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METHODS AND RESULTS IN THE STUDY OF WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE (WTC) AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE ARAB CONTEXTS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract

The present paper is a review of literature on the studies that investigated the willingness of Arab students to communicate in a foreign language in Arab contexts. The research paper has presented the readers with the origins of WTC and its definitions. It also investigated the perspectives from which WTC has been conducted, the instruments used and the results that are reported. However, two main approaches were found in the literature regarding WTC: trait and state perspectives. Various instruments have been detected in the literature that is used for measuring WTC in the first language, second language and foreign language too. The literature reviewed revealed that WTC studies in Arab contexts concentrated only on two types of population: secondary and undergraduate students. The focus was also on studying trait WTC rather than state WTC. This study sums up with displaying the most effective factors increasing Arab students' WTC and the most influential factors decreasing their WTC. Finally, the study provided some suggestions and recommendations for further studies.

Keywords: Willingness to Communicate; Trait-WTC; State-WTC; WTC scales; Arab context

Introduction

The ability to communicate fluently and confidently in the target language is one of the most essential skills that foreign and second language students need to maintain. Communicating in real situations is viewed as the main purpose of L2 pedagogy (MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996). Riasati (2014) maintains that motivating students to use the target language effectively and for mainly communicative purposes inside and outside classrooms is the primary goal of contemporary language teaching/learning. However, research has shown that the communicative competence alone may not always enable learners to communicate in the L2; rather, it is the willingness to communicate that stimulates learners to communicate (Kang, 2005; Dornyei, 2005). MacIntyre et al. (1998) also found that some students are linguistically competent but unwilling to communicate with others while other students are linguistically incompetent but are more willing to communicate with other people.

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Though the communicative language teaching emphasizes that the ultimate goal of L2 language learning is to develop students' communicative competence, this competence, however, cannot be translated into real use unless students have the willingness to engage in communication. Dornyei (2005) confirms the possibility of finding communicatively competent learners who avoid communicating in L2 contexts. This means that communicative competence alone may not be sufficient for producing effective communicators. Kang (2005) argues that setting WTC as a goal of language learning ensures the production of fruitful outcomes more than setting the communicative competence alone. MacIntyre et al. (1998) maintained that generating the willingness in students to seek communication situations and encouraging them to talk in such situations is the central objective of the language learning process.

WTC is viewed an individual difference factor facilitating L2 acquisition (MacIntyre, 2007). The concept of WTC has been studied in various EFL and ESL contexts. This research paper aims to review the literature to find out the most important WTC perspectives and scales. Further, the study aims at investigating previous WTC studies conducted on Arab students, the type of perspectives frequently researched, the instruments used to measure Arab students' WTC and the results reported.

Origins of Willingness to Communicate

The concept of WTC (Mc Croskey & Baer, 1985) was evolved from previous seminal studies that investigated students' approaching or avoidance from communication such as Burgoon's (1976) "Unwillingness to Communicate", Mortensen, Arntson and Lustig's (1977) "Predisposition towards Verbal Behaviour", Mc Croskey and Richmond's (1982) "Shyness". Burgoon (1976) introduced the term unwillingness to communicate into the first language (F1), and viewed it as the propensity of an individual to avoid or withdraw from oral communication. Burgoon (1976) defined the term unwillingness to communicate as "a chronic tendency to avoid or devalue communication" (p. 60). She reported that five variables could affect students' willingness to communicate which are "anomia, alienation, introversion, self-esteem and communication apprehension" (p. 60). Mortensen et al. (1977) assured the existence of a consistent amount of people's predisposition to communicate across situations, but they did not mention the causes of such predisposition as Burgoon did.

Definitions of Willingness to Communicate

McCroskey and Richmond (1990) defined WTC as the possibility of an individual to undertake communication when he has the appropriate opportunity and ability to do so. MacIntyre et al. (1998) defined the term L2 WTC as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using L2" (p. 547). MacIntyre et al. (2002) defined the concept of WTC as "an underlying continuum representing the predisposition toward or away from communicating, given the choice" (p. 538). MacDonald, Clement and MacIntyre (2003) defined WTC as "a psychological readiness to speak a second language and

is based on much more than objective linguistic competence" (p. 2). Mc Croskey and Zakahi (1989) viewed WTC as "a general trait-like tendency to approach or avoid communication" (p. 98). MacIntyre (2007) conceptualized WTC as "a readiness to speak in the L2 at a particular moment with a specific person, and as such, is the final psychological step to the initiation of L2 communication" (cited in MacIntyre & Doutette, 2010, p. 162).

