

**THE LEVEL OF WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE OF EFL HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**A Thesis Presented to Department of English Language Education
as Partial Fulfillment of Requirements to Obtain the Degree
in English Language Education**



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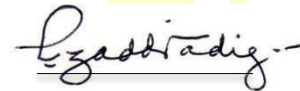
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THE LEVEL OF WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE OF EFL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English among students in an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. This study aims to identify the students' levels of willingness to communicate using English in Islamic boarding school. A survey was conducted using a 20 item-questionnaire adapted from Weda et al. (2021). The participants were 96 students from X and XI classes by females with 58 participants or 60% from total of students and male with 38 participants or 40% from total of students. The data of this study were analyzed using SPSS IBM 25. Findings showed that highest WTC levels were observed in group discussion related to cultural differences, where students feel comfortable and engaged. Conversely, the lowest WTC scores were associated with anxiety and cognitive barriers, particularly in group discourse settings. Future research should incorporate larger samples sizes and mixed-method approach for more comprehensive understanding of WTC in diverse educational context.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to the paper. It covers the background of the study, Identification of the problem, formulation of the problem, limitation of the problem, objectives of the study and finally presents the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

English is dominant global language in academia, business, and technology. Its widespread use in science, commerce and information access has solidified its position as the international lingua franca (Rao, 2019). Its widespread use is attributed to its role in information access and technology transfer, making it essential for professional and economic competitiveness (Grabe, 1988). The dominance of English language in academic publishing is crucial for students and researchers internationally contribute to global academic discourse and collaboration (Kawabiki & Indrawan, 2024). In business, multinational corporations often use English extensively in international business transactions, negotiations, and customer services (Abilasha & Ilankumaran, 2018). English is also primary language of programing, software development, and digital communication (Kumaran & Kalanithi, 2023). Therefore, proficiency in English language is important to enabling individuals to participate in cross-cultural communication, global economy, and access to newest knowledge (Tibus & Bendulo, 2018). However, there are many individuals who reluctant to learn more about the foreign language because of their own perception on foreign language from their learning environment.

English as a foreign language (EFL) learning are diverse and ranging from traditional classrooms settings in schools and universities to more specialized language institute. Schools and university teaching English as mandatory subject in primary and second education. However, the quality of EFL instruction can widely depending on the resources available (Amalia N et al., 2019). Language institutes offer more specialized and intensive English instruction with smaller class size, experienced teachers, and a

curriculum focused on practical skills, such as speaking and listening. Nonetheless, the limitation of the access of language institutes create a disparity between learners from different socio-economic backgrounds (Ebn-Abbasi & Nushi, 2022).

The diversity EFL learners' origins lead to significant variance in their language learning experiences and results. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation plays critical variety of degree in language learning. Learners with higher level of motivation tend to achieve better language proficiency (Macintyre et al., 1998; Şener, 2014). Additionally, the amount of exposure to English outside the classroom, particularly between urban and rural area can result a disparity listening and speaking skills, as well as overall language proficiency (Lee et al., 2021; Sarwari et al., 2024). Learners' prior experience can influence their approach in studying English whether they are familiar with language learning strategy or struggled with additional challenges and anxiety (Alberth, 2023; Subekti S, 2019). Cultural attitudes towards English and language learning can also impact EFL study depending on their historical, political, or cultural reasons on learning English (Amalia N et al., 2019; Macintyre et al., 1998). These varied factors highlight the complexity of EFL learning and need more better approaches that consider the unique characteristic of each learning environment and diverse backgrounds of the learners.

Willingness to communicate (WTC) in classroom setting plays a pivotal role in second language (L2) communication (MacIntyre, 1998). The influence of L2 WTC on classroom communication can have significant impact on the process of acquiring a second language. The WTC involved several factors related to context, personality traits, cognition, and emotion. A model was developed in which WTC is affected by both immediate situational factors (.e.g. topic conversation, familiarity with the interlocutor) and more stable individual factors (e.g. personality traits, motivation). Learners with higher WTC tend take more opportunities to speak, leading to greater language improvement (Macintyre et al., 1998; Subekti S, 2019). Studies on WTC in EFL context have positively correlated with factors like self-confidence, motivation, and language proficiency. Conversely, anxiety and fear of making mistakes can significantly lower a learner's WTC,

because of that it limits their opportunities to practice speaking English (Alberth, 2023; Lee & Drajati, 2019)

