Degree Thesis 1
Bachelor’s Level
Stimulating Willingness to Communicate for Learners of English

A literature review of teachers’ possibilities of facilitating Willingness to Communicate in the Swedish EFL classroom.

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Abstract:
In ESL/EFL classrooms all over the world, teachers sometimes struggle with stimulating students’ willingness to communicate (WTC). Since communication is arguably the essential goal for all language learning and in order to secure that learning takes place, teachers need to create conditions that stimulate WTC. This limited literature review aims to investigate what predicts and stimulates WTC, and teachers’ possibilities of enhancing it in classrooms. The results of this review suggest that reducing anxiety and increasing self-perceived confidence through the creation of a learning environment that is supportive, motivating, and joyful facilitates WTC. Teachers are the key to stimulating WTC by providing increased explicit feedback and establishing high-quality relationships with students. In addition, this review suggests a dynamic relationship between learning and WTC.

Keywords: WTC, Willingness to Communicate, EFL, Oral Interaction, L2 Communication
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1. Introduction

Over the years, researchers have debated whether English should be regarded as a second or a foreign language in Sweden. Even though English is a foreign language in Sweden, some students regard it as their second language. In fact, much of the Swedish population has a high proficiency in English due to the influence of popular Anglo-American culture and the Swedish school system, which started implementing English as a compulsory subject as early as 1962 (Cabau, 2009). Also, English proficiency could be regarded as a part of Swedes’ cultural and linguistic identity (Hult, 2003, p.60, cited in Cabau, 2009). Studies have shown that a high level of perceived proficiency is a median predictor of FL communication (Sampasivam & Clement, 2014). However, not all students are willing to communicate frequently in the second language classroom in Sweden, thus posing a problem for teachers’ possibilities of implementing the curriculum without inducing anxiety for the pupils.

This study is important because if teachers cannot encourage students to start talking in the classroom, both with each other and with the teacher, it will seriously hamper second language teaching for all participants. As a result, bringing the possibility of facilitating willingness to communicate (WTC) to ESL/EFL teachers is imperative for success in foreign language learning. If students are not communicating, they are, in a sense, not fully participating in the class. In fact, the productive communicative skills of English as a subject in the Swedish school system for upper secondary school are a part of the core content in the Swedish curriculum, which stresses the importance of “oral […] production and interaction of various kinds, also in more formal settings, where students instruct, narrate, summarise, explain, comment, assess, give reasons for their opinions, discuss and argue” (Skolverket, 2011). In short, the implementation of communicative exercises is hampered if students are unwilling to communicate, thus affecting learning negatively.

1.1 Aim and research questions

This literature review aims to explore what suggestions modern research gives for teachers’ possibilities to influence their teaching in terms of increasing pupils’ willingness to communicate in the EFL context. The aim can be divided into two parts. The overall aim is to investigate teachers’ possibilities of supporting ESL/EFL pupils who struggle with WTC and how teachers can facilitate WTC; the secondary aim is to investigate underlying factors impacting WTC for ESL/EFL. In order to narrow down the field of communication, this study will focus on oral communication in general and in particular: interpersonal speaking, small group speaking and some aspects of public speaking exclusively in the foreign language context. The following are the research questions:

- What factors stimulate WTC for learners of English?
- What factors describe, explain, or predict WTC for learners of English?
- How could teachers of English in upper secondary schools in Sweden facilitate WTC?

2. Background

The background for this study consists of a mix of didactics regarding speaking in a second language, studies in the fields of communication and motivation, steering documents for English as a subject in Swedish upper secondary school, and previous research in WTC.
2.1 EFL/ESL in Sweden

Determining whether Sweden could be considered an ESL or EFL country is relevant because different motivational studies are limited in terms of whether the learner is positioned in an EFL or an ESL context. For example, Gardner’s (1985, cited in Khajavy et al., 2016, pp. 157-158) socio-educational model states that the intrinsic motivation for learners develops in contact with the target language community. Because an EFL context is less likely than an ESL context to render opportunities for target language contact, native speaker contact, and target language use, a strict ESL view of Sweden is a complicated approach to motivational studies in EFL in Sweden. In comparison, self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985, cited in Khajavy et al., 2016, p. 158) builds more on intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation stating that extrinsic motivation is more closely linked to learning for instrumental goals (Abrahamsson, 2009, pp. 208-209), which is applicable to an EFL context. Besides, the EFL context mainly provides opportunities for target language communication inside the classroom. Because Sweden could be said to provide both an ESL context and an EFL context it is positioned in the middle of these two positions. In addition, access to the target language is sometimes highly individual and could be influenced by various factors, such as geographical locations in Sweden—the bigger cities such as Stockholm, Malmoe and Gothenburg are arguably more likely to provide ESL contexts than rural Sweden—online gaming communities, or other personal interests influenced by an international scene or Anglophone culture. As for the purposes of this study, literature pertaining to either an EFL or an ESL context is used and compared to a Swedish context.

2.2 Steering documents

Oral communication effectively employs two of the four language skills, namely speaking and listening. Lundahl (2012) explains that listening is the most overlooked skill in terms of attention in EFL/ESL teaching and research (p.169). Listening can be divided into two categories: one-way listening and two-way listening. One-way listening occurs naturally in music or movies, or the classroom when the teacher addresses the class. In teaching, students are often prompted to practice listening through various hearing exercises with a dominant focus on details over the bigger picture (Lundahl, 2012, p.169). Two-way listening occurs naturally in all conversations but is often rejected as a listening exercise. This rejection could hamper the learning of competent communication skills. Nevertheless, WTC is not concerned with the unwillingness to listen, but more often an unwillingness to speak.