It can be concluded from these definitions that learners will initiate communication when they have the desire and intention to communicate. Thus, the willingness of a person to communicate in the target language increases the frequency of language use. There are four common communication situations that are associated with WTC: group discussion, meeting, interpersonal conversation and public speaking, and with three types of receivers: friends, acquaintances and strangers (Mc Croskey & Baer, 1985). People usually vary in the degree of willingness to communicate in these four communication situations and with these types of interlocutors. That is, some people may be willing to communicate in interpersonal communication situation or in a small group but feel less willing to communicate in meetings or in public speaking context. Some may be willing to communicate with friends but not with acquaintances and strangers. However, the most willing to communicate people are often more inclined to approach communication situations while the least willing to communicate people are often predisposed to recoil avoid communication.

Perspectives in Willingness to Communicate Research
Trait-like Willingness to Communicate
　　WTC was first introduced into the F1 (Mc Croskey & Baer, 1985) as an enduring personality-trait construct that has the potency to impact people across various communication situations and types of interlocutors. It was conceptualized as the possibility to converse when given the choice to do so (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). Later on, WTC was also introduced into the L2 and similarly as an enduring trait-like predisposition (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Trait WTC indicates the learners' degree of consistency in their choice to talk or not to talk across various communication contexts and types of receivers.

　　Mc Croskey and Richmond (1990) proposed that certain personality traits like–introversion, self-esteem, communication competence, CA and cultural diversity– are dominating the cognitive decision-making processes of communicators. MacIntyre (1994) made an analysis of the antecedents of WTC presented by Mc Croskey and Richmond (1990) and found that anomie and alienation as insignificant factors, and that WTC was best predicted by a combination of perceived competence and CA. However, various seminal studies on WTC in both F1 and L2 have investigated the concept as a trait-like individual difference variable (McCroskey & Baer, 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1990; MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998).

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Mc Croskey and Baer (1985) explained that despite the importance of talk in interpersonal relationship, the degree of talking among people differs from one person to another as some people talk little, talk when spoken to or sometimes do not even talk; others talk in certain contexts and some others talk to some specific receivers. This variability of talking behaviour is ingrained in a personality-trait factor called "willingness to communicate" (p. 3).

Mc Croskey and Richmond (1990) maintained that WTC is situational influenced, and that the tendency of people to talk fluctuates according to the situation and receiver as well. According to them, WTC is to a major degree situational dependent, and that the situational constraints of a given context could certainly affect the person's WTC with another interlocutor. They indicated that the feelings and mood of the person in the day of communication, the type of communication the person has recently held with others, identifying the other person, the appearance of the other person, what can be earned or lost during the communication and time requirements for that person could have an impact on a person's WTC. Further, MacIntyre et al. (1998) point out that "the degree of acquaintance between communicators, the number of people present, the formality of the situation, the degree of evaluation of the speaker, the topic of discussion, and other factors can influence a person's WTC" (p. 546).

Mc Croskey and Baer (1985) pointed out that though WTC is influenced to a large degree by situations, individuals exhibit a consistent WTC predisposition across situations. Thus, they attributed the regularity of people in communication behavior across various interpersonal communication situations to the existence of a personality factor which they called WTC. This personality factor is suggested to explain the phenomenon of communication variation, i.e. why one person communicates while another does not under similar situational constraints (p. 3).

State-like Willingness to Communicate
That some students are willing to communicate while having less linguistic competence, and others avoid communication despite having adequate linguistic competence inspired MacIntyre and associates to investigate the situational factors that affect students' WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The heuristic L2 WTC model was the first model that investigated L2 WTC as both a trait-like variable that is influenced by enduring or distal factors (e.g., personality, intergroup), and as a state-like variable that is influenced by situational or proximal factors (e.g., the desire to communicate with a specific person). This model was the starting point for myriad research studying the concept as a state-like variable influenced by situational variables and because of this model, L2 WTC has gained momentum in L2 research (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Most previous studies of L2 WTC have dealt with the concept as a personality trait-like variable, i.e. individuals show a general personality predisposition towards talking (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Baker & MacIntyre, 2000).

