Willingness to Communicate in Foreign Language: The Effects of Confidence and International Posture

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Abstract

Understanding student's language communicative behaviors is crucial to explain why some students might have more willingness to communicate (WTC) when they are learning English than other students. WTC is one important factor contributing to student's success in developing their speaking skills with its relation to other aspects. This study intended to examine the level of students' willingness to communicate during a speaking class, WTC outside the classroom, communication confidence, and international posture and to see the correlation among those variables. The data were collected through a questionnaire adapted from a willingness to communicate in the L2 scale. The result shows that most Indonesian students majoring in English Education at Yogyakarta State University in the Special Region of Yogyakarta have a high willingness to communicate during a speaking class as well as international posture. Furthermore, half of the students have high and moderate willingness to communicate outside the classroom and communication confidence. However, there is only one correlation among those variables that is found significant which is a correlation between WTC during a speaking class and communication confidence. Since this study did not find any participant who had a low rank for all the variables tested, this study has limitations in explaining the path from low to high level of the four variables.

Keywords: Communication, confidence, international posture, speaking, willingness to communicate

1. Introduction

The ability of learners to use the language has been the main purpose of English education in Indonesia since the communicative language teaching approach was introduced in 1980 and still maintaining to adopted now (Madya, 2013). Yet, only a small number of the students can communicate in English which leads to a sense of failure (Lie, 2007). Therefore, understanding communicative behavior which is manifested in individuals' willingness to avoid or to communicate seems to be crucial. By understanding this, teaching and learning processes are expected to accommodate students to be more willing rather than avoid the chance to communicate.

There are many factors affecting individuals' willingness to communicate (WTC). In the process of acquiring a new language, it is believed that individuals are unique. It means that

everyone will get different results even though they are treated the same way as others. For example, a student in a class gets a different score for their final exam in an English language subject even though they are given the same materials and taught by the same teacher, which means that students are individually different. In short, individual differences play a role in the result of someone' WTC as well as the other affecting variables such as attitudes and motivation.

From the recent study held by (Yashima, 2002) on Japanese EFL learners, it is found that international posture and motivation were significant predictors of WTC in an EFL context. (MacIntyre et al., 1998) also proposed a heuristic model of variables influencing WTC, highlighting the complex interplay of linguistic, communicative, and social-psychological factors in determining an individual's decision to communicate in a second language. Furthermore, the newest study from (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2016) which investigated the dynamic nature of WTC in classroom settings, emphasizing how situational factors and individual differences, such as language anxiety and self-confidence, affect learners' WTC in real-time interactions.

Meanwhile, this research stands out by examining WTC in the specific context of Indonesian students during speaking class and outside the classroom, offering a dual-context perspective. This research also integrates international attitudes with self-confidence and communication confidence, also providing a deeper understanding of the interaction of these variables in the EFL context in Indonesia. In addition, this study aims to analyze the correlation between WTC in the classroom, WTC outside the classroom, communication trust, and international attitudes, revealing comprehensive insights into the collective influence of these factors on students' WTC.

However, these findings may be culturally specific to Indonesian students and not easily generalize to other contexts. Self-reported measures can create bias, as students may misreport their behaviors and attitudes. If a cross-sectional design is used, the study may not capture the dynamic nature of WTC over time, unlike longitudinal studies that observe change and development.

Understanding the factors that influence WTC can help educators develop targeted strategies for creating more communicative classroom environments tailored to students' needs. Integrating self-confidence, communication confidence, and international attitudes highlights the importance of addressing both affective and cognitive components in language teaching. This research may inspire further researchers to explore WTC in other under-researched contexts, broadening the scope of WTC research and its applications.

1.1 Willingness to communicate model

There are many studies done to examine the effect of individual differences in second language acquisition. Much of the study examines the influence of affective variables such as attitudes, motivation, and language anxiety. Furthermore, recent studies have added another affective variable, the so-called WTC (Yashima, 2002).

WTC refers to the decision-making process of making up people's minds and deciding whether they are going to communicate or not (Gałajda, 2017). Thus, this might explain why people behave differently under the same circumstances when they have the opportunity to speak up. For instance, some people tend to speak whenever they have the opportunity to speak even if

they have to create their own while others tend to avoid or are unwilling to speak even if they are asked to speak. Furthermore, Individuals show a stable predisposition of willingness to speak across circumstance (McCroskey & Baer, 1985).

