

Exploring the Supportive Classroom Environment in Relation with Students' Willingness to Communicate in English

Septian Maulana ^{1*}, Nita Kaniadewi ²

^{1,2} Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka, Indonesia

* maulanseptian9@gmail.com

Abstract

This study is concerned with the interplay between the classroom atmosphere and an EFL senior high school learner's willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. Information was gathered from 153 students in Bekasi, Indonesia, using two questionnaires: the Classroom Environment Survey and the Willingness to Communicate Scale. From a descriptive point of view, students reported that their classes were supportive overall, while they exhibited medium levels of English WTC. Correlation analyses revealed a moderate yet significant positive relationship ($r = 0.413$, $p < 0.01$) between the classroom environment and WTC. Feeling supported by peers and teachers generates a sense of personal confidence within students to communicate in English. Findings suggest the importance of creating a conducive classroom atmosphere to foster and enhance students' confidence and willingness to speak in English. Practical recommendations aimed at improving classroom interaction for promoting language use among EFL students are proffered in this study for future teachers.

Keywords: *Classroom Environment, Willingness to Communicate, English Speaking Skills, Language Learning*

Introduction

The classroom environment (CE) is essential in developing their willingness to communicate (WTC) in English learning. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, the purpose should not only to improve students' language skills, but also to foster a positive and supportive classroom to learn (Zarrinabadi et al, 2023). It means students feel comfortable, encouraged, and supported by their teacher and classmates, they are more confident and more likely to try speaking English. A study by looked at how the classroom environment affects students' willingness to communicate in English, especially among Iraqi EFL learners (Obaid, et al, 2022). The results showed that a supportive classroom has a strong, positive effect on students' willingness to speak. The study explained that when teachers give encouragement and create a friendly, safe space, students feel more confident and ready to join in communication activities. The research findings suggest that increase confidence through teacher encouragement and fostering a supportive atmosphere enhances students' readiness to participate in communication tasks.

Furthermore, the classroom environment plays a key role not only in supporting students but also in helping language teachers create more effective and engaging lessons. This environment is especially important in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, where students often feel nervous about speaking in a second language. When teachers create a space where students feel safe, respected, and motivated, students are more likely to take part in classroom discussions and express themselves in English. A study conducted by explored how

different elements of the classroom environment significantly affect students' willingness to communicate (Salbaş et al, 2025). By involving 207 EFL students, the research examined what factors influence their motivation to speak in English. The findings provided valuable insights into how classroom strategy, group work, teacher feedback, and student-teacher relationships—can either support or hinder students' willingness to speak. This research highlights the importance of designing a classroom atmosphere that supports open communication and encourages interaction.

Similarly, emphasized the role of teacher-supported classroom interaction in reducing students' unwillingness to communicate (Chen et al, 2022). Their study found that when teachers actively support students during speaking activities through positive feedback, encouragement, and meaningful interaction—students become more confident and are more willing to participate. These findings suggest that the way teachers manage classroom communication has a direct impact on students' engagement and language development. Therefore, a well-organized, supportive classroom environment not only boosts student confidence but also increases their readiness to communicate in English. Furthermore, the classroom environment helps language teachers by promotes variety and encourages students to communicate in developing a learning. For instance, teacher-supported classroom interactions greatly reduce unwillingness to communicate. This highlights the importance of teacher involvement and classroom structure in building students' confidence and willingness to communicate in English.

Empirical research consistently emphasizes the importance of a supportive classroom environment in promoting student communicative competence., when students are encouraged to collaborate with their peers and offer help to one another, they become more motivated to learn and more willing to participate in classroom activities (Ye, 2024). The study highlights that peer support and group-based learning not only strengthen social bonds among students but also create a more comfortable and engaging learning environment. These findings suggest that collaborative learning plays a key role in boosting students' confidence and promoting active classroom participation, especially in language learning contexts where communication is essential. Complementing these findings, provide further evidence that such a supportive classroom atmosphere—where cooperation and mutual encouragement has a significant positive impact on students' willingness to communicate in English (Xie et al, 2021). These studies underline the importance of building a classroom culture that values teamwork, empathy, and interaction, as these elements directly contribute to greater communicative engagement and language development. Similarly, highlights the overall atmosphere of the classroom plays a key role in helping students feel ready and willing to communicate, this is particularly important for language learners who may feel nervous about making mistakes (Dewaele, 2019). However, these studies show that creating a supportive classroom climate is essential for improving students' communication skills.

