Factors Affecting Students’ Willingness to Communicate in EFL Classroom at Higher Institution in Indonesia

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One of the primary goals of learning and teaching process in EFL classroom is to enhance students’ willingness to communicate (WTC). This study aims at exploring factors affecting willingness to communicate (WTC) in EFL classroom at higher institution in Indonesia. This study employed quantitative research method. Questionnaire data were obtained from seventy university graduate students (19 males or 27.14% and 51 or 72.86% females) major in English study program of Graduate Program State University of Makassar participated in this study. The data of the study were analysed using descriptive statistics which presented percentage, mean, and standard deviation (SD). The present study therefore reveals that the influential factors of EFL students’ WTC are interested in speaking in group discussion if the topics discussed are interesting. Other evidences from the present study are: 1) the participants said that classroom discussion is the best way to practice speaking English, 2) they find it easy to have conversations in the classroom discussion, 3) they are excited to speak in front of the English class, 4) group discussions are the activities they enjoy most in English classes, and 5) they enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions.

Keywords: willingness to communicate, EFL classroom, higher institution, EFL

INTRODUCTION

Communicative competence development of the learners is the main target of a foreign language (FL) or a second language (L2) teaching and learning. Modern language

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pedagogy places great importance on communication and trains language learners who are able to communicate effectively in the target language (Riasati, 2012, p. 1287). Riasati therefore mentioned that in language classrooms that follow a communicative approach, language teachers are eager to have students who are willing to use language in the class. Student participation is welcomed very well in communicative language classes, but the degree to which successful classroom interaction can rely on the level of willingness of students to speak the target language (Peng, 2012, p. 203). The current communicative approach to teaching second language (L2) emphasizes the importance of students using L2 in oral and written texts (Léger & Storch 2009, p. 269). Therefore, Léger and Storch mention that the active use of L2 in language classrooms has directed to the emergence of a vital construct in the field of second or foreign language instruction and teaching: willingness to communicate (WTC). A similar viewpoint was taken from Harizaj, 2015, p. 235). She asserts that teaching through communicative approach teacher’s main goal is to teach students how to communicate effectively.

Research into willingness to communicate (WTC) has been increasingly thriving since its first application to the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in the 1990s (Peng, 2013). WTC as a goal of foreign language learning and teaching has drawn the attention of language researchers and language practitioners in recent years (see, for example, Peng, 2012; Peng, 2013, Riasati, 2012; Barjesteh et al., 2012; Fu & Wang, 2012; Khany & Nejad, 2016; Macintyre, 2007; Macintyre et al., 2011; Mirzane & Khabiri, 2016; Nazari & Allahyar, 2012; Zarrinabadi & Abdi, 2011, Eddy-U, 2015; Zarrinabadi et al., 2014; Kamdideh & Barjesteh, 2019; and Léger & Storch, 2009). Macintyre (2007, p. 564) asserts that a degree of willingness to communicate (WTC) with the potential to rise and fall rapidly as the situation changes. There are countless factors that contribute to FL or L2 learners' WTC and participation (Nazari & Allahyar, 2012, p. 18). The vital factors that can enhance students’ WTC are the use smart phone, mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), foreign language vocabulary, and communication apprehension (CA). Khan, et al. (2019) mention that the presence of smartphones around us today is a major source of communication and effective teaching assistant for the advancement of educational methods in general. Khan, et al. (2018) argue that their questionnaire and interview revealed positive attitudes among participants regarding the use of smartphones for language learning and teaching activities. Similar comment is from Shahbaz et al. (2017) who claim that the use of this mobile phone application provides new insights for innovation and opportunities in teaching and language learning. Khan, et al. (2018) confirms that vocabulary learning verifies to play an important role in oral communication. They therefore add that both teachers and students show that lack of vocabulary is one of the main factors in students' inability to speak English. Shahbaz et al. (2016) state that in a formal context offers strong evidence that a strong understanding of communication in one language can produce positive self-perceived communication competence (SPCC) in another language and becomes a reason for increasing WTC in that language. For informal contexts, there is a positive relationship between SPCC and WTC in certain languages.