However, it is not easy to examine why someone has a higher willingness to communicate than others. Many variables might influence someone's WTC. According to Burgoon in (Gałajda, 2017) anxious people tend to be more unwilling to communicate. Introverts are also believed to be more unwilling to communicate than extroverts. (MacIntyre et al., 1998) argue that linguistics, communicative, and social psychological variables might also influence an individual's WTC. Hence, examining WTC means showing the interrelationship among those variables also.
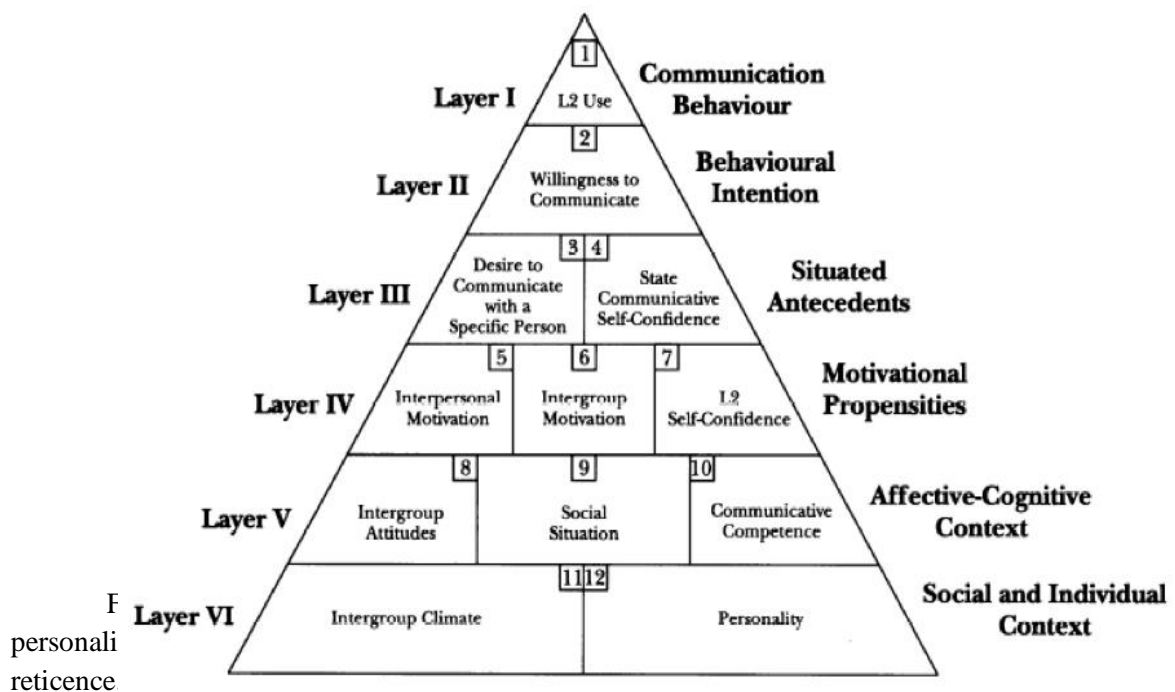
language context, WTC will be more related to L2 confidence (p.203).

1.2 Self-confidence

(MacIntyre et al., 1998) state that self-confidence consists of two components. First, it is a cognitive component that relates to self-evaluation of L2 skills. In other words, it is how people judge themselves about their proficiency towards L2. Second, it is an affective component. It relates to language anxiety especially unpleasant feelings which are affected by previous experiences when they used the L2.

(Yashima, 2002) found that self-confidence in L2 communication will affect students' WTC. Those who have low anxiety will have high WTC. However, those who have high proficiency which are expected to have greater self-confidence are found not significantly related. This is not supported by the previous study done by Gardner et al in (Yashima, 2002) which found that those who perceived themselves as competent enough would have greater self-confidence. However, some empirical findings show motivation, self-confidence, and international posture have a consistent influence on learners' WTC (Clement et al., 2003; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2016).

1.3 International Posture

International posture includes interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, and a readiness to interact with intercultural partner (Yashima et al., 2004). They found that interest in international activities and interest in foreign language has significant correlation with frequency of communication in host family. In other words, those who have both high interest in foreign language activities will also have high WTC (Ibid, p. 140). Moreover, some empirical findings show motivation, self-confidence, and international posture have a consistent influence on learners' WTC (Clement et al., 2003; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2016).

Finally, the purpose of this study is to examine the level of students' willingness to communicate during a speaking class, WTC outside the classroom, communication confidence, and international posture and to see the correlation among those variables.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The participants of the study are Indonesian students majoring in English Education at Yogyakarta State University in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. They are in their first semester graduate program in class B which consist of 20 students. They come from various islands of Indonesia such as Jawa, Sumatra, NTT, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi. Therefore, the participants can represent Indonesia as a whole with their uniqueness in terms of socio-cultural. They are also homogenous since they are accepted by passing an exam set by the university. Nevertheless, the number of the participants was small. Therefore, the result of this study is not generalizable.

