication readiness. Self-confidence is often cited as a key component; students who are confident in their English language skills are more likely to engage in conversation. On the other hand, learners' willingness to speak has been reported to be decreased by foreign language anxiety, especially fear of making mistakes and receiving a poor grade. In WTC, motivation is also very important. English communication is more common among learners who have strong instrumental or integrative motivation. However, motivation for non-English department students is sometimes instrumental and restricted to meeting academic requirements or passing tests, which may not necessarily translate into active engagement in class. Students' decisions to talk or stay silent in the present are influenced by the dynamic interaction of these psychological elements. These statements are supported by (Almarshadi, A.N.B., et al., 2019; Bergil, 2016; Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021).

3. Classroom Environment and Social Factors

Beyond personal psychology, societal and educational settings have a significant impact on WTC. Students' willingness to communicate can be aided or hindered by teacher conduct, such as encouragement, feedback style, and error

tolerance. It has been demonstrated that a classroom environment that is encouraging and non-threatening boosts pupils' self-esteem and lowers anxiety. Another important feature is peer contact. When students feel supported and welcomed by their peers, they are more inclined to speak up. On the other hand, fear of scorn or condemnation from peers might deter students from participating, especially in big or mixed-ability classes. Task types also matter; activities that are teacher-centred or accuracy-focused typically result in lower WTC than those that are communicative, collaborative, and meaningful.

4. WTC among Non-English Department Students
Despite the fact that WTC has been extensively studied, the majority of these studies concentrate on English majors or language-focused students. Students from non-English departments constitute a unique group whose academic identity is not strongly associated with English. These students may be less inclined to communicate because they frequently view English as a required subject rather than a tool for communication. Limited exposure to English, low self-esteem, and a fear of making mistakes are significant communication hurdles, according to studies involving non-English majors. However, a large portion of this study is based on quantitative questionnaires, which provide little information about how students really encounter and understand these difficulties. Qualitative research that thoroughly examines the perspectives, voices, and classroom realities of non-English department students is still needed.

5. Need for a Qualitative Perspective

Although quantitative research has produced insightful results regarding the determinants of WTC, it frequently ignores the contextual and intricate aspects of students' communication behaviour. Researchers can investigate the intersections of psychological, social, and instructional aspects in actual classroom situations by using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research can identify small but significant factors on WTC that might not be detected by numerical data alone by hearing students' stories and experiences. Therefore, in order to supplement current research and offer context-sensitive insights for EFL teaching practice, a qualitative

investigation of non-English department students' willingness to converse in English is required.

In the realm of acquiring second and foreign languages, Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has been thoroughly studied. WTC was defined as a dynamic construct impacted by both situational and individual aspects in early, significant work by (Lo, 2018; Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021; Rizvic, E., & Becirovic, 2017). Many empirical investigations investigating the psychological and contextual variables of learners' communicative behaviour in L2 classrooms were made possible by their approach. Numerous further investigations have looked into WTC using quantitative methods. For example, studies have repeatedly found strong correlations between WTC and factors including motivation, language anxiety, and self-confidence. Learners who are more self-assured and less anxious typically show a stronger desire to speak English. These results have been validated in a variety of EFL contexts, including Asian ones, where anxiety and fear of receiving a poor grade frequently show up as the main inhibiting variables.

Numerous studies have also looked at how the educational environment influences WTC. Students' readiness to talk has been proven to be increased by communicative instructional techniques, teacher support, and positive feedback. When compared to teacher-centred training, peer support and cooperative activities like role plays and group discussions have been demonstrated to foster higher levels of WTC. These studies, however, mostly depend on survey data and provide little insight into how students perceive and understand these classroom elements. There is still a dearth of research that focuses only on students from non-English departments. According to current research, non-English majors frequently show lower levels of WTC than English majors because of their lack of confidence, instrumental motivation, and inadequate exposure to the language. English is often seen as a required subject rather than a useful tool for communication, which could lower students' participation in speaking exercises. Despite these results, the majority of research involving students from non-English departments continues to use quantitative approaches that prioritize assessment over in-depth comprehension.

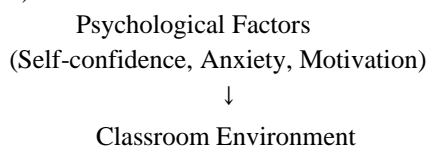
Fewer research has used mixed-method or qualitative approaches to investigate WTC. These studies show that students' readiness to speak is flexible and context-dependent, impacted by classroom interactions in real time, emotional states, and impressions of peer and teacher reactions. Qualitative research reveals that silence might be a sign of fear, lack of preparation, or cultural norms surrounding classroom involvement rather than always being an indication of refusal (Fernando, W., & Subekti, 2023; Maryansyah, 2019).

