



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Ghardaia

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language

# The Effectiveness of Active Learning Approach in Developing EFL Learners' Willingness of Speaking: The Case of 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Licence Students at Ghardaia University

Dissertation Submitted to the University of Ghardaia as a Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Didactics

Presented by: Isra Benhedid

Supervisor: Dr. Fatima Yahia

# **Board of Examiners:**

Dr.Smail Hadj Mahammed

ima Vahia

.

President

University of Ghardaia

Dr. Fatima Yahia

Dr.Aicha Imane Bessadat

Supervisor

Examiner

University of Ghardaia

University of Ghardaia

# Academic year: 2024/2025

# **Dedication**

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

First and foremost, I thank God

for granting me the strength, patience, and guidance to complete this work.

This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to my dear parents, my mother and my father, whose

unconditional love and constant support have been my foundation throughout this journey.

Special and heartfelt thanks go to my father, whose sacrifices, encouragement, and

belief in me have meant more than words can express. Thank you both for everything.

To my sisters, Aya, Anfal.

To my brother, Achref.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to me, Isra; to my own perseverance and determination throughout this research journey. Despite the challenges, I remained committed to complete this work to the best of my ability.

**ISRA** 

# Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Fatima Yahia, of her continuous guidance, support, and valuable feedback throughout the development of this dissertation.

> I am deeply grateful to the jury members, who accepted to deal with my dissertation. Many thanks for your efforts and time.

Finally, I would like also extend my sincere thanks to the students (2 nd year licence level, at the English department, University of Ghardaia), who participate in this study, for their time and cooperation, which was essential to the success of this research.

#### Abstract

The present study investigates the effectiveness of the Active Learning (AL) Approach in developing the EFL learners' willingness to speak. Active learning, as a learner-centered method that involves students in meaningful activities and collaborative tasks, plays an essential role in improving their confidence, motivation, and engagement in speaking activities. This research raises the issue of how Active Learning strategies influence students' willingness to speak in English as a foreign language (EFL). It aims at exploring practical methods to enhance oral participation and reduce speaking apprehension among learners. The study follows the experimental research design, it was conducted with 2nd year licence students at the English department, University of Ghardaia, through the implementation of a role-play activity in oral expression sessions. The study is based on the qualitative approach via using individual interviews with the same students, as data collection tool. The results indicate that the use of Active Learning strategies, especially role-plays, positively influences the EFL students' willingness to speak, helping them to engage more actively, overcome anxiety, and develop their oral competence. It is recommended that teachers incorporate such interactive strategies in oral expression sessions to foster speaking confidence and learner autonomy.

**Keywords:** Active Learning, speaking, communicative competence, role-play, willingness to communicate

# List of Abbreviations

- **EFL:** English as a foreign language
- AL: Active Learning
- **L1:** first language
- L2: second language
- **TL:** target language
- **WTC:** Willingness to Communicate
- **TPS:** Think-Paire-Share

# List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Savignon's Model of Communicative Competence	43
Figure 2.2: Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC	38
Figure 2.3: Structural Model of Variables Influencing WTC in the EFL Classroom	43

# List of Tables

<b>Table 3.1:</b> Scoring Rubric for Performance Evaluation	50
Table 3.2: Students' Performance Based on Role-Play Assessment Criteria	54

# CONTENTS

Dedication	Ι
Acknowledgements	II
Abstract	III
List of Abbreviations	IV
List of Figures	V
List of Tables	VI
Contents	VII
General Introduction	1

## **Part One: Theoretical Part**

# **Chapter One**

#### Active Learning Approach: A Framework for EFL Classroom Engagement

1.1 Introduction	08
1.2 Active Learning Definition	09
1.3 Active Learning Approach and EFL Contexts Relationship	10
1.4 Theoretical Framework of Active Learning	11
1.4.1 Constructivist Theory	12
1.4.1.1 Cognitive Constructivism	13
1.4.1.2 Social Constructivism	14
1.5 Active Learning Techniques for EFL Classroom	15
1.5.1 Role-Play	16
1.5.2 Storytelling	17
1.5.3 Debates	18
1.5.4 Peer Teaching	19

1.5.5 Think-Pair-Share	19
1.6 Teacher-Centred Approach	20
1.7 Student-Centred Approach	21
1.8 Active Learning as a Student -Centred Approach	21
1.9 Benefits of Active Learning in EFL Classroom	22
1.10 Challenges of Implementing Active Learning Approach	24
1.11 Conclusion	25

# **Chapter Two:**

# Willingness to Communicate in Active Learning EFL Contexts

2.1 Introduction	28
2.2 Overview of Willingness to Communicate	29
2.3 Definition of Willingness to Communicate	29
2.4 WTC in EFL Classroom	31
2.5 The Nature of Speaking Skill	32
2.6 Speaking in WTC	33
2.7 Communicative Competence	34
2.7.1 Grammatical Competence	36
2.7.2 Discourse Competence	36
2.7.3 Sociolinguistic Competence	37
2.7.4 Strategic Competence	37
2.8 The Pyramid Model of Willingness to Communicate	37
2.9 Factors influencing Willingness to Communicate	39
2.9.1 Psychological Factors	39

2.9.1.1 Self-confidence	39
2.9.1.2 Self-perceived communication competence	40
2.9.1.3 Anxiety	40
2.9.1.4 Motivation	41
2.9.2 Linguistic Factors	41
2.9.2.1 Lack of Vocabulary	42
2.9.2.2 Pronunciation Difficulties	42
2.9.3 Environmental Factors	42
2.9.3.1 Teacher's Role	43
2.9.3.2 Classroom Environment	43
2.10 The Role of Active Learning in Enhancing Learner's Willingness to Communicate	44
2.11 Conclusion	45

#### **Part Two: Practical Part**

# **Chapter Three**

# Data Analysis and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction	47
3.2 Data Collection	47
3.2.1 A sample Lesson about Role-play in Oral Expression Session	47
3.2.2 Observation Through Rubric-Based Assessment	49
3.2.3 Description and Administration of The Students' Interview	51
3.2.4 Data Analysis	52
3.2.4.1 Analysis of The Rubric-Based Observation	52
3.2.4.2 Analysis of The Student's Interview	55

3.2.4.3 Feedback of Student's Performance	60
3.3 Discussion	61
3.4 Recommendations	62
3.4.1 For EFL Teachers	62
3.4.2 For EFL Learners	63
3.4.3For Future Researchers	63
3.5 Conclusion	64
General Conclusion	66
References	70
Appendix A	
Appendix B	
Appendix C	
ملخص	

# **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

#### **1.** Background of the Study

The main goal of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) is to improve students' speaking abilities, especially as effective communication in English becomes increasingly important due to globalization. However, many students face challenges such as language anxiety, insecurity, and a lack of practice opportunities, which hinder their speaking fluency. Traditional teaching methods, which often rely on lectures and rote memorization, do not provide the dynamic, conversational environment needed for practice.

Active learning (AL), an approach that involves students in interactive, studentcentered activities, has emerged as a solution. This approach enhances student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes across various subjects. However, its impact on EFL learners' speaking abilities, particularly their willingness to speak, is not well understood. Willingness to talk is a key factor in achieving fluency, but many students struggle with hesitation due to fear of making mistakes or concerns about grades.

Active learning techniques such as think-pair-share, role-play, peer teaching, debates and storytelling have been shown to increase student engagement, reduce anxiety, and provide opportunities for practice in a relaxed setting. These methods not only improve speaking skills but also encourage peer collaboration. Despite the growing recognition of Active Learning's benefits, there is limited research on how specific strategies influence students' confidence and engagement in speaking activities. This gap highlights the need for more research on how active learning can enhance EFL learners' speaking abilities and willingness to participate.

This study examines the effectiveness of the Active Learning approach in developing EFL learners' willingness to speak, choosing 2nd-year Licence students at the University of Ghardaia as a case study. This topic has been widely discussed by researchers due to the crucial role of active learning techniques in fostering students' confidence and engagement in speaking activities. It also focuses on the interaction between teachers and students, as well as the methods used in speaking classes. This research will help learners enhance their speaking and communication skills by promoting a more engaging and participatory learning environment, which encourages them to speak more confidently in English.

#### 2. Rationale

The rationale behind choosing this research topic is based on the observed lack of oral participation among EFL learners, despite their vocabulary background of the target language. Many students remain reluctant to express themselves orally due to fear of criticism, anxiety, lack of confidence, or insufficient motivation. Traditional teaching methods often overlook the learners' emotional engagement and the importance of providing interactive learning experiences.

By focusing on Active Learning techniques, the researcher seeks to explore pedagogical practices that can transform passive learners into active participants who willingly engage in speaking tasks. Moreover, the researcher intends to offer practical insights to EFL teachers striving to develop communicative competence among their students through creative, participatory approaches.

#### **3.** Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing emphasis on communicative competence in EFL contexts, many learners still exhibit low willingness to speak English inside the classroom. This reluctance hinders their speaking development and overall language acquisition. Therefore, the central problem addressed in this research is:

To what extent can Active Learning Approach enhance EFL learners' willingness to speak English in the EFL classroom?

#### 4. **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between individual learners' factors, such as language anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation, and EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English?

2. How can role-play activities affect EFL learners' willingness to speak in English?

3. What are the most effective techniques of Active Learning that can develop learners' confidence and engagement?

#### 5. Hypotheses

Concerning the main question, the study is based on the assumption that Active Learning Approach can be effective for developing EFL learners' willingness to speak English. In the light of the research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. Individual learner factors, such as language anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation, can play an effective role in affecting EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English.

2. The use of Active Learning strategies may have a positive impact on EFL learners' willingness to speak in English.

3. Certain Active Learning techniques, such as role-play and peer teaching, can be more effective for enhancing EFL learners' confidence and engagement in speaking contexts.

#### 6. Research Objectives

This research aims to understand how EFL students perceive the impact of Active Learning activities on their willingness to speak English. In addition, it examines the specific active learning strategies that motivate EFL learners to improve their speaking abilities. Also, the research explores the challenges and obstacles that students face when practicing speaking skills in an active learning environment. Furthermore, it examines the role of teacher's facilitation, feedback, and classroom atmosphere in supporting or hindering the effectiveness of Active Learning.

#### 7. Methodology

The present study is based the experimental method. It was conducted with second-year Licence students at the University of Ghardaia, English department. The researcher designed speaking session, incorporating Active Learning strategies, particularly role-play activity. The study was conducted in oral expression module with thirty (30) students. To assess the impact of

this strategy, students' performance was observed and evaluated using a grading rubric focusing on activeness, engagement, communication, creativity, and collaboration.

The qualitative approach was utilized where semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students to gather insights into their speaking experiences and perceptions of the applied technique. The interview includes (10) Questions designed for fifteen (15) students with whom the researcher applied Active Learning technique in oral session.