Both receptive skills and productive skills are presented in the curriculum with a progression from English 5 to 7, here increasing the difficulty of the communication in types of communication, strategies and language difficulty. For the purposes of this study, the focus will be on productive oral skills and interaction.

**English 5:**
Oral […] production and interaction in different situations and for different purposes where students argue, report, apply, reason, summarise, comment on, assess and give reasons for their views.

**English 6:**
[…] argue, report, apply, reason, summarise, comment on, assess and give reasons for their views.

**English 7:**
[…] argue from different perspectives, apply, reason, assess, investigate, negotiate and give reasons for their views.

(Skolverket, 2011)

The progression moves from simple informal production tasks to complex, abstract and formal tasks. As a result, oral communication not only permeates the steering document but is ascribed a vital role through the progression and breadth of the subject.
The following is an excerpt from the knowledge criteria for grade E in English 5:

In oral [...] communications of various genres, students can express themselves in relatively varied ways, relatively clearly and relatively coherently. Students can express themselves with some fluency and to some extent adapted to purpose, recipient, and situation. Students work on and make improvements to their own communications.

In oral [...] interaction in various, and more formal contexts, students can express themselves clearly and with some fluency and some adaptation to purpose, recipient, and situation. In addition, students can choose and use essentially functional strategies which to some extent solve problems and improve their interaction.

(Skolverket, 2011)

Since even the lowest criteria for grade E in English 5 ascribe a vital role to oral production, it would not be possible to receive a passing grade without communication. In short, it is vital that the teacher creates various situations that enable measurements for the acquired skills, something that is hampered by an unwillingness to communicate.

2.3 Foreign language speaking

Speaking is considered by many the fundamental skill in a language. However, it is one of the most complex skills of language learning due to a variety of complex characteristics such as: “clustering words in thought groups, hesitation markers and pausing, colloquial language, slang and idioms, and suprasegmental features including stress, rhythm, and intonation” (Lazaraton, 2014, p. 106). In addition, the speech act must focus on the interactional aspects of communication. As a result, it is frequently perceived by EFL learners as the hardest skill to master (Galajda, 2017, p. 49).

Lazaraton (2014) presents current pedagogical practices that are designed to promote L2 oral interaction development and various classroom activities for doing so. Lazaraton (2014) explains that the foundation of efficient and skilled L2 speaking rests on fluency, accuracy, appropriacy, and authenticity (p. 107). Over the years, the focus has shifted from language-based tasks concerned with accuracy to meaning-based tasks. Appropriacy is concerned with speakers adapting their speaking skills to the appropriate sociocultural context. Authenticity is concerned with providing situations that enable authentic language use but poses the question of what authentic language use is. Lazaraton (2014) concludes that authentic language use should not be based on written language—such as scripted dialogues that are not based on real-life situations—because corpus studies and conversation analyses provide evidence that authentic spoken language use is different from that kind of artificially created language. Certainly, authentic spoken language contains errors and rephrases, but upholds a focus on meaning. As a result, authentic spoken language use is different from correct written language in terms of register.

Current pedagogical practices frequently build on the concept of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). That is, the teaching emphasizes that the focus should lie on the learners’ communicative skills first and foremost. Duff (2014) states that some principles of modern CLT in EFL and L2 contexts include enhancing learners’ confidence, strategies, motivation and providing exercises that are meaningful and useful. However, although students may be proficient in their L2, they may still just carry out exercises to get them done by avoiding exercises that focus on fluency as a result of low self-esteem in FL communication (Galajda, 2017, pp. 104-105). In this event, students may merely adopt a thin IRE-pattern1 of communication for

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1 IRE-pattern is the Initiate- Response- Evaluate pattern. Also known as the IRF-pattern. That is, the teacher initiates- the student/s respond and the teacher provides feedback—or evaluation (Ellis, 2014, p. 40).
task completion, thus avoiding communicating freely. In short, the role of the teacher is ultimately to facilitate the development of communicative competence and increasing willingness to communicate (Galajda, 2017, p. 105).

Galajda (2017) studied the reasons for the different communicative behaviors of foreign language learners. In short, Galajda (2017) sought to investigate why some students were willing to communicate and others were not. Students may be motivated to learn but are still unwilling to communicate due to anxiety induced by speaking in a foreign language. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) surfaces either before or during the communication act. Factors that influence FLA before communication are personality, perception of the foreign language learning process, learning history and types of communication situations. Performance-related factors are a lack of linguistic competence and immediate teacher correction causing sudden interruption (Galajda, 2017, pp. 49-50). In short, the umbrella term performance anxiety is often linked to various negative expectations and perceptions causing negative emotions that hamper the willingness to communicate (Galajda, 2017, p. 50).

Another term related to FLA is communication apprehension (CA). A person suffering from CA typically avoids oral interaction altogether because the level of anxiety-induced outweighs the situational gain (Galajda, 2017, p. 51). Moreover, CA is often viewed as either a personality trait or as a permanent state of personality (p. 53). Nonetheless, CA is different from FLA since several studies indicate a correlation between CA in L1 and L2 communication (Galajda, 2017, p. 54). Indeed, FLA may only surface in L2 communication but CA functions similarly regardless of L1 or L2. In short, there is a difference in terms of teachers’ possibilities of influencing WTC concerning FLA and CA.

2.4 Psychology of language learning
The previous section indicates that psychology has an impact on the successful teaching of a second language, not only in terms of the learner’s psychology but the teacher’s as well.

