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Situational Willingness to Communicate in English: Voices from Indonesian Non-English Major University Students

Adaninggar Septi Subekti
Duta Wacana Christian University, Indonesia
e-mail: adaninggar@staff.ukdw.ac.id

Abstract:
This study investigated the perspectives of Indonesian non-English major university students on factors that could affect their Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English as a situational affective construct affected by various surrounding factors. Involving seven university student participants from three categories of WTC level (low, medium, and high) in individual semi-structured interviews, the study found seven emerging themes through Thematic Analysis. First, supportive peers were attributed to higher WTC and unsupportive peers to lower WTC. Second, learners, especially those with low WTC, reported higher WTC when they were among classmates they already know. Third, learners reported higher WTC when they perceived their teachers as caring, patient, and supportive, showing empathy of learners' struggle. Fourth, learners who perceived themselves as having low self-perceived communication competence (SPCC) would likely have less WTC. Fifth and sixth, learners had higher WTC when they were to speak among few interlocutors and were given some time to prepare for their talking. These two were found especially among learners with low WTC. Seventh, learners with medium and high WTC was found to have pleasant and successful previous experiences in using English whilst those with low WTC reported upsetting experiences with the language. Based on the findings, pedagogical implications and suggestions for future studies were presented.
Keywords: *Affective Construct, English as Foreign Language (EFL), Self-perceived communication competence (SPCC), Situational Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Thematic Analysis*

1. Introduction

1.1 Backgrounds

Willingness to communicate (WTC) in second language (L2) is considered one of affective variables affecting success in failure in L2 learning (Dornyei, 2005). The importance of WTC in learning has been reiterated by experts. WTC in L2 is regarded as "the most immediate determinant of L2 use" (Clement, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003, p. 191) and a critical component of L2 acquisition (S. J. Kang, 2005) and thus it should be the primary goal of any language instruction (MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998).

WTC began to be studied in the field of first language (L1) communication in the 1980s by McCroskey and associates. McCroskey (1997) emphasised that WTC is "an individual's predisposition to initiate communication with others" (p. 77). In other words, in McCroskey's view, WTC reflects the constant tendency to communicate in a wide range of situations and is regarded as ones' personality trait which is relatively stable (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

WTC began to be developed in the field of L2 communication in the 1990s by MacIntyre and associates. Extending WTC construct to L2 communication situations, MacIntyre et al. (1998) in their seminal work to conceptualise WTC in L2 contexts defined WTC "as a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2" (p. 547). It means that in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) view, in contrast with WTC in L1 which is seen as a personal trait, WTC in L2 is considered situation-specific in which ones' WTC in L2 can change depending on various communication situations. This view is supported by S. J. Kang (2005) who argued that interlocutors, conversational topic, situational contexts, and other potential situational variables will play a role in influencing ones' WTC in L2. In this case, WTC in L2 is not seen as a stable predisposition, but rather as an affective variable which may fluctuate depending on situations (S. J. Kang, 2005). That being said, WTC, which becomes "the most immediate determinant of L2 use" (Clement et al., 2003, p. 191) and an important component of L2 learning (S. J. Kang, 2005), can flexibly change depending on situational factors surrounding learners.

1.2 Rationales

Despite many experts' reiteration on the importance of WTC in L2 learning and findings of many empirical studies on WTC construct in various learning contexts explained further in the next section, empirical studies in the field in the Indonesian context are generally still very rare (e.g.: Fadilah, 2018; Ningsih, Narahara, & Mulyono, 2018; Sa'adah, Nurkamto, & Suparno, 2018; Subekti, 2019) despite the potential it has as one of the biggest countries in terms of the number of English as Foreign Language (FL) speakers (Kachru & Nelson, 2006). Despite these previous studies' contributions, they may not be enough to further understand WTC in L2 in the Indonesian context. Ningsih et al.'s (2018) and Sa'adah et al.'s (2018) studies examined WTC in the Indonesian secondary school context and as such may not be indicative to Indonesian university students' WTC despite university students' tendency to be reticent and hesitant in

speaking (Subekti, 2018b). Fadilah's (2018) study in the university context, furthermore, investigated learners' WTC in Facebook communication context, which was largely written, and as such may not be sufficient in reflecting their WTC in spoken communication. Another study in the university context, furthermore, was my recent previous quantitative study, as the continuation of which the present study was conducted (Subekti, 2019). Involving 276 non-English major university student participants, the study found that learners generally had high level of WTC in L2 speaking (see Subekti, 2019). It also found that learners' perceived communication competence was found to be a strong predictor of their WTC and their communication apprehension was correlated with their WTC in just a moderate level (see Subekti, 2019). Despite these generalisable findings on the Indonesian university students' WTC in speaking in L2, these findings may not be indicative to see learners' in-depth experiences related to their WTC and surrounding situational factors that may play a role affecting it, and in turn, their L2 learning. Furthermore, as I have found in an initial observation before conducting this study, many Indonesian non-English major university students tend to be reticent to communicate in English. They tend to speak only when called upon, and tend to speak in the Indonesian language unless supervised by their teachers. When asked to share their ideas, many google-translate their statements into English and read them instead of making actual communication in English.

