FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

EFL WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE ACROSS COMMUNICATION CONTEXTS AND VOCATIONAL MAJORS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF INDONESIAN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English among Indonesian vocational high school students across communication context and vocational majors. Many EFL learners remain reluctant to speak English even when their linguistic competence is sufficient (Purwati et al., 2023). A quantitative descriptive design was used with 233 tenth-grade students from several vocational high school in Jakarta, representing Business and Management, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Hospitality and Tourism and Health and Social Care. Data were collected through a questionnaire adapted from Lee & Drajati (2020), comprising 14 close-ended Likert items, analyzed with descriptive statistics and 10 open-ended items, summarized descriptively to support interpretation. Students generally reported a positive level of WTC with higher willingness in informal, peer-related, low-stakes situatuins and lower willingness in formal, evaluative situations such as classroom presentations and responding to teachers' greetings. Descriptive patterns also varied across majors, elthough subgroup sizes differed considerably (n=10 to 105); these are observed variations rather than firm group differences and no inferetial tests were conducted. Teachers are encouraged to design interactive, supportive speaking activities that connect students' informal communicative strength with formal classroom demands.

Keywords: Communication Contexts, EFL Students, Vocational High School, Willingness to Communicate

INTRODUCTION

Oral communication is a central goal of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Robert & Meenakshi (2022) identify communicative competence, particularly the ability to express ideas orally, as one of the most significant outcomes of language learning, and Salih & Omar (2024) similarly note that speaking skills allow EFL learners to take part in presentations, discussions, and everyday social communication. This demand is especially pronounced in Indonesian vocational education, where students are expected to develop communication skills directly applicable to their future professions.

Despite this importance, many EFL learners remain reluctant to communicate in English even when their linguistic competence is sufficient. This pattern is closely tied to

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

Willingness to Communicate (WTC), an individual's readiness to initiate communication with a specific interlocutor at a given moment (MacIntyre et al., 1998). MacIntyre et al. (1998) Heuristic Model describes WTC as emerging from a layered interaction of situational and enduring variables: at the situational level, the immediate predictors are the desire to communicate and state communicative self-confidence; at the enduring level, motivation, attitudes toward the interlocutor, intergroup attitudes, social situation, and communicative competence shape a learner's general disposition, with personality traits and intergroup climate acting as broader background influences.

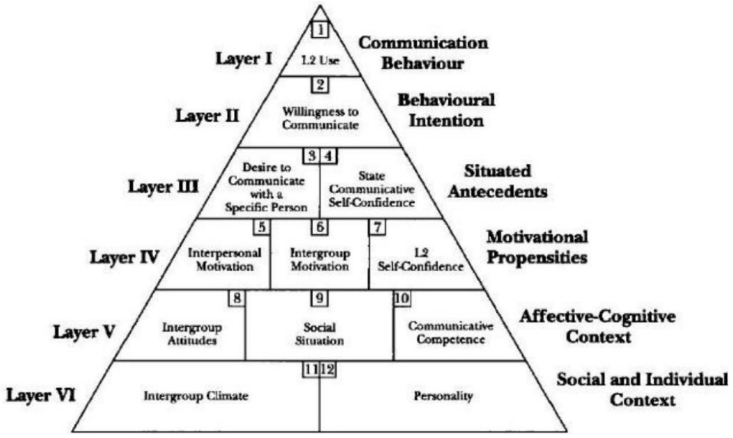


Figure 1. Heuristic model of variables influencing WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998)

In EFL contexts, students' WTC strongly shapes their engagement in speaking activities and the development of communicative competence, particularly where opportunities to use English outside the classroom are limited (Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Zhang & Dai, 2024). Students who are unwilling to communicate may miss opportunities to develop spoken language abilities regardless of their proficiency (Purwati et al., 2023).

WTC's situational sensitivity is well documented. MacIntyre et al. (1998) described WTC as a state-like variable that shifts with communication context, interlocutor, and perceived risk, and Kang (2005) confirmed that it emerges and changes dynamically across situations. Peng & Woodrow (2010) found that EFL classroom contexts produce distinctive WTC profiles shaped by communication confidence, motivation, and classroom environment, and Lee & Drajati (2020) developed a multi-context WTC scale showing that willingness varies considerably between inside- and outside-the-classroom settings. Alqarni (2021) reported higher WTC in low-anxiety, supportive environments; Lin & Wang (2025) found that enjoyable speaking activities positively predict WTC; and Liang & Alavi (2025) identified classroom safety and peer relationships as significant factors. In the Indonesian vocational context specifically, Yunus et al. (2023) found through interview data that WTC is highly sensitive to peer dynamics and task formality; Setyowati et al. (2025) found that interactive learning approaches improve English communication among vocational students; and Rotjanawongchai (2023) confirmed that in- and out-of-classroom factors shape WTC differently.