The concept of WTC has been extensively studied in the context of EFL, with MacIntyre et al. (1998) being among the pioneer in conceptualizing it as a situational construct influenced by psychological, linguistic and contextual factors. Their model has laid the foundation for numerous studies that examine how WTC affect learning language outcomes. Lee (2019) studied the role of grit and classroom enjoyment in predicting WTC among learners, findings that higher levels of positive emotions and persistence in language learning were associated with increased WTC. Another significant study Ebn-Abbasi & Nushi (2022) compared WTC among students in Iranian public schools and private language institutes. Their findings indicated that students in private institutes exhibited higher WTC, because of more supportive learning environment and better resources. Additionally, educational context plays critical role in shaping students' willingness to communicate in English.

Although there many existing researches on willingness to communicate levels in both schools and university, there is lack of research among specific populations, such as students in rural areas, adult learners, and those in unique educational settings like Islamic boarding schools. Considering that willingness of communicate is important traits that can have affect motivation in the process of learning, this study seeks to identify their levels of willingness to communicate.

1.2 Identification of Problem

As previously stated, that public and private school educational system forecast how student's willingness to communicate, a positive emotion of enjoyment can boost students in the classroom. However, the willingness of students engage in communication can have an influence on the process of language acquisition. When the students feel shy, uncomfortable, scared of making mistakes and less confident, they try to be unwilling to

communicate. Because of that, this research aims to identify the Junior High School students' levels willingness to communicate in English

1.3 Formulation of the problem

1. What is the students' perception on levels willingness to communicate of Indonesia Islamic boarding schools' students?

1.4 Objective of the study

To identify the students 'levels of willingness to communicate using English in Islamic Boarding School.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence of the factors that encourage students to use English for communication. In addition, it provides data-based information which can be used by teachers and other researchers to adjust their teaching and studies in relation with willingness to communicate with students in secondary level education.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Willingness to Communicate in EFL Classroom

The term "willingness to communicate in a second language" (L2 WTC) refers to the ability to start a conversation in a second language with a specified person or people at a specific moment (McIntyre et al. 1998, 547). The principle of L2 WTC includes both psychological and environmental aspects that affect an individual's ability to participate in second-language communication. Self-assurance, motivation, anxiety, and language competency are examples of psychological elements, whereas the availability of a supporting environment, linguistic conventions, interpersonal interactions, and the context or objective of communication are examples of situational factors. Ebn-Abbasi & Nushi (2022) examined role of grit and classroom enjoyment in learners' L2 WTC of Iranian public schools and private language institutes. The descriptive analysis showed that students enjoyed high levels of reliability to elicit WTC, grit, and CE in public schools and private institutes. Analysis using correlation showed a significant positive association between CE and WTC in both public school and private institute.

Rihardini, Yaniafari & Mukminatien (2021) investigated students' perception towards willingness to communicate using English during classroom interaction at tenth and eleventh grade students of SMK Negeri 10 Malang. The findings of the study show that linguistic factors (vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) and non-linguistic factors (interlocutor, motivation, anxiety, social situation, and topic interest) contribute to students' willingness and unwillingness to communicate using English (Rihardini et al., 2021). The findings of this study also show that some variables presented in the such as communicative competence, desire to communicate with a certain person, motivation, anxiety, social situation, as well as topic of discussion are based on Heuristic Model of Factors Affecting WTC McIntyre et al. (1998). In another research investigation, Lee and Drajadi (2019) looked at the relationship between emotional factors, willingness to speak in English, and informal digital learning English (IDLE) activities (receptive and

productive IDLE activities). Based to the results, PIA and three emotive factors—self-confidence, grit, and motivation—were found to represent the most reliable indicators of students' L2 WTC in non-digital contexts (Lee & Drajeti, 2019).

Lahuerta (2014) examined the relationships among the variables that affecting Spanish undergraduates' willingness to communicate in English. The result showed that motivation and self-perceived communication had significant positive relationship with willingness to communicate whereas anxiety had significant negative relationship with self-perceived communication (Lahuerta, 2014). In another study, Şener (2014) investigated the relationship among student's willingness to communicate in English, their linguistic self-confidence, motivations, attitudes on Turkish university students inside and outside class. The result of the study showed most students have positive attitudes toward English language and the cultures of the English-speaking countries. In addition, there was significant correlations between self-confidence, attitude towards international community, motivation with WTC in English (Şener, 2014).