2.2 Instrument

The data collection tool used in this study is a questionnaire. The questionnaire is adapted from a willingness to communicate in an L2 scale constructed by (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2016). It has eight parts, but in this research, the researcher will only use four parts which are WTC during a Speaking class (11 items), WTC outside the classroom (7 items), communication confidence (11 items), and international posture (20 items). Each item is scored 1 to 6. Then, the questionnaire was analyzed anonymously. It was done by coding each questionnaire in order to guarantee participants' anonymity and to gain their willingness to participate in this study.

2.3 Procedure and data analysis

The researcher spread out the questionnaires to 20 participants on 19th December 2017 and 18 were returned at the end of December 2017. The response rate was 90 percent. After the questionnaires were returned, the researcher analyzed the results to answer the research questions. The SPSS was used to see whether the correlation was significant or not. Before examining the relationship among the variables, the researcher did manual calculations to see whether the scores are considered as high, moderate, or low.

The manual calculation was done by categorizing. The categorization was under the assumption that the scores are normally distributed. Therefore, the theoretical score could be calculated. The calculation was done for each item (WTC during a speaking class, WTC outside

the classroom, communication confidence, and international posture). The researcher applied the following formula to get the scores considered as low, medium, and high.

$X < (\mu - 1{,}0\sigma)$ Low

$(\mu - 1{,}0\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1{,}0\sigma)$ Medium

$(\mu + 1{,}0\sigma) \leq X <$ High

with μ = theoretical mean and σ = deviation standard unit.

When the researcher applied the formula to all the variables, she got the following results. First, to WTC during a speaking class participants were considered as low when they got a score < 24, moderate when the score is $24 – 42$, and high when the score is > 42. Second, to WTC outside the classroom participants considered as low when they got score < 15.2, moderate when the score is $15{,}2 – 26.8$, and high when the score is > 26.8. Third, to communication confidence participants considered as low when they got score < 24, moderate when the score is $24 – 42$, and high when the score is > 42. Fourth, international posture participants were considered as low when they got a score < 43.4, moderate when the score was $43.4 – 76.6$, and high when the score was > 76.6.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Descriptive statistics

The number of the participants was 18. The following table shows the participants' scores from the questionnaire and the rank of their scores. All the participants were indicated as moderate and high. None of the participants was indicated as low.

Table 1. Result from questionnaire (score and rank)

Participant	WTC during a speaking class	WTC outside the classroom	communication confidence	international posture
P.01	57 (high)	36 (high)	40 (moderate)	87 (high)
P.02	53 (high)	42 (high)	62 (high)	94 (high)
P.03	51 (high)	25 (moderate)	26 (moderate)	84 (high)
P.04	44 (high)	24 (moderate)	39 (moderate)	79 (high)
P.05	49 (high)	21 (moderate)	43 (high)	71 (moderate)
P.07	46 (high)	32 (high)	43 (high)	95 (high)
P.08	50 (high)	23 (moderate)	44 (high)	76 (moderate)
P.10	56 (high)	27 (high)	47 (high)	79 (high)
P.11	51 (high)	31 (high)	44 (high)	59 (moderate)
P.12	49 (high)	22 (moderate)	43 (high)	80 (high)
P.13	52 (high)	31 (high)	43 (high)	99 (high)
P. 14	35 (moderate)	16 (moderate)	24 (moderate)	66 (moderate)

P.15	40 (moderate)	32 (high)	39 (moderate)	73 (moderate)
P.16	28 (moderate)	16 (moderate)	28 (moderate)	82 (high)
P. 17	37 (moderate)	22 (moderate)	30 (moderate)	63 (moderate)
P. 18	43 (high)	23 (moderate)	39 (moderate)	64 (moderate)
P.19	45 (high)	31 (high)	45 (high)	79 (high)
P.20	47 (high)	28 (high)	41 (moderate)	79 (high)

To see the frequencies of the rank for each item from all the participants, the researcher included the following tables. From the tables, it can be seen how many of the participants indicated as high and moderate.

Table 2. Frequency table of WTC during a speaking class

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tinggi	14	77.8	77.8	77.8
	Sedang	4	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

From the table above it can be seen that there are 77.8 % participants are indicated as having high willingness to communicate during a speaking class, 22.2 % are indicated as moderate.