In the light of the aforementioned explanations, the present study, therefore, was prompted by the need to obtain the Indonesian university students' perspectives on factors that can influence their willingness to use English (their L2) in class.

2. Literature Review

Many empirical recent studies have found that learners' peers or classmates play an important role in affecting learners' WTC in L2 in various learning contexts (e.g.: Cao, 2011; Cao & Philp, 2006; Gallagher, 2018; Joe, Hiver, & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2015). Joe et al.'s (2017) study in Korea, for example, found that learners tend to have a higher WTC when they sense emotional support from their friends while speaking. In line with that, studies by Barjesteh, Vaseghi, and Neissi (2012) in Iran and Cao and Philp (2006) in Sweden found that having speaking activities with peers learners already know boosts their WTC. Some consistent findings were also found in several other studies in which familiarity with peers contributes to higher WTC (e.g.: Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2015; Zarrinabadi, 2014). In comparison, as Cao (2011) found in a study among Korean and Chinese students in New Zealand, learners are hesitant to talk when they feel peer pressure such as in whole-class discussions led by their teacher. A relatively same finding was found in Saint Leger's and Storch's (2009) study in which their Australian university student participants are afraid of peers' negative evaluation in whole-class discussions. Cao (2013) later also found a consistent finding that one of her participants preferred group work and pair work to teacher-led activities. This participant especially liked group work in which everyone took a turn to talk whilst in pair-work she felt obliged to talk as there were only two interlocutors involved. These findings may suggest that learners tend to

have higher WTC when they sense emotional support from their friends, are familiar with them, and there are few interlocutors involved.

The afore-mentioned phenomena may also be attributed to learners' self-perceived communication competence (SPCC) investigating which phenomenon many recent empirical quantitative studies found that the higher learners' SPCC, the higher their WTC (e.g.: Amiryousefi, 2016; Denies, Yashima, & Janssen, 2015; Shahbaz, Khan, Khan, & Ghulam, 2016). Denies et al. (2015), for instance, found that learners' SPCC emerged as a positive predictor of learners' WTC in class. Shahbaz et al.'s (2016) study in Pakistan found that "If learners have a positive SPCC in one language, they demonstrate a strong WTC in the same language" (p. 158). Further, Jamshidnejad (2010) found when interlocutors are considered being more proficient, some learners simply give up talking because of anxiety and fear of making mistakes. Positive previous experiences in dealing with L2, furthermore, is thought to be vital to raising learners' SPCC and in turn their WTC (Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Dewaele & Dewaele, 2018; Joe et al., 2017). Joe et al. (2017), for example, explained that learners' sense of prior achievement boosts their confidence in speaking. In comparison, negative experiences in using L2, such as stressful, upsetting, or difficult ones, can decrease learners' future engagement and WTC (Cao, 2011, 2013). For example, a participant in Cao's (2011) study reported a negative experience made her angry, confused, and frustrated and this experience affected her WTC negatively.

Gallagher (2018), however, mentioned that learners with an exceptionally high WTC are more likely situated in a brokerage position or being "a broker" in conversation. That is to say that they tend to help facilitate discussions among students by bridging their reticent friends in conversation (Gallagher, 2018). Learners with such position tend to be given "more opportunities to contribute to conversation simply because the brokers are more interesting as conversation partners" (p. 8). As such these learners tend to learn more than their classmates (Gallagher, 2018). Interestingly, in an attempt to explain the complexity of WTC construct, Bernales (2016) mentioned that very often learners with a high WTC decide to remain silent because of "a sense of solidarity towards peers who have fewer opportunities to use the L2" (p. 3). These learners do not wish to look too "visible" or "too outstanding" by being the ones dominating conversations in class.