Additionally, implementing effective classroom strategies can help create a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment where students are encouraged to participate actively in discussions (Fan, 2022). The study highlighted the importance of using innovative teaching methods, real-life communication tasks, and technology-based tools to capture students' interest and make the learning process. When teachers use creative approaches and adapt to students' needs, the classroom becomes more supportive, which is essential for developing strong communicative skills in English. Further, found that a supportive classroom environment plays a crucial role in increasing students' confidence to speak English. When students feel safe and encouraged, they are more willing to express themselves without fear of making mistakes

(Khajavy et al, 2018). Building on this, more recent studies have shown that confidence is one of the strongest predictors of a student's willingness to communicate. For example, discovered that students who possess higher levels of self-confidence are significantly more likely to engage in classroom communication and use English more frequently (Cao et al, 2019). These findings suggest that classroom strategies that promote engagement, support, and innovation not only make learning more enjoyable but also help build the confidence needed for effective language communication. Factors such as teacher-student interactions, peer support, and a positive classroom environment also play an important role in promoting WTC (Dincer et al, 2019). A supportive teacher-student relationship has been shown to positively influence students' willingness to engage in classroom interactions (Kun et al, 2020). In their study, the researchers explored the relationship between the classroom communication climate and the development of communicative linguistic competence among Malaysian EFL learners. The findings revealed that when students perceive their teacher as approachable, respectful, and encouraging, they are more likely to participate actively in classroom discussions. This highlights the essential role of teacher-student relationships in fostering a classroom environment that supports language learning.

However, most of the study on this topic has focused on university students or adults, creating a gap in knowing how students frequently deal with the fear of making mistakes or being judges, affecting their English communication. The classroom is key to getting students to learn a language (Li et al., 2022). In this study, the researcher examined the relationship between the classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate among a large sample of 2,268 university students who were learning English as a foreign language. The findings strongly suggest that a positive, supportive classroom environment is a key factor in increasing students' motivation and confidence to engage in communicative activities. Researcher emphasize the crucial role of teacher support in fostering students communicate in language learning environments (Charline et al, 2023). A teacher's positive attitude and consistent encouragement can significantly boost students' self-confidence, making them more comfortable in speaking English and participating in classroom discussions. This research findings that positive teacher-student relationships promote emotional well-being and engagement, which are critical for successful communication in English.

Several studies agree on the importance of a supportive classroom environment in promoting WTC. These study addresses gaps by exploring how the classroom environment impacts willingness to communicate (WTC) among senior high school EFL students. However, these differences highlight the complex impact that the supportive classroom environment has on EFL students' willingness to communicate. By focusing on students' perceptions of their classroom environment, this research fills a gap in existing studies and provides valuable insights for teachers, and future researchers. The findings aim is there any positive correlation between supportive classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate, and to guide English language teachers in implementing strategies to enhance the classroom environment. Th novelty for this study is seeks to equip future educators to create positive classroom experiences, and increase willingness to communicate.

Method

This study takes a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate in English. Data were gathered using standardized survey questionnaires that captured students' perceptions of classroom conditions

and their communication behavior. Two main instruments were employed: the Classroom Environment Survey, which evaluated teacher support and student cohesiveness, and the Willingness to Communicate Scale, which measured how often and in what contexts students were willing to use English. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were used to identify the strength and nature of the relationship between classroom conditions and students' participation in English communication. A quantitative correlational design was an appropriate choice for an investigation of the relationship between the classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. Correlational research allows researchers to examine naturally occurring variations in the classroom setting without experimental manipulation, which is truly suitable for real-world contexts pertinent to education (Mackiewicz, 2018). The design also helps to ascertain both the strength and direction of association between the two constructs while ensuring ecological validity in that students were studied in their real-life classroom environment.

Using validated and widely recognized instruments, such as the Classroom Environment Survey and the Willingness to Communicate Scale, has further ensured high methodological rigor of the study (Lee et al, 2020). These instruments have good psychometric properties themselves, thus adding to the reliability and validity of the findings. The survey administration occurred mostly during class hours, which mechanized response bias and guaranteed high response rates, since the students were in familiar surroundings while being able to seek clarification effortlessly if required. It was not so much the data analysis dimension of the study that was visible. Instead, it made it possible to complement and deepen the analysis by both descriptive and inferential statistics. While descriptive statistics made clear the aspects of students' perceptions of their classroom environment and WTC, the application of Pearson's correlation coefficient allows the study to test the hypothesis that a supportive class climate is associated positively with students being willing to speak English. Besides increasing the reliability of the conclusions drawn from these statistical analyses, meeting the assumptions about normal distribution by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test reflected more credibly the conditions of parametric tests (Field, 2024). In short, the methodological options reflect careful thinking and adherence to established research protocols in applied linguistics and educational psychology.