According to Oz (2014) there are five main factors of extraversion, friendliness, and openness to significant experiences in predicting and setting psychological contexts for
WTC in English. Therefore, Oz (2014) argues that the interaction of five main personality characters can make a major contribution to the production and promotion of WTC in learning a second or foreign language.

Some scholars and language researchers focused their studies on influential factors on WTC and they identified factors influencing students’ willingness to communicate (WTC) in the EFL classroom at higher education. Peng (2012) identified six underlying WTC class factors in micro systems: leaners beliefs, motivation, cognitive factors, linguistic factors, affective factors, and classroom environment. Riasati (2012) states that there are a number of factors contribute to the willingness to communicate. These factors include the type of assignment, the topic of discussion, the interlocutor, the teacher, the class atmosphere, and personality and self-perceived speaking ability.

Riasati and Nooreen as cited in Riasati (2012, p. 1288) have conducted a thorough literature review on WTC antecedents. In their study, there are a number of factors that have been identified directly or indirectly influencing students’ WTC, including motivation, communication anxiety, perceived communication competence and content and context. Oz (2014) argues that factors of extraversion, friendliness, and openness to experience are significant in predicting and building psychological contexts for WTC in English. Fu et al. (2012) emphasize that many WTC factors such as learning motivation, learning attitudes, social support, and language environment influence foreign language learning. Similarly, Kamdideh & Barjesteh (2019) argue that EFL teachers aware that providing the students enough time to think can improve their willingness to communicate in the foreign language or second language.

Therefore, in this present study we investigate EFL students’ WTC in the classroom setting at higher education. Thus, we proposed the research question as follows: What are the factors affecting students’ willingness to communicate in the EFL classroom at higher institution in Indonesia?

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**FL or L2 Willingness to Communicate (WTC)**

Communication apprehension is the anxiety to express ideas, feelings, and opinions with other people, including both the production apprehension and the reception apprehension (Kralova & Petrova, 2017, p. 110). Weda, et.al (2020, p. 129) argue that the students are reluctant to express their ideas to other students because they feel nervous, and they are also reluctant to express themselves because they feel afraid. In contrast to unwillingness to communicate (UTC), MacIntyre et al., 1998 as cited in Barjesteh et al. (2012, p. 48) propose that WTC in L2 should be conceptualized as the main goal of language instruction and as a comprehensive conceptual framework to describe, explain and predict L2 communication behavior. The L2 construct of the WTC has been speculated to possess both trait and state characteristics (Dörnyei 2005 as quoted in Peng, 2013, p. 282).

The measurement of L2 or FL WTC has been frequently employed both in quantitative or qualitative research. Table 1 presents a summary of the WTC scales used in previous studies.
Table 1
The measurement of L2 or FL WTC in previous studies

