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Understanding the Notion of Interdependence, and the Dynamics of Willingness to Communicate

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Abstract

The current individual differences research in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) addresses the issue of the situated nature of individual difference (ID) factors. Willingness to communicate (WTC) is a relatively new ID variable in SLA (Dörnyei, 2005) and it is seen as both a facilitating factor of SLA and a non-linguistic outcome of the second language learning process (MacIntyre, 2007). Previous research into WTC primarily focused on its trait disposition as remaining stable across situations. Only a handful of studies have revealed that the construct might be situation-specific rather than fixed.

The present study investigated the dynamic and situated nature of second language (L2) learners' WTC in class. Framed within a sociocognitive perspective on L2 learning which draws together social, environmental and individual factors, this classroom-based multiple case study involved 18 English as an additional language (EAL) learners in New Zealand over an academic year and was implemented in three phases. Data were collected through classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews, semi-structured interviews and reflective journals.

Evidence from self-report and observational data suggests that the classroom WTC construct is best described as a dynamic situational variable rather than a trait disposition. The findings indicate that situational WTC in class results from the interdependence between individual characteristics, classroom environmental conditions and linguistic factors. These three strands of factors interdependently exert either facilitative or inhibitive effects on an individual student's WTC in class at any point in time. The effect of the combinations of factors differs between individuals and the interrelationship is too complex to be predicted. This study has attempted to describe and measure the WTC construct as situated in L2 classrooms and it serves as a stepping stone for further research on the role of WTC in L2 learning.

Dedication

*To the memory of my mother who has always been in my heart
and who would be proud to see this achievement.*

“I co-exist with the world, and everything in the world and I are one.”

Equality of All Substances

*Chuang Tzu
(Chinese Philosopher, 369-286 B.C.)*

天地與我并生
而萬物與我爲一
莊子《齊物論》

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ID	Individual Difference
IDs	Individual Differences
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
L1	First Language
L2	Second or Foreign Language
NNS	Non-native Speaker
NS	Native Speaker
PPCT	Person-Process-Context-Time
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
WTC	Willingness to Communicate
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Background of the Study

In my experience as both a second language learner and a practitioner in the TESOL profession, students' quietness in class is considered by many second language researchers and pedagogues as a negative attribute. In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), students' quietness is typically labelled *reticence* (Katz, 1996; Tsui, 1996; White & Lightbown, 1984). Similarly, anecdotal evidence has shown that second language teachers identify it as a problem to get students to respond willingly in classrooms. I recall one teacher's remark during a staffroom discussion on extremely quiet students that, despite many years of experience in the classroom, she had still not managed to decode the behaviour of those reticent students, or work out suitable strategies to encourage them to talk in class. By "talk", she meant prolonged turns or engagement rather than short utterances in answering teacher or peers. She is not alone in having encountered difficulties in encouraging reticent students to talk. As Tsui (1996) notes, the numerous contributing factors to student reticence include low L2 proficiency level, fear of making mistakes and derision, the uneven allocation of turns, and the teacher's intolerance of silence.

Thus either from a language teachers' perspective in general or research into learner's reticence in class participation in particular, it appears that learners who do not engage in second language interaction are usually regarded as being passive and unmotivated. For those who regard quietness and reticence as synonymous, the focus is probably on the communication side of L2 education. Their stance is better understood from the current popular theoretical perspectives in SLA that stress the importance of interaction and communication, as well as from L2 pedagogy that values learners' open participation in

class. In the TESOL profession, which since the 1970s has been dominated by communicative language teaching (CLT) methodology, researchers and practitioners' common goal is to encourage learners to become more efficient and effective communicators. As Breen (2001) observes, "one of CLT's innovations was to advocate spontaneous learner communication through talk about topics and issues that were immediately meaningful to them" (p. 113). It is the teacher's engagement of learners in active participation that is a defining characteristic of CLT. The theoretical and pedagogic rationales underlying CLT emphasise learning through learners' participation in the interactions afforded by the classroom learning activities. The pedagogic emphasis of CLT represents a shift from the verbalising of decontextualised linguistic forms to the expression of meaning in social contexts (Breen, 2001). Within a CLT approach, it is now learners' social production of L2 that is considered to best promote learning and acquisition.

It is undeniable that student participation in class is of great importance in language learning. Interaction research, for instance, provides abundant evidence for the facilitating role that participation plays in language acquisition. For this reason, researchers such as MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels (1998) argue for the importance of promoting learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) in L2 education. WTC refers to an individual's intention to engage in communication when free to do so. As a direct predictor of frequency in communication in L2, WTC has the potential to facilitate the language learning process due to their findings that higher WTC among students translates into increased opportunity for practice in an L2 and authentic L2 usage (MacIntyre, Babin, & Clément, 1999). In classroom reality, L2 learners display different levels of WTC and they can therefore be perceived positively or negatively by their teachers and peers. It is therefore important to describe and measure the construct of WTC as situated in L2 classrooms.

1.2 Theoretical Approach

In the field of SLA, the last decade has been characterised by a heated debate concerning both ontological and epistemological issues. The ontological issue concerns the nature of what the SLA field studies and the epistemological issue concerns how researchers might best go about studying it (Block, 2003). The debate over the ontological and epistemological issues underlies different approaches to SLA, that is, “the rationalist cognitive dominated approach versus the socially sensitive and engaged, postmodern approach” (*Ibid.*, p. 122). The fundamental assumption of SLA research is still that of a cognitive science (Long, 2006); however, a number of critiques have developed of applied linguistics and SLA from more socially engaged perspectives (Atkinson, 2002; Block, 1996; Kramsch, 2002a; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Tarone, 2000). This debate results from a growing suspicion about the inadequacy of a SLA theory that fails to accommodate both the role of cognitive and contextual variables (Norris & Ortega, 2001). This is reflected in Firth and Wagner’s (1997) seminal article in which they strongly criticised SLA’s scientific orientation and the cognitive bias in SLA theory construction. They, and others since, have proposed that SLA would need a more socially sensitive conceptual framework to consider the interaction of both social and cognitive factors (Collentine & Freed, 2004).

Leo van Lier (2008) identifies two extremes in the theories of learning, the mentalist position and the environmentalist position. The former position sees SLA primarily in psycholinguistic terms and it concerns cognitive theories that posit learning primarily happening inside the head of individual learners. The latter position concerns more socially and environmentally oriented theories that place the locus of learning in the context. The interactionist position lies in between the two extremes and the theories that reflect this position explore the relationships between cognitive and environmental processes. These theories can broadly fit under a general umbrella of sociocognitive theories (Atkinson, 2002). Atkinson (2002) encourages SLA researchers to adopt a sociocognitive perspective on SLA which entails that cognition of language is

intertwined with and inseparable from experiences, cultural knowledge, emotions, and social identity.

Similarly, Block (2003) proposes a broader, socially informed SLA that does not exclude the mainstream psycholinguistic approach but takes on board the complexity of the context. He warns that the dominant line of the mentalist position might lead to a narrow view of the complex SLA phenomenon and might widen the existing gap between researchers and practitioners in this field because it “ignores the alternative views of what constitutes SLA research” (Block, 1996, p. 76). He argues for an expansion of the agenda for SLA by taking into account the cognitive and linguistic aspects as well as the learners’ social environment and the interactions between them. He believes that it is desirable to explore alternative paradigms, and that the existence of pluralism appears to provide fertile ground for the advancements of the SLA field.

Since the social and cognitive debate, the broadening of different perspectives of SLA has opened the door for attention to context-sensitive approaches or sociocognitive approaches, including sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000), language socialisation (Kramsch, 2002b), chaos and complexity theory (Larsen-Freeman, 1997), and the ecological approach (van Lier, 2000, 2004), to name a few. The common ground of these contemporary socially influenced theories is the emphasis on the central role of learning context, and on the idea of context being co-constructed. All of these recent influential perspectives on SLA assume that it is not appropriate to separate variables. This context-sensitive approach suits the present study which identifies WTC in L2 classroom as emerging out of complex and dynamic interactions between social and individual factors. This thesis provides an understanding of WTC as a situational variable from an ecological perspective.

1.3 The Notion of Interdependence

The notion of *interdependence* is a fundamental law of nature and a fundamental principle that underpins society. Everything, including all people and things, exists only

through relationships with the others. Nothing exists in isolation or absolute independence; everything is interdependent.

In the reality of the classroom, everything depends on everything else, and everything matters because everything has a consequence for outcomes. There exists an interrelationship between classroom-internal and classroom-external worlds, between the individual and the contextual. The ecological perspective, of which the notion of interdependence is the central idea, contravenes the reductionist and dualistic view that was deeply embedded in the Western thought and continued to direct thinking until the revolutions in the field of natural sciences in the twentieth century (Capra, 1996). An ecological perspective on SLA sees a web of intertwining relationships between students, teachers and their surrounding micro classroom contexts and macro institutional environments. All the components in the web of relationship or the network are interconnected and inseparable. As Kramsch (2002a) puts it, it is not possible to tell the dancer apart from the dance; that is, the dancer is always part of the dance. When the learner is viewed as a dancer, s/he learns to dance by means of dancing, and attending differently to different partners who are in turn differently sensitive to the learner's movements (Tarone, 1998).

The present study is framed within this notion of interdependence: all is interrelated, nothing works independently. The notion of interdependence in this study is defined within a sociocognitive perspective and an ecological framework as the interrelationship between individual characteristics, linguistic factors, and classroom environmental conditions. This study is based on the premise that the relationships between these three dimensions are reciprocal, and it is through mutual shaping that learners' classroom WTC is either facilitated or inhibited. In this study, interdependence is used interchangeably with the terms *interrelationship* and *interconnectedness*.

1.4 WTC in Context

The SLA field has seen the movement from a more traditional cognitive perspective to a more complex context-sensitive perspective. Currently, individual differences (IDs) research is also experiencing a shift in investigations of ID variables such as motivation, anxiety and personality as situated in context rather than treating them as trait variables. This situation-specific (Dörnyei, 2003) or situated approach (Dörnyei, 2005) is process-oriented, and focuses on learner behaviours within particular contexts. It is therefore sociocognitive in nature. As far as the research on the ID variable, WTC is concerned, Dörnyei (2005) and Ellis (2004) have highlighted the need to explore WTC in a second language grounded in concrete classroom situations.

Referred to as an individual's intention to engage in communication in L2 and the final step to actual communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998), WTC has been looked at as a trait disposition that is independent of what happens in contexts. WTC is traditionally viewed as a cognitive construct and is seen as static. However, it seems inadequate to view WTC as static in actual language classrooms. Language classrooms are social contexts and not just pedagogical contexts (Allwright, 1989; Breen, 1985) and language lessons are essentially social events which are co-constructed by individual students participating in them. From a context-sensitive perspective, WTC in the classroom does not exist as a single variable in itself, but is rather the result of numerous underlying cognitive predictors and surrounding conditions. A low level of WTC displayed by a student might be due to any number of factors, some internal, others external: his/her shyness by temperament, or a topical knowledge deficit and linguistic inadequacy, or an influence of his/her cultural background (Leather & van Dam, 2003), an uncooperative interlocutor, or a combination of all these factors in the particular classroom culture. If any of these cognitive predictors or environmental conditions are changed or removed, it is likely to incur a change in the WTC level. Although very few studies have examined WTC as situated in actual L2 classroom context, the present study has attempted to investigate the situated and dynamic nature of this construct in L2 classrooms.

Context has been identified in different ways. For example, Collentine and Freed on a broad scale (2004) distinguish between three types of contexts: the formal language classroom at home (AH), the intensive immersion (IM) context and the study abroad (SA) context. In a more traditional distinction, both the AH and the IM contexts can be regarded as the EFL context whereas the SA context can be considered as the ESL context. The SA context involves both communicative and learning contexts (Batstone, 2002) which entail a hybrid of the two, a communicative-learning context. Among the three, SLA processes within a SA context are unexpectedly complex (Collentine and Freed, 2004). The present study concerns learners in a SA context. They attended a private language school where they were learning English with other foreign language learners in an L2 context. After that they studied in university content programmes in which language was not the object of instruction. In that immersion context, they were learning with native English speakers.

In the present study, context is seen as co-constructed; that is, it is jointly created through interactions. Jacoby and Ochs (1995) define co-construction as “the joint creation of a form, interpretation, stance, action, activity, identity, institution, skill, ideology, emotion, or other culturally meaningful reality” (p. 171). Young (1999) points out that co-construction as defined by Jacoby and Ochs is not necessarily cooperative or supportive interaction, rather, an argument is as much co-constructed as a conversation. According to Batstone (in press), the co-constructed context is a dynamic concept which is “continually being re-negotiated as interlocutors work to co-construct their understanding of the kind of activity they are engaged in” (p. 6). Within a sociocognitive perspective, context is not simply an external phenomenon but it exists partly in the head and partly in the world in situated activity (*Ibid.*). The context includes not only the physical space, but also the intersubjective space between interlocutors, among other things (Larsen-Freeman, 2007). From the sociocognitive perspective, context is viewed very differently from that as defined by Collentine and Freed (2004), because of co-construction.

The L2 classroom is not an isolated island and what happens in the classroom is connected in multiple ways to the wider community including the school, the family, the

local educational authorities, governmental agencies, and ideological and cultural pressures. To investigate the connections between contexts requires appropriate models of contextual analysis, or ecological models of context (van Lier, 2008). This study chose among a number of ecological models of context to follow Bronfenbrenner's nested ecosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1993) in order to highlight the importance of the proximal classroom context and to link the micro-level of classroom context to the macro-level of wider communities. In the present study, context was considered as the interrelationship between people and the ecological context they found themselves in, including the teacher, the students, class activities, and the wider communities.

Investigating WTC in the classroom from an emic, context-sensitive perspective led me away from the mentalist and cognitive view of language learning to an alternative view that acknowledges its contextual and interactional aspects. I took a naturalistic and holistic perspective to focus on how contextual aspects in class were intimately connected to individual learners and their volitional WTC processes. Situating the classroom WTC research within an ecological perspective, which concerned interactions between individual and environmental factors, provided a powerful explanatory model incorporating both individual and contextual characteristics that seemed to affect WTC behaviour in L2 classrooms. In an ecological perspective, particular attention is given to the interrelationships in a given system between the environmental, the social and the individual. The ecological framework proposed by van Lier (2000, 2002) embraces the interdependence between classroom relationships and those studied.

1.5 The Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

In line with the philosophical stance established in the thesis, the present study was mainly a qualitative, exploratory and naturalistic inquiry. In this study, I took an interactionist position as defined by van Lier (2008) and adopted a socially sensitive approach to the investigation of WTC as situated in the L2 classroom context. In this thesis, WTC was regarded as a central concept rather than either a dependent variable that represented students' communication behaviours or a variable considered to be subsumed by L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2003; Ellis, 2008).

The overall aim of this study is to theorise the construct of L2 classroom WTC through an empirical investigation. Within the theoretical framework of an ecological perspective, the primary aim is to explore the dynamic and situated nature of L2 learners' WTC at the micro-level of the classroom context; that is, it investigates the co-influence of factors on learners' classroom WTC. The intention is to examine the interrelationship between these factors that might facilitate and inhibit learners' WTC in class from an ecological perspective. This is a descriptive multiple case study conducted on the basis of evidence from extensive observations, stimulated-recall interviews, and journal entries. This study involved 18 ESL learners in New Zealand over an academic year and covered three phases. Phase I and Phase II involved learners enrolled in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programme at a university-based language school. A follow-up study was carried out to track some participants in the university content programmes they later enrolled in; this was to explore their WTC behavioural change given a different learning context. The following research questions are addressed:

1. How is learners' WTC manifested in L2 classrooms?
2. How does learners' WTC behaviour change according to time and contexts?
3. What particular interacting factors underlying WTC can be identified?
 - a. What individual factors, if any, influence WTC in L2 classrooms?
 - b. What environmental factors, if any, influence WTC in L2 classrooms?
 - c. In what way do the individual and environmental factors interact, and affect WTC in L2 classrooms?

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The present study has the potential to make a number of important contributions to the field, especially in the SLA IDs area and classroom-based L2 research. The present study addresses a largely uncharted area in IDs research in SLA, in particular, WTC as situated in classroom context. It is in line with the current context-sensitive approach in SLA and demonstrates the crucial role of context in WTC research. It fits in with the wider debate on the cognitive and the social in the SLA field and wider applied linguistics community.

It makes the first attempt to adopt an interactionist position to investigate the WTC construct by integrating the cognitive and social aspects.

Another unique contribution is that this study makes the first attempt to conceptualise and empirically test the classroom WTC construct as a situational variable. By using a multiple case study approach, this study exemplifies the interrelationship between individual and environmental variables underlying WTC and explores the important notion of interdependence. It also produces an empirically grounded model to account for the complexity of WTC in class.

A novel element in the thesis concerns the recognition of WTC as both a dynamic and interdependent concept. In the present study, WTC in class is viewed as a dynamic rather than a trait phenomenon. It is seen as an interdependent concept in relation to learner-internal and learner-external factors. It is not defined as an intention as in previous studies; instead, it is defined and operationalised as *observable behaviours in class*, which refer to occasions on which learners initiate or engage in communication when they have the choice.

1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters. As an introduction, chapter 1 sets the scene and provides an overview of the research together with its purpose. Chapter 2 reviews major theoretical issues that frame the study, discusses empirical studies on WTC, identifies gaps in the literature and specifies the research questions. Chapter 3 describes methodological issues considered in this study. It outlines the research design and specifies the procedures for data collection. It also describes coding and analysis of the data and addresses the issue of the trustworthiness of the study. The results of the study are presented and discussed in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Chapter 4 provides answers to the three research questions and presents both quantitative and qualitative results. Chapter 5 exemplifies the notion of interdependence through triangulation of data and detailed description of case studies. Chapter 6 further explores the notion of interdependence among the underlying factors of WTC, and their co-influences on WTC. Chapter 7, the

concluding chapter, summarises the results, explains where this study fits in the field, and discusses the implications of the study at the theoretical and pedagogical levels. Recommendations for future areas of research are offered and limitations of the study are addressed.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature pertaining to the main areas of interest in this study. It contains two distinct parts, one on WTC and the other on the sociocognitive framework. The first section describes the theoretical and empirical issues of the WTC construct in a L2. It reports that the L2 WTC construct has recently been conceptualised and empirically tested as a situational concept rather than a trait disposition. The second section introduces the situated process-oriented approach that has emerged recently in IDs research and provides a rationale for applying a situated context-sensitive approach in the investigation of WTC in the present study. The third section focuses on the historical background to the increased attention to social and contextual dimensions of SLA research in the past decade. It provides a critique of the SLA perspectives on classroom communication and interaction that ignore the notion of interdependence. The following section presents the ecological approach and highlights its relevance to the investigation of WTC as a situational construct. Research questions are raised and research aims are addressed in the final section.

2.1 Willingness to Communicate in L2

Ellis (1999) acknowledges the universalistic view of learning theories in SLA in that these theories seek to “identify the environmental conditions that pertain to L2 acquisition in general” (p.15). However, as he further points out, learners vary enormously not only in the rate of L2 acquisition but also in their ultimate level of L2 achievement. In other words, they vary enormously in how successful they are in learning an L2. These differences in L2 achievement can be explained by looking at a range of cognitive and affective factors that lie inside the learner. Among a number of affective factors responsible for individual differences in L2 learning, WTC has attracted recent attention in L2 research (Ellis, 2004, 2008). As a complex but promising construct of

obvious relevance to communicative language teaching (Ellis, 2008), WTC can be seen as both a facilitating factor of L2 acquisition and a non-linguistic outcome of the L2 learning process (MacIntyre, 2007).

In the section that follows, the definition of WTC in L2 is introduced, and section 2.1.2 on WTC is organised according to the theoretical and empirical issues concerning the WTC construct. Two influential heuristic models of L2 WTC have been proposed by MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels (1998) and Wen and Clément (2003). Quite a number of empirical studies have tested the reliability of these models in both ESL and EFL contexts. A considerable body of research has been conducted to identify the relationship between WTC and its underlying individual, social and situational variables. While much quantitative research has focused on the trait aspect of WTC, there has also been some research from a holistic and qualitative perspective to investigate the state level of WTC. Some of the research has explored WTC as situated in EFL or ESL classrooms.

2.1.1 Defining WTC in L2

WTC is a relatively new ID variable in SLA. The notion of WTC was originally introduced with reference to first language communication, and it was considered to be a personality-based, trait-like predisposition that remained stable across different communication situations (McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). In essence, the notion entails an intention to initiate a communicative behaviour, and this behavioural intention is often predictive of actual behaviour (MacIntyre, 1994). WTC in L2, however, was reinterpreted as a situational variable, open to change across situations. It was defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, & Noels, 1998, p. 547). Specific to a L2 classroom, WTC was defined by Oxford (1997) as “a student’s intention to interact with others in the target language, given the chance to do so” (p. 449).

2.1.2 Heuristic WTC in L2 Models

In this subsection (2.1.2), I introduce two heuristic *WTC in L2* models, proposed by MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noels (1998) and Wen and Clément (2003)

respectively. I review a number of empirical studies which tested these two models in both ESL and EFL contexts. My purpose in so doing is to illustrate the applicability of these models in different contexts.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) proposed a conceptual pyramid-shaped structure incorporating a range of potential linguistic and psychological variables that appeared to influence WTC in L2 (see Figure 2.1). The level of conceptualisation, intergroup communication process, and the issue of time were all integrated in this pyramid model. WTC was identified as a behavioural intention, the final step to using a L2 with a specific person. They made a distinction between immediate situational factors and enduring influences that underlie WTC in the L2. The situational factors (for example, desire to communicate with a specific person and state communicative confidence at a given time in a given place), which were seen as more dependent on the specific situation at a given moment of time, were placed within the first three layers, from the top of the pyramid. The enduring influences (for example, intergroup motivation, communicative competence, intergroup climate, and personality), which were comparatively distal and stable factors, formed the foundation of the pyramid.

This model explores the interrelations among affective variables influencing WTC in L2 that could explain and predict second language communication. The significance of this heuristic model lay in it being the “first attempt at a comprehensive treatment of WTC in the L2” as a situation-based variable (MacIntyre et al. 1998, p. 558). In this model, L2 WTC is conceptualised at the state level rather than at the trait level (MacIntyre, 2007). The major flaw with this model, as (MacIntyre, 2003) acknowledged, is that the pyramid is one-dimensional like a triangle, thus it does not reflect the interrelationship between and the weighting of the various components (Dörnyei, 2005), and that the transition from distal influences to proximal effects is not a simple hierarchy, because at times distal influences such as social situation can bypass proximal ones.

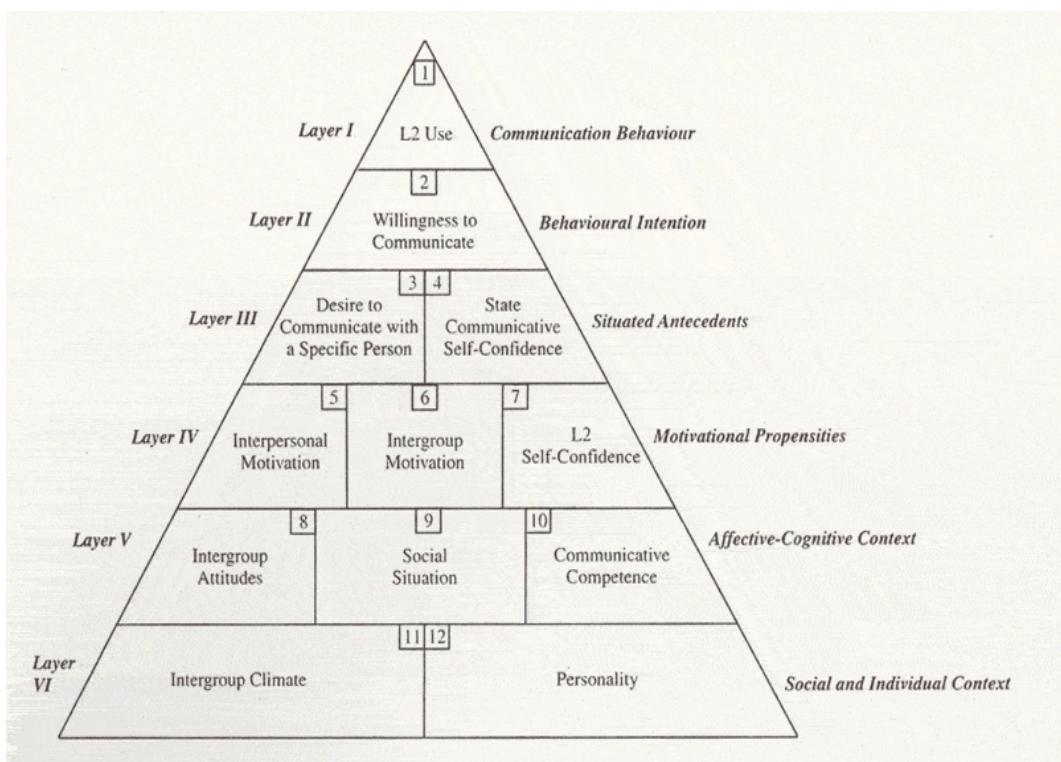


Figure 2.1. Heuristic model of variables influencing WTC (MacIntyre et al. 1998, p.547).

A considerable number of research studies have been conducted to validate some parts of this complex pyramid model in both western and Asian contexts. MacIntyre and his associates carried out several empirical studies in the Canadian immersion context, with a prime focus on the identification of any correlation of WTC with a number of factors from this model. These studies revealed that the strongest predictors of WTC in this model included communication anxiety and perceived communicative competence (Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003). For example, Baker and MacIntyre (2000, 2003) compared an immersion ($n = 71$) to a non-immersion programme ($n = 124$) and examined the effects of the programmes on some variables in the model including perceived competence, WTC, frequency of communication, communication anxiety, and motivation of students who had English as their L1 and were studying French as their L2. Based on questionnaire and interview data, it was found that anxiety and perceived competence strongly predicted WTC and frequency of communication. Similarly, MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Donovan (2003b) conducted a study among university-level students ($n =$

59) to evaluate differences between French immersion and non-immersion students in terms of WTC, communication anxiety, perceived competence, integrative motivation and frequency of communicating. All these variables were measured by a questionnaire survey. The results showed that WTC correlated strongly with motivation in the immersion group but not in the non-immersion group. WTC was found to be predicted by communication anxiety but not by perceived competence in the immersion group. The reverse was true for the non-immersion group – WTC was predicted by perceived competence but not communication anxiety. These results lent support to the pyramid model; that communication anxiety, perceived competence and motivation have a direct relationship with WTC.

A number of recent studies tested MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic WTC model in the EFL contexts including Chinese, Turkish and Korean contexts (Atay & Gokce, 2007; Cetinkaya, 2005; Kim, 2005; Peng, 2007b). The studies carried out in these different EFL contexts suggested that WTC is strongly predicted by motivation, attitudes towards international community, perceived linguistic self-confidence (a combination of communication anxiety and perceived communicative competence), and desire to learn English.

Peng (2007b) partially replicated MacIntyre et al.'s (2003b) study by examining the possible relationship between integrative motivation and L2 WTC among Chinese college students learning English in an intensive programme ($n = 174$). The WTC questionnaire adapted from MacIntyre et al. (2001) was used to measure the effects of motivation and social contexts on L2 WTC. Integrative motivation was measured by the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery used in Hashimoto's (2002) study. Peng's findings showed motivation to be the strongest predictor of L2 WTC and that integrative motivation accounted for a small proportion of variation in L2 WTC. Attitudes towards the learning situation were not found to predict L2 WTC. Therefore, Peng argued that motivation was an important impetus in stimulating learners to persevere in both L2 learning and possibly L2 communication in an EFL context.

Cetinkaya's (2005) study examined whether MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model explained the relations among social-psychological, linguistic and communication variables in the Turkish EFL context at the tertiary level ($n = 356$). Following a hybrid design to combine both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis procedures, this study employed both questionnaires and interviews. This study investigated the interrelations among students' WTC in L2, motivation, communication anxiety, perceived communication competence, attitude toward the international community, and personality. Qualitative interviews were utilised to extend and elaborate these quantitative results. Unlike Peng's (2007b) study which found no relationship between attitudes towards the international community and WTC, structural equation modelling revealed a consistent relationship between the students' WTC in L2 and attitudes as well as perceived linguistic self-confidence. Students' motivation to learn English and degree of introversion/extroversion were found to be indirectly related to their WTC through linguistic self-confidence.

Atay and Kurt's (2007) study examined how a number of variables in the model such as perceived L2 competence, communication anxiety, communication frequency and desire to learn English would predict WTC both inside and outside of the classroom in the Turkish EFL context ($n = 58$). Based on questionnaire and interview data, they found that L2 communication frequency and desire to learn English correlated positively with WTC outside the classroom at the beginning of the term. L2 communication anxiety correlated negatively while desire to learn English correlated positively with WTC inside the classroom at the beginning of the term. At the end of the term, perceived competence and desire to learn English correlated significantly with WTC outside of class; however, communicative anxiety correlated negatively while communication frequency and desire to learn English correlated positively with WTC in class. The study identified desire to learn English as the strongest predictor of WTC inside and outside of class. This factor was not considered in the other studies attempting to validate MacIntyre et al.'s model.

Kim's (2005) study examined the reliability of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model in explaining WTC in L2 among Korean learners and its application to the Korean context.

The test of reliability of the model relied on the assumption that WTC displayed dual characteristics of being trait-like and situational. The study also employed structural equation modelling and collected questionnaire survey data from Korean university students ($n = 191$). The results showed that WTC was more likely to be trait-like than situational and that MacIntyre et al.'s model was reliable in the Korean context. The study also concluded that Korean students' low levels of WTC in L2 might be responsible for their less successful results in English learning.

Wen and Clément (2003) made an attempt to adapt MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model to the Chinese ESL context (see Figure 2.2). They argued that Confucianism, which underlies Chinese cultural values, was likely to be manifested in L2 communication. Thus WTC in L2 in a Chinese classroom setting would be a far more complicated notion than that reflected in MacIntyre et al.'s model. Their modification of the structural relationships between the constructs mainly concerned two variables from the top three layers in the original model, namely, the desire to communicate (Layer III) and WTC (Layer II). A distinction was made between these two notions. Desire to communicate referred to a deliberate choice or preference whereas WTC emphasised the readiness to act. They contended that having the desire to communicate did not necessarily imply a willingness to communicate. They also suggested that a number of factors that were located distally in MacIntyre et al.'s model would intervene between the links of these two variables. These factors, including the societal context, personality factors, motivational orientations, and affective perceptions, would be positively related as well as culturally bounded to help create a positive communication environment. This revised theoretical framework proposed a new way to localise the original WTC model in a different EFL setting where variables affecting WTC could be examined from a cultural perspective.

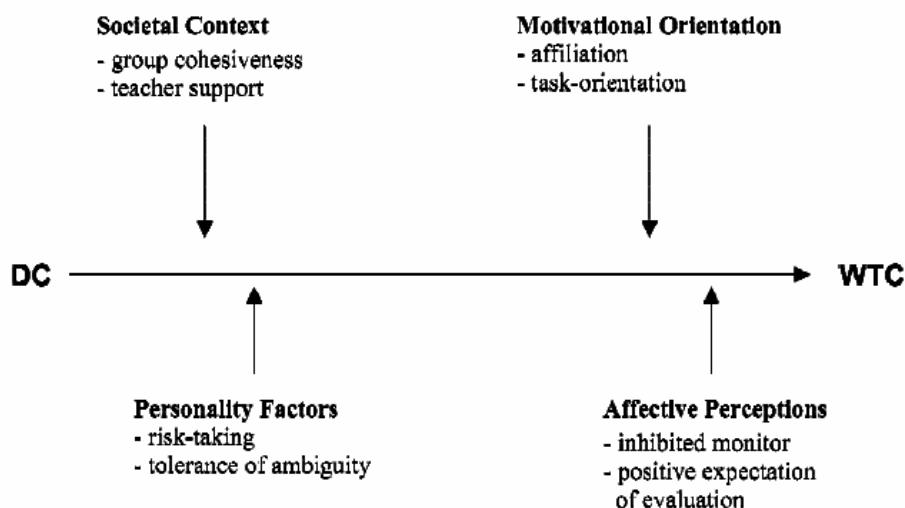


Figure 2. 2. Variables moderating the relation between DC and WTC in the Chinese EFL classroom (Wen and Clément 2003, p.25).

There have been recent attempts to incorporate both MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model and the adapted model proposed by Wen and Clément (2003) in Asian EFL contexts including China, Japan and Thailand. Peng's (2007c) study aimed to provide empirical evidence to support the heuristic models of WTC in L2 proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998) and Wen and Clément (2003), by taking the Chinese EFL classroom as its focused background ($n = 118$). Based on the results from the WTC questionnaire adapted from MacIntyre et al. (2001) and interviews with students with high and low WTC scores, it was found that Chinese students exhibited generally low L2 WTC tendencies and female students seemed to be more willing to engage in L2 communication than their male counterparts. A positive relationship between self-perceived proficiency and L2 WTC was observed. Of the eight factors identified to contribute to L2 WTC in this study, communicative competence and language anxiety were posited from MacIntyre et al's model whereas risk-taking, group cohesiveness, and teacher support were posited from Wen and Clément's (2003) model. It was found that the precursors of L2 WTC among Chinese students were related to the influence of the Chinese Confucian heritage.

Matsuoka (2006) investigated how a number of ID variables affected Japanese university students' WTC and English proficiency. Data were obtained from 180 students with a

questionnaire, WTC test and computerised English proficiency test. The results showed that communication apprehension, perceived competence, introversion, and motivational intensity were predictors of L2 WTC, and that perceived competence and L2 WTC were predictors of L2 proficiency. Matsuoka thus developed a six-layered conceptual model, based on the results from her study, MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model, and Wen and Clément's (2003) model. Following MacIntyre et al.'s model, Layer I to Layer III consists of situational factors while Layer IV to Layer VI comprises enduring influences. Layer VI represents societal/cultural context including other-directness and international posture. Layer V, cognitive context, includes self-efficacy. The fourth layer is called affective context and includes predisposition against verbal behaviour. Layer III is made up of three situational factors including desire, tension, and confidence. Layer II is WTC, also called communication intention, believed to bring about communication behaviour or L2 use.

Pattapong's (in press) study also drew on MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model and Wen and Clément's (2003) culture-specific model to examine the factors contributing to WTC in L2 for Thai EFL students ($n = 45$) at tertiary level as well as investigating the relationship between WTC in L2 and speaking achievement. Her study also sought to understand the nature of classroom teaching practices which were considered to relate to WTC. Data were collected from WTC questionnaires, oral exams, interviews, and classroom observations. Pattapong's findings showed that the cultural orientation was similar to the role of culture in WTC for Chinese EFL students described by Wen and Clément (2003), and that confidence was a parallel factor to state communicative self-confidence in MacIntyre et al. (1998).

In summary, the empirical studies on L2 WTC carried out in different contexts provide some evidence for the applicability of MacIntyre et al.'s heuristic model across contexts. The studies which combined both MacIntyre et al.'s and Wen and Clément's models demonstrate that the relationship between L2 WTC and its various predictors is substantially different when it is considered from a cultural perspective. There seems to be a focus on use of quantitative methods in WTC research such as structural equation

modelling to examine the causal relationship between WTC and its antecedents. The aforementioned studies pinpoint the influences of affective/individual variables such as motivation, perceived linguistic self-confidence and attitude on WTC. A number of studies also reveal contextual variation in the influence on WTC. In the next section, a more comprehensive review of empirical studies on L2 WTC is conducted to identify the different strands of factors affecting WTC.

2.1.3 Variables Underlying WTC in L2

To gain an insight into the relationship between WTC and its predictors, it is necessary to turn to a comprehensive review of empirical investigations of WTC in L2. In this subsection I want to review WTC studies which have examined how WTC is affected by a range of affective/individual and social contextual variables.

Among the affective/individual variables, perceived communicative competence and communication anxiety (referred to as *self-confidence* when combined) are key predictors (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000, 2003; Cetinkaya, 2005; MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 2001), as mentioned in the preceding section. Other individual difference variables such as personality (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996), motivation (Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre et al., 2001), international posture (Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), gender and age (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2002; Weaver, 2004) have also been found to be predictive signs of WTC.

In a study ($n = 92$) carried out in the Canadian immersion context, MacIntyre and Charos (1996) found personality to be a predictor of WTC. They investigated the relations among attitudes, personality, motivation, perceived competence, and anxiety, and their impact on frequency in L2 communication. Based on questionnaire data, significant relationships were found affecting frequency of communication from WTC, motivation, and other variables. The results from path analyses confirmed students who were more willing to communicate were more likely to use the language more frequently. The study also revealed an evident contribution of personality trait to predicting frequency in L2 communication. The significance of the MacIntyre and Charos study lay in its attempt to

replicate relations described in the language-learning motivation model and the WTC construct, thus connecting motivation to WTC.

In a partial replication of MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) study in a tertiary Japanese EFL context ($n = 56$), Hashimoto (2002) found that perceived competence, L2 anxiety and motivation were predictors of WTC. This study employed both the socio-educational model and the WTC model as the basis for a conceptual framework to examine relationships among L2 learning and communication variables. Structural equation modelling of self-report survey data showed that perceived competence and L2 anxiety were causes of WTC. The findings also showed that motivation and WTC affect L2 communication frequency, which indicates that students who had greater motivation for language learning and who were more willing to communicate reported using L2 more frequently in the classroom. Hashimoto's study indicates that motivation affects WTC directly, a link that was not identified in the MacIntyre and Charos (1996) study and reveals that the WTC construct possesses motivational properties.

Yashima's (2002) study of Japanese EFL students ($n = 297$) was also informed by combined WTC and socio-educational models, and this study yielded similar results as in Hashimoto (2002) and MacIntyre and Charos (1996). She postulated the *international posture* construct which referred to "an interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to study or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners and ... a non-ethnocentric attitude towards different cultures" (Yashima, 2000, p. 57). Self-confidence was taken to mean a combination of perceived communicative competence and a low level of anxiety. In this study, L2 proficiency, international posture, confidence in L2 communication, and motivation were hypothesised to affect WTC in a L2. Since there was little daily contact with English native speakers in the EFL context, frequency of communication was not included as a variable. Findings from self-report surveys showed that there was a significant correlation between international posture and WTC in L2, and motivation appeared to directly affect perceived L2 competence that led to WTC in L2. It was also found that a lower level of anxiety and a higher level of

perceived L2 competence led to a higher level of WTC, thus supporting the results of the MacIntyre and Charos (1996) study.

To further investigate possible relationships among variables underlying WTC in L2, Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu (2004) conducted a comparative study involving two groups of Japanese adolescent learners of English in a Japanese high school ($n = 160$) and in an American ESL context ($n = 60$). Apart from the variables tested in the previous study (Yashima 2002), another construct *frequency of communication in L2* was added, which was hypothesised to be predicted by WTC in L2, along with international posture. Using structural equation modelling, the results from investigations in both contexts revealed that WTC resulted in more frequent communication in L2; in addition, international posture predicted WTC and L2 communication behaviour. Yashima's studies (2002, 2004) differ from the other studies in that she conceptualised a new variable international posture and found its direct relationship with WTC.

Concerning the effects of gender and age on WTC, MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Donovan (2002) conducted a study in the Canadian context to examine how these influenced WTC and other variables including anxiety, perceived competence, frequency of communication and motivation in both L1 and L2. They examined the effects globally at Grades 7, 8 and 9 in a junior high school French immersion programme ($n = 268$). The results from questionnaire data demonstrated obvious changes in each variable across the grade levels, and differences based on gender were observable in WTC and anxiety. There was an increase in L2 anxiety among males and a decrease among females as students progressed through the programme.

Apart from individual/affective variables, research has also shown how WTC can be affected by social contextual variables (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000, 2003; Clément et al., 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2001; Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008). For example, MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Conrod (2001) examined how motivation and social contexts (inside the classroom and outside the classroom) affected WTC in four macro-skills ($n = 79$) in a L2 French immersion programme. The results indicated a positive correlation between motivation for language learning and WTC both inside and outside the classroom. The

findings also implied that social support of families and friends was an important consideration in promoting WTC. Similarly, Baker and MacIntyre's (2000, 2003) studies examined the influence of learning context on WTC by tapping into the distinction between foreign language learning (FLL) and second language acquisition (SLA) (Dörnyei, 2005). They compared French immersion versus non-immersion students and found that immersion students displayed higher WTC, lower communication anxiety and more frequent communication in L2 than their non-immersion counterparts.

Clément, Baker and MacIntyre (2003) showed that opportunities for L2 contact, in terms of both frequency and quality, had an effect on L2 WTC. Their study was carried out among two groups of tertiary students – Anglophone ($n = 130$) and Francophone students ($n = 248$) attending a Canadian context. By combining the WTC model with the social context model (a model that stressed the importance of contact, L2 confidence and identity in acquiring an L2), they examined the differences in the contextual and individual difference variables between the two groups. The study demonstrated the possibility and benefits of merging models of L2 acquisition and use. The findings from questionnaire data and path analyses revealed that contextual, individual and social factors are all important determinants of L2 use. Findings from this study point to the role of opportunities for L2 communication, which in turn suggests that WTC might not be relevant to L2 use when participants are not given the choice to use the L2. Clément et al.'s study emphasises the importance of taking into consideration the aspects of the context in which L2 communication occurs and highlights the importance of social support in promoting learner's L2 WTC.

To examine the effects of learning context on L2 WTC, frequency of communication, proficiency development and changes in international posture, Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide (2008) carried out a follow-up study to Yashima et al. (2004). They compared study-abroad and stay-home groups ($n = 165$) and also compared two EFL programme options with considerably different exposure to an L2. Based on questionnaire data, the findings revealed that the study-abroad group demonstrated a clear advantage in all the indicators over the stay-home groups. The results also indicated that international posture

could develop with L2 proficiency and frequency of communication in both the study abroad and the stay-home context when learners fully participated in an imagined international community. They acknowledged that using combined methods of observation and interviews in future studies would promote a holistic understanding of learner development. This study highlights the impact of different learning contexts on L2 WTC.

The aforementioned empirical studies carried out in western and non-western contexts reveal that various individual and affective variables can exert influences on L2 WTC. The particular variables common to most studies include linguistic self-confidence, personality, motivation, international posture, gender, and age. These studies also highlight the influence of social and learning contexts on WTC. In those studies, self-report questionnaire is the main data source and quantitative methods such as structural equation modelling, path analysis, and correlation analysis are widely used to identify causal relationships or correlations between L2 WTC and its underlying variables.

2.1.4 Trait Versus Situational WTC in L2

This section reviews work on the L2 WTC construct itself by focusing on the trait and state levels of this construct. WTC in L2, similar to other ID variables such as motivation, language anxiety, and personality, is suggested to display dual characteristics, trait WTC and situational WTC (Dörnyei, 2005), with the former being a stable disposition and the latter possessing a situated nature. MacIntyre (2007) acknowledges the role played by trait-level WTC, proposing, however, that the interplay of the features of the situation with the psychology of the individual speaker should take on a primary role in this paradigm. According to MacIntyre, satisfying the remaining need to examine the process of creating WTC at a specific time with a specific person would illuminate a fascinating and complex process.

The dual characteristics of WTC (trait-like and situation-specific) were examined experimentally by MacIntyre et al. (1999) with ESL tertiary students. The participants ($n = 226$) in their study were first asked to complete a questionnaire including five scales to measure trait WTC, perceived competence, communication anxiety, self-esteem,

extroversion, and emotional stability. The state measures for WTC, perceived competence, and anxiety were the participants' self-rating of how willing, competent, and anxious they felt about performing two speaking tasks and two writing tasks. The trait-level and state-level WTC were found to be complementary. The results indicate that trait WTC prepares individuals for communication by creating a tendency to place themselves in situations where communication is expected; situational WTC, on the other hand, influences the decision to initiate communication in a particular situation. MacIntyre et al. (2001) pointed out that the self-report method only tapped trait-like WTC in the 1999 study and suggested that observational studies would be more suitable to examine state-level WTC. MacIntyre et al. (2002) further called for verification of self-report data by behavioural studies in the classroom. Therefore, it appears problematic to measure state WTC in terms of self-report; instead, observational research of state WTC is warranted.

While much previous research has been done to investigate WTC in L2 as a trait variable measured by questionnaire surveys, Kang's (2005) study deserves special attention as the qualitative method employed in the study enabled insights into WTC in L2 as a situational variable (Dörnyei, 2005). In an investigation of situational WTC, Kang examined change in L2 WTC in the course of communication between NNS (Non-native speaker) learners and NS (Native speaker) tutors in an American university ($n = 4$). From inductive analysis of data collected over 8 weeks from videotaped conversations, interviews and stimulated recalls, she found that situational WTC in L2 could vary according to influence of situational variables such as interlocutor(s), topic and conversational context. These situational variables interacted with the psychological conditions of security, excitement and responsibility to determine the degree of L2 WTC. She therefore proposed a new definition of WTC as a situational variable:

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual's volitional inclination towards activity engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables. (p. 291)

Dörnyei (2005) noted that the effects of time and temporal fluctuation on WTC could not be overlooked when this construct was considered in a situated manner. Previous research on WTC as a situational variable also revealed its fluctuation over time as a

result of variations in its antecedents. For example, MacIntyre et al. (2002) considered the effects of year of study on the variables of WTC in L2, such as anxiety, perceived communication competence, attitude, and motivation. They showed that changes were evident in each variable across the grade levels. Baker and MacIntyre (2000, 2003) concluded from their comparison of French immersion and non-immersion students that the influences of the underlying variables on WTC might change over time as students gained greater experience in a L2. MacIntyre et al. (2003a) pointed out that the variables underlying WTC showed intriguing and complex interrelations and evidence from their previous studies suggested that these relations could change over time. Kang (2005) found that situational WTC was a multi-layered construct that could change from moment to moment in the conversational context, under the joint effect of the psychological conditions and situational variables. Thus, as a situational variable, WTC in L2 could change as learners gain greater experience in an L2 in a broader sense (Baker and MacIntyre 2000, 2003), or fluctuate from moment to moment (Kang 2005) at a micro-level.

This section has introduced the dual characteristics of WTC in L2 – trait WTC and situational or state WTC. The previous research on WTC has focused predominantly on its trait disposition; however, a handful of studies have investigated state WTC. Whereas the questionnaire is a widely used measurement of trait WTC, this instrument seems inadequate to measure state WTC. Observation is suggested as a more suitable method to examine state WTC. Due to its situated nature, state WTC entails fluctuation over time. This dynamic and situated nature of state WTC is currently under-explored and warrants further attention. In relation to L2 learning and communication, the L2 classroom is a key context for the research of situational WTC. In the following section, recent attempts to explore the concept of WTC as situated in L2 classrooms are presented.

2.1.5 Classroom WTC in L2

Some researchers (Dornyei 2005; MacIntyre et al. 1998, 2003) have argued that the ultimate goal of language instruction should be the creation of WTC in the language learning process. Given the relevance of WTC to language teaching and learning, it seems important to examine WTC as specific to the L2 classroom context, by considering

the influence of the underlying variables of learners' WTC. There has been increasing attention to research on WTC as situated in L2 classrooms and this body of research has investigated a number of areas in both ESL and EFL settings, including examination of learner perceptions of their WTC in L2 in class (de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009; House, 2004), comparison between self-report WTC and WTC behaviour in class (Cao & Philp, 2006; Liu, 2005), together with exploration of contextual and situational variables underlying WTC in the L2 classroom (Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000; Pattapong, in press; Peng, 2007a, 2008; Weaver, 2004, 2005a).

Some research has focused on learner perceptions of WTC in class. For example, House (2004) investigated learner perceptions of factors contributing to WTC in L2 among ESL learners, and relationships existing between these factors, through the use of diaries and interviews. Six learners were asked to report their experiences over a 5-week period, and how perceptions of these experiences influenced their WTC inside the language classroom. The results showed that WTC in L2 was affected by whether learners take up opportunities that they perceive as suitable for actually engaging in L2 communication. He also found that factors such as perceived politeness, the role of physical locality, the presence of the opposite sex, mood, and the topic under discussion were minor influences affecting WTC. House's study was the first attempt to enable learners' perceptions of WTC to be voiced and heard.

Likewise, de Saint Léger and Storch (2009) investigated French L2 learners' ($n = 32$) perceptions of WTC. Differing from House's (2004) study which explored general factors perceived to affect learners' WTC in class, this study focused on the role of learners' L2 speaking abilities and of their contributions, their attitudes towards the speaking activities employed in two interactional classroom settings (whole-class discussions and small-group discussions), and how such perceptions influenced their WTC in L2. Data were collected through self-assessment questionnaires and focused group interviews over 12 weeks. The study found that learners' perceptions of themselves as learners in the L2 classroom affected their WTC in class. As their self-confidence increased over time, their WTC in L2 also increased. This study also highlighted the

potential pedagogical benefits of self-assessment questionnaires administered at key points during the course of study. These can help learners to monitor and modify their perception of their speaking abilities, which may lead to an increase in WTC.