The sample consists of eleventh-grade high school students from a school in Bekasi, Indonesia. These students are English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners who regularly participate in English classroom activities. Data were collected over a period of three months. During this time, students will complete the questionnaires anonymously to encourage honest responses. Participants were selected to gain insight into how classroom interactions, especially with teachers and peers, affect their willingness to speak English. The findings are expected to provide educators with practical strategies for creating a more supportive and motivating classroom environment. To collect the data, the researcher uses two types of questionnaires. The first is the Classroom Environment Survey, which asks students about their experiences in the classroom such as how much support they receive from their teacher and how well they interact with their classmates. This survey is adapted from the Learning Environment Inventory developed by (Dorman, 2003). The second instrument is the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) Scale, which measures how often students are willing to speak English in different situations. This scale is based on previous studies by (Gol et al, 2014; Li et al, 2025). Both questionnaires use a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The questions are written clearly and simply to ensure they are easy for students to understand. Before being used in the main study, both instruments are tested to ensure they are reliable and effective.

The researcher will begin by using descriptive statistics. This means calculating the average (mean), how much the answers vary (standard deviation), and how often each answer appears (frequency). These results will help show what students think about their classroom environment and how willing they are to speak English. Descriptive statistics give a basic picture of the data and help find common patterns in the students' answers. Further, the researcher will use correlation analysis to find out if there is a relationship between the classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate. This will help see whether students who feel more supported and connected in class are also more likely to speak English.

Results

Normality Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used on both the Classroom Environment (X_CE) and Willingness to Communicate (Y_WTC) variables to see if the regular distribution because both significance values are higher than 0.05. This finding shows that it is appropriate to use parametric statistical analyses in additional stages of data processing, including correlation testing. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used on both variables, X_CE and Y_WTC. To see if the data followed a normal distribution. The X_CE variable had a significance value of 0.200, while the Y_WTC variable had a significance value of 0.058. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test shows that both significance values are greater than 0.05, which means that the data for both variables are regularly distributed.

Normality tests showed that both variables were normal and could thus justify parametric tests for further analysis ($p > 0.05$). Such finding further corroborates the strength of the correlation result and suggests that the relationship between the classroom environment and WTC is really and truly judging the population under study. These findings thus reiterate the fact that supportive classroom environment is eminent, yet individual differences should be taken into consideration when addressing students' active English communication.

Descriptive Statistics Result

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
X_CE	153	46	100	11122	72.69	8.318
Y_WTC	153	40	100	10105	66.05	11.907
Valid N (listwise)	153					

The study included a total of 153 students as respondents. The descriptive statistics were used to demonstrate the average and range of the two primary variables: Classroom Environment (X_CE) and Willingness to Communicate (Y_WTC). The descriptive analysis showed that the Classroom Environment scores were between 46 and 100, with a total score of 11,122. The average score was 72.69, which means that most students thought their classroom was supportive. The standard deviation was 8.318, which means that students' views of their classroom environment were stable and did not vary much from the average. The Willingness to Communicate scores, on the other hand, ranged from 40 to 100, with a total score of 10,105. The average score was 66.05, which shows that students were in fact willing to speak English. The standard deviation, on the other hand, was 11.907, which is higher than that of the classroom environment variable. This shows that students' willingness to talk to each other different more which some were very willing, while others were less so. These results reveal that, on average, students think that the classroom is a rather good place to be and are willing

to communicate in English, but there are significant variations between students when it comes to the latter.

This descriptive data depicts the average ($M = 72.69$) to mean that students bring their classrooms as an ambience where they express willingness and a low standard deviation ($SD = 8.318$) for Classroom Environment. Meanings may explain that perceptions of classroom environment were relatively similar among respondents, reflecting a stable and uniform classroom climate. In contrast, the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) scores between groups differed widely ($M = 66.05$) in that they had a high standard deviation ($SD = 11.907$). Such cases might be personal case factors as often self-confidence, language anxiety, or prior experience with English apply to tend to affect students' willingness to communicate even in environments very supportive towards them (Khajavy et al, 2018). The ranges of scores can also be viewed in support of this proposition: Classroom Environment scores were in the range of 46 to 100, whereas WTC scores fell within a 40-to-100 range. These indicate perhaps that students with least supportive classroom perceptions still highlighted some positive aspects of their environment, whereas some students held low WTC despite seemingly supportive classrooms. This ties in very well with the moderate correlation coefficient ($r = 0.413$), suggesting that the classroom environment is not the only factor affecting WTC. The result that external classroom conditions interact with internal emotional and psychological states to influence WTC is supported by researcher as well, who stated that students' internal states interact with external factors to shape their communicative behaviors (Dewaele, 2019).

