A Quantitative Study of Norwegian Upper Secondary Pupils' WTC and Reluctance to Speak in the EFL Classroom



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1. Introduction

The purpose of the present quantitative study of reluctant speakers' willingness to communicate (WTC) in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom aims to investigate the main reasons for oral reluctance among EFL learners in a Norwegian upper secondary school through a questionnaire. I will investigate what factors create reluctance among the pupils, and in contrast, what makes them willing to communicate in the EFL classroom. Utilizing concepts such as WTC, reluctance to speak, motivation and individual learner differences, I will investigate what impedes and contributes to the learners' willingness to speak in their second language (L2), which is English in the current study. Thus, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1. What individual learner differences do Norwegian upper secondary pupils selfreport for their willingness or reluctance to speak English in the EFL classroom?
- 2. What factors affect the Norwegian upper secondary pupils' reluctance to speak in English in the EFL classroom?

The above questions will be answered through a pupil questionnaire conducted in a Norwegian upper secondary school. The questionnaire was answered by 29 pupils attending the first, second and third grades.

As ratified in LK20, the Norwegian core curriculum draws forth oral skills as one out of five basic skills: oral skills, writing, reading, numeracy and digital skills (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). The English subject curriculum in upper secondary school highlights that this skill should involve the creation of meaning and opinions through listening, speaking, and conversing in English, using spoken language in both formal and informal situations (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). Therefore, the issue of reluctance and willingness to communicate orally in the EFL classroom is of great significance to teaching the English subject. Earlier research on reluctance to speak and WTC in EFL classrooms in Norway has been more focused on teachers' perspectives, with research conducted at the primary and lower secondary levels (e.g. Moe (2019), Daastøl (2022)). This study will contribute to the field by focusing on the upper secondary learners' perspective.

2. Theory

2.1 Introduction

So far, reluctance to speak and willingness to communicate are topics that have been subject to multiple research projects. For example, MacIntyre (2007) and Dörnyei (2003; 2005) have contributed substantially to the field. Their theory on motivation, individual differences and WTC in language acquisition will be utilized to define and discuss the matters at hand.

2.2 Individual Learner Differences

Theory connected to individual learner differences (IDs) can contribute to explaining why some learners are naturally more comfortable and willing to communicate in their L2. First, to define the term, IDs are differing characteristics or traits that are relatively stable with a person and mark them as distinct (Dörnyei, 2005). IDs can have an impact on an individual's ability and willingness to acquire a L2. The theory elaborated on has to do with personality and aptitude, self-esteem, anxiety, motivation, and WTC.

Personality and aptitude can impact a learner's prerequisites to learn and be willing to communicate orally in a L2. A factor of interest is the level of extraversion or introversion. Introverted learners tend to have greater ability to consolidate learning, as they are less distracted and have better study habits (Dörnyei, 2005). At the same time, extraverts are found to be more fluent in their L2, especially when assessed and during other stressful situations. The reason for this is that the level of arousal in stressful situations makes introverts go from automatic to controlled processing, which in turn slows down their speech and increases their hesitancy and chance of making mistakes. Hence, it makes sense that extraversion has a more positive effect within L2 acquisition than in other learning domains (Dörnyei, 2005). With the research question in mind, one can therefore assume that introversion might contribute to reluctance to speak. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that aptitude, meaning the ability to learn, intelligence, and the personal attribute of openness to new experiences, are found to be closely related to learning as well (Dörnyei, 2005).

2.2 Main Reasons for Reluctance to Speak in the EFL Classroom

One of the concepts that need to be defined is reluctance to speak in context of the EFL classroom. Reluctance is defined as an unwillingness to do something (Cambridge University Press, n. d.). In context of the EFL classroom, reluctance to speak refers to an unwillingness to contribute orally in English, which for most Norwegian pupils is their L2 or a foreign language (Simensen, 2010). This could be grounded in several phenomena; speaking anxiety, foreign language anxiety and linguistic perfectionism, terms that to a larger degree focus on the learners' anxious feelings and worry connected to using their oral L2 (MacIntyre, 2007; Moe, 2019).

According to Littlewood and Yu (2011, cited in Daastøl, 2022, p.4), one of the reasons why learners may experience reluctance to speak is due to the intimidating thought of the teacher's and others' assessment of them. This includes both formal and informal assessments. Moe (2019) connects the fear of assessment to speaking anxiety, which is common especially in testing situations, where learners tend to become anxious and insecure during tasks that they are often more than able to perform. The anxiety creating this unwillingness to speak has a higher chance of developing amongst learners who have had negative past experiences with assessment situations (Moe, 2019).

On the other hand, informal assessments by other learners, "fear of what others think", can contribute to speaking anxiety and reluctance as well. Daastøl (2022) mentions staying silent instead of losing face as one of the main reasons for reluctance, while Moe (2019) discusses the fear of not giving the right social impressions. These reasons seem to be rooted in the learner assessing their abilities up against others' expectations. Tsui (1996, cited in Nunan, 1999, pp.233-234) has identified five factors for pupils not speaking up in class, where two have to do with the points mentioned here: a perception of their English as low in proficiency, and a fear of making a fool of themselves in front of peers. Whether the learners choose to contribute orally, would in these cases depend on whether they consider their oral abilities sufficient amongst their peers. If learners lack self-confidence and assess their oral skills as poor in comparison to others, that might be a reason for reluctance to speak.

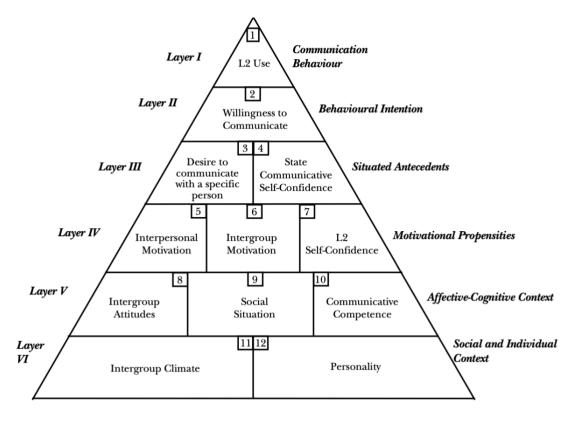
Further, even those pupils who *do have* a high level of proficiency, might experience reluctance due to a phenomenon known as linguistic perfectionism. According to Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), linguistic perfectionists set their own unreachable performance standards that hinder them from participating unless they are certain of the correct answer. They are more concerned with avoiding mistakes than with learning and will therefore rather stay silent than contribute orally. Connections can be made to Zondag's (2021) study of improvisation activities among university student English teachers, learners who due to their chosen career have a sufficient degree of efficiency in their L2. Reluctant speakers in this study expressed a need for control that was not granted in activities that required them to speak spontaneously (Zondag, 2021). The need for preparation time has been highlighted as something that might increase learner participation, especially among reluctant speakers (Moe, 2019; Nunan, 1999).