Cao and Philp (2006) compared self-reported WTC and WTC behaviour in class. This study employed triangulation as a technique to compare ESL learners' ($n = 8$) self-report of WTC to their actual WTC behaviour in three interactional classroom settings (whole class, small groups and dyads) and how their WTC behaviour differed in each of these contexts. The results indicate that learners' self-reports of WTC are not necessarily predictive of their actual classroom behaviour. It was also found that situational WTC could change in the classroom across the three interactional contexts, under the influence of situational variables such as group size, familiarity with interlocutors, the familiarity and interest of topic of discussion, and the confidence of the learner in relation to the task. This study supported the use of classroom observation as an appropriate way to tap situational WTC in L2 in class.

Another study that employed the triangulation technique in investigating WTC in L2 was Liu's (2005) study. This study examined Chinese tertiary students' reticence in oral English language classroom by employing questionnaires, classroom observations and reflective journals ($n = 27$). The study found that the factors that prohibited students' WTC in class were lack of practice, low English proficiency, lack of self-confidence, anxiety, cultural beliefs, personality, and fear of losing face. This study highlighted the importance of searching for reticence-coping strategies to promote learners' WTC in class.

Some classroom-based WTC research has explored contextual factors affecting WTC in class, in particular in relation to task attitude, task type and pre-task planning. The first study was conducted by Dörnyei and Kormos (2000), who investigated the effects of a number of affective and social variables such as motivation, L2 proficiency, WTC, group cohesiveness, and relationship with the interlocutor on L2 learners' engagement in oral tasks. This study involved 46 participants at secondary schools in Hungary. Data were

collected from oral tasks, questionnaires and oral proficiency tests. The results indicated that the students' WTC in the L2 classroom was influenced by their attitudes towards the task. Strong and positive correlations were found between learners' WTC and the amount of L2 they produced when performing the task in the case of learners with high task attitude. However, there was no correlation between WTC and the amount of L2 produced in the case of learners with low task attitude.

Weaver's studies examined situational variables underlying WTC in L2 classrooms in relation to task types. His study (2004) investigated Japanese learners' WTC ($n = 1104$) within an L2 classroom at tertiary level. Unlike previous studies that exclusively adopted the WTC scale developed by McCroskey and Richmond (1990) in their questionnaire surveys, this study used a questionnaire developed by the researcher himself to investigate whether or not learner's L2 WTC would vary across 17 speaking situations and tasks potentially arising in this social context of a L2 classroom. The findings revealed that students' WTC varied significantly across different speaking situations and tasks and suggest that task is a variable likely to contribute to changes in WTC in L2 classrooms.

Weaver's (2005a) study followed an experimental design to investigate the effect of English instruction and pre-task planning on students' level of WTC to do different speaking tasks inside an oral communication class. The participants were asked to complete a survey in the first and last classes. Weaver's study employed a WTC survey ($n = 490$) specifically designed for an L2 classroom (2005b). This survey was previously tested by using the Rasch model to confirm its usefulness in defining a range of indicators of L2 WTC among second language learners. Differing from a widely accepted WTC survey (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990) which was not restricted to instructional settings, this survey appears to be more relevant to an L2 classroom. The results showed post-instruction gains in terms of WTC, suggesting that pre-task planning has a positive effect on WTC.

Some classroom WTC studies have aimed to identify general contextual and situational variables affecting WTC in class. For example, Peng (2007a) conducted a qualitative study integrated with quantitative techniques to investigate the factors contributing to Chinese EFL learners' WTC in the classroom ($n = 118$). Based on questionnaire and interview data, two groups of factors were identified as influencing Chinese students' L2 WTC; namely, individual contextual factors and social contextual factors. The individual context included factors such as communicative competence, language anxiety, risk-taking and learners' beliefs. The social context included factors of classroom climate, group cohesiveness, teacher support and classroom organisation. She interpreted the eight factors from a cultural perspective, pointing out that communicative competence is not a priority in the culture of learning in China and therefore still a downplayed variable, and arguing that the classroom climate within the Chinese culture of learning and communication can be viewed as an environment built up by the majority of others to which the individual self is affiliated and oriented. She further argued that Chinese learners' WTC encompasses their linguistic, cognitive, affective and cultural readiness. That is, their reluctant engagement in L2 communication could be attributable to the lack of one or more of such readiness factors. She proposed that the dynamic nature of the L2 WTC construct in the classroom setting warranted future research.

Peng's (2008) recent study on Chinese EFL university students' WTC examined dynamic fluctuations of WTC in the classroom longitudinally. Informed by both a Chinese conceptualisation of WTC and an ecological perspective on classroom dynamics, this study investigated fluctuations of WTC across situations and the factors underlying such fluctuations over time. Four students with highest and lowest WTC were chosen through extreme and deviant sampling from two intact classes (one Year 1 and one Year 2 class) and they were followed up for 8 months. Triangulation was employed for data collection, through use of individual interviews, classroom observations and journal entries. Interestingly, both the high and low cases in Year 1 demonstrated a downward trend in their WTC behavioural change over 8 months whereas the Year 2 high and low cases displayed an upward trend in their WTC behavioural change. As for the factors underlying fluctuations of WTC across situations and over time, both distal individual

variables and situational social factors and situational individual factors were identified. The distal individual context included learner beliefs about English learning and classroom behaviours and motivation. The situational social context included classroom atmosphere, group mates' participation, teacher, and tasks. The situational social factors were also referred to as environmental factors. The situational individual factors included cognitive issues, linguistic resources and psychological feelings. Among the three strands of factors, the situational social (environmental) factors exerted most effects on the students' situational WTC in class. All three strands of factors were found to either facilitate or debilitate the students' WTC. This study demonstrated how WTC inside the EFL classroom fluctuates over time and across situations as a function of the interaction between individual and situational contexts. The study also illustrates the usefulness of employing a hybrid theoretical framework in providing contextualised understanding of the dynamic changes of WTC in the EFL tertiary classroom.

Pattapong's (in press) study explored EFL learners' WTC in a Thai context by employing questionnaires, stimulated-recall interviews and classroom observations ($n = 45$). The study investigated factors underlying learners' WTC in class. The findings revealed that three strands of factors influenced the participants' WTC in L2; that is, cultural, individual and situational factors. Cultural factors referred to cultural-oriented variables, both stable and changeable, including Thai values, tolerance of ambiguity, and insider effect. Individual factors included individual interest, interpersonal motivation, personal characteristics, self-perception, and inhibition monitor. Situational factors included confidence, classroom atmosphere, teacher characteristics, classroom organisation, and affect. One special feature of this study was that it explored the kind of teaching practice that was considered to relate to WTC. Classroom observations and teacher interviews revealed that the classroom learning environment was "controlling" and exerted a negative effect on learners' WTC.

While there exist widely accepted instruments to measure trait WTC including McCroskey and Richmond's (1990) and MacIntyre et al.'s (2001) questionnaire surveys, it remains a challenge to observe learners' situational WTC in class. Despite the

challenge, a number of attempts have been made to operationalise WTC behavioural intention as specific to language classrooms and these include Cao and Philp (2006), Cao (2009), Pattapong (in press) and Peng (2008). They operationalised WTC behavioural intention in terms of similar categories including volunteering answers to teachers' questions, responding to either the teacher's or peer's questions, asking either the teacher or peers a question, and presenting opinions in class. All of their classroom observation schemes concerned both teacher-fronted interaction and group/pair interaction. Cao's scheme only focused on verbal WTC behaviour while Pattapong's and Peng's schemes consisted of both verbal and non-verbal WTC behaviour such as hand-raising, laughing and smiling, and looking bored or engaged. Pattapong's scheme also included a range of teacher characteristics that encouraged learners' WTC, such as giving feedback and prompts, creating alertive environment, and clarifying for understanding. These three studies independently developed similar categories in their WTC observational schemes, providing support for the validation of a more uniform WTC classroom observation scheme for future research.

Overall, recent studies on WTC as situated in the L2 classroom provide empirical evidence for WTC being dynamic and situation-dependent rather than static. As a dynamic situational construct, classroom WTC in L2 is shown to be affected by classroom contextual variables including the particular interactional context, interlocutor, teacher, task and topic. Through the use of triangulation of self-reported and observational data, research has demonstrated that learners' self-report of WTC is not necessarily predictive of their actual WTC behaviour in the classroom. This summary of the extant findings in classroom-based WTC research concludes a section; in the next, I identify the gaps in WTC research and provide a glimpse of areas particularly deserving of future research in this domain.

2.2 A Situated Approach to IDs and WTC Research

2.2.1. Gaps in WTC Research

From the review in the preceding sections of recent WTC studies carried out in different contexts, it can be seen that the WTC research still bears a very close relation to the most comprehensive theory of the WTC in L2 construct proposed by MacIntyre and associates (1998). It is noteworthy that the research is limited to employing a quantitative approach with data collected mainly from self-report questionnaires and with data then being subjected to statistical analysis to identify causal or correlational relationships between WTC and its predictors. However, a small but growing body of research seems to have adopted a multi-method approach and particularly, to have employed qualitative methods in the investigation of WTC. More in-depth qualitative analysis over a relatively longer period of time has enabled a more holistic and comprehensive view of the dynamic nature of this concept. The increasing adoption of multiple methods in WTC research is in line with the trend in IDs research in general which embraces greater diversity in the methods used to examine the ID factors and encourages adoption of a multi-method approach to investigating individual differences among learners (Ellis, 2008).

An examination of the findings from previous studies on L2 WTC reveals mixed results. This could be the result of different measures applied in different contexts. The questionnaire employed in the majority of the studies to measure trait WTC was adapted from either McCroskey and Richmond (1991) or MacIntyre et al. (2001). McCroskey and Richmond's WTC scale was developed in relation to WTC in L1 and it was intended to measure the extent to which a person was willing to communicate; it included items related to four communication contexts including public speaking, talking at meetings, talking in small groups and talking in dyads with three types of receivers – strangers, acquaintances, and friends. MacIntyre et al.'s scale operationalised WTC in L2 in the four basic skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and it was intended to measure students' willingness to engage in L2 communication both inside and outside the classroom. This scale was adapted in a number of studies to include communication tasks specific to EFL classrooms (Peng, 2007a, 2008). Cao and Philp (2006) questioned the

applicability of a generic WTC questionnaire in an instructional setting; they proposed instead that Weaver's WTC survey, specific to an EFL classroom setting, provided a possible model. Thus, overall there lacks a uniform well-established questionnaire for WTC in L2 (Ellis, 2008). While a self-report questionnaire is considered suitable to measure trait WTC, defined as *a behavioural intention that remains stable across contexts*, this method is identified as unsuitable for examining situational WTC, which may change across situations. An observational method was suggested to be more suitable to tap situational WTC (MacIntyre et al. 2001). In observational studies, a number of attempts were made to operationalise WTC in L2 classroom as observable communication behaviours; however, these studies operationalised L2 WTC in class in slightly different categories (Cao, 2009; Cao & Philp, 2006; Pattapong, in press; Peng, 2008). It seems that in future studies it will be necessary to develop a uniform classroom observational scheme for WTC behaviours in both EFL and ESL classrooms.

The methodological concerns mentioned above point to the importance of triangulation of data and participant perspectives in future WTC research. Self-report data from questionnaires, interviews, and journal entries require verification by actual classroom observations (MacIntyre et al., 2001; MacIntyre et al., 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). This is in keeping with the concern voiced in current motivation research that multi-method analysis in context from multiple perspectives should be employed in motivation research (Turner, 2001; cited in Ushioda, 2009).

As Kang (2005) argued, WTC constitutes an important component of SLA and L2 pedagogy and further research should focus on WTC by incorporating WTC into SLA and L2 pedagogy to provide insights into SLA and more effective suggestions for L2 pedagogy. Therefore, it would seem promising in future studies to examine learners' WTC behaviour in relation to their participation in classroom discourse.

As a situational variable, the WTC concept is found to entail fluctuation and dynamism over time. A number of attempts have been made to address the impact of time on WTC (Cao & Philp, 2006; de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009; House, 2004; Kang, 2005; Peng,

2008), although the results are suggested to be mixed. The majority of the L2 WTC research has been cross-sectional rather than longitudinal. Longitudinal research is needed to document a systematic change in WTC behaviour. On a different level, in order to capture the dynamic nature of this construct, MacIntyre (2007) has called for a methodology that focuses on the dynamic process of choosing to initiate or to avoid L2 communication when opportunity arises, one that demonstrates the complexity of the processes involved in creating WTC. Such a methodology would show how WTC may be strengthened or weakened by situational factors at a particular moment (Cao and Philp, 2006). The idiodynamic approach employed in MacIntyre et al.'s (2008) study to investigate the approach and avoidance (referred to as *ambivalence*) tendencies in L2 communication and to capture the dynamic process underlying L2 WTC seems to be promising in this direction.

An important change has occurred in an attempt to consider the WTC construct as specific to a context, which reflects the situated nature of WTC. There seems to be a shift towards a more contextualised process-oriented approach to the study of WTC in L2; that is, examining how a particular learning context influences this construct, and documenting its ongoing changes over time within this context. Moreover, Yashima et al. (2004) have noted that contextual variables that make a person more or less willing to communicate both inside and outside a classroom should be investigated. In particular, it is necessary to look into how sociocultural contexts influence communication behaviour and how learners' interactions with their environments including teachers, co-learners, and hosts make the learner more or less willing to communicate.

2.2.2. A Situated Approach to IDs Research

A model of WTC must be understood within models of IDs as a whole. The theme of context is emerging in the recent ID literature, as current research addresses the issue of the situated nature of ID factors. The trait and state dichotomy of ID variables such as personality, motivation, anxiety, and WTC still persists, but there have been an increasing number of propositions for considering dynamic conceptualisations of ID factors as interacting with situational parameters rather than treating them as stable across task and environment (Dörnyei, 2005, 2006). The role of ID factors can only be evaluated in their

interaction with specific environmental conditions and temporal factors (Dörnyei, 2008b). In a word, IDs researchers are increasingly acknowledging that ID factors are situational and dynamic rather than trait-like; that is, they operate differently according to different contexts and they fluctuate as a result of learner-internal and learner-external factors (Ellis, 2008).

Dörnyei (2008a, *in press*) specifically urges a reconsideration of two fundamental issues concerning individual-level variation: the conceptualisation of a dynamic system of multiple interrelated ID components; and the feasibility of distinguishing different types of ID factors. He acknowledges the inadequacy of conceiving the concept of individual differences in the traditional sense; that is, regarding ID factors as stable and monolithic learner traits. This conception does not conform to the inherently process-oriented and situated nature of SLA phenomena. Within a process-oriented and situated perspective of SLA, learner attributes should not be viewed as stable and context-independent, rather these ID factors vary considerably from time to time and from situation to situation (Dörnyei, 2008b).

Dörnyei (2008a, 2008b, *in press*) proposes a dynamic systems approach, one of the context-sensitive approaches, to capture the complexity of individual-level variation. He explains that the interconnected, constantly changing, and environmentally sensitive IDs system serves as an example of a complex, dynamic system. He then proposes three interconnected subsystems to account for individual variation in human mental function; the cognitive, the motivational, and the emotional systems. Cognition refers to a range of slightly different meanings concerning knowing and knowledge representation, memory, attention, learning, information processing, appraisal, and so on. It can be seen as a powerful central attractor in the dynamic system. Motivation refers to the plethora of relevant motivational factors, conditions, and motives that work as a system whose outcome is tangible for the individual at any given moment in time. Emotions include a wide variety: basic feelings (fear, joy, anger, and sadness), moods (depression, irritability), long-term emotions (lasting love), dispositions (benevolence), motivational feelings (hunger), cognitive feelings (confusion), and calm emotions (sympathy,

satisfaction). From a dynamic systems perspective, these three subsystems continuously interact with each other and do not operate in isolation from one another. In this dynamic IDs system, it can be argued that the WTC construct may fit within the motivational subsystem and interact with factors in the motivational and other subsystems.

Dörnyei (2008a, in press) argues that individual variation in the system is not so much a function of the strength of any individual determinants such as motivation or aptitude but rather of all the relevant factors working together. The non-dynamic stable states within the system can be explained by the concept of *attractors*. The higher-order ID variables can serve as powerful attractors acting as stabilising forces. He suggests that future research should be to identify these attractors (higher-level amalgams) of cognition, affect and motivation which are relatively stable rather than focusing on isolated ID variables. Dörnyei (2008b) argues that higher-order ID variables involve at one level or another the cooperation of cognitive, motivational, or emotional components of very different nature, resulting in hybrid attributes.

Dörnyei (2008b) recognises the difficulties in applying a dynamic systems approach to IDs research, which include modelling non-linear dynamic changes quantitatively and observing the operation of the whole system and the interaction of the parts rather than focusing on specific units. He points out that no methodological guidelines are currently available on how to conduct language-specific dynamic systems studies, and therefore a dynamic systems approach cannot easily be applied in quantitative investigations in SLA research and IDs research. Instead, he proposes that some aspects of a qualitative approach are suited to dynamic systems studies in SLA and IDs research. These aspects include the emergent nature of data collection and analysis, the thick description of the natural context, the relative ease of adding longitudinal aspects to the research design, and the individual-level analysis.

There is a current trend for integrating IDs research into the mainstream SLA field (Dörnyei, 2005). Particularly at the level of motivation research, it has been advocated that this synergy between L2 motivation theory and mainstream SLA lies in employing a

dynamic systems approach or a *person-in-context relational view* (Ushioda, 2009, p. 215) to investigate motivation as a situated and dynamic concept (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). As Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) propose, there is great potential for growing synergy between mainstream SLA and L2 motivation theory due to the advancement in re-theorising L2 motivation as a situated and dynamic concept and recent developments in L2 motivation research. The parallel social and cognitive worlds (Zuengler & Miller, 2006) can be expected to be bridged at the level of motivation research by adopting a person-in-context relational view or employing contextualised approaches such as dynamic systems theory, complexity theory, and emergentism in L2 motivation research (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009).

Ushioda (2009) points out that the role of context in L2 motivation research has been implicit, and context is often defined as a stable independent background variable that is outside the individual learner and that is theorised to affect the learner's motivation. She therefore argues for an emphasis on person-in-context to capture the mutually constitutive, dynamic, and complex relationship between persons and the context. From this perspective, L2 learners are understood as people located in a particular cultural and historical context. As she puts it, a person-in-context relational (as opposed to linear) view of motivation sees it as an organic process emergent from interrelationships "between real persons, with particular social identities, and the unfolding cultural context of activity" (Ushioda, 2009, p. 215). She further argues that a person-in-context relational analysis of L2 motivation needs not privilege any theoretical perspective over another, but may draw on various theoretical frameworks that have great potential to illuminate a contextually grounded relational analysis in an integrated but not indiscriminate manner. She believes that an integration of relevant perspectives to inform the relational analysis may enrich and diversify our understanding of the way motivation shapes and is shaped through engagement in language-related activity, of learner identities, and with possible selves (Ibid.)

In a word, the dynamic systems approach (Dörnyei, 2008a, 2008b, 2009) and the person-in-context relational view (Ushioda, 2009) provide feasible models for integrating the

parallel social and cognitive paradigms at the level of motivation research (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). WTC research should follow this trend, employing similar context-sensitive approaches to explore the social and cognitive aspects of this construct. In the next section, a rationale for a context-sensitive approach to WTC research is provided.

2.2.3 Rationale for a Context-sensitive Perspective on L2 WTC

In the present study, a context-sensitive perspective on the situational WTC construct is motivated by the need to investigate the interrelationships between the variables suggested to interact with situational WTC in class by incorporating psychological and social aspects of this construct.

The WTC construct was previously researched as mainly an individual factor with a focus on its trait disposition. The emergence of its situated nature in a conversational context and the L2 classroom context revealed that individuals communicate differently with different interlocutors when discussing different topics in different situations. These social factors in the context surrounding individuals appear to intertwine with their psychological conditions. WTC behaviour cannot be fully explained by looking solely at individual or affective factors such as motivation, self-confidence or attitude. Both individual and contextual factors need to be included to explain this multilayered situational construct and a context-sensitive process-oriented approach can be expected to combine these two aspects in an organic coherent manner. From a context-sensitive perspective, we can expect that learners' situational WTC in the L2 classroom will dynamically change as their situational WTC or WTC behaviour interacts with factors in the classroom environment (including the teacher, their peers, topics, and tasks) which mediate their psychological conditions.

Despite an increasing amount of research on L2 WTC, there have been few syntheses of individual and contextual variables in WTC research, resulting in gaps in our understanding of the interrelationships between individual and contextual factors affecting WTC. The present study intends to fill this gap, synthesising the strands of individual and contextual factors underlying WTC by utilising a context-sensitive approach; more specifically, the ecological approach. The ecological approach researches

language learning through situated contextualised research, and recognises context as the central and focal field of study that defines language in use. Applied linguistics research in general and SLA research in particular have witnessed a growing tendency to situate both theory and research, and employ holistic, contextualised classroom-based approaches which are expected to better account for the social dimensions of second language learning (Kubanyiova, 2008).

In WTC research, there is also a need to take a situated context-sensitive approach to future investigations. Recent developments in SLA research and in motivation research lead the way and it can be argued that WTC research should keep pace with the current developments in L2 motivation theory and SLA research.

In the next section, I present the historical background to the increased attention to social and contextual dimensions of SLA research over the past decade. I first introduce the initiative underlying the social/cognitive debate – Firth and Wagner's (1997) focal article that called for a reconceptualisation of the SLA field to account for the social and contextual dimensions of language learning. I then draw specifically on the sociocognitive perspectives that attempt to integrate the social and cognitive aspects, as proposed by Atkinson (2002). In the subsequent section, I outline one of the sociocognitive perspectives that inform the current study, namely, the ecological perspective. The ecological approach is useful in drawing together the social and the cognitive aspects as well as affording an explanation for dynamic interactions between the social and the cognitive dimensions. A rationale is provided for considering ecological theory as a useful conceptual framework for researching WTC in L2 as a situational, context-specific construct.

2.3 Historical Context

2.3.1 Reconceptualisation of SLA: The Social/Cognitive Debate

A debate between cognitive and social theories of SLA originated within the past 20 years and it is still continuing. This debate has been characterised by a tension concerning

what constitutes productive research within the SLA field, and involves disagreements between positivists and relativists over how to construct SLA theories (Thorne, 2000; Zuengler & Miller, 2006).

Due to the fact that SLA adopted cognitive psychology and linguistics as its source disciplines (Crookes, 1997; Mitchell & Myles, 1998), a cognitivist view has dominated the SLA field since the 1960s (Larsen-Freeman, 2007). Doughty and Long (2003) characterise this field as “a branch of cognitive science” (p. 4). The bulk of research conducted in this field in the 1960s and 1970s featured either a strong linguistic focus or a cognitive orientation (Gass, Lee, & Roots, 2007). The cognitively oriented research tended to isolate variables and favour repeatable experimental design that required specific de-contextualised and controlled environments (Thorn, 2000). Language acquisition was placed mainly within individual learners’ heads and individuals were seen as autonomous language acquirers. The SLA process was considered almost unanimously to be an internalised cognitive process. There was little room for social context to be considered a variable in language acquisition (Atkinson, 2002; Gass et al., 2007; Thorne, 2000). In this cognitivist view of L2 learning, social variables only have indirect influences on the acquisitional process (Ellis, 1994).

When the SLA field developed in the 1980s and 1990s, a greater emphasis was placed on the description of learners’ interlanguage systems. The focus was on the static knowledge of language including syntax, phonology and morphology rather than areas of pragmatics (Gass et al., 2007). During this period, SLA research was influenced by the social turn and witnessed a steady increase in contextual and interaction-oriented studies; however, SLA continued to be dominated by an emphasis on individual cognition (Firth & Wagner, 2007). It was in the mid-1990s that Firth and Wagner (1997) called for a more socially and situated view of SLA research (Larsen-Freeman, 2007). They criticised the then mainstream SLA research for its predominantly cognitive orientation in defining and researching the L2 learner and language learning. They argued that the overwhelming emphasis on individual cognitive issues within SLA failed to account for a large number of sociolinguistic and communicative dimensions of language use, including the roles of

context, discourse, interaction and the social identity of learner (Mori, 2007; Thorne, 2000). They advocated a need for a theoretical, methodological, and epistemological broadening of SLA (Firth and Wagner, 2007) and the reconceptualisation of the fundamental notions central to the SLA field, including language, discourse, communication, acquisition and use, and native and non-native speakers (Mori, 2007).

The major components of Firth and Wagner's (1997) proposed reconceptualisation of SLA included "(a) a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language; (b) an increased emic (i.e., participant-relevant) sensitivity towards fundamental concepts; and (c) the broadening of the traditional SLA data base" (p. 286). They suggested that language should be viewed as a dynamic set of resources which can be constantly negotiated and renegotiated through interaction (Mori, 2007). They emphasised that language acquisition cannot be discussed separately from language use.

Firth and Wagner's criticism has been viewed by some as a watershed for the SLA field in general and for SLA studies of interaction in particular (Firth & Wagner, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2007) because their article represented a radical attack on the traditional SLA (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007) and they challenged the perceived dominance of a cognitive, mentalistic orientation to SLA (Larsen-Freeman, 2007). Others argue that Firth and Wagner's (1997) article did not represent a new direction but continued an argument that was already prevalent in the SLA field (Gass et al., 2007; Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Prior to Firth and Wagner's (1997) criticism, in opposition to Long (1993) and Beretta (1993) as proponents of a unified theory of SLA, Block (1996) challenged the mainstream SLA preoccupation with individual cognition by pointing out that SLA was "scientised" by its researchers and practitioners, proposing theoretical pluralism. Similarly, Vygotskian researchers such as Lantolf and Appel (1994) also argued against the reductive cognitivism of the SLA field. Lantolf (1996) provided a postmodern argument for a pluralist approach to the exploration of SLA.

Following Firth and Wagner's (1997) criticism, several prominent scholars took a variety of positions in relation to their critique. The opposing respondents included Kasper (1997), Long (1997), Pouuisse (1997) and Gass (1998). They shared a cognitive orientation and maintained a strong split between language acquisition and language use (Zuengler and Miller, 2006). They all defended the cognitive approach and argued that Firth and Wagner held a basic misunderstanding of what constitutes SLA research and that they failed to show how language learning and language acquisition may take place simultaneously. On the other hand, commentators in support of Firth and Wagner's argument included Hall (1997), Liddicoat (1997), and Rampton (1997). They subscribed to Firth and Wagner's stance that there would be a need to reconceptualise the SLA field and they embraced Firth and Wagner's call for a new socially oriented way to examine learning in terms of the knowledge of and the ability to use language.

Firth and Wagner's critique had a positive effect on broadening of the research base in the SLA field. While psycholinguistic research was ascending, there was an increase in research embedded within a social context (Gass et al., 2007). Within this social turn in SLA research (Block, 2003; Breen, 2001), Firth and Wagner (2007) observed that learning was still conceived as a cognitive process and etic perspectives prevailed over emic perspectives in the mainstream of SLA; nevertheless, the SLA field witnessed a marked growth in context-oriented and interaction-oriented research. There was a growing awareness among SLA researchers of the importance of a more balanced approach to SLA, and more researchers attempted to adopt emic perspectives to explore and develop cognitive-social approaches to L2 learning.

To summarise, since Firth and Wagner's (1997) seminal article in which they called for a reconceptualisation of SLA with a more socially and contextually situated view, the past 10 years have seen increased attention to social and contextual dimensions of SLA research. There has been a broadening of perspectives in SLA research and SLA researchers are increasingly turning to more context-sensitive approaches such as Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2006, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998), the language socialisation perspective (Duff, 2000, 2001; Norton, 2001; Poole, 1992), the

ecological approach (Kramsch, 2002b; van Dam, 2003; van Lier, 2000, 2002, 2004), and chaos/complexity theory (de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002, 2007; van Geert, 2008).

Sociocultural theory, advocated by Lantolf (1994, 2006, 2000), is an adaptation of Vygotsky's (1978) theory of mind and activity theory (Leontiev, 1978). Lantolf and Thorn (2006) applied sociocultural theory to the study of the relationship between language, thought and activity when L2 learners internalise L2 knowledge from the social plane to the psychological plane (Lantolf, 2000). The language socialisation perspective of SLA regards linguistic and cultural knowledge as co-constructed through each other and language learners as active and selective agents in both processes (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2003). Kramsch (2002b) and van Lier (2000) proposed an ecological approach to SLA and language learning. The ecological approach centrally acknowledges the interactional and contextual characteristics of L2 use and acquisition. It is a critical approach to the study of interrelationship between the L2 and the natural environment of the L2 users (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007). Larsen-Freeman (2002) proposed chaos/complexity theory as a means of integrating both cognitive and sociocultural approaches within the SLA field. Chaos and complexity theory is considered by some SLA researchers such as Kramsch and Steffensen (2007) to be an explicit ecological theory. What these different theories have in common is that they attempt to account for both the cognitive and social dimensions of L2 learning.

These new approaches represent an attempt to bring the social and the cognitive into contact. Larsen-Freeman (2002) observes that the social/cognitive debate seems irresolvable because they present two different ontological positions that reflect “fundamental differences in the way they frame their understanding of learning” (p. 37). The most trenchant criticism of the mainstream SLA research is its failure to consider language use (*Ibid.*) and the traditional separation between language acquisition and language socialisation (Kramsch, 2002b). In the current SLA field which is seen by some as “in a state of turmoil” (Larsen-Freeman, 2002, p. 33) and by others as “incredibly, and happily, diverse, creative, often contentious, and always full of controversy” (Lantolf,

1996, p. 738), researchers such as Ellis (2000), Swain (2000) and Tarone (2000) argue for the integration of cognitive and sociocultural perspectives to SLA, calling for a balance between the social and cognitive (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Larsen-Freeman (2007) argues that an increasing number of researchers are taking up the challenge of researching language acquisition and language use from a sociocognitive perspective.

This section has provided a historical account of the emergence of more context-sensitive approaches to - or sociocognitive perspectives on - SLA. The nature of these approaches/perspectives concerns their commitment to making connections between the cognitive and social dimensions of L2 learning. These approaches/perspectives are explored in the following sections.

2.3.2 *Sociocognitive Perspectives*

The term *sociocognitive* has been used in a wide variety of disciplines and approaches (Atkinson, 2002). For example, the prominent educational psychologist Bandura (2001) referred to it as the interaction between an individual and his or her sociocultural environment. Bandura's social cognitive theory (as it was called) was based on both environmental and internal factors, which include affective, cognitive, psychological, and environmental factors together with the interaction between these factors. The individual cognitively responds to social and cultural elements through strategies that are intended to exert some measure of control over the environment. Bandura's (1986) theory emphasises the interplay among personal, behavioural, and environmental influences. The strength of the reciprocity between the factors can vary by personal behaviour, cognition, and situation, and can take place over time. This theory suggests that both the individual system and external environmental factors co-influence human behaviour. Individuals select the environments where they themselves exist and are influenced by those environments. Their behaviours in a given situation are affected by environmental characteristics, which are in turn affected by their behaviours. Their behaviours are also influenced by cognitive and personal factors, and in turn affect those same factors. Bandura (1986) referred to this relationship as "triadic reciprocity" or "reciprocal determinism" (p. 18); that is, both people and their environments are reciprocal determinants of each other.

Similarly within applied linguistics, Atkinson (2002) discussed parallel ideas and adopted the coinage *sociocognitive* from a number of sources (Ochs, 1988), defining it as “a view of language and language acquisition as simultaneously occurring and interactively constructed both in the head and in the world” (p. 525). She proposed a conceptualisation of SLA as a “situated, integrated, *sociocognitive* process”, a view that she believed would bear real fruit in attempts to understand the complex phenomenon of SLA (p. 526).

Atkinson (2002) argues that language from a sociocognitive perspective is “an abundantly rich resource for getting on in the world – for performing social action” and that language is “intricately but dynamically interwoven with humans’ other means of ecological adaptation and activity” (p. 536). She maintains that the sociocognitive perspective on language is fundamentally cognitive and fundamentally social. It is social because language is inherently a tool for communication between an individual and others, and it is cognitive because language is “stored in, comprehended by, produced by, and therefore reflects the basic design features of the human brain” (p. 529). Language is “always mutually, simultaneously, and co-constitutively in the head and in the world” (p. 538). She argues that the social and cognitive aspects of language co-evolved from the beginning and they function interdependently. The cognitive and the social do not simply interact, rather they are mutually constituted and cannot usefully be separated.

The sociocognitive perspective alleges the profound interdependency and integration of the cognitive and social aspects of SLA (Atkinson, 2002). The sociocognitive perspective on L2 learning sees the social, the physical, and the cognitive as parts of the same larger process that underlie L2 development. From this perspective, mind, body and world are viewed as relationally and integratively “constituting a continuous ecological circuit”, and L2 development is viewed as “engagement and participation in a dynamic and changing mind-body-world continuum” (Atkinson, Nishino, Churchill, & Okada, 2007, p. 170).

Atkinson (2002) suggests that a sociocognitive perspective has a number of implications for SLA research. Firstly, teaching and learning go hand-in-hand. As learning occurs in participation in specific and meaningful social activities, co-participants in the activities should be considered as teachers. Secondly, language and its acquisition are intimately connected to other realms of inquiry and practice, including culture, schooling, identity, power, discourse and social ecology. Thirdly, qualitative research approaches to studying learners in real contexts and interactions have a central place in SLA within a sociocognitive perspective. Finally, L2 learners can be seen as real people doing what they naturally do, rather than being considered as mere research subjects or mere sites for L2 acquisition.

Within a sociocognitive perspective, Atkinson et al. (2007) define learning as “trajectories of ecological experience and repertoires of participation, gained in the process of adaptive dynamics” (p. 172); that is, learning is seen as occurring in participation, which differs greatly from a cognitive conception of learning which sees learning as primarily occurring in a learner’s head. The sociocognitive perspective on researching L2 learning leads to “a shift in focus from what goes on *within* the learner in the L2 acquisition process – cognitive internalisation and restructuring of language – to what goes on *between* the learner and his or her sociocognitive world” (Atkinson et al., 2007, p. 185).

A common thread running through the literature mentioned above is an emerging view that suggests the interdependence between social and cognitive aspects of language and language learning. In the preceding section, I described the social and cognitive debate initiated in the SLA field in the 1990s. I have also briefly introduced sociocognitive perspectives on conducting SLA research. In the following section, I turn to the ecological approach, which falls into the broad category of sociocognitive perspectives. I introduce a number of key notions in ecological theory before explaining the relevance of an ecological framework for the investigation of WTC.

2.4 Ecological Approach

2.4.1 Defining Ecology and Ecological Validity

The ecological theory is potentially relevant to researching WTC as a situational construct in that it emphasises the role of context and the dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment.

The field of ecology emerged out of the natural sciences of biology and physics. Ecology is the study of the interrelationship of various organisms/human activities and their physical environment. It concerns how the organism or activity is part of the environment and “at the same time influences and is influenced by the environment” (Barton, 1994, p. 29). It is a “complex and messy field of study about a complex and messy reality” (van Lier, 2002, p. 114). An ecological approach is multidisciplinary. It is grounded in areas of psychology such as studies of human development and perceptual psychology, works in anthropology which link biological notions of ecology with anthropological and psychological concerns about the nature of human thought. Most of the systematic theory-building in ecological models of human development has been attributed to Bronfenbrenner (1979), whose work was first introduced in the 1970’s as a reaction to the restricted scope of research conducted in developmental psychology (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Husten & Postlethwaite, 1994).

In psychological studies, the idea of *ecological validity* has been used by researchers to question “whether experimental studies of psychological activity are valid reflections of natural everyday contexts” (Barton, 1994, p. 30). Ecological validity is defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as “the extent to which the environment experienced by the subjects in a scientific investigation has the properties it is supposed or assumed to have by the investigator” (p. 29). He proposes three conditions for ecological validity in psychological research: 1) an experiment must maintain the integrity of the real-life situations it is designed to investigate; 2) an experiment must be faithful to the larger social and cultural contexts from which subjects come; 3) the analysis of the experimental results must be consistent with the participants’ definition of the situation.

In this view, ecological validity is partly phenomenological validity, that is, the “correspondence between the subject’s and the investigator’s view of the research situation” (van Lier, 2004, p. 169).

2.4.2 An Ecological Approach in Language Education

Within sociolinguistics and language education there is also a tradition of using the term *ecology*. This dates back to Haugen’s (1972) work which looked at the ecological nature of languages that come into contact with each other (Hornberger, 2003a; Kramsch, 2002b; van Lier, 2004). *Language ecology* was originally defined by Haugen (1972) as “the study of interactions between any given language and its environment” (p. 325). He points out that the environment of a language refers to its social and natural environment in which language exists in the minds of the users and functions in relating these users to one another. Thus language ecology is both psychological and sociological. The psychological part refers to the interaction between the language and other languages in the minds of bilingual and multilingual speakers, whereas the sociological part refers to the interaction between the language, which functions as a medium of communication, and the society. The ecology of language, as Haugen (2001) goes on to argue, is “determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it, and transmit it to others” (p. 57). He also emphasises the reciprocal relationship between language and environment by pointing out that what is needed is not only a description of the social and psychological situation of each language, but also of the effect of this situation on the language (p. 334).

Along a similar line, Kramsch and Steffensen (2007) argue that the language ecology approach offers a rich holistic framework for studying linguistic phenomena, which are described as interconnected, interdependent, and interactional. Interconnectedness implies that every part of the whole is regarded as connected to any part and to the whole. Interdependence entails that a linguistic phenomenon’s mode of existence changes in accordance with the changes in other phenomena. Interaction implies that no part of a linguistic phenomenon affects other parts without being affected itself. Generally, the holistic approach presupposes a worldview in which everything is part of an undividable whole and this approach implies that the contextual properties of language and communication should be investigated.

The language ecology approach is widely used within a broad array of linguistic disciplines such as bilingualism, multilingualism, language diversity and revitalisation, and SLA. All these disciplines are concerned with multilingual realities, which are either psychologically or sociologically conceived (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2007).

From the macro-perspective on language education, researchers such as Hornberger (2002, 2003a, 2003b), Muhlhausler (1996) (1996) and Ricento (2000) have applied ecological theory to the goal of language maintenance and in the area of language planning and policy. From the micro-perspective on language education, within an ecological framework, research has been done to explore the interaction between languages and their speakers in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, the dynamics of multilingual classroom interaction, and the positionings of classroom languages and their speakers in dominant educational settings. The multilingual classrooms are located in diverse contexts but the research studies carried out in these multilingual classrooms have all investigated some aspects of interactions and interrelationships between teachers and learners and how the educational discourses within and between micro- and macro-levels are institutionally and societally reproduced (Creese & Martin, 2008).

SLA research has only recently become interested in language ecology. SLA theories that explain the acquisition processes through interactional, collaborative, or socialisation processes highlight the significance of the social and the cultural aspects of SLA (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2007). Ecological theories of SLA as socialisation gained its momentum in mid 1990s. Three representatives of this trend include Kramsch (2002b), Leather and van Dam (2003) and van Lier (2004). All three strands view SLA as an emergent phenomenon which is triggered by the availability of affordances or opportunities in the environment and is at the same time heavily dependent on individuals' perceptions of these affordances and their willingness to participate actively in the use of affordances (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2007).

In language learning, van Lier (1996, 2000, 2004) initiated and advocated for an ecological approach to conceptualising, researching, and practicing language learning. He proposed that the ecological approach is a coherent alternative, theoretically and practically well-motivated, to other ways of researching language education. Van Lier (2000) picked up the ecology metaphor for SLA research. This metaphor is considered as “a convenient shorthand” for the realisation that “learning is a nonlinear, relational human activity” (Kramsch, 2002a, p. 5). Language is viewed, from an ecological perspective, as “relations between people and the world” and language learning is seen as “ways of relating more effectively to people and the world” (*Ibid.*). Learning is regarded as situated, occurring in the context of meaningful activity (van Lier, 2004). As Hornberger (2003b) puts it, the ecological approach to language learning advocated by van Lier (2000) highlights emergent language development, and emphasises learning and cognition as explained not only in terms of processes inside a learner’s head, but also in terms of their interaction with the environment, and learners’ perceptual and social activity as their learning in a fundamental way.

An ecological approach to SLA research sees the “individual’s cognitive processes as inextricably interwoven with their experiences in the physical and social world” (Leather & van Dam, 2003, p. 13). The ecological perspective encompasses the totality of the relationships that an individual “entertains with all aspects” of his or her environment (Kramsch, 2002a, p. 8). This approach considers language behaviour involving more than “can be captured in any single frame or script” and any setting or context turns out to be “discoursally and socioculturally complex” (Leather & van Dam, 2003, p. 13). This research approach is a relational way of probing, enabling researchers to account for phenomena that could go unnoticed or unaccounted for (Kramsch, 2002b).

2.4.3 Ecological Research Methods

Ecological research is contextualised or situative research. A typical feature of the ecological approach is a focus on action, perception, and language within the context; that is, the focus is on contextual analysis, close attention to people’ actions in the context and search for patterns that connect. Context is the central and focal field of study that cannot be reduced or pushed into the background (van Lier, 2002). The context of

language activity is socially constructed and dynamically negotiated on a moment-by-moment basis (Leather & van Dam, 2003). The ecological perspective on observation of learning focuses on the complex process of interaction and the way to unravel the interactional processes from inside out in all their complexities (van Lier, 2004). In order to handle the complexities of people in context, researchers should study the process by employing appropriately complex methods such as dynamic assessment of interaction as it unfolds over time, assessment of multiple contexts including variations in tasks and contextual supports, and participatory observation (Wozniak & Fischer, 1993).

Van Lier (2004) proposes that ecological research considers factors of both space and time. Space refers to the physical, social and symbolic parameters of the research site while time refers to past and future, and to the present as it evolves with its past/future dimensions. Therefore, ecological research is often associated with longitudinal descriptive and interpretative work, such as ethnography and case study. Kramsch (Kramsch, 2002b) makes a similar recommendation that ecologically oriented methodologies are typically descriptive, analytical, and interpretative and they generally involve the use of micro-observations and descriptions over long periods of time. According to Kramsch and Steffensen (2007), researchers working within an ecological framework should be very conscious of the need for qualitative and longitudinal data. Similarly, Wozniak and Fischer (1993) propose that activities in a process should be studied as they naturally occur in everyday contexts. Behaviour should be studied within a rich matrix of body, emotion, belief, value, and physical world, and behaviour should be analysed as changing dynamically, not only over seconds and minutes, but over hours, days and years. This implies that ecological research should be contextualised and longitudinal.

As van Lier (2000) explains, that there exist no ready-made research procedures for the ecological approach to language learning. This approach faces a big challenge in that an attempt must be made to show “the emergence of learning, the location of opportunities, the pedagogical value of various interactional contexts and processes, and the

effectiveness of pedagogical strategies” in order to study the interaction in its totality (p. 250).

2.4.4 Process-Person-Context-Time Model (PPCT Model)

Two basic strands of ecological research are the micro-analytical and the macro-analytical; these, which can also be combined, are known as *micro-ecology* and *macro-ecology* respectively. The micro-ecological approach examines learning processes with the concepts of perception, attention and inner action at the centre and with language placed in the context of semiotics. At this analytical level, observation of learning focuses on the physical environment and learners’ engagement with the environment (van Lier, 1997).

As an example of a macro-ecological approach, Bronfenbrenner’s (1988, 1989, 1993) Process-Person-Context-Time model of developmental research offers new and exciting opportunities for longitudinal observation-based research (van Lier, 1997). For many years, Bronfenbrenner has been an articulate, influential advocate for an ecological view of human development (Wozniak & Fischer, 1993). In the Process-Person-Context-Time model, his research understands process in terms of progress in the process. As specific to learning, *process* refers to researching learning in terms of improvements in the processes of learning. *Person* implies taking a long time to understand learners, who are all different. Also, learners are not just passive recipients of research, but active co-researchers. *Context*, as a complex concept, entails studying the environment relevant to the people in question, as they signal the relevance in either actions or words. *Time* means that ecological research must document relevant processes of learning and changes longitudinally as the processes of action, perception and learning unfold gradually over time (van Lier, 2004). The Process-Person-Context-Time model highlights the conceptual structures and strategies employed by the individual in interpreting and manipulating the outside world. This process of interpretation and manipulation in turn influences the way in which the environment can affect subsequent development. This model permits assessment of the individual’s contribution to his or her own development (Bronfenbrenner, 1988).

The ecological perspective views development as an evolving process of organism-environment interaction. This paradigm posits interaction both between and within each of its two constituent domains. Within this paradigm, the human organism is conceived as a functional whole, an integrated system in its own right in which various psychological processes, including cognitive, affective, emotional, motivational, and social processes, operate not in isolation, but in coordinated interaction with one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1993).

Bronfenbrenner's descriptive taxonomy of the environment is especially sensitive to the social contexts. In Bronfenbrenner's ecological view, a complex ecology of development consists of classroom, home, neighbourhood, school, parent workplace, and the government which makes public policy, together with the connections at all levels among these contexts and the cultural and historical framework within which they exist (Wozniak & Fischer, 1993).

In this paradigm, the environment is viewed as a system of nested, interdependent, dynamic structures ranging from the *proximal*, consisting of the immediate face-to-face setting, to the most distant or *distal*, comprising broader social contexts such as classes and culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). The several levels of contexts form a set of ecosystems, with each system nested inside the next (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1993) like a set of Russian dolls (Husten & Postlethwaite, 1994) and with each system consisting of its own set of actors, artifacts and patterns of operations and relations (van Lier, 2004).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed four different levels of environment, namely, *microsystem*, *mesosystem*, *exosystem* and *macrosystem*, from the proximal level to most distant level. The definitions for these systems were redefined and expanded in his subsequent works (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, 1993). What follows are definitions of each of the ecosystems presented in Bronfenbrenner (1993). The expanded parts of the definitions are in italics in the original text.

A *microsystem* is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with

particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or inhibit, engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment. (p. 15)

A *mesosystem* comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person. *Special attention is focused on the synergistic effects created by the interaction of developmentally instigative or inhibitory features and processes present in each setting.* (p. 22)

The *exosystem* comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that directly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives. (p. 24)

The *macrosystem* consists of the overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exosystem characteristics of a given culture, subculture, or other extended social structure, *with particular reference to the developmental instigative belief systems, resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in such overarching systems.*

(p. 25)

The microsystem exists in the innermost region where complex person-environment interaction takes place in the immediate face-to-face setting. It is within this immediate microsystem environment that proximal influences emanate from within the person, from physical features, objects and persons to produce and sustain child cognitive and social development. The second level of the environment is the mesosystem, which involves interconnection between two or more settings frequented by the same person, such as connections between home and school. The mesosystem can be seen as a system of microsystems. The next level is the exosystem in which both direct and indirect interactions are possible. The linkages within the system can be found between the school and neighbourhood peer group. At the broader level, the complexity of nested interconnected systems is viewed as a manifestation of overarching patterns of ideology and organisation of the social institutions common to a particular culture or subculture. The formulation of the macrosystem points to the necessity of going beyond the simple labels of class and culture to identify more specific social and psychological features at

this much broader level that ultimately affect the conditions and processes occurring in the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1988, 1989, 1993).

Bronfenbrenner (1988, 1989) also acknowledges that the passage of time in human development studies has traditionally been treated as synonymous with chronological age and he feels a need to take into account constancy and change not only in the person but also in the environment. A final systems parameter therefore extends the nested environment into a third dimension, which is referred to as the chronosystem. This level of the system encompasses change or consistency over time both in the characteristics of the person and of the environment in which that person lives (Husten & Postlethwaite, 1994). Bronfenbrenner (1988) argues that this parameter permits the identification of the impact of prior life events and experiences, singly or sequentially, on subsequent development. He notes that these experiences may have their origins either in the external environment or within the organism.

According to van Lier (2004), the value of Bronfenbrenner's model lies in the focus on the relationships among the nested sets of systems. The linkages or connections allow the tracking of instigative and debilitative forces between one ecosystem and another. The model also allows for an investigation of how trends or activities on one scale can influence those on another scale: a multi-scalar analysis is suitable to track the influences. Apart from emphasis on the linkages across systems, van Lier (2004) goes on to argue that mostly the analytical work will be anchored at the microsystemic classroom level to assess the extent to which the classroom is, in Brofenbrenner's (1993) terms, a proximal context. Brofenbrenner's view of ecology allows an "organic description of context, moving from the micro to the macro and definitely moving beyond the classroom walls" (van Lier, 1997, p. 785).

2.4.5 Relevance of Ecological Theory to Researching WTC

The essence of an ecological approach can be encapsulated in two words: context and interrelationships. As mentioned in chapter 1, in this study context refers to the interrelationship between learners and the ecological context in which they interact with their teachers and classmates in class activities as well as people in wider communities.

The ecological theory emphasises context, and the dynamic interaction between components and context, together with treating the context as a nested system. The centrality of context, along with the focus on the dynamic interaction between the individual and the contextual, are of importance to the situated and context-sensitive approach to the investigation of WTC.