The choice of the second-year level is justified by the fact that students at this stage have acquired a basic foundation of English, yet many still face challenges in speaking confidently and fluently.

#### 8. Limitation of the Study

Several challenges were encountered during the conduct of this research. Firstly, motivating all students to participate actively in speaking activities proved difficult, especially for those experiencing high levels of anxiety or shyness. Secondly, evaluating speaking performance remains inherently subjective despite the use of rubrics. Finally, the findings are context-specific and may not be generalized to all EFL learning environments.

#### 9. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of active learning approach as a framework for EFL classroom engagement, its theoretical foundations and its role as a student-centred approach. In addition, the chapter presents various active learning techniques and challenges encountered in implementing such approaches in EFL classroom.

The second chapter reviews the concept of willingness to communicate (WTC). It covers WTC definition, the nature of speaking skill, and communicative competence. The chapter explores various factors that influence learner's readiness to speak.

The third chapter presents the practical part of the study. It describes the experimental design, data collection procedures, analysis of results, and interpretation of findings. Moreover, it concludes with recommendations for enhancing EFL learners' speaking abilities through active learning and offers suggestions for future research.

#### **10.** Definition of Terms

- Active Learning: Active Learning involves students doing meaningful activities and thinking about what they are doing, instead of just listening to lectures. It encourages participation through methods like discussions, problem-solving, and group tasks (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).
- EFL Speaking Skill: EFL speaking skill is the learner's ability to communicate effectively and naturally in spoken English when it is not their native language (Brown, 1994).
- Willingness to Communicate: willingness to communicate is a learner's personal readiness to start talking in a second or foreign language with others in a specific situation (MacIntyre et al., 1998).
- **Communicative Competence:** Involves understanding not just the grammatical rules of a language, but also knowing when and how to use language appropriately in different social situations (Hymes, 1972)

# **Chapter One**

#### **Chapter One**

## The Active Learning Approach: A Framework for EFL Classroom Engagement

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The conventional teacher-centric pedagogical model employed in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has frequently been subjected to critique due to its constrained capacity to engage learners actively and cultivate substantial communication. Conversely, the active learning paradigm has surfaced as a vibrant and efficacious alternative, enhancing student involvement, collaboration, and analytical reasoning.

Active learning prioritizes the engagement of students in their educational journey, transitioning the emphasis from merely absorbing information to actively interacting with both the material and their classmates. By utilizing methods such as role-play, storytelling, peer teaching, and think-pair-share, educators provide learners with opportunities to develop language skills in genuine and interactive contexts. These approaches not only facilitate language learning but also bolster students' confidence and enthusiasm for participating in classroom activities.

Hence, this chapter provides detailed definition of the Active Learning Approach. Secondly, it presents Active Learning techniques in EFL Classroom. It will shed light on benefits of Active Learning in EFL Learning, challenges of implementing it and its role in building Confidence in EFL learners.

### **1.2 Active Learning Definition**

The term Active Learning refers to teaching strategies to actively participate in the learning process by engaging in discussions, problem-solving, writing, or other interactive tasks. Active Learning is an instructional approach that encourages students to engage deeply with the learning process rather than simply listening to lectures, students take an active role in constructing their own understanding (Bonwell & Eison,1991). Bonwell & Eison (1991) emphasized: "In the context of the college classroom, active learning involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing." (p.2). Furthermore, Active Learning involves students actively participating in class rather than simply listening. This approach focuses on developing students' skills through activities and involvement, rather than merely giving knowledge.

Zireva (2022) defined active learning as an educational strategy that directly involves students in the learning process. This strategy is consistent with the assumption that:

Active learning is an approach employed by the educator which actively engages the learners as participants in their learning. The learners who are active find learning more interesting and meaningful when new knowledge, skills and attitudes are contextualized to their previous experiences and what they are to experience in the immediate future (p. 28).

In this context, active learning in this case not only considers what is being presented to the learner but is also concerned with the learner's role in processing and applying knowledge. Through reflective consideration, learners make deeper connections among prior knowledge, new learning, and future application, ultimately enhancing the relevance and impact of the learning experience. (ibid)

Prince (2004) emphasized: "Active learning is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. In short, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing." (p.1). Prince (2004) defined active learning as an approach to teaching that actively involves students in the process of learning through purposeful activity. Rather than being passive recipients of information, students are invited to engage in activities that require them to think and reflect about their actions and learning.

#### **1.3** Active Learning Approach and EFL Contexts Relationship

Widdowson (1978) holds the view that effective language learning does not come about through the passive receipt of linguistic rules but through the active exploitation of language in communicative action. He is critical of traditional, teacher-centered methods of language teaching that prioritize form over function and instead recommends that students be engaged in communicative activities that reflect the use of language in the real. He argues that language learning needs to be a participatory process in which learners decode, negotiate, and produce meaning in environments. In EFL, it entails moving away from rote tasks and drillings in grammar to tasks such as role-playing, discussions, simulations, and other interactive practice tasks that allow greater learner independence and oral communicative competence. Such concepts make up the premise of what now constitutes the active learning approach in language instruction.

#### Chapter One Active Learning Approach: A Framework for EFL Classroom Engagement

Freeman (1997) presents the idea of complexity and dynamic systems to second language acquisition, viewing second language acquisition as an emergent, interactive process. She encouraged teaching practices in support of exploration, interaction, and learner autonomy, which are Active Learning's main components. Freeman encouraged learning settings in an EFL situation where students engage in tasks, negotiate meaning, and reflect on the learning process. She argued that good teaching should give learners opportunities to test out language, see how wrong they get it, and learn how to adapt—precisely what they would do in spontaneous, real-world interactions. Such arguments instantly legitimize the use of active learning techniques like debates, role-plays, and peer work in EFL instruction.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Framework of Active Learning**

The theoretical foundation of active learning is mostly founded on constructivist perspectives, which view learning as an active, student-centered process (Fosnot, 2005). As education theorists have argued, active learning creates conditions under which students develop increased understanding and long-term retention by actively participating in their own learning process (Flynn, Mesibov, &Vermette, 2004).

Astin et al. (1984, p.17) declared:

We contend that the quality of undergraduate education could be significantly improved if America's colleges and universities would apply existing knowledge about three critical conditions of excellence (1) student involvement, (2) high expectations, and (3) assessment and feedback.

They highlight that learning and development of students are proportionate to their active participation, and thus it is the responsibility of educational institutions to provide active participation rather than passive observation (Astin et al., 1984). John Dewey, who is largely viewed as one among the first active learning proponents, was an experiential learning believer, with the argument "*Education is not an affair of 'telling' and being told, but an active and constructive process.*" (Dewey, 1938, p. 39). Under his theory, learning occurs most effectively when students are themselves actively involved in their own education through practice in the actual world.

Zireva (2022) further highlights the connection of active learning with constructivist theories of learning, especially Dewey's, Vygotsky's, and Piaget's. Constructivism accepts that knowledge is constructed through reflective engagement with experiences. In this view, active learning is a reflective activity that teaches students how to build meaning and generate knowledge. Educators, especially, should thus abandon passive lecturing for approaches that encourage active, constructive engagement and critical thinking.

#### **1.4.1 Constructivist Theory**

Powell and Kalina (2009) describe constructivism as a standard educational theory that puts forward students constructively developing knowledge from interactions and experiences. Constructivist approaches, they notice, are becoming increasingly familiar in schools as effective means of teaching and learning. Flynn, Mesibov, and Vermette (2004) endorse a constructivist education whereby students constructively participate in the development of knowledge through substantive experience and contemplative reflection. Successful constructivist teaching, from the authors' perspective, requires teachers to make classroom environments support inquiry, discourse, and thoughtful consideration. Not only do such environments encourage students to explore and question ideas, but they also allow them to build their comprehension cooperatively. also, teachers' practical challenges in implementing constructivist methods, including the need to abandon mainstream curricular practices and in order to apply instruction to the varied needs of students. (ibid)

#### **1.4.1.1Cognitive Constructivism**

(Piaget, 1954) viewed cognitive development as a sequence of stages where students become actively engaged with their environment in order to build knowledge. He believed that true learning occurs when students are given problems that force them to modify their mode of thinking. As such, teaching has to be such that it enables discovery, exploration, and independent problem-solving—pillars of active learning. Fosnot (2005) noted that, from Piaget's standpoint, learning is not a reception of information in a passive manner but constructive process in an active manner. She emphasized that knowledge is actively constructed by the learner through his or her interactions with the world and personal experience. Constructivist orientation puts the learner in the focus role of knowledge construction, in which meaning emerges from ongoing participation and reflection. She refers to Piaget's concepts of assimilation and accommodation as foundational cognitive development. Assimilation is the acquisition of new information and integrating it into current, cognitive frameworks, while accommodation requires the modification

of those frameworks with respect to new experience. This ongoing process leads to increased understanding and cognitive development. (ibid)

According to Driscoll (2005), Piaget's theory views cognitive development as a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and interaction with the environment. She explains that Piaget believed learners construct knowledge by actively exploring their surroundings and engaging with tasks that challenge their current understanding. Learning, from this perspective, is not about absorbing facts but about building and reshaping mental models through experience and reflection.

Powell and Kalina (2009) emphasized its roots in Piagetian theory, explaining that knowledge is constructed internally through a personal and mental process. They argued that individuals develop understanding by integrating new information into their existing cognitive frameworks, thus highlighting the importance of internal reflection and mental reorganization in learning.

#### **1.4.1.2 Social Constructivism**

Lev Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism centers on the idea that learning and cognitive development are fundamentally social and cultural processes. Vygotsky (1978) argued that higher mental functions first appear between people (interpsychological) before being internalized by the individual (intrapsychological).One of his most influential concepts is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which he defined as: *"The distance between the actual* 

developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

According to Vygotsky, learning occurs most effectively in this zone, where social interaction and guided participation enable learners to perform tasks they could not achieve alone. Language plays a crucial role as a mediating tool in these social interactions, shaping both thought and learning.

Vygotsky's approach emphasized that education should create opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaborative tasks, making it especially relevant for active learning strategies in EFL classrooms such as role-play, peer teaching, and cooperative storytelling.

Powell and Kalina (2009) stressed the importance of interpersonal interaction in the learning process. Based on Vygotsky's theory, they asserted that learners construct knowledge through collaboration, communication, and shared activities with teachers and peers.

#### **1.5 Active Learning Techniques for EFL Classrooms**

Bonwell and Eison (1991) emphasized that active learning involves instructional strategies that engage students in activities where they are required to apply, analyze, and evaluate information rather than passively receiving it. This approach can be especially

beneficial in EFL classrooms, as it promotes higher levels of student involvement, fosters communication skills, and creates opportunities for learners to practice language in meaningful contexts.