Furthermore, teachers are also considered playing a role in affecting learners' WTC in L2 (e.g.: Cao, 2011, 2013; Cao & Philp, 2006; Joe et al., 2017; Khajavy, MacIntyre, & Barabadi, 2017; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Wen & Clement, 2003; Zarrinabadi, 2014). Wen and Clement (2003) suggested that teachers' immediacy, involvement, and teaching style promote a critical influence on learners' engagement in class as well as their WTC in L2 in which learners tend to be more willing to participate and ask questions more actively as they perceive their teachers to have a good interpersonal relationship with them, to be very supportive, patient, and caring (Wen & Clement, 2003). In addition, Amiryousefi (2016) found that Iranian learners of English acknowledged that teacher clarity behaviours contribute to learners' emotional interest which in turn lead them to be more willing to participate in class discussions. Even some students in Cao's

(2011) particularly appreciated their teacher as a more experienced interlocutor and welcomed his participation in their group discussions in class. It means that learners' perception of their teachers' ability can be attributed to learners' higher WTC. In comparison, Cao (2013) also found that teachers' confusing explanation can be discouraging for learners. One of the participants in her study commented that she was reluctant to ask the teacher for an explanation because she considered the teacher's attitude discouraging rather than encouraging.

Zarrinabadi (2014) in his study of the effects of teachers on WTC through learners' focused-essays, found that besides teachers' support, teachers' wait time also influences learners' WTC. His learner participants reported they needed some time to prepare for their speaking, to make sentences or to find the vocabulary and they felt braver to talk when they were given enough time by the teacher for their preparation before talking. Whilst some participants reported that "teacher's extended wait-time, which they called patience, as the reason for being active and communicative… some others believed the short time… was the main factor leading to embarrassment and unwillingness to communicate" (Zarrinabadi, 2014, p. 292).

Furthermore, several previous studies also suggest that previous experiences also affect learners WTC. Benefits of experiences in using L2 have been investigated in several empirical studies mostly in the form of study-abroad or immersion programmes (e.g.: Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Grant, 2018; D. Kang, 2014; MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011). Grant (2018), for example, found that immersion programmes could be attributed to the participating learners' improved WTC mentioning that immersion programmes helped learners to improve their SPCC which in turn boosted their WTC.

3. Research Methodology

My previous study, as the continuation of which the present study was conducted, involved 276 non-English major university student participants. Using questionnaire on WTC, SPCC, and communication apprehension, the study sought to investigate WTC in L2 of non-English major university students in Java, Indonesia, and its relationships with learners' SPCC, communication apprehension or anxiety, and their L2 achievement (Subekti, 2019). Fifteen items on WTC in L2 were adapted from Peng's and Woodrow's (2010) study in the Chinese context and Baghaei's (2011) study in the Iranian context, with each of the item having a 1-5 range of score in which a higher score indicated a higher WTC in L2. Hence, learners' WTC could be ranged from 15 to 75. For the present study, this range was divided into three categories, namely Low WTC ranging from 15-37.5, Medium WTC from 37.6 to 52.5, and High WTC from 52.6-75. Based on learners' WTC levels, Low, Medium, and High, three female and four male students were selected in which one male and one female were selected from High WTC category, two females from Medium WTC category, and three males from Low WTC category.

For the present study, individual semi-structured interviews in the Indonesian language were conducted with these seven students during the period of 6 July 2018 to 13 August 2018. Each interview lasted around twenty minutes to 45 minutes. The interview data were then transcribed

and translated into English for further analysis. In respect of research ethics, inform consent form on the interview was distributed to each of the participants before the interview was conducted (Creswell, 2014) and each participant was given a brief explanation of the research including on the research being the continuation of the previous study in which these participants filled a questionnaire on WTC. Throughout this paper, pseudonyms were used (Gray, 2014).

Thematic Analysis was used to analyse the data obtained from the interviews. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that in general Thematic Analysis identifies meanings found in the dataset. In the present study, it was conducted by familiarisation through reading and rereading the interview transcripts and then searching for the common themes to draw a thematic map of the analysis. After all the themes were given names, excerpts that could reflect each of the themes were presented and analysed further (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Unlike the previous studies on WTC in the Indonesian context and many of WTC studies worldwide which used questionnaires and minimum representations of learners' actual utterances with regard to their WTC and in the light of two previous studies conducted by Cao (see Cao, 2011, 2013) which were able to capture more detailed and thorough direct explanations from her participants' viewpoints on WTC, the present study focused on verbatim quotes from the participants to more clearly capture learners' more detailed perspectives on WTC. Figure 1 shows the whole sequence of data collection and analysis.