Context is central in ecological theory. The ecological approach holds learner and context as inseparable. The learner is inexorably part of the fabric of the context. The context is dynamic and whatever the learner or another contextual component does changes both the doer and the environment. A learner in the classroom is not an isolated individual, but can rather be seen as being inextricably attached to the classroom environment and woven into the tapestry by the threads of local and macro contexts. That is to say, the learner is intrinsically part of the classroom environment of the teacher and other students who do not merely surround him.

The ecological principle of nesting (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 1993) holds that on an ecological scale, events are nested within events, and behaviours are nested within behaviours. In the present study which is limited in scope to the microsystem, the nested systems begin with the learners in the classroom, the learners' interactions outside of the classroom, and the learners' life histories which constitute a web of interrelationships that nest inside the teacher-and-student instructional context. The teachers themselves constitute another nested system. All of the above are the relationships that connect to the learners.

Another feature of the ecological approach lies in the interaction between the individual and the environment. An ecological perspective views learning environments as complex systems. The systems are open systems which fluctuate internally due to all sorts of external factors. The ecological perspective encompasses the totality of the relationships that a learner, as a living organism, entertains with all aspects of his/her environment (Kramsch, 2002a). The ecological approach also has a process-oriented focus. The

research methodology should be ecologically valid, including context as part of the system under investigation (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

To briefly summarise, an ecological approach to researching WTC means contextualised, situated and observation-based research. The main features of an ecological approach concern the focus on context, the focus on processes of interaction and the notion of affordances or opportunities for learners to actively engage in action or interaction. Bronfenbrenner's Process-Person-Context-Time model (1979, 1993) offers an option for conducting ecological research. This model involves researching learning in terms of progress in the process of learning, studying how the learner actively engages in actions and interactions and makes use of affordances in context, and documenting the process of action, perception and learning over time to search for patterns.

In SLA research in general, the need to investigate both individual and social factors has been recognised. IDs research has not been immune to this trend. Situating the classroom WTC research within an ecological perspective, which concerns interaction between the individual and environmental factors, provides a powerful explanatory model incorporating both individual and contextual characteristics that seem to affect WTC behaviour in L2 classrooms. A study informed by this perspective could be expected to shed some light on how to provide an optimal environment to foster learners' WTC in L2 classrooms. Due to the scope of this study, the application of the ecological approach in the present study of situated nature of WTC is at a general explanatory level.

The present study partially draws on Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective on human development (1979, 1993), which suggests that development is a joint function of person and environment. As applied to the current study, this model involves researching learners' situational WTC in the classroom interaction, documenting their WTC behavioural change according to situational factors embedded in the classroom context and temporal factors, and searching for patterns.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasises that it would not be necessary or even possible to meet all the criteria for ecological research within a single investigation. This means only some of the subsystems in the hierarchical nested ecosystem should be explored in an ecological research. As the current study only focuses on communication behaviour rather than human development, the immediate setting, referred to as the microsystem in the nested system seems to be of central importance. Within the microsystem of L2 classrooms, all the components of individual and environmental characteristics and the influence of the interactions among them on learners' WTC behaviour are explored. The focus of exploration is on interdependence: how individuals respond to the elements in the classroom environment and in turn create the perceived environment, and at the same time are influenced by the perceived environment.

2.5 Research Aims and Questions

Framed within an ecological perspective on SLA which draws together social, physical and cognitive factors, the present study seeks to theorise the WTC construct as situated in the L2 classroom. It aims to explore the dynamic and situated nature of L2 learners' WTC within the immediate classroom context. As this study is informed by an ecological perspective, it is important to investigate how various individual and environmental factors co-influence learner's WTC in class; that is, it attempts to investigate the interdependence between the individual and environmental factors that underlie the classroom WTC. The following research questions are raised in this study:

1. How is learners' WTC manifested in L2 classrooms?
2. How does learners' WTC behaviour change according to time and contexts?
3. What particular interacting factors underlying WTC can be identified?
 - a. What individual factors, if any, influence WTC in L2 classrooms?
 - b. What environmental factors, if any, influence WTC in L2 classrooms?
 - c. In what way do the individual and environmental factors interact, and affect WTC in L2 classrooms?

2.6 Summary

The main purpose of this chapter was to situate the present study within the appropriate theoretical framework. It has been explained that the main emphasis of the thesis is to investigate WTC in L2 classroom as a situational variable rather than a trait concept, and it has been argued that a situated process-oriented approach is most suitable for this investigation. Ecological theory has been identified as an appropriate context-sensitive approach to explore the situated nature of L2 WTC and the dynamic interaction between the individual and contextual variables influencing WTC. In the next chapter, an overview of the research methodology employed in the present study is presented.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present chapter describes the research design and methodology utilised in this study, which comprised three phases. Phase I study was an investigative 3-week classroom-based study. Phase II was the main study, which was conducted in three different classrooms for 5 months. Phase III was a follow-up study of the same participants in a different learning context. Since Phase I influenced the research methods and data collection, details of how that study was conducted are provided, together with changes made to the instruments used in Phase II. Research methods used in the Phase II investigation are presented in terms of participants, research context and data collection procedures, followed by a detailed depiction of Phase III. The rationale and procedure for data analysis is then provided. The trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations are also discussed.

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Multiple Case Study Approach

Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) propose three research paradigms widely recognised in discussion of research methodology in the social sciences, including normative, interpretative and critical. The present study fits into the interpretative paradigm. It is committed to the theoretical orientation that sees second language research as highly individualised as a result of complex interplay of psychological and social factors. It aims to describe and understand the individual differences subjectively and uncover key variables underlying WTC and their interrelationships. This study employs an interpretative multiple case study approach to examine the complex and dynamic WTC construct as situated in L2 classrooms. Yin (1989) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when

the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 23). A case study is an intensive study of “the background, current status, and environmental interactions” of an individual, a group, an institution or a community (Brown, 2002, p. 29). It is “an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge to understand a case and explain why things happen as they do” (Sturman, 1999, p. 103). In relation to a learning context, case study research provides detailed descriptions of specific learners or classes within their learning setting (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Case studies particularly suit an investigation of process. This research strategy is appropriate for the present study because it allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the situated and dynamic nature of classroom WTC; this is, to gain an in-depth understanding of L2 students’ learning processes, the way the individual learners display their WTC behaviour and the changes occurring in their situational WTC over time in naturalistic classroom contexts. The case study approach suits the longitudinal, contextualised, and ecological nature of the present study (van Lier, 2005). The case study method is compatible with the ecological perspective in that it is situative research that investigates classrooms as bounded systems over a long period of time to characterise their workings and development (van Lier, 2004).

The case study method can be vulnerable to oversimplification of the complexity in the case and “unwarranted claims based on spurious interpretations of data” (Stoyhoff, 2004, p. 380). Triangulation is central to achieving credibility in case study research (Sturman, 1999). Triangulation serves to clarify meaning by identifying different realities and ways “the case is being seen” (Stake, 2005, p. 454). To increase the credibility of the present research, triangulation was applied and took a number of forms: methods triangulation, data triangulation, multiple viewpoints, and triangulation in time and location (Patton, 1990) (see Figure 3.1). Four different methods were employed to collect data: audio-taping of class interactions, classroom observations, interviews, and journal entries. Data were gathered from different sources in multiple locations at repeated times. Multiple viewpoints were also triangulated to provide a more accurate picture of classroom WTC.

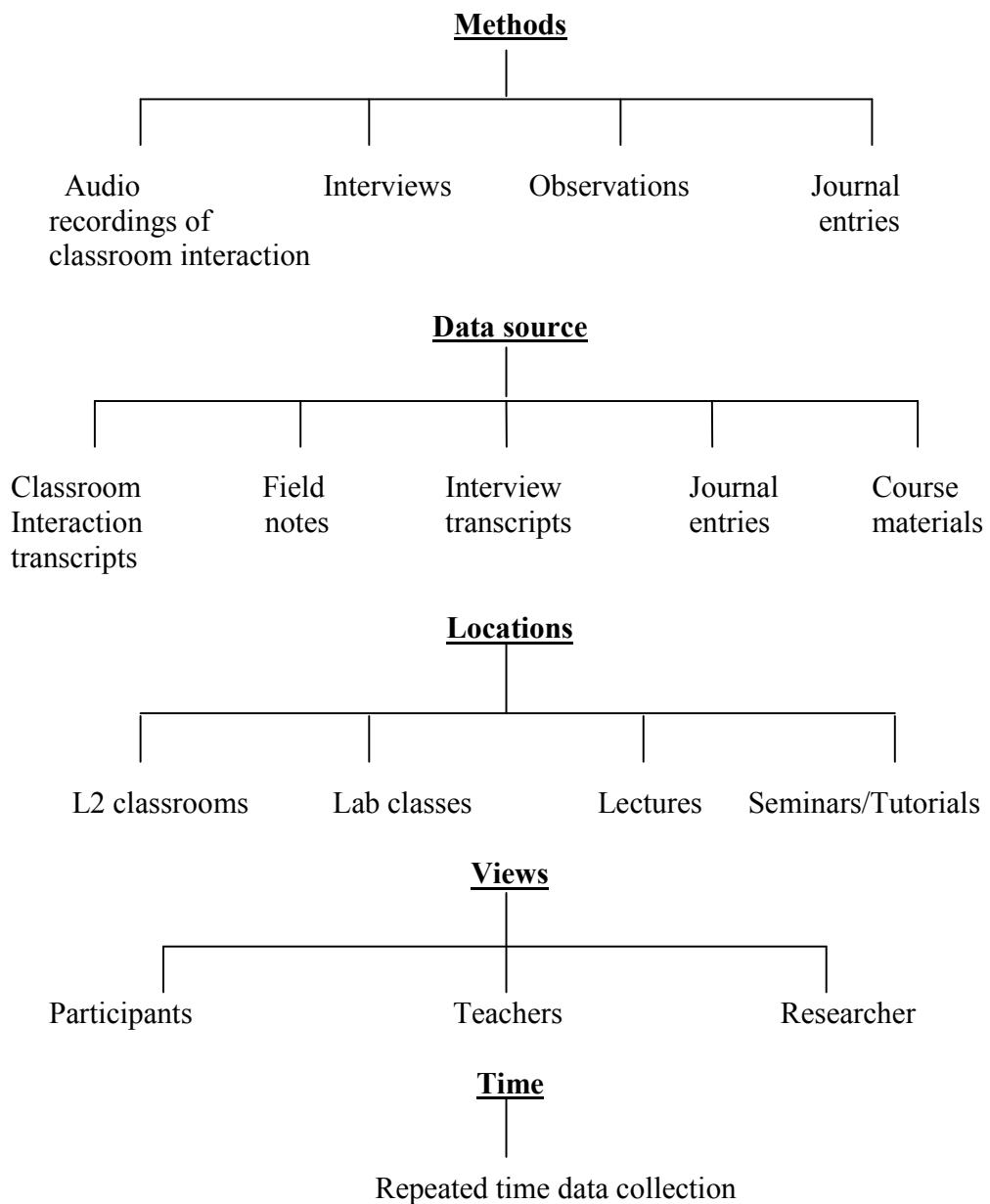


Figure 3. 1. Triangulation of data collection.

The rigour of the case study approach also lies in how well it is done. As mentioned previously, the use of multiple data-collection procedures and establishment of correct operational measures for the key constructs such as WTC and interdependence were tactics to strengthen the construct validity of the case study (Yin, 2003). The ecological approach also offered internal validity, appropriately called ecological validity, for the

case study (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2007). Ecological validity in the study was ensured in that the design and execution of the study was faithful to the larger social and cultural contexts from which the participants came. In addition to these strategies, the methodological rigour in this study was maintained in a number of ways, including developing a flexible and working research design that involved productive refocusing during the process of data collection, data analysis, and report writing, together with collecting adequate amounts of information about the individual cases and about important aspects of the classroom contexts over time (Johnson, 1993).

A purposeful or purposive (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990) rather than random sample was drawn in the present study. Research sites and participants were carefully selected. As suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), informal classroom observations and casual conversations with school administrators and teachers were conducted before focusing on particular students as individual cases. Multiple-case sampling instead of within-case sampling was used to add confidence to findings. The multiple case study approach enabled a small number of cases to be researched for a holistic look at the particulars of the case in its natural classroom context (Johnson, 1993). The evidence from multiple cases was considered to be more compelling and thus the overall study would be regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Analytic conclusions drawn from several diversified cases would tend to be more powerful than those drawn from a single case. Multiple sampling helped strengthen the precision, the external validity, and the stability of the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003).

3.1.2 An Overview of the Research Design

This multiple case study consisted of three phases: Phase I, the pilot study; Phase II, the main study; and Phase III, the follow-up study (see Figure 3.2). The Phase I study was conducted in January 2007 at a university-based language school for 3 weeks, with the aim of streamlining the research design and testing the main instruments. The Phase II study took place at the same school, involving a similar group of participants as in Phase I for 20 weeks, or 5 months from February to June. In the Phase III study, a number of

students from Phase I and Phase II were tracked in their undergraduate or postgraduate programmes at the university between August and October in the same year.

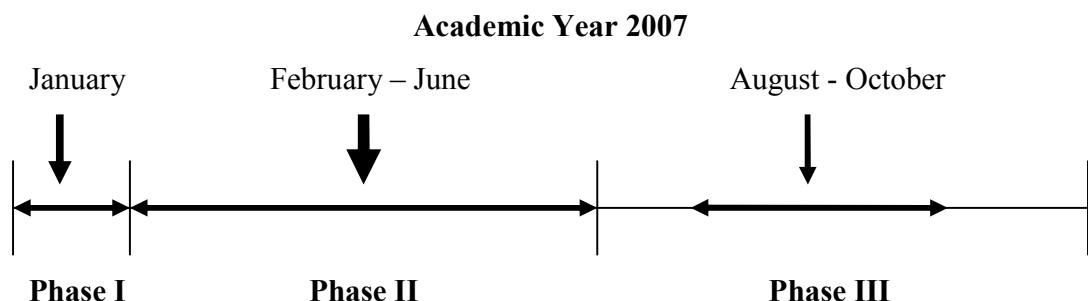


Figure 3. 2. Timeline for data collection.

3.2 Phase I Study

The Phase I study was intended to be formative, to assist the development of relevant lines of questions and provision of conceptual clarification for the research design (Yin, 2003). The specific purposes of conducting the Phase I study were:

- 1) to refine the instruments and the data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedure to be followed.
- 2) to examine if the journal entry would be an effective instrument to use; that is, whether learners would provide sufficiently rich data for the purposes of the present study.
- 3) to examine if the stimulated-recall interview procedure would be effective for eliciting learners' perceptions of their WTC behaviour in class.

3.2.1 Context and Participants

The Phase I study took place at a university-based language school in Auckland. The participants were enrolled in a Foundation Certificate in English for Academic Purposes course (FCertEAP). The prerequisite for them to be accepted in this course was a conditional offer (on improving their English language level) of a place in a tertiary institution in New Zealand for study in either an undergraduate or postgraduate programme. They would have had achieved a score of 5.0 or above in the academic

IELTS or TOEFL equivalent. For those who had not taken an IELTS or TOEFL test, they were required to pass the school placement test.

The EAP programme was intended to prepare this group of students for academic studies in English and equip them with the necessary skills to succeed in their further studies in the academic context. The programme included developing skills in note-taking and presentation, communication techniques, writing academic reports and essays and preparing for examinations. At the time of the data collection, the students had already completed the third module (10 weeks) of the course and were in the middle of the final module. To meet the English requirements as stated on their conditional offers and successfully pass the course, the students would need to achieve different course grades, such as an A grade for entry into master's degrees, a B grade for postgraduate diplomas and some undergraduate degrees, and a C grade for most undergraduate degrees.

Nine students from one intact FCertEAP class expressed a willingness to participate in the study and have their interactions in class audio-taped. The actual number of students enrolled in the class was eleven. Of the nine volunteers, six were selected on the basis of their different L1 backgrounds (French, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese, Thai and Tagalog). Due to the absence of the Thai student on the day of observation in Week 1, another Arabic-speaking student agreed to take her place as a participant. Three of the participants received conditional offers for entry into postgraduate courses and the rest were hoping to commence their undergraduate study at the university in the subsequent semester.

In addition to the small group of volunteer participants, all other students in the class and the teacher were asked to sign informed consent forms and give consent to data collection prior to the commencement of the study. The teacher of the class was a native speaker of English who held both a TESL certificate and a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. She had over 10 years of ESL teaching experience at both the secondary and tertiary levels. She had taught General English Courses and English for Academic and Specific purposes both abroad and in New Zealand.

Participant background information is displayed in Table 3.1. The six participants, whose ages ranged from twenty to thirty, came from five different countries (Philippines, Japan, China, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia). All of them except one had been staying in New Zealand for less than half a year at the time the data were collected. Most of them had been learning English as a foreign language in the home country for over 7 years. Two of them had been to an English-speaking country for a brief period of time for study or work purposes. All of them rated their overall proficiency in English as average or above. All of them had taken the IELTS test prior to studying in the EAP programme, with their results ranging from 5.5 to 6.5. They were identified by the programme as being at advanced proficiency level.

Table 3. 1
Participants in Phase I study

Pseudonym*	Mother tongue	Gender	Age	Length of time in NZ	Time studying L2
Joselito	Tagalog	Female	27	1-3 months	18 years
Fatima	Arabic	Female	30	4- 6 months	18 years
Ines	French	Female	22	1-3 months	7 years
Takuya	Japanese	Male	20	4- 6 months	8 years
Shu-wei 书伟	Mandarin	Male	26	4- 6 months	8 years
Umar	Arabic	Male	27	7-12 months	8 years

Note: All the participants were assigned a pseudonym to preserve their anonymity.

3.2.2 Instruments

3.2.2.1 Classroom Observation

Non-participant observation was carried out with the assistance of a systematic observation instrument – a checklist of a number of selected variables relevant to WTC behaviour. Following Cao and Philp (2006), WTC behaviour was coded by a classroom observation scheme (see Appendix A). The scheme was originally developed based on observations made by a number of researchers (Ely, 1986; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Oxford, 1997; Wajnryb, 1992). These observations related to a range of classroom behaviours demonstrated by L2 learners who appeared to show high WTC and motivation in class. WTC behaviour in L2 classroom was operationalised in terms of seven categories, as

described in Table 3.2. *Volunteer an answer* was coded when a student answered a question raised by the teacher to the whole class. Hand-raising was included in this category as a non-verbal WTC behaviour (MacIntyre et al., 1998). *Give an answer to the teacher's question* included two sub-categories: 1) Responding to a question addressed to the group (coded *provide information - teacher solicit*); 2) responding to a question addressed to another group or another individual student (coded *private response*). Another subcategory which was included in the earlier study (Cao & Philp, 2006) – responding to a question addressed to the student himself or herself specifically (coded *student-responding*) – was excluded from this study. WTC concerns a person's intention to communicate with someone when free to do so. When a student is called upon by the teacher, he or she is obliged to respond without having much choice. *Ask the teacher a question* referred to a student being proactive to ask a question without being asked to do so. *Guess the meaning of an unknown word* meant that a student made an attempt to guess the meaning of new word. *Try out a difficult form in the target language* was developed to include lexical, morphological, and syntactical forms. *Present own opinions in class* was a category that indicated making a point of view known to the class or group when no individual student was called upon to do so by the teacher or peers. *Volunteer to participate in class activities* referred to taking part in an activity without being asked to do so.

Table 3. 2
WTC Categories

Categories	Descriptions
Volunteer an answer/a comment (hand-raising included)	A student answers a question raised by the teacher to the whole class. A student volunteers a comment.
Give an answer to the teacher's question	A student responds to a question addressed to the group or a group member (teacher solicit); A student responds to a question addressed to another group or an individual student (private response).
As the teacher a question	A student ask the teacher a question or for clarification.
Try out a difficult form in the target language	A student attempts at a difficult lexical, morphological or syntactical form.
Guess the meaning of an unknown word	A student makes an attempt to guess the meaning of a new word.
Present own opinion in class/respond to an opinion	A student voices his view to the class or his group.
Volunteer to participate in class activities	A student takes part in an activity.
Talk to neighbour/another group member	A student talks to another group member or a student from another group as part of a lesson or as informal socialising.

When this scheme was used for the earlier study, it aimed solely at teacher-to-student/class or student/class-to-teacher interaction in the whole-class situation. According to Spada and Frohlich (1995) the whole-class pattern of organisation also includes student-to-student (or student-to-class) patterns as well as choral work by students. Therefore, extra categories such as *talk to neighbour*, *talk to a group member* and *talk to a student from another group* were added. The student-to-student interaction included talks either as part of a lesson or as informal socialising. Modifications were made to the whole-class observation scheme accordingly to cater for the nature of pair/group interaction. The scheme for pair/group work was divided into two sections, one representing the teacher's presence in the pair/group, and the other indicating the teacher's absence from the pair/group.

A number of additional sub-categories emerged when the co-rater was double-coding the classroom data, including (1b) *volunteer a comment*, (3b) *ask the teacher for clarification*,

(6) *talk to neighbour/add a comment* and (9b) *respond to an opinion*. The co-rater further developed codes for each sub-category for easier identification and coding. The codes are listed alongside each category as follows:

- Volunteer an answer (comment) **Va / Vc**
- Give an answer to the teacher's question **Gg / Gi / Pr**
- Ask the teacher (a question, or for clarification) **Aq / Ac**
- Guess the meaning of an unknown word **Gm**
- Try out a difficult form (lexical, morphological, syntactical) **TrL / TrM / TrS**
- Talk to (neighbour, a group member) **Tn / Tg**
- Present own opinion in class (Respond to an opinion) **Po / Ro**
- Volunteer to participate in class activities **Vp**

The following four examples illustrate how the participants' turns in classroom interactional episodes were identified and matched to the categories. In Example 1, Student A initiated a question to the teacher and her turn was coded as *ask the teacher a question* (Ac). In Example 2, Student J replied to the teacher's question addressed to the whole class. His contribution was coded as *volunteer an answer* (Va). Both of student Y's turns in Example 3 were coded as *try out a difficult form – lexical form* (TrL). In the final example which comprised two adjacency pairs, Student J's explanation to Student Y was coded as *talk to neighbour – explain* (TnE). Student Y's question was then coded as *talk to neighbour – ask a question* (TnAq) whereas Student J's reply was coded as *talk to neighbour – respond to a question* (TnRq).

- 1.) T: ...you can choose 5 verbs you've learned.
A: *I should use two form of one word?* **Ac**
T: No, just a verb.
- 2.) T: ...the event happened last weekend and it was connected to Pacific Islands.
Do you know what it is? What was it?
J: *Pasifika Festival?* **Va**
- 3.) Y: *To antivi anti* **TrL**
T: Antiviral

	Y: <i>Antiviral</i>	TrL
4.)	T: We can move on to our second task today.	
	Y: The fourth one the fourth one	
	J: <i>Volume number</i> ((J explains to Y))	Tn(E)
	Y: <i>What number?</i>	Tn(Aq)
	J: <i>Volume number</i>	Tn(Rq)

Apart from using the checklist to record individual WTC behaviour, on a separate lined blank sheet, I recorded salient talk, especially of individual student's utterances in choral responses, non-verbal information, including what was written on the whiteboard, and pictures shown. Contextual details were simultaneously recorded, including visual information and observer comments which could not be captured by tape recorders (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Merriam, 1998). Use of audio recording of participants' classroom interaction enabled mediation between the selectivity and subjectivity inherent in all on-the-spot observing, and the demand for detachment (van Lier, 1988, p. 38). Observations of participants' behavioural features further validated insights gleaned from the introspective data provided in the stimulated-recall interviews and journal entries.

To minimise the observer's paradox phenomenon (Labov, 1972), I chose to sit at a spot where the teacher and the class could largely ignore my presence. I strove to be both non-judgmental and neutral with regards to the classroom setting being investigated, and took a detached, analytical stand for the purpose of description and interpretation (van Lier, 1988). Also, attempts were made to establish a relationship of trust with the participants. As noted by Allwright and Bailey (1991), participants' reactivity could be reduced, but never erased. By paying repeated visits to the research site, I attempted to establish a good rapport with the participants and familiarise them with the presence of tape recorders. A variable amount of time was also allowed for "dummy recording" – recordings for testing and allowing learners to get used to being individually recorded (van Lier, 1988, p. 241). After each observation, I spent some time working on the field notes, in the hope that the strategy would help visualise the event, the participants, and the context long after the observation (Merriam, 1998).

Transcription of the data gathered from audio-taped classroom interactions and stimulated-recall interviews were handled solely by myself in the belief that the transcription process is an integral and inseparable part of the process of analysis and interpretation (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 209) and it was “a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions” (Ochs, 1979, p. 44). The transcription conventions proposed by Ohta (2001) were followed, with a few additions and simplifications and adaptations that appeared appropriate for the classroom interaction (see Appendix B). These conventions adapted from Conversation Analysis were followed because a variety of features were shown, such as intonation, pauses, false starts, speaker emphasis, volume, overlaps, and transcriber’s comments.

3.2.2.2 Diary/Journal Entry

Diary study in L2 learning, teaching and acquisition is defined as “a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience, documented through regular, candid entries in a personal journal and then analyzed for recurring patterns or salient events” (Bailey, 1990, p. 120). Second language diaries, referred to as L2 journal entries, can yield insights into the learners’ language learning process which are unavailable from the researcher’s single viewpoint. It allows researchers to access the phenomena under investigation from a perspective other than their own (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Due to its introspective nature, the diary records diarists’ reports on affective factors and their own perceptions, facets normally inaccessible to an external observer (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983).

Since some diarists find writing cumbersome and slow while others feel they are better able to express themselves in writing than in speaking (Bailey, 1983), it was anticipated that participants would need some guidance to structure their accounts. Learner reports on their perceptions of classroom learning have been investigated by researchers through use of structured journal entries, such as (Slimani, 1989, 1992) ‘uptake recall chart’ to obtain learners’ reports on uptake or what they claim to have learned at the end of a lesson, Mackey’s (Mackey, 2006, p. 415) learning journal to elicit learners’ impressions about interaction in the L2 classroom and to record their impressions of the activities and their learning throughout the class time and Block’s (1994) attempt to explore learners’

perceptions of tasks used in an English class through learners' oral accounts elicited by guided questions.

For the purpose of this study, a structured guideline or checklist was provided for the participants to complete the journal entry (see Appendix C). The checklist was expected to hold better consistency than general guiding questions and thus allow for comparisons to be made. The journals were intended as ongoing reports on the participants' WTC behaviour, thoughts and feelings about related classroom events, which took place in either the observed classes or those at which the researcher was not present.

The journal consisted of two main parts. Part I was intended to elicit how willing the participants felt about talking in one particular class generally, which was expressed in terms of a percentage. In Part II, the participants were invited to reflect on a particular episode of the class and comment on the factors that had encouraged or discouraged them to talk. A list of factors that might have affected their willingness to talk was provided. These factors (for example, confidence, topics for discussion, and interlocutor participation and familiarity), have been found to interact with learners' WTC in L2 classrooms in previous research. Each factor offered 5 choices, ranging from "1 = completely applied to me", "2 = generally applied to me", "3 = somewhat applied to me", "4 = generally not applied to me" to "5 = completely not applied to me". The participants were instructed to respond to the checklist by ticking the relevant factors and circling one of the five choices which sounded most appropriate to them, corresponding to the particular episode of the class that they had reflected on/were reflecting on.

3.2.2.3 Stimulated-recall Interviews

Stimulated-recall interview sessions were carried out to probe the nature of the participants' WTC behaviour or situational WTC in class (Appendix D). Stimulated-recall interviews used in the classroom normally involve video-taping or audio-taping a lesson and then playing back the tape to a participant, periodically stopping the tape, and asking what s/he had been thinking at that particular point in time (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

This method was used in a previous WTC study (Kang, 2005), in which the participants were asked to watch video-recorded conversations and stop the VCR at any moment when their communication and WTC were affected by certain factors and report on how their communication and WTC were affected by these factors. Though video-taping would be ideal and desirable to capture learners' WTC behaviour in class, video-recordings were not applicable in the case of the present study. Audio-recordings were used instead as stimuli in the interviews. The participants were told to listen to excerpts of audio-recorded classroom interactions and choose to pause the tape/digital recording at any moment to make comments on their communication and any related factors. To encourage accurate recall, the stimulated-recall interviews were conducted with participants as close as possible in time to the original event, that is, within 48 hours after the class observation session (Gass & Mackey, 2000).

Gass and Mackey (2000) suggest an accurate estimation of the time that the recall procedure may take. It appeared important to take into account the time spent on researcher-participant interaction, questions about the procedure, questions about the support structure, and opportunities for the participants to access the support. The time could vary according to how much verbalisation each participant provided. Since some participants were more forthcoming and talkative than others, and to encourage full and complete verbal protocol, the amount of time varied across participants.

3.2.3 Data Collection Procedure

The first phase of the study lasted 3 weeks and it involved classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews with students, and use of journals, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3
Data Collection Procedure for the Phase I Study

	Observation	Interview	Journal
Week 1	✓		✓
Week 2	✓	✓	✓
Week 3	✓		✓

The demographic information of participants was collected in terms of a biodata questionnaire (see Appendix E), which was adapted from Mackey and Gass (2005). The questionnaire included questions intended to elicit major demographic characteristics such as gender, age and ethnicity, the participants' first languages, L2 learning history, level of L2 proficiency, self-assessment of their L2 knowledge, length of stay in the country, and amount of experience in countries where L2 is spoken or where they had to use L2 for communication.

Two hours' classroom observation was conducted each week for 3 weeks. Observation time was set with the teacher first as to which lesson might be the most suitable to record more occurrences of students' participation. During observation, the participants recorded themselves during classroom interaction by wearing clip-on microphones attached to individual tape recorders. I chose the spot considered least obtrusive to observe the events of the lessons as they unfolded, and kept field notes relating to students' utterances and their nonverbal cues.

In Week 2, the participants took part in a stimulated-recall interview session. They were played excerpts from recordings of their classroom participation and were interviewed about their perceptions of their participation. In the interview session, I also asked probing questions that made use of the field notes taken in class. Those participants who shared the same first language with me were given the choice to use either Chinese or English in the interview (Rossman & Rallis, 1998).

The participants were also instructed to fill out the journals twice per week, one on the observed lesson and the other on any other session of the programme, which was not observed during the span of the study. They were given a choice to keep the journal either in English or their first language (Hilleson, 1996) or even code-switch (Barkhuizen & DeKlerk, 2006) to enable the emergence of less superficial data. However, they all used English as they saw it as an opportunity to practice their L2. The participants were informed that the journal entries would not be corrected in order to encourage them to write freely (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Hilleson, 1996).

3.2.4 Changes Made to Instruments for the Phase II Study

Since the journal entry failed to elicit much writing from the participants, the format of the journal was completely changed according to their comments (see Appendix F). Instead of providing participants a scale to rate and asking them to comment on possible factors that might affect their WTC in class, a different format was developed to motivate them to write. Prompts were provided to encourage them to reflect on one particular class and explain the activities in which they felt like talking. Regarding WTC outside of class, they were asked to write about a time in that week when they talked a lot in English and a time when they should have spoken more English. Cartoon figures were used to make the journal look more interesting and eye-catching for the students.

With regard to stimulated recall, one pitfall that threatens the reliability and accuracy is the time frame between the recorded event and the recall. It is suggested that recall should be prompted within 48 hours after the event to maintain 95% accuracy level (Gass & Mackey, 2000). To accommodate the students' schedules, two students were interviewed immediately after the observation of the class, two were interviewed the next day and the other two students two days later. It was found that only students interviewed on the first day could recall most of the events in the class, while the interviews that occurred two days apart were much less effective. Therefore in the Phase II study and the Phase III study all the interviews with students were scheduled either on the day of the observation or the following day.

3.3 Phase II Study

3.3.1 Context and Participants

The twelve participants in Phase II came from a similar advanced-level FCertEAP class. This FCertEAP course consisted of two modules (3 and 4). Five of the twelve participants enrolled in Module 3 and Module 4 for 20 weeks while six of them only completed Module 3. One more participant agreed to take part in the study in Module 4

although she was studying along with the others from Module 3 (see Table 3.4). Those six students who intended to complete Module 4 all expected to be able to continue with either their undergraduate or postgraduate programmes at the university. At the end of the course, five of the six students succeeded in passing with desirable grades, and gained entry into degree programmes in different departments at the university. The key participants who stayed in this phase of study for 5 months all happened to be Chinese students; including Ai-ling, Cai-wei Chen-feng, Rong-rong, Xin-ru, and Yi-yun.

Table 3.4 presents a summary of the participant information. The twelve participants were in their twenties. The majority of them came from Asian countries (in particular China and Korea) and one student came from Europe. The length of time the participants had lived in New Zealand ranged from 1 month to over a year. All of them had been learning English as a foreign language in the home country for over 7 years. One Korean student (Jun) had stayed in the USA for a year to learn English and the German student Lore had travelled to a number of English-speaking countries for brief visits. The majority of the students rated their overall proficiency in English as average or above. Most of them had taken the IELTS test prior to studying in the EAP programme, with their results ranging from 5.0 to 7.0. They were identified by the programme as being at advanced proficiency level. Only Lore grew up as a bilingual with German and Czech as her first languages. Three other students (Jun, Sirikit and Xin-ru) could speak a third language but only at beginner or elementary level.

Table 3. 4
Key participants in the Phase II study

Pseudonym*	Mother tongue	Gender	Age	Length of time in NZ	Time studying L2
Rong-rong 蓉蓉	Mandarin	Female	19	7-12 months	12 years
Xin-ru 心如	Cantonese	Female	21	Over a year	15 years
Xiao-qing 小青	Mandarin	Female	23	4-6 months	10 years
Chen-feng 晨风	Mandarin	Male	26	7-12 months	8 years
Ai-ling 爱凌	Mandarin	Female	20	Over a year	7 years
Cai-wei 采薇	Mandarin	Female	26	7-12 months	10 years
Yi-yun 逸云	Mandarin	Male	25	7-12 months	8 years
Mu-cheng 慕诚	Mandarin	Male	23	1-3 months	14 years
Jun	Korean	Male	25	1-3 months	8 years
Seung	Korean	Male	27	1-3 months	8 years
Sirikit	Thai	Female	25	1-3 months	15 years
Lore	German + Czech	Female	23	Over a year	13 years

Note: All the participants were assigned a pseudonym to maintain their anonymity.

Three teachers were involved in this phase of study, Helen, John, and Sue. Helen was a native speaker of Russian but she spoke several other languages including English. She joined the school a couple of months before the course. Prior to teaching in New Zealand, she had been living in English-speaking countries for almost 15 years. She had an undergraduate degree in English and French, and a DELTA teaching qualification. Apart from extensive experience teaching EAL students, she was also involved in teacher training programmes. At the time of my data collection, she was working on an MA in Applied Linguistics at a university in New Zealand. She described her teaching style as non-intrusive ‘orchestra-conductor’ style. Two of the participants commented that they quite liked this relaxing style in which they did not feel pressured to talk. John was born in New Zealand and started teaching English 15 years ago in Christchurch. Then he went to teach English at language schools in a number of European countries including Russia, Poland and Czech Republic. He stayed in Europe for nearly 10 years before he came back to New Zealand and joined the school. He had a postgraduate degree in Linguistics. Sue was a native speaker of English who held both a TESL certificate and an MA in Applied Linguistics. She had over 10 years of ESL teaching experience at both the secondary and tertiary levels. She taught General English Courses and EAP programmes both abroad

and in New Zealand. She only covered the class for Helen and John for 2 weeks. She was the teacher for the pilot group. The students liked her for her diversified teaching style, vivid use of body language and sense of humour. I thought of her as a performer-type of teacher, usually the most popular type among students.

3.3.2 Data Collection

As Table 3.5 presents, the main source of data was collected by audio recording the classes of the participants. The class was observed 2 hours per week throughout the duration of the study. Documents given to participants in class, including handouts and course materials, were collected the time and manner of their use having been recorded in the field notes. Stimulated-recall interviews were carried out in L2 with key participants once per month. The interviews started with general probing questions about their feelings of the class observed and their perceptions about their participation in class. The students were asked to keep a journal once per week of their WTC in class and outside of class. Although I felt that the journal did not elicit a sufficient amount of data in the pilot study, it was still used as an assisting tool to gain insights from the participants' emic perspective. The journal was collected every month before the stimulated-recall interview session, to provide some cues for additional questions to be asked in the interviews. The teachers were interviewed twice (emails with Helen and face-to-face with John) about their class and individual students' participation for an hour, with the consent of the students involved (see Appendix G for teacher interview guide). Also, questions about their teaching and the participants' WTC behaviour in class were asked informally during lunch break or after school on the day of observation to gain their immediate perceptions.

Table 3.5
Data Collection Procedure for the Phase II Study

	Observation	Stimulated-recall Interview with students	Journal	Interview with teachers
Week 1 – Week 8, Feb 2007	2 hours/week total: 8 hours	1 hour	weekly	
Week 5 – Week 8, Mar 2007	2 hours/week total: 8 hours	1 hour	weekly	1 hour
Week 9 – Week 12, Apr 2007	2 hours/week total: 4 hours	1 hour	weekly	
Week 13 – Week 16, May 2007	2 hours/week total: 8 hours	1 hour	weekly	1 hour
Week 17 – Week 19, Jun 2007	2 hours/week total: 6 hours	1 hour	weekly	

To elaborate further on the class observation throughout the main study, I started observation in the second week of Module 3 (Week 1 in my study) when the class had eighteen students. The class was taught by a relief teacher, Sue, who taught the pilot study group and who also covered for Helen in Week 8. Because of the relatively large class size, the school decided to divide the class into two. Most of my participants stayed in Class 1 while two students (Lore and Xiao-qing) were moved into Class 2 to join three students from another EAP class. John stayed with Class 2 and Helen took over Class 1 for the rest of Module 3. Then after the exam for Module 3 and the term break, John was summoned back to teach Module 4 and he remained till the end of the course (see Table 3.6).

Table 3. 6
Teachers for Module 3 and Module 4 Courses

Module	Week	Class 1	Class 2	
Module 3	1	Sue		
	2	John		
	3			
	4			
	5	Helen	John	
	6			
	7			
	8			
	9	Not observed		
Module 4	10	Break		
	11			
	12			
	13			
	14			
	15	John		
	16			
	17			
	18			
	19			

3.4 Phase III Study

The Phase III study was intended to be a follow-up study to track a subset of some participants from the Phase I and Phase II studies. The purpose of this stage was to investigate learners' WTC behavioural change given a different learning context. Among the students who successfully passed the First Certificate EAP course and gained entry into the university degree programmes, three students from the Phase I study and four students from the Phase II study agreed to take part in this final study. As can be seen from Table 3.7, Shu-wei, Fatima and Ines were from the Phase I study and they were all enrolled in postgraduate science programmes. Chen-feng, Rong-rong, Xin-ru, and Ai-ling were all key participants in the Phase II study. They were accepted into different undergraduate programmes.

Table 3.7
Participants' Fields of Studies

Pseudonym	Gender	Department	Programme	Observed lectures/tutorials	Interviews
Shu-wei	M	Computer Science	Postgraduate	Parallel and Distributed Computing (Lectures)	In Chinese
Fatima	F	Pharmacology	Postgraduate	Clinical Pharmacology (Lectures)	In English
Ines	F	Biological Science	Postgraduate	Aquaculture (Seminars)	In English
Chen-feng	M	Architecture	Undergraduate	Design (cancelled)	In Chinese
Rong-rong	F	Accounting and Finance	Undergraduate	Micro Economics (Tutorials)	In Chinese
Xin-ru	F	Psychology	Undergraduate	Individual, Social & Applied Psychology (Lab Classes)	In Chinese
Ai-ling	F	Computer Science	Undergraduate	Principles of Programming (Lab Classes)	In Chinese

This stage of data collection involved observations and interviews. Approval was sought from head of department, lecturer/tutor in each of the student's department, and the students themselves prior to data collection. All the participants except Chen-feng were observed in two lectures (or seminars, tutorials and lab classes) that they recommended as being willing to be observed in. As some lecturers/tutors were concerned about being recorded, audio-taping was cancelled and only field notes were taken during observation. After the observations for each student, s/he was interviewed for approximately an hour for their views of their WTC behaviour in university content programmes as opposed to that in the previous language programme. Chen-feng dropped out of the paper I was intending to observe. Thus he was interviewed without any observation of his classroom participation. The interview guideline is provided in Appendix H.

3.5 Data Analysis

Johnson (1993) points out that a good analysis in a case study should “identify important issues in relation to the case in the context, discovers how these issues pattern and interrelate, explains how these interrelationships influence the phenomena under study and offer fresh insights”. Data analysis took place in parallel with data collection as an iterative process (Glesne, 1999; Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). As Rossman and Rallis (2003, p. 176) suggest, data analysis and interpretation followed these steps: familiarising with data, generating categories, themes and patterns, coding the data, and searching for alternative explanations of data. Transcription of recorded data began in the process of data collection. The observed class interactions, interviews with students and teachers were transcribed. Then the intense process of reading and re-reading through the data enabled familiarity with the data and stimulated analytical thinking. The data from classroom interactions were analysed by using the coding schemes I developed for WTC behaviour. The interview data and journal entries were analysed using the constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I triangulated the participants’ performance in class (classroom interaction) with their reported factors in participant and teacher interviews, and my observation field notes. Further analysis occurred in the process of writing the dissertation. Writing is viewed as an integral part of the analytic process (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Rossman & Rallis, 2003) because “in the choice of particular words to summarise and reflect the complexity of the data, the researcher is engaging in the interpretative act, lending shape and form-meaning to massive amounts of raw data” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 182).

3.5.1 WTC Behaviour

Although the amount of observation time for each week for each participant remained the same as 130 minutes per observation session, the opportunities available for individual participants to demonstrate WTC behaviour varied from lesson to lesson, depending on the structure of each lesson. There were times when teacher-led instruction consumed the largest chunk of class time while there were also times when students mainly worked in

small groups in the computer lab with close supervision but limited participation from the teacher. In the former case, the participants were left with much less opportunities to display WTC behaviour than in the latter case.

Thus, number of turns, rather than time, was used as a measure of opportunities for students to show WTC behaviour, “as the number of turns used by a speaker can be seen as an indicator of the level of student involvement” (Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000, p. 283). Sums for number of turns for each observation session were calculated respectively for teacher-fronted activity, group work and pair work. Then teacher’s turns were excluded from the three contexts. The remaining turns for each context were regarded as opportunities for participants to demonstrate WTC behaviour. Frequency of WTC behaviour or WTC token was then counted for each learner for each observed session. Coding of WTC behaviour is exemplified in Excerpt 1 (whole-class activity) and Excerpt 2 (group discussion) below. Both excerpts are taken from Week 4 lesson. Ts-Va refers to *volunteering an answering in teacher-student interaction*. Ss-Tn refers to *talking to a neighbour in student-student interaction*. Po means *presenting one's own opinion*. Ta means *teacher being absent from a pair/group work*. TnA refers to *talking to a neighbour by asking a question*. TnR means *talking to a neighbour by responding to a question*. TrL means *trying out a difficult lexical form*.

Excerpt 1 (Whole-class activity)

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. T1: So let's check together, what do you write first? | |
| 2. J: The the surname | ts-Va |
| 3. R: Surname | ts-Va |
| 4. A: Surname | ts-Va |
| 5. X: Family name | ts-Va |
| 6. T1: The surname | |
| 7. J: Zeng zeng in Chinese Zeng | ss-Tn |
| 8. Y: In Chinese | ss-Tn |
| 9. T1: After first name as initial, after that? | |
| 10. SM: After that | |
| 11. SH: XX A-P-E-C | |
| 12. R: Sept 2001 | ts-Va |
| 13. J: APEC meeting to promote regional economies | ts-Va |
| 14. T1: APEC and blah blah blah, after that | |
| 15. J: China Daily | ts-Va |

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 16. R: China Daily | ts-Va |
| 17. A: First name or the family name first? ((asks SK and SL)) | ss-Tn |
| 18. SM: Family name | |
| 19. SL: Family name first. | |
| 20. T1: And then | |
| 21. J: Volume number and number | ts-Va |
| 22. R: Vol. 21 No. 6 | ts-Va |
| 23. SL: Volume number | |
| 24. X: XX ((asks M)) | |
| 25. M: I think this is retrieving time, where you retrieve this article, retrieving time. | |
| | ts-Po |

Excerpt 2 (Group discussion)

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. SH: Do you know what references mean? | |
| 2. J: Reference means (...) including some (...) other materials um yes | ta-TnR |
| 3. C: How about the first one? | ta-TnA |
| 4. J: I don't know, maybe the same meaning, why not? | ta-TnR |
| 5. C: Graphy graph | ta-TrL |
| 6. J: Graphy | ta-Tn |
| 7. C: Graphy | ta-TrL |

Considering the number of turns taken by interlocutors as an indicator of their WTC behaviour in dyadic interaction was problematic because in turn-taking in this type of context the number of turns produced by both interlocutors was roughly equal (Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000). Hence, length of turn in addition to number of turns was used as an indicator of learners' WTC behaviour. In previous research on WTC in L2, WTC was strictly confined to intention to engage in communication; however, it is argued in this study that WTC behaviour relates not only to initiation of communication, but also to sustaining communication in the same turn. Therefore, mean length of turn was calculated for each learner for each observed session.

3.5.2 Microgenetic Analysis of Classroom Interaction

To characterise the participants' classroom interaction in this study, microgenetic analysis was adopted, as a method widely employed in sociocultural research. Platt and Brooks (2002) points out that the microgenetic approach to L2 learning allows a local context which is "created by the participants themselves in the moment-to-moment development of their capabilities to perform a task" (p. 369). The microgenetic method can be adopted to allow tracing of evidence for the long-term impact of critical events on

learner's overall development of a certain L2 aspect under study (Ortega & Iberri-Shea, 2005, p. 38). Thus, a microgenesis analysis focuses on the "shift towards self-regulation which occurs during the moment-by-moment unfolding of a language learning activity" and aims at discerning "internalisation of L2 knowledge by learners as their interactions unfold utterance by utterance" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 236).

Firstly, instances of language-related episodes (LRE) in classroom interaction were identified. An LRE is a unit of analysis which entails discussion of meaning or form. It is an instance of collaborative dialogues where students talk about the language they produce, question the language use, either other correct or self-correct their language production (Swain & Lapkin, 1998). An LRE entails both discussion of meaning and form (Swain, 2000, 2001). In Swain and associates' studies, they distinguish between lexis-based and form-based LREs. Lexis-based LREs involve searching for vocabulary or choosing from competing vocabulary. Form-based LREs involve focusing on spelling or any aspect of morphology, syntax and discourse. In the present study, form-based LREs also included discussing an aspect of phonology.

Ohta's (2001) scale for microgenetic analysis was followed, to investigate the way students assisted each other in peer interaction through assisted performance or scaffolding. The scale includes mechanisms that learners use to assist each other (see Table 3.8, from Ohta 2001, p. 89). Learners provide assistance not only as corrective feedback when a peer interlocutor makes an error but also when the peer is struggling. She identified different levels of assistance. As shown in the table, E represents level of explicitness of assistance from least explicit (1) to most explicit (4). The least explicit form of assistance is *waiting*, referring to the interlocutor waiting while the peer is formulating an utterance. More explicit forms are *prompting* and *co-construction*. *Prompting* means an interlocutor helps his/her partner to continue by repeating a word or a syllable. *Co-construction* refers to an interlocutor chiming in to complete an utterance started by the peer. The most explicit form of assistance is *explaining*; that is, peers offer explanations to one another to help their interlocutors. Learners also help each other to correct linguistic errors by initiating or providing next-turn repair as well as asking for

clarification. *Next turn repair initiators (NTRI)* are used by an interlocutor to pinpoint the error. *Asking the teacher for help* is also one of the most explicit forms of assistance.

Table 3. 8
Some Methods of Assistance Occurring During Classroom Peer Interaction

Methods	E	Description
1. When the interlocutor is struggling		
A. Waiting	1	One partner gives the other (even when struggling) time to complete an utterance without making any contribution.
B. Prompting	2	Partner repeats the syllable or word just uttered, helping the instructor to continue.
C. Co-construction	2-3	Partner contributes a syllable, word, phrase, or grammatical particle that completes or works towards completion of the utterance. This includes prompts that occur in the absence of an error, when the learner stops speaking, or produces false starts.
D. Explaining	4	Partner explains in native language.
2. When the peer interlocutor makes an error, partners use the above methods (waiting, co-construction and prompting) as well as the methods listed below		
E. Next turn repair initiator (without repair)	1-2	Partner indicates that the preceding utterance is somehow problematic (by saying huh, or what?). When the NTRI is in the form of a prompt, it more explicitly targets the error. The NTRI provides an opportunity for the interlocutor to consider the utterance and self-correct. This is the case when the NTRI is triggering by comprehension difficulties rather than by a linguistic error.
F. next turn repair initiator (provide)	3	Partner initiates and carries out repair (either fully or partially provide a syllable, word, or phrase to the interlocutor. These may be in the form of recasts, which build semantically on the learner's utterance but change or expand it).
G. Asking	4	Partner notices their interlocutor's error and asks the teacher about it.

