



## Situational Factor Influencing Students' Willingness to Communicate in Speaking Classroom

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### ABSTRACT

This article reports a case identifying the what kind of situational factors can influence students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in the speaking classroom. The participants of this study were fifteen students majoring in English Education Department. The obtained data were analyzed using thematic analysis to determine the categorization for the findings. The findings reveal that most students prefer to speak depending on the situation when learning process is taking a place. Apart from that, questions from the teacher, students' background knowledge, and small group discussion affect students' willingness to communicate (WTC). This study implies that the teachers can design the learning instruction considering the factors affecting students' WTC and it is vital to boost the students' WTC in the classroom.

**Keywords:** *situational factor; speaking; students' WTC.*

### INTRODUCTION

Willingness to communicate (WTC) has been voiced from a number of studies in teaching speaking for more 20 years (Yapı, 2016). In case, it was first introduced into the literature by (McCroskey & Baer, 1985) regarding native language use. The WTC model was adapted and developed by (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998) to the second language (L2) situation that is intended to explain individual and contextual influences in choice to initiate L2 communication. At the appearing of WTC, some researchers focused on the social support of willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001). Passing through some years, WTC has become focus research and it has proven that WTC becomes important in Speaking Classroom (Zarrinabadi & Tanbakooei, 2016). Some studies revealed that WTC model increase student willingness to communicate according to (Aubrey, 2011), (Shen & Byfield, 2018), and (Yashima, MacIntyre, & Ikeda, 2018). It has been explored in the EFL classroom Halupka-Resetar, Knežević, & Topalov, (2018) and also in the public speaking context (Hodis, Bardhan, & Hodis, 2010).

Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) stated the main purpose of L2 education has to be a desire to communicate in language learning. In case, WTC is expected to facilitate the language learning process and increase student's opportunity to practice in L2 and also the use of authentic language. According to Riasati and Rahimi (2018) when students were allowed to use a foreign language, it may cause some students would prefer to speak up and express themselves and the other students would choose to be more silent. Therefore, these issues become important to be investigated into the WTC model in the field of language pedagogy.



The conceptualization of WTC is as a personality trait and different from the context of communication because it is relatively stable with various recipients, such as friends, strangers, and acquaintance (Zarrinabadi & Tanbakooei, 2016). The developers of the WTC model have goals to build students' willingness to speak for language pedagogy (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, 1998). Also, Kang (2005) argued that the importance of the WTC arises from the role of interaction in language development and various perspectives, such as linguistic perspective, community culture, and student. WTC was done analyzed by some researchers in the field of education. There are varied focuses of discussion on the matter, such as effective teaching strategy for increasing students' WTC (Nazari & Allahyar, 2012), positive impact from WTC (Hashimoto 2002), and as an effective construct Yapı (2016). In the Indonesian setting, the first is from Havwini's (2019) study that investigated the Indonesian students' WTC in high schools especially in English class. In this case, the initiation of the teacher in classroom communication still plays on a major role that influences the students' WTC. Next, a study conducted by Subekti, (2019) to investigate the willingness to communicate (WTC) of Indonesian learners of English as a second language (L2) at the university level. They found that that the level of students' willingness to speak is quite high, and students are not capable of communicating without supported of experts. Despite the fact that previous researches have discussed the benefit of WTC. Many researches focused more on implemented students' WTC in the classroom context. Therefore, a piece of more knowledge about what factor can influence students' WTC is needed. So, the researcher is interested to investigate the situational factor influencing students' willingness to communicate in Speaking classroom. This study expectedly can contribute to describe what the situational factor affecting the students' WTC is.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative study. The purpose of qualitative research is to describe and interpret the issue or phenomenon systematically from the perspective of the individual or population under study, and to produce new concepts and theories (Mohajan, 2018). Gay, Mills, and Airasian, (2006) the central focus of qualitative research is to provide an understanding of social setting or activities seen from the perspective of research participants. The research explored situational factor influencing student WTC in Speaking class A of second-semester students in English education department at one of Islamic Institutions in southeast Sulawesi. This study conducted in Speaking class A, in the second semester of English Education Department. The lecturer usually used several activities in the Speaking class whose teaching demands that students be active in these activities. After collecting data, the researcher analyzed data based on students' reflections and researcher observation. Data analysis be conducted in writing and answer questions that have been provided by researchers. In analyzing the data, it uses steps proposed by Creswell, Hanson, Plano, and Morales (2007), there are: (1) collecting data, (2) preparing data for analysis, (3) reading through the data, (4) coding the data, and (5) coding the text for themes and description to be used in the research paper.