| Researcher                        | Research Site & Year | Instrument                           | Subjects/Participants                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Mohammad Javad Riasati            | Iran, 2012           | Semi-structured interviews.          | 7 language learners                        |
| Jian-E Peng & Lindy Woodrow       | China, 2010          | Questionnaires                        | 330 university students                   |
| Jian-E Peng                       | China, 2012          | Semi-structured interviews.          | 4 university students                      |
|                                   |                      | Learning journals recorded by the students. |                                           |
|                                   |                      | Classroom observation over seven months. |                                           |
| Jian Peng                         | China, 2013          | Questionnaire                        | 1,013 university undergraduate students    |
| Hamed Harjeste, Reza Vaseghi & Sina Neissi | Iran, 2012      | Questionnaire consisting of 20 situations. | 25 English learners                       |
| Mary Eddy-U                       | China, 2015          | Semi-structured focus group interviews | 25 individuals participated (18 female, 7 male) |
| Nourollah Zarrinabadi, Saeed Ketabi, & Razieh Abdi | Iran, 2014     | Semi structured interviews           | 16 male English-language learners          |
| Peter D. MacIntyre, Susan C. Bake  | Australia, 2003      | Questionnaire                        | Fifty-nine university student volunteers (44 females, 15 males, mean age = 20.5 years) |
| Léger & Storch                     | Australia, 2009      | The study employed a range of data gathering instruments, but the main source of data came from self-assessment questionnaires | Thirty-two students of French (L2) |
| Glendora V. Tiu                    | Philippines, 2011    | The researcher-made questionnaire/checklist | 320 first year students                   |
| Mei-Hui CHEN                       | Taiwan, 2018         | observation from pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test, and stimulated recall interviews | Two EFL classes of non-English major students from a large university in Taiwan |
| Shahab Khaki                       | Iran, 2013           | A learner autonomy questionnaire and a WTC scale, for measuring trait-like WTC | The participants of this study were 100 male and female advanced learners |
| Jiaxin Zuo                         | China, 2018          | The questionnaire was willingness to communicate inside the classroom scale, adapted from MacIntyre, P. D., Balcer, S. C., Clément, R., & Conrod, S. (2001). | 134 high school students |
| Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Miroslaw Pawlak | Poland, 2014  | Self-ratings and surveys/ a battery of questionnaires | 44 second- and third-year students majoring in English |
| Denise Cameron                     | 2015                 | Questionnaire designed by the researcher, incorporating seven items and using a four-point Likert-type scale | Four participants attended (Advanced and Academic English 2) were pre-university and were at an IELTS level of approximately 5.5 |
| Mardižah Shamsuddi, Mosalama Othman, Maryam Jabeedi, & Dalia Aralas | Malaysia, 2017 | a pre-test and post-test questionnaire | 32 ESL undergraduate students |
| Encounters 6, 2018, pp. 51–74      | Indonesia, 2019      | videos recorded intensive interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves during classes | 68 11th graders from three classes and their two English teachers, at one public senior high school |

Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC

MacIntyre et al. (1998) as cited in Mirzane & Khabiri, 2016, p. 400 - 401) hypothesizes that there are three layers on top of the heuristic model pyramid, the variables that influence WTC have a situational influence and we can consider them to be the most

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direct and likely 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 Antecedents of Being (Desire to Communicate with Certain People = Layer III). The bottom three layers consist of Layer IV (Motivational Tendency), V (Affective-Cognitive Context), and VI (Social and Individual Context = the bottom of the pyramid). They have a relatively stable and durable influence on the L2 communication process.

![Heuristic model of variables influencing WTC](image)

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

**METHOD**

**Research Question**

The research question underlying this study is formulated as follows:

What are the factors affecting students’ willingness to communicate in the EFL classroom at higher institution in Indonesia?

**Participant**

The participants of the study were the students of English Education Study Program of Graduate Program State University of Makassar, Indonesia in 2019/2020 academic year. The samples of the study were chosen using cluster random sampling technique. The willingness to communicate (UTS) scale was completed by 70 participants (male = 19 or 27.14% and female = 51 or 72.86%). The participants were 22 – 40 years of age.
enrolled in Educational Psychology course and Entrepreneurship course in 2019/2020 academic year.

**Instrument and Procedure**

The measurement was questionnaire which aimed to investigate willingness to communicate (WTC), measured by the 2-item Likert-scale of willingness to communicate. The questionnaire was written in English and the participants were asked to rate their perception on WTC in EFL classroom. This questionnaire investigated information on the students’ demographic information and their perception on WTC. In this study, the students were asked to rate their perceptions with response to the questionnaires on a 3-point Likert scale on which 1 = agree, 2 = uncertain, and 3 = disagree. The beginning part of the questionnaire consisted of questions on demographic information of participants. The reliability and validity measures of the questionnaire are as revealed in table 2.

| Table 2 Reliability statistics | Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------|
| .588                           | .637             |                                             | 20         |

The measurement used to measure reliability and validity measures with alpha method was obtained Cronbach’s Alpha 0.637 where this value is bigger than 0.60. This means that the questionnaire in all items is reliable and valid. Reliability and validity of the questionnaire are reliable and valid if Cronbach’s Alpha > 0.60 (Nully as cited in Weda, 2017).