3.5.3 Qualitative Data

Qualitative data collected in this study included stimulated-recall interview transcripts, participants' journal entries and researcher's field notes. These qualitative data were analysed using content analysis and constant comparison method. Content analysis involved coding by identifying themes and sub-themes through repeated readings of the transcripts. Constant comparison method refers to constantly comparing themes and sub-themes concerning all the participants for a particular interview question as well as comparing the themes and sub-themes concerning a single participant's dataset. Prior to coding and analysis of the qualitative data sets, the researcher gained familiarity with the data in the process of transcribing, reading and re-reading the transcripts. Through reading and re-reading of the transcripts, salient and recurring ideas, and especially the occasions/incidents when the participants made comments on their WTC or un-WTC were identified first. Guba and Lincoln (1994) considered "incidents" as the smallest "units of information" in a text.

Coding was carried out to reduce data into easily locatable segments. The initial step of coding involved identification of the incidences. Then codes were assigned to the incidents and an attempt was made to discover patterns or categories between the codes. Affective factors relating to WTC or un-WTC were also inductively searched and noted. Coding was done both horizontally and vertically. The former concerned analysis of codes of all the participants for a particular question and the latter involved comparing the codes of a single participant's data set. Once the data were coded and categories were formed, they were organised into emerging themes. Only the themes relating to the research question which addressed the factors affecting the learners WTC in class were selected.

Some themes were arrived at inductively through constant review and comparison of interview data, journal entries and field notes while others were developed deductively based on the concepts from the literature reviewed and the conceptual framework described in the previous chapter. This method conforms with the claim made by Ellis

and Barkhuizen (2005) that the two approaches to coding can be placed along a deductive-inductive continuum and qualitative researchers can use both induction and deduction throughout their analysis. An annotated portion of interview data from the Phase II study is provided in the excerpts below as an example of how the coding of interview and journal entry data was conducted. The codes, themes and sub-themes are italicised in brackets.

Excerpt 3:

C: Yesterday I think I felt bored (*EMO: Emotion - bored*) because just watch the TV and it's about news, and she teacher want wanted us to find a topic and to search some information but I think all the class just talk about this topic and all repeat again, maybe I think she can change another way, like er she want me to um go home to watch the news and choose one or something or can be thing (*TM: Teacher – teaching method*), I don't know, I just think don't waste time in the class doing something like this, I think you just go home to find topic or you use the Internet

R: You think the class time might be better used if you did some preparation work instead on your own

C: Yeah

R: Um maybe it's kind of listening task as well? Maybe the teacher wanted you to listen improve listening skills as well?

C: Maybe but um some of the news I couldn't understand, because they speak too fast and the words too difficult for me (*LP: Language Proficiency*).

(Interview with Cai-wei, Phase II, the first round)

Excerpt 4:

R: Ok, so other people are really quick they get a chance to talk better than you, how do you feel about that?

C: I feel not so good (*EM: Emotion - frustration*), because when I studied in Massey I talked a lot in class, but now, in Massey my classmate and me stay in the class for a long time so we knew each other well (*INT: Interlocutor - familiarity*), so it's more comfortable (*EM: Emotion – relaxed and comfortable*) to talk something or ideas yeah but here when I first come here I just feel not good (*EM: Emotion - frustration*) but now I think I get used to it just keep quiet

R: I noticed that you're being quiet in class, but when you were studying at Massey you think you were different in class

C: Because the teacher will choose a person to speak and the teacher will know if you want to say something from your face she will say how about you, so everybody can speak, here you have to if you have your opinion you have to say by yourself, otherwise nobody will ask you (*TM: Teacher – teaching method; OPT: Opportunity to talk*).

(Interview with Cai-wei, Phase II, the first round)

3.6 Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of the study was established during both data collection and analysis. Credibility is the major criterion for trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As mentioned earlier, triangulation was employed in terms of using multiple methods for data collection, multiple data sources, multiple viewpoints and analysis to strengthen the credibility or truth value of this multiple case study. The study integrated multiple methods of data collection including classroom observation, audio-recording of individual participants, stimulated-recall interview, and weekly journal. Data were collected in an extensive and longish manner in that audio recordings were set up once per week for 5 months. Triangulation also occurred along the way through data analysis and organising and writing the final report. It meant the researcher being “redundant and skeptical in seeing, hearing, coding, analyzing and writing” (Stake, 2006, p. 77). To ensure credibility, prolonged engagement was also incorporated. Prolonged engagement refers to the researcher “being present for a long period of time in the setting or spending a substantial amount of time with participants” as this also helps ensure the researcher to have “more than a snapshot view of the phenomenon” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 69).

Another strategy to establish credibility involved peer debriefing. Two fellow doctoral students, who were not involved in the research, each double coded a sample of the classroom WTC data (approximately 40%) and interview data (35%), following the same steps of the methods as described aforementioned. The co-raters were familiarised with the coding scheme developed by the researcher before the double coding work. Any discrepancy was discussed with the co-raters. The inter-rater reliability for the classroom WTC data achieved 90.5% and the inter-rater reliability for the interview data achieved 94.5%. During the span of the researcher’s doctoral candidature, the coding categories and results from different phases of the study were presented and explained at professional conferences and graduate seminars, and thus increased trustworthiness of coding and interpretation of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Multiple methods of data collection, coupled with clear documentation of the analytical and interpretative processes, were techniques that aided dependability of the study. Dependability refers to “taking care that the inevitable changes in the situation being investigated, the participants, and in the emergent design of the research itself are properly documented, so that the decisions made and the conclusions reached are justifiable in their own contexts” (Edge & Richards, 1998, p. 345). Thus, the theoretical perspectives that informed the interpretations of the data are clearly presented, together with a detailed description of the data collection procedure and data analysis, unexpected changes occurred in the data collection process, and decision-making process, in order for readers to trace and reconstruct the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998).

To establish transferability, a thick and rich description of theoretical and methodological orientations as well as empirical evidence about contextual similarity was provided for other researchers to determine if their situations are similar enough for the results to be applicable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). To enhance trustworthiness, multiple cases and situations were used to maximise diversity in the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 1998). According to Glesne (1999), realising the limitations of the study is also a way of demonstrating trustworthiness of the data. The limitations of the study will be addressed in the concluding chapter.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

During the data collection for the three stages of the study, privacy and confidentiality were respected throughout the research process, in accordance with the ethical guidelines issued by The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (UAHPEC). The consent was obtained from the key participants, the instructors and the head of school prior to the commencement of the study (Ref. 2006/405). All the parties involved were informed as to the purpose of the study and what their participation would entail.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has presented and evaluated the research design, together with the research instruments and data collection procedures involved in this multiple case study that sought to investigate the situated nature of the WTC construct. The process of data analysis and coding was described to enhance trustworthiness and transparency of the study. The results of the data gathered from observations, interviews, and journals are presented and discussed in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 4

THE DYNAMICS OF WTC

This chapter presents the results from the three phases of the study, which involved three separate classrooms with similar participants. A subset of participants in Phase I and Phase II went on to university classes in the Phase III study. The data were obtained from the WTC observation scheme, the interviews with students and teachers, and the classroom interaction. These three studies and three types of analysis each reveal one aspect of classroom L2 WTC. The findings contribute towards revealing the situated and dynamic nature of WTC in L2 classrooms and exploring the interrelationship between different strands of factors underlying learners' situational WTC in class.

The results are presented in four main sections. The first section attempts to capture the WTC behavioural trajectory by making comparisons between WTC in class at different points in time using inferential statistical analysis. This section presents the quantitative analysis of WTC behaviour in the Phase I and Phase II studies. Phase I was a short preliminary study and the changeability of WTC is examined over 3 weeks. In Phase II which lasted 5 months, WTC is compared at three different points in time: the beginning, the middle, and the end of the language programme.

The second section identifies factors reported by learners as influencing their WTC in class and the extent to which these are positive or negative. This section mainly presents results of quantitative analysis. Factors reported as interacting with learners' WTC are identified within three dimensions: individual, environmental, and linguistic. These factors in the three dimensions appear to either facilitate or inhibit WTC in class.

The third section depicts each of the factors in the three dimensions in detail and relates to the findings of other studies on WTC. This section presents a qualitative analysis of interview data and it reveals another perspective of WTC behaviour.

While section 3 reports on the factors separately, section 4 focuses on the notion of interdependence, which implies that the factors do not work independently; rather, they work together to create learners' situational WTC at any point in time. These factors underlying WTC display multifaceted and dynamic interrelationships.

Overall this chapter represents a shift from primarily results of quantitative analysis to results based on qualitative analysis; from a holistic view of WTC trajectory to a detailed description of reported factors underlying WTC behaviour, and from an examination of variables in isolation to a focus on the interdependence of variables.

4.1 Capturing WTC Trajectory

This section provides answers to the first two research questions, which concern how learners' WTC behaviour is manifested in L2 classrooms and how this communication behaviour changes according to time and contexts. WTC behavioural change in both Phase I and Phase II will be examined.

4.1.1 WTC Behaviourial Change over 3 Weeks

This section presents and discusses findings from the Phase I study, which examines the general pattern of WTC behavioural change over 3 weeks among 6 participants in one L2 class. Table 4.1 presents the mean scores and standard deviations for the WTC ratio in each of the 3 weeks. As mentioned in chapter 3, WTC ratio refers to a measure of WTC behaviour, which was calculated as tokens of observed behaviour. WTC behaviour was operationalised by observable behaviour, including the categories *volunteering an answer/a comment, giving an answer to the teacher's question, asking the teacher a question/for clarification, guessing the meaning of an unknown word, trying out a difficult form in the target language, presenting own opinions in class/responding to an*

opinion, volunteering to participate in class activities, and talking to neighbour/group member. First, number of turns for each observed lesson was calculated for teacher-fronted activity, group work and pair work respectively, excluding teachers' turns. Each turn counted was considered an opportunity to demonstrate WTC, so total turns per context provided the total opportunities for WTC figure. The WTC ratio was then counted for each student for each observed session. The Friedman test, a non-parametric equivalent of ANOVA, was conducted to assess differences between WTC ratios in the 3 weeks. The results from the Friedman test show no significant differences in WTC ratio from Week 1 to Week 3 ($\chi^2 (2, n = 6) = 0.09, p > .05$). That is, overall the differences in WTC ratio during the 3 weeks are not statistically significant; similarly, at an individual level, there are no significant differences, although some variations can be seen (see Figure 4.1).

Table 4. 1.
Means and SD of WTC Ratio in Phase I Study

WTC ratio	n	Mean	SD
Week 1	6	12	3.8
Week 2	6	12.9	2.9
Week 3	6	12	5

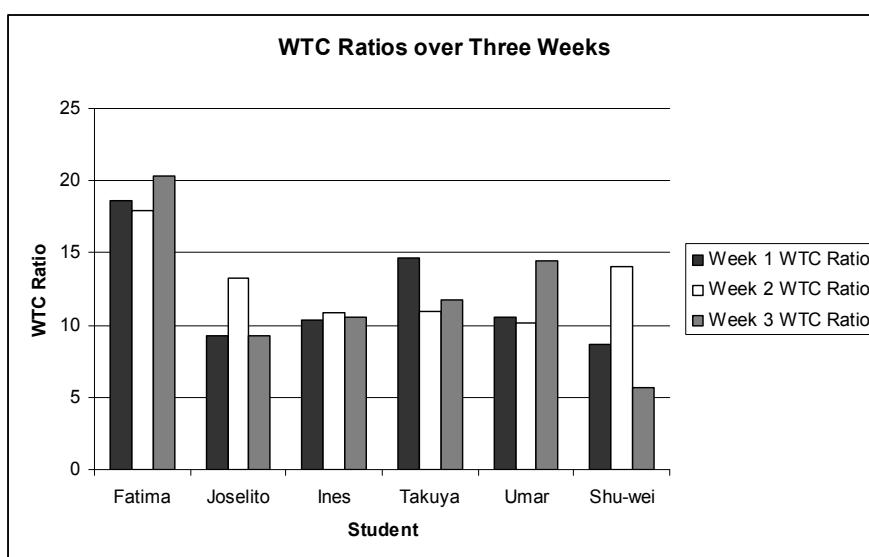


Figure 4. 1. Individual WTC ratios over 3 weeks.

Taking a further look at WTC ratios by rank order (7 = low, 1 = high), it can be seen in Figure 4.2 that Fatima demonstrated a consistently high level of WTC whereas Ines and Shu-wei were the ones with relatively low WTC across the 3 weeks, except in Week 2. The other students' WTC levels oscillated considerably during the time.

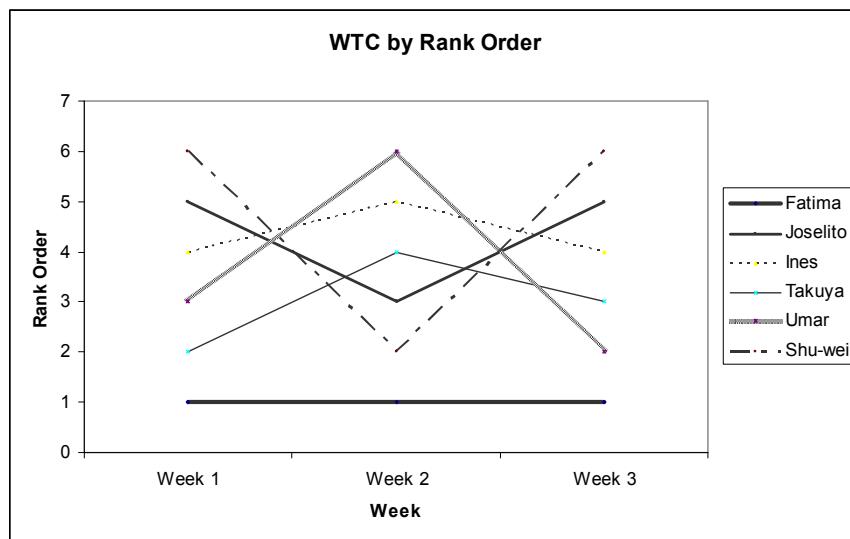


Figure 4. 2. WTC ratios over 3 weeks by rank order.

To explore a possible relationship between initiation of communication (WTC) and actual engagement in communication, length of turn for each learner in class interactions was considered as another variable to measure engagement in communication. The results from the Friedman test show the difference in length of turn from Week 1 to Week 3 as significant ($\chi^2 (2, n = 6) = 8.33, p < .05$). This could be due to different task types used in class for each week. This could also be due to different conditions under which the tasks were done; that is, group/pair work and teacher-fronted activities. A Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient was employed to identify relationships between WTC ratio and length of turn in classroom interaction in each week. These results, as well as the mean and standard deviation for each variable, are reported in Table 4.2. The Spearman rank-order correlation indicates no clear correlations between WTC ratio and length of turn in class interactions in any of the 3 weeks.

Table 4. 2
Correlations between WTC Ratio and Length of Turn

Variables	Mean	SD	Turn Length Week 1	Turn Length Week 2	Turn Length Week 3
Week 1 Rank of WTC ratio	12.03	3.82	<i>-.600</i>	.143	-.543
Week 2 Rank of WTC ratio	12.87	2.87	<i>-.600</i>	<i>-.486</i>	.200
Week 3 Rank of WTC ratio	12.02	4.97	<i>-.371</i>	.429	<i>-.600</i>

**p<0.01

From the quantitative analysis of WTC ratios in the Phase I study, it was found that WTC ratio did not differ significantly from Week 1 to Week 3. There also appears to be no clear correlations between WTC ratio and length of turn in class interactions. Since the study only lasted 3 weeks, the span of study is not long enough to see patterns in WTC behavioural change. The quantitative analysis only provides a very limited perspective of WTC. In the Phase II study, WTC behaviour will be examined over a much longer period of time; 5 months.

4.1.2 WTC Behaviourial Change over 5 Months

This section presents changes in learners' WTC over 5 months in Phase II study. Six lessons were sampled, two at each of three 6-weekly intervals in pairs of consecutive weeks as follows: Weeks 4 and 5 at the beginning of the programme, Week 11 and 12 in the middle, and Weeks 16 and 17 towards the end of the programme. The key participants who completed the 20-week programme were Chen-feng, Yi-yun, Ai-ling, Rong-rong, Xin-ru, and Cai-wei, who all happened to be learners with a Chinese background. The other four students, Jun, Seung, Sirikit, and Mu-cheng, finished only the first 10-week module of the programme. Thus their data were only included for Week 4 and Week 5. Table 4.3 presents the means and standard deviations for the WTC ratio in these 4 weeks. The sample size in Week 16 and Week 17 dropped to four because of students' absence from class. A Friedman test was run to compare the key participants' WTC ratios at Time 1 (average of Week 4 and Week 5 WTC ratios), Time 2 (average of Week 11 and Week 12 WTC ratios) and Time 3 (average of Week 16 and Week 17 WTC ratios). The result shows a statistically significant difference between WTC ratios at the

three points in time ($\chi^2 (2, n = 6) = 6.33$, $p < .05$). This suggests an overall change in WTC ratio for the class. At an individual level, there also seem to be variations. As Table 4.4 shows, Jun demonstrated the highest WTC level and Mu-cheng displayed consistently low WTC in Week 4 and Week 5. In Week 11 and Week 12, Xin-ru displayed the highest WTC level in class whereas Ai-ling and Cai-wei had the highest WTC in Weeks 16 and 17 respectively. Concerning individual WTC trajectory over 5 months, Cai-wei, Chen-feng and Yi-yun showed a seemingly upward trend in terms of their WTC levels while the other four students' WTC levels fluctuated greatly over time (See Figure 4.3).

Table 4. 3
Means and SD of WTC Ratio in Phase II Study

WTC ratio	n	Mean	SD
Week 4	8	0.8	0.71
Week 5	7	0.84	0.72
Week 11	6	0.7	0.08
Week 12	6	1.4	0.47
Week 16	4	1.04	0.54
Week 17	4	0.83	0.8

Table 4. 4
WTC Ratio at Six Points in Time

	Chen-feng	Yi-yun	Jun	Ai-ling	Mu-cheng	Sirikit	Rong-rong	Xin-ru	Cai-wei	Seung
Week 4	0.47	0.67	2.5	0.76	0.37	0.77	0.51	0.31	-	-
Week 5	-	-	2.2	-	0.56	1.29	0.09	0.23	0.71	0.79
Week 11	0.64	0.76	-	0.59	-	-	0.74	0.79	0.66	-
Week 12	0.96	0.81	-	1.53	-	-	1.34	2.07	1.7	-
Week 16	1.07	1.17	-	1.6	-	-	-	0.31	-	-
Week 17	-	-	-	0.56	-	-	0.51	0.24	2.01	-

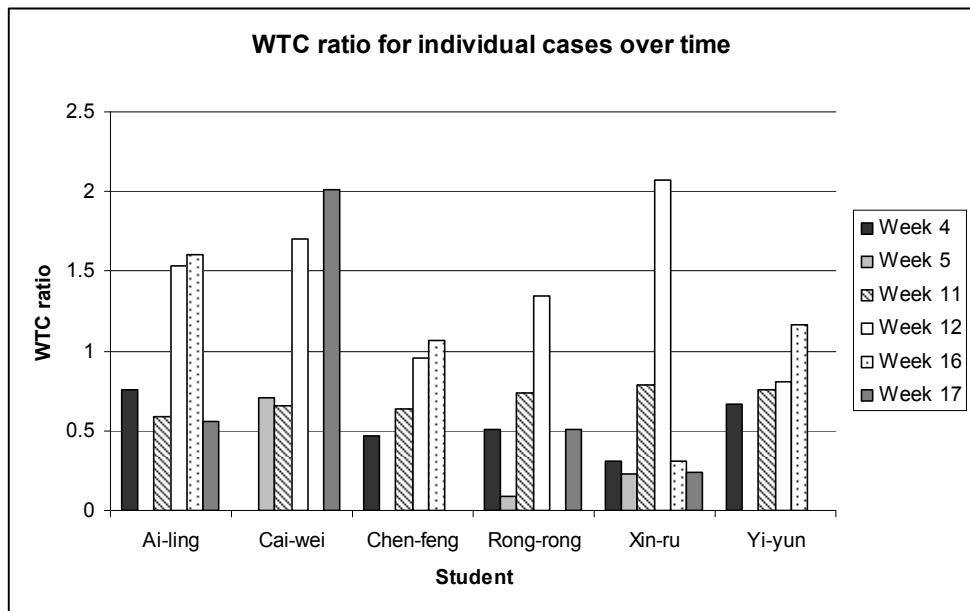


Figure 4. 3. WTC ratio at six points in time for key participants.

The results concerning WTC behaviour in the Phase II study revealed statistically significant differences between WTC ratios over the span of 5 months. The changes in learners' situational WTC in class over time could be due to the variations in the underlying factors of WTC. The following section explores these factors as they were reported by learners to interact with their WTC in class.

4.2 Factors Facilitating and Inhibiting WTC in Class

This section provides answers to the third research question, which concerns the identification of interacting factors underlying learners' WTC in L2 classrooms; in particular, individual, and environmental factors. The results reported here are based on interview data from all three phases. This section mainly reports on quantitative results.

Within an ecological framework, the environment is considered to be any event or condition outside the developing person that either influences or is influenced by the person. In the present study the personal factors were operationalised as individual characteristics possessed by any student, and the environmental factors as any event or

condition outside the individual student that either influences or is influenced by the student. Based on the interview and journal entry data, factors reported by learners to impact on their situational WTC were categorised into three dimensions: *environmental*, *individual*, and *linguistic* dimensions.

Firstly, the environmental dimension concerns external factors such as topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher, and class interactional pattern (or group size). The *topic* factor consists of four subcategories, including topical knowledge, familiarity with the topic, interest in the topic, and the sensitivity of the topic. *Task type* concerns project work and other types of activities used in the programme. The *interlocutor* variable concerns the interlocutor's communicative competence, personality, nationality, familiarity, and participation, together with peer evaluation. The *teacher*, a prominent factor, refers to the teaching style, teacher involvement, participation, and immediacy. The *class interactional pattern* encompasses group size and includes whole-class situation or teacher-fronted activity, group work, and pair work. Secondly, the individual dimension refers to internal affective factors including self-confidence, personality, emotion, and perceived opportunity to communicate. Among them, *emotion* refers to a range of positive and negative emotions, including satisfaction, enjoyment, anxiety, boredom, disappointment, frustration, embarrassment, and anger. Thirdly, the linguistic dimension concerns competence factors such as language proficiency and reliance on L1. *Language proficiency* concerns language ability in terms of comprehension and production.

Table 4.5 lists, by dimension, the factors nominated by students during the interviews, and specifies the number of students who reported this factor in relation to WTC and the frequency of times it was reported either to promote or prohibit WTC in class. These factors can have a significant impact on learners' WTC behaviour in class, both in the positive and negative sense, by either acting as a single force or in combination with other factors on a moment-by-moment basis.

Table 4. 5
List of Factors Influencing WTC with Frequency Counts

Dimensions	Factors	N=18	Frequency mentioned to facilitate WTC	N=18	Frequency mentioned to inhibit WTC
Environmental	Topic	9	14	10	19
	Task type	5	5	5	5
	Interlocutor	14	22	8	9
	Teacher	9	10	5	7
	Class interactional pattern	13	13	4	5
Individual	Self-confidence	3	3	1	1
	Personality	6	6	3	3
	Emotion	4	5	16	30
	Perceived opportunity to communicate	6	6	12	17
Linguistic	Language proficiency	1	1	7	13
	Reliance on L1	6	6	2	2

In the environmental dimension, the factor most frequently mentioned by the students to have a positive influence on their WTC was the interlocutor. Fourteen out of a total of 18 commented on the interlocutor: of the 22 comments, they reported a preference for talking to a more knowledgeable, competent interlocutor from a different cultural background, someone they were familiar with, someone they felt comfortable with, and someone they socialised with after class. Negative evaluation from interlocutors was perceived to prohibit their WTC. Class interactional pattern was also mentioned by the majority of the students as a factor promoting their WTC. Most of them preferred to work in small groups rather than in pair work or in a whole-class situation. Topic was cited by an equal number of participants as either enhancing or reducing their WTC. On the one hand, learners felt that they needed to be both knowledgeable about and interested in a topic to display a willingness to talk about it. On the other hand, they perceived their WTC level to decrease when they were allocated a topic which they thought was boring or culturally sensitive. There were two further environmental factors, mentioned by at least one third of the learners, which had both a positive and a negative influence on their

WTC: the teacher and task type. Similar to the role that an interlocutor plays, the teacher's teaching style, classroom management skills and participation in group discussion could either encourage or discourage learners' WTC intention. Task type was also perceived to play a role – in a way, paralleling topic – exerting influences on WTC.

The next group of factors in the individual dimension included emotion, personality, self-confidence, and perceived opportunity to communicate. Twelve out of 18 students commented that they would not be willing to talk when they did not perceive an opportunity as being suitable for them to talk. Some participants felt that their WTC was inhibited by over-talkative students who took up most of the opportunities to talk, especially in a whole-class situation. Some reported that they felt a sense of responsibility for filling the gap when observing that others in class were too quiet. Others regarded interrupting the teacher to ask a question as rude and a waste of the teacher's and other students' time. Emotion was predominantly reported to exercise a negative effect on WTC behaviour. Predominantly, nearly all the students mentioned that feelings of anxiety, boredom, disappointment, frustration and embarrassment were pervasive and prevented them from participation. For example, a number of students reported that they were very nervous about speaking up when the teacher was present in their group discussion. More than one third of the students emphasised the importance of a relaxed mood in fostering situational WTC. As for personality and self-confidence, their positive effect on WTC behaviour appeared to be associated with learner attributes such as being talkative and outgoing.

The final group involves two factors: language proficiency and reliance on L1. Seven students mentioned 13 times that their actual language proficiency or communicative competence could affect their WTC negatively in terms of language comprehension and production. In terms of production, for instance, lacking specific vocabulary in a topic could decrease WTC levels, in group discussions in particular. Reliance on L1 also seemed to exhibit a complex relationship with WTC in L2 in this study, working occasionally in class as an agent to assist learners' comprehension and communication.

To find out whether the factors in each dimension were reported as exerting more of a positive or a negative influence on the students' WTC in class, a chi-square test with post-hoc analysis was conducted. The bar graphs in Figures 4.4 to 4.6 represent proportions of actual observed counts of the factors reported by learners to either promote or reduce their WTC in class in the three dimensions respectively. The confidence intervals are superimposed as arrows in the bar graphs. Where the arrows overlap, the differences between the promoting and reducing factors are not at levels of statistical significance ($p < .05$). As Figure 4.4 shows, there appears to be no statistically significant differences between the factors promoting WTC and those reducing WTC overall in the environmental dimension ($\chi^2 (4) = 7.20, p > .05$). However, the topic factor is reported as having a significantly more negative than positive influence on the learners' WTC. As can be seen in Figure 4.5, there lie significant differences between the factors perceived as promoting WTC and those perceived as inhibiting WTC in the individual dimension ($\chi^2 (3) = 14.31, p < .05$). The post-hoc analysis reveals that personality is a significant promoting factor while emotion is a significant reducing factor. Figure 4.6 indicates statistically significant differences existing between the factors reported as promoting WTC and those reported as reducing WTC in the linguistic dimension ($\chi^2 (1) = 7.90, p < .05$). The post-hoc analysis shows that perceived language proficiency exerts a predominantly negative effect on learners' WTC whereas reliance on L1 plays a mediating role in promoting learners' WTC in class. In sum, in each of the three dimensions, based on students' self-report, the factors exert either a positive influence or a negative effect on learners' WTC in class. There does not seem to be a clear pattern concerning which dimension imposes more of a positive rather than a negative influence on this construct.

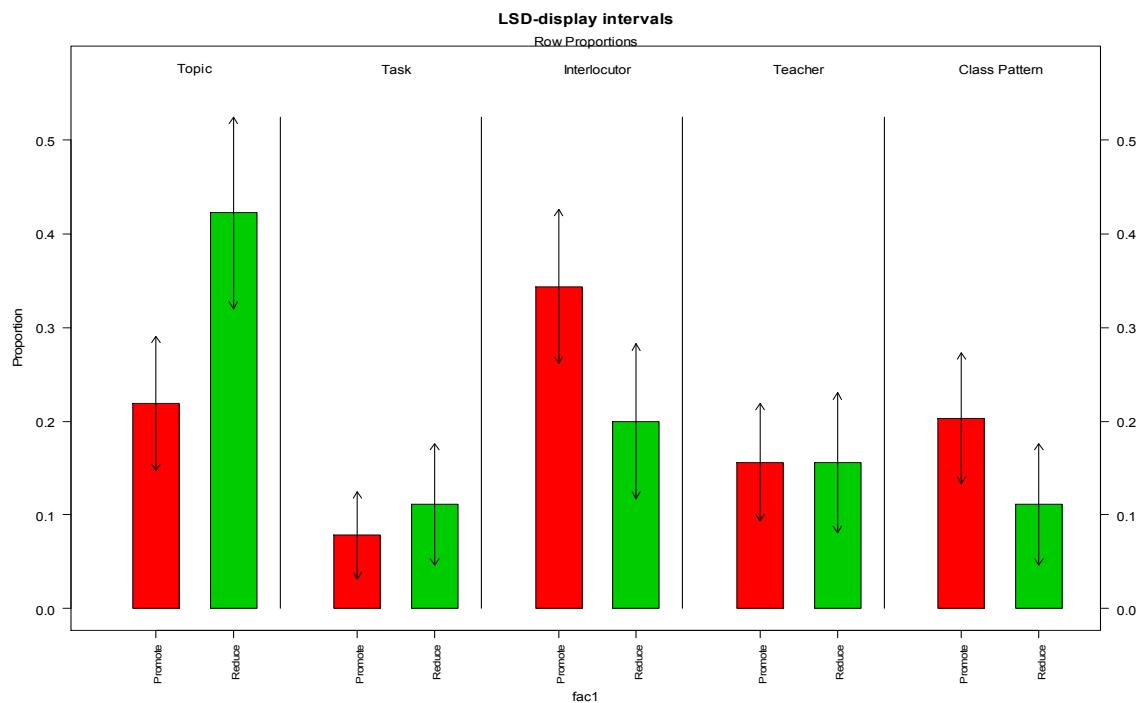


Figure 4. 4. Factors facilitating and inhibiting WTC in the environmental dimension.

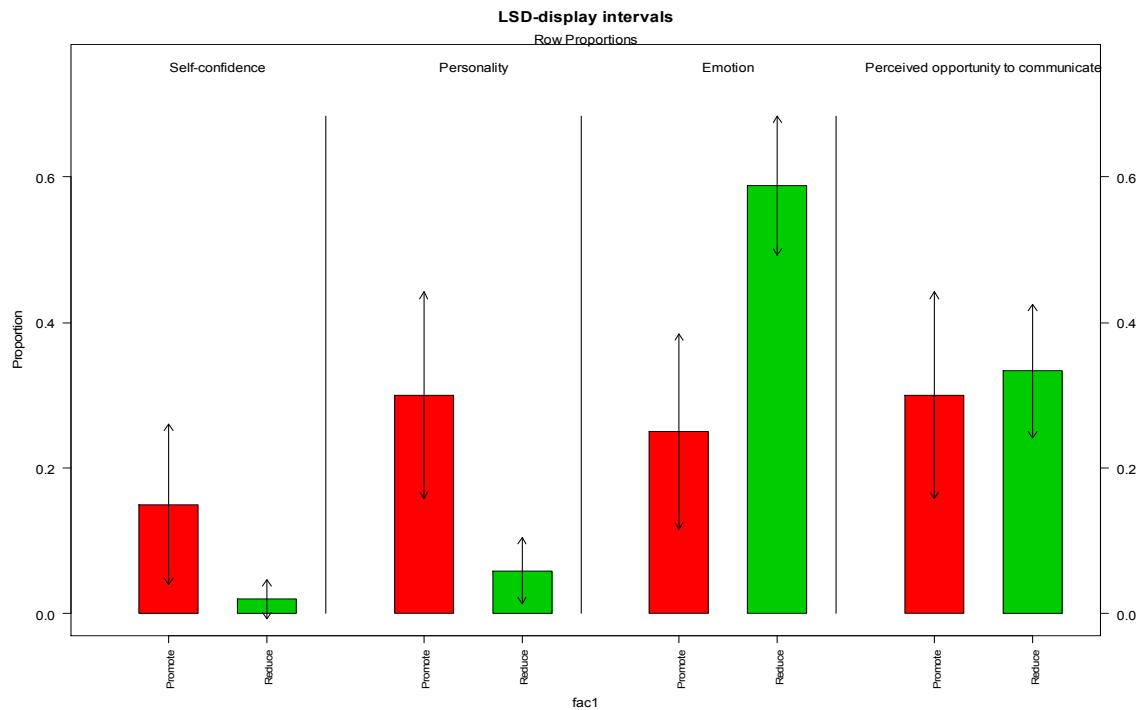


Figure 4. 5. Factors facilitating and inhibiting WTC in the individual dimension.

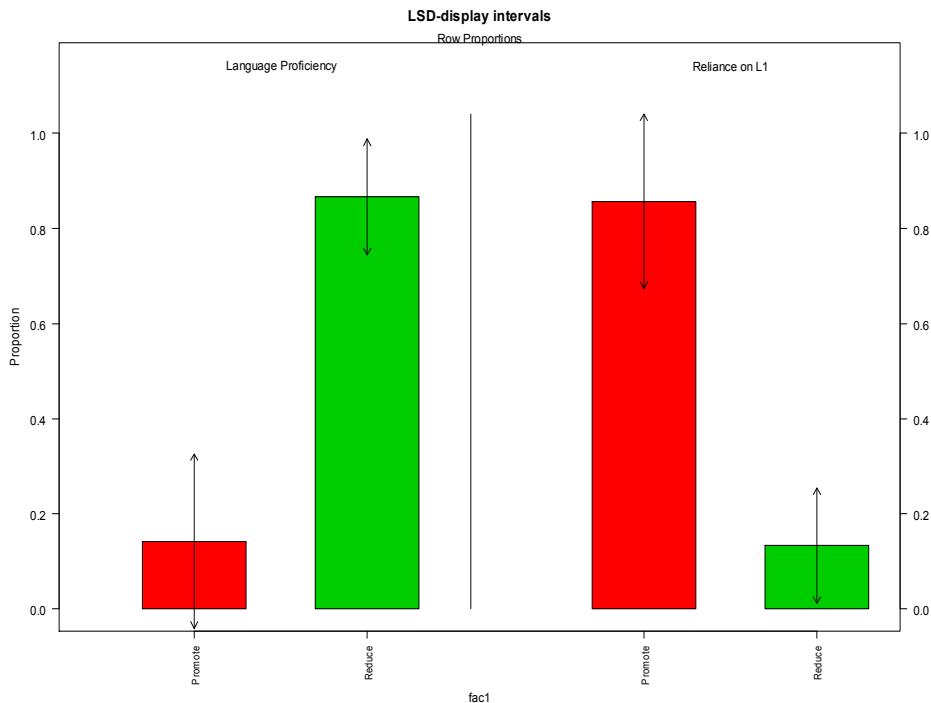


Figure 4. 6. Factors facilitating and inhibiting WTC in the linguistic dimension.

4.3 Qualitative Analysis

In this section, I will elaborate on each of the factors in the three dimensions and provide quotations from interviews and excerpts from classroom discourse to illustrate the way in which these factors shaped situational WTC in class. Differing from the previous sections which presented quantitative results, this section provides results and discussions of qualitative interview and classroom interaction data. The findings of the present study will be discussed in relation to other studies on WTC.

4.3.1 Environmental Dimension

The environmental factors refer to variables embedded in the immediate classroom environment that exerted influences on learners' WTC. They included the external factors such as topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher, and class interactional pattern.

4.3.1.1 Topic

Concerning their heuristic *WTC in L2* model, MacIntyre et al. (1998) claim that the topic of communication significantly affects the ease of language use. Content knowledge and familiarity with a certain register is likely to result in a boost in one's linguistic self-confidence, while lack of knowledge about a topic and lack of familiarity with the register may inhibit communication. Previous empirical research has also shown that background knowledge of a topic is essential for students to feel secure enough to talk about it (Cao & Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005). The knowledge included both general knowledge and knowledge of a specific topic related to a participant's own area of study. Among the participants in the current study, half of them mentioned topic as a factor. For example, Fatima, who used to be a pharmacist, possessed knowledge of medical science and terms that she was eager to share with her class in the Week 2 lesson. This was well expressed in her comment,

Maybe the topic, it was the thing I know or I have a lot of information about, so I can give a lot of information...something that's related to the health that's our topic, so I can clarify because not all of them can understand medical terms...some dictionaries not including the meanings, so I try to participate in some points which is not really clear or to add something new maybe. (Phase I interview)

When the students knew little about a certain topic they would try to avoid talking (Atay & Gokce, 2007). In this study, the students reported feeling disadvantaged in discussions of topics they lacked knowledge about. Some reported they were not even equipped with the knowledge to discuss such topics in their first language, as suggested by Chen-feng and Mu-cheng:

If some kind of topic you didn't um you don't touch it frequently, I mean if you if you ask me how about the political in NZ I know nothing, something like that, I can't I can't um I don't know what I should say because I know nothing about NZ political...even if someone someone ask me to discuss in Chinese, I think it's the same way yes, if I didn't interest in that topic even if I use Chinese to talk about it. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

If I don't have enough vocabulary to express my thoughts about the topics...I don't even have much to say in Chinese (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

Apparently, the students would talk more about issues that they found more interesting (Cao, 2006; Kang, 2005). They would feel reluctant to talk about topics that they thought were boring,

So if I really interested in the topic yes I um I will be more active, yes I want to talk maybe I'd like to talk. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

But the topic is so boring, she just play a tape and we listen to different kind of noise like the car, make some noise and something, and to choose the word to describe this voice, it's so boring. (Cai wei, Phase II interview)

The effect of lack of interest in topics on WTC was also observed in Atay and Kurt's (2007) study, which demonstrated that the students did not seem to be bothered to talk if they thought that the topic was boring. House (2004) also found a lack of interest in topics discussed, resulting in reduced communication for a number of participants. Likewise, Liu (2005) reported that interest mattered substantially in students' active participation in classroom activities in her study.

Topics involving exchanging experiences with someone from a different cultural background were appealing to these students as they were eager to understand other cultures, as suggested by Rong-rong and Jun:

I like to talk or if that topic is about cultures, I like to talk with foreigners, I mean I'm a foreigner, I mean different country people, yeah I can understand more about other cultures. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

I feel very fun when I was talking about the difference between different cultures difference between peoples. (Jun, Phase II interview)

Some reported that they were talkative in the group discussion because the topic was chosen by the students themselves instead of being allocated by the teacher:

I think the topic is one the reason that make us so talkative...this topic is we choose by ourselves, there's a list and we choose by ourselves, I think everyone will interested in this topic. (Xiao-qing, Phase II interview)

For the same reason, some students seemed to be more talkative out of class rather than in class:

After class I can talk whatever I want and no no commitment...in the class we should talk about what the teacher set the topic um after class we can choose, myself or other people, so you can you can feel more freedom. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

Culturally sensitive topics can also have an effect on students' WTC by creating negative feelings. Chen-feng said that he felt somewhat embarrassed and hurt by the negative comments about Chinese immigration policy from two Korean students, "as a Chinese, I feel a little bit um not very good you know that feeling is not very good." He did not want to discuss the issue further in case the discussion might cause arguments and conflicts that would "perhaps hurt some other people's feelings" (Phase II interview).

4.3.1.2 Task Type

Similar to previous studies that identified task type as a factor affecting students' WTC in pair and group interaction (Cao, 2006; Cao & Philp, 2006; Peng, 2008; Weaver, 2004), the majority of the participants expressed preference for the project work which involved teamwork rather than teacher-fronted activities. Participants reported that this was not just because they had more opportunities to talk to the team members and to share their own ideas, but also because it gave them opportunities to learn other skills that might be useful for future job prospects. As Cai-wei suggested in the interview,

I feel more like to talk, I have my idea and I want to tell other people and maybe it's good idea and we can use it, but if just [teacher's name] sitting there and told us something maybe no idea...it's better than just sitting there listening to a teacher. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

Some liked the project work because it had a kind of continuity that helped sustain their motivation and they had abundant opportunities to talk to other group members:

Today we were doing the project in a group and that was more concrete...for the project I had to search for information based on the topic we chose yesterday...I can communicate with classmates. (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

Some thought project work was interesting and creative, suitable for more independent learners, and they seemed to be enjoying the teamwork:

Very interesting, because um I like self-study, so I think I can do self-study with the task this project, we can make a report we can make newspaper

for ourselves, so maybe it will be very creative and can improve my progress my English writing and speaking. (Seung, Phase II interview)

4.3.1.3 Interlocutor

As shown in other studies (Cao & Philp, 2006; House, 2004; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005; Peng, 2008), the interlocutor was reported to be a major factor affecting students' WTC. The participants appeared to be willing to talk to peers with higher proficiency. As Shuwei revealed, he could benefit from being corrected by a more competent interlocutor. The students preferred to talk to interlocutors who were more competent than them, who were talkative and outgoing, also who had a lot of ideas that could stimulate more ideas, as illustrated in the following interview excerpts:

I think their vocabulary is quite wider than me, if they speak and I don't understand and they will explain the word for me. I think it's nice. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

Jun is very talkative then they can talk to each other then we can join them to talk each other, that's better...he's talkative and a lot of ideas...maybe something I hear if I want to say something about it I can I can talk more I think. If no one talking I don't want to talk at all. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

Jun, I will talk more with him, he will talk a lot more about the topic and there will be more communication. (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

If they're quite talkative, I can't help to talk with them, like brainstorm, they say something and I have another idea and they got another idea from my idea and lots of things, yeah that's good. (Xiao-qing, Phase II interview)

Similar to findings in other studies (Cao & Philp, 2006; Liu, 2005), it was found that the more familiar the students were with their interlocutors, the more comfortable they felt talking to them. This is evident in the following excerpts:

I think it's better it's better now because we're familiar with the classmates and not very nervous...they're all very friendly I think. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

If the person I don't know or I'm not familiar with him, I won't talk much with him, but after a few days, we getting we know each other more I will talk more. (Ai-ling, Phase II interview)

The students developed their friendship with some classmates through socialising with them out of class. Consequently such socialisation enabled a much tighter bond among them which in turn made them feel more comfortable and willing to talk to their friends in class. For example, Cai-wei reported:

Because in the morning we also stay together...just during break time we discuss something or talk about something interesting yeah...just like the discuss maybe last week what we did what is interesting or or what did you do yesterday or something. (Phase II interview)

Ines also preferred to talk to friends with whom she socialised outside of class,

It's easier to work with someone that you appreciate outside of class, because you can be more confident and say more easily yeah I don't like what you said...you just did something outside of class with your classmates and they became kind of friends it's easier to share ideas...with some people he or she is nice but we can never be friends...that's all right to work in group for little things...but if it's more precise work it would be hard to discuss. (Phase I interview)

Rong-rong expressed similar appreciation of social opportunities:

I mean after school at break time or other times, you can you can meet together and talk about whatever I want and get some information about which place is very interesting and very nice. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

As noted above regarding topic, the students found it more interesting to talk to interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds, not only because they could learn about different cultures, but also because they felt more open and freer to talk to "foreigners" whom they perceived as knowing less about their own cultures. Mu-cheng appeared to be more guarded and reserved while conversing with Chinese classmates, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

I think that foreigners are more open than Chinese. You have reservations when you talk to Chinese, for example, you feel more freely talking to a foreigner...like you're more open talking to a foreigner, when talking to a Chinese, you might be concerned about how your interlocutor is going to react to your comments, you're more selective talking to a Chinese. (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

It was considered less appealing to talk to interlocutors from the same country as the ways of thinking were similar:

Other nationalities, because the way of thinking is quite different, while Korean students, they might have quite similar thinking maybe. (Jun, Phase II interview)

Kang (2005) reported a similar finding. He reported that the Korean participants in his study regarded Koreans as the least preferable conversation partners, who would most decrease their interest and motivation to talk.

De Saint Leger and Storch (2009) found that the majority of their participants were concerned about the potential risk of being judged negatively by their peers and consequently they felt vulnerable when expressing an opinion in front of the whole class. In the current study, Shu-wei explained that he had been quite disturbed by the negative evaluation of his oral skills by a classmate in the previous course. His apprehension of being negatively evaluated by peers led him to avoid communicating with classmates from the same cultural background:

If in the class there're only Chinese I think I don't have courage to speak because in Module 3, the three Chinese, one of the Chinese is a girl, she was 18 years old and she had good speaking listening and writing, so I feel more pressure, stressed... I don't know why, because she says sometimes when I talk about some topic she always interrupt me and say something about what I said. (Shu-wei, Phase I interview)

4.3.1.4 Teacher

In a language classroom, it is unavoidable that the teacher plays an influential role in affecting students' WTC. Wen and Clément (2003) suggested that the teacher's involvement, attitude, immediacy and teaching style exerts a significant and determining sociocultural influence on student engagement and WTC. In a study of Thai tertiary students' WTC, Pattapong (in press) reported the influence of teacher characteristics and teaching practice on learners' WTC in an EFL setting. In the Chinese EFL context, Peng (2007a, 2007b, 2008) found that "teacher support" was considered to be important by the students especially in activating their L2 WTC. Teacher support refers to teachers' dedication to and skills in providing both linguistic and non-linguistic aids and fostering a

safe classroom environment to boost L2 communication. Teacher's classroom management skills and teaching styles, termed *classroom organisation*, was also found to have a role to play in influencing students' L2 WTC.

In the present study, the majority of the participants in one class mentioned that the teacher was an inducing factor that encouraged them to talk. They seemed to like the varied and vivid teaching style possessed of the teacher and consequently felt motivated to participate in class. As Shu-wei remarked, "Her teaching style is very interesting and I think she's suitable for us...I think it's important reason". Referring to a different class in her postgraduate programme, Fatima commented that she was especially enthusiastic about anticipating and volunteering answers to questions from lecturers who adopted a more interactive and learner-centred teaching method:

He used to ask us yeah to to make us like participating like concentrating every time that he could ask, so I have to prepare my mind, I have to prepare, he may ask here for something what kind of questions could be asked XX she she use the same, not the same exactly but sometimes she ask about something why, who can tell me that, just think about the the like that. (Phase III interview)

Teacher involvement, which refers to the quality of interpersonal relationship of the teacher with his/her students, willingness to dedicate psychological resources to students, enjoyment of interaction with students and attentiveness to students' needs and emotions, is suggested to have a strong impact on students' WTC (Wen & Clément, 2003). In the current study, the students tended to be more willing to ask questions and participate more actively in class when they liked the teacher of that class. As Cai-wai commented, "Everybody like her, and yeah and so we can ask a lot of question and discuss a lot of question" (Phase II interview). Mu-cheng had similar feelings,

If the teacher is more friendly, I feel more like talking...for example, I didn't quite like the topic and I was quiet, and she asked me to talk more, I actually didn't have much to talk about...I didn't like that, I think [teacher's name] is more flexible, you don't feel obliged to talk. (Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

Some students particularly appreciated the teacher as a more competent interlocutor and welcomed the idea of the teacher's participation in group discussions, as commented by Rong-rong, Yi-yun and Chen-feng:

I like teacher join us, because if we have the grammar mistake he can correct it...he is New Zealander he also can express the New Zealand opinion culture to us and we can clearly know this culture this country yeah and also we can discuss question...he's more friendly when he's in a group...like an elder student. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

I think the teacher join us is a good idea because all the students, actually English isn't my first language, as students sometime we can't understand each other, and we can't understand each other's words, if the teacher joins us he will correct words. (Yi-yun, Phase II interview)

When we discuss topic we might meet a lot of questions and we can't solve these by ourselves and of course when the teacher comes and ask him for help make us more clearly make us more clear about the topic and make us understand it more completely. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

Conversely, the teacher could also have a negative effect on learners' WTC in class. When the students had difficulties with listening or reading comprehension, they would expect the teacher to explain. Cai-wei noted, "The teacher I think when we study in this class we don't understand some things, vocabulary, she didn't explain it for us". When she was asked why she did not make an attempt to ask the teacher about the new words, she commented that the teacher's attitude and physical distance prevented her from inquiring further:

I think her attitude is not good, when we discuss something and we have our opinion but she didn't agree with us and she just say no, I think it's not good...maybe I don't want to ask her, like this...I think if I ask her she will never come here and explain for me...because she always sits in there. (Phase II interview)

Wen and Clément (2003) found that teacher immediacy positively correlated with students' WTC in the classroom. The *immediacy* construct was coined by Mehrabian (1969, p.203; cited in Wen and Clément, 2003), referring to those communication behaviours that "enhance closeness to and nonverbal interaction with each other". Immediacy behaviours, either verbal or nonverbal, can reduce the actual physical or psychological distance between the teacher and students. In the present study, as Chen-

feng, Rong-rong and Yi-yun mentioned above, when the teacher chose to actively participate in group discussion, his approach behaviour increased and this produced interpersonal closeness with the students and consequently promoted their WTC. In Cai-wei's case, when the teacher kept a physical distance from her, she interpreted the distance as a source that prevented her from seeking further information from the teacher.