## **FINDINGS**

Based on the data that was spread by the researcher through Google Form, fifteen students participated in this study. There were nine reflection questions provided for students

and the answers to these reflections use the Indonesian language to make it easier for students to write their own opinions. In this reflection, the researcher found that most of the student had the same thought but the way they expressed it was different. The following are the result of the researchers' analysis of each reflection question given to students.

### Reaction If the Teacher’s Questions Addressed in English

The figure below reveals the students answer about' their reaction when receiving a question in English:

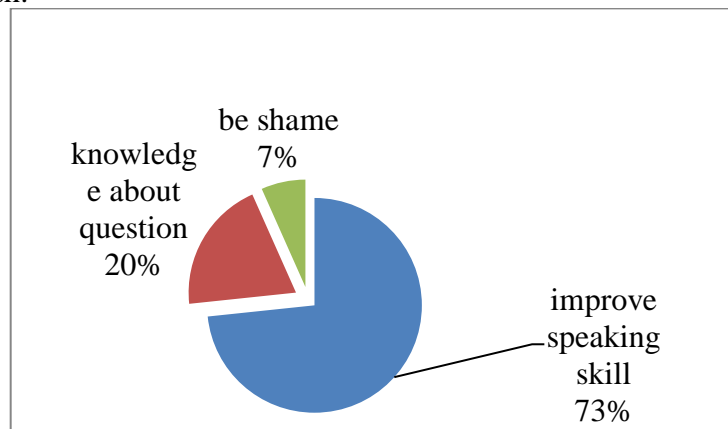


Figure 4.1.1.1 reaction when being asked in English

Based on the question of students reflection “If the lecturer asks a question in the classroom generally (the question is open for anyone who wants to answer), will you answer it in English? Why?“ There are 73% students reaction when they receive the question from a lecturer in English was to improve their speaking skill. It means that most students would try to answer the lecture question in English too because it was able to improve their speaking skill. Then, 20% of students were argued that they will answer the lecturer question when they knew the question. Finally, as many 7% of student still not confident to speak in the classroom and front of many people. The following sections include the confirm from several students to support the interpretation of the data above:

From S4 reflective she said that

*“Yes, the goal is that I can improve my speaking skill, even though my pronunciation and the answer are not completely correct”.*

From S1 she said that *“Yes, I will answer in English if I know what the question means. The last”.*

From S5 he said that *“No, because I am not confident in speaking in front of many people”.*

### Clarifying Questions

There are three statements include data about students perception about clarifying question

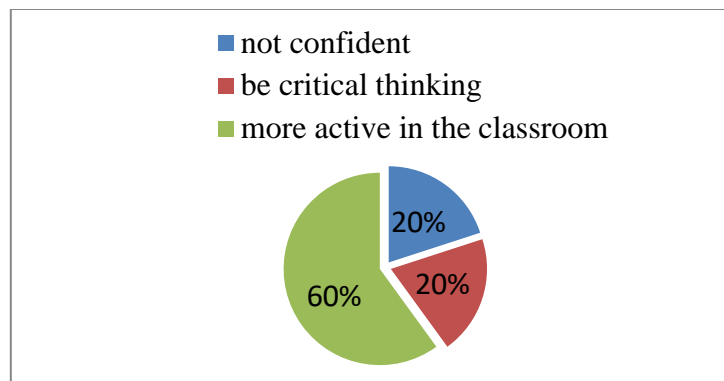


Figure 4.1.1.2 clarifying questions

From the figure 4.1.1.2, (the question is If the lecturer asks students to comment or convey the opinion, will you comment in English? Why?) Most of the students would to convey their opinion in the classroom as many as 60% of the student said that it made us more active in the classroom. It was confirmed by the S3 reflection she said that

*“Of course, because I want to be an active student in the classroom if I still have mistakes in my speech, I can get improvement to justify”.*

And also S6 said that *“In online classes always express my opinions because it is obligation and giving comments, in my opinion, is a stepping stone to being able to speak”.*

Indirectly, besides they wanted to be active in the class. It becomes a place to practice speaking to make it more fluent.