**Data Analysis**

This present study of students’ WTC is a quantitative research design was performed. In this present study, the researchers employed Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)/IBM SPSS Statistics 23 to see descriptive statistics as a measurement used for the study. Descriptive statistics (percentages, means, and standard deviation (SD) were used to characterize the participants’ perceived levels of factors affecting students’ WTC in EFL classroom.

**FINDINGS**

In this part, demographics of participants and descriptive statistics for EFL students’ WTC and percentages of responses to the scale items are presented, followed by a detailed explanation and discussion.

Table 3 displays the distribution of participants in questionnaire which shows demographic information (gender, age, and semester), frequency, and percentage.
Table 3
Demographics of participants in questionnaire

| Demographic Information | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender                  |           |            |
| Female                  | 51        | 72.86%     |
| Male                    | 19        | 27.14%     |
| Age                     |           |            |
| 22 - 25                 | 52        | 74.29%     |
| 26 - 30                 | 12        | 17.14%     |
| 31 - 40                 | 6         | 8.57%      |
| Semester                | 70        | 100%       |

As illustrated on Table 3 that there were seventy participants of the study, 51 or 72.86% females and 19 or 27.14% males. The age ranging from 22 – 40, there were 52 or 74.29% of 22 – 25 years old, 12 or 17.14% of 26 – 30 years old and 6 or 8.56% of 31 – 40 years old. The participants were in the first semester at English education study program, Graduate Program State University of Makassar in Educational Psychology and Entrepreneurship course in 2019/2020 academic year.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of minimum, maximum, mean, SD, Skewness, and Kurtosis for EFL WTC.

Table 4
Distributions for EFL WTC (N = 70)

| Item | Min | Max | Mean   | SD   | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|------|-----|-----|--------|------|----------|----------|
| 1    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.5143 | .63114 | .835     | -.292    |
| 2    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.4714 | .60724 | .912     | -.133    |
| 3    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.5857 | .67013 | .718     | -.545    |
| 4    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.6857 | .69246 | .511     | -.797    |
| 5    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.7714 | .68464 | .326     | -.826    |
| 6    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.5143 | .58341 | .619     | -.559    |
| 7    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.3286 | .58288 | 1.613    | 1.640    |
| 8    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.3714 | .51560 | .868     | -.532    |
| 9    | 1.00 | 3.00 | 2.3857 | .70798 | -.716    | -.689    |
| 10   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.6143 | .54621 | .077     | -.938    |
| 11   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.1714 | .44952 | 2.706    | 7.003    |
| 12   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.9429 | .65686 | .059     | -.615    |
| 13   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 2.4286 | .71366 | -.849    | -.552    |
| 14   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 2.0857 | .75648 | -.145    | -.1219   |
| 15   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.7714 | .70549 | .356     | -.920    |
| 16   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.9857 | .84258 | .027     | -.1598   |
| 17   | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.4286 | .49844 | .295     | -.1970   |
| 18   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.5429 | .58199 | .510     | -.660    |
| 19   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.4143 | .60176 | 1.162    | .372     |
| 20   | 1.00 | 3.00 | 2.3714 | .76464 | -.752    | -.880    |

Cronbach alpha = .588

*Refer to Appendix for item description
Descriptive statistics for the scale of EFL students’ willingness to communicate (WTC) are shown in Table 4. As revealed in this table, participant responses ranged from three points on the scale. The results show that the participants achieved a mean of 1.5143 and SD = .63114 for student’s perception number 1 (I am excited to speak in front of the English class). The students achieved a mean of 1.4714 and SD = .60724 for student’s perception number 2 (Group discussions are the activities I enjoy most in English classes). The students achieved a mean of 1.5857 and SD = .67013 for student’s perception number 3 (I enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions). The students achieved a mean of 1.6857 and SD = .69246 for student’s perception number 4 (I don't feel nervous to express my opinions in class discussions). The means and SD for students’ perception number 5 to number 20 are clearly displayed on Table 4. Finally, a normal distribution can be observed for all scales in this current study as illustrated by skewness and kurtosis value as presented in Table 4. The item's skewness and kurtosis values are mostly in the range -1 and +1. Univariate normality is considered to be supported according to the ± 2 threshold for the slope and kurtosis suggested by Kunnan (1998) in Peng (2013).