As a way of promoting competent L2 behavior, the focus lies predominantly on motivation and second language confidence (L2C). L2C corresponds to a low level of anxiety induced by foreign language communication coupled to a high level of self-perceived target language proficiency (Sampasivam & Clement, 2014, p. 23). Sampasivam and Clement (2014) explain that L2C mainly flourishes from various contact experiences which had beneficial outcomes (p. 36). These contact experiences can be frequent and pleasant contact with actual L2 members, teachers, classmates or peers. In addition, the contact experiences are determined by a bidirectional relationship, meaning that frequent contact develops L2C and that L2C motivates seeking contact (Sampasivam & Clement, 2014, p. 28). However, L2C is also related to WTC as a composite variable since it is context-dependent (Sampasivam & Clement, 2014, p. 26). In other words, L2C is a composite variable because FLA and perceived proficiency sometimes diverge due to context. In short, frequent pleasant contact in various contexts is the key to developing L2C.

As aforementioned, it is vital to consider the psychology of the teacher as well. Mercer (2018) argues for a need to understand teacher psychology; a key reason is that interpersonal psychology is linked to a process of contagion (p. 509). That is, emotions and motivation of a key member of a group, i.e. the teacher, can affect the people around them (Mercer, 2018, p. 509). In fact, a positive teacher-student relationship trumps motivation as a key variable, and suggests that caring and high-quality relationships between the teacher and peers aid L2C, learning, and
performance (Mercer, 2018, p. 515). In short, the teacher’s position as the ‘contagious’ leader affects all classroom relationships, both individually and collectively.

### 2.5 Willingness to Communicate

WTC first started as a concept concerned with the first language and merely explained that communication is the result of a certain personality trait (MacIntyre, Dörneyi, Clement, Noels, 1998, p. 546). However, with current research, it is possible to discern that WTC is affected by more factors than personality. The currently adopted working definition for WTC is “a readiness to enter into discourse, at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). The authors aimed to explain why some L2 students are willing to communicate while others are not. This resulted in a Heuristic model of WTC that was intended to describe, explain and predict L2 communication (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1** Heuristic Model of Willingness to Communicate

MacIntyre et al. (1998) explain that the six layers in this Heuristic model are divided into two parts: layers 1-3 are based on the specific situation that determines WTC, and 4-6 are stable processes that influence WTC (p. 547). Most importantly, MacIntyre (2007) explains that L2 WTC is conceptualized as a state of readiness that the learners enter at the occurring moment (pp. 568-569).

In short, the underlying layers aim to explain what impacts the top layer: communication behavior. The second layer, which only contains one box: willingness to communicate, is described as behavioral intention. Indeed, this implies that intention and behavior are linked. MacIntyre et al. (1998, p. 548) refer to other studies of behavioral intentions which have shown that behavior and intentions are linked. Likewise, other studies have shown that these layers have correlating relationships (compare Sampasivam and Clement on L2C and behavior; see Baran-Lucarz, 2014, p. 448), thus providing some validity to the model. In addition, box four seems
to be the most affected by various sub-variables. Accordingly, MacIntyre et al. (1998) state that communicative self-confidence consists of perceived competence and lack of anxiety. Equally, Baran-Lucarz (2014) show that foreign language anxiety is affected by the sub-variable: pronunciation anxiety. Conceivably, this is a complex area of study, where knowledge of various sub-variables is important to understand how to stimulate willingness to communicate.

Arguably, a majority of these twelve boxes are subject to change, both over time and through outside influence or intervention. Indeed, the social situations change, and topical knowledge—a known predictor for communicative behavior—varies and communicative competence may be stable but still a process. In total, this suggests that WTC has a propensity to change over time and must be understood as an act of volition (MacIntyre, 2007).

3. Theoretical perspectives
As a frame for the study, the results and discussion are linked to aspects of the language acquisition theories mentioned below. The theories are introduced and problematized briefly within the scope of the study.

3.1 Interaction hypothesis
Long (1996) introduced the Interaction Hypothesis (IH) based on the results of a study of Canadian French immersion students where the students failed to attain native-like proficiency in terms of productive skills despite spending years in optimal conditions for language acquisition (cited in Doughty & Long, 2003, p. 163). The study focused primarily on learning through Krashen’s theory, the Comprehensible Input Hypothesis, that learning is essentially about providing students with opportunities for acquisition by providing them with input that is i+1. On the other hand, IH claims that interaction is a source for learning and not just the practice of acquired structures and features. Moreover, Ellis (2014) explains that “interaction is not just a means of automatizing existing linguistic resources, but also of creating new resources” (p.39). Nonetheless, IH does not aim to make the claim of being a complete theory (Gass & Mackey, 2015). After all, the major components of the interaction approach reveal that they, like other approaches, are focused on particular parts of learning.

These major components are input, output, interaction and feedback (Gass & Mackey 2015). The definition of IH claims that language is learned through the negotiation of meaning, also called feedback (Gass & Mackey, 2015, p.187). That is, the input is modified to provide positive evidence of what is grammatical and acceptable (Ellis, 1999). As a result, target language acquisition is facilitated through adjusted input and output in the interaction between interlocutors. That is, negotiation work focuses the learner’s attentional resources to either a discrepancy in existing knowledge—"negative evidence”—(Ellis, 1999) of the reality of the second language compared to what the learner knows, or an area of knowledge of which the learner has no previous knowledge (Gass, 2003, p. 235). In addition, learning may be a direct result of the negotiation process, or the interaction serves as a priming device for delayed learning by initiating another negotiation stimulated by more input.