Inspired by MacIntyre's et al. (1998) study, many L2 researchers started to investigate L2 WTC as a state variable; they investigated other situational factors affecting learners' L2 WTC in classrooms (Kang, 2005; Cao & Philp, 2006; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2010; Cao, 2011, 2014; Zarrinabadi, 2014; Syed & Kuzborska, 2018). These studies were conducted in various contexts and with different students and levels. The results of the above research indicated that, in addition to the immediate situational variables influencing L2 WTC such as the desire to communicate with a specific person and state self-confidence, various other psychological, linguistic and contextual factors have been found which could influence learners' WTC such as topic, task, group cohesiveness, excitement, security, teacher, etc. The findings of such research confirmed the dynamic nature of WTC and that, contrary to MacIntyre's et al. (1998) model linear interaction between variables, L2 WTC emerges out of a non-linear interaction between contextual, psychological and linguistic factors (Kang, 2005; Cao & Philp, 2006; Peng & Wood, 2010; Riasati, 2014; Cao, 2014; Syed & Kuzborska, 2018). Students' WTC is not always static; rather, it is dynamic that fluctuates from time to time and sometimes within one task (Kang, 2005; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2010). Thus, L2 WTC can be influenced by situations, and that various situational variables interact with each other to affect an individual's WTC.

The major influential situational variables influencing L2 WTC are self-perceived competence and CA (MacIntyre, 1994); attitudes and motivation (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Hashimoto, 2002); social support (MacIntyre et al., 2001); attitudes towards international posture (Yashima, 2002); security, excitement and responsibility (Kang, 2005); group size, lack of self-confidence, familiarity with interlocutor and interlocutor participation (Cao & Philp, 2006); classroom environment (Peng & Woodrow, 2010); teachers (Zarrinabadi, 2014).

Measures of Willingness to Communicate

Several measures of trait and state WTC have been introduced into the literature. While some scales were used for measuring WTC in the F1; others were used for measuring WTC in the L2 and FL. However, this study presents only some prominent WTC scales that are frequently used in the literature.

Trait and State Willingness to Communicate Scales

McCroskey and Baer (1985) have developed a scale for measuring students' WTC. The scale consists of twelve scored items and eight filler items. The WTC scale is estimated to have internal reliability at .92. The scale measures students' trait-WTC in four types of contexts (public speaking, meeting, group discussion and dyads or interpersonal conversation) and three types of receivers (friends, strangers and acquaintance). The scale is numerical that ranges from (0) never to (100) always.

MacIntyre et al. (2001) have developed a scale for measuring the willingness of students to engage in communication outside the classroom. It measures students' feelings about communicating with other people, in French. Students are asked to indicate how willing

they would be to communicate in each classroom situation. The scale consisted of 27 items. The items comprised four skill areas: speaking (8 items, α= .89), comprehension (5 items, α= .90), reading (6 items, α= .93), writing (8 items, α= .96). The parameters range from 1 almost never willing, 2 sometimes willing, 3 willing half of the time, 4 usually willing, 5 almost always willing.

A famous scale for WTC in a foreign language was designed by Baghaei (2014). Baghaei (2014) introduced a scale for measuring FL-WTC in the process of foreign language learning. The tool was used for conceptual and practical research purposes. The scale consisted of 22 items which measure students' ability to communicate with native speakers in different situations. The scale can be employed to discover the relationships and causal paths between FL-WTC and other related communication variables such as: communication apprehension, perceived communication competence, and different modalities of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in a FL. This scale could also be used as a help to predict the success of FL learners.

Simic (2014) introduced a scale for measuring students' WTC. The scale comprised three sections. The first section included general information about the participants. The second section offered students with some factors that can affect one's WTC in class. It was adapted from Gutmann's (2012) questionnaire. Students were required to choose five factors, rating their influences from 1 to 5, with 1 being "influences the most". Students were offered an additional space at the end of the scale for further comments, or for including any relevant factor not contained in the scale. The third section required students to express their level of agreement with 20 statements on a five-point Likert scale. The statements are related to the common factors influencing students' WTC in a FL. The factors included in the questions are topic, speaking self-confidence, speakers' personality, relationship with the interlocutor, perceived speaking skills, of the interlocutor, task type, correction and grading, class atmosphere and embarrassment factor.