Research on WTC is expanding but still scarce in the Indonesian EFL context, especially in higher education settings with students from non-English departments. The majority of current research prioritizes statistical analysis over student opinions and focuses on general EFL learners or English majors. Because of this, there is still a dearth of qualitative data that describes how students from non-English departments perceive and negotiate their desire to speak English in class. All things considered, earlier research has provided insightful information about the variables affecting WTC; still, qualitative, context-specific studies that emphasize the viewpoints of students from non-English departments are still needed. In order to close this gap, the current study aims to investigate students' opinions of their willingness to communicate in English as well as their lived experiences in an Indonesian higher education setting.

Conceptual Framework

According to this study, Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English is a dynamic and context-dependent phenomena that is impacted by social interaction, the classroom environment, and psychological factors. The paradigm sees WTC as shaped by students' lived experiences in EFL classrooms, especially among non-English department students, rather than as a fixed personality attribute.

Conceptual Framework Model (Text-Based Diagram)



(Teacher Support, Peer Interaction,
Task Design, Classroom Atmosphere)



Students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC)



Actual Classroom Communication
(Participation, Speaking, Interaction)

Context: Non-English Department EFL Classroom

Key Components of the Framework

1. Psychological Factors

Students' willingness to speak is greatly influenced by psychological variables. Among them are: self-assurance when speaking English anxiety, especially the dread of making mistakes or receiving a poor grade. In non-English department settings, motivation is frequently crucial. These elements, which are influenced by prior learning experiences and classroom interactions, have an impact on students' internal preparedness to speak.

2. Classroom Environment

Psychological elements are either increased or weakened in the classroom setting, which serves as a mediating space. This comprises: Peer interaction (acceptance, cooperation, judgment), teacher support (encouragement, feedback style, error tolerance), Task design (discussions, role plays, group work), classroom climate (threatening versus safe). Students' WTC can rise in a supportive educational setting by lowering fear and boosting confidence. Communication Willingness (WTC) WTC is positioned as the framework's core construct. It symbolizes pupils' spontaneous choice to talk or keep quiet in English. Instead of using numerical scores, this study examines WTC via the perspectives, emotions, and views of the students.

3. Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

WTC is positioned as the central construct of the framework. It represents students' moment-to-moment decision to speak or remain silent in English. In this study, WTC is explored through students' perceptions, feelings, and reflections rather than numerical scores.

4. Actual Communication Behavior

WTC results in discernible communication practices like: Taking part in conversations, posing

or responding to queries, working in pairs or groups.

The paradigm does, however, recognize that silence may be a reflection of emotional or contextual limitations rather than a sign of poor WTC. Conformity to Qualitative Research The qualitative investigation is guided by this conceptual framework by: By framing interview questions in terms of classroom reality and psychological experiences. In order to determine how the element interacts dynamically, thematic analysis is supported by giving kids the opportunity to express their reasons for wanting or refusing to communicate.

The framework functions as an interpretative lens to comprehend students' lived experiences of WTC in non-English department EFL classrooms rather than testing causal linkages. Using this paradigm, the current study investigates: How students perceive their psychological preparedness for speaking, how their WTC is shaped by classroom procedures, how these elements work together in actual classroom settings.

METHOD

Research Design

This study investigated the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among students from non-English departments using a qualitative research approach. In order to completely comprehend students' perceptions, experiences, and emotions regarding their English communication behaviour—which cannot be entirely captured by quantitative measures—a qualitative method was selected (Creswell, J.W. & Timothy, 2019; Miles, M.B., et al., 2014; Tracy, 2013). The researcher can investigate WTC as a dynamic and context-dependent phenomenon in actual classroom situations thanks to this design.