Usually when the answers from students differed from what their teacher had in mind, the students would expect explanations. They would feel discouraged from talking if the teacher did not seem to be engaged in the interaction:

She don't she don't concentrate too much about student's answer, I think she have answer in her head, and she don't expect, she don't open-mind about student answer so much, it's not good to force student want to participate...sometimes I answer, not the really answer in her mind...she listen and she say it's not the right answer, she only say no not it, don't discuss why it's not the answer. (Sirikit, Phase II interview)

The students also expected the teacher to be more tolerant of their answers and to deal with them skillfully. They would feel discouraged when their answers were not acknowledged by the teacher. As noted by Sirikit in the interview, she refrained from speaking due to the teacher's communicative insensitivity,

She will not accept but she will it's OK, she explain it in another way, you can answer in another way, its OK, but this one is better...if I talk she don't listen my opinion and she refuse everything. I feel really bad I don't want to talk. (Phase II interview)

Similarly, Atay and Kurt (2007) reported that the students in their study felt unwilling to talk when the teacher paid little attention to what they were saying in class.

Some students reported that it was important for the class teacher to be able to tell from the student's facial expression or body language whether the student was ready to answer questions or had difficulty with comprehension:

The teacher will know if you want to say something from your face she will say how about you...maybe you're thinking but she can know from your face she will know if you want to say something...if we don't understand, we just sit there and look at her, she will explain it, how can I say it. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

Though some students preferred to be called upon by the teacher rather than volunteering answers, this technique of the teacher calling upon students was perceived as being more eastern style rather than western style.

4.3.1.5 Class Interactional Pattern

In a conversational context, the number of interlocutors in communication, or to put it more precisely, group size, seemed to have an influence on WTC (Kang, 2005; McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). In a classroom context, the concept of group size can be expressed in terms of three types of class interactional pattern: whole-class, small group and dyad. As shown in previous research, learners' preferences for the class interactional contexts are not uniform. Some feel more comfortable to talk in small-group work or dyads whereas others are more vocal in teacher-fronted activities. However, generally students prefer small group or pair work to whole-class activity in both ESL and EFL settings. This is similar to findings in other classroom studies (Cao & Philp, 2006; de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009; Liu, 2005).

In de Saint Léger and Storch's (2009) study, for example, whole-class discussion was perceived as the most difficult type of interactional pattern due to peer pressure and involvement of high-level online processing. The students in their EFL French class reported that their WTC was impeded by the pressure to think on the spot in order to be able to contribute to class discussion, and was further inhibited by more proficient speakers who dominated class discussion.

In the present study, whole-class interaction was also perceived by some students as anxiety-provoking due to peer pressure; that is, they felt anxious and uncomfortable about giving incorrect answers in front of their classmates when the teacher asked the class a question. They also reported that their non-participation in whole-class activities was attributable to the level of difficulty of questions addressed by the teacher to the whole class. Sometimes the questions addressed to the class were too challenging to answer:

If I know the answer sometimes I will answer it because sometimes I sit there hear others' opinion...like [Teacher's name] sitting in the front and he sometimes will ask some question, some questions are too difficult. (Ai-ling, Phase II interview)

Some students did not feel motivated to answer the questions because other students might answer them and thus their own participation would be redundant,

I just speak my answer and someone will follow me or I follow someone, I don't like answer independently...if they have the same answer to me, like me, I wouldn't say again, but if I have the different answer from others I will talk to the teacher yeah I think there is no need to say it again...if someone if some answers are right I will nod just answer yeah I nod. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

In Liu's (2005) study the students were observed to be active in answering easy questions in chorus and only a few students volunteered to answer difficult or challenging questions. In the current study, those who liked volunteering answers seemed to be confident risk-takers:

I want to improve my speaking skill too, that's a reason and I don't care if my answer is right or wrong, I'm trying to make my answer right, I don't care whether it's right or wrong. (Jun, Phase II interview)

De Saint Leger and Storch's (2009) study found that learners' perceptions of small group discussion were mixed. Some were more vocal in small groups than in the whole class and they perceived group work as an opportunity to speak in a more relaxed and informal interaction. Others perceived group work as challenging on account of a perceived lack of authenticity. They considered it unnatural and pretentious to interact with fellow students in a language other than their L1 and they emphasised the importance of having a native speaker such as the teacher participate in the discussion. The current study saw an absence of such a learner perception of group work. This is probably due to the difference in context – De Saint Leger and Storch's study was carried out in a French as a foreign language context with a common L1 while the present study explored an ESL English class among mixed L1 learners. De Saint Leger and Storch suggested that this perception could be attributed to learners' "affiliation motive" to establish a rapport with the native-speaking community, that is, their intergroup affiliation.

Peng (2007a, 2007b) reported that students' L2 WTC in the Chinese EFL classroom could be influenced by group cohesiveness. The majority of participants in her study reported that they felt relatively relaxed and more willing to communicate within a cohesive group. The cohesive group could provide them with a safer context to rehearse their English utterances. They also reported that group work fostered their self-confidence because they could exchange ideas with others and gain a sense of contributing to the whole group's learning outcome.

In the present study, group work rather than pair work was the pattern preferred by students, because there were more people involved in discussion, and more ideas could be generated. Although there could be conflicts, they could be easier to resolve in a group than in a pair, as suggested by Jun, Mu-cheng, Cai-wei and Rong-rong in the interviews:

It is more easier to get common common thinking, no, in pair work in pair, if we met some conflicts about out thinking, it's very hard to make compromise...in groups, there's much more confliction maybe, kind of, I think it's more natural to make mindmap in group not in pair, so I prefer to work in groups not pairs. (Jun, Phase II interview)

Small groups, it's better than pair work as there are more people who can express their opinions, in pair work people might run out of ideas. (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

Because if you're in a pair just two people, you have to work, yeah, and in a small group we discuss something maybe I have my opinion and say my opinion to other students...if I didn't say maybe other students said it so I don't need to. (Cai wei, Phase II interview)

I feel like to discuss with the group, not in pairs. I think in pairs the mind is too narrow. You can I like to get information from everybody not focus on you or me...whole-class, I think it's too messy. You can't really find people to talk, and one people to say and other people interrupt you so, finally you can't know you don't know what you're going to say. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

Still, some thought pair work was sometimes preferable because there would be less competition in turn-taking:

Sometimes if we talk in only, we listen to each other, but if you talk more than three or four or four you cannot participate everybody, because competition to talk, everybody want to talk. (Sirikit, Phase II interview)

De Saint Leger and Storch's (2009) study also found that learner's perception of whole-class discussion as the most difficult type of interaction changed over time. As they gained greater self-confidence and improvement in fluency and vocabulary, their willingness to contribute to this activity also increased. However, in the present study, the students' preferences for a particular interactional pattern remained unchanged over the period of the 20-week programme.

4.3.2 Individual Dimension

Factors within the individual dimension refer to personal characteristics, that is, internal psychological and affective factors possessed by each individual student that exert influences on his/her WTC. They included perceived opportunity to communicate, self-confidence, personality, and emotion.

4.3.2.1 Perceived Opportunity to Communicate

Perceived opportunity for talking was also regarded as a factor contributing to WTC (Cao & Philp, 2006; House, 2004). The students reported they would be willing to talk when a suitable opportunity arose. Ines commented, "I try to speak when a time is made for that. I'm here to improve my English and my problem is speaking". (Phase I interview).

Sometimes the format of the lesson did not create much opportunity for the students to talk, as noted by Seung:

Maybe today's lesson was not to, not was not to talk, today's lesson was to prepare prepare the next project...so today's lesson need me to think not talk and choose something, but last week, we got our topic to discuss with each other...we discuss about the topic and we talk each with our individual opinion about the topic so it was the purpose was talking, but today's lesson not for talking maybe. (Seung, Phase II interview)

Specific to each lesson, opportunities available for students to talk also varied. It would depend on how they perceived those opportunities,

Because other people like Jun or Seung they're I think their reaction is quicker than me". She wouldn't feel like voicing her opinion which was different from the others' because she thought 'usually the teacher will say something. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

I just reply because nobody answers. (Jun, Phase II interview)

Perception of others' participation was also identified as influencing WTC. Some reported that they felt a sense of responsibility to fill the gap when observing that others in class were too quiet. This was reflected in Fatima's comments, "They are shy to be embarrassed or...sometimes they're not answering at all...so I just on behalf of them, so I have to say no or yes...the class is so silent...I have to say anything" (Phase I interview). Ines expressed similar feelings, "Sometimes they're like TOO quiet and VERY SLOW...sometimes the teacher asks a question, the answer is really simple, nobody answer, so OK I will answer because nobody feel this" (Phase I interview). However, some participants felt that their WTC was inhibited by over-talkative students who took up most of the opportunities to talk, especially in a whole-class situation. As Umar noted, "Some students they can't wait, sometimes they answer before the teacher finishes the question...when other students do something like that I just don't want to talk at all" (Phase I interview).

A few students mentioned that they would not waste the teacher's or other students' time to ask a question that nobody else had a problem with, and that interrupting the teacher might be considered rude:

I always interrupt him maybe he hope today's class can teach some writing but I keep ask some question then it goes out of the track, maybe make him not so comfortable. (Xiao-qing, Phase II interview)

Teacher is the teacher was keeping talking I think it's rude to stop him. (Yi-yun, Phase II interview)

The students who had this perception were largely students from an Asian background. This could be due to their cultural and educational background which emphasised being a passive recipient of knowledge. Their affective concerns such as face-protection or avoiding "showing off" probably inhibited them from speaking up (Peng 2007b). However, their perceptions changed over time. After being immersed in the western environment and seeing students from other cultures interrupting the teacher a lot, some felt that it would be appropriate to follow:

When I in Taiwan, I always ask my classmates, I don't used to ask to raise my hand, I feel shy and everyone will look at me, what's problem with you, so I never raise hand sorry I don't understand or something. And I try to do that in NZ, cause I saw my other classmate they're from other country and they're just brave really brave, say sorry I don't understand. But I don't know that is good for teacher's teaching or not. (Xiao-qing, Phase II interview)

Compared to the learning environment in their home country, some students felt they were given more opportunities to talk in this environment. For example, Cai-wei mentioned that back in her home country, students usually had no opportunity to speak in class. When they made an attempt to ask the teacher a question, the teacher would direct them to a reference book rather than responding to the question itself. She thought students were given more opportunities to speak in the western environment but that she would still have to be quick enough to air her opinions in class.

4.3.2.2 Personality

Personality can either facilitate or inhibit language learning in general and learner's WTC in particular (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre, et al., 1998). Students with such personality dispositions as extraversion, impulsiveness, socialisation and flexibility tend to be more risk-taking and more prone to communication (Wen & Clément, 2003). Seung, a popular interlocutor among his classmates, described himself as an extraverted and sociable student, "To talk first to others is my character, I always talk first with other people to be to make some friendship" (Phase II interview).

Personality traits can be universal, but the behavioural expressions of personality traits are highly context dependent (Wen & Clément, 2003). As Cai-wei noted, her personality was fluid and adjustable according to her familiarity with interlocutors in a given conversational context. Her context-adaptable personality also determined whether she talked more or less with certain interlocutors,

If the person or a friend are just met, not know each other well, I think I'm a quiet person, but if my family or yeah I will talkative. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

4.3.2.3 Self-confidence

There appeared to be evidence to confirm that the self-confidence variable (a combination of perceived communicative competence and a lack of anxiety), identified in previous studies (Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Clément et al., 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2001; MacIntyre et al., 2003b; Yashima, 2002) as an individual difference factor that would directly affect WTC influenced learners' WTC in this study. As MacIntyre et al. (1998) point out, self-confidence operates at dual levels – L2 self-confidence, which is the overall belief in being able to communicate in an efficient manner, and state self-confidence, which fluctuates and tends to be reduced or enhanced at particular moments. Pattapong (in press) found that self-confidence was comparable to the state communicative self-confidence in MacIntyre et al. (1998) that comprised perceived competence and communication comprehension. Similar to Pattapong's findings, the students' situational WTC in the present study appeared to be affected by their state self-confidence, which could be enhanced by increasing familiarity with interlocutors, as suggested by Takuya and Ai-ling in the interviews:

But sometimes I have to be confident about my English otherwise it's quite troublesome for me, that's why how can I say, of course I'm not cowards but I don't want to make mistakes by nature I mean. (Takuya, Phase I interview)

I don't know maybe yes but maybe I feel confident to talk because I get familiar with classmates not because comfortable to talk. (Ai-ling, Phase II interview)

4.3.2.4 Emotion

Research on emotion suggests that academic emotions impact on the quality of student's learning and student emotions have a substantial effect on the quality of classroom communication. Students experience a full range of diverse emotions in instructional settings. Apart from negative emotions such as anxiety that have been widely reported, positive emotions are mentioned as frequently (Goetz, Pekrun, Hall, & Haag, 2006; Pekrun, 2000; Pekrun, Gietz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). In the present study, a range of emotions were also noted by the students as factors influencing their WTC participation in class, including negative emotions such as anxiety, boredom, frustration, embarrassment and anger, and positive emotions such as enjoyment and satisfaction.

Anxiety has been frequently reported in previous research on WTC as a factor negatively affecting WTC, (for example, Baker and MacIntyre 2000, 2003; Yashima, 2002). In the EFL classroom, Peng (2007b) identified a number of factors causing language anxiety, including stage fright, a sense of competing against others, and a fear of losing face. In the current study, anxiety could be provoked in a whole-class situation where peer pressure was on, and teacher's participation in group work could also lead students to feel too anxious to speak in the teacher's presence. Ai-ling and Cai-wei remarked on this as follows:

When the teacher stand beside you, he will correct your mistakes and you will feel nervous about making mistakes...Sometimes you can see others they will maybe before [teacher's name] come they will talk a lot and after he came and we um become quiet...if I talk if he ask me a question er I want to talk to him, I will think about my grammar mistake, but in other times I won't think about my grammar. (Ai-ling, Phase II interview)

This Thursday we talked about cultural differences or something and [teacher's name] walked along and listened to you walk beside you and feel really nervous speak slowly. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

Students who say they feel bored are, according to Pekrun et al.'s (2002) finding on the sources of academic emotions, rationalising their disinclination towards a task or topic because it is either insufficiently stimulating, or, conversely, overly demanding (pp. 93-94). The term *boredom* is used to varying degrees unconsciously, as a vehicle to express other feelings which are harder to access or articulate. The dual aspects of boredom, which could be caused by insufficiently stimulating or overly demanding tasks or topics, can be illustrated in the following two excerpts. Ines felt bored and unwilling to communicate because she found the class activities not sufficiently challenging and engaging. In Yi-yun's case, he felt bored and remained quiet almost during the entire session of the class because he lacked the linguistic resources to cope with the demanding task:

No not really and as you said I was not really in a good mood so (giggles), sometimes you get bored, I think I was bored very easily yesterday. (Ines, Phase I interview)

I know my vocab is very bad so so when I feel bored and I can't pay attention on reading and writing and speaking, so I think that's a way to study is remember the words... just because of vocab, some words I don't know and I can't understand, I can't understand what it is, so I feel a little nervous yeah. (Yi-yun, Phase II interview)

When faced with high demands, unlike Yi-yun who chose to escape the discussion by remaining quiet, Chen-feng felt deeply frustrated and withdrew himself from participation:

I can't understand the article totally...I can't put my concentrate on this one because of a lot of new words...some words like this influence my emotion you know...if you can't read the article very fluently...if from the beginning you can't understand, you can't make yourself to move on. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

Feelings of frustration can result from internal factors such as a lack of linguistic ability, as seen in Chen-feng's situation. Frustration can also be due to external factors. In the interview, Sirikit expressed her feeling of frustration resulting from the teacher's communicative insensitivity:

I like to talk, you can see I talk a lot, if I talk she don't listen my opinion and she refuse everything I feel really bad I don't want to talk. (Sirikit, Phase II interview)

Fatima, the student who demonstrated very high WTC in the language programme, a very confident speaker, expressed annoyance and irritation at a native-speaking classmate's reaction to her attempts to volunteer answers in lectures in her university postgraduate programme,

Today there's one of the students the guy who's sitting who's sitting who was sitting there, he from last semester he just if I talk anything about anything in seminars in presentation in answering he just laugh, just laugh yeah just laugh... just laugh and today he laughed already, with the question that OK maybe I answered wrong but he didn't answer at all, so instead of laughing he could answer. (Fatima, Phase III interview)

Interestingly, negative emotions were much more frequently reported than positive emotions by the students in this study. Still, a few students expressed their feeling of

enjoyment and satisfaction with class activities and their willingness to participate in those activities.

Some students in the current study commented that their WTC was at times affected by their mood, which seemed to be induced by the learning environment. They would be in a more cheerful and relaxed mood in a friendly, supportive and non-threatening environment and more willing to engage in discussions. Tiredness or fatigue could lead to a decrease in self-confidence and WTC participation level. Their mood also seemed to be a socially situated and fluctuating variable:

It's more relaxed because we have to do lots of practice and read lots of handouts in the morning, but in the afternoon class we can discuss more...my mood is better than yesterday...I gave opinion to our team so I talk I talked more. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

Sometimes I'm tired and I feel that my English tends to be very bad. (Ines, Phase I interview)

4.3.3 Linguistic Dimension

The linguistic factors refer to both actual and perceived ability to express oneself in L2 thoroughly and correctly, as well as an intention to switch back to L1 to sustain communication. Two factors belong to this dimension, namely, language proficiency and reliance on L1.

4.3.3.1 Language Proficiency

As a distant rather than a proximal factor in the heuristic pyramid model, the degree of a person's L2 proficiency has a significant effect on his/her WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). It has also been shown in empirical studies on L2 WTC that both actual and perceived competence of language learners was found to be related to WTC (Freiermuth & Jarrel, 2006) and that low linguistic proficiency could prevent students from risking speaking the L2 in class (House, 2004; Liu & Jackson, 2008). In the current study, lacking linguistic competence impeded communication in terms of both comprehension and production.

When difficulty occurred in comprehension, either in listening or reading, some students reported that it affected their willingness to talk and consequently they felt bored. For example, Mu-cheng reported, “I didn’t talk much, because I didn’t quite understand the news, it was too fast” (Phase II interview, translated from Chinese).

The difficulty with comprehension of the keywords in the article affected Chen-feng’s mood. Not being able to understand the details of the article obviously deterred him from engaging in the follow-up group discussion. As he noted,

I can’t understand the article totally...I can’t put my concentrate on this one because of a lot of new words...some words like this influence my emotion you know...if you can’t read the article very fluently...if from the beginning you can’t understand, you can’t make yourself to move on. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

The two quotations below show that difficulty with understanding oral language would reduce their intention to talk:

The news reporter talks very fast, I couldn’t understand anything I could just read some headline from the TV so when we choose the topic we didn’t we didn’t talk we didn’t have much information to talk about the topic...if we doesn’t have don’t have much information then it’s very hard to talk about that, I feel I feel some I feel hard to express my opinion because my database empty. (Seung, Phase II interview)

Like teacher ask some question and I have no idea, or I can’t really understand other classmates meaning what they say, I can’t understand, I can’t join the situation. (Xiao-qing, Phase II interview)

In terms of production, a lack of lexical resources would affect the students’ communication with others. For example, Yi-yun noted, “I think um if my vocabulary isn’t good enough, I can’t have a good communication with others” (Phase II interview). In particular, lacking specific terms in the field of study would impede self-confidence and then discourage participation in class discussions,

I don’t feel confident enough to um it’s just try to express my ideas, it’s just because yeah, a lot of people say very intelligent things that I XX I’m not sure I could say it, the same, you know, it’s more sometimes I don’t feel confident enough with my English to just participate yeah, but it’s um yeah I don’t know if it’s only due to English to something else... like the first seminar I want to say something so, I say the things, but people didn’t

understand exactly what I was meaning, ‘cos it’s, can be pretty complex concepts, and so, so sometimes it’s if I don’t use the right words, I can actually mislead them you know like so, yeah... I’m less less confident in participate yeah um, yeah really. (Ines, Phase III interview)

Similarly, de Saint Leger and Storch (2009) reported that vocabulary was an area of concern that hindered the students’ oral interaction, whereas grammar or pronunciation was less perceived as problematic. Cao (2005) similarly reported lacking vocabulary in L2 as a factor affecting the students’ perceived competence, which in turn influenced WTC at times. Peng (2007b) revealed that learners reported problems in finding appropriate words or structures to transfer ideas into verbal expressions. Such insufficient communicative competence may add to students’ cognitive load and result in their delay or withdrawal from speaking up. Liu (2005) identified a lack of vocabulary as a source of student reticence in oral English language classrooms. The students invariably found their vocabulary so small that they were not confident about expressing their ideas. This led them to feel anxious and frustrated and contributed to their quietness in class. Similarly, MacDonald, Clément and MacIntyre (2003) found that Francophone participants in their study felt unwilling to communicate on topics that were unfamiliar or that required specialised vocabulary.

4.3.3.2 Reliance on L1

The majority of my participants were Chinese students. Throughout the data collection period, I observed many occasions when some of them communicated in their L1, especially in group discussions. They knew they were not encouraged to use L1 and they did not feel positive about use of L1 in class. For example, Chen-feng said, “[to] just discuss the whole topic in Chinese, I don’t like that” (Phase II interview). Cai-wei expressed similar feelings, “I didn’t talk a lot with them so I don’t know them well because they all speak Chinese” (Phase II interview).

They mentioned that they would not normally speak to another student in Chinese unless s/he initiated the talk in Chinese. They felt obliged to respond in Chinese rather than English, because “if someone use Chinese speak Chinese to me, if I answered in English, that make me a little bit stupid” (Chen-feng, Phase II interview), and “it’s not good, feel

strange" (Cai-wei, Phase II interview). Peng (2008) reported that some participants in her study also felt obliged to respond in their L1 to the group mate who initiated the talk in L1.

Some students chose to ask for clarification from peers using an L1 in order to resolve comprehension difficulties,

If something I don't know for example I didn't pay attention to teacher's speaking, and I misunderstand something yeah I ask I ask classmates in Chinese, yeah because... I know it's quite bad but but it's Chinese can help me to understand it completely. (Yi-yun, Phase II interview)

When they lacked the vocabulary in English, they would switch back to L1 as a scaffold to communicating in English. As Mu-cheng noted,

We most use Chinese to communicate the key word...I try to use English but when we're when we're get involved with it's not I can't it's not er I can't think of English words, so I use Chinese. (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview)

It was thought that translating key words into L1 "helps other to understand the whole meaning whole sentence meaning" (Chen-feng, Phase II interview). But some students thought otherwise; for example, Cai-wei disliked it that her classmate explained the word in Chinese to her when they could have used English:

If you speak to people who can speak Chinese, and even when you speak English, but you want to ask the word they want to use Chinese to respond you, just tell you what is the word meaning. I think it's not good, you can explain it in English. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

Some of the students chose to switch back to L1 in discussion on account of it being less demanding to communicate in L1 with peers,

Actually if I discuss with Chinese, maybe I will speak Chinese, that's easy more relaxed than English...sometimes I feel lazy I want to relax, we use Chinese you can say it without thinking, in English you must think first say it. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

When there was an increase in task difficulty, there was the possibility of code-switching: "the task the teacher give us the difficulty of task is increasing...we use more Chinese" (Mu-cheng, Phase II interview).

They used L1 for socialising and chatting in class as well. When the chat concerned something more personal, it felt more natural to use L1:

Someone might think it's strange to talk with them in English especially we're discussing some something like your hair or your dress, because it's too complicated to talk in English and very strange. (Ai-ling, Phase II interview)

The fact that they sometimes took time out was also noticed by Helen:

They participate well but are not easy to keep on task sometimes. They tend to chat a lot. In afternoon class at least they are not prepared to put in a lot of effort. (Phase II interview)

Certainly John's attitude towards use of L1 in class was not positive: "I think it's a waste of their money, I don't agree with that as a learning choice, er I think it's foolish, and I think they know that." But John chose to deal with this problem in various ways, some of which were more tolerant of L1 use for more appropriate purposes, such as giving explanation to aid comprehension:

Depend[ing] on what they're explaining, it'll be better if they try to do it in English, but if the idea is to structure a task or something then if they understand in their own language, it won't help much. (Phase II interview with John)

But other teachers seemed to be exercising stricter rules, and the students knew that:

In the morning class, [Teacher's name] usually forbid us to speak Chinese, our own languages, just English in class, John didn't mention about this too much. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

Teacher will hear and she will stop us to talk in Chinese and she will separate the two people who like to talk Chinese...when we speak use Chinese she will stop us. (Cai-wei, Phase II interview)

The teachers also identified different occasions when the students used their L1, including asking for clarification, getting excited about the discussion or having to talk about something more personal:

I guess my default assumption is that they do it, because they can communicate quite well in English I think, they do it just when they get too excited, or they want to I don't know talk about something really personal,

or something about it, OK fair enough, but I count that as a break when it's part of their learning strategy and works well for them, once or twice I heard a discussion which seemed to be clarification, only once or twice. (Phase II interview with John)

Freiermuth and Jarrel (2006) also found that some students reverted to their L1 to compensate for their weakness in their spoken L2. In situations where silence was identified as uncomfortable for teachers and students, it was convenient and stress-relieving for students to opt for their L1. It seems to be natural for the students to opt to their L1 when they all speak the same L1 (Duff, 2001; Kobayashi, 2003). The students used their L1 in both off-task chatting and on-task planning. While Freiermuth and Jarrel accept that some L1 is inevitable and useful in the language learning classroom, they also point out that reliance on L1 can definitely hamper WTC in L2 and result in little language production in the target language.

To compare the students' report of L1 use in the interviews with their actual L1 use in classroom discourse, I found that some students did take timeout at times to chat with one another in L1, which, as suggested by Freiermuth and Jarrel, would impede their WTC in L2. However, there were also occasions when reliance on L1 played a role not only in keeping the students on task, but also in aiding comprehension in an efficient and effective manner. I exemplify the positive role that reliance on L1 plays in this type of situation in the following two excerpts from classroom discourse.

In Example 1, Chen-feng and Ai-ling started off the interaction in L2 but then switched to L1 to discuss the meanings of the words, *involve* and *export*. Chen-feng initiated use of L1 in this episode to give definitions of these two words. It can be argued that use of L1 in this situation could assist comprehension and thus aided L2 WTC.

Example 1

1. C: Try involve. (...) *zen me pin ya* (How do you spell?)
2. A: Involve can I check, involve not evolve, in ((looks it up in dictionary))
3. C: involved, *juan ru shen me xian rulian lei* ((gives several definitions of "involve"))
4. A: Well have you got example, have you got example, *li ju* (example)

5. C: XX get involved *jiu shi shi ren juan ru shen me dang zhong* (It means get sb. involved in), get involved in.
 6. A: XX
 7. C: *Juan ru shen me shen me bao kuo* (get involved in sth. means) include, *juan ru jiu shi* (get involved means) get involved, be involved.
 8. A: *ni gei wo xuan ge dong dong ci hao ma, gei wo xuan ge li ju* (Could you choose a verb for me, choose an example for me)
 9. A: Export, *zhe shen me yi si* (What does this mean?)
 10. C: *Chu kou* (export) export.
- (from Week 16 lesson)

In Example 2, Chen-feng opted for L1 to give definitions of the words *analyse* and *consistence*. He also used L1 metalinguistic terms for gerund and noun forms. Like the preceding examples, use of L1 was entangled with use of L2. But it was clear that both of the students were on task and engaged in pair discussion. It can be seen from the two examples that learners' WTC in L2 interacted with their reliance on L1 in class participation. Reliance on L1 seemed to play a positive role maintaining their engagement with the tasks.

Example 2

1. C: Analyse *shi zhi fen xi de ma* (means analyse) *dong ming ci* (gerund)
 2. A: Is XX ((reads out the sentence))
(...)
 3. A: Cons, did you use this one?
 4. C: Which one?
 5. A: Er consist, consist. Consis-tence
 6. C: This one consistence consistence, *ming ci shi* (the noun form is) consistency
 7. A: That's right.
 8. C: Um consistence. *Bu dui, gen consistence de yi si bu yi yang* (It's not right. It has a different meaning from consistence). *yi si shi zhu cheng de yi si* (It means consists of.)
- (from Week 16 lesson)

4.3.4 Summary

In this section, I have described the factors that emerged in the three dimensions (environmental, individual and linguistic) as perceived by learners to affect their situational WTC in class. The current study lends empirical support to the comprehensive

conceptual WTC in L2 model proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998), in that some of the factors that emerged in this study appear to correspond to the variables noted in the heuristic model. For example, state communicative self-confidence, the situated antecedent proposed in Layer III of their model, exercised an influence on learners' WTC in a fluctuating manner in the present study. The other two factors, communicative competence in Layer V (affective-cognitive context) and personality in Layer VI (social and individual context) also emerged in the linguistic and individual dimensions in the present study. However, the factors identified in the environmental dimension in the present study, including topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher and class interactional pattern, which are specific to the L2 classroom context, were not specifically noted in MacIntyre et al.'s general model of WTC. These environmental factors could be regarded as roughly corresponding to what in the model is represented by the term *social situation*. This describes a social encounter in a particular setting; in the L2 classroom setting in this case. The present study also suggests that the individual factors of emotion and perceived opportunity to communicate together with the linguistic factor of reliance on L1, factors which were not included in MacIntyre et al.'s model, may also be important variables to consider in an L2 classroom setting.

In comparison with other classroom-based WTC research, there appear to be similarities in terms of prime dimensions and learner perceptions reported (see de Saint Leger and Storch, 2009; Peng, 2007b, 2008; Pattapong, in press). The three dimensions identified in the present study overlap considerably with the three contexts identified in Peng's (2007a, 2007b) and Pattapong's (in press) studies, including individual, situational/social, and cultural contexts. The common factors that emerged in the three studies on classroom situational WTC comprise teacher support and characteristics, classroom climate and atmosphere, class interactional pattern or group cohesiveness, communicative competence, and self-confidence. Similarly, situational factors such as interlocutor and class interactional pattern together with the linguistic factor of language proficiency are also reported in de Saint Leger and Storch (2009). Taken together, this suggests that classroom WTC is not just affected by learner-internal factors, but also by the external classroom conditions.

There are further parallels with Peng's (2008) recent study in that the factors within the three dimensions of the present study also seem to closely correspond to the three strands of factors underlying fluctuations of WTC inside Chinese EFL classrooms. Peng's study identified three contexts: distal individual context, situational social context, and situational individual context. Among them, situational social context is also referred to as the physical environment and the social environment. The environmental factors include classroom atmosphere, task, group mate's participation and teacher. These environmental factors in her study correspond to the factors of task, interlocutor and teacher in the environmental dimension in this study. The situational individual context in her study consists of cognitive issues, linguistic resources, and psychological feelings. The latter corresponds to self-confidence, emotion, and perceived opportunity to communicate within the individual dimension in the present study. Similarly, linguistic resources, a situational individual factor in Peng's study, correspond to the linguistic dimension in the current study. As Peng (2007b) argues, *readiness to enter into discourse*, which she defines L2 WTC as, can encompass L2 learners' linguistic, cognitive, affective, and cultural readiness. The students' reluctant engagement in L2 communication can be attributable to the lack of one or more such readiness factors. Thus the identification of these underlying dimensions and antecedent factors in this study is supported by previous classroom-based research on L2 WTC.

4.4 Intertwining Interrelationships

In the preceding section, the factors in the three dimensions underlying learners' WTC behaviour were identified and explained. However, evidence suggests that the three dimensions of individual, environmental and linguistic characteristics are not distinct but rather are interrelated and overlapping (Kang, 2005; Peng, 2008). Kang (2005) showed that in an ESL conversational context situational WTC emerged through the interaction between psychological antecedents which were co-constructed by situational variables in a conversational context. Peng (2008) found that WTC in the EFL classroom fluctuated over time and across situations as a function of the interaction between individual and

situational contexts. Similarly, in the ESL classroom investigated here, it seems that the emergence of learners' situational WTC was influenced by individual factors such as self-confidence, perceived opportunity to communicate, emotion and personality, which were mediated by contextual variables including topic, task, interlocutor, teacher and class interactional pattern as well as being shaped by linguistic variables such as language proficiency and reliance on L1. I exemplify below the intertwining relationship between the three dimensions by focusing on one student, Seung, in an example taken from the first activity in the Week 5 class.

Seung's WTC behaviour in the Week 5 lesson was largely determined by the co-influence of environmental, individual and linguistic factors, including topic, perceived opportunity to communicate and linguistic proficiency. Seung's WTC level was just below the mean ratio of 0.84 (WTC ratio =0.79, WTC proportion =13.8%) in the Week 5 lesson. His whole-class participation was lower than the mean while his group participation was higher than the mean. The first part of the lesson involved watching a series of news items. He had to sit and watch the news but found it hard to concentrate and he felt "quite sleepy". Seung reported that he quite liked the topic and the task, but he also found this lesson "not suitable for talking". In the first whole-class activity, comprehension check of the news item, he only volunteered answers six times, which was comparatively low. He reported in the interview that he could only understand 10% of the whole news and just guessed the main idea of it as the news reporter talked fast and had an accent that he found hard to understand. With minimal information from the news, he found it difficult to carry out the subsequent group discussion.

From the example shown above, it can be seen that the factors in all the three dimensions were relevant in playing a part in shaping Seung's WTC in the first part of the Week 5 lesson. It was not a single factor that influenced his WTC, rather, a range of factors worked together to create his WTC and they exerted combined influences on the dynamics of his WTC. In this particular lesson, or more specifically in the first whole-class news viewing and discussion activity, topic seemed to be the factor that motivated him to talk. However, the topic was made less accessible due to his relatively low

linguistic ability as specific to this task. Thus topic was not an independent variable as defined in the traditional cognitive paradigm. It worked with other factors, such as opportunity for talking and his own linguistic ability, to affect his WTC as situated in that task. It seems that in order to understand the interdependence between dimensions and the co-influence of factors on WTC, the etic perspective taken in the description of WTC in this chapter is not adequate. An emic perspective may provide greater insight into the complexity and dynamics of the classroom WTC construct, and this is explored in the following chapter.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the analyses concerning learners' WTC behavioural change and descriptions of the factors affecting their WTC behaviour point to the emergence of and fluctuations in situational WTC in class under the joint influences of individual, environmental and linguistic antecedents. The first half of the chapter focused on the quantitative analysis of WTC behaviour based on data from the WTC observation scheme and presented a fluctuational pattern in WTC behaviour over time. Based on the interview data, factors perceived by learners to either facilitate or inhibit their WTC in class were identified within the dimensions: individual, environmental and linguistic. The three dimensions were found to overlap substantially with those reported in other classroom-based WTC studies in EFL settings.

In this chapter, the usefulness of the quantitative analysis was acknowledged but at the same time its limitations of it were also pointed out; that is, the quantitative analysis was able to reveal one perspective of WTC behaviour - its fluctuational pattern over time. Yet, it appeared that the underlying variables of WTC consisted of a multifaceted, dynamic and interwoven set of relationships. The relationships are so complex that it seems inadequate to isolate the factors and quantify one item at a time and measure their impact on WTC separately. The complexity and the depth of the interrelationships between factors may better be understood through an in-depth holistic qualitative analysis. In accord with the sociocognitive stance established in chapter 2, a pure quantitative and etic

perspective is considered unsuitable for the investigation of the classroom WTC behaviour. In the rest of the thesis, I show how necessary it is to understand much more about the qualitative and social aspects of the dynamic WTC behaviour, and what it means to be more qualitative and socially oriented.

CHAPTER 5

EMERGING INTERDEPENDENCE

This chapter is devoted to exemplifying the notion of interdependence, the joint interaction of involved factors and the dynamics of WTC. At the beginning of this chapter, the importance of triangulation in the investigation of WTC behaviour is stated. It is argued that by triangulating the students' self-reports of factors affecting their WTC behaviour with classroom observations and micro-analysis of their interactions with the teacher and peer students in the classroom, more insights into the nature of this construct can be generated. The first section concerns triangulation of the data in the Phase I Study. The snapshots of individual participants' classroom interactions are closely examined and a connection is made between their WTC behaviour and factors underlying WTC as reported in the subsequent interviews. The second section provides in-depth qualitative accounts of key participants' WTC behaviour by triangulating their classroom interactions with self-reported factors in the stimulated-recall interviews and journal entries, together with both the researcher's and the teachers' perceptions. In the following section, the notion of interdependence is introduced and illustrated through the evidence from the case studies. This chapter concludes with a description of flux in WTC behaviour in class.

5.1 Triangulation of WTC Behaviour in the Phase I Study

The discussion in this section demonstrates the limitations of a purely quantitative analysis of WTC. The WTC ratio elicited by the classroom observation scheme needs to be examined in relation to the students' self-report in the interviews and actual transcripts of classroom interaction in order to provide a more accurate description of WTC behaviour. In what follows, the rationale for triangulation in the data analysis is provided.

5.1.1 Triangulating WTC: the Internal and the External

As mentioned earlier, the WTC construct is viewed very differently in the present study from previous research. Previously WTC was mainly treated as a trait disposition that did not change particularly from context to context. Trait WTC was defined as *intentions* and was measured by self-report questionnaires. The present study differs from previous studies in that WTC is seen as a dynamic situational concept that is interdependent on both learner-internal and learner-external factors as specific to the L2 classroom context. Because it is viewed as a dynamic variable, the only reasonable empirical way to look for evidence of WTC in class is in actual communication which is voluntary but not forced. WTC as situated in the L2 classroom is not defined as an intention but is instead described in terms of behaviour. It is therefore operationalised in terms of observable behaviour in class, which refers to occasions on which students choose to communicate or not, when they have the opportunity. Because of the nature of the classroom interactions which involve participation from more than one student in any of the class interactional patterns (whole-class activity, pair, and group work), there is some overlap between WTC and participation, and the WTC behaviour itself is part of participation. In other words, WTC behaviour and participation are closely related. They overlap to some extent, but they are not the same concepts. WTC is voluntary behaviour whereas some types of participation can be forced. Some WTC does not result in participation (for example, a teacher chooses someone else to answer a question or another student interjects to bid for a turn). As mentioned in chapter 3, the students' WTC behaviour in class is described in terms of WTC categories which include *volunteering an answer/a comment, giving an answer to the teacher's or an interlocutor's question, asking the teacher or interlocutor a question/for clarification, guessing the meaning of an unknown word, trying out a difficult lexical, morphological or syntactical form, presenting or responding to an opinion in class or in a pair/group, and talking to a group member by initiating, responding, asking, explaining and commenting.*

In the previous chapter, I argued that the WTC ratio based on quantitative analysis provides a limited perspective of WTC; that is, it only shows whether a particular student demonstrated high or low WTC in a particular lesson. The quantitative analysis alone is

not sufficient to explain the complexity and depth of the interrelationships between factors underlying learners' WTC. As a situational variable, WTC entails moment-to-moment fluctuation, and it is highly sensitive to the classroom environment. Because WTC is dynamic and ecologically sensitive, it is necessary to triangulate different data sources and multiple perspectives to gain evidence for it in class. To gain an insight into the nature of learners' WTC in class, it is important to correlate learner-internal factors with their perceptions and interpretations of the external environmental factors in order to examine numerous simultaneous factors that shape WTC. It is important to triangulate observations of learners' WTC behaviour in class interactions and their self-reported factors for high or low WTC levels. In the following two sections, triangulation will be conducted with results from both the Phase I study and the Phase II study.

5.1.2 Triangulation in the Phase I Study

This section concerns a description of triangulation of data and perspectives in the Phase I study. For this phase of the study, which lasted 3 weeks, I compared observational data of WTC behaviour, transcripts of classroom interactions and interview data for a class in Week 2. I chose this lesson because it was representative and it was complemented by stimulated-recall interviews. The 2-hour lesson maintained a balance between teacher-fronted activity and small group discussion. Table 5.1 shows the students' WTC proportions for the whole-class activity and pair/group work in Week 2 compared to Week 1. In the whole-class situation, only half the students' WTC levels increased from Week 1 to Week 2. In the pair/group work, all the students' WTC levels remained roughly the same. Compared to Week 1, Joselito seemed to be more active in the Week 2 lesson but Umar showed less WTC. Fatima tended to display a higher WTC level in the whole-class pattern than in pair/group work in both weeks. In Week 2, while Fatima and Shu-wei displayed high WTC in the whole-class situation, Ines and Takuya were more active in the pair/group work.

Table 5.1
Comparison of WTC Proportions between Week 1 and Week 2

Week	WTC Proportion	Fatima	Shu-wei	Joselito	Takuya	Ines	Umar
1	Whole Class	28%	8%	6.4%	16%	16.5%	19%
	Pair/Group	17%	12%	13%	17%	10%	10%
2	Whole Class	32%	23%	17%	9%	8%	8%
	Pair/Group	13%	12%	12%	12%	11%	11%

It was found that there were a range of factors underlying their either high or low WTC levels, including environmental factors of group size, interlocutor, and topical knowledge, individual factors of emotion, perceived opportunities to communication, and motivation, paired with linguistic factors of language proficiency. These factors exerted combined influences on the students' WTC behaviour in this particular class. Ines was quiet in the whole-class situation because she felt bored and there were not enough opportunities perceived suitable for her to communicate. She was more active in the pair work because she preferred this class interactional pattern and she enjoyed working with her interlocutor Takuya. Similarly, Takuya was more active in the pair work because he preferred pair work and he was familiar with his interlocutor Ines. In contrast, Shu-wei was quiet in the group work because his low linguistic proficiency caused difficulty for him in understanding his partner's accent and thus he withdrew himself from the group participation. Fatima had higher WTC participation in the whole-class situation than in the pair work since she found it difficult to work with an interlocutor in either a pair or a group. Joselito's WTC level was higher in Week 2 than in Week 1 due to her high motivation, her excellent topical knowledge, and more perceived opportunities to talk. In contrast, Umar's WTC level was lower in Week 2 than in Week 1 because he perceived fewer opportunities for him to talk and the quiet interlocutor dragged down his WTC level in the group work.

In what follows, triangulation is conducted by comparing WTC proportions and WTC behaviour as exemplified in excerpts of classroom interactions with possible reasons from interview data for learners' high or low WTC levels in Week 2. What the participants reported concerning their WTC in that class in the interviews appears to be consistent with their WTC behaviour in the classroom interaction.

Ines' WTC level in the teacher-fronted situation was the lowest in this class (WTC proportion = 8%) and her WTC level in the pair/group was much higher (WTC proportion = 11%). Similarly, Takuya was more active in the pair work (WTC proportion = 12%) with Ines than in the teacher-fronted activity (WTC proportion = 9%). Example 3 below is an excerpt from the pair discussion between Ines and Takuya on developing a questionnaire survey. In the entire discussion, both of them showed high WTC towards contributing ideas, engaging in the discussion with each other and working on appropriate questions for the survey. This example shows that Ines tried to come up with a proper question by proposing different question forms (lines 1, 3, 5 and 11) and Takuya responded very well to Ines' suggestions (lines 2, 4, 6, 12). Apart from responding to Ines' turns, Takuya also proposed a question himself in line 8 and expressed his own opinion on the question form in line 10.

Example 3

- 1 I: *So what's what's what is the legal legal age*
- 2 T: *In your country*
- 3 I: *What is legal age you're allowed when you*
- 4 T: *What legal age*
- 5 I: *No no. What is the legal age for drinking? I don't know*
- 6 T: *For drinking yeah legal age*
- 7 I: *It's good grammar*
- 8 T: *What is, maybe how old can people be allowed to drink*
- 9 I: *Yeah*
- 10 T: *I think what is legal age, what is the legal age of drinking*
- 11 I: *From from what age from what age are you allowed*
- 12 T: *OK from what age*
- 13 I: *Age are you allowed to drink, so um (...) um under 16*
- 14 T: *Under 16, 16 to 20 in my country it's*

According to the interview, Ines' active WTC behaviour in the pair work was attributed to the fact that she liked pair or group in which she found it interesting to hear an interlocutor's opinions:

When you're with other people, sometimes they have different opinion about something, about content or about how to do it. So yeah it's interesting. I think it's really interesting, another point of view. (Ines, Phase I interview)

Takuya commented in the interview that he enjoyed working in a pair with Ines in which they cooperated in forming the questionnaire items through stimulating discussions. He thought that the pair work was a much more appreciated opportunity to practice his speaking skills than the whole-class pattern:

For me it's more interesting to have conversation with a partner, it's quite crucial for me, without partner I couldn't make up the questionnaire, more important is consulting with partner. (Takuya, Phase I interview)

Ines displayed a lower level of WTC in the whole-class situation compared to the pair discussion with Takuya. She reported that she was not given enough opportunity to air her opinions while everybody else was taking the opportunity to talk and she thought that the teacher tended to call upon other classmates:

I was concentrate on the class, but just everybody was speaking, so I just added a few comments, and Sue ask some people every time, so, she said Joselito what do you think blah blah, Fatima what do you think, so when she ask the precious people, you don't have to talk...It's not you, you have to listen, you don't have to talk, or maybe add some comments if you don't agree with what they say, but you don't need to, you can't really answer when one precious people is asking or answer so. (Ines, Phase I interview)

She also reported that she had become easily bored in that activity, which was not very interesting, and she simply listened to what the teacher said:

First part was not very interesting, I don't want to really, I just listen, listening listen to what Sue taught us about...I remember people were not really into it...I was yeah a little bit bored... I was not really in a good mood. (Ines, Phase I interview)

Ines' self-report suggests that her WTC in the whole-class activity was strongly influenced by her opinion of her relationship with the teacher and other students in the class as well as by perceived opportunity to talk.

Similarly, Takuya was less active in the whole-class interaction and his WTC was also affected by perceived opportunity to talk. He reported that he felt reluctant to ask the teacher questions because he found it inappropriate to interrupt the teacher to ask for

clarifications, and he would rather ask the teacher after class. Also his classmate Fatima had already asked the questions that he wanted to raise. He felt that there would be no need to address the same issue:

Fatima asked a question to the teacher, maybe for me for my characteristic I don't want to interrupt the class and asking a question, from my experience after the course I'm going to ask, but sometimes I did I did ask, but in Japan, I usually ask some question after the course... sometimes I didn't have to ask the question because Fatima already asked. (Takuya, Phase I interview)

In contrast to Ines and Takuya, Shu-wei was very active in the teacher-fronted activity (WTC proportion = 23%), but he seemed much quieter in his group (WTC proportion = 12%). Example 4 is an excerpt from a whole-class activity in which the teacher Sue asked the students to correct grammatical errors in a questionnaire survey. In this example, Shu-wei showed very high WTC in terms of volunteering answers to the teacher's questions which he did 7 times (lines 2, 4, 7, 16, 18, 22, 14), among the 24 turns in this excerpt.

Example 4

- 1 Teacher Sue: Under 12, is there anything wrong with the grammar here
- 2 S: *When did you start*
- 3 J: No when did you
- 4 S: *just smoke*
- 5 Teacher Sue: When=
- 6 F: =did you smoke
- 7 S: *Can't smoke now. When did you smoke*
- 8 Teacher Sue: When should be
- 9 J: Nothing
- 10 F: No when
- 11 J: No no no I mean sorry
- 12 F: maybe years
- 13 Teacher Sue: So what are they really
- 14 F: About the age
- 15 J: How old
- 16 S: *How old are you*
- 17 Teacher Sue: What's the rest of the question?
- 18 S: *Were you old were you*
- 19 F: When you started smoking
- 20 Teacher Sue: When
- 21 F: When you started to smoke
- 22 S: *When you start*

- 23 Teacher Sue: started
24 S: *Start smoking*

In the interview Shu-wei did not mention any reasons for his high WTC in the whole-class activity, but he attributed his relatively low WTC in the group work to having difficulty with understanding a group member who had a very strong American accent. His participation in the group work mainly involved asking for clarifications and help from his group members:

I think the two Japanese girls especially Y because she lived in America for 6 years, but sometimes I can't understand what she said because she has American accent. (Shu-wei, Phase I interview)

Similar to Shu-wei, Fatima demonstrated much higher WTC levels in the whole-class situation (WTC proportion = 32%) than in the pair work (WTC proportion = 13%) in the Week 2 class. In Example 4 above, we have seen that Fatima showed high WTC by attempting to volunteer answers to the teachers' questions (lines 6, 10, 12, 14, 19, 21). She commented that she did not like pair or group work. She thought individual work would be more effective than pair or group discussions. As she was rather protective of her own ideas, she dreaded objections from her partner Joselito concerning the questionnaire items she proposed:

The topic we selected is for example about plastic surgery, I already wrote my questions in a way, and she wrote in another way, I felt there's some differences... Yeah and my answer is wrong, I want to know why it is wrong, because sometimes they said it is wrong and then at the end oh it's quite correct...I don't like to work in groups, but I have to do that. (Fatima, Phase I interview)

Joselito was more active in the whole-class activity in the Week 2 class (WTC proportion = 17%) as opposed to the lesson in Week 1 (WTC proportion = 6.4%). Her higher WTC level in Week 2 can be attributed to a combination of factors including her high level of motivation, low level of anxiety, her desire to learn, her excellent topical knowledge, her preference for the teacher's teaching style and greater perceived opportunities to talk. In Example 5, Joselito showed quite high WTC in that she was very active volunteering answers to the teacher's questions for the organisation of a sample survey (lines 2, 5, 7, 11).