Besides, the result of percentage in reflection about able to be critical and still felt not confident was equal. As many as 20% of the student said that it was made more be critical thinking. It was confirmed by the S9 said that

*“I will try my best to comment, Why because it can train my brain to think more creatively in coming up with an idea”*

Finally, as many as 20% Of students said that it made us not confident to speak. S3 had confirmed in the reflection is *“No, because I lack confidence in commenting or expressing opinions and I feel scared when giving comments”.*

### Asking Questions

The chart below shows the students' answers about student speaking preference in the group learning:

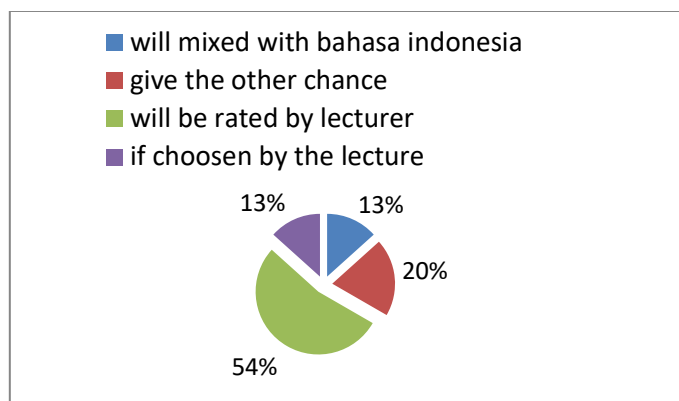


Figure 4.1.1.3 Asking questions

Most students preferred to speak in a group discussion class (the question is if the lecturer asks questions to your group, will you respond in English? Why?) all of the students' have answer preferred to talk in the group discussion than in front of the class. The figure explains that there are 54% of students told their reason when speaking in a group discussion is the lecturer give the rated to the student who speaks in the group. It was confirmed by S8 that

*"Yes. Same as the answer to the previous question because I wanted to know the ability and could be assessed by the lecturer"*.

Then, some students' give their friend a chance to speak as many as 20% of students. It is because these students always speak in front of the class, when in group discussion they wanted to give their friends a chance to stated their opinions. It was confirmed by S3 said that

*"No, because I also want my other friends to have the same opportunity to speak in the group"*.

There are 13% of student in the classroom would speak in the group discussion if they were chosen by the lecture. Usually, this students thought that their friends will represent their answers or their groupmates' answers. It was confirmed by S5 said that

*"Yes, sometimes I give a response when I am selected as the person to provide that response"*.

The last, 13% of students' stated their opinion in the group discussion in English mix with the Indonesian Language. they said that the lecturer would correct the students' mistakes, and then they able to learn from their mistakes.it was confirmed by S1 reflection said that

*"Yes, of course. However, if the lecturer says can use Indonesian, I will use it but I will use English as much as I can"*.

Also S2 said that *"Yes, but sometimes I also mix it with Indonesian, because if I don't answer I don't know anything late."*

### Students' WTC and Opinion Expressing Opinion in the Classroom

The researcher got 3 students idea through reflection about Expressing Opinion in the Classroom

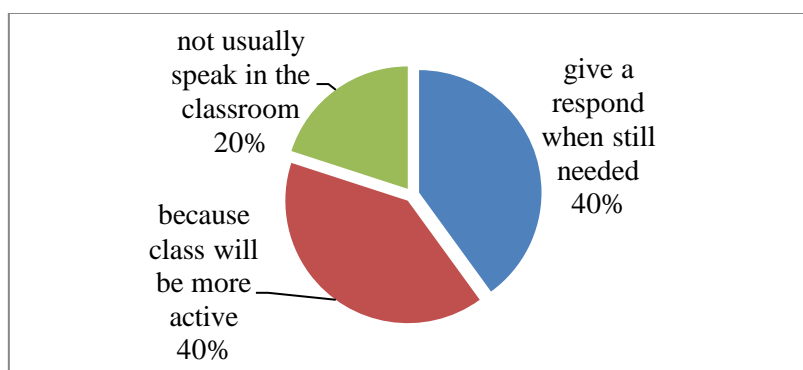


Figure 4.1.2.1 Expressing opinion in the classroom

In this case, the researcher assumes that only several students consider if the question that is not clear means that it still needs clarification. In the learning process in the classroom, the lecturer usually asks some questions to find out how the students' abilities about the subject. But if the question still needs clarification, as many as 40% of student give the clarification if still needed. It was confirmed by S1