#### 1.5.1 Role-play

Role-playing exercises give students the chance to take on different roles or act out various situations, either individually, in pairs, or in groups, which can create more complex scenarios. These activities immerse students in real-life situations that may be challenging or unfamiliar. Role-playing can involve scenarios that are *"stressful, unfamiliar, complex or controversial,"* prompting students to reflect on their own feelings, perspectives, and circumstances (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p. 47)

Role-playing is an effective way for students to practice real-world communication in a structured learning environment. As (Ur ,1996, p. 133) explained "*This is virtually the only one* way we can give our learners the opportunity to practice improvising of range of real-life spoken language in the classroom." In these activities, teachers assign different roles to students while their peers observe the performances. After the role-play, students receive constructive feedback from their teacher, helping them reflect on their speaking skills and make improvements.

#### **1.5.2 Storytelling**

Using storytelling as a learning technique can help students become more fluent in a language. It allows them to engage in extended speech, giving them more practice in forming sentences and expressing ideas naturally. Ellis and Brewster (2014) explained that storytelling is an effective strategy in language learning, as it allows students to practice meaningful communication, expand their vocabulary, and develop fluency in speaking. Haven (2007) explained that storytelling serves as a powerful instructional tool because it activates both the emotional and cognitive centers of the brain, allowing information to become more memorable and easier for students to express. Through the storytelling process, learners develop essential speaking skills as they organize ideas, sequence events, and select appropriate language. This not only enhances their oral fluency and confidence but also encourages the use of expressive features such as tone, gestures, and intonation—core elements of effective spoken communication. Additionally, storytelling creates an authentic and engaging context for learners to refine their speaking abilities while improving memory retention and comprehension.

#### 1.5.3 Debates

Bonwell (1991) explained that debates in active learning offer several advantages, including minimizing instructor bias, improving students' research abilities, fostering logical reasoning, enhancing oral communication skills, and increasing motivation. Additionally, debates benefit not only those participating directly but also students who listen. According to a 1983 survey cited by Bonwell, debates significantly boosted students' confidence in speaking and deepened their understanding of various topics, with a substantial number of students expressing a positive view of this approach.

Kennedy (2007) emphasizes that in-class debates are a powerful active learning strategy that fosters critical thinking, enhances oral communication skills, and increases student engagement. He argues that debates require students to research, analyze, and defend arguments, which encourages deeper learning and active participation. This process not only improves students' ability to think critically and articulate their thoughts clearly but also promotes collaboration and teamwork, as students often work in groups to prepare their arguments. Kennedy further notes that debates are particularly effective in language learning contexts, as they provide meaningful opportunities for learners to practice speaking in structured, purposeful ways. Overall, debates create a dynamic classroom environment that aligns with the core principles of active learning by involving students in the construction and communication of knowledge.

#### 1.5.4 Peer teaching

Bonwell and Eison (1991) highlighted the effectiveness of peer teaching in active learning contexts, noting that it can take multiple forms such as peer tutoring, teaching assistants, and collaborative groups. They emphasize that partnerships and group work are especially beneficial, as these formats enable students to switch roles between teaching and learning, thereby deepening their comprehension and involvement in the learning process.

Baltzersen (2024) viewed peer teaching as a powerful pedagogical approach that goes beyond traditional learning methods. He argues that when students take on the role of teacher, they do not just reinforce their own understanding, but also contribute to the development of collective knowledge within the classroom. The book draws on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, emphasizing that learning is a social, participatory process, and highlights that teaching and learning are deeply interconnected—students learn most effectively when they teach others.

#### 1.5.5 Think-Pair-Share

Lyman (1981) introduced the Think–Pair–Share strategy as a structured technique to promote inclusive classroom participation and improve students' ability to articulate their ideas. In the context of speaking development, he emphasized that providing students with time to think individually, followed by the opportunity to discuss their thoughts with a partner, helped reduce anxiety and build confidence before sharing with the larger group. This gradual process encourages students to rehearse their responses, clarify their ideas, and practice verbal expression in a low-pressure setting—key components in strengthening oral communication skills, especially for quieter or less confident learners. (Lyman, 1981)

Sharma and Saarsar (2018) described Think-Pair-Share (TPS) as an interactive cooperative learning technique that develops students' thinking, communication, and

collaboration. They emphasize how the process—thinking individually, pairing with a partner, and sharing with the group—promotes cognitive development, problem-solving, and classroom engagement.

#### **1.6 Teacher-centred Approach**

The teacher-centered approach is a traditional method where the teacher plays a dominant role in delivering content, while students are passive recipients. In this model, lessons are typically structured around lectures, grammar instruction, and textbook exercises, with limited student interaction. As Brown (2001) explained, this type of instruction prioritizes knowledge transmission over student engagement. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2001) noted that teacher-centered classrooms often limit opportunities for learners to develop communicative competence, which is essential in EFL contexts. This approach may help with classroom control and curriculum coverage but can hinder learners' ability to practice language skills actively and meaningfully. Nunan (2003) added that such environments may lead to over-reliance on memorization and reduced learner autonomy, especially in language classes where students need consistent speaking and listening practice.

#### 1.7 Student-centred Approach

The student-centered approach has deep philosophical and pedagogical roots. It doesn't come from just one founder, but several key thinkers across time contributed to its development. Weimer (2002) argued:

With learning being the central focus, attention squarely on learning: what the student is learning, how the student is learning, the conditions under which the student is learning, whether the student is retaining and applying the learning, and how current learning positions the student for future learning (p. 15)

Weimer (2002) explained that student-centered teaching repositions the focus of instruction onto the student's experience of learning. Rather than emphasizing content delivery, this approach prioritizes how and why students learn, how they apply that learning, and how it prepares them for future knowledge. The goal is to make students active participants who take responsibility for their own development.

#### **1.8** Active Learning as a Student-centred Approach

Active learning is widely recognized as a student-centered approach that shifts the focus of instruction from the teacher delivering content to students actively constructing knowledge through participation, collaboration, and reflection. Bonwell and Eison (1991) described active learning as instructional methods that *"Involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing,"* (p.2), emphasizing that learners become responsible participants in their educational experience rather than passive recipients of information.

Similarly, Prince (2004) argues that active learning fosters deeper understanding by engaging students in higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These activities place learners at the center of the process, allowing them to make decisions, ask questions, and connect new knowledge to their prior experiences. Fosnot (2005) also emphasized that student-centered learning is rooted in constructivist theory, where learners build their own

understanding through meaningful interactions with content, peers, and the learning environment.

She noted that when instruction is designed around student engagement, it promotes motivation, autonomy, and ownership of learning—all of which are hallmarks of the active learning model. In language learning contexts, Larsen-Freeman (1997) reinforced that student-centered approaches, including active learning techniques, are particularly effective because they encourage learners to interact, reflect, and adapt—behaviors essential for acquiring communicative competence. Dewey (1938) believed education should be based on students' interests and real-life experiences. He promoted learning by doing, reflective thinking, and active participation in the learning process.

#### **1.9 Benefits of Active Learning in EFL Classroom**

According to Allsop et al. (2020), active learning offers numerous benefits that significantly enhance the learning experience for students. It requires learners to engage actively with the material through reading, writing, discussing, and solving problems, which leads to higher levels of engagement and participation. Additionally, substantial research supports the effectiveness of active learning in helping students master difficult subjects more effectively. This approach not only improves understanding but also boosts retention and success rates; for instance, a meta-analysis revealed that students in traditional lecture settings were 1.5 times more likely to fail compared to those in active learning environments. Furthermore, active learning

aligns with constructivist principles by enabling students to build knowledge through their own experiences and take greater responsibility for their learning).

It also promotes communication, interactivity, community, and a sense of belonging, which enhance student satisfaction and provide greater flexibility in the learning process (Allsop et al., 2020). Also, (Bonwell and Eison (1991) emphasized that engaging students in activities that require reflection on their actions can significantly enhance their critical thinking abilities. Michael (2006) stated that "Active learning promotes greater student engagement and motivation by involving them directly in the learning process." (p. 161).

Michael (2006) highlighted that students tend to be more motivated and engaged when they actively participate in learning activities rather than passively receiving information. Through strategies like Think-Pair-Share and peer teaching, students practice language skills in authentic contexts, which leads to improved oral fluency, listening comprehension, and critical thinking (Kaddoura, 2013).

Also, Prince (2004) emphasized that active learning enhances long-term retention of information and promotes deeper understanding of linguistic structures and communicative functions. Additionally, it creates a learner-centered environment that supports autonomy and collaboration, both crucial for language acquisition.

#### **1.10 Challenges of Implementing Active Learning Approach**

Bonwell and Eison (1991) identified several challenges associated with the implementation of active learning strategies. One significant difficulty is the additional time required for active learning activities, which may limit the amount of content covered during class sessions. Additionally, some students may resist these strategies, as they are more accustomed to passive learning and may feel uncomfortable with the increased level of engagement.

Instructors also face challenges, as active learning requires greater preparation, adaptation of teaching methods, and the ability to facilitate rather than simply lecture. Furthermore, traditional classroom layouts may not be conducive to interactive activities, making it difficult to implement group work or movement-based learning. Assessment poses another challenge, as traditional grading methods may not effectively measure the outcomes of active learning experiences, necessitating alternative evaluation approaches. Lastly, institutional barriers, such as large class sizes and resistance to pedagogical change, may hinder the widespread adoption of active learning strategies (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

Felder and Brent (2009) also argued that active learning can be difficult to apply in large classrooms, where managing group activities and maintaining student engagement is more complex. Similarly, Prince (2004) pointed out that logistical issues—such as class size, classroom layout, and time limitations—often deter teachers from shifting to active models.
Additionally, language anxiety and low self-confidence can make EFL learners hesitant to participate in speaking-based group work, limiting the effectiveness of strategies like Think-Pair-Share and peer teaching (Vermunt & Verloop, 1999). Finally, large class sizes and rigid classroom layouts often prevent the smooth implementation of cooperative tasks, particularly in public schools with limited resources (Trigwell, Prosser, & Waterhouse, 1999). These barriers highlight the need for systemic support, tailored training, and gradual integration to successfully embed active learning into EFL education.

#### 1.11 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings of active learning as a student-centered approach, with a focus on enhancing speaking skills in EFL classrooms. Active learning fosters learner engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking qualities essential for meaningful language acquisition. By shifting the instructional focus from teacher to learner, strategies such as role-plays, debates, storytelling, peer teaching, and Think-Pair-Share create dynamic, interactive environments that support communicative competence and speaking confidence.