Correlation Test

To examine the relationship between the Classroom Environment and students' Willingness to Communicate in English, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 2. Correlation Test

Correlations		Classroom Enviroment (X)	Willingness to Communication (Y)
Classroom Enviroment (X)	Pears on Correlation	1	.413
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	153	153
Willingness toCommunication (Y)	Pears on Correlation	.413	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	153	153

The result shows that the two variables connect in a positive way and that the connection is statistically significant. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is 0.413 and the significance level (p -value) is 0.000. The p -value is less than 0.01, which means that the relationship is very important at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This correlation coefficient ($r = 0.413$) shows that there is a small positive link. This means that students who think their classroom is more helpful are more likely to be interested in conversing in English. So, students are more likely to speak English when they think the classroom is supportive and helpful. These findings strengthen the belief that the classroom environment is a key factor in encouraging students to communicate in language learning settings.

In addition to these main findings, correlation results may also further be described by considering the precision of the estimate. Although it is recommended to report the 95% confidence interval of the correlation along with the Pearson correlation coefficient reported as $r=0.413$ with a significance level of $p<0.01$, the Pearson correlation coefficient again refers to this. This would indicate the most likely range of values within which the true population

correlation would fall and would provide a more moderate framing of the strength and reliability of the relationship. For example, confidence intervals not including zero will be evidence in favor of the claim that the association between classroom environment and willingness to communicate is significant.

Therefore, even though the correlation is significant statistically, its pragmatic value from the perspective of classroom pedagogy warrants discussion." The coefficient suggests a low to moderate positive relationship, indicating that the classroom environment contributes significantly to students' willingness to communicate, but will not be the only source of this behavior. Teachers may interpret this finding in terms of classroom support being able to facilitate a small step towards enhancement in student participation, leaving yet the demand for motivational, anxious, or language ability factors. It is also important to ensure that the assumptions of linearity and the absence of outliers have been met, because if these hold, the correlation analysis's validity is compromised.

Discussion

The objective of this study was to investigate how the classroom environment affects students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. The descriptive and correlation analyses have revealed significant patterns that support the assumption that the classroom environment is a key factor in how students communicate when they are learning a language. The descriptive statistics showed that students generally have a good view of their classroom, with an average score of 72.69. This means that many students feel safe and supported while they are learning. Several factors contribute to creating such an environment, including the quality of student-teacher relationships, mutual respect among classmates, well-managed classroom procedures, and opportunities for collaboration with peers. These elements help to reduce anxiety and increase students' confidence, which in turn makes them more willing to express themselves in English. Additionally, the relatively low standard deviation of 8.318 indicates that this positive perception is shared consistently among most participants, showing little variation in how students experience their classroom environment. This consistency further emphasizes that a supportive and structured classroom can universally benefit students' willingness to communicate, regardless of their individual differences.

The average score for students' readiness to speak English was 66.05, which shows that they were moderately. The standard deviation (11.907) reveals more variation, which means that certain students are quite willing to communicate, while others are still unsure. First, many parts of CE are very important for making learners ready to speak English. They also cause positive as well as negative emotions, which affect the strength of WTC. Because of this, teachers need to pay attention to CE by always helping students, encouraging them to get along with one other, and carefully picking a wide range of activities for English sessions (Li et al., 2022). Classroom environment and willingness to communicate in English: The mediating role of emotions experienced by university students in China. Language Teaching Research, Pearson's r showed a moderate, positive, and statistically significant connection ($r = 0.413$, $p < 0.01$) between the classroom setting and the willingness to communicate. This means that students who think their classroom is more helpful are more likely to participate in English communication activities. The association is not very strong, but its significance shows how important contextual factors are in forming how students perform. The fact that there was a positive relationship between the Classroom Environment and WTC in English meant that ongoing professional development to create an encouraging atmosphere would help raise the

level of WTC in English. So, to improve the level of WTC in English, teachers need to provide a comfortable and friendly space where students may engage with each other in a way that works for them (Kun et al, 2020).