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN**: **2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN**: **2776-8880**

Despite these contributions, most prior WTC research has focused on higher education or general secondary settings, leaving the vocational sector comparatively underexplored. Existing studies also tend to examine WTC mainly in relation to psychological variables such as self-confidence and anxiety, without fully mapping how it varies across specific situations, including formal classroom tasks, peer-to-peer interactions, and informal contexts such as social media or interactions with foreign visitors. Vocational programs in Indonesia cover distinct professional orientations, including Business and Management, ICT, Hospitality and Tourism, and Health and Social Care, each with different workplace communication demands (Hajar & Triastuti, 2024; Saputro & Savitri, 2025; Sari et al., 2024), yet how these orientations relate to WTC patterns has received limited empirical attention, and prior studies may have touched on related dimensions in other contexts.

Addressing these gaps, this study investigated two research questions: (1) What are the WTC levels of vocational high school students in English across different communication contexts, both inside and outside the classroom? and (2) What descriptive WTC patterns are observed across vocational majors, namely Business and Management, ICT, Hospitality and Tourism, and Health and Social Care? The study aimed to describe students' overall WTC levels across specific communication situations, identify the contexts in which students are most and least willing to communicate in English, and describe these patterns across the different vocational study programs.

This study's contribution is primarily contextual and pedagogical rather than theoretical. Using the multi-context WTC instrument adapted from Lee & Drajati (2020) across four vocational programs and 233 tenth-grade students in Jakarta, it offers context-sensitive descriptive evidence of how WTC manifests across communication contexts and vocational majors in Indonesian vocational EFL settings, a context that has received limited empirical attention. Rather than extending WTC theory, the findings are intended to give EFL teachers and curriculum designers in vocational schools practical insight for fostering communicative engagement in both formal and informal situations.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design to describe students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English across communication contexts and vocational majors, rather than to establish casual relationships (Creswell, 2009). The participant of this study were 233 tenth-grade students from several vocational high school in Jakarta, selected through purposive sampling based on active enrollment in a vocational program and in English instruction. They came from four programs: Business and Management (n = 105, 45.1%), Information and Communication Technology or ICT (n = 88,37.8%), Hospitality and Tourism (n = 30, 12.9%), and Health and Social Care (n = 10, 4.3%). Tenth-graders were chosen because they are at an early stage of their vocational pathway. Subgroup sizes reflect actual enrollment at the participating schools rather than a sampling quota, a limitation addressed in the Discussion.

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

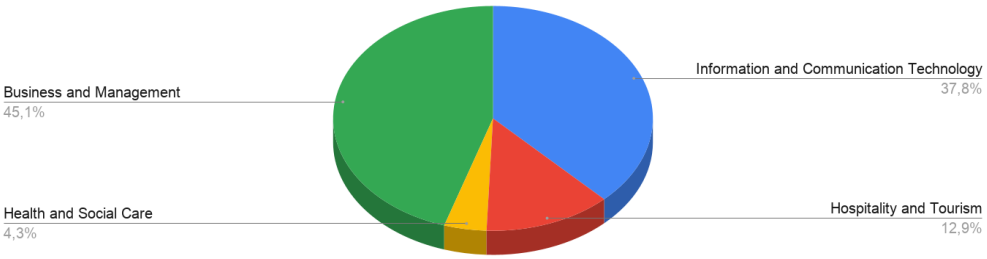


Figure 2. Distribution of participants across vocational high school majors (N=233)

Data were collected using a questionnaire adapted from Lee & Drajati (2020), comprising 24 items across two contexts: inside the classroom (17 items) and outside the classroom (7 items) (Table 1). The 14 close-ended items used a four-point Likert scale from 1 (Definitely not willing) to 4 (Definitely willing) and 10 open-ended items explored students' communicative experiences. Original items about waiting in line, interacting with strangers, or speaking with speakers abroad were replaced with situations typical of Indonesian vocational schools, such as greeting friends and teachers, workplace role-plays, and asking a teacher to repeat an explanation, while preserving the original construct. The questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Indonesia and reviewed by the researcher's supervisor for accuracy (Zulaiha & Mulyono, 2020).