Moreover, the nature of speaking as a productive and interactive skill requires real-time processing, fluency, and the ability to express thoughts clearly. These demands align closely with the objectives of active learning, which encourages students to practise speaking in authentic, low-anxiety settings. In particular, Think-Pair-Share and peer teaching exemplify how cooperative learning can bridge linguistic gaps and promote both social and cognitive growth among learners.

While the benefits of active learning are well-documented—including heightened motivation, deeper understanding, and improved retention—its effective implementation is not without challenges. Factors such as limited time, insufficient training, and resource constraints may hinder its integration into everyday classroom practice. Therefore, successful adoption calls for intentional planning, institutional support, and teacher readiness.

In sum, embracing active learning as a core element of EFL instruction represents a vital step toward empowering students to become confident, autonomous speakers of English.

# **Chapter Two**

### Chapter Two: Willingness to communicate in Active Learning EFL Contexts

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is an essential aspect of second language (L2) learning, influencing how actively students engage in spoken communication. Developing WTC is necessary for language learners, as it determines their ability to use the target language effectively in real-life situations. This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the present study. It aims to establish a strong conceptual foundation for understanding the dynamics of EFL learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) and the pedagogical significance of speaking activities within active learning contexts. It explores the nature of speaking as a productive skill, emphasizing its complexity and central role in language learning.

A detailed examination of willingness to communicate follows, beginning with its overview and definition. The section also addresses the various psychological, linguistic, and environmental factors that influence learners' willingness to speak in English, as well as common difficulties faced by EFL students in oral communication. To better understand these influences, the chapter draws on key models and frameworks, including communicative competence theory. Particular attention is given to Savignon's model of communicative competence and the pyramid model, which illustrate the multi-dimensional nature of communicative ability.

#### 2.2 Overview of Willingness to Communicate

MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) explained that the concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) originally came from studies on first-language (L1) communication. Initially, WTC was viewed as a stable personality trait, meaning that some individuals were naturally more inclined to communicate while others tended to avoid it. However, when applying this concept to second-language (L2) learning, researchers found that WTC is not fixed but rather a dynamic situational variable.

The study highlighted that WTC in an L2 is influenced by multiple interrelated factors, including linguistic competence, confidence, anxiety, motivation, and social environment. Unlike in L1, where personality plays a major role, WTC in L2 is more dependent on situational factors such as the topic of discussion, the presence of peers, and the classroom environment.

#### 2.3 Definition of Willingness to Communicate

According to Safitri, Habizar, and Putri (2023), willingness to communicate is defined as an individual's decision to either engage in conversation or remain silent. This choice is influenced by psychological factors, such as confidence and anxiety, as well as situational or environmental factors, including classroom dynamics and topic familiarity. MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) stated: *"Willingness to communicate (WTC) is the probability of engaging in communication when free to do so."* (p. 547). WTC is not solely dependent on linguistic competence but also on psychological and contextual factors. Some learners, despite having strong language skills, may hesitate to speak due to anxiety or lack of confidence, while others with limited proficiency might actively seek opportunities to communicate. This indicates that WTC is a dynamic and multifaceted construct influenced by personal traits, social settings, and external conditions (MacIntyre *et al.*, 1998).

Peng and Woodrow (2010) suggested that WTC should be seen as a context-sensitive construct that can fluctuate according to environmental factors such as classroom atmosphere, interlocutors' behavior, and learners' psychological states. Collectively, these perspectives underscore that WTC is not only a matter of linguistic ability but also shaped by complex, situational, and interpersonal factors that either encourage or inhibit a learner's communicative behavior. Peng (2010) developed a comprehensive model integrating WTC with communication confidence, motivation, learner beliefs, and classroom environment.

His study revealed that a supportive classroom atmosphere—characterized by teacher encouragement, student cohesiveness, and task orientation—significantly predicts students' WTC. Notably, motivation influences WTC indirectly through its impact on communication confidence, and learner beliefs directly affect both motivation and confidence.

Additionally, McCroskey and Baer (1985) introduced the idea of Willingness to Communicate as a stable personality trait that reflects how likely a person is to begin a conversation when given the choice. Rather than being driven by external circumstances, WTC was viewed as an internal predisposition that influences whether someone chooses to speak or remain silent across different communication settings. Their work emphasized that WTC is not the same as feeling anxious about communication or lacking confidence; instead, it refers to the actual intention to communicate. They developed a measurement scale to assess individuals' willingness to communicate in various contexts—such as one-on-one interactions, small groups, or public speaking—and with different people, including strangers and friends. This early framework helped shift focus in communication research toward understanding why some people talk more than others, even when they are equally capable.

#### 2.4 WTC in EFL classroom

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in the EFL classroom has been recognized as a crucial factor in promoting language use and oral proficiency. MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) emphasized that WTC is a situational and dynamic construct that reflects a learner's readiness to engage in communication, particularly in speaking. In the EFL classroom, where learners may have limited exposure to authentic English environments, WTC becomes especially important as it often determines the extent to which students take advantage of opportunities to speak. Cao and Philp (2006) found that WTC in the classroom is significantly influenced by interactional context, such as whether students are in whole-class, group, or pair work settings. Their study showed that students tend to be more willing to communicate in small groups or dyads, where they feel less anxious and more supported.

Yashima (2002) further argued that EFL learners' WTC is linked to their international posture—a motivation to interact with people from different cultures using English. In this way, learners who view English as a tool for global communication are more likely to speak up in class. Moreover, classroom factors such as teacher support, peer relationships, and task type can also affect learners' willingness to communicate (Peng, 2012). Altogether, the research shows that fostering a supportive, low-anxiety, and motivating classroom environment is key to enhancing WTC in EFL learners.

#### 2.5 The Nature of Speaking Skill

Speaking is the process of verbally expressing meaning through the use of sounds, words, and sentences in a way that is understandable to others. Brown and Yule (1983) described speaking as an interactive process involving the construction, reception, and interpretation of spoken messages. It requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to organize thoughts coherently and deliver them fluently in real-time communication. Harmer (2007) highlighted speaking enables individuals to express their ideas, intentions, reactions, and feelings. It requires not only knowledge of linguistic structures but also the ability to manage interaction, respond to others, and adjust speech according to context, purpose, and audience.

Speaking is the productive skill in oral communication that involves constructing and delivering verbal messages through the use of language. It requires coordination of mental and physical processes, including selecting appropriate vocabulary, organizing thoughts coherently, and articulating sounds clearly to convey meaning effectively (Brown, 1994).

According to Pakula (2019), speaking is a vital yet challenging skill in language learning that involves both cognitive and social processes. From a psycholinguistic perspective, speaking development requires internalizing language structures through proceduralization and automatization, allowing learners to produce language fluently (Pakula, 2019). From a sociocultural perspective, speaking is learned through interaction, where language is coconstructed with more capable peers or teachers before being internalized by the individual (ibid).

Guebba (2021) stated: "Speaking is simply the physical embodiment of abstract systems. In other words, speaking is the physical realization of ideas, concepts, and assumptions existing *in the human schema.*" (p.10). Speaking is described as a crucial productive skill in language learning, though it was long neglected under traditional language teaching methods that focused more on reception (listening and reading) than production (Guebba, 2021). Speaking is defined as the physical realization of abstract ideas, transforming thoughts and concepts into audible sounds that convey meaning. It is not only a productive act but also an interactive process that varies depending on social context (Guebba, 2021). Widdowson (1978, as cited in Guebba, 2021) distinguished between speaking in terms of usage—producing language structures without necessarily aiming for interaction—and speaking in terms of use, which involves active communication, decoding and responding in real-time dialogue. Furthermore, modern approaches emphasize authenticity and the need for learners to practice speaking in realistic social interactions.

#### 2.6 Speaking in WTC

Speaking is considered a central component of Willingness to Communicate (WTC), as it reflects the most direct and observable form of language use. MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) emphasized that speaking is the end point of their WTC model, where all psychological, social, and contextual variables converge to result in actual communication behavior. They argued that even learners with high linguistic competence may remain silent if they lack the willingness to speak. Similarly, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) highlighted that anxiety related to speaking in a FL can significantly reduce learners' WTC, noting that many students fear being judged for making mistakes when speaking.

Moreover, Yashima (2002) found that learners who possess international posture and strong communication confidence are more likely to engage in speaking activities, demonstrating a higher WTC. Collectively, these authors suggest that speaking is not only a product of linguistic competence but is heavily influenced by emotional, psychological, and social factors that either enhance or hinder a learner's readiness to communicate.

#### 2.7 Communicative Competence

Theresa Lillis (2006) remarked that the concept of communicative competence is explained as going beyond mere grammatical knowledge to include the ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts. This idea, originally developed by Dell Hymes in the 1960s and 1970s, emphasized that language competence involves both knowing the rules of grammar and understanding how language should be used depending on the social setting, participants, and cultural norms.

Hymes argued that communicative competence includes:

- Knowing what is appropriate to say in different contexts,
- Understanding the sociocultural rules of language use,

• And being socialized into these norms through participation in specific speech communities.

This contrasts sharply with Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence, which focuses solely on the abstract, idealized knowledge of grammatical rules without regard to social use or context. (ibid)

According to Guebba (2021), communicative competence is based on the idea that language learning is not only about mastering grammar rules but also about being able to communicate meaningfully in social contexts. Guebba explains that the term communicative competence was introduced by Hymes (1972) as a reaction against Chomsky's idea of linguistic competence, which focused only on the knowledge of grammar without considering social use. In communicative competence, learners must know how to convey and interpret messages appropriately depending on the situation (Guebba, 2021).



Figure 2.1: Components of Communicative Competence (Savignon, 2002, p. 8)

According to Savignon (2002), communicative competence includes several interrelated components, such as grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies, all of which function within a contextual framework, as illustrated in Figure 2.1

#### 2.7.1 Grammatical Competence

This refers to the learner's knowledge and correct use of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology. It is not only about understanding the rules of language but also applying them accurately in real context (Guebba, 2021).

Savignon (2002) emphasized that grammatical competence is essential for forming correct sentences and interpreting the meanings of others' utterances. It does not focus on the ability to explain grammar rules, but rather on applying them naturally during communication. In essence, grammatical competence supports the linguistic foundation necessary for conveying and understanding messages.

#### 2.7.2 Discourse Competence

Savignon (2002) explains that discourse competence is the ability to construct and understand connected speech or written texts that are cohesive and coherent. It involves combining sentences meaningfully and using both grammatical links (cohesion) and logical flow of ideas (coherence). Learners need both bottom-up (from words to overall meaning) and topdown (from context to details) processing to interpret and produce discourse effectively.

Discourse competence involves the ability to connect sentences and ideas to form coherent and meaningful communication. It focuses on structuring language into logical sequences that go beyond isolated sentences. (Guebba, 2021).