Gol et al. (2014) have developed a questionnaire for measuring WTC in a foreign language context. The questionnaire consists of 28-items which contain 28 situations. The WTC questionnaire also comprises seven underlying factors: self-perceived communication competence (items, 6, 10, 16, 17, 19, 26), external pressure (items, 8, 11, 12, 13, 20), classroom climate (items, 1, 7, 9, 18), teacher immediacy (items, 21, 22, 23), perceived self-efficacy (items, 4, 14, 24), group size (items, 5, 25), topic of discussion (items, 15, 3). The parameters are numerical in which 1= Rarely, 2= Sometimes, 3= Often, 4= Almost always. Students are asked to circle the number 1-4 that suits the extent to which they are willing to communicate in an English class. The reliability of the questionnaire is indexed at 0.73.

Gutmann (2012) used a scale for measuring students' speaking anxiety and WTC in a FL. The scale consisted of four sections. The first section included demographic information

about the participants. The remaining sections were marked as A, B and C. Thus, sections A and B focused on measuring students' speaking anxiety, and section C focused on measuring students' WTC. Students were required to rate their agreement with the statements on a six-point scale ranging, from 1 to 6. An additional question was provided that required respondents to tick the appropriate box. The boxes include some influential factors that affect one's WTC. Students were also provided by additional space for further comments which might be useful.

Peng and Wood (2010) have developed a scale for measuring WTC in an ESL context. The scale consisted of 10-items that measure the association between WTC and classroom environment. The WTC scale measures two factors: WTC in meaning-focused activities and WTC in form-focused activities.

The Literature on Willingness to Communicate in the Arab Contexts
Studies of Secondary Students' WTC

Alqahtani (2015) investigated the willingness of Saudi secondary students to communicate and to learn English as a second language. The researcher used a mixed-method: quantitative and qualitative to analyze the study data. The quantitative method used a questionnaire to collect primary data from students. The questionnaire was adapted from Baghaei's (2011, 2013) WTC in a foreign language-scale (WTC- FLS). The qualitative method of the study used various literature sources to collect secondary data. It included several previous literature taken from various journals, articles, magazines and many internet sources. The population of the study was 658 male and female students taken from Saudi institutes. The results showed that 50% of students were willing to learn English as a second language, and willing to communicate with native speakers of English. The findings also revealed that several motivational, cultural and social factors were found to affect students' WTC.

To examine the Yemeni students' unwillingness to communicate in English, Al-Murtadha and Feryok (2017) conducted a study on a sample of 12 Yemeni secondary rural school students. The study investigated how students' perceptions of events in the sociohistorical (in textbook, policy) and ontogentic timescales (personal memory, future plans) mediated students' unwillingness to communicate (UWTC). The tools of the study were a questionnaire adapted from McCroskey and Baer's (1985) WTC, a classroom observation, interviews and journals collected from students over a semester, 2015. The findings of the study revealed that students' UWTC was influenced by social, cultural, and historical factors, and lower level timescales alone did not completely constitute UWTC. Further, higher level timescale did not constitute UWTC directly, but indirectly through individual interpretation.

In an experimental study, Al-Murtadha (2018) investigated the effects of a 6-week treatment on enhancing the willingness of Yemeni secondary students to communicate in English. The intervention aimed to investigate the effect of visualization and goal setting activities on enhancing students' WTC. A total number of 206 of Yemeni rural secondary school learners were divided into two 104 experimental group and 102 control group. The study adopted a mixed method: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative tools were a pre-test and a post-test, WTC scale adapted from Cao and Philp (2006) observation scheme. The qualitative tools were a semi-structured interview, action plan and a written evaluation at the end of the program. However, the experimental group was taught 5 classes of communicative activities and a 45-minutes visualization lesson designed by the researcher. The control group was taught the usual 6 classes of communicative activities per week. The results indicated the effect of the visualization activities in enhancing students' WTC.

Studies of Arab Undergraduate Students' WTC

In a recent study, Aomr et al. (2020) have investigated the association between classroom environmental factors (cohesiveness of students, teacher support, task orientation) and Libyan EFL students' WTC. The participants of the study were 209 Libyan university students. To collect data about the influence of the classroom environment, the researchers adapted items from two questionnaires: 13-items from Peng and Wood's (2010), and 3-items from Matsubara's (2007). To collect data about the situational WTC, the researchers have adopted Gol's et al. (2014) WTC questionnaire. The data were analyzed descriptively using the Correlation test and Multiple Regression test. The results of the Correlation test indicated a positive relationship between WTC, students' cohesiveness and task orientation. The results from the regression test also indicated that students' cohesiveness and task orientation were the best predictors of WTC. The results also indicated that teacher support has no correlation or prediction of students' WTC.