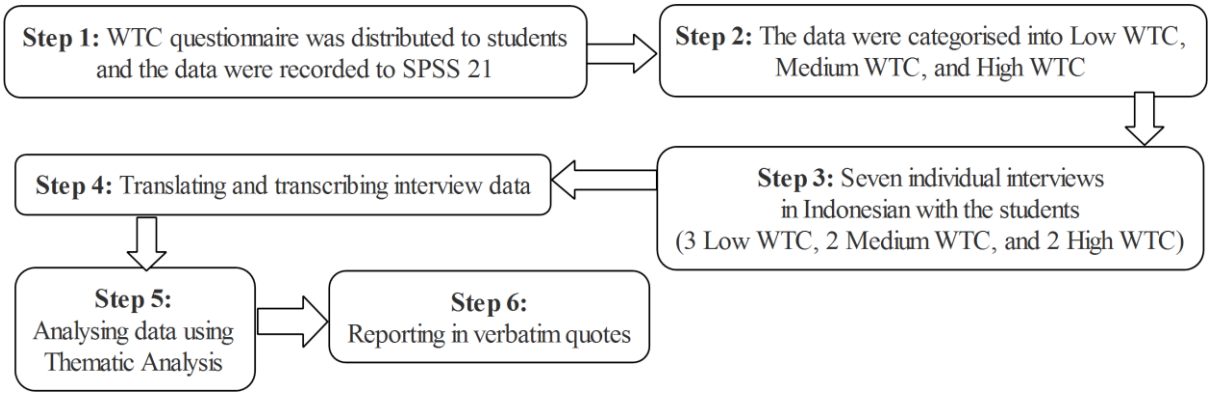

Figure 1. The sequence of data collection and analysis

4. Findings and Discussion

The pseudonyms of the seven participants were as follows: Sinta (Female/F) and Romi (Male/M) (High WTC), Ana (F) and Marni (F) (Medium WTC), and Sunu (M), Andi (M), and Dito (M) (Low WTC). Table 1 shows the emerging themes about these student participants' perspectives on factors that can influence their willingness to use English in class.

Table 1. Emerging Themes on the participants' perspectives on factors that can influence their WTC

Theme 1	The extent of peers' support affects learners' WTC
Theme 2	Familiarity with peers affects learners' WTC
Theme 3	English teachers' attributes and teaching methods affect learners' WTC
Theme 4	Learners' low SPCC affects their WTC in a negative way
Theme 5	Fewer numbers of interlocutors affect learners' WTC in a positive way
Theme 6	Learners' prior preparation affects their WTC in a positive way
Theme 7	Learners' prior experiences in using English affect their WTC

4.1. Theme 1. The extent of peers' support affects WTC

It was found that learners reported less WTC when they considered their classmates unsupportive or if they perceived the classroom atmosphere not motivating enough for them to be engaged in the class activities. A student with low WTC, Sunu, for example, admitted that he was so self-conscious and was afraid of being laughed at in case he made mistakes, and thus chose to remain silent. He reported:

> [Being laughed at in front of the whole class] is too embarrassing for me…. They [my classmates] normally laugh if there is something wrong… So, better stay quiet even if you don't understand rather than being laughed at. [Sunu, Low WTC]

This qualitative finding gave some kind of confirmation of several previous studies mentioning the needs of low threat positive classroom atmosphere to get learners to communicate (see Cao, 2011, 2013; Joe et al., 2017; Khajavy et al., 2017; Peng & Woodrow, 2010). For example, this study's finding in which peers' unsupportive attitude surfaced as a factor inhibiting learners' WTC could explain Joe et al.'s (2017) quantitative study in Korea which found that learners tended to have higher WTC if they got emotional support from their friends and vice versa.

Romi, a student with high WTC, seemed to understand this problem and remarked that unsupportive attitude like laughing at friends' mistakes was not good. He stated:

> Students are afraid of talking because they do not know or understand... afraid of embarrassment. Moreover, some of us tend to laugh at friends' [mistakes] – that is not good. [Romi, High WTC]

Another student with high WTC, Sinta, strongly believed that friends and classroom atmosphere were very influential in affecting learners' WTC and engagement in class. She stated that she tended to be motivated to show her best in class when seeing friends performing well and tended to lose interest when seeing indifferent and unmotivated friends. She stated:

> To me, environments, friends… very influential… a major factor. I will be more diligent as well, like more challenged… whenever seeing a friend's achievement, [I] will be like

> 'Why can't I?'… I become less motivated when I see my friends not performing optimally… suddenly my mood changes [becoming less excited]. How can you feel excited when other friends aren't very excited? [Sinta, High WTC]

Learners with low WTC seemed to need peer support more as could be observed in Andi's comments:

> When our friends help us when we are speaking…like for example, to answer this question, we already know the answer in the Indonesian language and we need the English version and our friends will help us by giving help from behind by whispering [Andi, Low WTC]

Andi's comment may reflect what Joe et al.'s (2017) referred to as supportive social climate in which learners with less WTC feel braver to talk because they have their friends' support. Further, this needed support may be obtained from peers with higher WTC. Marni, a participant with medium WTC, for example, admitted that sometimes she took a role of initiating conversation and keeping the discussion going. She reported:

> I see some students were not really active in class, so I kind of stimulate them to talk, invite them to conversations… We are not from the same majors, so I see the barriers there. I try to help make the class livelier. I understand some friends are quite timid to new people but I think we should overcome that to learn together. [Marni, Medium WTC]

Gallagher (2018) explained that such role as Marni's in stimulating her friends to talk is called "a broker" in which Marni took a role in facilitating discussions among learners with less WTC to keep the conversation going on. Learners who often assume brokerage positions in class, Gallagher (2018) explained, would likely have more opportunities to contribute, to talk, and thus to learn, as they obtain "an enhanced social reputation in the eyes of others" (p. 8) simply because their friends see them as fine conversation partners.

However, this role may not be sustained if learners begin to be self-conscious and afraid of negative evaluation on being considered "too showy" if they talk much in class and seem to be dominating discussions. Regarding this, Ana, a student with medium WTC, commented:

> I don't mind [speaking in groups or in front of the class], but when I speak in front of the class, I am honestly rather afraid of my friends' judgement… like "This kid, how showy!" I am certain this is what they would think because [speaking in front of the class] perhaps is something too difficult for them to do now… [Considered showy by some friends] does give an influence to some extent. I begin to think like, "Oh okay, I don't need to show my ability too much in front of my friends. Just stay low and I will be just fine", but in the end [when I keep silent], the class becomes very, very quiet with only one student or two willing to talk a bit. [Ana, Medium WTC]

This was consistent with Sinta's remark:

> I expected to expand my vocabulary mastery. But I am now getting reluctant… The first factor is friends. They still speak in Indonesian in English class, and if I start talking in English they will be like, 'how showy' [showing unsupportive attitude]. [Sinta, High WTC]

With regard to this finding, Bernales (2016) warned that very often learners with a high WTC decide to remain silent because they avoid looking too visible by being the ones dominating conversations in class. It is also to show solidarity towards classmates who have less chance to speak, for example, due to their reticence or limited ability (Bernales, 2016).

4.2. Theme 2. Familiarity with peers affects learners' WTC

All of the participants with low WTC admitted that they were afraid to talk if they had not really been acquainted with the classmates that became the interlocutors. In comparison, they felt braver to talk when they had known their classmates. Sunu, for instance, commented:

> I am afraid of making mistakes and afraid that they [friends] may not understand. I will only use English with group members whom I am already familiar with. So… I am afraid that I make mistakes in speaking in English to "new" people, and I am afraid that they do not understand what I say. [Sunu, Low WTC]

In a similar tone, Andi commented that he was reluctant to speak in front of new friends because he was afraid of being considered small and stupid. He reported:

> If I get a new atmosphere [unfamiliar classmates from different majors]… I become reluctant to talk because I am afraid of mistakes, I would be considered small and stupid. [Andi, Low WTC]

Dito reflected that everybody seemed to be anxious initiating conversation with classmates they did not really know. He stated:

> The problem [if we have group discussions with classmates we are not familiar with] is that nobody is willing to initiate the conversation. We tend to keep silent, waiting for others to start talking. I don't want to say anything first because I don't feel familiar with them and because the others are so quiet. They may feel the same as what I feel, so we are waiting for each other to initiate the discussion and nobody does. [Dito, Low WTC]

The three afore-mentioned excerpts from learners with low WTC suggested that familiarity with peers they were conversing with greatly boosted their WTC. This finding was not surprising as many studies in various learning contexts also found consistent results (e.g.: Barjesteh et al., 2012; Cao & Philp, 2006; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2015; Zarrinabadi, 2014). This study, however, may offer an additional insight in which learners who emphasised the importance of familiarity with peers were learners with low WTC, whilst comments from learners with medium and high WTC on this aspect were not really evident. This may suggest that learners

with low WTC really need to feel secure before getting to talk more than learners with higher WTC.