#### 2.7.3 Sociolinguistic Competence

This competence reflects the speaker's awareness of how language use varies depending on the social context. It includes recognizing formal and informal language, roles of participants, and appropriate expressions. (Guebba, 2021). Similarly, Kramsch (1998) asserts that language and culture are inseparable. She argues that sociocultural competence is essential because learners must be able to interpret the meanings behind social interactions, which are often culturally embedded.

#### 2.7.4 Strategic Competence

Strategic competence involves the use of verbal and non-verbal strategies—such as paraphrasing, asking for clarification, or gestures—to compensate for communication breakdowns or gaps in language knowledge. (Guebba, 2021).

According to Savignon (2002) Strategic competence refers to a learner's ability to manage communication challenges using various strategies. This includes techniques like rephrasing, asking for clarification, using gestures, or pausing to search for the right words. While learners become less dependent on these strategies as they gain fluency, strategic competence remains a critical part of communication. It allows individuals to maintain interaction and convey meaning even when faced with gaps in knowledge or unexpected situations.

#### 2.8 The Pyramid Model of Willingness to Speak

MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) proposed a pyramid-figure model of L2 WTC, which inserted a variety of potential variables that might affect one's WTC in L2, to explain the interrelations of emotional variables influencing L2 communication behaviours:

37



Figure 2.2. Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC (MacIntyre *et al.*, 1998, p.547)

MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) proposed a heuristic model of variables influencing Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in a second language (L2), represented as a pyramid consisting of six interrelated layers. These layers range from immediate, situational influences at the top to more stable, enduring traits at the base. The topmost layer (Layer I) represents actual communication behavior, such as speaking in the L2. Layer II involves the individual's behavioral intention or willingness to initiate communication.

Layer III includes situational antecedents like the desire to communicate with a specific person and state communicative self-confidence, both of which vary depending on context. Layer IV covers motivational propensities, including interpersonal and intergroup motivation and general L2 self-confidence. The fifth layer, known as the affective-cognitive context, comprises attitudes toward the L2, perceived communicative competence, and social support.

Finally, Layer VI represents broad social and individual context variables such as personality and intergroup climate. This model highlights how both temporary and long-term factors work together to influence an individual's WTC in an L2 (MacIntyre *et al.*, 1998).

#### 2.9 Factors influencing Willingness to Speak

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is a fundamental aspect of second language (L2) learning, influenced by various factors that determine whether a learner actively engages in conversations or avoids them. These factors can be broadly categorized into psychological factors and situational/environmental factors.

#### 2.9.1 Psychological Factors

Psychological factors refer to internal emotional and mental states that influence a learner's ability and willingness to speak in a second language. These include self-confidence, anxiety, motivation. When learners feel anxious or lack confidence, they may hesitate to participate in conversations, even if they have the necessary language skills:

#### 2.9.1.1 Self-confidence

According to MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998), self-confidence plays a central role in determining a language learner's willingness to communicate. It is comprised of two key elements: a learner's perceived ability to effectively use the language and the level of anxiety they experience during communication. When individuals believe they can communicate successfully and feel less anxious about doing so, they are more likely to engage in conversations in the second language. Importantly, the perception of competence and emotional comfort may have a greater impact on communication behavior than actual language proficiency.

#### 2.9.1.2 Self-perceived communication competence

According to MacIntyre and his colleagues (1998), students' decisions to participate in speaking activities are largely influenced by their own assessment of their communication skills. A student may be unable to speak even if they have adequate language skills if they have a low sense of their own competence. Conversely, students who think they can communicate effectively are more inclined to participate in discussions, even if they make mistakes occasionally.

Self-perceived communication proficiency is therefore one of the best indicators of a person's desire to communicate in a second or foreign language. Yashima (2002) highlighted that learners' willingness to speak is greatly increased when they have trust in their communication skills and a positive attitude toward using the target language in foreign contexts. Students' motivation to engage in communication increases when they feel that they can effectively express themselves. Thus, learners are more inclined to take chances, strike up discussions, and participate more actively in speaking exercises when they have a positive self-perception of their communicative competence.

#### 2.9.1.3 Anxiety

Krashen (1982) stated that learners with lower anxiety levels are more successful in acquiring a second language, as high anxiety raises the affective filter, which can block language input from being processed. He noted: "Low anxiety appears to be conducive to second language acquisition, whether measured as personal or classroom anxiety. Classrooms that encourage low filters are those that promote low anxiety among students, and that keep students off the defensive." (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). Liu and Jackson (2008) explained that students often feel anxious about speaking English when they lack confidence in their language ability or when

they anticipate negative judgments about how well they speak. This internal doubt and fear of poor evaluation lead learners to avoid speaking opportunities, directly influencing their willingness to communicate in class.

#### 2.9.1.4 Motivation

MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) emphasized that motivation is a crucial factor in second language (L2) communication. They suggest that a learner's decision to engage in L2 communication is influenced by both immediate situational factors and more stable, enduring motivational traits. Motivation in this context is shaped by interpersonal factors (such as the desire to control or affiliate with others), intergroup factors (driven by group identity and the desire to connect with or influence other groups), and personal factors like self-confidence and language anxiety.

These various motivational influences collectively determine how willing a learner is to communicate in the L2. Nunan (1999) emphasized that the importance of motivation in learning is vital to take note of because it can influence students' reluctance to communicate in English. In this regard, motivation is an important factor in determining how ready students are for communication.

#### 2.9.2 Linguistic Factors

Linguistic factors involve the learner's knowledge and control of language components such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation. A lack of vocabulary or difficulty constructing sentences can reduce a learner's ability and willingness to communicate. Strong linguistic competence, on the other hand, boosts confidence and promotes more active use of the language:

#### 2.9.2.1 Lack of Vocabulary

Swain (1995, as cited in Zhang, 2009) explained that when learners attempt to speak in English, they often realize there is a significant discrepancy between their intended message and their actual language output. This gap is usually due to a lack of vocabulary or incomplete knowledge of language structures, which makes communication difficult and reduces their willingness to participate in speaking activities. (Zhang, 2009).

#### **2.9.2.2 Pronunciation Difficulties**

Pronunciation difficulties are among the key linguistic barriers that negatively impact learners' willingness to speak in EFL classrooms. Learners who are unable to pronounce words correctly often experience anxiety, fear of being misunderstood, and a lack of confidence, which discourages them from participating in oral communication.

As Gilakjani (2016) pointed out, pronunciation plays a vital role in communication, and without it, effective interaction becomes nearly impossible. He asserted: "*Pronunciation instruction is very important because it is the main source of understanding. If learners cannot utter the correct version of a word then they are not able to communicate correctly.*" (p.5). Therefore, poor pronunciation not only hinders intelligibility but also contributes to students' reluctance to engage in speaking tasks.

#### **2.9.3 Environmental Factors**

Environmental factors are external conditions and contexts that affect language learning and communication. These include such as: classroom atmosphere, teacher support. A positive, supportive environment can encourage learners to take risks and engage in speaking, while a stressful or judgmental setting may hinder participation:

#### 2.9.3.1 Teacher's Role

Wen and Clément (2003) demonstrated that teacher support, characterized by teacher engagement and approachability, plays a significant role in enhancing students' willingness to communicate in English. According to Wen and Clément (2003), this teacher support is crucial within the educational environment, effectively boosting students' desire to communicate in the English language.

#### 2.9.3.2 Classroom Environment

Peng and Woodrow (2010) highlighted that the classroom environment is a significant situational factor influencing a student's willingness to communicate in a second language. A supportive and engaging classroom can greatly encourage students to speak up, take risks, and use the L2 more confidently.



Figure 2.3. Structural Model of Variables Influencing WTC in the EFL Classroom (Peng

& Woodrow, 2010, p. 843)

Peng and Woodrow (2010) presented the hypothesized structural model of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in based on empirical research in Chinese EFL classrooms. The model illustrates the interrelationships among five key variables: classroom environment, learner beliefs, motivation to learn English, communication confidence, and WTC in English. It demonstrates that classroom environment directly influences learner beliefs, motivation, and communication confidence, all of which in turn affect students' WTC. Notably, communication confidence, which is composed of communication anxiety and perceived competence, acts as a central predictor of WTC. This model emphasizes the complex and dynamic interplay between psychological and contextual factors, highlighting that fostering a supportive and engaging classroom environment is essential to encouraging learners to actively participate in communication.

## 2.10 The Role of Active Learning in Enhancing Learners' Willingness to Communicate

Bonwell and Eison (1991) argued that active learning techniques create a more interactive classroom environment, encouraging students to actively participate rather than passively absorb information. Activities such as group discussions, role-playing, and debates enhance student involvement, confidence, and communication skills, which in turn increase their WTC.

Bonwell and Eison (1991) suggested that students who are actively engaged in discussions and interactive tasks are more likely to develop the confidence to express their thoughts, reducing anxiety and hesitation in speaking.

Moreover, MacIntyre et al. (1998) defined willingness to communicate *as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2."* (p. 547). Active learning environments provide authentic opportunities for such interaction, which helps reduce anxiety and improve motivation.

From a constructivist perspective, learners build knowledge through interaction and reflection. As Dewey (1938) emphasized, education must be grounded in experience and reflective thinking. Through active learning strategies like Think-Pair-Share, interactive storytelling, and guided role-plays, learners participate in meaningful, real-life communication that boosts their linguistic confidence and interpersonal skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Additionally, Zireva (2022), learners become more motivated and confident when new knowledge is connected to their prior experiences and future applications, making communication more relevant and less intimidating. Furthermore, speaking tasks embedded within active learning environments foster a sense of ownership and reduce anxiety, which are key factors influencing willingness to speak (Prince, 2004). When learners are actively involved, they are more likely to take risks, initiate conversations, and use the target language without fear of making mistakes. As a result, active learning not only supports language development but also empowers students socially and emotionally, thereby enhancing their overall communicative competence.

#### 2.11 Conclusion

WTC plays a vital role in second language learning, as it determines the extent to which students actively participate in verbal communication. This chapter explored the definition and influencing factors of WTC, emphasizing the psychological, linguistic and environmental aspects that shape students' readiness to speak. Anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation were identified as key psychological influences, lack of vocabulary and pronunciation difficulties as a linguistic factor, while teacher's role, and classroom environment were discussed as environmental factors that impact WTC.

Additionally, the role of Active Learning in enhancing WTC was examined. Research suggests that interactive, student-centered teaching approaches—such as peer teaching, debates, and role-playing—reduce anxiety, boost confidence, and create a supportive learning environment that fosters communication. Understanding these factors is essential for educators aiming to implement effective strategies that encourage students to actively engage in spoken communication. The next chapter will explore practical applications of Active Learning techniques in improving WTC among EFL learners.