Table 1. Blueprint of the questionnaire

No	Constructs	Item Number	Number of Items	Source
1.	WTC Inside the Classroom	1-10, 15-18, 20, 21, 23	17	Lee & Drajati (2020)
2.	WTC Outside the Classroom	11-14, 19, 22, 24	7	

After permission was obtained from the school principal, the questionnaire was distributed in class through Google Forms between November 2025 and March 2026. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent given by selecting "Yes" at the start of the questionnaire. Participants were told that their responses would be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes. Names were collected but not reported, and access to data was limited to the researcher and supervisor.

Each close-ended item was scored from 1 to 4, with higher scores indicating greater willingness. A mean or median of 3 (Willing) or above was treated as a positive level of WTC, and item means were compared descriptively to identify the contexts with the highest and lowest willingness. All 14 items showed corrected item-total correlations above 30 (approximately .62 to .78), and Cronbach's alpha was 935, indicating excellent internal consistency (Tables 2 and 3) (Berlian et al., 2020; Lee & Drajati, 2020).

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

Table 2. Validity test

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q1	38.49	60.380	.702	.534	.930
Q2	38.77	60.237	.675	.607	.931
Q3	38.69	60.344	.660	.503	.932
Q4	38.87	58.987	.719	.586	.930
Q5	38.71	59.594	.699	.566	.930
Q6	38.86	60.033	.625	.440	.933
Q7	38.60	59.784	.680	.511	.931
Q8	38.64	59.784	.702	.569	.930
Q9	38.54	59.361	.752	.725	.929
Q10	38.58	59.417	.760	.712	.929
Q11	38.41	59.433	.720	.624	.930
Q12	38.56	60.368	.659	.541	.932
Q13	38.53	59.647	.677	.545	.931
Q14	38.50	60.225	.622	.499	.933

Table 2. Reliability test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.935	.936	14

Ethical procedures for this study followed standard practice for research involving minors. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the principal of the participating vocational high school before data collection. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were asked to indicate their consent by selecting "Yes" on the informed consent section at the beginning of the questionnaire before completing it. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and that the information they provided would be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Although respondents were asked to provide basic demographic information (name, class/major, gender, and age), all collected data were treated confidentially, used only for research purposes, and analyzed in aggregate or by major-group category. Access to the data was limited to the researcher and the academic supervisor.

All data were analyzed using JASP statistical software. Data analysis was conducted in two stages corresponding to the two types of items. For the close-ended items, descriptive statistical analysis was applied, including the calculation of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores for each item across the full sample and within each vocational major subgroup. These statistics were used to identify which communication situations yielded the highest and lowest WTC scores and to describe WTC patterns across majors. For the open-ended items, responses were read and summarized descriptively rather than through formal thematic coding; recurring points and illustrative responses were used to provide supporting context for interpreting the close-ended results, rather than as a standalone qualitative analysis. Results were organized by communication context and vocational major to allow for systematic comparison.

FOSTER JELT
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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

RESULTS

Contextual Variability of Willingness to Communicate

Across the total sample (N = 233), students generally reported a positive descriptive level of WTC in English, with a median and mode of 3 (Willing) on all 14 items.

Table 3. Overall students' WTC score

	Valid	Missing	Mode	Median	Mean (arithmetic)	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
Q1	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.107	0.744	1.000	4.000
Q2	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.824	0.782	1.000	4.000
Q3	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.906	0.788	1.000	4.000
Q4	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.730	0.846	1.000	4.000
Q5	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.884	0.814	1.000	4.000
Q6	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.734	0.855	1.000	4.000
Q7	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.996	0.817	1.000	4.000
Q8	233	0	3.000	3.000	2.961	0.795	1.000	4.000
Q9	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.056	0.783	1.000	4.000
Q10	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.017	0.771	1.000	4.000
Q11	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.185	0.807	1.000	4.000
Q12	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.034	0.787	1.000	4.000
Q13	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.069	0.833	1.000	4.000
Q14	233	0	3.000	3.000	3.094	0.841	1.000	4.000

The highest mean scores were observed for Q11, responding to a peer's greeting outside the classroom (M = 3.19), and Q1, talking freely in English class (M = 3.11), both reflecting informal, peer-related situations. The lowest mean scores were observed for Q4, presenting in front of the class (M = 2.73), and Q6, responding to a teacher's greeting inside the classroom (M = 2.73), both reflecting formal, evaluative situations. This indicates that WTC, as measured descriptively, tended to be higher in informal contexts and lower in formal ones, although these differences were not tested for statistical significance and should be read as descriptive tendencies rather than confirmed effects.