Example 5

- 1 Teacher Sue: Yeah there're lots of sub questions, so there're 24 main questions, but for example number 5 has some sub questions, how did they organise the questionnaire?
- 2 J: *General to specific*
- 3 F: A narrowing
- 4 Teacher Sue: Yeah they have some different categories, right? So they use headings to organise the questionnaire. So they had=
- 5 J: =*Health and activities*
- 6 Teacher Sue: Is this useful?
- 7 J: *Yes so we know the topic*
- 8 Teacher Sue: Is this useful for you answering questions?
- 9 F: Yeah for the organisation
- 10 Teacher Sue: So you know in general what they're looking for, um how about question number 14, in the question on alcohol, they give you a guide XX why do you they do that?
- 11 J: *Because difference in XX, the drink is not*

She reported that she was motivated to participate and she had more opportunities to talk in the Week 2 lesson. She knew the topic of health well enough to volunteer answers to the questions, which she thought were quite easy:

She asked about what we have done last weekend this weekend so it's a good motivation I think... because a lot people are concerned with their health, so maybe this is a very common topic, that's right, you can I can share a lot of things because I do really know the topic. (Joselito, Phase I interview)

Concerning the Week 1 lesson in which she had a lower WTC level, she attributed her comparative quietness to her perception that the teacher called on other students most of the time and left her fewer opportunities to talk:

It's reading I think I don't need, it depends on situations, it's more interaction, but the teacher asked other students, that's why I didn't talk A LOT. (Joselito, Phase I interview)

Unlike Joselito, Umar's WTC level was much lower in Week 2 (WTC proportion = 8%) than in Week 1 (WTC proportion = 19%). This could be because of the joint effects of perceived opportunities to talk, interlocutor and class interactional pattern on WTC. In the interview, he noted that "it was not a very heavy class", which meant it was not a

cognitively demanding lesson full of reading and writing activities but it was a lesson that he enjoyed. He particularly liked the teacher who possessed a lively teaching style and created a comfortable learning atmosphere. However, he did not show high WTC in the teacher-fronted activity, which concerned identifying mistakes in the questionnaire surveys. He explained that he did not spot any mistakes in the questionnaires and he was not called upon by the teacher. Thus he did not volunteer many answers:

Because I don't need to talk, it's just something written on the board, and when she asked some question, I don't know the answer, so I hard to say anything. (Umar, Phase I interview)

He also commented that he would not want to talk when an opportunity was not perceived suitable for him to talk. He would rather listen when the teacher was giving an explanation or when another classmate asked the same question that he intended to ask:

Sometimes we need to listen to teacher to what she want to say and usually you talk when you need to talk, when the teacher need you to talk or if you want to ask... sometimes the students they ask some question exactly the same what your classmate will ask or he or she ask what you want ask, and sometimes exactly happen like this, yes, so it's nice listening to your classmates. (Umar, Phase I interview)

His low WTC in the whole-class activity was also attributable to his low perceived opportunity to talk. His WTC was reduced by talkative students, whom he thought took most of the class time:

She always she talk even though she doesn't know the answer, she talk even when the answer is wrong, always, for me I really don't like it...for example she talk more than what she should, so after that I don't want to...I know the answer but because she talk a lot or he, and they don't give other students a chance to talk. (Umar, Phase I interview)

Umar's WTC level in the group work was also low compared to the others in class. In the interview, he commented that one of the group members was an extremely quiet Japanese girl who contributed only a few turns in the group discussion. He implied that his WTC level was pulled down by this quiet interlocutor in the group.

Through triangulation in the Week 2 lesson, it is seen that learners displayed varied WTC behaviour which was influenced not by a single factor but by the interaction between a range of involved individual, environmental and linguistic factors.

5.1.3 The Relationship between WTC and Assisted Performance

This section seeks to demonstrate how a learner's WTC relates to the way s/he interacts in class, and the kinds of opportunities for communication s/he chooses from. An analysis of the language-related episodes (LREs) from the 3 weeks in the Phase I study generated some interesting results concerning learners' WTC and assisted performance during classroom interaction. As explained in the Methodology chapter, firstly, instances of LREs in classroom interaction were identified. As explained in chapter 3, an LRE is an instance of collaborative dialogue where students talk about the language they produce, question the language use, sometimes either other-correcting or self-correcting their language production (Swain & Lapkin, 1998). This was then combined with an analysis of the way the students helped each other in peer interaction through assisted performance, using a subset of Ohta's (2001) scale.

To take a closer look at the participants' actual performance in the classroom interaction, I chose to focus on two students – Shu-wei, the student with the lowest WTC and Fatima, the student who maintained highest WTC level during the 3 weeks. Below are two examples showing the way they sought and received assistance in social interaction with peers and the teacher.

The first excerpt contains two examples of peer assistance (Example 6). In line 1 Shu-wei had difficulty with vocabulary and Student Y provided the appropriate word in line 4. Another example is co-construction. Student A provided the first part of the sentence in line 9, which Shu-wei picked up and completed in line 10. This co-construction resulted in “vertical construction” (Ohta 2001), in which peers collaboratively produce an utterance by alternately providing words or phrases to the growing utterance.

Example 6

- 1 S: And what (...) what country (...) we can ask XX next questions, *how to say what's fact of after you no no no, how do you think the fact when people after*
2 Y: When people are drunk
3 S: Yeah no after drunk maybe
4 Y: *Hangover*
5 S: Hang hangover
6 Y: After you drink XX
7 S: Yeah yeah effect your health or
8 Y: XX
9 A: *What you do you know any effect?*
10 S: *On yourself on yourself after your drink*
11 A: After your drinking
12 Y: On your health XX

(from Week 2 lesson, Phase I study, 22/01/2007)

The second excerpt is an example of the students handling the problem by consulting the teacher (Example 7). Joselito and Fatima failed to resolve a discrepancy in their answers in lines 2 to 6. They turned to the teacher for help. The teacher provided the correct answer in line 10, together with an explicit explanation in line 14. Seeking assistance from the teacher helped them notice the problem and receive further information regarding the item in question. By asking the teacher, Fatima assisted her partner Joselito and also benefited herself. The difficulty with the choice of correct verb can be regarded as an affordance for both Fatima and Joselito. The triadic interaction with the teacher provided Fatima an opportunity to see the information in a new light. Fatima's clarification about the choice of the verb with the teacher also reshaped and refined Joselito's knowledge.

Example 7

- 1 J: At which age have you gone the surgery?
2 F: Have you done have you done?
3 J: Have you gone I think
4 F: Gone?
5 J: It's not it's not done because done is the one who the doctor done the surgery but you gone
6 F: Gone gone?
7 J: You can ask T

- 8 F: *T, a question*, it's here and here, it will be like how many how many times did you do or have you gone
 9 J: how many times have you gone
 10 T: *How many times have you had*
 11 F: Have you OK
 12 T: Have you had plastic surgery
 13 F: At which age have you had also
 14 T: Yes, *have you had present perfect 'cos we're talking about in their life time*
 15 F: Your or a plastic surgery
 16 T: How many times have you had a plastic surgery
 (from Week 2 lesson, Phase I study, 22/01/2007)

Table 5.2 presents the number of assisted performance for each student during the 3 weeks and Table 5.3 shows a comparison between the participants' instances of assisted performance and their WTC ratios in each lesson. According to Ohta's (2001) scale, co-construction represents a more implicit form of assistance, but asking the teacher for help is the most explicit type. As Table 5.2 shows, among all the instances of assisted performance over 3 weeks, Shu-wei, the student with the lowest WTC had the highest number of instances of receiving peer assistance. He co-constructed answers twice, asked for the teacher's help twice and asked for his peer's assistance five times. Most of the time, the assistance was more on the explicit side. Fatima, the one with the highest WTC only had three instances of assisted performance.

Comparing these two students, Shu-wei, the student with the lowest WTC seemed to be more dependent on peers to do tasks and to offer minimum suggestions; on the other hand, Fatima, the student with the highest WTC appeared to be a more independent learner who would initiate conversations and share opinions more frequently. The time for this 3-week study was too short for me to make any reliable statements as to whether students with low WTC would tend to rely more on assisted help and whether students with high WTC would be more likely to initiate conversations, give explanations and express opinions (Cao, 2009). There seems to be a relationship between learners' situational WTC and type of contributions they make in class participation, the assistance they seek and receive from the teacher and their peers in classroom interaction. Further inquiry is needed to explore these possible relationships.

Table 5. 2
Assisted Performance

Student	Seek help	Seek teacher's help	Receive assistance	Co-construct	Explain	Total
Fatima	1		1	1		3
Joselito				2		2
Umar	1			2	1	4
Ines		1	1	2		4
Takuya			1	3		4
Shu-wei		2	5	2		9
Total	2	3	8	12	1	26

Table 5. 3
Comparison between WTC and Assisted Performance

Student	Number of assisted performance	WTC		
		Week 1 Ratio	Week 2 Ratio	Week 3 Ratio
Fatima	3	18.6	17.9	20.3
Joselito	2	9.3	13.2	9.3
Umar	4	10.6	10.2	14.4
Ines	4	10.4	10.9	10.6
Takuya	4	14.6	11	11.8
Shu-wei	9	8.7	14	5.7
Mean	4	12	12.9	12

Triangulation of different data sources and different perspectives in the Phase I study enables us to discover the underlying factors affecting students' WTC in class. Most importantly, it shows the interdependence between these underlying factors. In the following section, which describes how triangulation in the Phase II study was conducted, more evidence for the notion of interdependence will be shown.

5.2 Case Study Description and Interpretation in the Phase II Study

Triangulation of learners' WTC behaviour in the Phase II study is presented in terms of description and interpretation of case studies through classroom interaction episodes, classroom observations, together with interview and journal entry excerpts. A number of individual case studies occurring in the immediate classroom environment are delineated

following Bronfenbrenner's bioecological Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) framework (1979, 1993). Based on this model, the key participants' WTC behaviour is discussed in relation to their interpretations and perceptions of their WTC behaviour. Their WTC behavioural trajectory is depicted through the process in which they interacted with their interlocutors and the teachers within the immediate classroom context over the 20-week course. The stories of the participants are woven throughout the PPCT framework. During the 20-week EAP programme (Module 3 and Module 4), six observed lessons were selected, including two lessons at the beginning of the programme (Week 4 and Week 5), two in the middle of the programme (Week 11 and Week 12) and two towards to the end (Week 16 and Week 17).

Table 5.4 presents the contents for each 2-hour class I observed in Module 3 and Module 4. The goal and content of the afternoon course was to practice and polish the students' academic skills they studied in the morning class; that is, in this supplementary course, the teachers were expected to focus on the skills the students appeared to be weak in and provide opportunities for them to improve those skills, including the four macro-skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking), note-taking, grammar and vocabulary. Apart from developing general and academic English skills, another component of the course was group project work. Usually each project lasted 2 weeks in Module 3 but only 1 week in Module 4. The project work involved students working in groups to either produce a brochure or design a survey to collect data for oral presentation and report writing. The differences between Module 3 and Module 4 lay in the level of difficulty with a greater emphasis in Module 4 on developing the skills necessary for university study, rather than developing language skills.

Table 5. 4
Contents/Topics for Observed Sessions

Module	Week	Content/Topic	
		Class 1	Class 2
Module 3	1	Comparison of essay structure in English and in L1	
	2	Family relationships in different cultures; Differences between argumentative essay and descriptive essay	
	3	Discursive essay: advantages and disadvantages of genetically modified food	Argumentative essay: planning & structure; Grammar: a/an/the/Ø article
	4	Bibliography (APA style); Reading: Refugee/Immigration policy	Revision of vocabulary: Students chose words to make sentences
	5	Listening: news items; Students decided on the topics for their news articles (prelude of Project 1)	Group project 1: designing a survey for “strategies to deal with stress” (a topic chosen by students)
	6	Group project 1: preparation and presentation of news articles	Interpretation of results from the survey (follow-up of Project 1)
	7	Listening to the lecture: dinosaurs; Reading for main ideas: extinction of dinosaurs	Not observed (key participants being absent)
	8	Group project 2: produce a brochure to address environmental issues	Practice for presentation
	9		Not observed
Module 4	10	Break	
		Class 1	
	11	Reading: journal article; Formulating questions	
	12	Group Project 1: Designing advertisements for products, designing PPT for presentations	
	13	Group discussion: discrimination and harassment	
	14	Group project 2: designing questionnaire for “discrimination & harassment”	
	15	Informal presentation of survey results from Project 2; Proofreading questionnaires	
	16	Revision of vocabulary: Students chose words to make sentences; Grammar: noun + noun groups	
	17	Error correction: sentence organisation, punctuation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun, tense/verb form, vocabulary	
	18	Practice for presentation: focusing on pronunciation	
	19	Practice for presentation: focusing on pronunciation	

The case studies presented below are based on six key participants' WTC behavioural change during 5 months. These key participants were Ai-ling, Cai-wei, Chen-feng, Mu-cheng, Rong-rong, and Yi-yun. They all came from a Chinese background. The participants' WTC behaviour in the six lessons are compared with their self-reported factors that impacted on their WTC behaviour in the interviews and journal entries, together with the field notes taken during classroom observations.

The main finding from the case studies is that the students' WTC behaviour in class is in a state of flux from lesson to lesson during the 20-week course and from task to task within a single lesson. Furthermore, the variability in the students' WTC behaviour is determined by the joint influences of factors within and between the individual, environmental and linguistic dimensions. As all the involved factors and the interactions between them vary moment by moment, their co-influence on WTC also varies, and this variability leads to dynamic changeability in the students' WTC level. Finally, the involved factors exert either a positive or a negative influence on the students' WTC.

The commonality between the case studies lies in that all the involved factors in the three dimensions interact with one another to create the flux in WTC. However, each case is different in terms of their vulnerability to the environment; that is, there is a kind of difference in the degree of their sensitivity to the environment. Some of the participants are more easily influenced by what is happening outside of themselves in the classroom environment while the others are more predisposed to reacting in a particular way because of the learner internal factors, such as their mood or personality. Thus not every participant equally changes in the same way to the same degree at the same time because one's experience is different from the others'. All the six case studies are characterised by means of a continuum of dynamic fluctuations in situational WTC. It is a continuum that concerns the degree of learners' sensitivity to the environment. At one end of the continuum is strong assertiveness, and at the other end is vulnerability (or submissiveness) to the environment. On balance, each of the participants strikes me as being either towards the assertive side or the vulnerable side, or in the middle of the continuum: relatively assertive or relatively submissive. As Figure 5.1 shows, Chen-feng is extremely

vulnerable to the environment. Yi-yun is positioned towards the more submissive end. Cai-wei seems to be a very shy student and her case goes in the middle of the continuum. Ai-ling is a very confident student and her case can be placed more towards the assertive end. Rong-rong seems to be a student with low self-confidence and her WTC is also close to the assertive end. Mu-cheng is extremely reticent and introverted and his WTC can be located at the assertive end of the continuum.

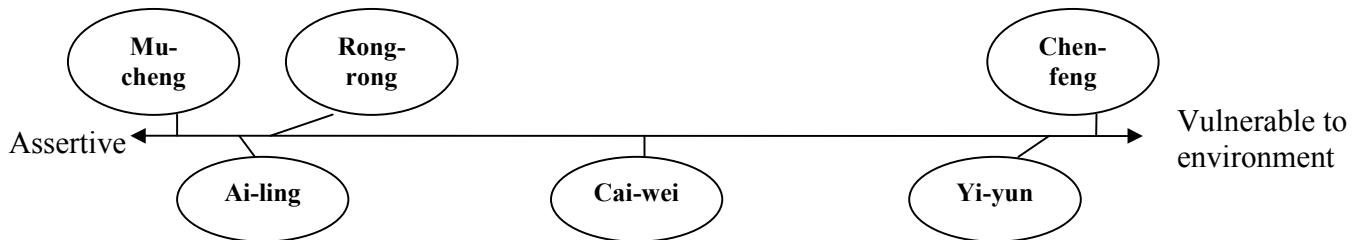


Figure 5.1. Continuum of dynamic fluctuations in WTC.

5.2.1 Case I: Yi-yun – Sensitive to Interlocutors' Performance

Yi-yun's case is particular in the sense that his WTC during the 5 months seemed to be more shaped by what was happening in the classroom environment. Although the factors from all the three dimensions were involved in creating his WTC in each lesson observed, his WTC in those lessons was particularly affected by whoever he was working with in a group. His WTC appeared to be promoted by the interlocutors in those groups. A brief profile for Yi-yun is provided in Figure 5.2.

Yi-yun

- Former English learning: studied English till the 2nd year of university in China
“did not study English diligently at university”
- Work experience: 3 years
- Reason for enrolling in the EAP programme: to improve academic English skills
- His own perception of himself: not very sociable, a quiet person, liked being alone
- His main concerns about English learning: limited range of vocabulary
- Teacher John’s view of him: not a particularly serious English learner, quite extroverted
- Outside school: stayed with a Kiwi home-stay

Figure 5. 2. Profile for Yi-yun.

Yi-yun’s WTC participation in the Week 4 lesson was very low. His WTC ratio was 0.67 (WTC proportion =10.1%), which was much less than the mean ratio of 0.8. He felt the entire lesson was somewhat boring but he was more willing to talk in the first part of the lesson than the second session in which he felt tired and fell asleep for most of the time, explaining his low WTC level. His quietness in that lesson was attributable to the individual factors of emotions of boredom and frustration, low linguistic competence, and little perceived opportunity to ask for clarification, together with environmental factors of topic and teacher.

In the initial activity of composing a reference list, his WTC level was relatively low in the whole-class situation in which the teacher did a number of class checks. He contributed three to four turns in each of the whole-class interactions. He appeared to be more active in the group discussions in between these whole-class interactions. He worked in a group with Jun, Chen-feng and Student H. He seemed to be quite engaged in the task of comparing the reference list with his group members, which can be illustrated in Example 8. In this group discussion, Yi-yun was very proactive in talking to his group members by initiating questions (lines 3, 15, 21, 23, 31, 33), responding to their answers (lines 6, 11) and offering explanations (line 17).

Example 8

1. SH: this one the dates? This one dates, and this one
 2. J: Year
 3. Y: Year, which one?
 4. J: Which one?
 5. SH: This last one
 6. Y: Last one
 7. J: last one, last one is the year
 8. SH: Yeah here
 9. Y: No no the page
 10. J: Yeah page page
 11. Y: /yeah the page
 12. J: Ah yeah yeah page page
 13. SH: Page number? And here page number also?
 14. J: No it is publishing house, we can check check it out the page or, er name of the city
 15. Y: Which one? Name of the city?
 16. J: Name of the city, Melbourne.
 17. Y: Ah ah ah Melbourne, and this one is initial, initial of the first name
 18. J: Yes initial initial of the first name.
 19. Y: And
 20. J: Volume number
 21. Y: What's that?
 22. J: Volume number, actually I checked the answer, I already checked answer the page where XX
 23. Y: Page number?
 24. J: Answer's in here
 25. SH: And the last one is the date?
 26. J: Yes no the last one no, the last one is page number
 27. SH: The the first here
 28. J: First the year year
 29. SH: Year, and XX name of the book?
 30. J: Yes name of the book
 31. Y: Name of the, which one is?
 32. J: Title
 33. Y: You say this one? Title?
 34. J: Yeah
- (from Week 4 lesson, 06/03/2007)

In the pre-reading group discussion on the positive and negative effects of immigration, as shown in Example 9, he took part in the discussion with Jun and Student H by expressing his opinion regarding this issue and actively brainstorming the positives and negatives of immigration. In line 5, he presented his opinion in the group as to his stance on the flow of immigrants to New Zealand. In lines 7, 9, 11 and 15, he commented on the

advantages of immigration. In lines 15 and 17, he was trying hard to pronounce the word “refugee” properly. These two attempts could be seen as him trying out a difficult lexical form. In the interview, he made no comments on his interlocutors in this group. However, from the interaction as evident in both Example 8 and Example 9, it seems that they were a cooperative group and that somehow promoted Yi-yun’s WTC behaviour. In both examples, Yi-yun was very responsive to his group members’ comments.

Example 9

1. SH: And you what do you think?
2. Y: What are you talking about?
3. SH: Immigration
4. J: Immigration
5. *Y: I think immigration is er a big thing for the for the country, for example, for NZ, lots of immigration immigrate take lots of money to this country and make the NZ much more stronger*
6. J: Hmm yes maybe (...) it has it has good and bad thing together
7. *Y: And it take a lot of different cultures*
8. J: Um that is
9. *Y: Different cultures from different backgrounds*
10. J: That is good part of immigration
11. *Y: We can know each other much better*
12. J: The bad part of immigration is racism
13. SH: Is what?
14. J: Racism, in United States, white people hate the black people, that's racism
15. *Y: And it's very good for REfu refugees, reFUGee or REfugee*
16. J: Yeah REfugees
17. *Y: refugees yeah yeah refugee and lots of er*

(from Week 4 lesson, 06/03/2007)

When the reading activity started, Yi-yun’s mood changed swiftly. In this activity, the linguistic factor of low language proficiency, individual factors of emotion and perceived opportunity to talk played a big role in affecting his WTC negatively, although the interlocutors in his group continued to exert a positive influence on his WTC. In the interview, he reported that he found that the article was very difficult to understand because approximately 20 to 40 words in the article were unknown to him. Such a large number of new words obviously prevented him from grasping the main idea of the article, let alone thoroughly understanding the details. He said that the difficulty with reading comprehension seemed to be a universal problem in the class:

Actually I don't think my partners and my classmates they understand the whole meaning, because for example yesterday we you can see some classmates they still didn't understand meaning, like that table girls, I see lots of girls they're very embarrassed. (Phase II interview)

He expected that the teacher would assist comprehension by either explaining the key words or paraphrasing some of the sentences. He complained that the teacher for this afternoon class failed to provide help in the way the morning class teacher usually did:

In the morning class in the reading I can I can't still understand all the things, but because there're lots of new words, but um I can understand the meaning. Most of the words meaning and the teacher will speak it, teacher will speak it like her opinion, make me make me sure the meaning, make me be sure the meaning. So afternoon class, I just read it and I'm not sure the meaning, the teacher didn't do it. For example, I read the first paragraph, I understand some parts of them, but I just understand part. If the teacher repeat it or give us give us...yeah the teacher explain and I can understand it. (Phase II interview)

His low language proficiency affected his emotions in a negative way; that is, he felt very nervous and worried about his comprehension problem and this caused difficulty in communicating with his interlocutors. The feelings of nervousness and frustration led him to withdraw from the group discussion:

Actually just because of vocab, some words I don't know and I can't understand, I can't understand what it is, so I feel a little nervous yeah... um if my vocab isn't good enough, I can't have a good communication with others, for example, we talk about immigration but some words I don't know I can't understand, so I listen the words but I don't know the meanings so I can't understand sentence meanings. (Phase II interview)

In class, I observed that Yi-yun kept quiet in the group discussion and he seemed busy looking up words in the dictionary during the discussion. He reported in the interview that he felt so bored and shifted his attention instead to find out the meanings of the words to solve comprehension problems:

Because I know my vocab is very bad so so when I feel bored and I can't pay attention on reading and writing and speaking, so I think that's a way to study is remember the words...If I can't understand the whole meaning of the reading and I don't understand what my teacher's and what my classmates they talk about, actually it's wasting my time, so I think if I don't want to waste my time, I have to make sure the meaning, so I check the dictionary. (Phase II interview)

When I probed further why he did not make an attempt to ask for clarification from the teacher or his peers, as Student H and others did, he said that he had a large number of new words and it was his own problem to have difficulty with vocabulary and he would find it a waste of the teacher or his peers' time to consult them:

Because other students they just can't understand a few words not me, not like me, I can't understand the words which I can't understand more than them so... I think I don't know the meaning of the word, if the word is special word it's OK I ask the teacher is OK, but some words is my is my problem, it's not, if I ask lots of words in class, I will waste other students' time. (Phase II interview)

In brief, the fluctuation of WTC within a single lesson can be found in Yi-yun's WTC participation in this Week 4 lesson. The first activity of the lesson concerned writing reference lists for the essay. Yi-yun's low level of WTC in the whole-class situation was constrained by this task which he found quite boring. The subsequent activity was a pre-reading discussion on the positive and negative effects of immigration. His WTC participation increased considerably in this group discussion reportedly due to the fact that he was working with cooperative interlocutors. His WTC level then dropped sharply when the reading activity started. Lacking lexical resources caused comprehension problems and led him to feel frustrated and withdraw from participation. Also there was not enough perceived opportunity to communicate and thus he felt reluctant to seek clarification and help from the teacher. In this activity, the factors in the individual dimension and linguistic dimension, that is, emotion of frustration, low perceived opportunity to communicate and low linguistic competence jointly worked as inhibiting factors that generated low level of WTC.

Yi-yun's WTC level increased in the lessons observed in Week 11 (WTC ratio = 0.76) and Week 12 (WTC ratio = 0.81). In particular, his WTC ratio in Week 12 was above the mean ratio of 0.7. As no interviews were conducted with him for those two lessons, his perceptions of his WTC behaviour in those classes were not obtained.

The second interview was conducted with Yi-yun in Week 13 concerning a lesson involving discussions about the topic of discrimination and harassment. In the initial part of the lesson, the teacher did a vocabulary revision activity. Yi-yun found it interesting to discover the subtle differences between words but he did not talk much because he considered it rude to interrupt the teacher to ask questions during his explanations. Regarding the group discussion about the discrimination and harassment issue, he mentioned that he was not interested in the topic itself but sharing experiences with classmates from different cultural backgrounds was more appealing to him and his WTC was boosted by that. He especially liked talking with a Korean partner, Student K, because she had many interesting ideas to share; he found it difficult to understand her accent sometimes, but she spoke slowly:

I prefer talk with Student K because she is interesting, she has a lot of different opinion about a topic, but her pronunciation sometimes is...actually I hate talk with people quite different accent no no, different some people speak very quickly but not clearly, I hate it I can't understand anything. Student K doesn't speak clearly but she can speak slowly.
(Phase II interview)

He reported that he would probe further when he was not able to understand their experiences completely. He seemed to show quite high WTC towards asking his interlocutors for clarifications:

Actually we live in different backgrounds, so sometimes I can't understand other people who come from different countries, so I can't understand their experience completely. So I have to ask question about it, so I ask a question and a person explain it and I say my experience and the person ask a question like that. (Phase II interview)

In the Week 16 lesson, Yi-yun's WTC ratio was 1.17 (WTC proportion =24.8%), which was slightly higher than the mean ratio of 1.04. This lesson mainly involved group discussions and teacher-fronted activities were scarce. His WTC level in group work was higher than the mean level. His relative high WTC in this class may be attributed to the fact that he liked the grammar-based activities in this lesson and he interacted actively in the pair work with his interlocutor Sun. Similar to previous lessons, Yi-yun's WTC was positively affected by cooperative interlocutors including Jun, Sun and Student K in this lesson.

In the first session, the teacher asked the class to find five verbs from an academic word list and make five sentences containing those verbs. Yi-yun reported that Sun helped him with choice of words and correction of mistakes in his sentences. In Example 10, Yi-yun was consulting Sun about the meaning and usage of the verb *benefit*. This example shows that Yi-yun demonstrated high WTC in his pair work with Sun by guessing the word meaning and asking Sun for explanations. In lines 4 and 7, Yi-yun seemed very persistent in enquiring about the meaning of the word. In line 11, he appeared to have guessed the meaning of the word from Sun's explanation.

Example 10

1. S: I benefit
 2. Y: Sorry?
 3. S: I benefit from the XX
 4. Y: *What's that mean?*
 5. S: I, benefit
 6. Y & S: from XX
 7. Y: *Yeah what's that mean?*
 8. S: XX
 9. Y: No
 10. S: You can help me, I benefit from XX
 11. Y: *Um yeah, benefit is from benefit.*
- S: Beneficiary. Yeah.

(from Week 16 lesson, 29/05/2007)

In Example 11, the first exchange (lines 1-4) concerned Sun explaining the noun and adjective forms of the verb *interpret*. From line 5 to line 9, Yi-yun asked what Sun thought of his second sentence. Sun offered a recast to his utterance “no limit” and he corrected it in the subsequent turn. In the third exchange (lines 10-29), Sun spotted misuse of the word *race* in Yi-yun’s sentence. Yi-yun did not know an alternative for race, and Sun suggested “species”, explaining that species was used for animals and race for humans. Yi-yun reported in the interview that he learned the differences between these two words from Sun. When applying the WTC categories to explain Yi-yun’s WTC behaviour in this episode, we can see that Yi-yun tried to explain to Sun what he meant in his sentence in line 1. He asked Sun a question regarding the usage of “limits” in line 5.

He presented his opinion concerning use of preposition *in* in his sentence in line 8. In response to Sun's question in line 9, Yi-yun explained in details what his intention was when making the sentence in the subsequent line. In lines 15 and 17, Yi-yun attempted to indicate that he would need Sun's help. In lines 19 and 21, he tried out the new word *species* that he learned from Sun. In line 23, he asked Sun for the meaning of this new word. In line 29 again, he tried out this new lexical form several times in order to remember it. The exchanges in this excerpt show that Yi-yun perceived Sun's scaffoldings as useful meaning-making and he actively engaged with it by acting upon this reciprocal interaction as an affordance. Sun's scaffolding appeared to sustain Yi-yun's WTC level.

Example 11

1. Y: *No no, you can you can think like that, some people XX blah blah blah, it's this word is to describe this word. It's mean (...) for example, I want to know I want to know the meaning of blah blah. Actually actually the main verb is "know", is not "want".*
2. S: Yeah in this sentence I know what you mean. In this sentence, this verb is interpret, interpretative is adjective, adverb, becomes an adverb. XX
3. Y: So you you
4. S: You can make interpret interpretation, you can make a sentence with interpretation. It's not XX, it's not what we normally use.
5. Y: *How about XX? Yeah. It's the same meaning? There's no limit yeah?*
6. S: No **limits**?
7. Y: *Yeah no limits.*
8. S: No limits or too dangerous?
9. Y: *I think it's "in".*
10. S: I think it's "to". What about this sentence, it is hard to identify
11. Y: *It's like it's like for example there are there are two cats, and actually you can't defy the you you can't see the differences between two cats, so I want to describe this one er correctly.*
12. S: It's hard to identify the surface differences between two of same races of animals.
13. Y: I don't know.
14. S: Could we
15. Y: *Yeah I I don't know how to say*
16. S: Different, two different, cos you don't use races races
17. Y: *Yeah I don't know how to*
18. S: You should choose species
19. Y: *Pieces?*
20. S: Species

- 21. *Y: Species*
 - 22. S: Yeah races for human XX
 - 23. *Y: Species is what?*
 - 24. S: S-P-E-C, I-E-S.
 - 25. Y: I
 - 26. S: E-S
 - 27. Y: E
 - 28. S: Species. Right?
 - 29. *Y: Good, yeah species. Species species species.*
- (from Week 16 lesson, 29/05/2007)

He reported in the interview that he found this lesson very interesting and very useful as a grammar-based lesson. He especially liked the first part of the lesson because he learned a number of words and used them correctly in different contexts with his partner Sun's help in the pair work:

I learned lots of words from other students and we use some academic words and other students use it too...Yeah because this part can help me to understand word completely and how can I use a word in different situation. (Phase II interview)

Commenting on his WTC behavioural change over the 20 weeks, Yi-yun thought his WTC had not changed much towards the end of the course as opposed to the start of the course. However, according to the coding of WTC behaviour, his WTC ratio increased gradually over time. He thought his English had improved considerably in the four macro-skills, particularly in speaking. It seems improvement in his perceived communicative competence did not affect his WTC level over time during this course.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Yi-yun's WTC level throughout the 5 months increased over time. However, a close examination of Yi-yun's WTC behaviour at different points of the 5-month course suggested that his WTC levels fluctuated from lesson to lesson and even from task to task within one single lesson. For example, in the Week 4 lesson, his WTC participation was high in the pre-reading discussion on illegal immigration with Jun, but he fell quiet when subsequently he had great difficulties with the reading comprehension task. What is also striking about Yi-yun's WTC behavioural pattern is that his WTC was influenced by different strands of factors in each of the lessons. In Week 4, his WTC was affected by individual, environmental and linguistic factors, including emotion, perceived

opportunity to communicate, topic, teacher, and low linguistic competence. In both Week 13 and Week 16, interlocutor and topic were the main factors underlying his WTC behaviour. What is common to his various WTC behaviours in those 3 weeks is that he seemed to demonstrate high WTC in group work due to cooperative interlocutors including Jun, Student K and Sun; that is, his WTC was largely influenced by the major environmental factor of interlocutor and his WTC in group work was pushed higher by acting upon the affordances they provided in the reciprocal interaction with him.

5.2.2 Case II: Chen-feng – Extremely Sensitive to the Environment

Chen-feng seems extremely sensitive to environmental factors. In particular, topic and interlocutor were found to be persistent factors affecting his WTC in each lesson. So along the continuum, his WTC can be placed at the end of being very vulnerable to the environment. Chen-feng's case is also interesting in that he appears to demonstrate a lower WTC level and a lower proficiency level among the 6 key participants. Figure 5.3 presents a brief profile for Chen-feng.

Chen-feng

- Former English learning: studied English at university in China
- Work experience: 4 years
- Reason for enrolling in the EAP programme: to improve academic English skills required for the postgraduate study at the university in New Zealand
- His own perception of himself: in the middle of the introvert-extrovert scale
- Teacher John's view of him: a serious and focused language learner, but easily drifted away when bored
“His enthusiasm for learning English was high but his willingness to improve his English was not equally high.”
- Outside school: worked as a part-time cleaner

Figure 5. 3. Profile for Chen-feng.

Similar to Yi-yun, Chen-feng's WTC ratio was only 0.47 in Week 4 (WTC level =7.1%), which was well below the mean ratio of 0.8. According to interview data, his low WTC in this class was due to both personal factors such as low linguistic competence, feelings of frustration and boredom, as well as environmental factors such as topic and interlocutor. He reported in the interview that he was not in a cheerful mood to talk right from the beginning of the lesson, "I want to talk but I found it's hard to talk it's hard to open my mouth this afternoon...I mean I don't know why" (Phase II interview, 06/03/2007).

The class started with an activity of composing a list of references or bibliographies for the essay. During the first 5-minute warm-up stage in which the teacher introduced the topic, Chen-feng only contributed one turn, the lowest among the class. He commented that he had virtually no interest in this boring activity and he was in a very sleepy mood. In the brief follow-up group discussion of the reference list, he did not quite understand how to write the references but he only managed to copy the examples. His WTC participation in the group discussion was zero. Afterwards, the teacher did the class check of this task. He still remained silent during the class check. The explanation for his extreme quietness during this whole activity could be found in the following interview excerpt. It seems that his low WTC level was affected by factors in all the three dimensions - the boring task, sleepy mood and low linguistic proficiency:

That's more boring than the second part I think...because in the first lesson, I really want to sleep yes, and I'm not interested in that infer inferences and something like that ... I actually I didn't understand at first and so I just copied the example from this I didn't understand what the teacher said, so when she asked us to to write the task to answer the task 2 and the at first I don't know how to do it, just copy copy that and don't didn't really understand it. (Phase II interview)

The second activity in this lesson concerned a reading activity of immigration and refugee policies. The teacher moved on to this activity through a whole-class lead-in discussion of the differences between the three words *immigrant*, *emigrant* and *refugee*. At this lead-in stage, Chen-feng's WTC participation was zero. Then the teacher asked the students to discuss in small groups the positive and negative sides of immigration, a

feature of our lives nowadays. In this group discussion with Jun, Yi-yun and another student H, he took seven turns, three of which were responses in his L1 (Chinese) to Yi-yun's question regarding the differences between the three new words, immigrant, emigrant and refugee. In Example 12, Yi-yun was not familiar with the words *emigrate*, *immigrate* and *migrate*. He had no idea what the differences were between the three near-synonyms and he turned to Chen-feng for help in line 1. Chen-feng responded to his request by encouraging him to look them up in the dictionary in line 2. After Yi-yun insisted on finding out the meaning of the word in line 3, Chen-feng carried on with a thorough explanation of the subtle differences between the three words by giving Yi-yun a concrete example in line 4. Although the interaction between these two students was mainly carried out in their L1, I would argue that Chen-feng showed his improved level of WTC in his pair work with Yi-yun. He explained in the interview that he chose to respond in Chinese because Yi-yun initiated the question in Chinese. He thus relied on his L1 to clarify the differences in the meanings in a perfectly coherent and efficient way. Had he attempted to explain them in his L2, given the actual proficiency level of his and of Yi-yun's English, he may well have made Yi-yun more confused. In this example, we can see the influence of the factors in the linguistic dimension, language proficiency and reliance on L1 on Chen-feng's WTC.

Example 12

18. Y: Which one, E-M-M, *dan ci* (word)?
 19. C: *Cha Zi Dian* (look it up in your dictionary)
 20. Y: *Zhe shi shen me yi si?* (What does this mean?)
 21. C: *Di er ge shi, bi ru ni yi ming dao xin xi lan ma, yi ming guo lai, ran hou ni dui xin xi lan lai shuo, dui xin xi lan de guo jia lai shuo ni jiu shi immigrate immigrate, ran hou ni dui zhong guo yi min chu lai de hua, dui zhong guo na ge guo jia lai shuo ni jiu shi emi er emigrate.*
 (The second one is, for example, you migrated to NZ, you migrated, then from NZ's point of view, you immigrate immigrate, then from China's point of view, you emigrate)
 22. Y: *Yi chu de* (emigrate)
 23. C: *Dui dui dui* (Yes yes yes)
- (from Week 4 lesson, 06/03/2007)

Chen-feng had a problem with this reading activity because he was struggling to understand the new words which were essential for reading comprehension and for him to engage in either the whole-class activity or the group discussion. He reported that there was about 20% of the article that was incomprehensible to him. He said that he actually thought the topic was interesting, but lacking linguistic competence in this reading activity caused him to feel frustrated and this affected him throughout the lesson as all the tasks were related to the article. This can be illustrated in this interview excerpt below:

But I think it's it's not a problem of the topic. I think this topic is quite interesting. Maybe lots of strange words in the article...I don't understand the um the main idea lots of main idea, this some words like this influence my emotion you know. (Phase II interview)

There were times for group discussion in between the tasks for the reading activity. Chen-feng was working in a group of four with Jun, Yi-yun and Student H in the first session of the lesson. Jun, according to him, was an inspiring interlocutor to speak to in a group. However, Jun moved to a different table in the second session. Chen-feng perceived that Student H might not want to start a discussion with him and Yi-yun, who were both focusing on the comprehension of the article but not really involved in the discussion task. Lacking linguistic competence in the reading activity, coupled with his perception of his interlocutors, his WTC in the group discussion was very low. This can be illustrated in the following interview excerpt:

You see my my table, Yi-yun is he is very sleepy... Student H yeah I think he, I think he knows he is not XX he didn't want to discuss... he saw both of us Yi-yun and me and both focus on the article... this is the first time I sat beside Student H... You know in the first class Jun is very talkative. Then they can talk to each other, then we can join them to talk to each other, that's better... he (Jun) is talkative and a lot of idea...maybe something I hear, if I want to say something about it, I can I can talk more I think...I prefer Jun. (Phase II interview)

In the final activity in the lesson, the teacher initiated a class discussion about government's policy of taking refugees. She told the class a story about the controversial attitude of the Australian Government in their treatment of a cargo ship of refugees, an incident that had occurred a couple of years earlier. She then asked a number of very

difficult but stimulating questions to guide the discussion. In my observation, Chen-feng totally withdrew himself from participation.

In Example 13, we can see that in the discussion about illegal immigrants his minimum WTC level is evident. He stayed aloof till the moment when he heard about Jun's comments on how the Chinese government dealt with illegal immigrants from North Korea. He declared that he had never heard about such news (line 34). In my observation, he only uttered his disagreement in a low voice; that is, it was a non-public response. As he reported in the interview, his carefulness about not making a public response was due to his concern about the possibility of causing conflict or quarrelling with classmates like Jun or Student K. In the middle of the episode, he took an off-task turn (line 17) in L1 to address Yi-yun who just woke up.

Example 13

1. SK: We just talk talk about you know Korean situation.
2. T: OK tell us, what's going on in Korea?
3. SK: Like the same situation in Korea, lots of XX people come to Korea?
4. T: From what countries?
5. SK: China,
6. J: Thailand, Indonesia
7. T: How did they come? Are they illegal?
8. SK: Illegal
9. T: And so what happened, what did the govt do with them?
10. SK: They do nothing
11. J: We do nothing, we just register register them
12. T: What can they do
13. J: If they found illegal immigrants, they XX 90 days they're not employed or
14. T: Or if they're not allowed to find employment, what're they going to do?
15. J: You can, you cannot do anything
16. T: So basically they're sent back
17. C: *ni shui zhao le ma* (Did you fall asleep? To Y)
18. J: Maybe send them back with kind of sea ferry or ship or airplane, or out govt
19. T: Basically send them back
20. J: Not not this, not like Australia, we we give them airplane tickets
21. T: XX of course they will send them by plane
22. C: XX
23. J: before ship boarding this country
24. SK: situation
25. T: Ok so do you have illegal immigration into China?

26. J: From North Korea
 27. T: From North Korea to China, do you have illegal immigration?
 28. J: Chinese don't welcome North Korean
 29. T: From where?
 30. J: I heard a lot of news about the Chinese govt, they send they send North Korean people back to their country with
 31. S1: Illegal?
 32. J: yeah with handcuff and
 33. T: Ok let's XX this question
 34. C: *I never heard that.*
 (from Week 4 lesson, 06/03/2007)

He commented of this episode in the lesson that he had very low WTC towards the discussion of the situation for illegal immigrants. He felt that it was a sensitive topic to discuss and he felt hurt by some of his classmates' comments about the situation in China. His minimal contribution was also due to a reluctance to cause any conflict by arguing back. He was probably attempting to avoid discussing embarrassing topics so as to distance himself from the disturbing content of a topic that was emotionally charged. As seen in this interview excerpt:

I feel a little bit um not very good you know that feeling is not very good...I don't want to talk about this, so like Jun said about Chinese government refused North Korea, send them back with ...handcuff, if Chinese government are not very friendly...I never heard about this but I can't...I don't know this situation very well, maybe he already saw some article or saw some news about this, but I don't know I can't say he's wrong...that may cause some argument I don't think that's good...both of us will feel embarrass or unhappy about argue this issue. (Chen-feng, Phase II interview)

Chen-feng's WTC ratios in Week 11 and Week 12 were still below the mean ratios. His WTC ratio in Week 11 was 0.64, close to the mean ratio of 0.7. His WTC ratio in Week 12 was 0.96, which was much lower than the mean ratio of 1.4. In the interview conducted for the Week 12 lesson, he reported that he found the group project of designing an advertisement for an environmentally friendly product very childish. He also noted that his group members argued a lot during project work. For these reasons, he did not feel particularly willing to participate. He simply followed the procedure after his

group members finally agreed on the results to present. This is reflected in the interview excerpt below:

Actually I was not interested in the topic before, because I think it's too childish, in some we produce make some make our own company to sell some products... because they argue about, Student L and Student P argued a lot and they, so actually I didn't do more do a lot of work. I just when they when they finish their argument when they achieve agreement, I just follow the process and remember what I would speak in the presentation that's all. (Phase II interview)

Chen-feng was interviewed again for the second round in Week 14 regarding a lesson in which the class worked in the computer lab to compose a questionnaire survey to investigate language school students' perceptions of and attitudes towards the issue of discrimination and harassment at university. Compared to the project he worked on in Week 12, he preferred this project on discrimination issues because he thought it was at least a real-life topic. He worked in a group with Sun and Student P. Chen-feng felt bored and displayed a low level of WTC for a number of reasons. He had already worked on the questionnaire survey and developed some items for it with Sun in the previous lesson. Student P was absent in that class. Sun thus spent some time explaining the items for him to catch up at the beginning of class. Chen-feng felt that there was no need for him to give further explanations. It only took them half an hour to complete the questionnaire. For the rest of the lesson, Student P and Sun chatted about some Korean and German websites. Chen-feng did not seem to be interested in this off-task talk:

We just make some questions for our research subject and nothing's interesting, actually we finished very soon and after that we just do something by ourselves talk about other things... Talking about some website in Korea and Germany... Not much I'm not interested in the topic, so in what they're talking about I'm not interested, just to listen what they were talking about... Me and Sun have already decided yesterday the questions so we I don't need to talk much about questions, because Student P was absent yesterday so he want to know about the questionnaire and Sun explained those questions to him. (Phase II interview)

We can see that Chen-feng's WTC from Weeks 11 to 14 continued to be affected largely by the environmental factors of task and interlocutor and was somewhat influenced by his emotions of boredom.

Chen-feng's WTC ratio in Week 16 lesson was 1.07 (WTC proportion = 25.2%), which was just above the mean ratio of 1.04. He was not interviewed for this lesson. However, according to the analysis of his participation in the classroom interactions, he seemed quite engaged during the group work with Ai-ling and Student A in the activity of making sentences using the five verbs from the academic list. There were quite a number of LREs in their group interactions. Two examples were selected to show Chen-feng's engagement in the group discussions below and his relatively high WTC in the pair work with Ai-ling. In Example 14, Ai-ling was not certain if the use of 'involve' was correct in her sentence. She proposed use of present perfect tense in line 3. Chen-feng pointed out directly that she should use the passive voice in the subsequent turn. Ai-ling then suggested using the preposition *from* to collocate with "involve" in line 5. Chen-feng corrected her misuse of *from* by suggesting "in" in line 6. To make the rule more explicit, he explained it again in L1. Ai-ling seemed to be suspicious of his correction of the preposition *in* and she was attempting to ask for clarification from the teacher.

Example 14

1. A: I'm not sure if it's right. Involve.
 2. C: *Involve the big trouble. You are.*
 3. A: I have involved
 4. C: *No no no, be involved. I have been.*
 5. A: Invovle from
 6. C: *Involve, not from, be involved in sth. **ni bei juan ru shen me shi qing** (You're involved in something). (...) A big financial pro (...) °° procedure or °°*
 7. A: °° Financial, be involved°°
 8. C: For for months
 9. A: Ask T2
 10. C: In, involve of financial, involve from the financial
- (from Week 16 lesson, 29/05/2007)

Example 15 demonstrates another LRE in which Chen-feng and Ai-ling negotiated the usage of certain phrases in one of the sentences that Ai-ling composed. This LRE started with Chen-feng's doubts about Ai-ling's sentence. He made a comment abut Ai-ling's sentence in line 1. He sensed something wrong but failed to spot where exactly the mistake lay. Ai-ling argued back in line 2 that she was confident about the correctness of

her sentence. Chen-feng was persistent with identification of the error in line 5 while Ai-ling insisted that she was right and she had consulted the teacher about the sentence in the subsequent turn. In the same turn, Ai-ling asked Chen-feng a question regarding a noun phrase. Chen-feng provided the answer in line 7 and a further explanation in line 9 and line 11. Ai-ling still remained doubtful about Chen-feng's explanations in line 12. It seemed to her the teacher should be the expert who would provide a correct and convincing answer. Chen-feng encouraged her to ask for clarification from the teacher. This episode showed Chen-feng's relatively high WTC in this pair work in terms of him talking to Ai-ling by commenting, explaining, responding and giving his opinion.

Example 15

1. C: *Give that to me. Distribution of food, distribution of food to people in poor area, the dis the distribution of food to people. No no no, there's something wrong*
2. A: Wrong? Both sentence is right.
3. C: Really?
4. A: Yeah
5. C: *The distribution of food to people in poor area done by government. This huge family in class systems. I don't think it's right. It's the same, is consistence of, consist of, consists of. XX is deri derivation XX.*
6. A: No. I did ask the teacher. The expert will give the result after the data are (...) that after the data after data and XX for, after what what?
7. C: *After data analysing*
8. A: It's a noun after something?
9. C: *Yes it's a noun phrase*
10. A: It's a noun but
11. C: *Data analysing data analysing after data analysing from the research, this is verb phrases. You see?*
12. A: Did you ask the teacher?
13. C: I'm sure it's right. So you can ask the teacher.

(from Week 16 lesson, 29/05/2007)

Chen-feng reported that he felt more comfortable to speak in class towards the end of the 20-week course, which seemed consistent with my observation of him in class and with his WTC ratios as measured by the observational scheme. He thought his English had improved during the course in three of the four macro-skills, except in speaking being the exception. He felt that he did not achieve what he had aimed to in speaking. He wanted to be able to speak very fluently, but still he could feel the progress.

