CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the study. It involves the background of the study, research questions, research purposes, research significances, rationale, and previous studies.

A. BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

A widespread problem faced by an English teacher in the classroom is to make the student have willingness to communicate (WTC). It was because for a long time the primary purpose of teaching English was to develop the linguistic competence and to master the structure of the English language (Tajeddin, 2013). However, the aim of teaching English in recent decades has shifted from the mastery of structure to the ability of communicative language. MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) in (Aliakbari, Kamangar, & Khany, 2016) emphasised that the goal of the second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) learning is to facilitate better communication and understanding between individuals who come from different cultural backgrounds and different languages. In other words, being able to communicate becomes the primary purpose of learning of language.

During preliminary observation in junior high school in Bandung, some students were found that they are not confident to speak up in the class. It was because they only learnt reading text and were only directed to comprehend the text given by the teacher. According to the new curriculum known as K-2013 that was developed by the Ministry of National Education of Indonesia, K-2013 is
designed in anticipation to new learning in the twentieth century. K-2013 focuses on learning through modelling with scientific processes. One of them is that concentrating on communicating (Tantra, 2013). It means the curriculum of Indonesia has transformed not only targeting how students can comprehend the English reading text but also how students can communicate in English.

In fact, learners need to have WTC before they engage in language acquisition or communication (Vongsila, 2016). Willingness to communicate (WTC) in modern language pedagogy in meaningful communication also has become an essential concept in second language learning and communication (Tajeddin, 2013). Therefore, this research is conducted to know how WTC in English as a foreign language applied in high school in Indonesia.

In the last two decades, factors that focus on affecting willingness to communicate (WTC) in second language acquisition have been conducted. They included cultural context, social and individual context, classroom context, social and psychological context (Pattapong, 2010), attitudes (Yashima & Zenuk-nishide, 2004), and international posture (Piggin, 2010). Gender and age also have also been studied as one of the affecting factors on WTC (P. Macintyre & Donovan, 2004).

Despite findings from previous studies, only a few studies of willingness to communicate (WTC) can be found English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia context. Until recently, a study (Wulandari, 2015) has been conducted in Satya Wacana Cristian University. However, the study of WTC in Indonesia
context was conducted in university and focused on transactional speaking courses. Meanwhile, this study focuses on WTC in English subject at one of high school in Indonesia.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

The researcher formulates the problems of this research as follows:

1. How is the willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language at YASPIA Islamic Junior High School Bekasi?
2. What factors influence the willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language at YASPIA Islamic Junior High School Bekasi?

C. RESEARCH PURPOSE

Based on the reasons above, the primary purpose of this study is:

1. To find out willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language at YASPIA Islamic Junior High School Bekasi.
2. To find out the factors influencing the willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language at YASPIA Islamic Junior High School Bekasi.

D. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCES

This study gives several significances. It contributes to an understanding of how WTC can facilitate language instruction in an EFL classroom, with a primary focus on identifying factors that may influence L2 WTC. Practically, this study is useful for teachers that can help them increase the willingness to communicate in the classroom. Theoretically, this study can be beneficial information for
curriculum planner as evaluation for creating the English material that makes students have willingness to communicate.

E. RATIONALE

Recently, second language (L2) pedagogy has gained great attention to communicative interaction in class with the purpose of developing learners’ communicative competence. In deciding the result of the second language pedagogy, communicative language teaching (CLT) has taken the lead in the 21st century (Xie, 2011). The primary purpose of CLT is to help students develop their communication competence (Savignon, 2005). Therefore, communication is not only a means of facilitating language learning but also an important goal in itself. Skehan (1989) assumed that focus on the active use of L2 in language classrooms reflects the belief that learners must use the language to develop proficiency, that is, “learners have to talk in order to learn” (Xie, 2011).

Language acquisition theories also have impact on the pedagogical approach of communicative language teaching. Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis (IH) pointed out the question of how L2 interaction can facilitate language development by providing learners with opportunities to receive comprehensible input. The updated version of the IH also gives a much richer view of how negotiation can help language learning. It provides two other ways in which interaction can contribute to the acquisition. They are the provision of negative evidence about what is not acceptable in the target language; and through opportunities for modified output when they notice a gap between what they want to say and what they can say (Ellis, 2013).
WTC is an interest in the area of communicative language teaching, which focus on learning through communication (Ellis, 2013). L2 researchers have agreed that language students who are more active in language use have a higher potential to develop communicative competence by having more opportunities to interact with others. Therefore, learners with a strong willingness to communicate may be able to benefit from CLT. MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Conrod (2001) have argued that WTC should be expected to facilitate the language learning process, a view based on their findings that higher-level WTC among students translates into more opportunity for practice in an L2 and authentic L2 usage (Ellis, 2013).

MacIntyre et al. (1998) argue that it is essential for L2 educators to design L2 teaching pedagogy and programs that can enhance L2 students’ WTC. In order to achieve this goal, it is important for L2 educators to understand which factors affect L2 students’ diversity in levels of WTC. The students may become more successful in learning an L2 if they understand the importance of WTC and what variables determine their degree of WTC.

In summary, WTC has gained considerable attention in L2 research (Ellis, 2013), and given the important role that WTC plays in second language learning, it is necessary for L2 teachers to understand the variables underlying L2 WTC. Therefore, the research of willingness to communicate in Indonesia should be conducted to find out how and what factors that affect it.
F. RELEVANT STUDIES

Findings that relates to willingness to communicate (WTC) have been found around the world. One of them is the importance of confidence enhancement takes part on the role of teaching practices on students’ WTC in English by Pattapong (2010). In order to maximise the students’ WTC in English, this research suggested that the teachers should focus on how to enhance the students’ confidence in using English. The findings showed that teaching practices employed by teachers depended on their teaching principles. The teaching principles that influence what the teachers do in their teaching practices link to the theory of L2 knowledge as a result of instruction directed by the teachers. (Pattapong, 2010)

In Japan, a research conducted by Yashima and Nishide (2004) show that a high engagement of communication in willingness to communicate happened to who frequently talk to them for long periods of time, like family, friends, and others. This finding found that the amount of time spent talking is an outcome of interpersonal interaction which reflects the availability, receptiveness, and willingness to interact. Those who communicated with closed people more frequently and for a greater amount of time seem to have had a higher degree of satisfaction in human relationships, experienced less difficulty in making friends, to be better than those who engaged in communication less frequently (Yashima & Zenuk-nishide, 2004).

Meanwhile, international posture affecting willingness to communicate was conducted by Piggin (2010) in 2010. The finding focuses on how and why
international posture influences the affective variables that constitute the WTC model, which in turn affects an individual language learner’s L2 communication behaviour. It is found that to encourage Japanese EFL learners to be more willing to communicate in their L2, their exposure to different cultures and international affairs should be increased in contexts such as the classroom (Piggin, 2010).

Leslie and Peter (2004) conducted a research about age and sex differences in willingness to communicate. They found that Junior high females are higher in WTC than their male. It may be that junior high girls having higher WTC than boys of the same age reflect norms of sustained, intimate conversation among girls, which contrast with norms of shared physical activities among boys (P. Macintyre & Donovan, 2004). Therefore, this study is conducted at one of the high schools in Indonesia and only focusing on English subject in the school. Some factors relating to previous research are also provided to help to know which factors influencing the WTC In Indonesia. The study of WTC in Indonesia is rarely found. That’s why this study is aimed to understand how WTC in Indonesia is and which factors influence the WTC.