Table 5 below shows the percentages of students’ perception on WTC.

| Item                                                                 | Students’ Perception                          | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|----------|
| 1. I am excited to speak in front of the English class.              | 55.7                                          | 37.1  | 7.1       |
| 2. Group discussions are the activities I enjoy most in English classes. | 58.6                                          | 35.7  | 5.7       |
| 3. I enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions. | 51.4                                          | 38.6  | 10.0      |
| 4. I don’t feel nervous to express my opinions in class discussions. | 44.3                                          | 42.9  | 12.9      |
| 5. I prefer talking rather than listening in the classroom discussions. | 37.6                                          | 48.6  | 14.3      |
| 6. I always confidently speak in front of the class.                 | 52.9                                          | 42.9  | 4.3       |
| 7. Classroom discussions are the best way to practice speaking English. | 72.9                                          | 21.4  | 5.7       |
| 8. I find it easy to have conversations in class discussions.        | 64.3                                          | 34.3  | 1.4       |
| 9. I find it difficult to understand other people’s talks in classroom discussions. | 12.9                                          | 35.7  | 51.4      |
| 10. I always want to talk with classmates and teachers when lessons take place. | 41.4                                          | 55.7  | 2.9       |
| 11. I am interested in speaking in group discussions if the topics discussed are interesting. | 85.7                                          | 11.4  | 2.9       |
| 12. I talk in classroom discussions even though the topic is less interesting. | 24.3                                          | 57.1  | 18.6      |
| 13. I’m the type of student who doesn’t like to talk in group discussions. | 12.9                                          | 31.4  | 55.7      |
| 14. I was nervous to start conversation in class discussion.         | 24.3                                          | 42.9  | 32.9      |
| 15. I don’t feel ashamed to start a classroom discussion by asking questions. | 38.6                                          | 45.7  | 15.7      |
| 16. I feel ashamed if my answers are wrong in classroom discussions.  | 35.7                                          | 30.0  | 34.3      |
| 17. I like English conversation classes more than others.             | 57.1                                          | 42.9  | 0         |
| 18. I am always encouraged to speak in class discussions.             | 56.0                                          | 45.7  | 4.3       |
| 19. I am always eager to speak to practice my speaking skills.        | 64.3                                          | 30.0  | 5.7       |
| 20. I am afraid to express my ideas in group discussion.              | 17.1                                          | 28.6  | 54.3      |
Frequency of Responses to L2 WTC Scale

As presented in Table 5, the majority of the participants expressed their WTC on comment *I am interested in speaking in group discussions if the topics discussed are interesting* (Item 11, 85.7%) followed by comment *Classroom discussions are the best way to practice speaking English* (Item 7, 72.9%), *I find it easy to have conversations in class discussions* (Item 8, 64.3%) and I am always eager to speak to practice my speaking skills (Item 19, 64.3%). These items all elicited EFL students’ WTC in the classroom setting in Indonesian higher education context.