A further observation concerns role-play activities: 79 of the 233 participants reported never having experienced role-play in their English classes, yet the mean WTC score for this item (Q8, M = 2.96) was comparable to scores for more familiar activities. This points to a possible gap between students' reported willingness and their actual exposure to communicative tasks, though this interpretation remains tentative given the descriptive nature of the data.

WTC across Vocational High School Majors

Because the four vocational majors differed considerably in sample size (Business and Management, n = 105; ICT, n = 88; Hospitality and Tourism, n = 30; Health and Social Care, n = 10), the patterns below are presented as descriptive observations only. No inferential tests

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

were conducted to compare the majors, and the smaller subgroups in particular should not be read as statistically distinct from one another or as representative of their major.

Business and Management

As students in the Business and Management major are expected to develop communication and interpersonal skills relevant to business environments, examining their willingness to communicate (WTC) in English may provide insights into how they respond to different communication situations. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of WTC scores among Business and Management students across various English communication contexts.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of WTC scores among Business and Management students

	Valid	Missing	Mode	Median	Mean (arithmetic)	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
Q1	105	0	3.000	3.000	3.057	0.7446	1.000	4.000
Q2	105	0	2.000	3.000	2.733	0.7998	1.000	4.000
Q3	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.838	0.7354	1.000	4.000
Q4	105	0	2.000, 3.000	3.000	2.743	0.8207	1.000	4.000
Q5	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.762	0.7406	1.000	4.000
Q6	105	0	2.000	3.000	2.610	0.8262	1.000	4.000
Q7	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.943	0.8066	1.000	4.000
Q8	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.905	0.7275	1.000	4.000
Q9	105	0	3.000	3.000	3.057	0.7048	2.000	4.000
Q10	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.981	0.7068	1.000	4.000
Q11	105	0	3.000	3.000	3.200	0.7771	1.000	4.000
Q12	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.962	0.8195	1.000	4.000
Q13	105	0	3.000	3.000	2.971	0.8140	1.000	4.000
Q14	105	0	3.000	3.000	3.143	0.7774	1.000	4.000

Note: Where two responses were tied for the highest frequency, both are shown as the mode (Q4: 2.000, 3.000).

For Business and Management, the highest mean scores were observed for Q11 (M = 3.20) and Q14 (M = 3.14), and the lowest for Q6 (M = 2.61).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Although students in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) major are often associated with technology-oriented learning, English communication remains important for academic and professional purposes. Therefore, investigating their willingness to communicate can help reveal how they engage in English across different situations. Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of WTC scores among ICT students.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of WTC scores among ICT students

	Valid	Missing	Mode	Median	Mean (arithmetic)	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
Q1	88	0	3.000	3.000	3.136	0.714	2.000	4.000
Q2	88	0	3.000	3.000	2.841	0.709	2.000	4.000
Q3	88	0	3.000	3.000	2.989	0.780	1.000	4.000

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

Q4	88	0	3.000	3.000	2.659	0.856	1.000	4.000
Q5	88	0	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.844	1.000	4.000
Q6	88	0	3.000	3.000	2.784	0.809	1.000	4.000
Q7	88	0	3.000	3.000	2.977	0.830	1.000	4.000
Q8	88	0	3.000	3.000	3.057	0.849	1.000	4.000
Q9	88	0	4.000	3.000	3.068	0.881	1.000	4.000
Q10	88	0	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.844	1.000	4.000
Q11	88	0	3.000	3.000	3.136	0.833	1.000	4.000
Q12	88	0	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.727	2.000	4.000
Q13	88	0	4.000	3.000	3.136	0.860	1.000	4.000
Q14	88	0	4.000	3.000	3.102	0.898	1.000	4.000

For ICT, the highest mean scores were observed for Q1, Q11, and Q13 (each M = 3.14), and the lowest for Q4 (M = 2.66) and Q6 (M = 2.78).