Table 3. Frequency table of WTC outside the classroom

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tinggi	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Sedang	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

From the table above it can be seen that there are 50 % of participants are indicated as having high willingness to communicate outside the classroom as well as those who are indicated as moderate.

Table 4. Frequency table of communication confidence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tinggi	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Sedang	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

From the table above it can be seen that there are 50 % of participants are indicated as having high communication confidence as well as those who are indicated as moderate.

Table 5. Frequency table of international posture

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tinggi	11	61.1	61.1	61.1
	Sedang	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

From the table above it can be seen that there are 61.1 % of participants are indicated as having high international posture, and 38.9 % are indicated as moderate.

3.2 Correlation

Table 6. Spearman *p* correlation of the four variables

Correlations

		WTC During a Speaking Class	WTC Outside the Classroom	Communication Confidence	International Posture
WTC During a Speaking Class	Pearson Correlation	1	.267	.535*	.396
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.284	.022	.104
	N	18	18	18	18
WTC Outside the Classroom	Pearson Correlation	.267	1	.333	.342
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.284		.176	.165
	N	18	18	18	18
Communication Confidence	Pearson Correlation	.535*	.333	1	.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.176		.653
	N	18	18	18	18
International Posture	Pearson Correlation	.396	.342	.114	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.104	.165	.653	
	N	18	18	18	18

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows a correlation matrix for the four variables. From the table it can be seen that, first, between WTC during a speaking class and WTC outside of classroom, the significant value is 0.284. It means that P > 0.05, thus, Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected. Meaning that there is no significant correlation between WTC during a speaking class and WTC outside of classroom.

Second, between WTC during a speaking class and communication confidence, the significant value is 0.022. It means that P < 0.05, thus, Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. Meaning that there is significant and positive correlation between WTC during a speaking class and communication confidence.

Third, between WTC during a speaking class and international posture, the significant value is 0.104. It means that P > 0.05, thus, Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected. Meaning that there is no significant correlation between WTC during a speaking class and international posture.

Fourth, between WTC outside of classroom and communication confident, the significant value is 0.176. It means that P > 0.05, thus, Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected. Meaning that there is no significant correlation between WTC outside of classroom and communication confident.

Fifth, between WTC outside of classroom and international posture, the significant value is 165. It means that P > 0.05, thus, Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected. Meaning that there is no significant correlation between WTC outside of the classroom and international posture.

Last, between communication confidence and international posture, the significant value is 653. It means that P > 0.05, thus, Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected. Meaning that there is no significant correlation between communication confidence and international posture.

3.3 Discussion

The first goal of this study was to examine the level of the participants' WTC during a speaking class, WTC outside the classroom, communication confidence, and international posture. From the result of this study, the researcher found that 77 % of the participants are indicated as having high WTC during speaking class. It means that the majority of the participants have high WTC during speaking class.

The second high percentage is for the scores of participants' international posture with 61.1 % participants are indicated as having high international posture. Then, it is followed by the scores of WTC outside the classroom and communication confidence. These two variables have the same score for those whose scores are indicated as high and low. Meaning that 50 % of the participants are indicated as having high WTC outside the classroom and 50 % of the participants are also indicated as moderate. The same case is applied to the communication confidence variable.

The second goal of this study was to see the correlation among the four variables (WTC during a speaking class, WTC outside the classroom, communication confidence, and international posture). Through this study, the researcher found that there is only WTC during a speaking class and communication confidence have a significant correlation. Meanwhile, the rest are not found to have a significant correlation.

In other words, this study reveals that there is no significant correlation between WTC during a speaking class and WTC outside of the classroom, WTC during a speaking class and international posture, WTC outside of the classroom and communication confidence, WTC outside of the classroom and international posture, communication confidence, and international posture. The finding of this study supports the previous studies done by (Clement et al., 2003; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Yashima, 2002) which found that those who have high self-confidence will be more willing to communicate. However, this study does not support the previous studies done by (Clement et al., 2003; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Yashima et al., 2004) which concluded that those who have high international posture will also have high willingness to communicate.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, this study found that mostly Indonesian graduate students majoring in English Education at Yogyakarta State University in the Special Region of Yogyakarta have a high willingness to communicate during a speaking class as well as international posture. Moreover, half of the students have high and moderate willingness to communicate outside the classroom and communication confidence. Nevertheless, only one correlation among those variables is found significant which is correlation between WTC during a speaking class and communication confident. Since this study found no participant had a low rank for all the variables tested, this study cannot explain the path from low to high level of the four variables.

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