In addition, discovered a strong and meaningful connection between the classroom atmosphere and students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in Chinese EFL contexts (Peng et al, 2018; Zhang et al, 2018). The research provides compelling evidence that a positive and supportive classroom environment significantly enhances students' confidence and readiness to engage in spoken communication. Overall, Peng and Woodrow's findings are consistent with the current study's findings, emphasizing the idea that the classroom environment is a critical component in encouraging active use of language among students. Their research highlights that a positive classroom environment greatly contributes to students' confidence and readiness to engage in communication. Specifically, the study emphasizes the critical role of teacher encouragement, peer support, and interactive classroom activities in fostering students' communicative confidence. Researcher also found that classrooms which promote learner autonomy and encourage meaningful interaction have a positive impact on students' communicative behavior (Hashimoto, 2002; Teimouri et al, 2019). Students who were given more opportunities to make choices in their learning and engage actively with peers were more likely to participate in classroom discussions and speak in English. By fostering an environment where students felt both independent and socially connected, teachers were able to create conditions that supported greater willingness to communicate. The results show that teachers should create a positive and student-friendly learning space. Using strategies like group activities, interactive lessons, regular feedback, and emotional support can help students feel more comfortable and willing to participate in speaking tasks.

Apart from the results discussed above, our finding of moderate positive correlation suggests that one's environment of learning was conceptualized as one of many interacting factors impacting the willingness of students to engage in communication (WTC). For example, (Li et al., 2025) argued that WTC is dynamic in nature and indeed situationally or permanently, influenced by several factors such as "language anxiety" and "perceived competence." Thus, the present study supports such argument and findings since the classroom environment to WTC was significant but only moderate, indicating that indeed maybe individual differences will come into play. Future studies should continue to explore the interactions of such factors with these internal variables on communicative behavior. The research we have conducted is further evidence in line with the emerging studies on the emotional dimension of classroom environments. According to a positive emotional climate decreases anxiety and improves WTC among EFL learners. Current findings affirm this conclusion, as those students enrolled in supportive classrooms tended to be more willing to speak English (Khajavy et al, 2018). This could be because of such environments reducing the fear of making mistakes. This link shows how perceived support relates to decreased anxiety and becomes a significant understanding of how teachers might build confidence and enable participation through emotional scaffolding.

Another point worth contemplating is to investigate the possible cultural influence on how the classroom environment affects WTC. Researcher mentions how peer support and harmonious relationships are especially important for encouraging students to communicate in collectivist cultures (Rini et al, 2023). Our participants in the Indonesian context—an equally culturally collectivist one—seem to reflect this pattern, whereby increased perceptions of support from peers and teachers correlated with increased willingness to communicate. This means that teachers in similar cultural contexts might want to work hard on developing group cohesion and respect for interpersonal relationships to further students' WTC.

Finally, our findings also resonate with the argument made by researcher, who argued that students' willingness to communicate is influenced by a host of immediate situational factors (Derakhshan, 2022). Our study only considered the perception of classroom environment and WTC at one single point in time, and this moderate correlation shows that students' situational experiences may have fluctuated, thus affecting their WTC. This affords the opportunity to further consider how certain things that happen day-to-day in the classroom or teacher interventions could cause variations in students' willingness to communicate in the long run. Such an approach could be helpful in identifying the specific elements of the immediate classroom environment that most influence, and have the most immediate effects on, communicative behavior. In conclusion, the strong correlation between the classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate adds to what we already know: learning a language is not just about understanding grammar or vocabulary—it also involves emotions and social interaction. While language ability and motivation are important, the way the classroom feels and functions is just as important in influencing how students behave and communicate. For future studies, it would be helpful to use other research methods like interviews or classroom observations to better understand how specific parts of the classroom setting influence students' willingness to speak.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to delve into the relationship between classroom environment and students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among senior high school EFL learners. The study concluded that there is a moderate and statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables. Thus, students who viewed the classroom environment as supportive were more likely to express willingness to communicate in English. Findings highlight that teacher support, peer interaction, and safe learning environments promote students' confidence and reduce their anxiety towards communication. In addition, the results consider the broader relevance of classroom dynamics in language learning beyond the apparent immediate communicative outcomes. A positive classroom atmosphere is a supportive environment for speaking practice as well as a domain for developing belonging and confidence that may impact students' long-term motivation and attitudes toward English.

Despite its useful insights, this study is limited in many respects. First, the focus of the research was only on one senior high school in Bekasi, Indonesia, hindering generalizing the findings to wider populations or other educational contexts. Secondly, the study hinged solely on quantitative data through self-report questionnaires that may miss much of what informs students' experiences or feelings about their classroom environment. Given the limitations, one suggestion would be to have a more heterogeneous sample in the future from different schools and regions to give a more comprehensive account over various learning environments and cultural backgrounds. The Pearson correlation analysis showed a moderate, positive, and statistically significant link ($r = 0.413$, $p < 0.01$) between the classroom environment and WTC. Ultimately, the more encouraging and interesting students think their classroom more likely they are to do things that require them to speak English. These results show that the classroom setting has an important effect on how confident to use English in real life.

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