Hospitality and Tourism

Communication is a fundamental component of the Hospitality and Tourism industry, where interaction with customers and international visitors frequently occurs. As a result, students in this major are expected to develop strong communication skills, including the ability to use English effectively. Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics of WTC scores among Hospitality and Tourism students.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of WTC scores among Hospitality & Tourism students

	Valid	Missing	Mode	Median	Mean (arithmetic)	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
Q1	30	0	3.000	3.000	3.133	0.819	1.000	4.000
Q2	30	0	4.000	3.000	3.033	0.890	2.000	4.000
Q3	30	0	3.000, 4.000	3.000	3.033	0.928	1.000	4.000
Q4	30	0	3.000	3.000	2.800	0.847	1.000	4.000
Q5	30	0	4.000	3.000	3.033	0.850	2.000	4.000
Q6	30	0	4.000	3.000	2.933	1.015	1.000	4.000
Q7	30	0	3.000, 4.000	3.000	3.167	0.834	1.000	4.000
Q8	30	0	3.000	3.000	2.933	0.868	1.000	4.000
Q9	30	0	3.000	3.000	2.967	0.765	2.000	4.000
Q10	30	0	3.000	3.000	3.067	0.785	2.000	4.000
Q11	30	0	3.000, 4.000	3.000	3.167	0.834	1.000	4.000
Q12	30	0	4.000	3.500	3.333	0.758	2.000	4.000
Q13	30	0	3.000	3.000	3.100	0.845	1.000	4.000
Q14	30	0	3.000	3.000	2.867	0.900	1.000	4.000

Note: Where two responses were tied for the highest frequency, both are shown as the mode (Q3, Q7, and Q11: 3.000, 4.000).

Hospitality and Tourism students recorded the highest mean score for Q12, greeting the teacher outside the classroom (M = 3.33), followed by Q7, asking the teacher to repeat an explanation (M = 3.17), and Q11, responding to a peer's greeting outside the classroom (M = 3.17). The lowest mean scores were recorded for Q4, presenting in front of the class (M

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

= 2.80), and Q6, responding to a teacher's greeting inside the classroom (M = 2.93) and Q8, role-play activities (M = 2.93).

Health and Social Care

Students in the Health and Social Care major are prepared for professions that require effective interpersonal communication and interaction with diverse individuals. Understanding their willingness to communicate in English can therefore provide valuable insights into their communication readiness. Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics of WTC scores among Health and Social Care students.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of WTC scores among Health and Social Care students

	Valid	Missing	Mode	Median	Mean (arithmetic)	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
Q1	10	0	4.000	3.500	3.300	0.823	2.000	4.000
Q2	10	0	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.816	2.000	4.000
Q3	10	0	2.000, 3.000	2.500	2.500	0.850	1.000	4.000
Q4	10	0	4.000	3.000	3.000	1.054	1.000	4.000
Q5	10	0	2.000	2.500	2.700	1.059	1.000	4.000
Q6	10	0	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.943	1.000	4.000
Q7	10	0	3.000, 4.000	3.000	3.200	0.789	2.000	4.000
Q8	10	0	2.000, 3.000	3.000	2.800	0.789	2.000	4.000
Q9	10	0	3.000, 4.000	3.000	3.200	0.789	2.000	4.000
Q10	10	0	4.000	3.500	3.400	0.699	2.000	4.000
Q11	10	0	4.000	4.000	3.500	0.850	2.000	4.000
Q12	10	0	4.000	3.500	3.200	0.919	2.000	4.000
Q13	10	0	4.000	3.500	3.400	0.699	2.000	4.000
Q14	10	0	3.000, 4.000	3.000	3.200	0.789	2.000	4.000

Note: Where two responses were tied for the highest frequency, both are shown as the mode (Q3 and Q8: 2.000, 3.000; Q7, Q9, and Q14: 3.000, 4.000).

For Health and Social Care (n = 10), the highest mean score was observed for Q11 (M = 3.50), and the lowest for Q3 (M = 2.50); given the very small subgroup size, these values warrant particular caution in interpretation.

Across the four majors, the lowest mean score was consistently linked to formal or teacher-directed communication (Q4 or Q6), while items involving peer interaction outside the classroom (Q11) consistently scored among the highest. Beyond this shared pattern, the specific rank order of items varied somewhat by major. These variations are descriptive observations and, given the unequal subgroup sizes and absence of inferential testing, should not be interpreted as confirmed differences between majors.