Looking further into speaking anxiety, a definition of different ways in which anxiety can affect the learner might contribute to understanding its effect on reluctance to speak. MacIntyre (2007) suggests three different levels of conceptualization of anxiety; the trait level, in which anxiety is trait-like in the way that the feeling endures over long periods of time and across situations; the situation-specific, in which a person shows typical patterns of behavior in specific situations; and lastly the state level, which concerns the independent experience of feeling anxiety in a specific moment. This explanation proposes that anxiety to speak an L2 is mostly connected to the situation-specific level, which means that having anxiety in general (trait level) or experiencing anxiety at some point (state level) is possible without necessarily contributing to reluctance to speak. Especially oral activities tend to create anxiety in EFL classrooms, generating the kind of situation-specific anxiety which is referred to by Zondag et al. (2020) as foreign language anxiety. More specifically, the situations in the classroom where learners often become reluctant are during conversations in front of the whole class, and as mentioned earlier, assessment situations, which indicates that these situations create situationspecific anxiety within the learners (Moe, 2019). This might be even worse for introverted learners, which as mentioned, might experience breakdowns that hinder L2 fluency. Dörnyei (2005) views these breakdowns as something that may be caused when a learner has high introversion in combination with high anxiety.

2.4 Main Reasons for Willingness to Communicate

Whereas reluctance has been brought forth as an unwillingness, WTC measures "the readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2" (MacIntyre et al, 1998, p.547). This perspective will be utilized as a contrast to reluctance. MacIntyre explains WTC through Figure 1, with six layers based on confidence and affiliation, in which the volitional act of using the L2 happens when the preceding factors lay the foundation for it (MacIntyre et al, 1998; MacIntyre, 2007). Among these, the factors such as L2 self-confidence, environment and motivation will be elaborated on.

Figure 1. MacIntyre's Pyramid Model of Willingness to Communicate (2007, p.568)



Both stable and unstable factors might contribute to WTC. Whilst the three first layers deal with the immediate and unstable determinants, the three layers at the bottom of the pyramid deal with stable and enduring influences on WTC, such as the individual's communicative competence in the L2 and their evaluation (self-confidence) of that competence (MacIntyre et al, 1998). Personality, which has already been brought up as a factor, can be seen in dependent relation to the intergroup climate which the individual is a part of (MacIntyre et al, 1998). This

means that the individual's personality and the structures, climate and roles of the group correlate and lay a foundation for WTC in the individual.

Further, this can be seen in light of comparison and reluctance to speak due to fear of what others might think. In the setting of the EFL classroom, the classroom environment plays a role both through factors such as the intergroup climate, the groups' attitudes towards English and the intergroup motivation, as well as through the social situation of a classroom setting (MacIntyre et al., 1998). In this context, it makes sense to address the importance of establishing a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere. Positive relationships both between learners and with the teacher, and the activities and structures chosen by the teacher have an impact on whether a learner might contribute orally (Daastøl, 2022; Nunan, 1999). Silent classroom "rules" might also be brought up as a factor that may hinder or scaffold WTC because of how the pupils have gotten accustomed to behaving in a set class culture (Nunan, 1999). When learners assess their participation as adequate and socially accepted within their context, they might be more willing to communicate.

WTC is stronger among learners who are motivated. Nunan (1999) describes motivation in English didactics as the effort and desire to achieve the goal of learning the language as well as the attitudes toward learning it. Dörnyei (2005) claims that all other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent, highlighting the importance of motivation to achieve long-term goals, and claiming it can make up for other qualities that the individual may lack. Hence, lack of motivation, not seeing the purpose nor relevance of learning the subject, can cause the opposite effect and therefore be one of the main reasons for reluctance to speak (Littlewood & Yu, cited in Daastøl, 2022, p.4).

Further, a learner might be motivated for different reasons, which in turn play a role in how they perform a task. Ryan and Deci (2000) differentiate between the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. If the learner is intrinsically motivated, they do an activity because of its inherent satisfactions, like genuinely finding it enjoyable or interesting. Hence it is relevant to bring forth the concept of task motivation, a perspective that recognizes tasks as shaping the learners' interest and enthusiasm (Dörnyei, 2003). In this context, one might ask the question whether the learner perceives the task as meaningful, fulfilling the meaningfulness-principle (Fenner & Skulstad, 2020; Richards & Rogers, 2014). A learner that finds the task

meaningful, interesting and/or enjoyable will be intrinsically motivated, and therefore more likely to work autonomously to succeed (Ryan & Deci, 2000). On the other hand, if a learner is extrinsically motivated, that means their motivation to do something comes from instrumental value, the goal to attain a separable outcome. Thus, if a learner is orally active in class to attain a high grade or impress their teacher or peers, this would indicate extrinsic motivation. These perspectives on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation might signify the type of motivation that lies behind a pupils' WTC and perhaps lacks among reluctant pupils.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

The present study applied the quantitative method of a questionnaire. Questionnaires can be defined as "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (Brown, 2001, p.6). The questionnaire in this study involved a combination of Likert scales and numerical rating scales, whereas the Likert scales included the majority of the items. The numerical rating scales were utilized to get an overview of the learners' perception of their English oral skills within the grading system that they are used to; 1 to 6, with 6 being the highest grade. This can be used in combination with other methods with good effect, because the participants are familiar with and understand the value of the options (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010).

To investigate what factors might contribute to reluctance to speak and WTC, items having the pupils identify or index their own personal characteristics, level of anxiety and level of motivation were utilized. The first category, asking the participants to choose to what degree they identified with personal characteristics, was utilized to see if there were any connections between aspects such as introversion/ extraversion and reluctance/ WTC. The second part, consisting of three categories, were the items involving Likert scales. Here, statements connected to motivation, oral contribution, experiences, and preferences were examined. The items including the numerical rating scales were utilized to identify the pupils' own perceptions and the teacher's assessment of proficiency. This data was utilized as reference to see what connections could be found between proficiency, IDs and reluctance or willingness to communicate.