Alboony and Ishag (2020) have recently investigated the correlation between WTC and Self-perceived communication competence (SPCC) among Sudani undergraduate learners. The research also investigated the relationship between students' WTC and their English language achievement, and the gender differences among students in WTC and SPCC. The participants of the study were taken from different levels (first, second, third, fourth and fifth year) of the English Department, University of Khartoom. The participants also represent different levels of English proficiency: preliminary, intermediate and advanced learners. The study data was collected by means of a WTC questionnaire adapted from Baghaei's (2013), and McCroskey and McCroskey's (1988) SPCC questionnaire. The results indicated a positive correlation between students' WTC and SPCC. SPCC was identified as the best indicator of WTC than actual competence. Regarding gender difference, the results showed some gender differences in WTC and SPCC among Sudanese undergraduate learners.

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Kadi and Madini (2019) investigated the causes of Saudi students' unwillingness to communicate (UWTC) in the EFL classroom. The participants of the study were 136 Saudi female preparatory year students at the English Language Institute in King Abdulaziz University. To collect the study data and to gain a deeper understanding of the main causes of Saudi students' UWTC, the researchers used a mixed methods approach consisting of two tools: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. A total number of 126 participants have responded to an online questionnaire consisting of one open-ended question: *In your opinion, what are the causes of students' UWTC in English in the language classroom?* The number of respondents who participated in the semi-structured interviews was 10. The questionnaire was analyzed descriptively and the semi-structured interviews were analyzed thematically using the software NVivo. The findings of the study indicated the existence of multiple causes affecting Saudi students' WTC. The main causes reported by the study participants were fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation, low proficiency of the language, shyness, lack of self-confidence, inefficient school education, students' mixed abilities, error correction and teacher/classmates related factors.

Al Amrani (2019) investigated the perceptions of Omani EFL learners towards L2 WTC in English. The participants of the study were 204 Omani English major learners taken from a private university. To collect the study data, the researcher adapted McCroskey's (1992) WTC scale that is used to measure students' WTC in four contexts and across three types of receivers and other measures of language affect such as self-perceived communication competence, communication anxiety and frequency of communication which were adapted from Mc Croskey and Mc Croskey's (1988) and MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) studies. Further, the affective variables measures included scales of motivation, integrativeness, instrumental orientation, and attitudes towards the learning situation. Thus, the data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using the SPSS software program, ANOVA test was used repeatedly to analyze the effect of context and interlocutor type on students' WTC. The results indicated that Omani university learners showed quite low WTC in English, and their WTC varied according to the interlocutor. Besides, the findings revealed that Omani learners showed moderate motivation to learn English, positive attitudes towards learning English and the target community.

Bawazir (2019) investigated the common linguistic, contextual and psychological factors influencing the WTC of Saudi male and female students. The gender difference factor was investigated in the study. The sample of the study consisted of 87 male and 87 female students taken from a preparatory program at Taibah University, Al-Madinah, Saudi Arabia. The instrument used to collect the study data was a questionnaire consisting of a 20-item adapted from Simic's (2014), and an open-ended question. The questionnaire was designed in Google Form and distributed online. The study data was analyzed statistically through the SPSS program by using various tests like frequencies, percentages, mean scores, standard

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deviation and T-test. The results indicated the effect of major factors on the three dimensions. Firstly, the lack of vocabulary was the most influential linguistic factor influencing students' perceived peaking skills. The interest of the topic, grading and friendly classroom atmosphere was the most influential contextual factors on students' WTC. Preparedness, embarrassment and mood were the most influential psychological factors on students' WTC. The results of the study revealed no significant differences between genders.

Khaldi (2018) investigated the impact of communication confidence and classroom environment on Algerian WTC in classroom. The participants of the study were 22 university students of English major at Tlemcen University, Algeria. The researcher used a closed-item and open-item questionnaire to collect the study data. The results indicated the impact of self-confidence and classroom environment (teacher behaviour, students' cohesiveness, task orientation) on students' WTC. The results also revealed that students with higher levels of WTC are willing to participate in accuracy and fluency activities.