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN**: **2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN**: **2776-8880**

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that vocational high school students' WTC in English, as measured in this study, tended to vary with the type of communication situation rather than appearing uniform across contexts. Across all four majors, higher mean scores were observed in informal, peer-related situations, and lower mean scores in formal, performance-oriented situations. This descriptive pattern is consistent with MacIntyre et al. (1998), who described WTC as situational rather than fixed, and with Kang (2005) and Peng & Woodrow (2010), who reported that WTC shifts across communicative situations and classroom conditions. The current study did not test these contextual differences statistically, so this consistency with prior literature is offered as a point of comparison rather than confirmation of a shared underlying mechanism.

The lower mean scores associated with formal speaking situations, particularly Q4 and Q6, align with prior reports of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation among EFL learners (Elov et al., 2025; Kulsum et al., 2025; Purwati et al., 2023). This study did not measure anxiety or apprehension directly, so this connection is interpretive rather than data-based; it is offered as a plausible explanation drawn from the wider literature rather than a finding established by the present data.

The gap between students' reported willingness to try role-play activities (M = 2.96) and the finding that 79 of 233 participants had never experienced such activities is a data-based observation. Any explanation for why this gap exists, such as limited curriculum time or activity design, would go beyond what the current data can support and is not proposed here.

Given the considerable difference in subgroup sizes (n = 105, 88, 30, and 10 for Business and Management, ICT, Hospitality and Tourism, and Health and Social Care respectively), the patterns discussed below are treated as descriptive observations rather than confirmed group differences. No causal claims are made about why particular majors showed particular patterns.

Business and Management students recorded the lowest mean score among all groups for Q6 (M = 2.61), alongside comparatively higher scores for peer-oriented items such as Q11 (M = 3.20) and Q14 (M = 3.14). This pattern of lower WTC in teacher-directed interaction alongside higher WTC in peer interaction is broadly consistent with prior findings linking supportive, low-pressure environments to greater willingness to speak (Yunus et al., 2023). The present data cannot establish why this pattern appeared in this subgroup, and any explanation involving classroom culture or program-specific norms would be speculative rather than evidence-based.

ICT students recorded comparatively high mean scores for items related to social media use (Q14, M = 3.10) and spontaneous or informal interaction (Q1, Q11, and Q13, each M = 3.14), alongside comparatively lower scores for Q4 (M = 2.66) and Q6 (M = 2.78). The higher scores on digitally related items are consistent with findings linking technology-mediated activities to greater communicative willingness (Lin & Wang, 2025), though this study did not directly measure engagement with or attitudes toward digital tools, so this remains a point of comparison rather than a tested explanation.

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Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

Hospitality and Tourism students recorded their highest mean score for Q12 (M = 3.33), and comparatively lower scores for Q4 (M = 2.80) and Q6 and Q8 (both M = 2.93). Their mean score for Q13, conversing with foreign visitors (M = 3.10), was comparatively lower than the scores recorded for peer- and teacher-greeting items. Because interaction with foreign visitors is often described as central to hospitality and tourism work (Trang & Phuong, 2023), this comparatively lower score may be worth attention in future research, though the present descriptive data cannot establish whether or why a gap exists between professional communication demands and reported WTC.

Health and Social Care students (n = 10) recorded comparatively high mean scores for peer-related items such as Q11 (M = 3.50), Q10 (M = 3.40), and Q13 (M = 3.40), and comparatively lower scores for structured activities such as Q3 (M = 2.50) and Q5 (M = 2.70). Given the very small size of this subgroup, these values are reported descriptively and should not be generalized or treated as representative of the major as a whole.

Taken together, the observed variations across majors do not point to a single consistent relationship between vocational majors and WTC. Each subgroup showed a somewhat different descriptive pattern across the fourteen items, with lower scores generally clustering around formal or teacher-directed items and higher scores generally clustering around peer-related items. Because no inferential testing was conducted and subgroup sizes varied considerably, these patterns should be read as preliminary and descriptive. They may offer a starting point for future research using more balanced samples and statistical comparison, but they do not by themselves establish that vocational major influences WTC in a particular direction

CONCLUSION

This study examined WTC in English among Indonesian vocational high school students across different communication contexts and vocational majors. The findings indicate that students generally reported a positive level of WTC, though their responses varied depending on the type of communication situation. Higher mean scores were observed in informal, peer-related, and low-stakes situations, such as greeting peers outside the classroom, commenting on social media, and playing games in English, while lower mean scores were observed in more formal and evaluative situations, such as classroom presentations and responding to a teacher's greeting. This descriptive pattern is broadly consistent with recent research emphasizing that WTC is shaped by contextual, motivational, communicative, and affective factors rather than functioning as a completely stable learner characteristic (Amalia et al., 2024; Solhi, 2024). Research on Indonesian EFL learners has similarly highlighted the situated nature of WTC across different communicative contexts (Amalia et al., 2024).