The percentages of students’ perception on factors affecting students’ willingness to communicate in EFL classroom setting are displayed in Table 5. The highest response for statement number 1 (I am excited to speak in front of the English class) was agree with 55.7%. The highest response for statement number 2 (Group discussions are the activities I enjoy most in English classes) was agree with 58.6%. The highest response for statement number 3 (I enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions) was agree with 51.4%. The highest response for statement number 4 (I don't feel nervous to express my opinions in class discussions) was agree with 44.3%. The highest response for statement number 5 (I prefer talking rather than listening in the classroom discussions) was uncertain with 48.6%. The highest response for statement number 6 (I always confidently speak in front of the class) was agree with 85.2%. The highest response for statement number 7 (Classroom discussions are the best way to practice speaking English) was agree with 72.9%. The highest response for statement number 8 (I find it easy to have conversations in class discussions) was agree with 64.3%. The highest response for statement number 9 (I find it difficult to understand other people's talks in classroom discussions) was disagree with 51.4%. The highest response for statement number 10 (I always want to talk with classmates and teachers when lessons take place) was uncertain with 55.7%. The highest response for statement number 11 (I am interested in speaking in group discussions if the topics discussed are interesting) was agree with 85.7%. The highest response for statement number 12 (I talk in classroom discussions even though the topic is less interesting) was uncertain with 57.1%. The highest response for statement number 13 (I'm the type of student who doesn't like to talk in group discussions) was disagree with 55.7%. The highest response for statement number 14 (I was nervous to start conversation in class discussion) was uncertain with 42.9%. The highest response for statement number 15 (I don't feel ashamed to start a classroom discussion by asking questions) was uncertain with 45.7%. The highest response for statement number 16 (I feel ashamed if my answers are wrong in classroom discussions) was agree with 35.7%. The highest response for statement number 17 (I like English conversation classes more than others) was agree with 51.7%. The highest response for statement number 18 (I am always encouraged to speak in class discussions) was agree with 50.0%. The highest response for statement number 19 (I am always eager to speak to practice my speaking) was agree with 64.3%. The highest response for statement number 20 (I am afraid to express my ideas in group discussion) was disagree with 54.3%.
Figure 2
Proportion of students’ perception on WTC

Figure 2 reveals that there were 55.7% of the students agreed to item no. 1. There were 58.6% of the students agreed to item no. 2. There were 51.4% of the students agreed to item no. 3. There were 44.3% of the students agreed to item no. 4. There were 37% of the students agreed to item no. 5. There were 52.9% of the students agreed to item no. 6. There were 72% of the students agreed to item no. 7. There were 64.3% of the students agreed to item no. 8. There were 12.9% agreed to item no. 9. There were 41.4% of the students agreed to item no. 10. Therefore, the percentage of students’ perception on WTC from item no. 11 to item no. 20 is clearly presented on Figure 2.

DISCUSSION

The results of this present study revealed that the majority of participants agree to emphasize that group discussions in a wide variety of activities is the most frequent and the highest responses as factors influencing EFL learners’ willingness to communicate (WTC) in the classroom setting at higher education in Indonesia.

Since the communicative competence and willingness to communicate are the primary target of FL and L2 teaching and learning, this present study therefore presents detailed discussion of the findings. As found out in the findings that the majority of students in the study reveal that they are interested in speaking in group discussion if the topic is interesting. Favero et al. (2007, p. 652) asserts that discussion seems to stimulate
situational interest, especially when relevant topics are addressed. The same result is from Nazari and Allahyar (2012) who mention that students’ WTC can be increased through classroom discussion which promote students’ participation in the classroom and reduce teacher talk. Accordingly, Barjesteh, et al. (2012) argue that Iranian EFL learners are willing to initiate communication in situations experienced before, like group discussion or communicating with their friends.

The study also indicates that classroom discussions are the best way to practice speaking English. Small group discussions are often seen as a means of reducing learners’ performance anxiety and providing greater opportunities for communicative interactions (Léger & Storch, 2009, p. 280). The same comment is from Naughton (2006, p. 169) who asserts that small group oral interactions in second language (L2) and foreign languages (FL) classroom have long been considered beneficial for students who are struggling towards the target language competence.

Other evidence show that students are eager to participate in the classroom discussion. This is because they find it easy to have conversations in class discussions, they are excited to speak in front of the English class, classroom discussions are the best way to practice speaking English, they are always encouraged to speak in class discussions, they don't feel ashamed to start a classroom discussion by asking questions, and they enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions. Menggo et al. (2013) say that the learners who have high English learning motivation are appropriately taught by using discussion technique since they are able to be critical speakers, involve actively in a wide variety of discussion activities, become high responsible students to be involved in the learning and teaching process, eager to be challenged in various challenging activities, and be brave to share their ideas in both inside and outside the classroom.