Another factor relevant for IH is whether the interlocutors engage in the negotiation of meaning or recast problems in the communication with each other—or use other types of correction. Gass (2003) explains that studies that researched the effect of recasts received varying results (pp. 239-240). Although recasts rarely result in uptake or acquisition, it enables the teacher to move the lesson forward and uphold a focus on meaning rather than form (Gass, 2003, p. 240). In addition, studies have shown that learners are more likely to imitate corrective than non-corrective recasts (Ellis, 1999, p. 10).
3.2 Output hypothesis

The Output Hypothesis (OH)—also known as ‘Pushed Output Hypothesis’—states that learners acquire language through the need to process language in order to produce a more correct utterance in the target language (Abrahamsson, 2009; Gass & Mackey, 2015). That is, “under certain circumstances, output is part of the process of second language learning” (Swain, 2005, p. 471). Therefore, it is in many ways linked to the Interaction Hypothesis. The theory originated as an extension of Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Hypothesis and was presented by Swain in 1985 (Liu, 2013; Swain, 2005). More recently, Swain proposed that the output serves three functions for second language acquisition: a noticing/triggering function, a hypothesis-testing function, and a metalinguistic function (Swain, 2005). In addition, output can be said to serve as a fluency function (Liu, 2013, p. 112). The fluency function states that fluency is enhanced by practice and repetition; the noticing/triggering function is the external or internal feedback that the learner uses to modify their output; the hypothesis-testing function is a way in which the learner tests whether their output “is comprehensible and linguistically well-formed”, and the metalinguistic (reflective) function entails that the output allows students to reflect on their own, or others’ target language to internalize linguistic knowledge (Liu, 2013, p. 112; Swain, 2005, p. 478). In summary, Swain (2005) argues for a connection between the Output Hypothesis and Sociocultural theory in the sense that the output serves the function of reshaping and comprehending experience in cognitive processes to facilitate internalization (p.480).

4. Material and Methods

4.1 Design

The current study is designed as a literature review. A literature review aims to identify available evidence within the research topic to compile and synthesize findings to draw conclusions (Eriksson Barajas et al., 2013, pp. 26-28). Due to the limited time frame of this review, it is not possible to include all available research on the topic and a selection had to be made. This literature review begins with a period of data collection governed by inclusion criteria (see Table 1), followed by an assessment of the material and ends with the analysis and the discussion of the results.

4.2 Data Collection & Sample

The current study mainly used the databases ERIC (EBSCO) and the search engine SUMMON. Some searches were also conducted in DiVA but did not provide any useful results. To complement the search, Google Scholar was used with a snowballing method without satisfactory results.

The study set out to find several relevant search words and terms for the study. Some of the search words were found in background reading, some were acquired by the subject lines in the ERIC database and some were a result of a snowball method. These are the search words and phrases used in the study: WTC, willingness to communicate, willingness to communicate in a second language, communicative competence, classroom communication, oral communication, oral interaction, communication apprehension and facilitating communication. Most of the search words were connected using Boolean phrases and operators AND, OR and NOT to combine the words with the correct context (Eriksson Barajas, Forsberg & Wengström, 2013, pp. 78-79). The context that was deemed appropriate for the review was: EFL, ESL, English as a second language, English as a foreign language, Sweden, Swedish, svensk, Sverige, swed*.)
Table 1 Sample Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Element</th>
<th>Inclusion criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>Published after 2010 in academic peer-reviewed journals or dissertations and theses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Outcome</td>
<td>Somehow addresses what facilitates, explains or predicts WTC in the EFL/ESL classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Learners of English as a second or foreign language. Children excluded. New beginners excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language of study</td>
<td>Written in English or Swedish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTC</td>
<td>The study is concerned with Willingness to Communicate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of studies</td>
<td>Empirical studies that are qualitative, experimental, or quantitative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is an overview of the articles that form the results.

Table 2 Presentation of articles for the review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title, year</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al-Murthada, M.</td>
<td>Enhancing EFL learners' Willingness to Communicate with visualization and Goal-setting activities (2019)</td>
<td>Empirical-Experiment + mixed methods</td>
<td>High-school EFL (rural) 15-15 years-total of 216. Country: Yemen</td>
<td>Intervention study that investigated the effects of visualization and goal-setting activities on enhancing WTC over six weeks with an intervention program. Measured using pre- and posttest surveys and semi-structured interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin, Y.</td>
<td>Taiwanese EFL Learners' willingness to communicate in English in the classroom: Impacts of personality, affect, motivation and communication confidence (2018)</td>
<td>Empirical-Quantitative</td>
<td>EFL-University students age 10-24 Total of 701 Country: Taiwan</td>
<td>This study investigated what factors influenced WTC in EFL University students in Taiwan using questionnaires and SEM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Data Analysis

The analysis for the review is essentially a critical appraisal of the seven chosen research studies in a qualitative way to answer the research questions. The articles will be scrutinized qualitatively and compared to theories to answer the research questions in the study. The analysis will mainly be a content analysis with the focus on finding relevant material for the established categories. The content analysis begins with close reading to identify categories that are relevant for the review (Eriksson Barajas et al., 2013, p. 164). The categories are ‘factors that describe, explain or predict WTC’, ‘factors that stimulate WTC’. In addition, a summary will be
added to illustrate the teachers’ possibilities for actions or methods that potentially affect WTC. For an evaluation of this summary, the current study aims to compare a synthesis between these results and the theoretical features: ‘negotiation work’, and ‘four functions for language acquisition’. In total, this analysis aims to answer the research questions and anchor them with theories to a learning environment.