3.2 Sampling

To investigate the EFL learners' perspectives in Norway, the questionnaire was conducted in a Norwegian upper secondary school. The technique used was criterion sampling, utilizing the criterion that participants should be pupils that have English as either a mandatory or a chosen subject (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The 29 participants were recruited through an acquainted teacher at the school, who agreed to conduct and distribute the questionnaire.

Because the questionnaire was made available to all English courses at this school, the ages of the participants may range from 16 to 19 years old.

3.3 Piloting, Data Collection and Data Analysis

Before conducting the questionnaire, the questions were piloted with a pupil from a different upper secondary school. This was done to ensure that the items would be clear and understandable for the pupils, and that the possibility of misleading items would be taken into consideration, which is a simplified version of Dörnyei's (2007) suggested piloting. The pupil spent 8,5 minutes answering the questionnaire, which is well within Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) 30-minute time limit. The feedback on the items was that the pupil had no problem understanding them. The only items that were suggested altered were the four last ones utilizing the numerical rating scales. The pupil suggested the formulation of the question could be simplified to make the questions clearer. The alternations were made, changing the formulation from "Hvor høyt nivå opplever du (karaktermessig) det er på ferdighetene (...)» ("How high (grade wise) do you perceive the abilities (...)") and «Hvilket nivå (karaktermessig) (...)» ("At what level (grade wise) (...)") to simply "Hvilken karakter (...)" ("What grade (...)"). This coincides with keeping the language used in the items simple and natural (Dörnyei, 2007).

The data was collected and analyzed through the Nettskjema and Excel tools. This included the opportunity to see figures of how the group had answered as a whole, look into the individuals' answers, and to plot in and create own figures. If the participants answered either "Agree", "Partly disagree" or "Disagree" to the item "I speak English in English class", they were divided into one of two categories to be examined further in Excel: the reluctant speakers and the pupils with a high degree of WTC. To compare and investigate average scores of the groups of high WTC participants and reluctant speakers, the answers on the Likert scales were converted into numbers ranging from 1-5, where 1 was the equivalent to "Disagree" and 5 to "Agree".

3.4 Reliability and Validity

Reliability "indicates the extent to which our measurement instruments and procedures produce consistent results in a given population in different circumstances" (Dörnyei, 2007, p.50-51). That means that the reliability lies in the production of consistent results with said

method. The items that are to be investigated in the questionnaire have predefined answers in the form of multiple choice, not opening for pupils to write their own answers. A strength to this is that the gathering of information can be done in a systematic way, where the items investigated are focused and tightly controlled (Dörnyei, 2007). Hence, it will be easier to produce reliable data and generalizations based on data that have been set clear boundaries. However, the downside of these kinds of quantitative studies is that they may not do justice to the individual when creating "averages" based on numbers (Dörnyei, 2007). They might also fail to uncover the more complex underlying reasons that go beyond the set boundaries of the choices given for the pupils to choose from. There is a possibility to be overly simplistic, reducing the answers to general truths.

Further, reliability has been weakened due to few participants. The initial aim was to have at least 60 questionnaire participants, but the response was way lower, with only 29 participants. For this reason, the data relies on few pupils' answers, which weakens the results' aim to be representative for Norwegian upper secondary schools. However, the sample consists of EFL pupils, which is the target population of this study (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, it can be argued that even though the sample is small, it is still representative to the target group and can contribute to answering the research questions at hand.

In a study that weighs the pupils' perspectives, it is necessary to question the reliability of the participants' answers. In Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) list of downsides of utilizing questionnaires, most have to do with factors that affect the participants' reliability. These include little motivation or enjoyment in taking the questionnaire, which can make the participants careless in their answering; and literacy problems, causing misinterpretations of items. Social desirability, the urge to meet the expected or desirable answer of the questionnaire as well as the desire to present oneself in a good light, may affect the participants' ability to answer truthfully. This may also be done subconsciously among participants that deceive themselves and are unable to give an accurate self-description.

Dörnyei (2007) argues that validity, meaning the extent of accuracy of the findings, lies not in the instruments and procedures themselves, but in the conclusions, interpretations, and inferences that we draw from the assessment of them. Addressing the limitations mentioned, validity was strengthened through piloting the study to ensure that participants would

understand the items. Further, conducting the questionnaire in Norwegian, which for most of the participants' is their first language, makes the items more understandable and prevents possible misinterpretations. These efforts are likely to contribute to the validity of the findings.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations include applying for the Sikt approval before conducting the questionnaire. However, because the questionnaire would be fully anonymous and not collect any unnecessary personal or sensitive data, as advised by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), Sikt concluded that the project did not need to be approved within their system. The questionnaire was conducted through Nettskjema, which allowed for the participants' full anonymity. As recommended by Sikt and Dörnyei (2007), the introduction of the questionnaire included necessary information about the study and what it was for, and the pupils were to give consent before being able to answer the questionnaire itself.

4. Results and Discussion

This section provides and discusses the questionnaire findings in light of the presented theory. Overall, the results displayed four participants who disagreed and six who partly disagreed to speak English in English class. These participants lay the foundation for the investigation of reluctant speakers. Further, the answers of the 12 pupils that agreed to speak English in class were utilized as a means of comparison. The answers were examined to answer the following:

- 1. What individual learner differences do Norwegian upper secondary pupils selfreport for their willingness or reluctance to speak English in the EFL classroom?
- 2. What factors determine the Norwegian upper secondary learners' reluctance to speak in English in the EFL classroom?

The research questions will be answered in turn, examining the individual differences first, as these answers complement the following research question as part of the factors that lead to reluctance in the EFL classroom.

4.1 Individual Learner Differences' Connections to WTC and Reluctance to Speak

Figure 2 displays the category of individual learner differences in personal characteristics. The average answers from the participants within the reluctant category and the high WTC category will be compared to the average score to see if there are any points that stand out, and further discussed in light of theory.

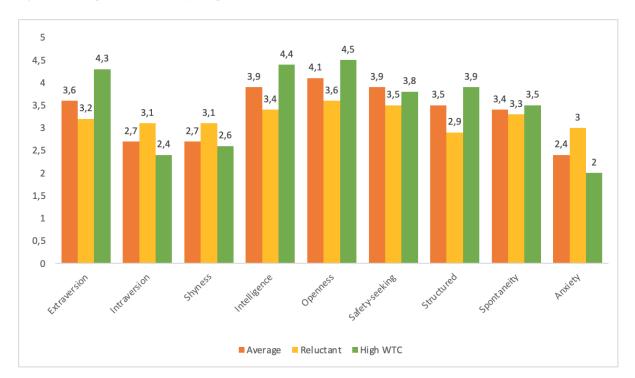


Figure 2. Participants' evaluation of own personal characteristics.