*“Sometimes I give respond if it still needs because it will build our way of thinking and can synchronize the work of the brain with what we will say. After all, we will automatically speak without having to think too long.”*

Then, there are as many as 40% of student clarified so that the class could be more active. In this case, the student clarified the question that still not clear even though the student answered in English and Indonesian or maybe the answer still incorrect. So, the classroom would be more active. It was confirmed by S3

*“Sometimes I give respond if it still needs because it will build our way of thinking and can synchronize the work of the brain with what we will say because we will automatically speak without having to think too long”.*

Last, as many as 20% of students' not usually speak in the classroom. Some students' though about they still learn hard to speak in English. It was confirmed by S4 *“No because in speaking I still have learned hard to use English”.*

### Stating Opinion Voluntarily

The data had obtained 3 students preference about stating opinion voluntarily in classroom

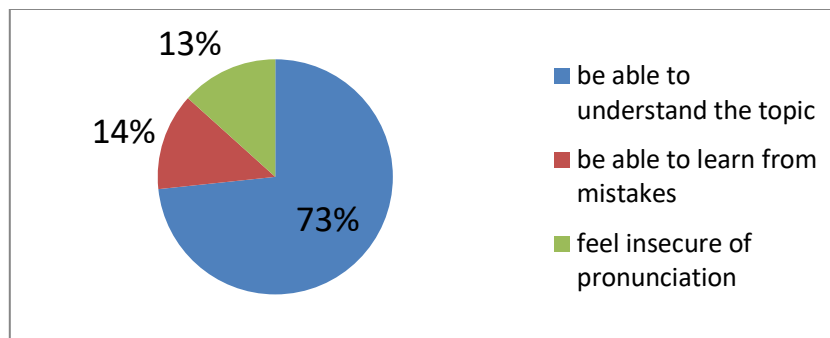


Figure 4.1.2.2 stating opinion voluntarily

When all students are asked “Do you ask questions to the Speaking lecturer in English if you still don't understand or need clarification? Why?” the researcher found that most of the students said yes to ask a question when they still don't understand but they have a different reason. Only 13% of student still lack they were confident about pronunciation when they asked the question in the classroom. It was confirmed by S5

*“Sometimes I ask questions if I need an answer to my question. But sometimes I often feel less confident and embarrassed to ask questions because I see pronouns and ideas from my friends are better. But right now I'm trying to get rid of that lack of confidence.”*

Then, there were 73% of students ask the question to the lecture because be able to understand the topic. It was confirmed by S9

*“Yes, of course, I will ask, Why? because so I know and better understand what the lecturer means.”*

The last, 14% of students asked the question to the lecture be able to learn from their mistake. In this case, learned from the mistake the students' would be more to understand and remember. As patma said

*“Yes because when I ask a question using English I don't feel afraid if there is an error or it has to be mixed with Indonesian because surely the lecturer will correct it.”*

### **Students' WTC and Speaking Speaking in Group Discussion**

The figure below shows the students' answers about the students' speaking in group discussion

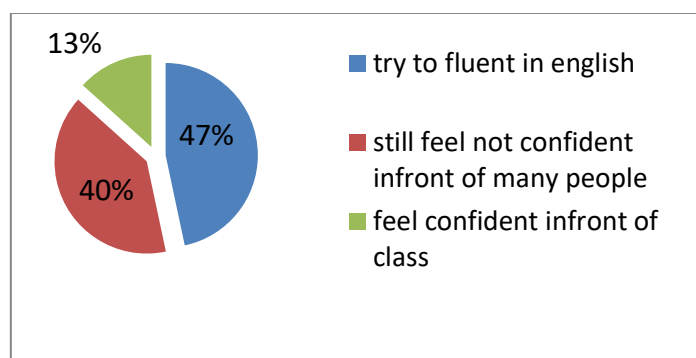


Figure 4.1.3.1 speaking in group discussion

From the chart 4.1.3.1 the researcher found that most of the students' still unwilling to speak in front of class voluntarily. As a result that the researcher found as many as 40% of students could not speak fluently without prepared and still felt afraid of being wrong. Some students able to speak in front of the class confidently or chosen by the lecture. It was confirmed by S4

*"I rarely express my opinion in class because I am afraid that I will speak incorrectly in English."*

Next, there are 47% of student expressed their opinion voluntarily in the class, because they wanted to be more speak fluently. S5 was confirmed that

*"Yes because train yourself to be able to speak English you have to be brave enough to try to talk even though there are still many mistakes".*