Research Context and Participants

Students from non-English departments who were enrolled in a required English course participated in the study, which was carried out at an Islamic university. Purposive sampling was used to choose participants, with an emphasis on students who had learned English in a classroom setting and were open to sharing their experiences. The study involved fifteen undergraduate students in all. The

investigation of various viewpoints on willingness to converse in English was made possible by the fact that they represented a range of academic disciplines and self-reported English proficiency levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data, giving participants the freedom to voice their opinions while guaranteeing that they were in line with the research goals. The topic of the interview questions was: English-speaking experiences of students in class, elements that either facilitated or impeded their desire to communicate, emotional reactions like assurance and nervousness, opinions about peer interaction and classroom procedures. Each interview was performed in a language that was comfortable for the participants (either English or Indonesian) and lasted between 20 to 30 minutes. With the participants' permission, all interviews were audio recorded and then verbatim transcribed for analysis. Classroom observations were optionally carried out to record students' real involvement patterns and classroom dynamics pertaining to English communication in order to enhance the data.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to examine the data (Braun, V & Clarke, 2021). The analysis was conducted in multiple steps: familiarization with the information via reading interview transcripts several times; initial coding to find significant WTC-related units; grouping codes according to more general themes, like social interaction, school conditions, and psychological aspects; examining and improving themes to make sure they are coherent and pertinent to the study questions; analysing the topics in light of the WTC framework proposed by (Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021). This procedure preserved theoretical alignment while allowing patterns and correlations to surface from the data.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Several techniques were used to guarantee the reliability of the results: Credibility: Interview summaries were shared with participants for verification as part of the member vetting process.

dependability: The steps involved in data analysis and research techniques were clearly documented. Confirmability: Direct quotes from participants served as the foundation for data interpretation. Transferability: Participants and the research context were thoroughly described. Moral Aspects Before any data was collected, ethical approval was secured. The goal of the study and their ability to withdraw at any time were explained to the participants. To maintain anonymity, participants' identities were anonymised and informed consent was acquired.

Research Procedure

To ensure methodological rigor and credibility, the research technique for this work was carried out in multiple systematic steps.

1. Stage of Preparation

Initially, the investigator: have out a thorough analysis of the literature on Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in EFL settings; created the research tools, especially the semi-structured interview guide, using the conceptual framework and research questions from (Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021) WTC model; acquired ethical approval and asked the institution for authorization to carry out the study.

2. Participant Selection

Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants. The following criteria were used to choose participants: undergraduates from departments other than English; enrolment in a required English course; willingness to take part and exchange English-speaking experiences. Before any data was collected, potential participants were made aware of the study's objectives and gave their informed consent.

3. Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The process comprised: setting up interview periods that work for the participants; conducting interviews in a relaxed and non-threatening setting; To guarantee rich and genuine responses, allow participants to speak in either Indonesian or English; audio record the interviews with consent from the participants. The duration of each interview was roughly twenty to thirty minutes.

Classroom observations were optional in order to record students' engagement, patterns of interaction, and classroom environment in relation to English communication in order to supplement the interview data.

4. Data Transcription

Every interview that was recorded was verbatim transcribed. To ensure accuracy transcriptions were closely compared to the audio recordings. To ensure confidentiality, participant names and identifying information were eliminated and replaced with pseudonyms.

5. Analysis of Data

A theme analysis method was used for the data analysis: familiarization with the data by reading the transcripts several times; initial categorization of significant segments according to communication willingness or reluctance; classifying related codes into groups; creating broad themes that are in line with situational WTC, classroom settings, and psychological elements; evaluating the subjects in light of the current literature and conceptual framework (Braun, V & Clarke, 2021;).

6. Trustworthiness Strategies

To increase the study's credibility: Summaries of the results were shared with chosen participants in order to perform member checking; Coding and topic development were reviewed through peer debriefing; To enable readers to evaluate transferability, a detailed description was given.

7. Presenting the Results

The results were then arranged and presented in a thematic manner. Students' voices were kept at the centre of the study by using direct quotes from participants to bolster each theme. The findings were then examined in light of earlier research and theoretical viewpoints on WTC.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The thematic analysis of interview transcripts and classroom observations led to the organization of the study's findings into six main topics. These topics highlight how students' readiness to communicate in English is dynamic and

multifaceted. The inclusion of student perspectives highlights their real-life experiences and strengthens the findings' trustworthiness.

Theme 1: Psychological Factors Influencing Willingness to Communicate

Students' willingness to converse in English was shown to be mostly determined by psychological variables. The majority of participants reported feeling anxious and lacking confidence, especially when they had to speak English in front of the entire class. Even when they understood the subject being discussed, pupils frequently remained silent out of fear of making grammar and pronunciation errors. Many students said they were less inclined to participate orally because they were afraid of being judged by others. Nonetheless, a tiny percentage of students who felt more confident expressed a greater desire to talk, particularly in situations where they were comfortable or encouraged. According to this research, students' communicative behaviour is greatly influenced by their psychological preparedness.