Regarding the theory of introversion and extraversion, the numbers in Figure 2 correspond with reluctant speakers being more introverted, and pupils with a high level of WTC as more extraverted. The differences are largest on the item of extraversion, where high WTC participants claim to be 1,1 higher on average than the reluctant group. Bearing in mind that the participants might not give a fully objective account of their own characteristics, one can compare these answers to how they answered on average on "Shyness" and items connected to preferred preparation time, since extraverts are more talkative and use less preparation time than introverts (Dörnyei, 2005). The value of shyness differs with 0,5, with reluctant speakers reporting to be more shy than high WTC participants. In preferred preparation time items in Table 1, the differences are much clearer, with each value differing between 1,4-1,8. Although these values could be connected to phenomena such as linguistic perfectionism, they show that there are significant connections between reluctance and the typical behaviors of introverts.

Table 1. Values on items connected to spontaneous speech and preparation time in the EFL classroom.

	Reluctant speakers	High WTC
I find it hard to formulate English sentences spontaneously.	3,7	2
I prefer to prepare myself before saying something in English out loud in front of the class.	4,1	2,7
I prefer to prepare myself before talking English in smaller groups.	4,1	2,3

An obvious difference in IDs is the higher tendency among reluctant speakers to categorize themselves as having anxiety. This value, differing with 1, places the average answers of high WTC learners on partly disagreeing to having anxiety, and reluctant speakers on neither agree nor disagree. This might not seem like a significant difference, but since this is an average number, it might be helpful to investigate the actual frequency of answers. Out of 29 participants, four agreed and three partly agreed to have anxiety. Among these, three out of four who agreed and two out of three who partly agreed were found in the reluctant category, making half of the reluctant speakers agreeing to have anxiety to some extent. However, it is worth mentioning that two out of the remaining three agreeing or partly agreeing to have anxiety were found among the 12 learners with high WTC. This is in line with MacIntyre's (2007) point that having trait-anxiety is possible without it necessarily leading to reluctance to speak.

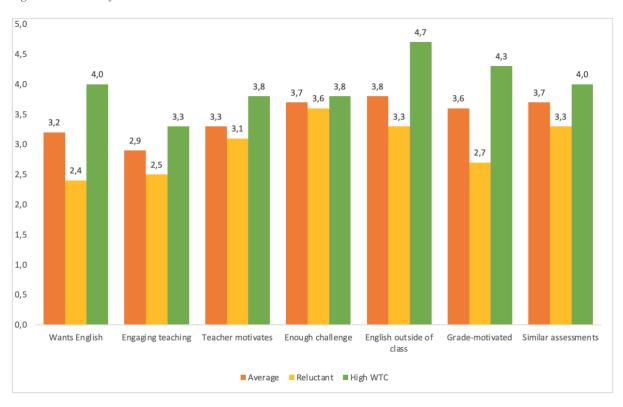
Further, it is worth noting that intelligence and openness to new experience, brought up as closely connected to learning, are among characteristics with substantial differing values between reluctant and high WTC learners. Both display a higher value among participants with high WTC, where all participants agreed or partly agreed to be open to new experiences and all except one agreed or partly agreed to be intelligent. However, as the case is with all answers, it is important to acknowledge that these are the pupils' own perceptions of their personal characteristics. Rather than showing whether pupils with high WTC *are* intelligent, the research provides the perspective of whether they *perceive* themselves as intelligent.

To summarize, reluctant speakers self-report to be more introverted, less intelligent, need more preparation time, and have more anxiety. On the other hand, pupils with high WTC claim to have less anxiety, be more spontaneous, extroverted, intelligent and open to new experiences.

4.2 Factors that Lead to Reluctance to Speak in the EFL Classroom

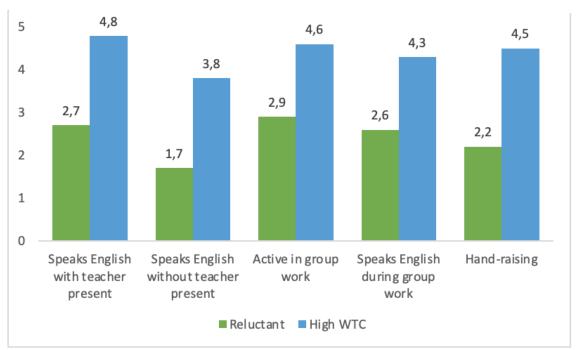
The reluctant speakers in the study seem to have lower motivation, as displayed in Figure 3 of pupils' accounts of motivational items. "I want English as a subject in school" demonstrated "Disagree" as the most frequent answer among reluctant speakers. However, the average value of the reluctant speakers was 2,4, placing them as a group between "Partly disagree" and "Neither agree nor disagree". This indicates that there are some learners that want and perhaps enjoy the subject. Further, the item providing a possible reason for perceiving English as useful, "I use English outside of class", had an average value with reluctant speakers of 3,3, a score 1,4 lower than that of the high WTC participants. This indicates that they see less value in learning the language for purposes outside of school, suggesting less instrinsic motivation. Another item looking into instrinsic motivation was "I find what we do in English class engaging", where the average value was 2,5 among reluctant speakers, demonstrating that this group finds little enjoyment in class activities, which again could indicate less instrinsic motivation. As mentioned, Dörnyei (2005) made a point about second language acquisition presupposing motivation. Hence, many reluctant pupils' lack of motivation may make them less equipped to learn and engage.

Figure 3. Accounts of Motivational Items



The degree of participation in oral activities vary among both reluctant speakers and high WTC participants depending on the audience and setting. Even though all categories of oral participation show larger participation among pupils with high WTC, there is a similar pattern in both groups in one of the categories. Figure 4, displaying pupils' accounts of their oral participation, shows how both participants who are reluctant to speak and those with a high WTC claim to speak more English with the teacher present than without. This could indicate extrinsic motivation to impress the teacher and/or motivation to attain a high grade (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The largest difference in average value in Figure 4 is the item "I raise my hand when I know the answer to something in class", differing with 2,3. Hand-raising indicates speaking in front of the class, which is one of the settings that Moe (2019) and Zondag (2020) point to as anxiety-provoking. Hence, with large audiences like the whole class, reluctant speakers are less likely to participate. However, in group work they report to be slightly more active, both in general and with speaking in English. This coincides with what Moe (2019) found about conversations in front of the class being a typical situation for reluctance to occur.