The last, only 13% of students' felt confident to speak in front of the class fluently and voluntarily. it was confirmed the S6 said that

*"Yes, sometimes I can express my opinion in front because I was ready long before that day".*

### Speaking in Small Group

The figure below point out the students' answers regarding their willingness to speak in the group:

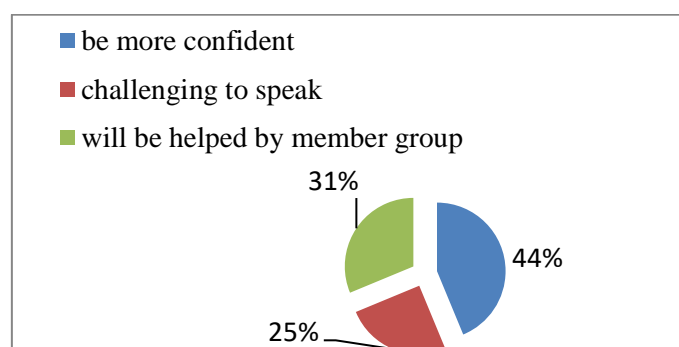




Figure 4.1.3.2 speaking in small group

The figure 4.3.2 explains the result from the question “Do you usually express your opinion in English when in a group? Why?”. The researcher found that the same thing, all students prefer to speak in the small group discussion. There are 44% of students’ willingness to speak in the group because they are more confident if speak in a small group. S7 has confirmed that :

*“Yes because when in a group I felt more confident in expressing my opinion using English because the other group friends helped to correct my English and could ask my group friends there was something I didn't understand”.*

Then, as many as 31% of students’ helped each member to speak in group. In this case, the students’ were not afraid to make mistakes when speaking in a small group because the other friends would to reflect on. Even though they did not have prepared the group member would helped them. As S6 stated that

*“Yes, because sometimes in my group feels more confident in expressing my opinion using English because group mates help correct my English and can ask my group mates if there is anything I don't understand”.*

The last, there are 25% of students are challenging to talk. Some students’ still thought about speak in the group is hard and challenging. it was confirmed by S8 she said that

*“I am unusual because I am afraid that if I speak I will make a mistake. However, right now I'm trying to change that habit”.*

### Speaking in the Classroom

The figure below represent the students' answers about talking in the learning process:

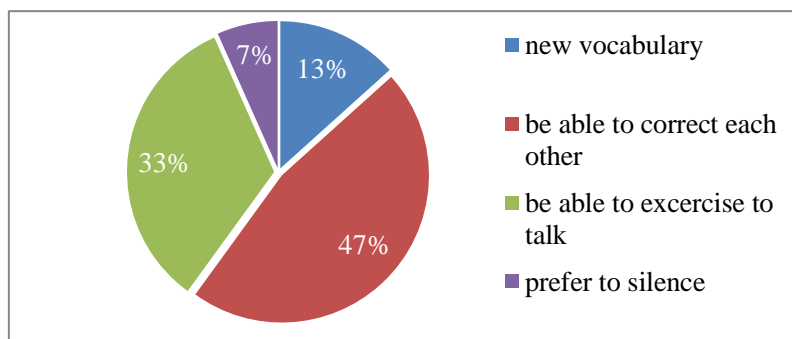


Figure 4.1.3.3 speaking in the classroom

The figure 4.1.3.3 explains the result from the question “Do you usually speak English to other group members/friends as part of the learning process/activity? Why?”. The researcher indicated that most of the students’ willing to speak in the group or other group.

47% of students that speak in the group and other groups as learning process be able to correct each other. S7 has confirmed that

*“Yes because if we talk to other friends in English, we can correct each other”.*

Then, there are 33% of students’ thought about talking with other groups as an exercise to improve their English. Besides that, the students also got some new vocabulary in talking to other groups. There are 13% of students’ to got new vocabulary when talking to other groups. It was confirmed by S9 that

*“yes, to be more fluent to using English and also to get new vocabulary with those of us who don't know it yet”.*

Finally, only 7% of students’ prefer to silence and use Indonesia language when learning process. in fact the learning process in the classroom that used the group method had many advantages and was quite attractive to students. however, it is also have a weakness one of them was if not be control the group will only be dominated by some students who are smart and others do not have the opportunity. S5 said that *“Not. I prefer Indonesian only”.*