Marni's comment on her reticent friends may give some kind of explanation as to why her reticent friends really needed to feel safe before initiating conversation, which she believed, could be attributed to their limited English ability. She commented:

> Students will tend to feel shy in class with classmates from different majors… rarely meet each other... [Because] we rarely meet, it is also difficult to communicate and initiate conversation. If students are not familiar with each other, they may be reluctant to have any conversation [in English]. Maybe it is also because they think they have limited communication [ability]. [Marni, Medium WTC]

This could suggest that learners' WTC is triggered with several overlapping factors (Cao, 2013; MacIntyre, 2007), in this case, learners' degree of familiarity with peers and their SPCC. This means the lower SPCC learners have, the more they need to be familiar with their friends before talking.

4.3. Theme 3. English teachers' attributes and teaching methods affect learners' WTC

All of the participants argued that their teachers played a very important role in affecting their WTC and enthusiasm in class. Two students with low WTC, Andi and Sunu, admitted that they would be more willing to communicate when they considered their teachers supportive, patient, and caring, for example, being willing to repeat their explanations if some students had not quite understood. Andi, for example, commented:

> If the teacher is always willing to repeat her explanation, for example, if she sees that two or three students seem to be bewildered, she is willing to repeat what she says. [Andi, Low WTC]

Marni argued that friendly teachers tend to make learners more at ease in communicating ideas in class and vice versa if the teachers are not considered friendly, learners tend to be reluctant in class. She stated:

> If the teacher isn't very friendly… for example, if the teacher from the beginning is not friendly, we will be a little reluctant to do anything in class. [Marni, Medium WTC]

Sinta, furthermore, seemed to have a strong opinion on the importance of teachers in affecting learners' WTC and enjoyment in class mentioning the necessity of teachers knowing their students better, every meeting's challenge, and supporting teaching methods. She reported:

> Teachers should know their students' types, and can give each class a challenge to make them more interested and involved… So the teacher, method… affect students' enthusiasm and engagement… If the teachers and methods are supportive, students are… more interested in being actively involved in the class. [Sinta, High WTC]

Whilst the finding on teachers' role in affecting WTC was quite predictable as many studies have been reported consistent results (e.g.: Cao, 2011, 2013; Cao & Philp, 2006; Joe et al., 2017; Khajavy et al., 2017; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Wen & Clement, 2003; Zarrinabadi, 2014), these afore-mentioned excerpts from learners from all three WTC categories could suggest an additional finding that teachers have somewhat "universal" impacts on learners' WTC. Teachers could affect learners' engagement in class whether or not these learners have high WTC. In general, if learners perceive their teachers as caring, encouraging, patient, friendly, and competent, learners would be more likely to be active in class (see also Cao, 2011, 2013; Wen & Clement, 2003).

4.4. Theme 4. Learners' low SPCC affects their WTC in a negative way

Participants with low WTC acknowledged that their low SPCC made them anxious to initiate conversation. Sunu and Dito, for examples, commented:

> [I stay quiet in English class…because I am not very proficient in English. [I] feel that [I am] still unable [to speak English well]. [Sunu, Low WTC]
>
> I feel that I have limited capability in English and I can see that many of my classmates are better than me in English. [Dito, Low WTC]

Additionally, Sunu also acknowledged that he did not like to answer his teachers' questions in a whole-class discussion because he was not sure if he got the answer right.

> When the teachers ask questions for the whole class to answer… I prefer to keep silent because many students will try to answer the questions… class becomes noisy and I don't like it … The problem is I do want to answer, but I am not sure of my own answer... if I give a wrong answer, I will feel awkward, kind of really embarrassed I suppose, being laughed at by the whole class. [Sunu, Low WTC]

These findings highlighted the debilitating effect of learners' low SPCC towards their WTC and, at the same time, gave explanations on several quantitative studies' finding that SPCC becomes a strong predictor of learners WTC (e.g.: Amiryousefi, 2016; Denies et al., 2015; Shahbaz et al., 2016). Dito's comment that he gave up talking when he perceived his classmates being more proficient was also in line with a finding in Jamshidnejad's (2010) study. Besides, fear of negative evaluation as acknowledged by Sunu may be a common phenomenon, especially in the Asian context which considers "face" very important and thus the possibility of losing face in front of friends, very often, is avoided (Subekti, 2018a, 2018b).