## **Chapter Three**

## Chapter Three Data Analysis and Recommendations

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the fieldwork that was conducted in order to investigate the effectiveness of the active learning approach, particularly the role-play strategy, in developing EFL learners' willingness to speak. This part of the research aims to present, describe, and analyze the data collected from the experiment and interviews conducted with second-year licence students at the University of Ghardaia.

The chapter proceeds to a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the collected data. The data were gathered using two primary tools: an observation rubric during the role-play session and individual interviews conducted with second year license students afterward. The purpose of combining these two instruments was to obtain a deeper understanding of students' engagement, performance, and attitudes toward speaking activities conducted through active learning technique. Through detailed analysis and discussion, the findings aim to answer the research questions and test the proposed hypotheses. In addition, based on the interpretation of the results, some pedagogical recommendations are presented to support EFL teachers in promoting oral production skills among their learners.

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

#### **3.2.1** A sample Lesson about Role Play in Oral Expression Session

In this session, a role-play activity was implemented with the goal of developing students' willingness to speak English in a real-life context. The activity was conducted with a

sample of thirty (30) students who participated in the role-play session during the oral expression class. The role-play was based on a job interview scenario, which is highly relevant for learners preparing for professional communication. Rather than providing strict scripts or predefined roles, students were encouraged to take ownership of the activity. Each student was free to choose a job position they were interested in applying for. They also formulated their own responses to general interview questions without receiving model answers.

The students worked in pairs, with one acting as the job applicant and the other as the interviewer or employer. They were given time to prepare and practice their roles. After the pair practice phase. Students were encouraged to use a wide range of vocabulary, body language, and creative responses to make the interaction more authentic and dynamic.

After the initial practice in pairs, selected students were invited to perform their interviews in front of the entire class, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate their communication skills in a more formal and public speaking context. Throughout the activity, the teacher observed the students using a structured rubric to assess various aspects such as activeness, engagement, creativity, communication skills, and collaboration.

This free role-play not only created a relaxed and motivating environment for speaking but also offered a valuable opportunity for students to personalize their use of English according to their interests and aspirations. It served as a practical implementation of active learning principles aimed at enhancing willingness to communicate among EFL learners. The activity aimed to increase confidence, spontaneity, and fluency in spoken English.

Each pair engaged in the role-play interview while the rest of the students observed

Among the common interview questions:

- 1. Can you introduce yourself?
- 2. Why do you want to apply for this job?
- 3. What are your strengths?
- 4. What are your weaknesses?
- 5. How would you handle a difficult customer?
- 6. Why should we hire you?
- 7. Do you have any questions for us?

The learners reacted with a mix of enthusiasm and nervousness, initially showing hesitation but gradually gaining confidence as the role-play progressed. Many expressed that the activity felt authentic and enjoyable, which helped reduce anxiety. Hence, the learners became more engaged and showed increased willingness to communicate in English.

#### **3.2.2 Observation Through Rubric-Based Assessment**

In order to gather deeper insights into the students' perceptions regarding the roleplay activity and its impact on their willingness to speak English, a classroom observation was conducted through a structured rubric-based assessment form, specifically designed to evaluate various aspects of students' performance during the role-play activity. The rubric included six criteria: Activeness & Energy, Engagement in the Role-Play, Application of Knowledge/Skills, Communication Skills (including body language), Creativity & Originality, and Pair Work & Collaboration. Each criterion was rated on a five-point scale: 5 (Excellent), 4 (Good), 3 (Satisfactory), 2 (Fair), and 1(poor).

Score Range	Grade	Performance level
27-30 points	5	Excellent – Actively engaged, applied skills creatively and effectively.
23-26 points	4	Good – Engaged and applied skills well, with room for minor improvement.
19-22 points	3	Satisfactory - Some engagement and application, but more energy needed.
15-18 points	2	Fair – Lacks sufficient energy and application.
Below 15 points	1	Poor- Minimal engagement, energy, and application.

 Table 3.1 Scoring Rubric for Performance Evaluation

Before the beginning of the role-play activity, the researcher observed the students' initial reactions while presenting the instructions for the task. The students' attentiveness, enthusiasm, and readiness to participate were informally noted to provide a broader picture of their willingness to speak. This preliminary observation allowed the researcher to understand the students' initial engagement and their attitude toward speaking in English.

During the role-play session, a systematic observation was conducted using the rubric. Each student's performance was evaluated in real time, focusing on their energy levels, interaction with their peers, application of English knowledge, non-verbal communication (such as body language and eye contact), and creativity in responding to job interview questions. Particular attention was paid to how students collaborated with their partners, how confidently they expressed themselves, and how naturally they used the language.

In Addition, general feedback was noticed for all student, highlighting both strengths (such as respecting their partners and actively listening) and areas for improvement (such as needing to work on vocabulary, creativity, and body language).

This systematic observation provided valuable qualitative data, offering a richer and more detailed understanding of students' willingness to speak and their speaking abilities during active learning activity.

#### 3.2.3 Description and Administration of The Students' Interview

In addition to the observation, a semi-structured interview was employed as a second tool for data collection during the role-play session. The interview involved fifteen (15) students who were part of the study's sample. All participants were second-year Licence students at the University of Ghardaia, majoring in English. These students had actively participated in the free role-play speaking session and were selected to share their experiences, challenges, and opinions about the activity.

The semi-structured format of the interview combined prepared open-ended questions with the flexibility to ask follow-up questions depending on each student's responses. This approach allowed the researcher to maintain a general structure while still encouraging personal and detailed answers. The learners reacted with a mix of enthusiasm and nervousness, initially showing hesitation but gradually gaining confidence as the role-play progressed.

Many expressed that the activity felt authentic and enjoyable, which helped reduce anxiety. In addition, the learners became more engaged and showed increased willingness to communicate in English. (see appendix A). These questions aimed to explore various aspects of the learners' affective and cognitive engagement. They covered how students felt while speaking English during the activity, the specific challenges they encountered, and whether the experience enhanced their confidence and speaking skills. Additionally, the questions sought to uncover any new vocabulary or expressions acquired, the impact of peer and teacher interaction, and the perceived usefulness of the role-play in preparing for real-life situations such as job interviews. Learners were also encouraged to reflect on their preferred elements of the activity, any difficulties in expressing ideas, and their willingness to participate in similar tasks in the future.

Each interview was conducted in a relaxed classroom environment, ensuring that students felt comfortable sharing their honest opinions. The students' answers provided valuable qualitative data that contributed to the analysis of the effectiveness of using role-play as an active learning strategy in the EFL classroom.

#### **3.2.4 Data Analysis**

This section presents the analysis of the data collected through two main tools: the rubric-based observation and the semi-structured interview of students during the role-play activity. The aim of the analysis is to evaluate the effectiveness of role-play in enhancing EFL learners' willingness to speak English, as well as to assess their speaking performance in an active learning context.

#### **3.2.4.1**Analysis of The Rubric-Based Observation

The observation conducted through the rubric-based assessment provided further insights into the students' performance during the role-play. All student's activeness, engagement, application of knowledge, communication skills, creativity, and collaboration were evaluated based on a five-point scale.

The general results showed that the majority of students performed at a satisfactory level, with most scoring between 21 and 25 points according to the performance scale. This

indicates that overall, students demonstrated good levels of participation, creativity, and interaction during the activity.

Observation revealed that the students were generally active, enthusiastic, and willing to engage in the role-play. They were able to apply their knowledge of English in a real-life context, showing motivation and energy. Additionally, many students made effective use of nonverbal communication such as gestures and eye contact to support their spoken language.

However, some general weaknesses were observed, particularly in vocabulary use and fluency, as a few students sometimes struggled to express their ideas clearly or hesitated when speaking. Despite these challenges, the students collaborated effectively and demonstrated a genuine willingness to communicate.

In general, the rubric-based observation confirmed that the role-play activity successfully stimulated the students' speaking skills and enhanced their willingness to participate in English-speaking tasks. The results of student's evaluation:

Criteria Activeness & Energy		
Application of Knowledge & Skills	3	
Communication & Body Language	2	
Creativity & Originality	5	
Pair Work & Collaboration	4	
Total Score	24/30	

Table 3.2: Students' Performance Based on Role-Play Assessment Criteria

The results of the rubric-based assessment indicate that the students generally performed well during the role-play activity. They achieved high scores in Activeness & Energy (5/5), Creativity & Originality (5/5), and Pair Work & Collaboration (4/5), suggesting that they were highly motivated, creative, and worked cooperatively with their peers. Engagement in the Role-Play also received a good score (4/5), reflecting a positive involvement in the task. However, slightly lower scores were noted in the Application of Knowledge & Skills (3/5) and especially in Communication & Body Language (2/5), indicating that while students were enthusiastic and imaginative, some still faced challenges in effectively applying their linguistic knowledge and using non-verbal communication during the interview. Overall, the total score (24/30) places their performance at a satisfactory level according to the grading scale.

#### **3.2.4.2**Analysis of the student's interview

The semi-structured interview was administered to a sample of fifteen (15) secondyear Licence students at the University of Ghardaia after completing the role-play activity. Students were asked several open-ended questions related to their feelings about speaking English, their experience during the role-play, and their overall engagement. Here are the following questions:

Question 01: How did you feel during the role-play activity when you speak in English?

This question investigates the emotional response of students to the role-play, which directly reflects their comfort level and WTC. Positive feelings may suggest increased confidence and reduced anxiety—key components of WTC in EFL contexts. It provides insight into how the active learning approach affects students' affective filters. Their common answers fall in: feeling nervous at the beginning of the roleplay activity, mainly due to the fear of making mistakes in front of their peers. This initial anxiety made it difficult for some to speak comfortably. However, as the activity progressed, they began to feel more at ease and gained confidence in expressing themselves. Others noted that it was exciting to use English in a real-world context, which encouraged them to participate more actively and overcome their hesitation.

Question 02: What was the most challenging part of the job interview role-play? Why?

This targets the cognitive or linguistic obstacles students faced, such as vocabulary limitations, grammar use, or fluency under pressure. It reflects how well the role-play addresses students' speaking barriers and readiness to use English in realistic settings. When asked about the most challenging part of the activity, several participants indicated that finding the right words quickly was a major difficulty. Others explained that understanding the interviewers' questions, especially when delivered in fast or formal English, posed an additional challenge. Some also struggled with keeping the conversation flowing smoothly and organizing their thoughts under pressure. In general, the combination of language accuracy, speed, and the need to maintain interaction made the roleplay particularly demanding

Question 03: Did this activity help you feel more confident when speaking English? How?

Measures self-perceived improvement in confidence, a core factor in WTC. Confidence gained through active learning techniques like role-play indicates the effectiveness of such methods in real-time communication practice. According to most participants, the activity helped them feel more confident speaking English. They highlighted that practicing spontaneous speaking allowed them to become less afraid of making mistakes and more willing to take risks when expressing their ideas. A few mentioned that their confidence didn't improve significantly, as they still felt shy or hesitant. Nevertheless, the majority agreed that the opportunity to speak in a realistic setting was a valuable step toward improving their selfassurance.