Heuristic Model of Factors Affecting WTC MacIntyre et al. (1998) hypothesized that there are three layers above the heuristic model pyramid, the factors influencing WTC have a situational impact and can be considered as the most direct and possible cause of L2 communication. The three layers closest to the top of the pyramid are Communication Behavior (use of L2 = Layer I), Behavioral Intention (WTC = Layer II), and Situated Antecedents (Want to Communicate with Specific People = Layer III). The bottom three layers consist of Layers IV (Motivational Propensities), V (Affective-Cognitive Context), and VI (Social and Individual Context = bottom of the pyramid). They have a relatively stable and influential on the L2 communication process.

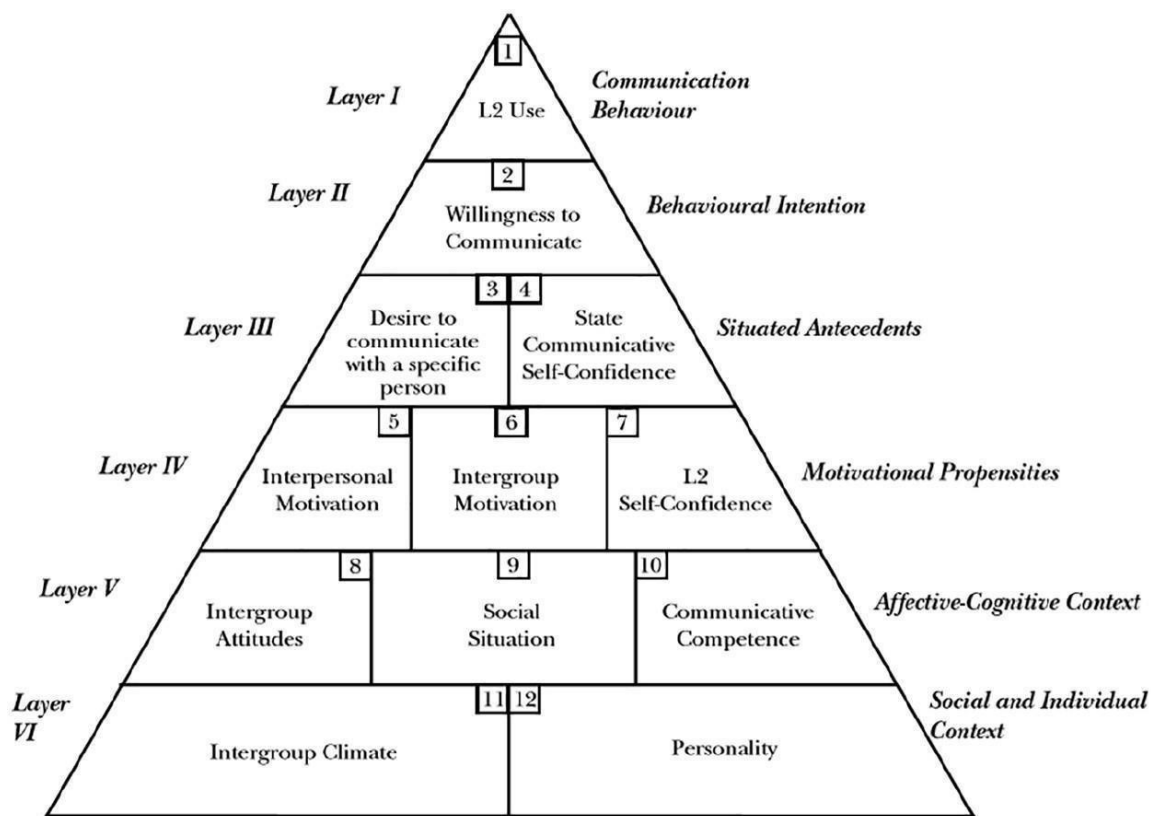
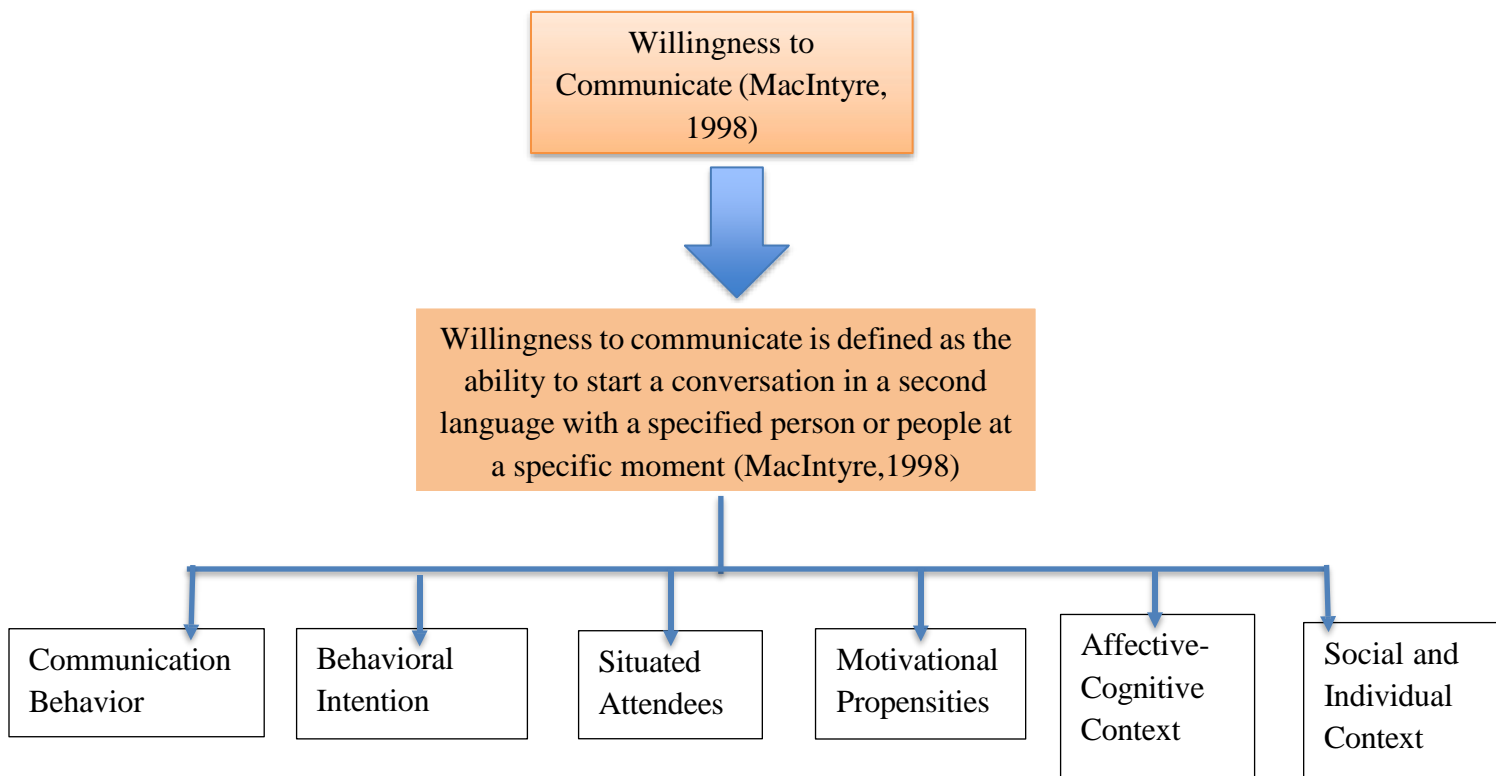


Figure 1
 The heuristic model of variables influencing WTC (MacIntyre, 2007, p.568).