Figure 4. Oral Participation in Different Settings



The findings show how EFL learners can be motivated and still have reluctance to speak because of other factors. For instance, participant 10 confirmed to want the subject, found the class activities engaging, was motivated by the teacher, challenged enough, and used English outside of class (see Appendix 2). This participant confirmed to have anxiety, which could be part of the reason for their reluctance.

Another reason for participant 10's reluctance could be negative past experiences with speaking English in class, which as demonstrated by Moe (2019) could be connected to assessment situations. Negative past experiences or the lack of good ones can lead to development of situation-specific anxiety. Figure 5 displays reluctant speakers and high WTC pupils' past experiences with speaking English in the EFL classroom. Many reluctant speakers claimed to have few good experiences connected to speaking English, with the average answer being "Partly disagree" to both the item "I have good experiences with speaking English in English class" and "I have good experiences with oral assessments in English". The reluctant participants' average answers to the items with negative experiences were more neutral, between "Neither agree nor disagree" and "Partly agree". However, four out of ten of the reluctant participants stated to agree fully to having negative past experiences, participant 10 being one of them. Hence, the effect of negative past experiences with speaking English might cause development of situation-specific anxiety leading to reluctance to speak.

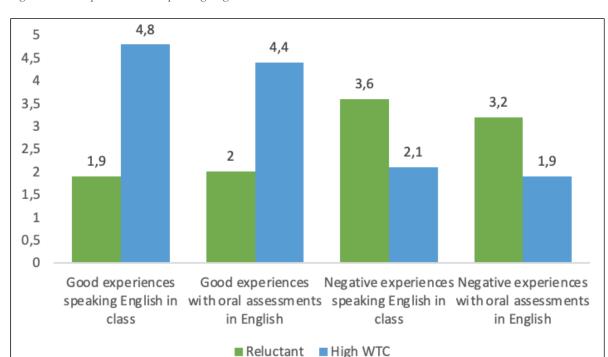


Figure 5. Past experiences with speaking English in the EFL classroom.

Comparison and fear of other's assessment can be interpreted as other factors causing reluctance to speak. To investigate possible connections between reluctance to speak and high/low perceptions of others, the items investigating the perceived grades of the class in comparison to the participant's own were utilized, displayed in Tables 2 and 3. The reluctant speakers judged the class to an average grade of 4,2, half a grade higher than the view of the high WTC participants that graded their peers to 3,7. Among the high WTC participants, none evaluated themselves as deserving of a grade lower than their perceived level of the class. However, among the reluctant speakers 60% perceived their own level as poorer than the average of the class. As brought forth in the theory, learners' lack of confidence in their oral skills might be a reason for reluctance (Nunan, 1999). Going back to the IDs, this was demonstrated through reluctant speakers' tendency to view themselves as less intelligent, with an average value of 3,4, a whole point lower than the high WTC participants' average of 4,4. These perceptions might lead to learners assessing their level as insufficient, rendering them to stay silent in fear of other's assessment.

the class

Table 3. Reluctant speakers' grades and perceptions of grades in Table 2. High WTC pupils' grades and perceptions of grades in the class

Reluctant speaker nr.	Perceptions on the rest of the class	Self- evaluation of oral skills	Teacher's evaluation of oral skills	Teacher's evaluation of writing skills
1	4	1	3	3
2	4	4	4	4
3	5	4	4	1
4	5	3	4	4
5	5	2	3	3
6	4	3	2	2
7	4	4	4	3
8	4	4	3	3
9	4	2	2	1
10	3	6	5	5
Average value:	4,2	3,3	3,4	2,9

High WTC pupil nr.	Perceptions on the rest of the class	Self- evaluation of oral skills	Teacher's evaluation of oral skills	Teacher's evaluation of writing skills
1	4	6	5	5
2	3	6	6	5
3	5	5	5	4
4	3	6	6	5
5	4	5	5	4
6	4	5	5	4
7	5	5	4	4
8	4	6	5	5
9	3	4	4	3
10	3	3	2	2
11	4	4	4	4
12	2	2	3	4
Average value:	3,7	4,8	4,5	4,1

The results confirm that even pupils who have high proficiency in English might experience fear of what others think, causing reluctance to speak. Participant 10 differed once more from the rest of the reluctant speakers by judging their own oral English as worthy of 6, the highest grade, and further claiming to receive the next highest grade from the teacher (see Appendix 2). This shows that the pupil has a high proficiency in oral English, and that they are aware of it. However, they agreed to find it hard to formulate themselves spontaneously, displaying a similar situation to that of Zondag's (2021) study among English teacher pupils, expressing a need for control. The participant further agreed to think about other people's thoughts on their pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary when speaking English. These concerns could be rooted in linguistic perfectionism, hindering the pupil from participating in fear of making errors (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). However, it should be noted that the average answer of reluctant speakers to these items were high on "Agree" as well, although compared to reluctant speakers' overall perceptions of own intelligence and answers on grading items, these participants are more likely to have answered this way due to lack of self-confidence in the L2.

Lastly, reluctant speakers generally state to be less comfortable in their class environment. Tables 4 and 5 display reluctant speakers' and high WTC pupils' account of the class environment. 50% of the reluctant speakers agreed with the statement "There are certain people in class I do not want to speak English in front of', making this the most frequent answer among them. In contrast, the most frequent answer among pupils with high WTC was "Disagree" with 8/12 participants, even though there were a couple who agreed here as well. This could be seen in context of situation-specific anxiety, where the participants agreeing to the item might experience reluctance to speak during oral activities in the presence of certain individuals (MacIntyre, 2007; Zondag, 2020). The reasons for not wanting to speak English in front of these specific persons could be rooted in comparison, for instance that these individuals have a higher proficiency in oral English (Nunan, 1999). Connections could also be made to Nunan's (1999) theory on the effect of a class culture setting silent "rules" as to what and how individuals may behave, as well as MacIntyre's (1998) theory on the group's attitudes and motivation shaping the individual's WTC. Furthermore, "I am comfortable with speaking in front of others in English class" was among the items with the largest differing average values, with reluctant speakers' average of 1,5, while the high WTC pupils had an average of 4,3. This contrast shows a clear connection between being comfortable with speaking in class to being willing to speak English in the EFL classroom. The results highlight the importance of a safe and positive classroom environment as a factor that encourages WTC.