4.4 Ethical aspects
Eriksson Barajas, Forsberg, and Wengström (2013) explain that ethical considerations are supposed to start at the beginning of the data collection where the researcher makes sure that the sample of articles is approved by ethical committees (pp. 69-70). However, due to the process of this study, these considerations were examined after the supervisor approved the selected material for analysis. The sample material’s ethical considerations were then carefully examined to look for any irregularities. Moreover, the current study aims to present the results objectively and concisely, without the researcher’s own opinions (Eriksson Barajas et al., 2013, p. 70).

In order to make sure that the results in the review are valid, the ISSN numbers for the chosen articles were compared to Cabell’s blacklist (n.d.). Some articles resulted in hits and were therefore excluded from the review due to violations of various criteria.

5. Results

5.1 Factors that describe, explain or predict WTC

Here are the results of the analysis that showed other factors that influence, describe, or predict WTC but do not necessarily stimulate it.

Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Hosseini Fatemi and Choi (2016) examined WTC in an Iranian EFL context for university students using a structural equation model (SEM- is “a powerful multivariate technique used to confirm a proposed structural theory”—Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Hosseini Fatemi & Choi, 2016, p. 165). The authors proposed a hypothetical model with five predictors of L2 WTC: motivation, classroom environment, communication confidence, attitudes, and FL achievement (see attachments- SEM-examples) (p. 162). Through the analysis, the proposed model was revised (see attachments- SEM examples). The revised model indicated that the classroom environment was the strongest predictor for WTC and that communication confidence also affected WTC (p. 169). In addition, the results indicated that L2WTC is affected by an indirect relationship between classroom environment, communication confidence, motivation, and attitudes. Moreover, another significant predictor for L2WTC was the autonomous motivation that, too, had an indirect relationship with communication confidence, thus contributing to the findings in previous research (p. 170). Also, the authors explain that the attitudes affected motivation; thus, learning English for communicative purposes was considered unimportant compared to passing examinations (p.170). As a result, the authors revised their statistical model and proposed an ecological model that predicts L2WTC in the Iranian EFL context (see Figure 2). An ecological model considers how each component in a context is related to other components (Khajavy et al., 2016, p. 159).
From these results, the authors conclude that “teachers play a significant role in promoting WTC in the classroom” (p.174) and suggest that the teachers are the key to the creation of a non-hostile, friendly and motivating learning environment. Such an environment can influence students’ perceptions of their own classroom environment to stimulate cooperation, collaboration, and support among students (p. 175).

A similar study was conducted two years later where the main difference is the age group and level of education. Khajavy, MacIntyre, and Barabadi (2018) examined the role of how enjoyment influences WTC in the Iranian EFL secondary school classroom by using a new statistical procedure: doubly latent multilevel analysis, which is a combination of multilevel analysis (ML) and SEM. Such an analysis “considers both sampling error and measurement error” making it a reliable statistical tool (p. 620). The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between classroom environment, anxiety, and enjoyment and WTC. The authors explain that this is the first study that aimed to examine the role of enjoyment as a predictor of WTC. That is, this is the first study to address both the influence of positive vs. negative emotions on L2 WTC. The study employed self-reporting questionnaires with Likert scales to measure the aforementioned relations. In short, the results indicate that both positive and negative emotions impacted WTC, with a stronger effect from enjoyment on WTC. Moreover, the result indicated that the classroom environment had a significant effect on emotions and WTC. In addition, the classroom environment was defined by “teachers’ support, students’ cohesiveness, and task orientation” (p.620). The authors suggest that the results indicate that students who enjoy learning tend to be more willing to communicate. In this respect, positive emotions and enjoyment outweigh anxiety. As for teachers, the authors ascribe teachers a significant role; the teacher can create a positive learning climate through choices of activities, support and other actions. Similarly, the analysis of Tavakoli and Zarrinabadi’s (2018) study indicated that without explicit feedback the students might feel more anxiety and stress, pointing to the fact the students did not like making mistakes. In total, the analysis highlights students’ preferences as a predictor of WTC, thus pointing to reinforcing enjoyment and avoiding negative-inducing situations.

Again, an investigation of factors concerning WTC in a different context was undertaken with similar results. Lin (2018) investigated what factors influence WTC in an EFL context in Taiwan. The questionnaire measured ten variables: big five personality traits, international posture, motivation, self-perceived communication confidence (SPCC), EFL WTC and frequency of using English in the classroom (p.105). The results of the study showed that the proposed model
(see Figure 3) was a good fit for describing and predicting L2 WTC within the current context. The model shows the serial mediation effect causing the frequency use of EFL. The results of the study suggested a positive indirect relationship between the layers. That is, although the personality traits (Layer VI) may not have a direct effect on WTC (Layer I) it can certainly influence other layers and subsequently lead to affecting intentions of English use (p. 111). In contrast, this model has six boxes, but the same layers as MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) heuristic model.

Figure 3 Lin’s (2018) six-layered EFL WTC model

In total, the study focused on the influence of personality’s mediating effect in relation to WTC using structural modeling which was supported by the results.

5.1.1 Synthesis of results that describe, explain or predict WTC

The synthesis reveals that regardless of country and age the initial heuristic model proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998) provides a varying fit across contexts. Thus, regardless of context, it is possible to impact and facilitate WTC in the classroom through interventions that affect the classroom environment positively (Khajavy et al., 2016; Lin, 2019) with a focus on reinforcing positive emotions in general and enjoyment in particular (Khajavy et al., 2018). Although this review only examined a few contexts, the results indicate that WTC behaves similarly across contexts.