Question 04: Can you share any new words or phrases you learned during the role-play?

This reveals the role of incidental vocabulary acquisition during active learning. It connects speaking with vocabulary development, which supports communicative competence. In response to this question, students shared that they had learned useful vocabulary relevant to job interviews. Some noted terms such as "strengths" as particularly valuable, while others

mentioned learning expressions like "active learning," which helped them articulate ideas more effectively. The activity exposed them to formal and professional language, enriching their vocabulary and expanding their ability to express themselves appropriately in such contexts.

Question 05: How did interacting with your classmates and teacher affect your speaking skills?

Explores the role of social interaction in speaking development. Active learning often relies on peer collaboration and teacher feedback, which are crucial in enhancing WTC and fluency. Participants generally emphasized the positive role of interaction with both classmates and the teacher in enhancing their speaking skills. They stated that peer feedback and teacher corrections helped them identify and correct their mistakes, which led to noticeable improvement. Additionally, many expressed that working in a collaborative environment boosted their confidence and encouraged them to speak more. Observing and learning from others' language use also contributed to their development, making the activity more engaging and educational.

Question 06: Do you think this role-play will help you in a real job interview? Why or why not?

Assesses the perceived transferability of the role-play to real-world situations. It connects academic speaking practice with authentic communication scenarios—central to the active learning philosophy. Most participants reported that they believed the roleplay would be beneficial in a real job interview setting. They explained that it gave them practical experience in answering common interview questions and helped them become more familiar with organizing their thoughts in English. According to several students, the activity felt realistic and made them more aware of how to respond under pressure. For example, one student mentioned that the

roleplay helped them learn to stay calm and think quickly during formal conversations. However, a small number of students noted that while the experience was useful, they still lacked confidence and would need more practice to feel fully prepared for an actual interview.

Question 07: What did you like the most about the free role-play activity?

Identifies which elements of the role-play were most engaging or beneficial, helping to refine active learning strategies based on student preferences. A common response among students was that they enjoyed the freedom to be creative and express themselves without restrictions. Many appreciated the informal and relaxed nature of the activity, which allowed them to speak naturally and without fear of being judged. Several students also highlighted working in groups as an enjoyable part of the experience, as it made the task more interactive and less intimidating. For instance, one participant noted that being able to speak freely without following a script made them feel more engaged. Others added that the activity was fun and motivating, which helped build their interest in speaking English more often.

**Question 08:** What difficulties did you face when trying to express your ideas during the roleplay?

Focuses on expressive challenges such as organizing thoughts, fluency, or vocabulary gaps. Highlights areas where students need more support in speaking development. Most students admitted facing difficulties during the roleplay, especially when trying to express their thoughts fluently. A common challenge was not being able to find the right words quickly while speaking. Others reported feeling a bit stressed about making grammatical mistakes or saying something incorrectly. For example, some students mentioned they were unsure about their pronunciation or sentence structure, which affected their confidence. However, a few students pointed out that even though they struggled, these moments helped them realize which areas of their English still needed improvement.

Question 09: How did preparing for the role-play influence your English-speaking skills?

Examines the impact of pre-activity preparation (a key active learning component) on performance. Indicates the value of planning and rehearsal in building WTC and skill. The majority of participants stated that preparing for the roleplay helped them feel more confident and less nervous when it came time to speak. They reported that reviewing vocabulary and practicing possible answers beforehand made the activity easier and reduced their anxiety. One student, for instance, shared that they memorized some key phrases, which helped them speak more smoothly. Others noted that preparation gave them a better understanding of how to structure their responses. While most found preparation useful, a few mentioned they still struggled despite their efforts, suggesting that preparation alone isn't always enough without regular speaking practice.

**Question 10:** Would you like to participate in similar role-play activities in the future? Why or why not?

Assesses student attitudes toward continued use of active learning. A positive response suggests effectiveness and acceptance of the method in promoting WTC. Almost all students expressed a strong interest in participating in similar roleplay activities in the future. A common reason given was that these activities helped them feel more motivated to speak and gave them a chance to practice English in realistic situations. For example, several students explained that
roleplaying made learning feel more practical and enjoyable, as it exposed them to useful vocabulary and real-life conversation scenarios. One student emphasized that speaking freely in a simulated job interview allowed them to develop better communication skills. A few students, however, indicated they would prefer more structured support in future activities to help them feel fully confident.

The analysis of students' answers revealed that the majority of participants felt more motivated and confident when participating in the free role-play activity. Several students mentioned that choosing their own job interview situation made the task more interesting and reduced their anxiety. They also highlighted that interacting with a peer in a simulated real-world context encouraged them to express themselves more freely, even if they made some language mistakes. These findings suggest that the active learning strategy of free role-play positively influenced the students' willingness to communicate and participate in English.

# **3.2.4.3 Feedback of Students' Performance**

#### • Strengths

During the interview, students demonstrated respect toward their partners by actively listening to their responses and reacting appropriately. They engaged in the activity with a positive attitude, and most students showed a clear willingness to participate, contributing to a supportive and collaborative environment.

#### • Areas for Improvement

Students need to pay more attention to their vocabulary and expressions to avoid repetition and enrich their speech. They are encouraged to be more creative in their responses and move beyond basic or predictable answers. Additionally, greater focus should be placed on using appropriate body language and an interrogative tone to better simulate real interview scenarios.

## **3.3 Discussion**

The findings obtained from the rubric-based observation and the interview responses confirmed the effectiveness of the free role-play strategy in enhancing the students' willingness to speak English. This section discusses these findings in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework reviewed in the first two chapters.

First, concerning the students' willingness to speak, the results clearly indicated that giving students the freedom to create their own job interview situations had a strong positive effect. Most students reported that being able to choose their desired job position made them feel more connected to the task, leading to increased motivation and confidence during speaking.

Furthermore, the rubric-based observation showed that students generally demonstrated high levels of activeness, creativity, and collaboration during the role-play activity.

However, the observation also highlighted some areas for improvement, particularly in vocabulary development and non-verbal communication skills. Some students hesitated or relied on simple expressions, suggesting that while role-play enhanced their willingness to speak, there

remains a need for continuous vocabulary building and practice in natural communication strategies.

Altogether, the discussion of these results demonstrates that role-play as an active learning strategy is highly effective in promoting not only students' willingness to speak but also their overall communicative competence. It allowed students to practice real-life speaking skills in an enjoyable, flexible, and learner-centered environment.

These findings are highly relevant to the teaching of speaking skills in EFL contexts, suggesting that incorporating more free, creative role-play activities into classroom instruction could be a powerful method for increasing students' willingness and ability to communicate in English.

# .3.4 Recommendations

Based on the results obtained from the present study and the classroom observation during the implementation of the role-play activity, several recommendations can be proposed for EFL teachers, learners, and future researchers.

## **3.4.1For EFL Teachers**

• Teachers are recommended to integrate active learning strategies, especially role-play, within their oral expression sessions to create a motivating and supportive environment for students to practice speaking.

62

• It is suggested that teachers encourage students to use real-life situations that reflect their interests and future professional needs to increase their engagement and willingness to speak.

• Teachers should provide constructive feedback focusing on both linguistic performance and communicative strategies, including vocabulary use, creativity, and body language.

• It is important to give students sufficient preparation time before performing their roleplays to help them feel more confident and organized.

# **3.4.2 For EFL Learners**

• Students are advised to take advantage of role-play activities to practice speaking English in a stress-free and enjoyable atmosphere.

• Learners should make efforts to expand their vocabulary, develop creativity in expressing ideas, and use non-verbal communication tools, such as gestures and eye contact, to support their speech.

• Students are also encouraged to listen actively to their peers, respect turn-taking, and collaborate effectively during pair or group work.

# **3.4.3 For Future Researchers**

• Future research is recommended to explore the impact of different types of role-play (guided vs. free role-play) on developing speaking skills in EFL contexts.

63

• Further studies may investigate the integration of technology, such as video recording, in role-play activities to enhance learners' self-reflection and self-assessment.

• It would be beneficial for future studies to involve a larger sample and longer duration of experimentation to gain deeper insights into the role-play strategy's effectiveness.

# **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the practical dimension of the study by detailing the methods of data collection, data analysis, and discussion of results. Through the implementation of a roleplay activity and the use of an observational rubric and interviews, it was found that active learning strategies significantly enhance learners' willingness of speaking. The findings highlight the importance of providing students with speaking opportunities that are meaningful, flexible, and motivating. Although challenges in fluency and grammatical accuracy persist, the overall results emphasize the positive impact of active learning in fostering communicative competence in EFL contexts.

# **General Conclusion**

# **General Conclusion**

This dissertation sought to investigate the effectiveness of active learning strategies, particularly role-play activity, in developing second-year Licence EFL students' willingness to speak English at the University of Ghardaia. The main objective was to explore whether active learning techniques could foster students' speaking confidence and engagement in the classroom.

The first chapter outlined active learning as a student-centered approach rooted in constructivist theory, highlighting its shift from traditional teaching to learner engagement. It covered techniques like role-play, debates, and peer teaching, emphasizing benefits in EFL settings such as increased motivation, autonomy, and interaction, while also noting implementation challenges like limited resources and teacher resistance.

The second chapter explored willingness to communicate (WTC), especially in speaking, using models like MacIntyre's to explain influencing factors. It reviewed communicative competence and its components, and emphasized how active learning supports WTC by creating interactive, supportive environments that reduce speaking anxiety and encourage participation.

In the fieldwork, the researcher employed two instruments for the purpose of gathering data: classroom observation, using a rubric-based assessment, and student interviews. These tools were used to collect qualitative insights into learners' speaking performance and their willingness to communicate within an active learning environment. The data collected through both instruments were analyzed and discussed in relation to the research hypothesis, in order to confirm or refute its validity. As a final step in this chapter, a set of suggestions and recommendations was formulated for EFL teachers and their students with the aim of facilitating

and improving the teaching and learning process of the speaking skill, particularly in ways that foster active engagement and communicative confidence in the EFL classroom.

In addition, the results of the study indicate that second-year EFL students were aware of the importance of speaking as a central component of language learning, particularly within the context of active learning. The findings suggest that students recognized how active participation in classroom tasks contributes to building their willingness to communicate. Furthermore, in addition to self-confidence, linguistic competence emerged as essential factors for achieving effective and confident oral communication.

Concerning the first hypothesis, which stated that individual learner factors such as language anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation can play an effective role in influencing EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English, the results from the rubric-based classroom observation and student interviews confirmed this hypothesis to be true. Students demonstrated varying levels of engagement and participation depending on their affective states, and those with higher self-confidence and motivation showed a greater willingness to speak in class.