Table 5. Reluctant speakers' accounts of the class environment

I am comfortable speaking in English in front of others in English class Reluctant speaker nr. There are certain people in my class that I do not want to speak English in front of Disagree 1 Neither agree nor disagree 2 Disagree Agree 3 Disagree Agree 4 Disagree Agree 5 Disagree Agree 6 Partly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Neither agree nor disagree 8 Neither agree nor disagree Disagree 9 Disagree Neither agree nor disagree 10 Disagree Agree 1,5 3,6 Average value when converted into numbers 1-5:

Table 4. High WTC pupils' accounts of the class environment

High WTC speaker nr.	I am comfortable speaking in English in front of others in English class	There are certain people in my class that I do not want to speak English in front of
1	Agree	Disagree
2	Agree	Disagree
3	Partly agree	Partly disagree
4	Agree	Disagree
5	Partly agree	Disagree
6	Agree	Disagree
7	Agree	Agree
8	Disagree	Agree
9	Partly agree	Disagree
10	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree
11	Agree	Disagree
12	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
Average value when converted into numbers 1-5:	4,3	1,9

Concluding, factors that can lead to reluctance to speak are lack of motivation, anxiety, linguistic perfectionism, comparison to others, and variable factors like high-risk activities, especially when in groups with students who are not comfortable with each other.

5. Conclusion

This quantitative study of Norwegian upper secondary pupils' WTC and reluctance to speak in the EFL classroom utilized a questionnaire to answer the following research questions: (1) What individual learner differences do Norwegian upper secondary EFL pupils self-report for their willingness or reluctance to speak; and (2) What factors affect this reluctance? The questionnaire utilized items involving Likert and numerical rating scales for closed-ended answers that would help identify their degree of reluctance to speak, WTC, individual learner differences, motivation, experiences, and preferences. The participants' answers that fit the criteria of reluctant speakers and pupils with high WTC were investigated more closely to answer the research questions at hand.

Regarding the first research question, the findings confirm that reluctant speakers claim to be more introverted, while those with high WTC claim to be more extroverted. This can also be seen through a tendency among reluctant speakers to want more preparation time before speaking and finding it harder to formulate sentences spontaneously. Further, the number of participants that claimed to have anxiety was higher among reluctant speakers, suggesting a higher chance of reluctance to speak among those with trait anxiety. However, this is not a rule, as the findings also displayed participants with anxiety in the high WTC category. Lastly, the degree of self-reporting to be intelligent and open to new experiences seemed highest among high WTC participants, displaying a tendency among those who perceived themselves within these categories to be more willing to contribute orally in the EFL classroom.

Investigating the actual factors behind reluctance utilizing findings from the individual differences, one factor seems to be the perception of oneself as less intelligent or less proficient in English compared to peers. Other possible factors found were low motivation, linguistic perfectionism, trait anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety rooted in negative past experiences. Further, reluctance to speak is determined by lack of comfortableness in the classroom environment or in the presence of certain peers, especially in situations that require oral participation in front of larger audiences.

Limitations of the study were few participants, the questionable reliability of pupils' accounts, and the risk of drawing overly generalizing finds. However, it contributes to the field of EFL teaching, especially at the upper secondary level in the Norwegian context, through displaying pupils' perceptions of their oral participation and the reasons behind them. This might enable teachers to notice stable factors they have to deal with in their EFL classrooms, as well as unstable factors, such as group dynamics, that might be considered to help encourage WTC. Further research could investigate teachers' perspectives on reluctant speakers and WTC on the upper secondary level, for example their views, observations, and how they deal with reluctance to speak in the EFL classroom.

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7. Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet om muntlig aktivitet i engelskfaget på videregående skole?

Formålet med prosjektet

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om du vil delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å finne ut hvilke faktorer som motiverer, legger til rette for, demotiverer eller hindrer elevenes mulighet og lyst til å delta muntlig i engelskfaget.

Undersøkelsen vil brukes for å svare på en bacheloroppgave om talevegring i engelskfaget i Norge, og for å svare på følgende spørsmål:

- Hvilke faktorer motiverer elever til å bidra muntlig i engelskfaget?
- Hvordan påvirker elevenes oppfattelse av eget nivå i muntlig engelsk deres villighet til å bidra muntlig?
- Hvilke aktiviteter hindrer eller tilrettelegger for muntlig aktivitet hos elever med talevegring?

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Du får denne forespørselen fordi du har engelsk som et valgt eller obligatorisk fag på videregående skole.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Det er fakultetet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora og instituttet for kultur- og språkvitenskap ved Universitetet i Stavanger som er ansvarlig for personopplysningene som behandles i prosjektet.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Svare ærlig på spørsmålene i spørreskjemaet - her er det ingen riktige eller gale svar. Dette er en anonym undersøkelse, og svarene vil ikke kunne spores tilbake til deg. Opplysningene registreres elektronisk.

Tusen takk for din interesse! Med vennlig hilsen, Prosjektansvarlig og veileder, Dina Lialikhova Student, Sigrid Olena Helms

Jeg samtykker til å delta i anonym spørreundersøkelse

Antall svar: 32

Svar	Antall	% av svar	
Ja	29	90.6%	90.6%
Nei	3	9.4%	9.4%

Vurdering av egne personlige egenskaper. Stemmer påstanden overens med slik du oppfatter deg selv?

Svar	Uenig	Litt uenig	Hverken enig eller uenig	Litt enig	Enig	Diagram
Utadvendt	3	3	5	10	8	
Innadvendt	10	2	6	8	3	
Sjenert	7	5	8	7	2	
Intelligent	0	3	6	11	9	
Åpen for nye opplevelser	0	2	3	14	10	
Trives best med det jeg kjenner fra før	1	1	9	8	10	
Strukturert	1	2	14	6	6	
Spontan	1	6	9	7	6	
Angst	8	11	3	3	4	
						0% 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100% Uenig Litt uenig

Hverken enig eller uenig Litt enig Enig

Muntlig deltakelse på skolen

Svar	Uenig	Litt uenig	Hverken enig eller uenig	Litt enig	Enig	Diagram
Jeg er komfortabel med å snakke foran andre i klassen i engelsktimene .	10	2	5	5	7	
Jeg er komfortabel med å snakke foran andre i klassen i andre fag enn engelsk.	5	2	7	9	6	
l engelsktimene snakker jeg på engelsk	4	6	4	3	12	
l engelsktimene snakker jeg engelsk når læreren min hører meg	2	3	5	9	10	=_
l engelsktimene snakker jeg engelsk når læreren min ikke hører meg	6	6	7	4	6	
l engelsktimene er jeg muntlig aktiv i gruppearbeid	1	4	8	7	9	<u> </u>
l engelsktimene snakker jeg engelsk når vi har gruppearbeid	2	4	10	5	8	
Jeg rekker opp hånda når jeg kan svare på noe i engelsktimen	5	3	8	4	9	
Det er noen i klassen jeg ikke vil snakke engelsk foran	11	1	6	2	9	
						0% 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100%