5.2 Factors that stimulate WTC

Here are the results of the review that indicated various factors that stimulate WTC.

One factor that indicated a stimulation for WTC was the visualization of participation in a future target language community. Al-Murthada’s (2019) study indicated that visualization and goal-setting activities were factors that stimulated WTC in the classroom. The participants were high-school EFL students in rural Yemen. All the results were self-reported, but the intervention showed a statistically significant increase in WTC in the quantitative results and was supported by the qualitative results. The results from the study indicated that the visualization and realization of the ideal L2-self increased L2 motivation by relating their current self to a future community. The intervention program consisted of three activities each week for a total of six weeks. Al-Murthada (2019) explains that the goal of the program was twofold; the visualization was meant for the students to train their imagination in imagining themselves as proficient L2-
speakers; the goal-setting activities were meant to create short- and long-term goals and creating personal action plans to achieve them (pp.143-144). Likewise, Lin’s (2018) study suggests that conscientiousness could provide a path to revised attitudes towards language learning (p. 109). Finally, one of the activities that indicated the most statistically significant positive results, and the easiest to implement, was to invite volunteer graduate students to role model successful L2 acquisition stories (Al Murthada, 2019). Similarly, Lin’s (2018) study emphasizes the cultivation of an international posture for the school and the envision of an international L2 community. Such an intervention is useful for motivating the ultimate goal of using English within the targeted community. As for Lin’s participants, these were Taiwanese EFL- university-level students aged 18-24. In short, this points to the fact that motivation through envisioning/visualization and goal-setting activities could be useful for facilitating WTC regardless of age and level.

Another factor that indirectly could be useful to stimulate WTC, but showed surprising results in measuring WTC, was a specific instructional focus. Van Batenburg, Oostdam and van Gelderen (2019) compared the effects on WTC, self-confidence, and enjoyment in EFL oral interaction between three newly developed instructional programs that differed in instructional focus. The participants were pre-vocational EFL learners in the Netherlands aged 12-16. The programs were: 1) “a program that combined form-focused instruction and practices with pre-scripted interaction tasks”, 2) “a program that replaced the pre-scripted interaction tasks with information gap tasks”, 3) “a program that combined these information gap tasks with instructional strategies instruction and practice” (p. 312). The results indicated that none of the programs affected students’ enjoyment, the strategies-directed instruction program affected self-confidence positively and all the programs reported a surprising decrease in WTC between measurements one and two. Actually, the decrease is the only study in this review that exhibited contradicting results in the form of a negative relationship between increased self-confidence and WTC. In other words, the results indicated that the use of information gap tasks combined with strategies instruction significantly increase self-confidence in EFL oral interaction but decrease WTC. Van Batenburg et al. (2019) also suggest that the study indicates that self-confidence is a predictor of achievement in oral interaction. In total, increased proficiency in oral interaction combined with increased self-confidence should have a positive effect on behavioral intentions from a long-term perspective.

From a short-term perspective and concerning the design of specific activities; a focus on explicit feedback indicated an increased WTC. Tavakoli and Zarrinabadi (2018) investigated the effects of explicit and implicit corrective feedback on L2 WTC in an experimental design that compared the results to a business-as-usual control group. The participants were Iranian EFL-students aged 12-16 (grades 7-12). The study employed quantitative and qualitative measuring. The quantitative data supported the fact that explicit corrective feedback best stimulated L2 WTC but failed to explain why. A closer look at the explicit feedback in the study revealed that the feedback was mainly in the form of recasts. The qualitative data supported the quantitative data but explained that the explicit corrective feedback affected their self-perceived proficiency, lowered their anxiety levels and knowing the number of errors they made functioned as a measure of progress serving as a form of motivation. In conclusion, Tavakoli and Zarrinabadi (2018) suggest that EFL teachers can implement explicit corrective feedback to facilitate L2 WTC. In addition, Khajavy et al. (2018) agree with such findings. In total, explicit corrective feedback can aid various activities from a short-term perspective.

Another short-term perspective concerns the use of technology to stimulate WTC. Ockert (2014) measured the effect of iPad and video intervention on confidence, anxiety and FL WTC on Japanese junior-high-school students ages 13-15. This longitudinal study progressed over a
year and included both video-recordings with a camcorder and an iPad where the students could also view themselves. The results of a structural equation model (see attachments- SEM examples) analysis indicate that the iPad and video intervention had a positive effect on reducing anxiety and increasing L2 confidence and L2 WTC. In particular, when the students view recordings of themselves it alleviates anxiety and boosts self-confidence (Ockert, 2014, p. 63). In short, the intervention proved useful for increasing FL WTC.

5.2.1 Summary of results that stimulate WTC
The following is a summary of the results of the review displaying factors that stimulate WTC or factors related to WTC—such as LC2.

Table 3 Summary of Results

| Visualization and Goal-setting activities + inviting volunteer graduate students | Al-Murthada (2019) |
| Implementing information gap tasks combined with strategies-directed interaction (stimulates LC2) | Van Batenburg et al. (2019) |
| Explicit corrective feedback on oral interaction | Tavakoli and Zarrinabadi (2018) |
| Video intervention and students viewing themselves in recordings | Ockert (2014) |
| Creation of a positive classroom environment (non-hostile, friendly, relaxing) | Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Hosseini Fatemi and Choi (2016) |
| Creation of an enjoyable classroom environment | Khajavy, MacIntyre, and Barabadi (2018) |
| Cultivating an international posture for envisioning future participation in the L2 community | Lin (2019) |

6. Discussion
Here the results of the literature review are discussed in relation to a Swedish upper-secondary school context, the background, and compared to the chosen theoretical perspectives on learning.