Many participants said they wanted to talk a lot but felt nervous and unconfident, especially in situations involving the entire class. Students frequently remained silent out of fear of making mistakes and being judged by others.

"Actually, I want to speak English, but when everyone is looking at me, I suddenly feel nervous and forget what I want to say," one student said (S3).

"I'm afraid of making mistakes, especially my grammar," said a different student. I feel ashamed if I say something incorrect (S7).

These voices demonstrate how, despite their motivation, emotional factors stifle students' readiness to communicate.

Theme 2: Classroom Environment and Teacher Support

Students' willingness to communicate was greatly influenced by the classroom setting and the conduct of the teacher. Students were encouraged to speak more actively in English in a classroom setting that was encouraging and non-threatening. Participants highlighted how lecturers who offered support, encouragement, and tolerance error

correction helped students feel less anxious and more confident. On the other hand, communication was sometimes hampered in classes that were seen as being very formal or evaluative. Additionally, observation data revealed that students were more inclined to speak when instructors provided flexibility, such as speaking in many languages or allowing sufficient time to wait for answers.

"I feel more relaxed and braver to speak when the lecturer says it's okay to make mistakes," said one participant (S5).

On the other hand, as another student noted, a more formal or strict teaching approach discouraged participation:

"I prefer to remain silent if the lecturer is too serious because I'm afraid of being corrected in front of the class" (S10).

These results suggest that one important situational trigger of WTC is teacher support.

Theme 3: Peer and Social Interaction Factors

Students' propensity to speak was influenced by peer contact in two ways. Students' confidence and readiness to speak were boosted by encouraging peers, especially when working in groups or pairs. When working with peers or classmates of comparable ability levels, students felt more at ease speaking in English. However, engagement was discouraged by the prospect of receiving a poor grade from peers. Speaking English in front of students who were thought to be more adept made several participants feel ashamed or insecure. Observations in the classroom revealed that a few self-assured kids frequently dominated speech involvement, while others stayed silent.

"I feel more comfortable speaking English with my close friends than in front of the whole class," a student stated (S8).

Another student acknowledged,

"I sometimes choose not to speak because I'm afraid my friends will criticize my English" (S6).

These narratives emphasize how socially conscious it is to be open to communication in educational settings.

Theme 4: Linguistic and Proficiency-Related Factors

Students' willingness to speak was significantly impacted by their perception of their level of English proficiency. Pronunciation issues, limited vocabulary, and grammatical confusion were often cited as obstacles to speaking English. Many students would rather keep quiet than take the chance of using inappropriate language. Despite these difficulties, several students reported feeling more inclined to talk when given communicative assignments that prioritized significance over correctness. This result emphasizes how crucial it is to lessen language pressure in order to encourage WTC among students who do not study English. *"I often know the idea in Indonesian, but I don't know how to say it in English," one student clarified (S4).*

Another said,

"I'm afraid people won't understand me because of my poor pronunciation" (S9).

These statements suggest that perceived communicative competence strongly shapes students' readiness to speak.

Theme 5: Situational and Contextual Factors

It was discovered that communication willingness varied depending on the situation and setting. Compared to whole-class interactions, students were often more open to speaking during small-group discussions. Compared to formal presentations, informal activities like role plays and debates encouraged higher levels of WTC. Large class sizes and time constraints were also noted as barriers. Students were less inclined to speak when they felt hurried or under constant peer scrutiny. These results imply that moment-to-moment WTC is significantly shaped by the classroom situation.

"I'm more willing to speak in small groups than when the whole class is listening," one participant said (S13).

"Presentations make me very nervous, but discussions are okay," said another (S15).

These findings confirm that WTC fluctuates according to task type and classroom context.

Theme 6: Coping Strategies and Adaptive Behaviours

Students used a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with communication difficulties despite their reluctance. These included using code-switching between Indonesian and English, mentally practicing responses, and taking notes before speaking. Additionally, some students reported using constructive self-talk to get over their nervousness and fear. Avoidance behaviours, such as avoiding eye contact or feigning busyness to avoid speaking opportunities, were also noted. These tactics show that communication readiness is not a fixed characteristic but rather a continuum. Overall, the results show that a variety of psychological, linguistic, social, and contextual elements interact to affect non-English department students' propensity to converse in English. Communication willingness is dynamic and varies according on students' emotional states, interpersonal interactions, and classroom settings.