Therefore, in the EFL classroom, the teachers or lecturers are recommended to employ methods or approach to foster student talk and understanding. Teaching approaches based on discussion seem to be especially effective in supporting students’ understanding of basic principles and epistemological procedures of a discipline (Favero et al., 2007, p. 652). Group work or discussion is an interesting approach that is potential to enhance students’ WTC and achievement in EF and L2 classroom. Small group discussion in the EFL classes has been widely accepted as a vital strategy to enhance students' communicative competence in English (Chen & Hird, 2006, p. 91). Many researchers and language practitioners argue that group discussion is the best way to enhance students’ language skills and foster WTC. Using group and discussion methods promote speaking, language acquisition and an active learning (Harizaj, 2015, 231). This in keeping with Jost (2018, p. 70) who argues that in a communicative class like discussion, reaching such a state represents a high level of achievement. Jost adds that in such an environment, students are truly able to test their linguistic boundaries and genuinely seek to learn new things.

Discussion in its various types, group discussion, small group work, big class discussion, classroom presentation, and even debate needs to be well prepared by the teacher and lecturer in the umbrella of student-centred approach. Debate was more
effective in promoting students’ willingness to communicate and self-communicative Competence (Shamsuddin et al. (2017, p. 150). English language teachers should provide students to frequently interactive activities in their classrooms and in turn, students feel secure, motivated and willingly participate and this activity is called student-centred classes (Harizaj, 2015, p. 231). Harizaj mentions that in student-centred classes language is primarily a tool of communication.

CONCLUSION

This present study explored the EFL students’ WTC at higher institution in Indonesia. The findings of the study revealed that the factors influencing the EFL students’ willingness to communicate (WTC) at higher institution are interested in maintaining speaking in group discussion in the classroom setting if the topics of discussion are interesting. Other evidences obtained from the study are: 1) the participants commented that classroom discussions is the best way to practice speaking in English, 2) the participants also find it easy to maintain conversations in the classroom presentation, 3) they are excited to speak in front of the English class, 4) group discussions are the activities they enjoy most in English classes, and 5) they enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions.

There are several limitations to this present study that should be noted. First, we examined students at one campus with small participants. Second, we needed a wide variety of instruments to obtain comprehensive data and information from participants. Therefore, the implication of the study is that the teacher or lecturer as a facilitator and a manager in the classroom should provide large portion of classroom discussion to foster students talk and WTC.

What is needed in future studies in related topics is to explore: (a) the relationship between the influential factors underlying the students’ intention to participate in willingness to communicate (WTC) and students’ achievement.

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Appendix

Name  :
Sex   :
Age   :
Program :
Semester :
Course :
Questionnaire
Below is a series of statements concerning your perception on willingness to communicate (WTC). There are no right or wrong answers. Please write the number which corresponds to your answer into the space provided at the end of each sentence.

1 = Agree
2 = Uncertain
3 = Disagree

Please put the number corresponding to your answers in the blank before the statement.

……….. I am excited to speak in front of the English class.
……….. Group discussions are the activities I enjoy most in English classes.
……….. I enjoy starting the group discussion with a number of critical questions.
……….. I don't feel nervous to express my opinions in class discussions.
……….. I prefer talking rather than listening in the classroom discussions.
……….. I always confidently speak in front of the class.
……….. Classroom discussions are the best way to practice speaking English.
……….. I find it easy to have conversations in class discussions.
……….. I find it difficult to understand other people's talks in classroom discussions.
……….. I always want to talk with classmates and teachers when lessons take place.
……….. I am interested in speaking in group discussions if the topics discussed are interesting.
……….. I talk in classroom discussions even though the topic is less interesting.
……….. I'm the type of student who doesn't like to talk in group discussions.
……….. I was nervous to start conversation in class discussion.
……….. I don't feel ashamed to start a classroom discussion by asking questions.
……….. I feel ashamed if my answers are wrong in classroom discussions.
……….. I like English conversation classes more than others.
……….. I am always encouraged to speak in class discussions.
……….. I am always eager to speak to practice my speaking skills.
……….. I am afraid to express my ideas in group discussion.