Like Yi-yun, Chen-feng's WTC trajectory during the 20-week course also showed an upward trend, and the micro-analysis of his WTC behaviour specific to different stages of each observed lesson revealed that his WTC level was very unstable over these 5 months. In the Week 4 lesson, he was unmotivated and displayed low WTC in the first task of composing a reference list, which he thought was very boring. However, his WTC was higher in group work than in the whole-class situation in this task. In the second task of reading comprehension on the issue of immigration, he showed an interest in the topic but his WTC level still remained low because lacking linguistic competence made him feel frustrated and he perceived his interlocutors as being uninterested in talking with him. His WTC level dropped to near zero in the subsequent task of discussion on the issue of immigration as he regarded it as a sensitive topic and he felt hurt by some of the interlocutors' comments. In the Week 12 lesson, his WTC level was generally low because he thought the topic for the group project was childish and his group members argued a lot when working on the project. In the Week 16 lesson, his WTC level increased to above the mean level and he showed high WTC in pair work. Overall, his WTC behaviour in each lesson observed seemed to be influenced by a range of environmental, individual and linguistic factors; however, he seemed extremely sensitive to environmental factors - topic and interlocutor appeared to be a persistent factor responsible for his WTC behaviour in each lesson.

5.2.3 Case III: Cai-wei – A Shy Student

Cai-wei's case is different from Yi-yun's and Chen-feng's because of the particular kind of interdependence between three dimensions. The factors in all the three dimensions were involved in shaping her WTC but the interactions between them seemed to achieve a balance. Therefore, her WTC can be located right in the middle of the continuum of somewhat assertive but also vulnerable to the environment. Her case is particularly interesting in that she seemed a very shy student by temperament and thus she showed higher WTC in pairs and small groups but low WTC in whole-class activities. The profile for Cai-wei is shown in Figure 5.4.

Cai-wei

- The most committed participant in my study – the only one who kept journals for 5 months, but the only one who failed this EAP course (surprisingly)
- Former English learning: studied English till the 1st year at university in Taiwan; studied at another university-based language school for 7 months in New Zealand (enjoyed that learning experience more than the days at this school)
- Her perception of herself: quite shy about presenting in front of class; two sides of her personality – talkative with family and friends but shy and quiet with new classmates, must know someone well enough to feel comfortable to talk
- Teacher John's view of her: a diligent student, eager to improve her English, enjoyed using English to solve problems

Figure 5. 4. Profile for Cai-wei.

In the first 4 weeks of the course, in her weekly journal entries Cai-wei identified topic and mood as the main attributes affecting her WTC in class, whereas interlocutor and opportunity for talking were reported as the factors influencing her WTC outside of class. For example, in the Week 3 journal, she commented that she felt like talking in Tuesday's class because the topic of discussing the structure and components of an essay was easy for her. Concerning the Thursday's class in Week 4, she reported that she felt quite willing to communicate in the lesson on a discussion about a documentary called *Supersize Me*. She found the topic quite interesting and she possessed a wealth of knowledge of this topic because her undergraduate degree was in food science. Outside of class, in those 4 weeks, she had very high WTC to talk with a proficient friend she met on the Internet. She also started socialising with classmates from different cultural backgrounds.

In the Week 5 lesson, Cai-wei's WTC ratio was 0.71 (WTC proportion =11.5%), which was below the mean ratio of 0.84. Her orientation towards this lesson was quite negative. She felt bored in the lesson and found it a waste of time to watch the news items in class. She said that it would have been better for the students to choose the topics on their own before the lesson. She seemed to be active in the group discussions and it was her low

WTC level in the whole-class activity that dragged down her overall WTC ratio in this lesson. Her WTC in this lesson was reported as largely affected by the environmental factors of topic, interlocutor, teacher and class interactional pattern, together with individual factors of personality, the emotion of boredom and perceived opportunity to communicate, as well as linguistic factors of language proficiency. Thus all the three dimensions exerted an impact on her WTC in class.

In the first activity of watching the news item, she only demonstrated six instances of WTC behaviour in the whole-class comprehension check. She reported that her classmates like Jun and Seung were quicker in responding in the whole-class activity and thus she hesitated to volunteer answers. She commented that the reporter spoke too fast in the news and the news item contained many new words; therefore, she only understood half of the news. The teacher also failed to explain the new vocabulary to the students. She felt reluctant to ask the teacher for explanation because she perceived the teacher's attitude to be discouraging rather than encouraging:

I felt bored because just watch the TV and it's about news, and she teacher want wanted us to find a topic and to search some information but I think all the class just talk about this topic and all repeat again ... I just think don't waste time in the class doing something like this, I think you just go home to find topic or you use the Internet... Maybe but um some of the news I couldn't understand, because they speak too fast and the words too difficult for me. (Phase II interview)

However, she participated actively in the group discussion regarding the main idea of the news item. In Example 16, she is sharing the pieces of information she heard about the news with her group members, Students, B, H and K. In lines 3, 5 and 11, she presents her answers about the news. In line 9, she responds to Student K's question and in line 19 she asks Student B a question for more specific information. Cai-wei reported that she preferred group work and pair work to teacher-fronted activities. She especially liked group work in which everyone could take turns to talk and fill a gap while she felt obliged to talk in a pair, where only two interlocutors were involved.

Example 16

1. SB: The vocab is very difficult XX couldn't catch.
 2. SH: XX
 3. C: *Two two thousand and ten*
 4. SH: No no Two hundred thousand people were there
 5. C: *[five hundred five hundred*
 6. SH: Two hundred
 7. C: Five hundred, and XX negotiation
 8. SK: Gotiation?
 9. C: Negotiation yeah
 10. SB: About Paci [Pasifika
 11. C: *[two hundred thousand people*
 12. SB: Festival and after that the traffic was bad
 13. C: I didn't catch that
 14. SK: XX
 15. SB: XX for New Zealanders
 16. SH: Traffic jam?
 17. SB: Not for Oxfam
 18. SH: There're XX Pacific Region
 19. C: *This one XX negotiation. Did you hear what kind of negotiation?*
 20. SB: I don't know. XX
- (from Week 5 lesson, 13/03/2007)

In the second half of Module 3 course (Week 5 to Week 9), a new theme emerged in Cai-wei's journals to influence her WTC in class. The interlocutor factor seemed to play an important role in shaping her WTC in group project work. She mentioned that she was dissatisfied with her group members who she felt were uncooperative and irresponsible in Weeks 5 and 6. She reported in the journal entry that it was a terrible experience to work in this group on the first project work. This negative experience caused her emotions of anger, confusion and frustration, and this was reported to affect her WTC in class negatively. In the following 2 weeks, she worked with Seung, a classmate she socialised with, on the second project work. This was a much more pleasant experience. She thoroughly enjoyed working with Seung and felt the outcome of their project – the brochure for raising awareness of environmental protection issues, was “incredible”. She obviously possessed very high WTC in working with Seung in those 3 weeks from Week 7 to Week 9. As she commented in her weekly journal in Week 9:

In making our brochures on Thursday, we talked about every team's product. When Helen asked us to make the brochure on Monday, we

thought that is impossible. We had to finish it for 3 days. However, we did it. When we saw our ‘babies’, we felt it is incredible (cos it’s colourful brochures). (Week 9 journal entry)

As for her WTC outside of class, the recurring themes included interlocutor and perceived opportunity to communicate. She continued to spend time with a few friends she made in class and have chats with them during break time and help one another out with their homework.

Cai-wei’s WTC ratio in Week 11 was 0.66, which was just lower than the mean ratio of 0.7. In Week 12 however, her WTC ratio was 1.7, which was higher than the mean ratio of 1.4. In the interview regarding the Week 12 lesson, she reported that she was quite happy about that lesson in which she worked with Chen-feng, Student P, a German student and Student L, from a Russian background, to design a poster for advertising an environmentally friendly product. She attributed her high WTC in this lesson to a range of factors – task type, interlocutor, teacher, and perceived opportunity to communicate. During this second interview, she commented that she was familiar with the project work since the Module 3 course. She felt more like talking when carrying out project work because she had her ideas that she wanted to share with her group. She thought the purpose of the project was to work cooperatively with team members and make her own contribution in a team. She elaborated on the importance of fostering this team spirit for later university studies. The project work also provided her with more opportunities to discuss issues with other students as opposed to other types of task. Another factor that contributed to her high WTC concerned the interlocutors in her group. She especially appreciated Student P’s performance in the group for his thought-provoking ideas. His talkativeness also promoted their group discussion. As a comparison, she mentioned her upsetting experience working with uncooperative group members in Week 5 on the first project. She also appreciated the attitude of John, the teacher, towards their project work. Instead of assigning the project topic to them, John adopted a more flexible approach by only making suggestions and leaving them enough room and freedom to develop their own group project. She compared this to her experience in the Week 5 class with Sue, whose authoritarian style seemed to discourage her participation in the first project. From

Cai-wei's self-report, it seems that her WTC tended to be high when environmental, individual and linguistic factors worked in concert together.

From Week 11 to Week 17, Cai-wei expressed in her journals that two emerging factors seemed to affect her WTC in class – task type and the emotion of anxiety. During this time, the class carried out two more group projects which involved designing surveys for data collection and presenting the results in both oral presentations and written reports. Cai-wei seemed to be quite willing to talk in the project work with her group. But at the same time, she felt quite nervous about presenting in front of the class and participating in group discussions while the teacher was present. She also reported the teacher was a big factor encouraging her to talk in class. According to her,

I think the teacher is really good at grammar, cos he can give us a lot of examples. Even though we asked a difficult question, he just needed few second to think how to explain for us. I like this way he taught us. (Week 16 journal entry)

During this time, interlocutor was a recurring factor affecting her WTC outside of class. She continued to make friends with people from different cultural backgrounds and chat with them during lunch break. In the final few weeks, she also seemed to be upset about the test results of her morning course.

The third interview was conducted with Cai-wei in Week 15, in which week the students continued with the project allocated to them in Week 14. The project concerned developing a questionnaire survey to elicit responses from the students at the school regarding their perceptions of and attitudes about harassment and discrimination at university. In Week 14, they designed the questionnaires in groups, administered them to respondents and collected data. In Week 15, they continued with analysis, interpretation and presentation of the results. Cai-wei reported in her weekly journal that they learned how to analyse data and present the results in both the spoken and written form in the first class in Week 15. In the following class in the same week which was not observed, she reflected in the interview that she did not particularly feel like talking in this class because the lesson seemed quite repetitive to her. She thought that the teacher had to

change his lesson plan on the spot to do some revision activities instead because a number of students were absent from the class that afternoon:

Actually I feel a little bit bored because this project our team already done it last week, but you see today not so many students here, I think the teacher cannot do anything, so we just um um practice how to present your result again and again. (Phase II interview)

The moment at which she did not feel so bored was when she was presenting her research results in class. She referred to this presentation in class as the show time. She did not feel nervous to speak because she had prepared well with all the details needed and she got used to giving presentations after plenty of practice speaking in front of the classmates during the course:

When you when you have to present something you know all the detail I think it's good for you, you don't be nervous like forgot detail or something you don't understand you confuse, you have the detail and speak... it's OK because it's show time just prepare for the show time... I think is because Module 3 to Module 4 I got a lot of chance to speak in front of the classmates, so I start get used to do it. (Phase II interview)

In the Week 17 lesson her WTC level was very high, with WTC proportion of 59.9% and WTC ratio of 2.01, which was well above the mean ratio of 0.83. She was the one with the highest WTC level in that lesson. Her WTC level was equally high in both the whole-class activities and in the pair work with Student L. In the first session of the class, John asked the students to work on an error-correction task. The students were expected to correct the errors in the sentences and explain what types of errors they were. Cai-wei worked closely with Student L in a pair on the error-correction task while all the other students in class worked quietly on their own. In the subsequent whole-class activity in which the teacher checked the answers with the class, she volunteered the highest number of answers compared with the other participants. Since she was not interviewed after this class, it was not possible to provide her perspective of her high WTC in this lesson. But by examining her classroom interactions, it was evident that she was attentive to task and proactive in suggesting answers in the whole-class check.

In the pair work, as shown in Example 17, she worked collaboratively with Student L in spotting the errors and offering possible corrections. She showed high WTC in this pair work by talking to her partner in terms of presenting her answer (lines 2, 16), offering an explanation (4, 6, 8, 12, 18), responding to her partner's question (line 10) and making a comment (line 14). I could assume that she was engaged with the task itself and enjoyed working with Student L, a classmate she became quite familiar with during the course. In a number of lessons I observed in the previous weeks, she usually worked with Student L either in a pair or a group.

Example 17

1. SL: With most American food you don't lose time to prepare a din a dinner, maybe maybe not
2. C: *I correct this one, with the most cos most we have the*
3. SL: Yeah the most
4. C: *Yeah the most American food you don't waste time to [prepare, not the*
5. SL: *[prepare dinner*
6. C: *Yeah not the, dinner because=*
7. SL: =you only put the food
8. C: *Because, no no this punctuation, yeah because because this this one*
9. SL: here?
10. C: *Yeah don't need this one.*
11. SL: Because you only put the food in the oven for 20 minutes at 200 degrees and your dinner, is, without it
12. C: *I I correct like this, you only need to do is to put the food in the oven cos cos they just said because your*
13. SL: you only put
14. C: *It's so strange so I say you need you only need to do is to put and then your dinner is ready.*
15. SL: You only need to put, I think you can XX but this one's better.
16. C: *Cos I change this word, I don't use "it". I use then your dinner's ready, so you can, and this, I use full stop.*
17. SL: Then your dinner is ready?
18. C: *I use full stop here cos a different sentence.*

(from Week 17 lesson, 05/06/2007)

Cai-wei thought that only her writing skills improved during this EAP course. Sometimes she felt that she had gone backwards in the other three macro-skills. Nonetheless, she felt more relaxed to talk in front of the class towards the end of the course because she got to know her classmates quite well.

Her WTC trajectory over 5 months showed the same trend as Yi-yun's and Chen-feng's; that is, her WTC level seemed to be increasing over time. And like them, Cai-wei's WTC behaviour was not uniform when we took a closer look at her WTC from lesson to lesson and within each observed lesson. Being a very shy student by temperament, she usually displayed low WTC in whole-class activities but high WTC in pair and group work in which she worked with partners she was particularly familiar with. Different factors from the three dimensions (individual, environmental and linguistic) were found to exert combined influences on her WTC behaviour in each lesson.

Flux in Cai-wei's WTC behaviour occurred from week to week. Concerning Cai-wei's WTC behaviour in the Week 5 lesson, the inhibiting factors of low language proficiency, feelings of general boredom, boring topic, few perceived opportunities to communicate, insufficient teacher support and negative evaluation from interlocutors surpassed the boosting factor of group work and generated a low WTC level. Her WTC level increased in the Week 12 lesson; the factors of task, interlocutor, teacher and perceived opportunity to talk worked as boosting factors that jointly promoted her WTC behaviour. In the Week 15 lesson, her WTC level dropped again, mainly because the topic was repetitive and made her feel too bored to participate. In the Week 17 lesson, her WTC participation increased because of the facilitating factors of task and interlocutor. She was very attentive to the task, proactive in the whole-class activity and active in the pair work with an interlocutor she was familiar with. Apart from fluctuation of WTC participation on a week-by-week basis, her WTC behaviour was variable within a particular lesson. For example, her general WTC level was very low in the Week 5 lesson but there were still moments when she showed high WTC in the group work.

I have described three cases, Yi-yun, Chen-feng and Cai-wei whose WTC trajectories showed an overall upward pattern with fluctuations within this trend. In the following three sections, I will depict three other cases, Ai-ling and Rong-rong whose WTC levels fluctuated greatly over time, and Mu-cheng, a very reticent student who differed considerably from the other participants.

5.2.4 Case IV: Ai-ling – A Confident Speaker

The impression that Ai-ling gave her teacher John and me was that she was a very confident speaker in class. Her WTC appeared to be affected largely by individual factors such as self-confidence and mood, and to some extent by a range of classroom environmental factors. Overall, her WTC can be placed towards the more assertive end of the continuum. A brief profile for Ai-ling is presented in Figure 5.5.

Ai-ling

- Former English learning: studies English till high school in China; studied English at another language school in New Zealand for half a year
- Reason for enrolling in the EAP programme: failed her IELTS test and had to choose this option; to improve academic English skills - especially note-taking skills
- Her perception of herself: neither too quiet nor too talkative
- Teacher John's view of her: the most confident speaker, the clearest thinker and most accurate in her spoken production among all the participants
“She could be easily distracted in class but she put herself into it when she was on task. She was very aware of what she wanted to learn and asked questions that might not be in line with what I intended to teach.”
- Outside school: stayed in a Kiwi home-stay with one Korean student and one Chinese student; English environment beneficial for improving conversational English but not for academic English

Figure 5. 5. Profile for Ai-ling.

Ai-ling's WTC ratio in Week 4 was slightly below the mean of 0.8 (WTC ratio =0.76). This was mainly because her WTC level in the whole-class activities was low. Since she was not interviewed for this class, her explanations for her low WTC participation could not be obtained. However, since the majority of the class displayed very low WTC in that class in general, both because the topic was perceived as boring and the materials challenging, it can be assumed that her low WTC was possibly attributable to the

environmental factors of topic, task and teacher, the individual factor of emotion of frustration together with the linguistic factor of perceived low L2 proficiency.

Ai-ling's WTC ratio in the Week 11 lesson was 0.59, which was lower than the mean ratio of 0.7, whereas her WTC ratio in the Week 12 lesson was 1.53, which was higher than the mean ratio of 1.4. The first interview with Ai-ling was conducted in Week 12 regarding this lesson, which concerned a group project about designing advertisements for an environmentally friendly product. She reported that she preferred the project work to normal classes because she had opportunities to discuss the project with group members and she could learn new skills through the project work. She also enjoyed working in the group with two other girls and had quite a good discussion with them in the class. Compared with Module 3 of the course, she felt more confident and at ease in speaking with classmates and doing oral presentations in front of the class:

Maybe I'm getting familiar with other students, so I don't feel worried about speaking English, but in Module 3, when I have a like a speech or presentation and things like that, when I sitting standing in front of the class I will feel nervous to talk with others, but this week I also had same the same presentation not presentation, only 5 mins talk, I don't feel worry... I didn't prepare much I just read it once, and I didn't see the notes and I can talk to them, I don't feel I didn't feel nervous... maybe because I know most of the student. (Phase II interview)

Ai-ling's WTC level was also comparatively high in Week 16 (WTC ratio =1.6, WTC proportion =35%), which was above the mean ratio of 1.04. In Week 17, however, her WTC level was below the mean ratio of 0.83 (WTC ratio =0.56, WTC proportion =17.5%). She was rather active in the whole-class activity in the first half of the lesson in Week 17. It was her quietness in the group work that pulled her overall WTC level down. During the first session of the lesson in which the students worked on the error-correction task, in my observation Ai-ling worked quietly on this task on her own. She reported in the interview that she was not particularly interested in this task even though she thought it was useful. She also felt sleepy and not in the right mood to talk:

I don't know. I don't like to do this kind of task. Yeah I think it's useful but that doesn't mean I like it...we feel tired and we didn't do the rest of the question and I didn't finish. (Phase II interview)

When the teacher did the class check on errors, she volunteered answers many times. The following excerpt (Example 18) shows that Ai-ling made several attempts to suggest changes to the errors and identify the types of errors in the sentence. In lines 2, 8, 13, 19, 25 and 28, she volunteered answers to the teacher's questions without being called upon.

Example 18

1. T2: So far so good, any other changes?
 2. A: *Young people don't receive the receive*
 3. T2: Thank you, don't receive
 4. SL: °° Don't receive °°
 5. C: Don't receive? ((to SL))
 6. SL: °° Don't receive enough attention from their parents. °°
 7. T2: One more?
 8. A: *From their parents*
 9. T2: From their parents, yes I've got that one.
 10. SL: Their parents
 11. T2: The father is busy, the fathers are busy, their fathers are busy, all are OK. In business meetings is OK.
 12. SL: [Some XX instead of young people
 13. A: [The the punctuation, instead of comma we use a dot
 14. T2: Where?
 15. A: *From their parents,*
 16. T2: Yes new sentence. Thank you. OK, what kinds of mistakes were in there?
 17. SL: Punctuation.
 18. T2: Punctuation yes.
 19. A: °° everything °° ((giggles))
 20. SL: Sentence organisation. Subject-verb.
 21. T2: Subject-verb agreement? For example?
 22. SL: Their parents.
 23. T2: Er that would be XX
 24. SL: Ah no no no XX
 25. A: °° Pronouns yeah pronouns °°
 26. T2: Speak louder people
 27. SL: Sure
 28. A: *Yeah vocabulary everything*
- (from Week 17 lesson, 05/06/2007)

Overall, Ai-ling's WTC level showed considerable fluctuations at different points of time over 5 months. In the Week 4 lesson, her low WTC level was probably due to the inhibiting effects of a range of environmental factors of topic, interlocutor and teacher, individual factors of emotion and linguistic factors of language proficiency. In the Week

12 lesson, her WTC participation increased because she liked the project work in which there were more perceived opportunities for discussion with interlocutors she knew quite well. In the Week 17 lesson her WTC level decreased again because she lacked interest in the topic and she felt sleepy and not in the right mood to talk. Within each single lesson, her WTC level also fluctuated in different class patterns (whole-class and pair/group work) for different tasks. Her WTC behaviour in class seemed to be determined largely by individual factors of self-confidence and mood. Environmental factors such as topic, task and interlocutor also exerted an effect on her WTC. Ai-ling said that she felt more confident to talk because she became more familiar with her classmates, and in turn her WTC increased towards the end of the course.

5.2.5 Case V: Rong-rong – A Frequent User of Private Speech

Rong-rong's case is similar to Ai-ling's in that her WTC can also be placed towards the assertive end of the continuum. The difference lies in that Ai-ling is a very confident speaker while Rong-rong seems to possess low self-confidence. According to her self-report, it appears that Rong-rong had a positive perception of her own WTC and was capable of higher WTC participation at times. Interestingly though, she seemed to consistently show lower WTC than the mean WTC ratio. The profile for Rong-rong is presented in Figure 5.6.

Rong-rong

- The youngest among this group of participants
- Former English learning: studied English till high school and sought private tutoring from a native-speaking English teacher in China
- Reason for enrolling in the EAP programme: an alternative way to enter the university without taking an IELTS test
- Her perception of herself: an extrovert and talkative person
- Her perception of the EAP programme: enjoyed meeting classmates from different cultural backgrounds, quite interested in learning others' experiences in different countries

- Teacher John's view of her: one of "the bunch of teenage girls", easily swayed away by other girls, usually confident but could lose confidence under pressure, unaware of her own weaknesses and strengths of her English

Figure 5. 6. Profile for Rong-rong.

Rong-Rong's WTC levels were very low in Week 4 (WTC ratio =0.51, below the mean of 0.8; WTC proportion =7.8%) and Week 5 (WTC ratio =0.09, below the mean of 0.84; WTC proportion =1%). She was not interviewed for these two lessons, but in the first interview conducted with her in Week 6 she commented that there more opportunities existed for the class to talk in this afternoon programme than in the morning programme, which seems to indicate that she perceived more opportunities for herself to talk in this afternoon programme. She generally felt very relaxed and got on very well with her classmates in the afternoon class. She said that she felt more willing to talk when she was in a relaxed mood. Generally she perceived herself as having high WTC tendency to talk in the afternoon class.

She reported that she was more talkative out of class rather than in class because she had more flexibility to discuss topics she liked after class, whereas the topics for discussion were usually assigned by the teacher:

After class I'm talkative but in the class I will be more quiet... Because after the class I can talk whatever I want and no no commitment... In the class we should talk about what the teacher set the topic um after class we can choose myself or other people so you can you can feel more freedom yeah. (Phase II interview)

Rong-rong's WTC ratio in Week 11 was 0.74, which was just above the mean ratio of 0.7 whereas her WTC ratio in Week 12 was 1.34, which was lower than the mean ratio of 1.4. She was not interviewed for those two lessons, thus her perceptions of her WTC behaviour in the two lessons were not obtained.

The second interview with Rong-rong was conducted in Week 13, halfway through the course. The lesson concerned group discussions about discrimination and harassment

issues in a university environment. Rong-rong reported in the interview that she found this topic very boring to discuss because she did not care about discrimination and harassment. She did not feel like talking in the teacher-fronted activity. She preferred the group work in which she compared this issue in China, Korea and New Zealand with her Korean partners. Fundamentally she was not interested in the topic but her interest lay in hearing and sharing stories, and pinpointing differences between countries:

I can listen to different opinions, I can hear a lot of experience of others and opinion different opinion compare with me, I like to do that kind of thing, I and when I when I work with the group I think more relaxed and I can express whatever I want yeah I will feel free. (Phase II interview)

Her preference for the group discussion in this lesson was also attributable to the teacher's participation in the group work. The teacher could not only correct her grammar mistakes but also inform her of local customs and culture. Therefore, in this Week 13 lesson, her WTC was affected by the environmental factors of topic, class interactional pattern, interlocutor and teacher.

In the Week 17 lesson, her WTC level was also low (WTC ratio =0.51, below the mean of 0.83; WTC proportion =13.8%). In the interview, she commented that she thought it was a useful grammar-based lesson and she felt good about it. She always regarded grammar as her weakest skill and thus she preferred the grammar instruction. In the first half of the lesson which was concerned with working on an error-correction task, like Ailing, Rong-rong was also quiet in the group work but instead she was active in the whole-class activity and volunteered answers quite frequently.

The following three examples show that Rong-rong displayed quite active WTC participation in the whole-class activity on the error-correction task. What I found interesting of her WTC participation was that she seemed to try out the answers using private speech before making an attempt to volunteer the answers. In Example 19, she repeated A's answer in a low volume in line 4. Then she attempted to voice part of her answer, attentively in private speech again in line 8 before making a public response of her complete answer in line 10.

Example 19

1. T2: So close, so close.
2. A: So can we use a comma in the with most American food comma, you don't?
3. T2: ((claps)) I was just about to say that.
4. R: *ooo comma ooo*
5. SA: Say what?
6. A: So just with most American food, put a comma here, you don't lose time to prepare a dinner. ((to SA))
7. T2: Does that make it clear?
8. R: *ooo I think is ooo*
9. SA: With a comma with American food
10. R: *I think is you don't lose time to prepare a dinner for most American food.*
11. T2: That's another way to look at it, thank you. Actually "with" is OK, it's a preposition. It should look something like this.

(from Week 17 lesson, 05/06/2007)

In Example 20, after Ai-ling read out her sentence, Rong-rong suggested an alternative, "run" (use of base form) for "are running" (present progressive) using private speech in line 2. The teacher raised a question as to the use of the active voice and Ai-ling failed to respond to that. Student L responded instead to change the active voice into the passive voice. Rong-rong's attempt to cut in to suggest her answer in line 7 did not seem to be acknowledged by the teacher. She switched back to a private response in line 10 before finally co-constructing the answer with Student L in line 13.

Example 20

1. A: Automob/il, so so you can see many them are running over (...) Automob/il/
2. R: *oo I think run is OK. oo*
3. T2: How can a snake run over a car? (asks A)
4. A: ((no response))
5. (...)
6. SL: Many of them are run by automobile on the streets
7. R: *[they are*
8. SL: Many of them are=
9. T2: Better better, you deleted a few words there
10. R: *oo Many of them oo*
11. T2: Any suggestions?
12. SL: Many of them are run over by by automo automobiles
13. R: *And and they died on the streets.*

(from Week 17 lesson, 05/06/2007)

In Example 21, Rong-rong seemed to have doubts about Ai-ling's answer and she directed a question at herself in line 2 in private speech. After the teacher's comments on Ai-ling's response, she gathered the courage to suggest her answer. The teacher seemed to think positively about her answer. After he read out the whole sentence, Rong-rong repeated part of his utterance in line 10.

Example 21

1. A: TOEFL means effects of the TOEFL test ...
2. R: ^ ^ ^ *What's this?* ^ ^
3. T2: I think it's become much easier that you take away because.
4. R: *The TOEFL TOEFL test test you tests your ability to listen read and to answer questions about what you listen and read about.*
5. T2: Er again please, a bit slower. I'm sorry.
6. R: The TOEFL [tests testS your ability to listen, read and to answer questions about what you listen and read about.
7. C: [tests
8. T2: I like the first part very much. We don't need to say TOEFL test because the T in TOEFL means test. So you say the TOEFL tests your ability to listen, read and answer questions
9. SL: what you listen and read about=
10. R: =*tests your ability to=*
11. T2: =to listen, read and answer questions

(from Week 17 lesson, 05/06/2007)

In the interview, she reported that there were sufficient opportunities for her to talk in the first half of the lesson because the teacher did not talk much. Thus she made attempts in the whole-class activities to show her relatively high WTC. Her frequent use of private speech prior to public responses in the whole-class activities might have been due to her low self-confidence or concern with accuracy in speaking.

Similar to Ai-ling, Rong-rong's WTC level also fluctuated between the lessons and within each single lesson. Her situational WTC in a particular class was determined by individual factors of perceived opportunities to communicate and self-confidence, together with environmental factors such as topic, task, interlocutor and class interactional patterns. She thought her general academic skills improved during the

course. But she still felt that her grammar was pretty bad. Rong-rong reported that over time she had come to feel more comfortable talking in class, because she was becoming more used to speaking English, more confident about her English skills, and more familiar with her classmates.

5.2.6 Case VI: Mu-cheng – A Reticent and Introvert Student

Mu-cheng differs from all the other key participants in that he is a very reticent and introverted student in class and his WTC tended to be shaped more by the internal factors of personality and self-confidence than the external environmental factors. On the continuum, his WTC can be put at the assertive end. Like Rong-rong, he also appeared to show a high WTC tendency based on self-reported interview data but he consistently demonstrated a low WTC level in class. Mu-cheng's profile is provided in Figure 5.7.

Mu-cheng

- Dropped out of Module 4 of this EAP programme and went back to China to look for a job in engineering
- Former English learning: studied English till university in China
- His perception of himself: very introverted and quiet
- His perception of the EAP programme: had abundant opportunities to practice his listening skills, had exposure to different accents of peer classmates
- John's view of him: "a black hole", did not seem to pay attention in class, his mind did not seem to be on the job in class
- The classmates' impressions of him: a very quiet interlocutor, hardly expressed his opinions in discussions, never socialised with them after class
- My impression of him: a loner, enjoyed his own company in class

Figure 5. 7. Profile for Mu-cheng.

Mu-cheng's WTC participation was quite low in both Week 4 (WTC ratio =0.37, below the mean 0.8; WTC proportion =5.7%) and Week 5 (WTC ratio =0.56, below the mean 0.84; WTC proportion =9.8%). In the interview for the Week 5 lesson, he commented

that he was quite motivated to do the group project work which he thought was a more concrete achievement than grammar-based activities or tasks in text books and which provided more opportunities for talking. He felt very willing to communicate with his peers for the project work. He also liked Sue, who was teaching the afternoon class. He did not quite like being urged by the teacher to participate in class, so compared to the morning teacher who usually called upon him for answers, he preferred Sue, who adopted a non-intrusive and relaxed style. He never felt he was being pushed to say something in her classes:

I like the afternoon class better than the morning class, in the morning class, it's more about grammar, writing, quite boring, finding topic sentences, boring. I find afternoon class more interesting, I want to speak more in the afternoon class... I think the afternoon teacher is more casual, you don't feel obliged to talk... I don't like it when the teacher asks me to talk when I don't have much to say about it. (Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

In the first whole-class activity, watching the news item about the Pasifika Festival, his WTC level was very low. When the teacher did a class check on comprehension of the main ideas of the news item, he only contributed two incidences of WTC behaviour, both of which seemed to be non-public responses (low volume private speech). These two turns of private speech exemplified the fact that he was not certain about his answers at all. In the interview, he reported that his low WTC was due to his low linguistic proficiency and unfamiliarity with the topic. He thought the listening materials were difficult and he only understood 10% to 30% of the news, which contained Maori language:

I didn't talk much, because I didn't quite understand the news, it was too fast... the news was too fast and the news contained some Maori language... I couldn't understand most of the news... I knew it was about a celebration, also it was partly about culture, I didn't know much about the multicultural aspect of New Zealand... I didn't figure out what each part was about... The first half was more difficult, discussion for the second half was all right, the material for the first half was more advanced. (Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

He was more active in the group discussion than in the whole-class activity. His WTC level in the group work was just above the mean. Mu-cheng was discussing with Seung

and Xin-ru which topic would be suitable for their group project. Xin-ru did not seem to be participating in this group discussion. Mu-cheng suggested a number of options such as Maori news, international news and financial issues. After some negotiation and clarification, Mu-cheng and Seung settled on campus issues as the focus for their project. In the group interaction, it seems that Mu-cheng was involved in pair discussion with Sueng. However, in the interview, he reported that he did not talk much in this group work:

We talked about which topic to choose... er because I wasn't too concerned about choice of the topic, whatever topic will suit me, I didn't talk that much, I only expressed my opinions, for example, some sports, economy and some international and local news. I personally like crime, but they didn't like it. (Phase II interview, translated from Chinese)

The second interview with Mu-cheng was carried out in Week 14 about his perceptions of a lesson during the third project work concerning designing a questionnaire for language school students' attitudes towards discrimination and harassment at university. Mu-cheng worked in a group for the task with Yi-yun and Rong-rong in the computer lab. He found it "very interesting" to discuss the definition and cases of discrimination with his group. The relaxing atmosphere in the computer lab made him feel willing to take part in the group discussion. But he also confessed that they used L1 when they could not find the key words about the topic:

Firstly my partner talking the definition of discrimination, yeah they're too interested in the definition of discrimination, I think it's kind of funny, because it's not it's not the most important part of the questionnaire, then we talked several cases of discrimination, it's also very interesting... I prefer e-lab in group we discuss we use English more in discussion and atmosphere is good for communication. (Phase II interview)

Mu-cheng was quite motivated to do project work in the afternoon class and he claimed to have high WTC towards the course; he reported that he liked the teacher who never pushed him to talk and he enjoyed working with his classmates. However, in particular lessons, his situational WTC was influenced by the factors within the three dimensions (environmental, individual and linguistic), including knowledge about and interest in a topic, interlocutor, perceived opportunity to communicate and perceived linguistic competence. Being an extreme introvert in class, the interlocutor played a very important

role in pulling up his WTC level in pair/group work. An example of this can be found from the Week 5 lesson when he worked in a pair with Seung.

Seung was a sociable and outgoing student. His teacher Helen regarded him as a more mature student with his own strong views as compared to the other students. A number of his peers commented that he was an interesting partner to have discussions with in group work as he seemed to have brilliant ideas about the different topics assigned to them. In the Week 5 lesson, he worked in a pair with Mu-cheng to carry out the project work. Seung found Mu-cheng a very quiet and shy interlocutor who usually stayed alone by himself in class and seldom attempted to express his opinions in L2 with his classmates. Because Mu-cheng seldom either initiated communication with Seung or expressed his own opinions and it was difficult for Seung to sustain the discussion with him:

Mu-cheng doesn't want to talk, yeah I think he no no no he does not er he I think his character his character may be shy when he talks talks with other people... I think it is very hard for him to be to be with other people for working together yeah I don't know why... Mu-cheng doesn't approach or doesn't do doesn't try to talk to others, so and his voice very low, I think he's afraid of afraid of not perfect talking in English, I think so, but I don't know. (Phase II interview)

Seung adopted the strategy of asking Mu-cheng questions first, in order to induce answers from him. Example 22 exemplifies this as Seung attempted to ask Mu-cheng questions (Turns 5, 7, 9, 13, 21, 28 and 30) to help him express his opinions. As shown in the excerpt, the techniques adopted by Seung, this cooperative and skilful interlocutor, to engage Mu-cheng in the discussion served as affordances for Mu-cheng to pick up on. This may have encouraged his WTC behaviour. Therefore, in this pair work with Seung, Mu-cheng's WTC was promoted through Seung's endeavours to engage him in communication.

Example 22

1. Se: Domestic and what kind of um we're Kiwi
2. M: I see the I see the what's?
3. Se: National XX
4. M: I see the accident
5. *Se: XX or?*

6. M: Just some Maori news
 7. Se: *From the?*
 8. M: Lazy lazy student
 9. Se: *And another reasoning another reason to to be late in that class, so we we can report about the lazy student, why why the student are late in the class*
 10. M: So it's not it's not real?
 11. Se: Sorry?
 12. M: It's not real it's not real thing
 13. Se: *It's not real?*
 14. M: You mean you mean you invite us?
 15. Se: Uh?
 16. M: You mean you um interview us? I mean interview
 17. Se: Now we're we're choosing a theme what we're going to report yeah yeah
 18. M: Er XX
 19. Se: Social (...) so we we make sure domestic or international or yeah
 20. M: International
 21. Se: *Yeah you want social problem yeah?*
 22. M: What does that mean?
 23. Se: Social social
 24. T1: Social
 25. Se: I mean we want to report er especially
 26. T1: You have to choose what I
 27. M: I think we choose the simple one, financial is clear, the question is clear
 28. Se: *Clear, clear questions?*
 29. M: It's not er easy to understand social problem, social problem have some=
 30. Se: *=how can you explain about about this problem, the student late in in their school*
 31. M: Er school problem? Campus problem
 32. Se: Campus problem
 33. M: Campus (.) issues campus issues
 34. Se: Good, XX campus
- (from Week 5 lesson, 13/05/2007)

From the descriptions of Rong-rong and Mu-cheng, it was shown that their general WTC tendency over the course as reported in interview data was not consistent with their actual WTC behaviour in a particular lesson. This mismatch between learners' overall tendency of WTC and situational WTC at a particular moment warrants further research.

5.2.7 Summary of Case Studies

Table 5.5 presents a summary of the six case studies. It shows the dimensions of factors perceived by the participants to exert either a positive or negative influence on their WTC behaviour in class at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the programme. The

table also indicates the students' WTC levels in the three class interactional patterns – whole-class situation, pair work, and group work for each lesson when applicable. For all the participants, it seems that factors from at least two of the dimensions were involved in affecting learners' WTC behaviour at any point in time in class. The interactions between the factors created the flux in learners' WTC at different stages of the language programme.

As mentioned in the previous chapter regarding the changes in the students' WTC behaviour over the 20-week programme, statistically significant differences were found in their WTC ratios at the three points in time (beginning, middle and end of programme). The delineation of case studies in the preceding sections reveals the dynamic fluctuations in WTC behaviour from lesson to lesson, and from task to task within a single lesson. The dynamic fluctuations were determined by the joint influences of factors within and between each of the three dimensions.

The description of the case studies provides firm evidence for the interdependency and integration of environmental, individual and linguistic influences affecting learners' WTC volitional process in L2 classrooms. As can be interpreted from the ecological perspective, the social and the cognitive factors form an integral part of the process underlying the WTC behaviour. WTC emerges out of the dynamic and reciprocal interactions between the social and individual factors. The emerging interdependence points to the complex and intertwining interrelationships between the classroom environmental condition, individual student's personal characteristics, and the linguistic predictors.

It should be noted that a limitation with the multiple case study lies in its small sample size. The present study involved 18 students overall and focused on only 6 key participants as cases. The in-depth qualitative analysis of individual cases in individual lessons allows us to see the dynamic nature of WTC but it also prevents us from seeing a bigger picture, that is, the general trend of overall WTC. However, even with the 18 participants coming from three different classes, we can see the same pattern occurring

repeatedly in the WTC behavioural trajectory; that is, the flux in the situational WTC of all the participants. Overall, Cai-wei, Chen-feng, and Yi-yun's WTC trajectories showed upward trends. However, within that trend there seemed to be fluctuations from lesson to lesson, and from task to task within each lesson. Ai-ling's and Rong-rong's WTC levels displayed a fluctuating pattern overall. Even the students such as Fatima and Jun who demonstrated particularly high WTC as compared to their peers had high and low moments for their WTC behaviour. Other students, like Shu-wei and Mu-cheng, who displayed low WTC overall, also had high and low WTC within that general pattern.

Table 5.5
Summary of Case Studies

Student	Early (Weeks 4, 5)						Middle (Weeks 11-14)						Late (Weeks 16, 17)								
	Dimension			Positive/ Negative		WTC level		Dimension			Positive/ Negative		WTC level		Dimension			Positive/ Negative		WTC level	
	E	I	L	W	P/G	E	I	L	W	P/G	E	I	L	W	P/G	E	I	L	W	P/G	
Ai-ling	N/A			N/A		↓	↑	✓	✓	-		↓	✓	✓	-	+		↑		↑	
Cai-wei	✓	✓	✓	- +		↓	↑	✓	✓	-		↓		N/A	N/A	↑	↑				
Chen-feng	✓	✓	✓	-		↓	↓	✓	✓	-		↑		N/A	N/A	↑					
Mu-cheng	✓		✓	- +		↓	↑	✓	✓	-		N/A		N/A	N/A				N/A		
Rong-rong	N/A			N/A		↓		✓	✓	+		↑	✓	✓	+	-	↑	↓			
Yi-yun	✓	✓	✓	- +		↓	↑	✓	✓	+		↑	✓	✓	- +	↓	↑				

Note: Dimension: Environmental (E), Individual (I), Linguistic (L); Mentioned in the interview or journal entry data (✓); Positive (+), negative (-); WTC level: high (↑), low (↓); Whole-class (W), Pair/Group (P/G).

5.3 Fluctuations in WTC

At a specific point in time, various combinations of factors in different dimensions can exist, which in turn contribute to a variation in the degree of WTC. The situational WTC construct entails fluctuation depending on the variation of the antecedents in the three dimensions. As all involved factors and the interaction between them can vary moment by moment, their co-influence on WTC can also vary moment by moment. This implies the dynamic changeability of each dimension, and the resulting level of WTC. For example, a variation in one environmental factor such as topic could contribute both directly and indirectly to a variation in WTC level, due to consequential variations in individual factors such as emotion and self-confidence. The findings from the present study lend support to Kang's (2005) finding that situational WTC may fluctuate over time, even within a single conversation session with the same interlocutors, given the extent to which situational variables and existing psychological antecedents could vary over the course of communication. In the present study, fluctuation of situational WTC occurred not only from lesson to lesson during the span of the language course, it also occurred subtly from task to task within one lesson. This is in line with current conceptions of L2 classroom learners' motivation as a similarly fluid and dynamic construct that "displays continuous fluctuation, going through certain ebbs and flows", rather than a static attribute (Dörnyei, 2006, p. 51).

5.4 Summary

This chapter provides empirical evidence for conceptualising WTC in L2 as a situational variable in the classroom interactional contexts. Triangulation of the students' self-reported factors influencing their WTC behaviour with classroom observations and micro-analysis of their participation in classroom interaction offers insights into the nature of this construct from multiple perspectives (Cao, 2009). Triangulation seems to be the key to understanding the dynamics of WTC methodologically. This research illustrates the usefulness of employing the combined methods of observation, stimulated-

recall interview and reflective journal in identifying WTC within the classroom context. To better understand the complexity underlying WTC behaviour, a mixed method to combine findings from both quantitative and qualitative studies is warranted.

It is found that dynamic and non-linear processes of WTC behaviour emerged through the interdependence among internal and external factors. The findings suggest that learners' WTC behaviour can fluctuate and dynamically change over time. This involves a process where WTC behaviour is jointly affected by learners' cognitive condition and linguistic factors, together with classroom environmental factors. This research suggests that, as a situational variable, WTC in L2 is subject to change both in the short term and in the long-term. It may change as learners gain greater experience and more confidence in an L2 in a broader sense (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000, 2003); it may fluctuate from lesson to lesson (Cao, 2006); from task to task within a single lesson as shown in the present study; and from moment to moment (Kang, 2005) at a micro level. There appears to be a relationship between learners' situational WTC and the assisted help they seek from their teacher and peers. What is needed in future research is to investigate: (a) the relationship between the factors underlying the learners' intention to participate and the quality of their participation; and (b) the potential this participation has for language development. This will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

In the following chapter, I identify the ways in which the factors underlying WTC interrelated and interacted, as well as interpreting the findings from the ecological perspective.

CHAPTER 6

CONCEPTUALISING SITUATIONAL WTC:

FUTURE ISSUES

In this chapter, the notion of the interdependence of environmental conditions, individual factors, and linguistic variables in class and their co-influences on situational WTC are further explored. The first section presents an empirically grounded classroom L2 WTC model which is created to account for the dynamics and complexity of situational WTC in L2 in class. In the second section, the way in which individual, environmental, and linguistic factors jointly facilitated or inhibited learners' WTC in class is discussed. The final section suggests possibilities for employing an ecological framework of nested systems in future research to investigate situational WTC.

6.1 A Classroom L2 WTC Model

In the previous chapter, I discussed various antecedent factors in the environmental, individual, and linguistic dimensions working as a combined force to exert either facilitating or inhibiting effects on emergence of situational WTC in L2 classrooms. In this section, a classroom L2 WTC model is created to account for the complexities underlying WTC in L2 classrooms and it is presented in Figure 6.1.

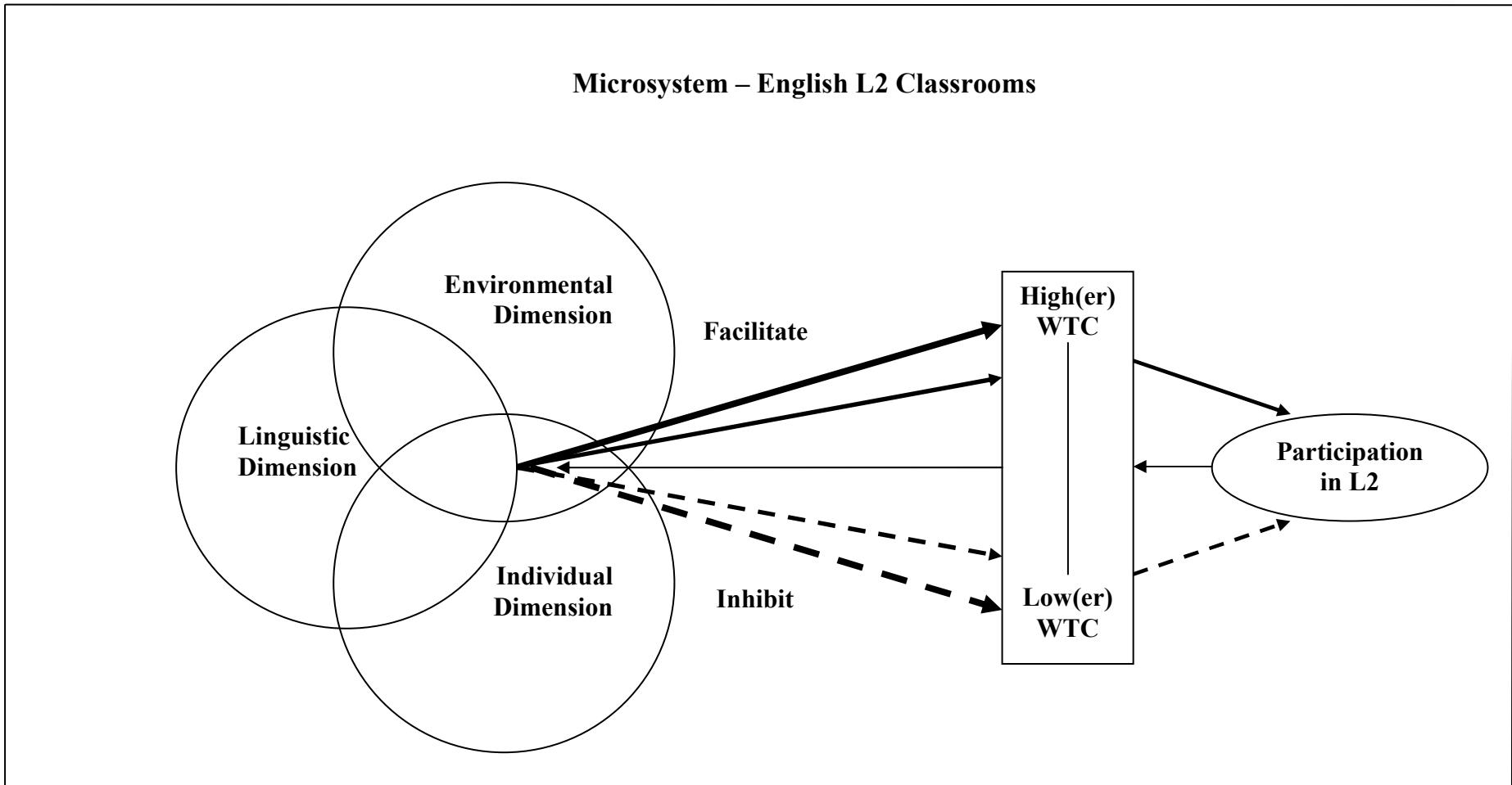


Figure 6. 1. A classroom L2 WTC model.

As shown in Figure 6.1, the immediate L2 classroom is situated in the first layer of Bronfenbrenner's nested system, referred to as the microsystem. Within the time-and space-bound L2 classroom microsystem (Wright, 2006), an individual's WTC behaviour in class is created through a multi-step process. At the first level, the overlapping three circles represent the interrelationship between the factors within the three dimensions – environmental, individual and linguistic. The environmental factors include topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher, and class interactional pattern. The individual variables refer to self-confidence, personality, emotion, and perceived opportunity to communicate. The linguistic antecedents consist of language proficiency and reliance on L1. The factors interact with each other between these dimensions.