### Speaking Outside the Classroom

The figure below exhibit the students’ reflection regarding their speak in English outside the classroom:

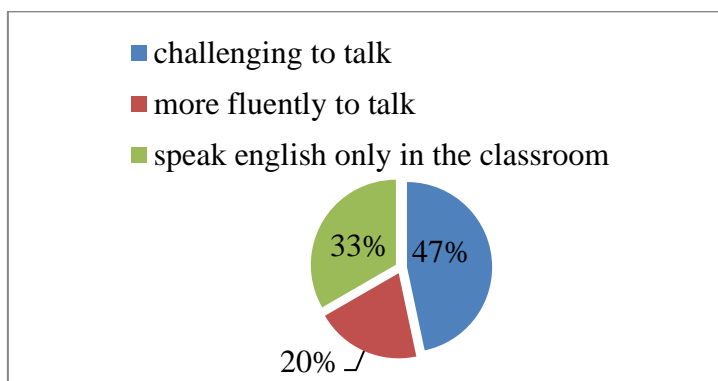


Figure 4.1.3.4 Speaking outside the classroom

In the figure 4.1.3.4 the researcher found that many of students’ only spoke English in the classroom or learning process. S1 confirmed about speak English only in the classroom

*“If it is required then I use English because then we can also practise our speaking skills so that we can know to what extent we can speak English”.*

moreover 33% of students would speak English as the daily conversation on campus. Then, there are 47% of students’ thought to speak English in daily conversation is challenging. Besides they feel challenged to speak. Communicating in English also make them accustomed to the natural language of English. It was confirmed by S4



*“Yes, I often do it with my friends. The goal is that we exchange, train, talk, and practice our pronunciation before speaking in front of many people. And we hope that it can become our habit of communicating when we meet”.*

The last 20% of students' felt spoke English beside in the classroom made their English more fluently. It was confirmed by S3

*“Yes so that our friends are also interested in learning together when we speak English with them”.*

## **DISCUSSION**

This study describes what kind of situational factors influence the students' willingness to speak. The researcher explained the research findings of situational factors that affect students' willingness to communicate in speaking class. There were 3 themes, namely, students' WTC and questions, students' WTC and opinions, students' WTC and speaking. Various situations affect the willingness of students to speak in groups, in front of the class, in pairs, or indicated directly by the lecturer during the learning process.

The first theme is WTC and students' questions, asked questions or gave some quizzes at the beginning of the lesson or after discussing the subject was an incentive to develop their knowledge. Teachers also make this a place for practice to upgrade students' speaking. It means that most of the students would try to answer the lecture questions in English as well as improve their speaking skills. It is line with Vale and Kozminski, (2013) Questions are a means of educating their students by describing their understanding of a subject and then teaching them to come up with a series of logical conclusions instead of teaching them what is right or wrong. Besides, students argued that they would answer the teacher's question when they knew the question. Understanding the topic that is used as a question material also affect students to speak. Kang (2005) stated that When talking about topics that are unknown to the participants, they tended to feel insecure about speaking. In the learning situation in the classroom, the mentality of students is uncertain to be active, some were afraid to make mistakes and failed in front of many people.

The second theme is students' WTC and Opinion. In the learning process in the classroom, the lecturer usually asks several questions to find out how the students' ability towards the course is. However, if the question still needs clarification, the students provide clarification if it is still needed. Also it related to the background knowledge of students in making justifications in the teacher's questions.

The last theme students' WTC and Speaking, the students preferred to speak in the small group discussion as many as 45%. It is because they were more confident if speak in a small group. Also, the students were not afraid to make mistakes when speaking in front of the group, because the group members would correct it.



## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of this study it can be concluded that many things made students willing to speak in a whole class. Besides the teaching method a teacher, the situation in the classroom also affects students' WTC. there are some the situational factors that affecting students such as interlocutors, class interaction pattern, the topic in learning, and task type.

These findings found several factors triggering students' willingness to communicate which consisted of the factors. these factors appeared to exist as individual differences between students' language proficiency levels and motivation. These factors were found to influence and relate to each other to provide input, topics of interest and kinship, and group discussions.

These factors can be used by the teacher rather than provoke the students' to speak in front of a whole class. It is necessary for a lecturer to always encourage and provide to speak in public. The students' need to get used to exercising to using English from the small group or pairs. At least the students are in an environment where English can be seen anywhere. For example, the student can be asked the question from a teacher then the students' discuss the answer with their groups.

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