In comparison, participants with high and medium WTC seemed to care little about getting the answer right and focus more on contributing to class discussions. Romi, for instance, stated:

> I like to talk, I usually share [what I know]. When it comes to responding to questions, I normally do it very fast. Miss Agni* and Miss Lintang* [the teachers] know [this habit of mine] very well ... active. Anything I can answer I answer – no matter [of it being] right or wrong. [Romi, High WTC]

*) formerly identifying information changed into pseudonyms

From Romi's excerpt, it may be tempting to infer that his WTC is somewhat "stable" and reflect "predisposition to initiate communication with others" (McCroskey, 1997, p. 77), which implied that his WTC was more of his personality trait. However, his comment could also suggest that unlike learners with low WTC, learners with high WTC do not seem to be very worried about making mistakes and this may be attributed to their being accustomed to being actively involved in class and to their previous exposure to English (see Grant, 2018; D. Kang, 2014).

4.5. Theme 5. Fewer numbers of interlocutors affect learners' WTC in a positive way

The participants with low WTC mentioned that they were willing to talk if there were only few interlocutors. Dito stated that the fewer people watched him speak, the more confident he became. He commented:

> [Speaking in English] in the group is much better. If I have to speak in front of all the students in class when I speak, everybody is watching and it makes me more nervous… I enjoy it more [to speak] in front of my group mates… The fewer people watch me speaking, the more comfortable I feel. {Dito, Low WTC]

Sunu partly attributed his same preference to his limited communication competence mentioning that he felt at ease talking in front of few friends only and might feel braver to speak if his ability had improved. He reported:

> Because I do not feel capable enough [speaking in front of many people]… Maybe I will feel more confident speaking… when I feel I am capable enough… [If my friends in the group laugh at me because of my mistakes]… not a problem, because… only three people at the most in my group. [Sunu, Low WTC]

The finding that learners preferred speaking among fewer interlocutors was consistent with the results of several previous studies (e.g.: Cao, 2011, 2013; Saint Leger & Storch, 2009). These studies along with the present study consistently found that learners tend to dislike whole-class discussions and being asked to talk in front of the class. The present study, however, slightly made a distinction in which this particular finding was only evident among learners with low WTC. Even, this study found that learners of higher WTC admitted helping their peers in group activities. Ana, for example, commented:

> In groups… My friends can ask me if they are confused. Usually, I will be like, "Oh the meaning of your sentence is too ambiguous, this is wrong, if you speak that way, they won't understand." In comparison, if they speak in front, they will not feel confident. [Ana, Medium WTC]

Whilst Ana's comment suggested the positive impacts of making learners from various WTC levels work together in small group discussions, these activities should be carried out with cautions. Ana mentioned that due to the relaxing atmosphere in group activities, discussions tended to be done in Indonesian (learners' L1) rather than in English. She reported:

> When they are doing it in groups, usually the atmosphere is not very strict and unsupervised, and the discussion usually tends to be done in the Indonesian language. [Ana, Medium WTC]

Regarding this, though not specifically in WTC literature, the use of L1 in L2 classrooms have been claimed to facilitate learners in communicating complex ideas and solving problems (see Swain & Lapkin, 2013). Besides, in WTC literature, it was not a totally surprising finding. One participant in S. J. Kang's (2005) study stated: "I feel like I'm wearing a mask" (p. 284), commenting it was unnatural to speak in English with peers also sharing Korean language (their L1). However, teachers allowing learners to use L1 too much could result and a lack of challenge (Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). Besides, their WTC in English may not grow if they continue communicating in the Indonesian language too much.

4.6. Theme 6. Learners' prior preparation affects their WTC in a positive way

Whilst participants with medium and high WTC did not emphasise any needs of being given time to prepare for their talking, participants with low WTC seemed to really need it. Both Dito and Sunu mentioned that they needed to be given some time to prepare what to say in English. They reported:

> [I would rather keep silent] in the situation when suddenly I am told to go forward to say something in front of the class without preparation… I do not have time to think about what to say and even if I know what to say in my mind, I don't know how to express it in English. [Dito, Low WTC]

> I don't feel ready to speak without any preparation. In the case of Indonesian, it is widely used every day, [so it is not a problem to speak in Indonesian without preparation], but to use English, I really have to prepare myself. [Sunu, Low WTC]

It is interesting to notice that Sunu explicitly mentioned that in the case of speaking without preparation, he had higher WTC in Indonesian (his L1) than WTC in English (his L2). It may give some kind of support that communicating in L2 needs a much higher communication competence than that in L1 (Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 1998). It could also be seen from Dito's comment stating that he needed some time to think and to formulate what to say. This finding resonated the finding of Zarrinabadi's (2014) study which found "teacher's extended wait-time, which they called patience, as the reason for being active and communicative" (p. 292). However, Romi's remark earlier (see Theme 4), might suggest that unlike learners with low WTC, those with high WTC are more likely to have risk-taking behaviours in which they get to speak once they have opportunities despite no prior preparation.