Uenig Litt uenig

Hverken enig eller uenig Litt enig Enig

Elevens egen erfaring og ønske

Svar	Uenig	Litt uenig	Hverken enig eller uenig	Litt enig	Enig	Diagram
Jeg har har gode erfaringer med å snakke engelsk i engelsktimeneti mene	4	5	3	6	11	=
Jeg har negative erfaringer knyttet til å snakke engelsk i timen	7	7	6	4	5	
Jeg har negative erfaringer med muntlige engelskvurderin ger	8	5	6	7	3	
Jeg har gode erfaringer med muntlige engelskvurderin ger	5	2	5	9	8	=
Når jeg snakker engelsk, tenker jeg på hva de andre i klassen tenker om uttalen	6	4	7	5	7	
Når jeg snakker engelsk, tenker jeg på hva de andre i klassen tenker om grammatikken og ordforrådet mitt	9	4	5	7	4	
Jeg synes det er vanskelig å formulere engelske setninger spontant	7	4	7	7	4	
Jeg foretrekker å forberede meg når jeg skal si noe høyt på engelsk i klassen	4	3	10	4	8	
Jeg foretrekker å forberede meg når jeg skal si noe på engelsk i mindre grupper	5	6	5	6	7	
						0% 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100%

Uenig Litt uenig

Hverken enig eller uenig 📕 Litt enig 📕 Enig

Hvilken karakter opplever du resten av klassen ligger på engelsk muntlig?

Antall svar: 29	Snitt: 3.79	Median: 4		
Svar		Antall	% av svar	
1		1	3.4%	3.4%
2		1	3.4%	3.4%
3		6	20.7%	20.7%
4		16	55.2%	55.2%
5		5	17.2%	17.2%
6		0	0%	0%

Hvilken karakter vurderer du deg selv til i muntlig engelsk?

Antall svar: 29	Snitt: 4.03	Median: 4		
Svar		Antall	% av svar	
1		2	6.9%	6.9%
2		3	10.3%	10.3%
3		3	10.3%	10.3%
4		10	34.5%	34.5%
5		6	20.7%	20.7%
6		5	17.2%	17.2%

Hvilken karakter får du tilbakemelding om at du ligger på i muntlig fra engelsklæreren din?

Antall svar: 29	Snitt: 3.90	Median: 4		
Svar		Antall	% av svar	
1		0	0%	0%
2		4	13.8%	13.8%
3		6	20.7%	20.7%
4		10	34.5%	34.5%
5		7	24.1%	24.1%
6		2	6.9%	6.9%

Hvilken karakter får du tilbakemelding om at du ligger på i skriftlig fra engelsklæreren din?

Antall svar: 29	Snitt: 3.55	Median: 4		
Svar		Antall	% av svar	
1		2	6.9%	6.9%
2		3	10.3%	10.3%
3		7	24.1%	24.1%
4		11	37.9%	37.9%
5		6	20.7%	20.7%
6		0	0%	0%

7.2 Appendix 2: Extracts from the Findings Converted into Numbers 1-5

Reluctant nr:	Extroverted	Introverted	Shy	Intelligent	Open to new experiences	Prefer familiarity	Structured	Spontaneous	Anxiety
:	1 3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
:	2 1	5	4	4	2	5	3	4	2
3	1	5	4	5	3	5	3	3	5
4	<mark>1</mark> 3	1	2	3	5	3	1	4	2
	5 4	4	5	2	4	4	3	2	5
(<mark>5</mark> 4	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3
7	<mark>7</mark> 4	1	1	4	5	3	2	3	1
8	5	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	2
9	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2
10	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	5
Average	3,2	3,1	3,1	3,4	3,6	3,5	2,9	3,3	3
Common value	4	1	4	3	4	3	3	3	2
WTC nr:	Extroverted	Introverted	Shy	Intelligent	Open to new experiences	Prefer familiarity	Structured	Spontaneous	Anxiety
	1 3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	3
	2 5	1	5	5	4	3	4	2	1
3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	2	5
4	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	2	1
5	5	5	2	4	4	4	5	4	4
(5 5	1	1	4	5	4	3	5	2
	7 5	1	1	5	5	3	3	5	1
8	2	4	4	5	5	5	5	1	1
9	4	2	3	4	4	5	3	3	2
10	5	1	2	4	5	5		5	1
1:	1 5	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	1
12		1		5	5	1			2
Average	4,3	2,4	2,6	4,4	4,5	3,8	3,9	3,5	2,0
Common value									