Theoretical Framework

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) was developed to encourage L2 interaction in classroom and enable students to continue to communicate beyond the classroom (MacIntyre, 1998). MacIntyre (1998) developed The Heuristic Model of Factors Affecting WTC comprises six layers that systematically analyze the factors influencing communication behavior (Layer I), behavioral intention (Layer II), and situated antecedents (Layer III) on the top layer, as well motivational propensities (Layer IV), affective-cognitive (Layer V) context, and social and individual text (Layer VI) on the bottom layer. At the foundation of the model Communication behavior, which encompasses observable language in various contexts including speaking, listening, reading, and writing in second language. It reflects the actual engagement in linguistic and non-linguistic communication. Behavioral intention, representing individual’s motivation,

desires, inclinations to engage in second language communication affected by several factors including confidence, motivation and perceived importance of communication. Beyond behavioral intention, situated antecedents are individuals' desire to communicate with specific people and groups influenced by social relationship, cultural factors, and contextual elements on WTC. Motivational propensities examined the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that shape individuals' WTC based on integrity orientation, instrumental orientation, personal goals, values, and aspirations. The affective-cognitive context layer addresses the emotional, attitudinal, and cognitive factors that influence WTC including anxiety, self-confidence, self-efficiency, language proficiency, and attitudes towards the second language. The layer of social and individual context representing the broader society and individual factors that shape WTC and emphasizing the role of social support, cultural expectation, and institutional factors (MacIntyre et al., 1998).



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Research Design

This research is a quantitative research using survey design. According to Check & Schutt (2012) survey study is to collect information from sample of individual through their responses to questions. This study focuses on quantitative description of factors affecting Islamic boarding school student's willingness to communicate. It can be gathered systematically from English as foreign language (EFL) learners in Indonesia.

3.2 Settings and Participants

The research was conducted through a Paper-Based Form survey questionnaire. It was performed in X and XI at an Islamic senior boarding school in Yogyakarta. This school was selected since it is well known for having English proficient English students and the student's willingness to communicate needs to be identified to provide information necessary for their development. The population is 191 students at Islamic senior boarding school class because students need to use English to communicate. In this study, the sample of this study are approximately 96 participants students taken from X and XI classes.

3.3 Data Collection Technique

3.3.1 Instrument

The present study used questionnaire research instrument adapted from Weda et al (2021) which consist of twenty questions to answer with 5-Likert scale about willingness to communicate. **However, to facilitate the respondents to fill in the questionnaire, 3-Likert scale (Agree, Neutral, Disagree)** This small-scale survey focuses on factors affecting student's willingness to communicate at Islamic boarding school. For the questionnaire survey used for this research, see Appendix.

3.3.2 Validity and Reliability

The L2 WTC questionnaire by Weda et al (2021) was used in this study. The Cronbach' α for this scale in Weda et al (2021) was .82.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

The study used the questionnaire from Weda et al. (2021). The questionnaires were distributed one by one to students in the class and accessed the data by using Microsoft Excel or SPSS.

The study was taken some steps:

- 1) Checked the item periodically in the questionnaire to make sure it comprehensible for students by consulting the lecture.
- 2) Distributed the 20-item paper-based questionnaire to participants from Monday to Friday in each different class
- 3) Used Microsoft Excel or IBM SPSS programs to analyze the study were collected using three methods: descriptive statistics, which presented percentage, mean, and standard deviation (SD) to identify EFL Islamic Boarding School students' willingness to communicate.
- 4) Interpreted the data by examining the highest and lowest values for each factor of student's willingness to communicate.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS

The questionnaire consists of student's willingness to communicate in English. The data results of student's personal information as follow:

Table 4.1 The respondents

Gender	Percent
L	40%
P	60%

Table 4.2 Age of each respondents

Age	Total	Percent
14	2	2%
15	14	15%
16	52	54%
17	22	17%
18	5	5%
19	1	1%

The total population sampling were 96 students who completed the questionnaire. From the table 4.1, the data result, students dominated by females with 58 participants or 60% from total of students and male with 38 participants or 40% from total of students. Table 4.2 showed that most students are 14 years old with 2 students or 2%, 15 years old with 14 students or 15%, 16 years old with 52 students or 54%, 17 years old with 22 students or 17%, 18 years old students with 5 students or 5% and 19 years old with 1 student or 1%.