"I usually prepare some notes or sentences in my head before speaking," one student clarified (S1).

Another pointed out,

"To keep talking, I sometimes mix English and Indonesian" (S7).

But avoidance tactics were also visible; one student said,

"If I'm really not ready, I avoid eye contact so I won't be asked" (S6).

Overall, the results show that a variety of psychological, linguistic, social, and contextual elements interact to affect non-English department students' propensity to converse in English. Communication willingness is dynamic and varies according on students' emotional states, interpersonal interactions, and classroom settings.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate, using a qualitative approach, the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among non-English department students. The results show that students' WTC is a situational and dynamic phenomenon that is heavily impacted by contextual, linguistic, social, and psychological elements. These findings align with the WTC pyramid model proposed by (Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021), which views communication

willingness as the product of several interrelated layers.

First, (Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021) claim that situational self-confidence is crucial in deciding immediate desire to speak is supported by the importance of psychological elements, including self-confidence, anxiety, and fear of negative judgment. Due to anxiousness and a fear of making mistakes, students in this study frequently showed a desire to speak English but abstained from doing so. This result confirms earlier studies that WTC is directly related to learners' emotional preparedness for communication rather than just being a question of language proficiency. This study also was in line with (Apriliani, A.I & Listyani, 2020; Lee, J.S., Xie, Q., & Lee, 2021; Mudra, 2024).

Second, the situated antecedents in Macintyre's approach align with the impact of the classroom environment and teacher support. Students' WTC has been found to be improved by supportive instructor actions like encouraging classroom practices, tolerance for mistakes, and positive comments. This suggests that teachers play a crucial role as mediators, having the power to either encourage or inhibit students' desire to speak at any particular time. Such support becomes even more important in lowering affective barriers for non-English department students whose primary academic identity is unrelated to English. These statements also are supported by (Anwar, I.W., et al, 2021; Leong, L.M., & Ahmadi, 2017; Rihardini, A.A., et al, 2021).

Third, it was discovered that social dynamics and peer interaction both promote and hinder WTC. According to Macintyre et al.'s social context layer, students were less inclined to speak in whole-class settings where peer judgment was felt, but more eager to do so in small groups with encouraging peers. This study emphasizes the social aspect of WTC and implies that silence should be seen as a reaction to perceived social risk rather than just a lack of motivation.

Fourth, students' perceptions of communicative competence—another essential element of Macintyre's framework—were

influenced by language and proficiency-related criteria. Students' confidence and willingness to communicate were diminished by limited vocabulary, grammatical ambiguity, and pronunciation issues. On the other hand, students displayed higher WTC when tasks in the classroom prioritized significance above precision. This bolsters the claim that instructional strategies can encourage communication even among students with lower competence levels and lessen language fear.

Furthermore, the findings confirm the situational variability of WTC, a key principle in Macintyre's model. Students' willingness fluctuated depending on task type, formality, time pressure, and class size. Informal and collaborative activities generated higher WTC than formal presentations, indicating that immediate classroom conditions play a decisive role in shaping communicative behavior. Finally, students' use of coping strategies, such as preparation, code-switching, and self-encouragement, reflects learners' active negotiation of their willingness to communicate. These strategies demonstrate that WTC exists on a continuum and can be developed over time through supportive learning environments and reflective teaching practices. Overall, by offering context-specific qualitative data from non-English department students in Indonesian higher education, this study expands upon Macintyre et al.'s WTC model. The results highlight the significance of considering WTC as a dynamic, socially constructed phenomena influenced by classroom interaction, emotional factors, and institutional context rather than as a permanent individual feature.

Additionally, the results validate WTC's situational variability, a fundamental tenet of Macintyre's paradigm. Depending on the nature of the assignment, formality, time constraints, and class size, students' willingness varied. Compared to formal presentations, informal and collaborative activities produced higher WTC, suggesting that the immediate classroom environment has a significant influence on communicative behaviour.

Lastly, students actively negotiate their desire to communicate through the use of coping mechanisms like self-encouragement, code-switching, and preparation. These tactics show that WTC is a continuum that can be built over time through reflective teaching methods and encouraging learning environments.

According to the results, students from non-English departments typically believe that their readiness to interact in English is restricted and erratic. Despite the fact that many students recognize the value of English, they frequently characterize themselves as reluctant speakers because of their lack of confidence and emotional discomfort when using the language in class. This view is consistent with the idea put forth by Macintyre et al that learners' psychological preparedness at a particular time shapes their willingness to communicate, which is a situational state rather than a constant attribute. According to students' self-perceptions, communication willingness varies depending on the classroom setting, ranging from avoidance to eagerness.