4.7. Theme 7. Learners' prior experiences in using English affect their WTC

All four participants with medium and high WTC admitted that they had pleasant or successful previous experiences with English either at school or private courses outside school and these experiences made them more accustomed to being brave to communicate despite possible

imperfections. For example, Romi's bravery could be attributed to his previous education in a seminary. He commented:

> I studied in Seminary for Senior High School, and I had an Irish [English] teacher who made me love English even more… maybe [since] high school, I have been accustomed to being active, debating, having open discussions… I became very active in sharing my ideas in English… [The education from Seminary] is very influential… including affecting my tendency to feel brave to say anything I know in class. [Romi, High WTC]

In a similar tone, Sinta admitted having benefited from her experience in joining an English program at an English Village. She commented:

> The extra course [at English Village]… has been very influential… I can be more confident… when I speak in front of people, [I am] not afraid of being laughed at… My pronunciation after taking the course [now] and that of before is very different [better]. I am a lot more confident now. [Sinta, High WTC]

In comparison, participants with low WTC seemed to have unpleasant previous experiences in using English. Sunu, for instance, had an experience which he described as "traumatising" in which he felt really embarrassed when he could not perform well in front of student parents in his spoken final exam in English at High School. He said that he could "never forget the experience". He recalled:

> One time, I had a high school exam, a speaking assessment…I had memorized my script… I had memorized everything. On the assessment day, all the village elders were invited, all parents were invited, and suddenly what I had memorized was lost. When I saw the audience I simply lost "my memory". Since then, [speaking in English] became "rather different". [I] will never forget the [unpleasant] experience. [Sunu, Low WTC]

The present study's specific finding on learners' pleasant and unpleasant experiences affecting their WTC may not have been thoroughly discussed in WTC literature. However, the effects of previous experiences in using L2 have been investigated under the umbrella of study-abroad or immersion programmes (e.g.: Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Grant, 2018; D. Kang, 2014; MacIntyre et al., 2011) in which such programmes were considered instrumental in improving learners' SPCC which in turn increased their WTC (Grant, 2018). It may also be the case in the present study in which both Romi and Sinta felt they had sufficient ability to communicate in English due to their pleasant experiences. As for Sunu's case, by contrast, his upsetting experience decreased his SPCC and increased his fear of negative evaluation, which in turn, decreased his WTC.

5. Conclusion

The present study's finding could suggest some important points. This study contributed to new findings that learners with low WTC and those with higher WTC have slightly different views on factors attributed to their WTC. Whilst those with low WTC expressed the needs to feel

secure in many ways before getting to talk, for example having enough preparation before talking, and speaking only in front of few numbers of classmates they were already familiar with, learners with higher WTC (medium and high WTC) considered teachers' motivating and challenging tasks that compelled them to learn more instrumental in increasing their WTC. Interestingly, at times the latter chose to remain silent, not because they were unsure of their ability, but because they were afraid of being considered boastful by their reticent friends if they talk much in class. Furthermore, the finding on the effect of learners' previous experiences in using English during their previous education levels suggest such experiences create lasting memories in learners' mind, which in turn affect their WTC either positively or negatively. Besides the new findings above, this study gave qualitative confirmation through the participants' perspectives on the results of several quantitative studies that peers, teachers' attributes and wait time, familiarity with and the number of interlocutors, learners' SPCC, and previous experiences have impacts on learners WTC.

With regard to the present study's findings which overall suggest the complexity of learners' WTC caused by various intertwining situational factors, teachers should "provide the factors facilitating WTC as much as possible, instead of focusing on one factor at the expense of other facilitating factors" (S. J. Kang, 2005, p. 291). They also need to pay attention to interactions among these factors in lesson planning because the interactions may not be linear and a small change in a factor could result in dramatic changes in learners' WTC.

Furthermore, there are several suggestions for future studies in the field of WTC. First, considering the impacts of learners' experiences in their previous levels of education on their WTC, it is important to investigate this phenomenon further. Whilst it is acknowledged that there have been several studies investigating the impacts of a handful of learners' experiences in study abroad and immersion programmes on WTC (e.g.: Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Grant, 2018; D. Kang, 2014; MacIntyre et al., 2011), learners' experiences in regular lower education levels is worth further investigation as this is what most EFL learners in various learning contexts experience. Furthermore, conducting a qualitative study involving both learners and teachers in which their perspectives on WTC can be compared is also worthwhile considering the present study's finding on the fairly universal impacts of teachers' attributes to all participants' WTC.

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