Table 4.3 Means and standard deviation of WTC items

NO WTC	Statement	Mean	Frequency (%)		
			Agree	Neural	Disagree
WTC-1	I am excited to talk in front of the English class.	1.93	26%	55,2%	18,8%
WTC-2	Group discourse is the activity I enjoy most in English class.	1.90	28,1%	54,2%	17,7%
WTC-3	I like to start group discussions with some critical questions.	1.99	30,2%	40,6%	29,2%
WTC-4	I don't feel nervous about expressing my opinion in class discussions.	1.73	42,7%	41,7%	15,6%
WTC-5	I prefer talking to listening in class discussions.	2.15	24%	37,5%	38,5%
WTC-6	I am always confident speaking in front of the class	1.80	37,5%	44,8%	17,7%
WTC-7	Class discussions are the most perfect way to practice speaking English.	1.70	40,6%	49%	10,4%
WTC-8	I find it simple to have conversations in class discussions	1.91	31,3%	46,9%	21,9%
WTC-9	I find it difficult to understand other people's	2.25	20,8%	33,3%	45,8%

	speech in class discussions.				
WTC-10	I constantly need to talk to classmates and teachers during lessons.	1.71	40,6%	47,9%	11,5%
WTC-11	I am curious about talking in group discourses if the points discussed are interesting.	1.54	56,3%	33,3%	10,4%
WTC-12	I speak in class discussions even though the topic is less interesting	1.96	21,9%	60,4%	17,7%
WTC-13	I don't like to talk in group discussions	2.39	11,5%	38,5%	50%
WTC-14	I'm nervous about starting a conversation in a class discussion.	2.22	21,9%	34,4%	43,8%
WTC-15	I don't feel shy to start a class discussion by asking a question	1.79	38,5%	43,8%	17,7%
WTC-16	I feel embarrassed if my answer is wrong in class discussion.	1.98	33,3%	35,4%	31,3%
WTC-17	I like English conversation classes more than anything else.	2.04	22,9%	50%	27,1%
WTC-18	I am always energized to talk in class discussions.	1.79	32,3%	56,3%	11,5%

WTC-19	I am always enthusiastic to talk to practice my speaking skills	1.50	56,3%	37,5%	6,3%
WTC-20	I feel anxious to express my ideas in group discourse	2.32	18,8%	30,2%	51%

The result of this survey study as shown in the table above, the highest mean score is item WTC-13 (I don't like to talk in group discussions) with mean (M= 2.39). The item number 13 showed that students agree they did not enjoy talking in group discussion in most English classes and has the highest item in students' WTC, followed by item WTC-20 (I feel anxious to express my ideas in group discourse) with (M= 2.32) and item WTC-9 (I find it difficult to understand other people's speech in class discussions) with (M=2.25).

Discussion

The high mean score for WTC-13 indicates a prevalent reluctance among students to engage in group discussions. These findings are consistent with previous research conducted by Alberth (2023). His research on the impact of foreign language anxiety on students 'willingness to communicate discover that anxiety can inhibit participation, suggesting that students who fear judgement or making mistake are less likely to engage in group settings. This finding may originate in from cultural factors that prioritize individual performance and fear of terror. Therefore, the high score of WTC-13 reflects a pervasive challenge in language learning environments, underscoring the need for educators to create supportive and engaging contexts that alleviate learners fear and anxiety.

Contrarywise, the mean score for WTC-20 emphasizes the idea that anxiety is substantial barrier to communication in classroom. The close mean scores between WTC-13 and WTC-20 suggest that the student's reluctance to engage in group discussions is

closely tied to their anxiety about expressing idea in classroom settings. This finding aligns with research by Lee & Drajati (2019) in which anxiety, particularly in group contexts, can substantially lower students' willingness to communicate. The anxiety may cause from negative evaluation, concern over linguistic proficiency or the pressure to perform well in front of the peers. As a result, it is important to address this anxiety, as it direct impacts on students' chances to practice and improve their English language proficiency in supportive environment.

The moderate score for WTC-9 suggest that students had difficulty comprehending their classmate speech during discussion. This finding is consistent with the research by Lee & Drajati (2019), who discover that students' willingness to communicate in English was greatly affected by comprehension challenges. This research consistence highlights the students' difficulty because of their low listening skills. This underscores the importance to developing listening comprehension strategy such as, interactive listening exercise and peer feedback system to enhance students' confidence to participate in discussion.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

The current study sought to examine the willingness to communicate (WTC) among students in Indonesian Islamic Boarding school, with a focus on influencing their participation in English language communication. The findings demonstrated a wide range of WTC levels among the participants, emphasizing the multifaced nature of this construct within the context of language learning.