As hypothesized, the belief that the use of active learning strategies may have a positive impact on EFL learners' willingness to speak in English was also proven valid. The data revealed that students responded positively to the active learning environment, participating more readily in communicative tasks, showing reduced anxiety, and displaying greater comfort in expressing themselves orally during lessons.

With regard to the third hypothesis, which proposed that certain active learning techniques, such as role-play and peer teaching, can be more effective in enhancing EFL learners'

confidence and engagement in speaking contexts, the findings also supported this claim. Learners expressed increased enthusiasm and reported feeling more empowered to speak when engaged in interactive, student-centered activities. These techniques not only encouraged communicative risk-taking but also created a supportive atmosphere that promoted mutual learning and confidence-building among peers.

Generally, this research has shown that integrating role-play activities into EFL speaking classes can be an effective strategy to promote learners' willingness to communicate, build their self-confidence, and enhance their speaking abilities. Despite some challenges that emerged, such as the need for better communication strategies and more accurate vocabulary use, the general outcomes were positive and encouraging.

To conclude, it is hoped that this modest contribution will inspire further research in the field of foreign language education, and encourage EFL teachers to adopt more active learning strategies to create dynamic, engaging, and supportive learning environments for their students.



# References

Allsop, J., Young, S. J., Nelson, E. J., Piatt, J., & Knapp, D. (2020). Examining the benefits associated with implementing an active learning classroom among undergraduate students. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, *32*(3), 418–426.

Astin, A. W., et al. (1984). *Involvement in learning: Realizing the potential of American higher education* (pp. 17–19). Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.

Baltzersen, R. K. (2024). *Effective use of collective peer teaching in teacher education: Maximizing student learning*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. (1991). *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom* (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1). Washington, DC: George Washington University.

Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Teaching the spoken language*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.

Cao, Y., & Philp, J. (2006). Interactional context and willingness to communicate: A comparison of behavior in whole class, group, and dyadic interaction. *System*, *34*(4), 480–493.

Dewey, J. (1938). Experience and education. New York, NY: Macmillan.

Driscoll, M. P. (2005). *Psychology of learning for instruction* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Ellis, G., & Brewster, J. (2014). *Tell it again! The storytelling handbook for primary English language teachers* (2nd ed.). London, England: British Council.

Felder, R. M., & Brent, R. (2009). Active learning: An introduction. ASQ Higher Education Brief, 2(4), 1–5.

Fosnot, C. T. (2005). Constructivism: A psychological theory of learning. In C. T. Fosnot (Ed.), *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 8–33). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Flynn, P., Mesibov, D., Vermette, P. J., & Smith, R. M. (2004). *Applying standards-based constructivism: A two-step guide for motivating middle and high school students*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Guebba, B. (2021). The nature of speaking in the classroom: An overview. *Middle East Research Journal of Linguistics and Literature, 1*(1), 9–12. https://doi.org/10.36348/merjll.2021.v01i01.002

Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching* (4th ed.). Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Haven, K. (2007). *Story Proof: The science behind the startling power of story*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. A. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132.

Hymes, D. H. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected readings* (pp. 269–293). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Kaddoura, M. (2013). Think-Pair-Share: A teaching-learning strategy to enhance students' critical thinking. *Educational Research Quarterly*, *36*(4), 3–24.

Kennedy, R. (2007). In-class debates: Fertile ground for active learning and the cultivation of critical thinking and oral communication skills. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 19(2), 183–190.

Kramsch, C. (1998). Language and culture. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York, NY: Pergamon Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (1997). Chaos/complexity science and second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 18(2), 141–165.

Lillis, T. (2006). Communicative competence. In K. Brown (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and linguistics* (2nd ed., pp. 666–673). Oxford, England: Elsevier.

Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(1), 71–86. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00687.x

Lutsenko, O., & Lutsenko, G. (Eds.). (2022). Active learning: Theory and practice. London, England: IntechOpen.

Lyman, F. T. (1981). The responsive classroom discussion: The inclusion of all students. In A. S. Anderson (Ed.), *Mainstreaming Digest* (pp. 109–113). College Park, MD: University of Maryland Press.

71

MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545–562.

McCroskey, J. C., & Baer, J. E. (1985, November). Willingness to communicate: The construct and its measurement. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Denver, CO.

Michael, J. (2006). Where's the evidence that active learning works? *Advances in Physiology Education*, *30*(4), 159–167.

Nunan, D. (1999). Second language teaching and learning. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical English language teaching*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

Pakula, H.-M. (2019). Teaching speaking. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 13(1), 95–111. <u>https://doi.org/10.17011/apples/urn.201903011691</u>

Peng, J.-E. (2012). Towards an ecological understanding of willingness to communicate in EFL classrooms in China. *System*, 40(2), 203–213.

Peng, J.-E., & Woodrow, L. (2010). Willingness to communicate in English: A model in the Chinese EFL classroom context. *Language Learning*, 60(4), 834–876.

Piaget, J. (1954). *The construction of reality in the child* (M. Cook, Trans.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Pourhosein Gilakjani, A. (2016). English pronunciation instruction: A literature review. International Journal of Research in English Education, 1(1), 1–6.

Powell, K. C., & Kalina, C. J. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: Developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education*, *130*(2), 241–250.

Prince, M. (2004). Does active learning work? A review of the research. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 93(3), 223–231. <u>https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2168-9830.2004.tb00809.x</u>

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Safitri, N. T., Habizar, & Putri, M. N. (2023). Willingness to speak: What factors influence EFL learners? *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 11(2), 469–478.

Sharma, H. L., & Saarsar, P. (2018). TPS (Think–Pair–Share): An effective cooperative learning strategy for unleashing discussion in classroom interaction. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 8(5), 91–100.

Savignon, S. J. (2002). *Communicative language teaching: Linguistic theory and classroom practice* (2nd ed.). Lincolnwood, IL: McGraw-Hill Contemporary

Trigwell, K., Prosser, M., & Waterhouse, F. (1999). Relations between teachers' approaches to teaching and students' approaches to learning. *Higher Education*, *37*(1), 57–70.

Ur, P. (1996). A course in language teaching: Practice and theory. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Vermunt, J. D., & Verloop, N. (1999). Congruence and friction between learning and teaching. *Learning and Instruction*, 9(3), 257–280.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds. & Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wen, W. P., & Clément, R. (2003). A Chinese conceptualisation of willingness to communicate in ESL. *Language Culture and Curriculum*, *16*(1), 18–37.

Weimer, M. (2002). *Learner-centered teaching: Five key changes to practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching language as communication*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Yashima, T. (2002). Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86(1), 54–66.

Zhang, Y. (2009). Reading to speak: Integrating oral communication skills. *English Teaching Forum*, 47(1), 32–34.



# Appendix A The Students' Interview

#### Dear student,

This interview is part of a study about the effects of the active learning approach on EFL learners' willingness to speak. Your honest answers will help us better understand how role-play activities can influence speaking skills. I would appreciate it if you could answer the following questions thoughtfully and sincerely. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will remain confidential. Thank you for your valuable contribution.

#### **The Questions**

1. How did you feel during the role-play activity when you speak in English?

2. What was the most challenging part of the job interview role-play? Why?

3. Did this activity help you feel more confident when speaking English? How?

4. Can you share any new words or phrases you learned during the role-play?

5. How did interacting with your classmates and teacher affect your speaking skills?

6.Do you think this role-play will help you in a real job interview? Why or why not?

7. What did you like the most about the free role-play activity?

8. What difficulties did you face when trying to express your ideas during the role-play?

9. How did preparing for the role-play influence your English-speaking skills?

10.Would you like to participate in similar role-play activities in the future? Why or why not?

# Appendix B

## **Rubric-Based Observation Table**

# **Role-Play Assessment Form**

**Student level:2<sup>nd</sup> year license student. Date:** 18/02/2025 **Role-Play Scenario:** Job interview

The following table presents the rubric used to observe and assess students' performance during the free role-play (job interview) activity, based on six main criteria.

Criteria	5-Excellent	4-Good	3- Satisfactory	2- Fair	1- Poor	Comments
1. Activeness & Energy						
2. Engagement in the Role- Play						
3. Application of Knowledge/Skills						
4. Communication Skills and body language						
5. Creativity & Originality						
6. pair work& Collaboration						

# **Total Score (Out of 30):** \_\_\_\_/30

**General Feedback & Observations:** 

- Strengths :
- Areas for Improvement :

# Appendix C

Score Range	Grade	Performance level		
27-30 points	5	Excellent – Actively engaged, applied skills creatively and effectively.		
23-26 points	4	Good – Engaged and applied skills well, with room for minor improvement.		
19-22 points	3	Satisfactory - Some engagement and application, but more energy needed.		
15-18 points	2	Fair – Lacks sufficient energy and application.		
Below 15 points	1	Poor- Minimal engagement, energy, and application.		

#### الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في فعالية نهج التعلم النشط في تنمية رغبة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في التحدث. يُعد التعلم النشط، باعتباره أسلوبًا متمركزًا حول المتعلم، ويشرك الطلاب في أنشطة هادفة ومهام تعاونية، دورًا أساسيًا في تحسين ثقتهم بأنفسهم وتحفيز هم ومشاركتهم في أنشطة التحدث. ويطرح هذا البحث مسألة كيفية تأثير استراتيجيات التعلم النشط على رغبة الطلاب في التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. ويهدف إلى استكشاف أساليب عملية لتعزيز المشاركة الشفهية وتقليل خوف المتعلمين من التحدث. تتبع الدراسة تصميم البحث التجريبي، حيث أجريت مع طلاب السنة الثانية ليسانس في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة غرداية، من خلال تنفيذ نشاط تمثيل الأدوار في جلسات التعبير الشفهي. وتعتمد الدراسة على النوعي من خلال استخدام المقابلات الفردية مع الطلاب أنفسهم كأداة لجمع البيانات. تشير النتائج إلى أن استخدام استراتيجيات التعلم من خلال استخدام المقابلات الفردية مع الطلاب أنفسهم كأداة لجمع البيانات. تشير النتائج إلى أن استخدام المتراتيجيات التعلم بفعالية أو خاصةً لعب الأدوار، يؤثر إيجابًا على رغبة طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في التحدث، ويساعدهم على المشاركة بفعالية أكبر، والنغلب على القلق، وتطوير كفاءتهم الشفهية. يُوصى بأن يُدمج المعلمون هذه الاستراتيجيات التعالم المثاركة التعبير الشفهي لتعزيز ثقة الطلاب في التحدث واستقلاليتهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم النشط، التحدث، الكفاءة التواصلية، لعب الأدوار، الرغبة في التواصل