Turjoman (2016) has examined the impact of public and private school education in Saudi Arabia on Saudi female English major students' WTC. The population of the study consisted of 118 Saudi female students of English and Literature department, college of Human Science at King Saud University, Riyadh. The number of students who attended public schools was 52, and the number attended private ones was 66. The researcher used a triangle method: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and classroom observation. The results of the study indicated that the students who studied English in private schools were more willing to communicate in the language than students who studied in public schools.

One of the early studies related to WTC was carried out by Mahdi (2014). The researcher investigated the communication difficulties that faced Saudi university students and the main reasons lying behind such difficulties. The study also examined the willingness of Saudi students to communicate in English when they have an opportunity as well as the effect of personality traits on students' oral communication in English. To collect the study data, a questionnaire adapted from McCroskey's (1992) WTC scale was distributed to 105 students, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 students. The sample was taken from final year students in the English Department, College of Language and Translation, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. The two tools of the study focused on measuring the WTC in four types of communication contexts (group discussion, meeting, dyad, public) and three types of receivers (friend, acquaintance and strangers). The results of the study showed that Saudi students at King Khalid University were more willing to communicate in interpersonal conversation and in group discussion contexts and less willing to communicate in public speaking and meeting situations. Further students were more willing to communicate with friends rather than with acquaintances and strangers. The findings also indicated a positive correlation between personality traits and WTC in public speaking and

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meeting contexts and with interlocutor types as acquaintances and strangers. Finally, the effect of personality traits on interpersonal conversation and group discussion contexts and the friends as a type of receiver was moderate.

Summery

WTC concept was first introduced into the F1 by McCroskey and Baer (1985). It was proposed as a trait-like predisposition that is enduring across situations and interlocutors. McCroskey (1992) developed a scale for measuring students' trait WTC in four communication contexts (group, meeting, dyad, public), and across three types of receivers (friends, acquaintances, strangers). However, two studies were carried out by Al Amrani (2019) and Mahdi (2014) that investigated the impact of four communication contexts and three types of receivers on Arab students' WTC by using McCroskey's (1992) WTC scale. The results of these two studies add support to McCroskey and Baer's (1985) WTC theory that the communication contexts and the type of interlocutors do have an effect on Arab students' WTC. Besides, most of the research conducted in the Arab contexts supported the results of MacIntyre's (1994) study results that anxiety is a negative factor decreasing WTC, and self-perceived competence is a positive factor increasing WTC.

The results of some studies reviewed indicated the willingness of Arab students to communicate in English situations (Alboony & Ishag, 2020; Turjoman, 2016; Alqahtani, 2015; Mahdi, 2014). The studies also revealed some causes, predictors and obstacles of WTC. Actually, most of the reviewed studies have almost discussed the level, causes and problems of WTC, and raised questions rather than providing solutions. There are no innovative programs, techniques, strategies or activities used to improve Arab students' WTC, except that of Al-Murtadha's (2018) study of visualization and goal setting activities.

Currently, a small number of studies have investigated WTC in the Arab context. The literature showed little research on WTC which was conducted in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Algeria, Libya and Sudan. Most of the studies reviewed focused on investigating trait-WTC by means of using self-report questionnaires that measured students' WTC. There is still a lack of qualitative research on investigating state-WTC in actual Arab classrooms. Some research has quantitatively investigated the situational factors affecting Arab students' WTC (see, Aomr et al., 2020; Bawazir, 2019), and some qualitatively (see, Al-Murthadha, 2017, 2018). However, there is still a shortage in conducting qualitative research that investigates the situational factors influencing as well as the factors enhancing Arab learners' WTC in real classroom interaction.

Factors Increasing Arab Students' Willingness to Communicate:

This section summarizes the main sources of Arab students' WTC to communicate derived from the studies reviewed. Bawazir (2019) found that contextual factors such as: the interest in the topic and friendly classroom atmosphere, and psychological factors such as: preparedness and mood as the most effective factors that increase Saudi students' WTC. Aomr et al. (2020) found that students' cohesiveness and task orientation as the best predictors of

Libyan students' WTC. Alboony and Ishag (2020) found that SPCC as the best indicator of Sudanese students' WTC than actual competence. Students' perception of their ability to communicate made them more willing to communicate in English. Khalid (2018) concluded that self-confidence and classroom environment (teacher behaviour, students' cohesiveness, task orientation) as effective factors in increasing Algerian students' WTC. Besides, Al-Murtadha (2018) found that visualization techniques and goal-setting activities as more effective in increasing Yemeni students' WTC.