	Wants English	Enjoys English class	Teacher motivates	Enough challenge	English use outside of class	Grades motivate	Oral assessments similar to class activities
Reluctant nr:							
1	1	2	4	4	4	2	4
2	3	ļ	3	2	2	4	
3	1	1	1	5	2	1	1
4	1	1	1	5	2	1	
5	2	4	5	4	4	5	4
6	3	3	3	2	3	2	4
7	3	2	3	4	4	3	3
8	4	2	3	2	4	4	2
9	1	2	3	3	3	2	3
10	5	5	5	5	5	3	4
Average	2,4	2,5	3,1	3,6	3,3	2,7	3,3
Common value	1	2	3	4	4	2	4
		200000000					
WTC nr:	Wants English						
	TT GITTES ETTBITSTT	Enjoys English class	Teacher motivates	Enough challenge	English use outside of class	Grades motivate	Oral assessments similar to class activities
1	5	Enjoys English class 4	Teacher motivates 4	Enough challenge 4	English use outside of class 5	Grades motivate 5	
2	5			Enough challenge 4 3			
2 3	5 2 5		4 1 4	Enough challenge 4 3 5	5	5	4
1 2 3 4	5 2	4 1 4 4	4 1 4 5	3	5 5 5 5	5 5 3 5	4
1 2 3 4 5	5 2	1 4	4 1 4	4 3 5	5 5 5	5 5 3	4
1 2 3 4 5 6	5 2 5 4	4 1 4 4 3 5	4 1 4 5 3 4	4 3 5 3	5 5 5 5	5 5 3 5 5	4
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	5 2 5 4	4 1 4 4 3 5 5	4 1 4 5 3 4	4 3 5 3 4	5 5 5 5 5 5 5 4	5 5 3 5 5	4
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	5 2 5 4 5	4 1 4 4 3 5 5 5	4 1 4 5 3 4 5	4 3 5 3 4 3	5 5 5 5 5 5 5 4	5 5 3 5 5 4 5	4
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	5 2 5 4 5 5 5 5 3	4 1 4 4 3 5 5 2 2	4 1 4 5 3 4 5 4 4	4 3 5 3 4 3 5 5	5 5 5 5 5 5 4 5 5	5 5 3 5 5 4 5 4 5	4
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	5 2 5 4 5 5 5 3 4	4 4 4 3 5 5 2 2 3	4 1 4 5 3 4 5 4 4 5	4 3 5 3 4 3 5 5 5 4	5 5 5 5 5 4 5 5 3	5 5 3 5 5 4 5 4 5	4
11	5 2 5 4 5 5 5 3 4 4 3 2	4 4 4 3 5 5 2 2 3 3	4 1 4 5 3 4 5 4 4 5	4 3 5 3 4 3 5 5 4 5 3	5 5 5 5 5 4 5 5 3	5 5 3 5 5 4 5 4 5 4 4 3	4 5 4 5 4 4 5 5 4 4 4 3
11 12	5 2 5 4 5 5 5 5 4 4 3 2	4 4 4 3 5 5 2 2 3 3 2	4 1 4 5 3 4 5 4 4 5 4	4 3 5 3 4 3 5 5 4 5 3 3	5 5 5 5 5 5 4 5 5 3 3	5 5 3 5 5 4 5 4 5 4 4 3 3	4 5 4 5 4 4 5 5 5 4 4 4 3
11	5 2 5 4 5 5 5 3 4 4 3 2	4 4 4 3 5 5 2 3 3 3 2 4 3,3	4 1 4 5 3 4 5 4 4 5	4 3 5 3 4 3 5 5 4 5 3	5 5 5 5 5 4 5 5 3	5 5 3 5 5 4 5 4 5 4 4 3	4 5 5 4 4 5 5 5 4 4 3 3 1

Reluctant nr:	Comfortable speaking in English class	Comfortable speaking in other classes	English in English class	English with teacher present
1	1	1	2	2
2	1	1	2	3
3	1	5	1	1
4	1	5	2	5
5	1	4	1	2
6	2	3	1	4
7	3	3	2	3
8	3	4	2	2
9	1	1	1	1
10) 1	1	2	4
Average	1,5	2,8	1,6	2,7
Common value	1	1	2	2
WTC nr:	Comfortable speaking in English class	Comfortable speaking in other classes	English in English class	English with tooch or present
WICHE:	Comfortable speaking in English class	Comfortable speaking in other classes	English in English class	English with teacher present
1	5	5	5	5
2	4	3	5	5
4	5		5	5
5	4	4	5	5
6	5	3	5	5
7	5		5	5
8	1	1	5	5
9	4	4	5	4
10	5	5	5	4
		\$	1	
11	5	5	5	5
			5	4
11		2		4 4,8

					There are certain people that I do
Reluctant nr:	English w/o teacher present	Oral activity in group work	Oral activity in English in group work	Hand-raising	not want to speak English in front of
1	1	3	3	3	3
2	1	4	4	4	
3	1	1	1	1	
4	2	3	1	1	
5	1	4	3	1	
6	3	2	2	3	
7	3	3	3	3	
8	2	3	2	3	
9	2	2	4	2	3
10	1	4	3	1	5
Average	1,7	2,9	2,6	2,2	3,6
Common value	1	3	3	3	5
					There are certain people that I do
WTC nr:	English w/o teacher present	Oral activity in group work	Oral activity in English in group work		not want to speak English in front of
1	5	4	5	5	1
2	5	5	5	5	1
3	3	5	5	4	
4	5	5	5	5	1
5	1	5	3	5	
6	5	5	5	5	
7	5	5	5	5	
8	2	3	3	2	
9	2	5	3	5	
10	3	5_	3	3	
11	5	5	5	5	
12	4	3	5	5	
Average	3,8	4,6	4,3	4,5	1,9
Common value	5	5	5	5	

	<u>u</u>			
	Good experiences with	Good experiences with	Negative experiences with	Negative experiences with
Reluctant nr:	using English in English class	oral English assessments	using English in English class	English oral assessments
1	3	3	3	
2	2	3	4	
3	1	1	5	
4	1	1	5	
5	1	1	5	
6	2	2	2	
7	2	3	3	
8	3	3	2	
9	3	2	2	
10	1	1	5	
Average	1,9	2	3,6	3,
Common value	1	3	5	
	Good experiences with	Good experiences with	Negative experiences with	Negative experiences wit
WTC nr:	using English in English class	oral English assessments	using English in English class	English oral assessments
1	5	5	1	
2	5	5	1	
3	5	4	1	
4	5	5	1	
5	5	5	1	
6	5	5	4	
7	5	5	1	
8	5	5	5	
9	5	4	2	
10	4	4	3	
11	5	5	1	
12	4	1	4	
	4,8	4,4	2,1	1,
Average Common value	4,8 5	4,4 5	2,1	1,

	Thinks of others' thoughts	Thinks of others' perception	Formulating English sentences	Prefer preparation	Prefer preparation
Reluctant nr:	on pronunciation	of grammar, vocabulary	spontaneously is hard	in front of class	in small groups
1	3	3	,	3	in sinan groups
2	5	5	4	5	
3	5	1	5	5	
4	5	5	5	5	
5	5	4	5	5	
6	2	1	2	3	
7	3	3	3	3	
8	4	4	3	5	***************************************
9	2	2	2	2	
10	5	5	5	5	
Average	3,9	3,3	3,7	4,1	4,
Common value	5	5	5	5	
	Thinks of others' thoughts	Thinks of others' perception	Formulating English sentences	Prefer preparation	Prefer preparation
WTC nr:	on pronunciation	of grammar, vocabulary	spontaneously is hard	in front of class	in small groups
1	3	1	3	3	
2	1	1	1	1	
3	2	2	1	3	
4	1	1	1	1	
5	1	1	1	1	
6	1	1	3	2	
7	4	3	4	5	
8	1	1	1	5	
9	3	4	1	4	
10	3	3	3	3	
11	1	1	1	1	
12	5	2	4	3	
Average	2,2	1,8		2,7	2,
Common value	1	1	1	3	