Descriptive WTC patterns also varied across the four vocational majors: ICT students showed comparatively higher scores on items related to digital and social media communication; Hospitality and Tourism students showed comparatively higher scores for spontaneous interpersonal interactions such as greetings; Health and Social Care students, drawn from a small subgroup (n = 10), showed comparatively higher scores on peer-oriented items; and Business and Management students showed comparatively lower scores

FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

for teacher-directed classroom interaction. Vocational major was associated with different descriptive WTC patterns across communication situations. Given the unequal subgroup sizes and the absence of inferential testing, however, this study cannot establish that major influences WTC, only that different majors showed different descriptive tendencies within this sample. This context is particularly relevant to vocational EFL education because recent Indonesian studies have examined WTC specifically among vocational students and have highlighted the importance of language anxiety, teacher support, digital readiness, and vocationally oriented communication (Maharani & Kaniadewi, 2026; Nurul Inayah Hutasuhut et al., 2026; Safitri & Kaniadewi, 2026). In terms of contribution, this study offers exploratory, context-specific descriptive evidence of how WTC appears across communication contexts and vocational majors in an Indonesian vocational EFL setting, a context that has received limited empirical attention.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The sample was drawn exclusively from vocational high schools in Jakarta, which limits generalizability to other regions. Subgroup sizes across majors were highly unequal, ranging from 105 participants in Business and Management to 10 in Health and Social Care, so the major-based patterns reported here should be treated as preliminary rather than firm group comparisons. No inferential statistical tests were conducted, so none of the observed patterns, whether across contexts or across majors, can be interpreted as statistically significant differences. In addition, reliance on self-reported questionnaire data may not fully capture students' actual communicative behavior in real classroom interactions. This limitation is particularly relevant because recent research with vocational students has also emphasized the importance of examining WTC in situated or authentic communicative conditions rather than relying exclusively on generalized self-report measures (Supraptiningsih & Sakti Aji, 2026).

For EFL teachers in vocational schools, the descriptive patterns observed in this study suggest that speaking activities drawing on peer-based and technology-mediated interaction may be worth exploring as a way of narrowing the gap between higher informal WTC and lower formal WTC, though this is offered as a practical implication rather than a tested recommendation. Recent studies have reported positive relationships between digital communication activities and WTC and have highlighted the potential of digital environments to provide additional opportunities for English communication (Atmojo et al., 2026; Han et al., 2024). Incorporating role-plays, games, and simulations tied to real-world vocational scenarios may also be a useful direction for further classroom-based investigation. Research on EFL vocational classrooms has further suggested that supportive classroom practices and approaches that allow learners to draw on their existing linguistic resources may be relevant to students' confidence and willingness to communicate (Kuncoroningtyas et al., 2025; Maharani & Kaniadewi, 2026). Future studies should use larger, more evenly distributed samples across majors and be conducted beyond Jakarta. Incorporating inferential statistical testing would allow researchers to make firmer claims about how a vocational major relates to WTC. Longitudinal designs tracking WTC across academic years and mixed-methods approaches combining questionnaire data with

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Journal of English Language Teaching

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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

classroom observation and interviews would also help clarify the contextual factors associated with WTC in vocational EFL settings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank the principals and English teachers of the participating vocational high schools in Jakarta for granting permission and supporting the data collection, and the tenth-grade students who took part in this study. The authors are also grateful to her supervisor, Nurhandayani Supraptiningsih, M.Pd., for her valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and support throughout the research process and for her feedback on earlier drafts of this manuscript. The authors would also like to thank Salman Febriansyah, S.Pd. for his contribution as a personal reviewer, as well as for his valuable feedback during the manuscript preparation process. This study received no specific funding.

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FOSTER JELT
Journal of English Language Teaching

Copyright © The Author(s)
Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
***p*-ISSN: 2776-8880**

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FOSTER JELT
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Vol.7, No. 4, October 2026
***e*-ISSN: 2723-4126**
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