s**Factors Decreasing Arab Students' Willingness to Communicate**
This section sums up briefly the main factors that affected Arab students' WTC depending on the results of the studies reviewed in this study. Kadi and Madini (2019) found multiple causes that influenced Saudi students' WTC such as fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation, low proficiency of the language, shyness, lack of self-confidence, inefficient school education, students' mixed abilities, error correction and teacher/classmates related factors. Al Amrani (2019) found an effect of language learning setting, communication contexts, interlocutor types and cultural backgrounds on Omani students' L2 WTC. Omani students were more willing to communicate in small groups than in interpersonal conversations and public speaking contexts, and more willing to communicate with friends than with other interlocutors such as acquaintances and strangers. Bawazir (2019) found the lack of vocabulary and embarrassment as the most influential factors affecting Saudi students' WTC.

Mahdi (2014) found an effect of communication contexts and receiver types on Saudi university learners' WTC. Saudi students were more willing to communicate in interpersonal communication and group discussion situations than in meeting and public speaking contexts. They were also more willing to communicate with friends, as a type of receiver, than with acquaintances and strangers. The personality traits (introvert, extravert) had also greatly affected students' WTC in two communication situations: meeting and public speaking contexts, and in two receiver types: acquaintances and strangers. Al-Murtadha (2017) found many factors that made Yemeni students' unwilling to communicate such as: noise in the classrooms, sitting in the back rows of classrooms, frustration due to inability to access the teacher, overcrowded classrooms, lack of opportunity, unfit classroom atmosphere, the perception of others and protecting one's self-image. The results of Turjoman's (2016) study indicated that the main causes of Saudi students' (from public and private schools) unwillingness to communicate in English were shyness, lack of language proficiency, anxiety and lack of confidence. Finally, motivational, cultural and social factors were found to influence Arab students' WTC (Al Amrani, 2019; Alqahtani, 2015).

Conclusion
This paper reviewed the literature on studies of WTC conducted in Arab contexts. L2 WTC has recently emerged as a specialized area in L2 research (Kang, 2005). WTC is also a

modern and highly productive and promising area for future research. However, the results of the literature reviewed indicated that WTC is still an under-researched area in Arab contexts. The findings of the studies reviewed on WTC in Arab contexts highlighted the significant role of WTC in enhancing FL learning. The results of such research add theoretical support to the literature that WTC is an individual difference factor facilitating L2 acquisition (MacIntyre, 2007). The findings of the studies reviewed also stress the significant role of the WTC factor in promoting students' abilities to communicate fluently and confidently in the target language. The results revealed that extravert, self-confident and less anxious students are more willing to communicate in English.

Suggestions and Recommendations

It is suggested that EFL teachers should exert efforts to raise their students' WTC in English. WTC is not only a trait-like predisposition as was first proposed but can also be a state that is influenced by many situational factors. Thus, teachers should concentrate on investigating the situational factors influencing Arab students' WTC in classrooms. An understanding of the negative factors affecting students' WTC will help in creating effective techniques that may increase students' WTC. The results show that very few studies have attempted some interventions, strategies and techniques to develop learners' WTC. Based on this literature review, it is suggested that more studies on WTC are carried out to develop students' WTC. Conducting effective solutions to tackle Arab students' low WTC is still a prominent gap in the literature.

The literature reviewed showed that most previous studies on WTC in Arab context focused on measuring the level of WTC and its relationship with different variables. Further, most of the studies were quantitative that used self-report questionnaires to measure trait-WTC. However, there is a gap in examining state WTC in authentic Arab classrooms. Recently, there is a shift from investigating the trait-WTC to the dynamic nature of WTC, i.e. state-WTC. Many psychological, contextual and linguistic factors influencing students' WTC have been investigated in different Asian contexts. However, Arab students are different from other Asian students and have their own independent culture and identity. Thus, it is recommended that future research should investigate the psychological, linguistic and contextual factors influencing Arab WTC in a real classroom, with the help of various methods such as focused essays (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991), observation, interviews, stimulated recall, journals, etc. As explained previously that many issues related to WTC have been left unsearched in the Arab context. Therefore, future research may also examine the antecedents of WTC as (introversion, self-esteem, communicative competence, communication apprehension, cultural diversity). Finally, all the studies reviewed focused on investigating the WTC of Arab secondary and undergraduate students. Future research is recommended to investigate Arab students' WTC in the primary level as well as in the postgraduate level: Master and Doctoral levels.

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