The results showed that the highest levels of WTC were detected in the context involving group work and discussions about cultural differences, where students felt comfortable and actively engaged. These settings provided a supportive atmosphere that promoted peer interaction and communication. In contrast, the lowest levels of WTC were attributed to a complex interaction of emotional and cognitive barriers, which impeded effective communication. This variation highlights the critical role of context and emotional factors in shaping student's willingness to engage in communication.

5.2 Recommendation

This study is limited by its small sample size and focus on a specific demographic, which may not accurately reflect Indonesia's broader population of English language learners. It is recommended to include larger number of participants and adopt a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. This approach would offer a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting WTC and provide deeper insights into students' communication experiences.

In conclusion, the examination of WTC-13, WTC-20, and WTC-9 highlights both similarities and differences in the willingness to communicate among students in Islamic boarding school compared to findings from another research studies. The reluctance to engage in group discussions,

challenges in understanding peers during class conversations and anxiety of expressing ideas are significant barriers to effective communication classroom are consistent across studies, suggesting that these issues are pervasive in language learning contexts. However, the enthusiasm for conversation classes indicates a potential area for growth and engagement practice. By addressing the identified barriers and leveraging students' interest in conversational practice, educators can enhance WTC and facilitate more effective language learning experiences. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, particularly concerning the effectiveness of specific instructional interventions on WTC across diverse educational settings.

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Appendix

Table 3.1 Instrument

Items	Statement	Translation
1	I am excited to talk in front of the English class.	Saya bersemangat untuk berbicara di depan kelas bahasa Inggris.
2	Group discourse is the activity I enjoy most in English class.	Diskusi kelompok adalah kegiatan yang paling saya sukai di kelas bahasa Inggris.
3	I like to start group discussions with some critical questions.	Saya suka memulai diskusi kelompok dengan beberapa pertanyaan kritis.

4	I don't feel nervous about expressing my opinion in class discussions.	Saya tidak merasa gugup untuk mengungkapkan pendapat saya dalam diskusi kelas.
5	I prefer talking to listening in class discussions.	Saya lebih suka berbicara daripada mendengarkan dalam diskusi kelas.
6	I am always confident speaking in front of the class	Saya selalu percaya diri berbicara di depan kelas
7	Class discussions are the most perfect way to practice speaking English.	Diskusi kelas adalah cara yang paling sempurna untuk berlatih berbicara bahasa Inggris
8	I find it simple to have conversations in class discussions	Mudah bagi saya untuk melakukan percakapan dalam diskusi kelas
9	I find it difficult to understand other people's speech in class discussions.	Sulit bagi saya untuk memahami pembicaraan orang lain dalam diskusi kelas
10	I constantly need to talk to classmates and teachers during lessons.	Saya selalu merasa perlu berbicara dengan teman sekelas dan guru selama pelajaran.
11	I am curious about talking in group discourses if the points discussed are interesting.	Saya ingin berbicara dalam diskusi kelompok jika poin-poin yang didiskusikan menarik
12	I speak in class discussions even though the topic is less interesting	Saya berbicara dalam diskusi kelas meskipun topik yang dibahas kurang menarik
13	I don't like to talk in group discussions	Saya tidak suka berbicara dalam diskusi kelompok
14	I'm nervous about starting a conversation in a class discussion.	Saya gugup untuk memulai percakapan dalam diskusi kelas.

15	I don't feel shy to start a class discussion by asking a question	Saya tidak merasa malu untuk memulai diskusi kelas dengan mengajukan pertanyaan
16	I feel embarrassed if my answer is wrong in class discussion.	Saya merasa malu jika jawaban saya salah dalam diskusi kelas
17	I like English conversation classes more than anything else	Saya suka kelas percakapan bahasa Inggris lebih dari apapun
18	I am always energized to talk in class discussions.	Saya selalu bersemangat untuk berbicara dalam diskusi kelas.
19	I am always enthusiastic to talk to practice my speaking skills	Saya selalu antusias untuk berbicara untuk melatih kemampuan berbicara saya
20	I feel anxious to express my ideas in group discourse	Saya merasa gugup saat mengungkapkan ide saya dalam diskusi kelompok