6.1 WTC through the theoretical background
Visualization, goal-setting activities, and the cultivation of an international posture (Al Murthada, 2019; Lin, 2019) arguably serve as a metalinguistic/reflective (Swain, 2005) form of language learning, because these activities force students to reflect on their own contemporary and future language production in comparison to that of target language community or native speakers, and notice differences and establish a way forward. Thus, the approach not only stimulates WTC but mediates second language learning. Similarly, the scaffolded information gap tasks combined with strategies-directed interaction (van Batenburg et al., 2019) could, according to IH, scaffold interaction by adjusting interlocutors’ output, thus providing positive evidence of grammatical and acceptable language (Ellis, 1999). By comparison, OH explain that this scaffolded output could enhance fluency, serve as a noticing and awareness-raising function and at the same time facilitate metalinguistic awareness (Swain, 2005). Nevertheless, van Batenburg et al.’s study pointed to a gap of knowledge concerning what stimulates WTC for learners of English. Finally, video and iPad interventions (Ockert, 2014) could serve as a noticing/triggering function for language learning. That is, video interventions raise students’ awareness of problems in their own communication and facilitate language learning. Given the fact that video interventions showed an increase in WTC, this could point to that an increased self-perception of target language production is the underlying factor. In other words, these activities function as implicit and explicit feedback to students for language learning.

As for feedback, explicit corrective feedback in the form of recasts helped improve WTC (Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi, 2018). Previous research indicated that recasts might not lead to target language acquisition but favor a meaning-based approach for teaching (Lazaraton, 2014; Gass,
Also, such corrective recasts could lead to imitation thus improving fluency. In total, the results indicate that the feedback serves a double purpose of both facilitating learning and WTC. Add to this, these various approaches scaffold both learning but indeed the “motivational propensities” and “situated antecedents” (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

With respect to the psychology of the language learner, the environment for learning is ascribed a vital role in facilitating WTC (Khajavy et al., 2016; Khajavy et al., 2018). Conceivably, this is not entirely unrelated from feedback in terms of providing learners with a positive environment where learners have high-quality peer-peer and teacher-student relationships (Mercer, 2018). That is, these high-quality relationships enable students to seek feedback from different sources thus overcoming foreign language anxiety (Galajda, 2017), and in the longer perspective enabling the development of second language confidence to facilitate WTC (Sampasivam & Clement, 2014).

6.2 Pedagogical implications in relation to a Swedish context

The fact that explicit corrective feedback proved more significant positive results on WTC than implicit, indicates that a more explicit scaffold is necessary for the process of oral interaction. This should not be limited to a focus on language forms but also include an explication of these varying communication forms. Conceivably, this is necessary for a Swedish context in terms of meeting criteria concerning interaction and oral communication to make progression necessary and explicate the abstract forms of communication in English in upper-secondary schools in Sweden.

An extension of Ockert’s (2014) study could be that not only is video useful for enhancing WTC but audio-recordings too. As a result, schools could possibly make use of the same technological tools on a smaller budget. In addition, for a Swedish upper-secondary school context it could be assumed that at least a useful number of students own and bring smartphones to school, which could be used to record audio or film simply as a tool or for feedback from the teacher.

The implementation of goal-setting activities and visualization (Al-Murthada, 2019; Lin, 2019) could arguably be applicable to a Swedish context. Students that are motivated to continue their schooling after graduation from upper-secondary school will possibly have English as the medium of instruction which motivates them to study hard and visualize themselves as future students.

Results in Khajavy et al.’s (2018) study suggest that positive emotions have a different impact on WTC than previous research has shown. Previous research has primarily focused on the role of the negative emotions connected to anxiety (see Khajavy et al., 2016; Galajda, 2017). That is, previous research has only exhibited a negative relationship between anxiety and WTC, but not a positive relationship between enjoyment and WTC. Similarly, this point to the fact that help, feedback, and scaffolding could create an enjoyable environment that in time stimulates WTC.

The hypothesized models showing relationships between variables that affect WTC (see attachments, Figure 2) are essentially partial adaptations of MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) heuristic model. These varying models indicate that the differences are related to contextual factors pertaining to the educational systems in focus, perhaps the age of students too, and probably individual preferences on behalf of the researcher. Nevertheless, these models and results also indicate that the initial heuristic model is largely applicable to various contexts but with differences
concerning accuracy. Conversely, teachers’ explicit knowledge of what factors impact WTC can influence teachers and provide them with new ideas for interventions that stimulate WTC for learners of English. In conclusion, these models suggest that a study of a Swedish context could have a different result— but not entirely unrelated— showing other factors that stimulate WTC.

This limited body of research indicates a partial unison between factors that stimulate, describe, explain, and predict WTC. In total, they also point to several available workarounds that teachers can use for students that are struggling with WTC. Finally, learning is not unrelated to the facilitation of WTC, thus indicating that WTC and learning’s relationship could be described as dynamic.

6.3 Limitations of the current study and material

Here the limitations of the current study and any weaknesses in the reviewed material are discussed.

A limitation of van Batenburg et al.’s (2019) study is that the experiment only measured WTC before and after the intervention, and the intervention was relatively short — nine lessons. As such, the increase in L2C might not have impacted the students’ WTC. Another explanation could be that there is a negative correlation between L2C and WTC, thus contradicting other results (see Sampasivam & Clement, 2014; Khajavy et al. 2016; Khajavy et al., 2018; Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi, 2018). In general, previous research concludes that an increase in L2C is a requirement for increasing WTC. Indeed, the authors suggest that possibly the gains in L2C were not enough to promote WTC during that short period of time.