RQ2: What factors influence non-English department students' willingness to communicate in English in the classroom?

Numerous interconnected elements impacting students' desire to communicate were found in the study. Anxiety, fear of being judged negatively, and perceived self-confidence were among the psychological elements that emerged as the main contributors. Additionally, the classroom environment, feedback style, and teacher support all had a significant impact on how students communicated. Another important social aspect was peer contact, which, depending on how much students felt supported or judged by their peers, might either encourage or discourage communication. These results corroborate the theory developed by (Macintyre, P. D & Wang, 2021), which highlights how contextual, social, and individual factors interact to influence communication willingness.

RQ3: How do classroom situations shape non-English department students' willingness to communicate in English?

The results show how context has a significant impact on students' readiness to communicate. Compared to formal, whole-class exchanges, students were more inclined to communicate in casual, small-group activities. Students' preparedness to speak was greatly impacted by situational elements such assignment kind, class size, and time constraints. These findings are consistent with the idea of situational antecedents proposed by Macintyre et al., which emphasizes how the immediate classroom environment can either stimulate or inhibit communication. The propensity for group projects indicates that pedagogical design is essential for encouraging students from non-English departments to engage in communication.

When considered collectively, the results of the three research questions support the idea that English communication willingness is a dynamic, socially mediated, and pedagogically sensitive phenomenon. In addition to individual language proficiency, the classroom environment's emotional, social, and instructional elements also influence non-English department students' readiness to communicate. The study's explanatory power is strengthened and its contribution to the qualitative understanding of WTC in higher education contexts is highlighted by this clear match between the research goals and findings. These are in accordance with (Anwar, I.W., et al, 2021; Chojimah, N & Widodo, 2023; Ubaid, U.U., et al, 2021).

The researcher is crucial to the creation and interpretation of meaning in qualitative research. The researcher in this study notes that their role as an English language instructor may have had an impact on the research process, especially when it came to gathering and analysing data. Although this professional experience offered insightful information about classroom dynamics and students' communication difficulties, it also carried the risk of preconceived notions about students' readiness to speak in English. A number of

techniques were used to reduce researcher bias. The interview questions were made to be non-leading and open-ended so that participants may freely share their experiences. In order to promote candid answers, the researcher took an impartial and sympathetic approach during interviews. Verbatim quotes from participants served as the basis for interpretations during the analysis phase, and emerging themes were frequently compared to the original data. In addition, the coding procedure and thematic interpretations were reviewed by peer debriefing. Throughout the investigation, reflexive notes were kept to record analytical choices and introspective thoughts. These procedures were intended to improve the study's findings' openness, reliability, and credibility.

CONCLUSION

This study used a qualitative methodology to investigate the willingness of non-English department students to converse in English. The results show that the interplay of psychological, linguistic, social, and classroom-related elements shapes students' motivation to communicate, which is a dynamic and context-dependent phenomenon. Despite the fact that many students understood the value of English, anxiety, low self-esteem, fear of receiving a poor grade, and limited perceived skill sometimes prevented them from communicating. The study also showed that students' propensity to communicate is greatly increased by a supportive classroom atmosphere, especially when it comes to positive instructor feedback and peer collaboration. Compared to formal, whole-class situations, students were more inclined to speak English in casual, small-group activities. These results demonstrate that non-English department students' propensity to speak is a situational reaction impacted by social dynamics and instructional approaches rather than just an individual feature.

Implications

Pedagogical Implications

According to the findings, instructors who teach English to students from non-English departments should foster a friendly and low-stress learning atmosphere. Students' motivation to interact may be increased by communicative activities that

prioritize meaning over linguistic precision, such as group discussions and cooperative assignments. Giving students enough wait time and permitting clever code-switching can also help them get over their nervousness and engage more fully.

Theoretical Implications

By offering qualitative data from a non-English department setting in Indonesian higher education, this study adds to the body of knowledge on Willingness to Communicate. By emphasizing the flexible and socially constructed aspect of willingness to communicate in actual classroom settings, the findings reinforce and expand upon MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model.

Research Implications

To further investigate WTC across fields, future research may use mixed-methods designs or include larger and more varied participant groups. In order to investigate how students' readiness to communicate changes over time and in response to educational interventions, longitudinal research is also advised.

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