The most prominent limitation of this study is that the review lacks material with research conducted in a Swedish context. As a result, it is problematic to answer the third research question concerning what teachers of English in upper secondary schools in Sweden could do to facilitate WTC. However, the results of the review suggest that the heuristic model provides a reasonable fit across contexts and could therefore possibly apply to a Swedish context as well. Under these circumstances, the factors that stimulate WTC could be incorporated and used in Swedish schools as well. Nevertheless, without proper research conducted within a Swedish context, such conclusions could arguably be overreaching.

In general, most of the articles are limited in their relation to the Swedish context of upper-secondary schools. In fact, some of the contexts in the studies differ a lot from a Swedish context e.g. Tavakoli and Zarrinabadi’s (2018) study. For example, Al-Murthada’s (2019) study focused on a rural context where the Yemeni students had little to no contact with anglophone culture and most students had never met an English-speaking person. Moreover, some of the studies were related to different age groups than those of upper-secondary schools in Sweden. Nevertheless, all the studies pertained to either an EFL or an ESL context which in general are related to Swedish steering documents; thus results should be transferable.

Another limitation of the review is the fact that most of the results from these studies were self-reported using Likert type scales to measure WTC. Self-reported data may be less reliable than other types of data; however, similar findings, and the high number of participants in most students, albeit gathered from different contexts, suggest a high validity in the results.

One of the limitations of the current study is the lack of research within a Swedish context. Nevertheless, the research is mainly focused on EFL or ESL contexts. Therefore, it is possible
to assume that some of the research is close to a Swedish context in some respects. Furthermore, the study has not included dissertations, as the search did not yield satisfactory results in the area, the inclusion criteria are not concerned with a Swedish context (see Table 2).

7. Conclusion

The present literature review aimed to investigate WTC for learners of English. Also, it aimed to answer these research questions:

- What factors stimulate WTC for learners of English?
- What factors describe, explain, or predict WTC for learners of English?
- How could teachers of English in upper secondary schools in Sweden facilitate WTC?

In conclusion, the review found several factors that stimulate WTC, either through activities, methods, or approaches that contribute to previous research. Therefore, this answers the research question concerning what factors stimulate WTC for learners of English. In general, these factors involve an increased focus on WTC through visualization/goal-setting, use of technology for awareness, and increasing the explicit feedback available to the student by interventions in teaching forms and classroom environment. But most importantly, the results show that stimulating WTC is not necessarily an activity that is separated from regularly scheduled teaching. In fact, stimulating WTC primarily lies in the structuring of the activity, classroom environment, and mindset of the students. In total, the results of this review suggest that there are several ways for teachers to facilitate WTC for learners of English.

The review also answers the research question concerning what factors describe, explain, or predict WTC for learners of English by comparing studies with that particular aim. The results contribute to previous research in several ways. Firstly, to research pertaining to the heuristic model and its applicability to various contexts; showing that the heuristic model provides a reasonable fit across contexts. Secondly, to various research stating that second language confidence is a predictor for increasing WTC in the EFL classroom (MacIntyre et al., 1998; Galajda, 2017; Sampasivam & Clement, 2014). Thirdly, to research stating the importance of the psychology of the language learner in terms of increasing enjoyment and creating a positive classroom environment with high-quality relationships. Finally, the review suggests that WTC is not stable, but liable to change over time.

Concerning the third research question, the results point to the fact that teachers of English in upper secondary schools in Sweden could possibly apply these activities, methods, and approaches for stimulating WTC. However, without any results pertaining to a Swedish context, this research question remains unanswered.

The theoretical perspectives on learning chosen for this review essentially claim that students need to start communicating in the classroom to adequately acquire target language and in the end become competent EFL users. Because the various factors that affect WTC certainly have an impact on other aspects of language learning — motivation, attitudes, classroom environment, enjoyment, etc. — these pedagogical interventions in the EFL classroom are probably not limited to impact on WTC only but other skills as well. As a result, this review points out communication as a source for improving listening. Finally, the results of the review suggest that learning and WTC are connected through a dynamic relationship.
7.1 Suggestions for future research
As aforementioned in the limitations and conclusion, the results concerning the third research question provided inconclusive results. Hence, research concerning WTC in a Swedish context is warranted.

As for EFL/ESL in Sweden, it could be relevant to partially replicate Lin’s (2019) study to investigate whether extrinsic or intrinsic motivation has more impact on WTC (p.110). As mentioned in the discussion, a heuristic model that compared significant factors for a Swedish context could be useful to specifically address the facilitation of WTC in Sweden. In addition, it would be interesting to measure interventions in a Swedish context to measure how these interventions operate and what interventions have the best applicability to a Swedish context.

It should be interesting to measure how improved listening skills impact WTC and oral communication in general. Concerning learning, it should also be interesting to more specifically measure whether increased second language confidence or WTC has a measurable impact on target language learning.
References
Cabell’s (n.d), accessed on 2019-11-26, Retrieved from: (URL):
Liu, D. (2013) The role of Oral Output in Noticing and Promoting the Acquisition of Lin-


## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Search History

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Appendix 2. SEM Examples

Ockert’s (2014) SEM:

\[ R^2 = 0.90 \]
\[ R^2 = 0.84 \]

Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Hosseini Fatemi & Choi’s SEM:
Lin (2019):

Diagram illustrating the relationship between various factors such as attitudinal, communicative confidence, and achievement in a language learning context.