The factors in the three dimensions also exert joint effects on the students' WTC behaviour at a given moment of time in a particular lesson. The interaction works in two ways; 1) different consequences of a student's individual and linguistic characteristics on his/her WTC behaviour depending on the environmental factors, and 2) different consequences of the same environmental factors on an individual's WTC behaviour depending on his/her individual and linguistic characteristics.

The joint effects involve interaction of both facilitative and inhibitive effects on the creation of WTC behaviour. At the second level as presented in Figure 6.1, the solid lines represent the facilitative effects while the dotted lines represent the inhibitive effects. The first type concerns interaction of only facilitative effects; the second and third types concern interaction between facilitative and inhibitive effects, and the final type involves interaction of only inhibitive effects.

Kang (2005) argues that situational WTC should be considered as a matter of degree, such as high(er) or low(er) levels of WTC given the fact that situational WTC can emerge through the joint function of situational variables and psychological antecedents which can vary from time to time. In the joint effects through interaction, when there are only facilitative effects at play or if the combined degree of the facilitative effects is greater than that of the inhibitive effects, a higher level of WTC is likely to be created. Conversely, when only inhibitive effects are involved or if the combined degree of inhibitive effects is

greater than that of the facilitative effects, a lower level of WTC is likely to be created. In other words, in the joint construction of the interaction, as the degree of the facilitative effects increases, a higher WTC level may emerge; on the other hand, as the degree of the inhibitive effects increases, a lower WTC level may emerge.

At the final level, when a high(er) level of WTC is created through joint construction of greater facilitative effects, students might tend to participate more actively in the classroom interaction. In contrast, when low(er) level of WTC emerges through joint construction of greater inhibitive effects, students might be inclined to withdraw from classroom participation.

The interrelationships occur in a recursive rather than a linear fashion. Learners' participation in L2 classroom also appears to affect their subsequent WTC behaviours and subsequent factors within the three dimensions that affect their WTC.

It is important to compare this empirically grounded classroom L2 WTC model with MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic pyramid WTC model. Both models conceptualise WTC as a situational construct, but there are a number of differences. Most importantly, MacIntyre's model suits all conversational contexts while this WTC model depicts WTC in L2 classroom context. Secondly, MacIntyre's model makes a distinction between the enduring (distal) and temporary (proximal) factors underlying situational WTC. MacIntyre (2003) points out that the problems with the pyramid model are that it is one-dimensional and that it is simply a hierarchy. He suggests that the transition from the distal factors to proximal factors is not triangular and at times the distal influences such as social situations bypass proximal factors such as state self-confidence. In this classroom L2 WTC model, the distinction between the enduring factors and temporary factors is not easily identifiable due to the interrelationship between individual and environmental factors. Finally, what is missing in MacIntyre's model are the facilitative and inhibitive effects of the factors on WTC. MacIntyre (2007) acknowledges the importance of exploring the driving and restraining forces underlying state WTC. Kang (2005) and Peng (2008) provide empirical evidence for the facilitative and inhibitive effects in a conversational context and an EFL classroom context

respectively. Thus, this classroom L2 WTC model makes the first attempt to incorporate facilitative and inhibitive effects.

In this section, I have presented a classroom L2 WTC model based on the findings from this empirical study. I have briefly described the interrelationship between the factors in the three dimensions and their facilitative and inhibitive effects on learners' WTC behaviour. In the following section, I discuss the complex interaction between the three dimensions in detail.

6.2 Interaction between Environmental, Individual and Linguistic Dimensions

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated through the description of case studies the overwhelming interdependence between the factors in the individual, environmental and linguistic dimensions. The individual predictors, environmental variables and linguistic factors seemed to play a joint role either reducing or enhancing the students' situational WTC at any point of time in all the classes observed. There was no single factor solely responsible for changes in situational WTC; instead, different combinations of factors unique each time shaped learners' WTC. Differences in the combination of factors were seen across tasks for individual students and these differences according to task were not consistent from one student to another. Some factors would play a more important role while others would exert less influence at particular moments.

The notion of interdependence exemplified in this empirical study is in line with MacIntyre's (2007) claim that the dynamic situational WTC construct was shaped by both driving and restraining forces, observed by Lewin (1951) when outlining motivational issues in Field Theory. According to Lewin, driving forces refer to energy in the direction of the intended goal whereas restraining forces impede the achievement of a goal by working in the opposite direction towards a different goal (cited in MacIntyre 2007, p. 571). As MacIntyre (2007) suggests, "at any moment a learner might feel both motivated to learn and inhibited by anxiety because of the culmination of converging, conflicting processes. Such processes lead to both approach and avoidance tendencies, operating simultaneously, waxing and waning

in salience from moment to moment” (p. 572). He uses the concept of *ambivalence* to refer to the tendencies of approach and avoidance (MacIntyre, 2007, 2008). He suggests that the moments of ambivalence can capture the difficulty faced by the learners when choosing whether to initiate communication or not. He further points out that an example of this ambivalent moment can be found in the Chinese WTC model proposed by Wen and Clément (2003), who argue that Chinese culture demands restraining forces based on the sense of responsibility to the collectivity and on deference to authority, to come into play after a speaker forms a WTC. These momentary restraining forces can explain the Chinese reluctance to speak.

In what follows, I will discuss the interaction between the environmental, individual and linguistic dimensions in these terms of momentary driving and restraining forces, in order to understand how facilitating and inhibiting factors work together for situational WTC in L2 to emerge (Kang, 2005). Prior to discussing the notions of driving and restraining forces, I will elaborate further on the interdependence between antecedents of WTC or their joint effects on WTC.

6.2.1 Joint Effects

As stated in the preceding chapter, in the findings from different participants’ WTC behaviour in three different classrooms, individual differences and interdependence between environmental, individual and linguistic effects are apparent. The findings support the main assumption of an ecological perspective, which posits the complex interaction between a human individual and the surrounding environmental characteristics. Interaction in the ecological perspective refers to the exchanges between the persons, objects and symbols in the immediate environment, which become progressively more complex in relationship and are reciprocal in nature. Situational WTC illustrates this fundamental principle. The joint effects of individual, linguistic and environmental dimensions on the creation of situational WTC in L2 classrooms illustrate that WTC behaviour is constrained by the interaction between individual characteristics and environmental conditions. Such joint effects imply that individual factors can have different consequences on the creation of WTC, depending on the involved environmental factors. Similarly,

environmental factors can have varied influences on shaping WTC, depending on personal characteristics.

The joint effects work in two ways, one of which concerns different consequences of an individual's personal characteristics and linguistic factors on his/her WTC behaviour depending on the environmental factors. This is one assumption of the ecological perspective, which posits that the same personal characteristics may lead to different psychological consequences, depending on the environmental conditions to which the individual has been exposed.

This type of interaction between individual, linguistic and environmental factors can be found in Mu-cheng's account. He reports that he felt relaxed and interested in participating in the afternoon class because he liked the teacher, who never pushed him to express his opinions, and he found that the project work provided a basis for concrete discussions; however, he felt reluctant to participate in the morning class in which the teacher often called upon him to answer questions, and he considered the academic content of the course tedious. Another example is that of Cai-wei, who related that her self-confidence and personality were quite fluid as far as her WTC was concerned. She reported that she felt more confident and appeared more outgoing when she was talking to family members and friends but she seemed to be a quiet and less confident person and felt shy about talking to people whom she was not familiar with. These examples provide evidence of the interactions between various individual factors possessed by the students (emotions, personality and self-confidence) and environmental factors such as the teacher, task type and interlocutor.

The other way in which the joint effects work concerns different consequences of the same environmental conditions on an individual's WTC behaviour depending on the personal characteristics and linguistic factors of the individual. This type of joint effect represents another form of interaction, that is, the individual's varied sensitivity to the environmental factors. Whether a student's WTC behaviour is more affected by one environmental factor or another varies depending on his individual and linguistic characteristics. The same environmental factors can be perceived differently by students due to the interactions between the environmental

factors and their own personal characteristics. For example, whole-class discussion, one of the class interactional patterns, could provoke anxiety among the learners who were concerned with negative evaluation from peers in this situation and therefore reduce their WTC. The same class activity (whole class), on the other hand, could be perceived by some confident risk-takers as a suitable opportunity to show their WTC. In this sense, the environmental factor, whole-class pattern, when combined with the affective factor of anxiety, functioned to decrease some students' WTC. Nonetheless, when the same environmental factor was associated with the individual factors of perceived communicative competence and risk-taking personality, they could jointly promote learners' WTC.

Likewise, the students with high English proficiency did not experience as intensely the emotions of frustration and anxiety as those with lower English proficiency did, at times when the same topic was allocated to all the students. In this case, the environmental factor, topic, interacted with the linguistic factor, individual's language proficiency. Similarly, the same environmental factor, topic, could be perceived as being boring or culturally sensitive by some students and discourage them from talking on the one hand, while on the other it could be regarded by others as interesting or something they had knowledge about to be willing to talk about it. These contrasting responses to the same environmental factors from different participants illustrated the existence of interactions between environmental and individual factors. The participants with different individual and linguistic characteristics displayed a difference in the way that the environmental factors affected their WTC behaviour, the degree of influence on their WTC in particular.

Another example of individual variation in terms of sensitivity to environmental factors in accordance with personal characteristics can be found when we compare the students in the Week 4 and Week 5 classes respectively. In the Week 4 class, Chen-feng, Yi-yun, and Jun were exposed to the same environmental factors, which were perceived differently by each of them and had varied influences on their WTC behaviours. While the environmental factors such as the teacher and the topic had a negative influence on Chen-feng and Yi-yun's WTC behaviour, Jun seemed immune to the influences of these environmental conditions imposed on him. In the

Week 5 class, Cai-wei, Jun, Mu-cheng, Sirikit, and Seung responded differently to the environmental conditions of teacher, topic, task and class interactional pattern. Seung, Jun, and Mu-cheng had a positive orientation towards the environmental factors in that they all thought the task and topic interesting and the teacher friendly; Cai-wei and Sirikit were negatively affected by the same environmental conditions. Variations in terms of their individual responsiveness to the environmental factors affected their WTC behaviours accordingly.

6.2.2 Driving and Restraining Forces

Based on the notion of interdependence, learners' high or low WTC can be attributed to the interaction of factors working either in concert or working in different directions. The factors involved are not equal in strength of influence on WTC, that is, their influence is differently weighted on different occasions. Some factors might override others at particular times. For instance, for a student with lower language proficiency, having relatively limited linguistic competence is likely to have a stronger and more predictable effect per se than many of the other factors such as perceived opportunity to communicate, or interlocutor. The weight of influences is not predictable for any individual student; instead, the manner of the influence is in close relation to the whole historical background, personality and other aspects of the student and the class environment.

This section focuses on the notions of driving and restraining forces to explain the facilitating and inhibiting effects of factors underlying situational WTC in class. According to Bronfenbrenner (1988), the process in his ecological Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model is subject to the interactive moderating effects of both person and context. These moderating effects can be either positive or negative. A positive moderating effect is one in which each factor enhances any positive moderating influences of the other, but buffers any negative influence the latter may have. A negative moderating effect is one in which each factor exacerbates any negative influence of the other, or undermines any positive influence the latter may exert. In the present study, there seems to exist a specific coordination of various individual, environmental and linguistic factors, involved in facilitating or inhibiting learners' WTC at particular moments in class through the interaction

among them. In the joint effects, as the degree of facilitating effects of the involved factors increased, the WTC behaviour was seen to increase; on the other hand, as the degree of inhibiting effects of involved factors increased, the WTC behaviour was seen to decrease. In what follows, I will exemplify how all the involved factors within the individual, environmental and linguistic dimensions jointly facilitated or inhibited learners' WTC in class. There are four types of joint facilitative and inhibitive effects: a) all the involved factors exerting a positive effect on WTC; b) the involved factors having a predominantly negative effect on WTC; c) the inhibitive effects overriding the facilitative effects; d) the facilitative effects overriding the inhibitive effects.

In the first type, when all the factors involved had a positive impact in the joint effects on situational WTC, a higher level of WTC was likely to be created, as in Jun's case. As mentioned before, he was an outgoing, extroverted and confident student who always grasped any opportunity to display WTC. All the involved factors in the individual dimension such as personality, self-confidence and perceived opportunity to communicate had a positive effect that created and maintained his high level of WTC in class. These individual factors acted as driving forces which probably overrode potentially restraining environmental or individual factors. Likewise, Fatima's persistently high WTC level was likely the result of the facilitating influence of a combination of variables. Like Jun, she was very confident and liked to participate in any kind of situations and to discuss whatever topic was allocated to her. Her particularly high WTC in the whole-class situation could be attributed to her preference for this type of class interactional pattern. She also liked the teacher who possessed a lively teaching style. In her case, the individual factors of self-confidence, personality and perceived opportunity to communicate, together with the environmental factors of the class interactional pattern, topic and teacher, exerted facilitating mediating effects on her high WTC level in class.

As illustrated in the preceding paragraph, both Jun's and Fatima's sustained high WTC participation in class emerged out of factors that exercised facilitating effects. For other students whose WTC level fluctuated over time, when only facilitating effects were at play, their WTC level would tend to be high. For example, Rong-

rong's WTC was quite low in Weeks 4, 5, 13 and 17; however, her WTC level was reported as high in the Week 6 lesson. She commented that she found the project work on a topic about fashion very engaging and interesting, and she was familiar with the other group members. Thus we can see in this lesson, her comparatively high WTC was facilitated by the joint functions of emotion, task type, topic and interlocutor.

The second type concerns the involved factors exerting a predominantly negative effect on WTC. In such a situation, a low level of WTC would likely to be generated. An example of this type of interaction between the three dimensions can be found in Chen-feng's WTC behaviour in the Week 4 lesson. His WTC participation was very low in this class and his self-report suggests this was due to personal factors such as low linguistic competence, feelings of frustration and boredom, exacerbated by environmental factors of boring topic and uncooperative interlocutor. These factors together appeared to reduce the likelihood of his WTC. Another example of inhibiting effects on WTC can be exemplified in Cai-wei's performance in the Week 5 lesson. Her low WTC participation in the lesson was reported to have resulted from low language proficiency, emotions of boredom and frustration, unhappiness with the teacher's help, and dissatisfaction with interlocutors who took up opportunities to talk in the whole-class situation and interlocutors who conversed with her using L1. In both Chen-feng and Cai-wei's cases, all the involved factors acted as restraining forces to exert debilitating effects on their WTC behaviour and under the joint effects emerged a low level of WTC in the lesson.

At times, different strands of factors may facilitate and inhibit WTC simultaneously, but some may exercise stronger effects than others. The third type of interaction concerns the inhibitive effects overriding the facilitative effects, from which a lower level of WTC is likely to emerge. An example of this type of interaction can be seen when Mu-cheng expressed his general feeling towards the Week 5 class. It seems that both facilitative and inhibitive effects were found to underlie his WTC. The environmental factors such as topical knowledge, task, teacher and interlocutor exercised facilitative effects on his WTC. Despite these facilitative effects, because of other inhibitive effects that were at play, such as his low language proficiency,

Mu-cheng's WTC was affected negatively. The degree to which Mu-cheng experienced the facilitative effects did not seem to be as great as the degree to which he felt the inhibitive effects. Through the interaction between the facilitative and inhibitive effects, Mu-cheng did not succeed in achieving a high level of situational WTC.

Another example illustrating this type of interaction is Seung's WTC participation in the Week 5 lesson, in which Seung reported both inhibitive effects from the interaction of the factors of shy interlocutor, less perceived opportunity to communicate, insufficient information extracted from the topic, low language proficiency and sleepy mood, together with facilitative effects from the interaction of the factors of his outgoing personality and the interesting project work. It appears that the degree to which he experienced the inhibitive effects was greater than the degree to which he experienced the facilitative effects. Therefore like Cai-Wei, Chen-Feng, and Mu-Cheng, Seung was unable to achieve a high level of situational WTC in the lesson.

The final type of interaction concerns the facilitative effects overriding the inhibitive effects, from which a higher level of WTC is likely to emerge. This type of interaction is exemplified in Sirikit's performance in the Week 5 lesson. The factors that had a negative effect included teacher, topic and task type (project work) and the factors that had a positive effect included class interactional pattern (group work) and cooperative interlocutors. Her WTC behaviour was created through the interaction of both positive and negative effects. Because the combined degree of the facilitative effects was greater than the inhibitive effects in this interaction, a higher level of WTC was created in that lesson.

In sum, in the joint effects of involved factors on WTC, when there were only facilitative effects or as the combined degree of the facilitative effects was greater than that of the inhibitive effects, the possibility of the emergence of a higher level of WTC increased. Conversely, when only inhibitive effects were involved or as the combined degree of inhibitive effects was greater than that of the facilitative effects, the possibility of creation of a lower level of WTC increased.

Peng (2008) also found that the factors underlying fluctuations of WTC inside the Chinese EFL classrooms exerted both facilitating and debilitating influences on the dynamics of situational WTC. In her study, in the two Year 1 cases, one with high WTC and the other with low WTC, environmental factors and cognitive variables played more of a facilitating role than a debilitating role on WTC. In contrast, linguistic resources and psychological feelings had more negative effects than positive effects on WTC. In the Year 2 high WTC and low WTC cases, the picture was more blurry. In the high WTC case, environmental factors and linguistic resources had more positive influences on WTC, whereas cognitive variables and psychological feelings had more negative effects on WTC. For the low WTC case, environmental factors and cognitive issues had more facilitating effects whereas linguistic resources and psychological feelings had more debilitating influences on WTC. Peng demonstrated from four cases studies that cognitive variables, environmental factors and linguistic resources seemed to act as either driving or restraining forces on learners' WTC.

Overall, the findings regarding the factors affecting learners' situational WTC in L2 classrooms and the dynamic interactions between them tend to support the assumption of the ecological perspective that a student's situational WTC is directly informed by the environment and cannot be divorced from the environment. The environment includes every aspect of the immediate classroom context, such as the interlocutors, the teacher, and the learning materials, together with the student's secondary learning environment, such as the school, the university and the home domain where s/he interacts with friends, colleagues and home-stay families outside of class. The experience of a particular class, either positive or negative, becomes part of the student and his/her context. Over time, the student gradually adjusts to surroundings and peers in the proximal and secondary learning contexts. This interaction with the environment and the process of interaction may change students and the experience therefore forms part of them, and constantly affects their WTC behaviour in the immediate classroom context.

I have so far conceptualised and empirically tested L2 WTC in class as a situational construct. The central principle is interdependence between learner-internal and learner-external factors as underlying WTC. There is some indication from the data

in the present study that Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework of nested environments may be a productive way of investigating situational WTC. This study has focused on the microsystem of the L2 classroom. However, the essence of the nested system is the interaction between micro- and macrosystems. It is important to look beyond the microsystem of the classroom and examine the impact of other systems on this construct in future research. In the following section, I will present some of the data that points to the existence of these nested systems. To fully apply the ecological theory of nested environments, however, future research is warranted.

6.3 Nested Environments: Future Issues to Address

From the ecological perspective proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1993), context is viewed as a system of nested, interdependent and dynamic ecosystems, comprising four sub-systems ranging from micro- to macro-level – microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. As van Lier (2004) points out, the value of the nested systems model lies not in the nested set of systems but in the focus on the interrelationships among them. The linkages allow the facilitative and inhibitive forces to be tracked between one ecosystem and another. Another potential of this model is that it allows for an investigation of how trends and activities on one scale can influence those on another scale.

The present study focused on the microsystem of the proximal immediate L2 classroom setting, which was part of the larger nested system, or ecosystem. Most of the factors that emerged in the three dimensions affecting learners' situational WTC were found to exist within the immediate classroom setting, the microsystem of proximal classroom context. These included the factors of topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher, and class interactional pattern in the environmental dimension, variables of self-confidence, personality, emotion and perceived opportunity to communicate in the individual dimension, and linguistic factors of language proficiency and reliance on L1 possessed by individual students.

As mentioned earlier, some of the interview data indicated the influence of environments beyond the microsystem on the learners' situational WTC in the

immediate classroom setting. First, there appeared to be influence from the mesosystem, which involved an interconnection between two or more Microsystems containing the individual. In the present study, the mesosystem concerned the students' experience outside the immediate L2 classroom setting affecting their situational WTC in class. The influence of the participant's experience in settings other than the current classroom setting was reported by Fatima, Ines, Cai-wei and Jun.

Fatima reported that her WTC in the Week 1 lesson was affected by events in the morning class. She felt depressed on the day she received a low grade for the essay she had submitted to the new morning teacher. She said the entire class was unhappy with the fact that a new morning teacher took over the class in the middle of the Module 4 course. The new teacher was not satisfied with her first draft of the essay and indicated to her that it would need a major revision. Prior to the submission of this first draft to the new teacher, her detailed outline for the essay had been approved by the previous teacher Sue. She felt that she had to rewrite the entire first draft by adding ideas and arguments suggested by the new teacher. She had been hoping to pass the course with flying colours but had become very despondent about the prospect of failing the course thanks to getting a very low grade for the essay. Her worries and despondency affected her WTC in the afternoon class in Week 1. As she reported in the interview:

Very depressed, my research already sent everything, the outline the detailed outlines are already in my 1500 words and I've spent a lot of time, but unfortunately she said no, it's not your XX so you have to change from the beginning, and I lost a lot of marks. (Fatima, Phase I interview)

Ines was not very bubbly in the Week 2 lesson. There seemed to be influences from another microsystem. She seemed to be preoccupied by what was happening in the other facets of her life. The events occurring in the other Microsystems in her life such as the need to hunt for accommodation appeared to be influencing her WTC in the afternoon class.

What Cai-wei and Jun experienced outside of the class in their home domain also appeared to indirectly affect their WTC behaviour in the immediate classroom

setting. From the beginning of the Module 3 course, Cai-wei made some friends from different cultural backgrounds such as Seung and Jun from the afternoon course, and she started socialising with them after class. This friendship she developed with them outside of class had positive effects on her WTC behaviour and class participation when she worked in the same group with them on tasks and group projects. Jun, however, not only socialised with classmates but also with international and local friends. He got along very well with his home-stay family, a couple who would spend some time chatting with him every day. He considered meeting his home-stay family, who were very kind and nice to him, the most meaningful experience that he had had in New Zealand. His colourful social life more or less enhanced his socialisation process as well as WTC participation in class.

Other interview data made reference to the exosystem; that is, it referred to the connections and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which did not contain the participant, but in which events occurred that indirectly influenced processes within the immediate classroom setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1993). In particular, there were references to the students' previous experiences or to events happening in their family that were perceived as affecting their situational WTC in class. This is illustrated in Rong-rong and Shu-wei's cases.

Regarding the Week 5 lesson, Rong-rong commented that she was very sad about the fight between her parents in China. She was told about the fight by her mother over the phone. Her sadness affected her participation in the class on that day. The following day, when her father called and told her that the problem at home was resolved and her parents had started talking to each other again, her mood improved and she felt happier and more willing to participate in class. Thus what happened in her family, a different microsystem in which she was not present, affected her WTC in the classroom microsystem. As she reported in the interview:

I think sometimes that day my mood is quiet day so I want to talk more, but if something affect me...like like yesterday morning my father and my mother just fighting like that I think let me very sad, and my mother called me and very sad and cry so my mood is very bad yesterday, but in the morning I got my father's call he told me they were getting better and they'll go out today so he want he want me to forget it you know, so I'm happy now... because my mood is is

better than yesterday and I think it's good so I will stay for long time and talk something about my our topic to, I gave opinion to our to our team so I talk I talked more. (Rong-rong, Phase II interview)

Shu-wei was studying in the postgraduate programme in computer science after he passed the EAP language course. He heard that oral English proficiency was not equally important as mastery of programming language for later job-hunting. Listening skills seemed more crucial for the programmer job because understanding the requirements and instructions is important for writing programmes. He therefore felt that it would not be urgent for him to improve his speaking skills, or more precisely, daily communication skills. He still talked to lecturers, classmates and flatmates in English but he did not seem to have a high WTC level while he was taking the postgraduate programme. Therefore, his perceptions of the requirements in the current job market in his field more or less influenced his WTC at the university.

The evidence of the existence of the macrosystem in the present study was not as obvious. The macrosystem consists of “the overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, subculture, or other extended social structure, with particular reference to the developmental instigative belief systems, resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in such overarching systems” (Bronfenbrenner 1993, p. 25). In this study, the existence of the macrosystem seemed to be reflected in the school and university systems, the wider communities, the participants’ positive attitudes towards the target L2 community, high motivation to learn English and desire to be familiar with and immersed in the L2 culture.

The findings also provided evidence of the chronosystem, the system that encompasses change or consistency over time both in the person and in the environment. The system allows identification of the impact of prior life experiences on subsequent development. The experiences might have their origins either in the external environment or within the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1988). The component of time in the PPCT model, also referred to as timescale, is relevant in an ecological approach. If we regard every individual student as a complex

system, his previous experience has influences on his present behaviour (Kramsch, 2002). Even events removed in time can be part of the student's persona. Certain events widely separated in linear time may be more relevant to meaningful behaviour now than other events which are closer in linear time (Lemke, 2002).

In the present study, in addition to the students' experience right before entering the immediate classroom setting, their lifetime experience also played a role affecting their situational WTC in class. That is, both their recent and distant past had effects on their current WTC behaviour in class. For example, by self-report, Jun's military training experience changed his personality substantially. He used to be a quiet and shy person before the two-year military service in Korea. Through this special experience he became an outgoing person. His outgoing personality had a great influence on his classroom WTC behaviour.

Another example can be found in Ines' preference for group work and pair work. In the interview, she recalled her experience doing project work in the undergraduate course in her home country, France. She majored in biology and project work was a norm for the course she was taking at the time. The students used to form groups of seven or eight to design measurements for the field work they undertook. They had to share the workload and everyone in the group needed to deal with his own part. Ines reported that she quite liked the group work because she was able to observe different methods used by the group members when they had varying points of view. She said that it was very important to do field work in a team as a science student. Her preference for group work in the language course could be traced back to her experience in her undergraduate study in her home country.

Takuya especially liked working in a group and he found that the relationship with interlocutors was a crucial element that would determine whether he would enjoy the group work. He commented that establishing a relationship with an interlocutor was very important in his home culture. Back in Japan, in the undergraduate course he had opportunities to talk with an interlocutor both in class and outside of class. It was crucially important to establish a harmonious relationship with the interlocutor first by talking about personal topics and trivial matters over coffee or lunch before discussing topics assigned to them for the class. Thus his preference for group work

with an interlocutor he was familiar with and with whom he socialised outside of class was influenced by his previous experience in Japan. In comparison to his experience in Japan, he felt frustrated by having much less opportunity to discuss issues with his classmates outside of class in the New Zealand context. He was expecting to have more opportunities to socialise with other students when at university.

Yi-yun's reluctance to ask the teacher questions in the whole-class situation may be attributed to influence from his cultural and educational background. He reported in the interview that he used to keep quiet and listen attentively to the teacher in class from primary school to university study in China. He considered it very rude to interrupt the teacher to ask questions and regarded it a waste of other classmates' time. Cai-wei made similar comments that the students in Taiwan would just listen to the teacher talking and wait till after class to ask the teacher questions. It seems what they experienced in the previous educational system still had an influence on their WTC behaviour in the western environment (Cheng, 2000; Wen & Clément, 2003).

Apart from the influence from their more distant past, what the students experienced more recently also had an effect on their WTC. For example, Shu-wei had a bad experience in the Module 3 course when talking to a classmate from the same cultural background. He felt quite pressured by her superior English speaking and writing skills. He was even more discouraged by her negative comments about his speaking ability. His apprehension led him to avoid talking to interlocutors from the same cultural background in the Module 4 course.

There was also evidence to show that the history of WTC behavioural change could be carried from lesson to lesson. Taking one lesson as an example, the Week 4 lesson in the Phase II study was a lesson in which all members were relatively reticent to participate, perhaps a particularly low moment during this 20-week course. All the participants interviewed for that lesson (Chen-feng, Yi-yun, and Jun) mentioned an incident occurring in the previous lesson that affected their WTC behaviour in the Week 4 lesson I observed. They reported that the students choosing to do this EAP course had the same learning agenda; to have enough academic

English skills for their university study. So their focus was on academic English, ignoring other aspects in their English that they were having trouble with. In the previous lesson, the teacher prepared some activities for listening practice, but the students complained about the inappropriateness of using general English material for their academic class. Conflicts between the teacher and the students that occurred in the previous lesson still led to some tension observable in the subsequent class I observed. I noticed that some students remained quiet almost throughout the lesson while only a few responded to the teacher's questions. Most of the time in the teacher-fronted interaction, Jun and Student H were the only ones who responded to the teacher's questions. Therefore, tension in the previous lesson affected and coloured the next lesson. It was not just what had happened in that previous class, but their shared experiences in the previous class that coloured the next lesson and shaped their WTC behaviour.

In this section, I have provided some data to illustrate the connections between the nested systems and their impact on learners' WTC behaviour in class. These data suggest possibilities for future research, which were not able to be explored in-depth within the scope of this study. It would seem promising to apply fully the ecological framework of nested environments in future studies in order to recognise and analyse the complexity of situated WTC and the interdependence of factors affecting WTC. As a way of applying the ecological framework in the investigation of situational WTC, the old style of employing a quantitative approach and questionnaires is inadequate and problematic because it fails to capture the situational nature of WTC: it is not stable and it changes considerably depending on the interaction of a range of factors. The present study has suggested a number of problems with current pure quantitative analysis of WTC and points to alternative analyses and the use of an ecological framework of nested systems as a promising direction for future WTC research.

6.4 Summary

This chapter concerned the underlying combinations of factors that showed constant influences on situational WTC in a completely unpredictable way. It presented an empirically grounded WTC model that is specific to L2 classrooms. It described the joint effects, together with driving and restraining forces of the combined factors in the three dimensions.

The findings from this study clearly demonstrate the interrelation of the environmental, individual and linguistic factors interacting with one another, operating as a holistic and dynamic process. This implies that learners' situational WTC in class was not determined in terms of a single variable, but as an integrated system. The interdependence idea is important for explaining the WTC construct as a situational variable due to the joint influence of factors from the three dimensions and different strengths and weights carried by the combinations of these factors at different times. The findings show how the various factors in the three dimensions and the interaction and interrelation among them can be explained from the ecological perspective. The joint effects of the factors in the three dimensions illustrate the interaction between personal and environmental characteristics, which is the main tenet of the ecological perspective. The results illustrate interaction among environmental factors by showing different consequences of environmental conditions on learners' individual and linguistic factors depending on another environmental condition. As the combined degree of facilitative effects increased, the level of WTC also increased. In contrast, as the combined degree of inhibitive effects increased, the level of WTC decreased.

The study has provided convincing evidence that the WTC construct is dynamic, in that the construct entails fluctuation depending on variation in the joint effects of individual, environmental and linguistic antecedents. As all the involved factors can vary from task to task within a single lesson and from lesson to lesson, the resulting situational WTC can also vary from moment to moment and over time.

The current study has focused on WTC behaviour in the microsystem of the immediate classroom setting. Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasised that it would not

be necessary or even possible to meet all the criteria for ecological research within single investigation. This means only some of the subsystems in the hierarchical nested ecosystem should be explored in ecological research. There were indications in the data of effects of multiple level environments as presented in Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1993) nested systems; namely, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. Future research should look into the ecosystems other than the microsystem of the immediate classroom and explore potential interactions between these systems.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents, firstly, a summary of the key findings of the research. The second section discusses to what extent the findings from this study correspond to, refute, or complement results of previous WTC research. This is followed by the implications of the study in terms of its contributions to existing theory and research. I then discuss pedagogical implications for teachers and institutions, and draw attention to the limitations of the study. The final section suggests some directions for future IDs research in general and WTC research in particular.

7.1 Summary of the Findings

Previous WTC in L2 research has largely focused on the trait level of WTC that is stable across situations and contexts, but few studies have investigated the situation-specific aspect of this variable that is sensitive to the happenings in the context. Also under-explored in the extant literature is research on WTC as situated in L2 classrooms. In an attempt to address these gaps, this classroom-based multiple case study sought to investigate the dynamic nature of L2 learners' situational WTC in class at a situated and micro level. The primary objective of this study was to theorise the classroom L2 WTC construct via an exploratory empirical investigation. The secondary aim of the study was to examine factors that appeared to facilitate and inhibit learners' WTC in class and explore the interrelationships between these factors. This study attempted to account for situational WTC in L2 classrooms from a sociocognitive perspective and within an ecological framework.

This multiple case study employed a triangulated approach to collect data by means of a number of instruments including extensive classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews, semi-structured interviews, and journal entries. Data collection was also triangulated through multiple perspectives of the students, the teachers,

and the researcher. Eighteen ESL learners in New Zealand participated in this study which consisted of three stages. Phase I and Phase II involved learners at an advanced proficiency level, who were enrolled in a pre-university EAP programme. Phase I was a 3-week pilot study of 6 participants in one class and it was intended to refine the instruments and the data collection plans in relation to the content of the data and the data collection procedure. Phase II was the main study involving 12 participants, which followed 6 key participants over 20 weeks and the other 6 students over 10 weeks. Phase III study was conducted subsequently to track down a number of participants from both Phase I and Phase II who had entered university undergraduate or postgraduate programmes, in order to examine any differences in WTC behaviour in a different learning context.

The most important finding of the study concerns the interdependence between the individual, environmental and linguistic dimensions from which the dynamic WTC behaviour emerged. The individual dimension involved learner-internal factors such as emotion, personality, self-confidence and perceived opportunity to communicate. The environmental dimension referred to external social factors within the classroom, including teacher, interlocutor, task type, topic and classroom interactional pattern. The linguistic dimension included language-related factors such as L2 proficiency and reliance on L1. These three dimensions did not impact on WTC independently but were interrelated and overlapping. There was firm evidence to show that learners' WTC behaviour was not determined by a single individual, environmental, or linguistic variable; rather, it was influenced by the intertwining and reciprocal interrelationship between these three dimensions. The effect of these combinations of factors differed between individuals and the interrelationships seemed too complex to be predictable. More particularly, WTC behaviour was either facilitated or inhibited by the different strengths and weights carried by the combinations of factors in the three dimensions over time. The joint effects worked in two ways, one of which concerned different consequences of a learner's individual characteristics and linguistic factors on his/her WTC behaviour depending on the environmental factors. The other way in which the joint effects worked concerned different consequences of the same environmental conditions on a learner's WTC behaviour depending on his/her personal characteristics and linguistic factors. In the joint construction through interaction and integration, as the

combined degree of facilitative effects increased, the possibility of a higher WTC level emerging would increase beyond that of inhibitive effects. In contrast, as the combined degree of inhibitive effects increased beyond that of facilitative effects, the possibility of a lower WTC level being created would increase.

Another important finding of the study was to provide empirical evidence for conceptualising WTC in L2 as a situational variable and not simply a trait disposition in the classroom interactional contexts. The WTC construct as situated in the L2 classroom was found not to be static; instead, it entailed fluctuation and dynamism due to variations in the individual, environmental, and linguistic antecedents. The factors within the three dimensions varied in the extent of their facilitative or inhibitive effects on WTC behaviour. Some factors exerted a more enduring effect while others had a more temporary influence, leading to fluctuations in WTC behaviour. As all the involved factors varied from lesson to lesson, from task to task within a single lesson, and from moment to moment at a micro-level, their co-influence on situational WTC varied and the resultant WTC level could vary accordingly.

7.2 A Comparison between the Present Study and Previous WTC Research

This section discusses the results of the current study in relation to findings on WTC in other studies which took either a quantitative or qualitative approach. It indicates conceptually how this qualitative study on situational WTC is different from but also complementary to quantitative research on trait WTC.

The current study partially supports MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) pyramid model of L2 WTC, in that some of the factors that emerged in this study appear to correspond to the variables noted in the schematic model, including state communicative self-confidence (a combination of perceived communicative competence and language anxiety) (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000, 2003; MacIntyre, 1994), and more enduring predictors of communicative competence and personality (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). As the present study focuses on the L2 classroom context, classroom environmental factors identified as important in this study which are specific to the

classroom context, such as topic, task type, interlocutor, teacher, and class interactional pattern, do not feature in MacIntyre et al.'s model, which applies to general L2 conversational contexts. In addition, linguistic factors such as language proficiency and reliance on L1 are not mentioned in the model.

Informed by MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) schematic model of L2 WTC, many empirical studies of WTC employed quantitative methods such as structural equation modelling and path analysis to identify the causal relationship between trait WTC and its affective/individual antecedents, including motivation (Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre et al., 2001), international posture (Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004; Yashima et al., 2008), gender, and age (MacIntyre et al., 2002; Weaver, 2004). The participants in the current study did not report these factors as predictors of their WTC; instead, they reported other individual factors such as emotion and perceived opportunity to communicate as more relevant to their WTC in the L2 classroom. The fact that this study yielded different results from most previous quantitative studies might be due to contextual variation. This study was classroom-based, whereas those studies were carried out in general learning contexts. It might also be that different methodologies raised different aspects of communication behaviour in these different contexts. Those quantitative studies measured the antecedents of WTC separately by examining large sample sizes whereas this qualitative study took a holistic view to investigate the interrelationships between the factors that might affect WTC by focusing on a small number of participants.

It should be acknowledged that those quantitative studies contributed to understandings of WTC through descriptions of trait WTC and measured the causal relationship between trait WTC and its predictors based on large sample sizes. They provided some suggestions for situational WTC but due to methodological limitations were not able to explore the dynamic and situated nature of WTC and the interrelationships between its antecedents. Differing from most of the cross-sectional quantitative studies, this in-depth qualitative study documented changes in state WTC and identified the interdependence between the underlying factors longitudinally. Similar to other qualitative research on WTC including that of Kang (2005), this study added to the understanding of the dynamic and situated nature of

this concept. It revealed flux in situational WTC from lesson to lesson, from task to task within a single lesson, and from moment to moment within a single task, supporting the findings of previous research where situational WTC emerged through the interaction between individual and situational antecedents in both the ESL conversational context (Kang, 2005) and the EFL classroom context (Peng, 2008). Thus these two types of research are complementary in that they explore different aspects of the WTC construct (the trait level and the state level).

The current study finds some support in a number of recent classroom-based WTC studies in EFL contexts. The environmental, individual and linguistic dimensions identified in this study were found to overlap considerably with the three strands of factors reported in de Saint Leger and Storch (2009), Pattapong (in press), and Peng (2007a, 2007b, 2008). They all pinpointed the interplay of individual, situational, social and linguistic factors underlying WTC in the foreign language classrooms. Pattapong (in press) and Peng (2007b, 2008) noted the influence of Asian culture on WTC in the EFL context, whereas the present study did not specifically consider the influence of the students' home culture in the ESL context.

In summary, this study differed from most previous quantitative WTC research which identified a causal relationship between WTC and a number of individual/affective antecedents; instead, it found a close and dynamic relationship between WTC and its underlying individual, environmental and linguistic variables from an in-depth qualitative analysis. It has been argued that both types of WTC research are complementary to rather than competing with one another. This study found some support in classroom-based WTC research and confirmed that WTC in an L2 classroom is a dynamic situational variable influenced by the interaction between learner-internal and learner-external factors.

7.3 Contributions to Theory and Research

This study makes a novel contribution to the area of IDs within the SLA field, in that the study has taken an interactionist position and provided a new perspective, a sociocognitive or more specifically an ecological perspective on researching the

WTC construct. It demonstrates the central idea in sociocognitive approach; that is, the interdependence of social and cognitive aspects. Previous studies on WTC identified different strands of factors that learners perceived as important in affecting their WTC in class, including ID variables, social contextual conditions, and situational factors; however, they tended to concentrate on affective/individual factors while paying less attention to factors related to learning environment. In line with the trend in the mainstream SLA field where the movement is occurring from a more traditional cognitive perspective to a more complex context-sensitive perspective, current IDs research is also experiencing a shift to investigations of ID variables as situated in a specific learning context. This study provided an example of taking a contextualised, process-oriented approach to the study of WTC in the L2 classroom context. In doing so, it was able to investigate the influences of learning environments and sociocultural contexts on the dynamism of WTC. The WTC construct was treated in a different way than the way that it had been treated in previous studies. In this study, the focus was on the situated nature and the complexity of the WTC construct.

While most previous WTC research examined general factors that influenced WTC and were conducted mainly via surveys or interviews, very few addressed the complex interrelationships between individual, environmental and linguistic dimensions through observations, as this study attempted to. The present study took a step further to investigate the synergy and interdependence between those dimensions. This is in keeping with current trends in IDs research (Dörnyei, 2008b; Ushioda, 2009) to explore the constant and dynamic interaction between language, agent, and environment. This study acknowledged the interplay and complex interrelationship between the social and cognitive factors underlying dynamic situational WTC in L2 classrooms. Framed within the sociocognitive perspective, L2 WTC in classroom can best be described in the following terms: *Willingness to communicate as situated in a second language classroom is a student's observable intention to engage in class communication with other interlocutors. This intention entails fluctuation and dynamism due to variations in its individual, environmental and linguistic antecedents, which interdependently exert facilitative and inhibitive effects on it.*

The current trend in IDs research is to integrate the IDs field into mainstream SLA research and such attempts have been made in motivational research (Dörnyei, 2005). As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) advocate, in the process of re-theorising and reconceptualising L2 motivation, the potential for the convergence between L2 motivation theory and mainstream SLA lies in an adoption of a person-in-context relational approach to investigate motivation as a situated and dynamic concept. They point out that this approach puts an emphasis on “the complexity and idiosyncrasy of a person’s motivational response to particular events and experiences in their life” (p. 355). In addition to offering a feasible alternative to the traditional L2 motivation research that focuses on clear-cut and predictable cause-effect relations between variables, they believe that this proposal, in accordance with the social turn in SLA research (Block, 2003) des a model to form bridges between the parallel social and cognitive paradigms. The findings of the present study are in harmony with this proposal. This study points to the interdependence between factors underlying WTC as well as the flux in WTC. It provides empirical evidence that all the relevant factors work in concert rather than that a single factor works independently to create WTC. This study is another voice adding to the current call in IDs research.

This study is one of the few studies to theorise the WTC construct as situated in the L2 classroom. This study is distinctive in that it investigates WTC through actual classroom interaction data and it has produced an empirically grounded L2 classroom WTC model (see also Peng, 2008). This new model addresses a problem that MacIntyre (2003) recognises with the heuristic pyramid model; that is, it is one-dimensional and hierarchical. This study proposes a model which emphasises interdependence between factors. This research situates the WTC construct within the microsystem of L2 classroom and depicts the emergence of the concept of WTC as dynamic in a recursive way. It incorporates the need to consider the driving and restraining forces (MacIntyre, 2007) of the underlying factors of situational WTC to investigate their facilitative and inhibitive effects on WTC.

This study has important implications for methodological issues in researching WTC in the classroom. It employed multi-method analysis from multiple perspectives, and thus reinforced the importance of triangulation of self-reported

and observational data in revealing the dynamism and situated nature of WTC in class. Triangulation seems particularly promising in shedding light on the complex relationships that exist among ID variables (Ellis, 2008). Previous research on WTC seldom combined others' ratings (such as the teacher's) with students' self-ratings. However, this study obtained three differing views from the students, the teachers, and the researcher to produce more comprehensive assessment of WTC behaviour. Most importantly, the inclusion of learner classroom interactional data is a novel element in IDs research in general and WTC studies in particular. Collection and analysis of samples of learner language is under-used in IDs research (Ellis, 2008). This study went beyond collecting learners' performance data in carrying out tasks and it systematically collected and analysed classroom interactional data longitudinally. Inclusion of classroom interactional data enabled focused analysis of the dynamic change in the communication process at a particular moment (MacIntyre, 2007), in order to investigate how WTC may be strengthened or weakened by the joint effects of social and cognitive factors at that moment.

Methodologically, this study has also contributed to the validation of a classroom observation scheme of WTC behaviour in class. Observation was considered more suitable for measuring situational WTC (MacIntyre et al., 2001) and a number of previous studies attempted to operationalise WTC in an L2 classroom in slightly different categories (Cao and Philp, 2006; Pattapong, in press; Peng, 2008). This study modified the scheme from Cao and Philp (2006), contributing to the development of a more refined observational scheme for future classroom WTC studies.

Relatively little research on WTC has cumulatively recorded the individual, affective, and environmental dimensions of WTC behaviour in the natural L2 classroom setting in a longitudinal manner, and none of the previous studies have attempted to investigate learners' WTC behaviour in class as lessons unfold. This study extended the WTC research to a longitudinal study over an academic year and across different learning contexts. It systematically documented changes in learners' WTC behaviour over time and in this way was able to provide rich data and interesting insights into the effects of learner-internal and learner-external factors on

WTC behavioural change. It is hoped that this study contributes to a better understanding of the complexity and dynamism of WTC.

7.4 Pedagogical Implications

The present study, through its detailed descriptions of WTC as situated in a learning context, offers valuable information for teachers' reflection and classroom practice. As WTC is a direct predictor of both frequency of communication and amount of communication in a conversational turn, it seems important for language teachers to understand the interaction and interdependence between various individual, environmental, and linguistic factors and the effect of that interaction on situational WTC. The results of this study suggest that it is inappropriate for teachers to attribute a learner's WTC to a sole factor such as his/her personality or WTC behaviour in the previous encounter. Teachers should recognise that there is much more involved in the learner's WTC behaviour at a particular point of time in class, given the range of individual, environmental, and linguistic factors that might actually impact on WTC. The recognition of WTC as an important learner variable and of its role in language learning should remind practitioners of attending to their students' WTC behaviour systematically and in a context-appropriate manner. In the L2 classrooms, it is important for teachers to promote facilitating factors of WTC as much as possible (Kang, 2005), and they should be mindful of the interactions between the factors when planning learning activities (Cao and Philp, 2006).

This study supports the proposition of van Lier and others that teachers should take a moment-by-moment ecological approach to teaching. That is, language educators and teachers should realise that both the students and the teachers themselves are placed in charge of a "sensitive learning ecology" (Horn, 2008, p. 142) and any small changes in the interaction patterns of the classroom could alter directions of the learning ecology. An ecological teaching approach is needed for teachers to develop the moment-to-moment skill to deal with the contingencies of the classroom ecology in which their teaching and students' learning unfold. This

contingent approach requires teachers to pay close attention to the handling of unexpected occurrences in class and in students' learning (van Lier, 2002).

7.5 Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study mainly stem from the nature of qualitative ecologically valid research carried out in the classroom. Although both qualitative and quantitative analyses of data indicated some relationships between the individual and social factors that appeared to influence WTC, these relationships cannot be generalised beyond the specific learners and the immediate context involved in the present study. However, as Cameron and Larsen-Freeman (2007) point out, it would be useful to think in terms of particular generalisations rather than universal generalisations in ecological research. As ecological researchers, we should acknowledge tendencies or patterns but resist claiming applicability for the findings of our studies beyond specific times and places. We should recognise the particularity of our research context and the relational character of the research and interpret the research findings accordingly.

This study relied considerably on self-reported data. Self-reported data enable researchers to gain an insight into participants' reflections on their mental processes (Mackey & Gass, 2005); however, they have many limitations including the lack of assurance that the answers to the questions are truthful answers. Stimulated recalls are subject to the possibility of students talking about what they consider to be important for the researcher. Nonetheless, the triangulation, verification, and rich description of the data enhanced the validity of data analysis and interpretations in this study.

As I was the sole researcher and observer in the classroom, the reliability of observation can be questioned. It would therefore be preferable to use video-taping in similar future studies to allow inter-rater reliability. However, apart from taking field notes, the students' classroom interactions were recorded and transcribed verbatim. A second rater then double coded approximately 40% of the classroom data. This enhanced reliability of the observational data.

There are inherent limitations to conducting research within a classroom longitudinally. In particular, the difficulty with collecting triangulated data precise to a moment lies in dealing with students' attrition and absence in class. This study employed a triangulated approach to data collection and data analysis. It compared students' WTC behaviour in particular lessons with their self-reported factors in corresponding stimulated-recall interviews and journals. It would have been useful to collect more precise triangulated data to correlate learners' engagement in a particular task in a lesson with their self-report. There was no way of knowing in advance which students would be present in one particular lesson and which students would speak in the subsequent interview or keep a journal for that lesson. Moreover, it would have been better to have the teachers interviewed on a more regular basis rather than once at the beginning and once at the end. For ethical and practical reasons, however, it was difficult to conduct interviews with the teachers more regularly during the span of the study. In future research, these issues should be addressed.

The use of observation and contextualised self-report (diaries and stimulated-recall interviews) may have precluded identification of some factors underlying WTC, notably motivation. Although identified as a key factor affecting WTC in other studies which used questionnaire surveys, motivation was not reported by the students in this study as an important factor. This suggests one limitation of the methods of diary and stimulated-recall interview. Those methods may have led students to focus on the here and now; that is, factors associated with present feelings and environment, rather than wider, longer-term contextual factors. WTC may also be shaped by factors which students are not able to articulate or introspection, or might not be fully conscious of. As with any research, method restricts the findings.

7.6 Suggestions for Future Research

MacIntyre et al. (1998) argue that WTC is fundamental to L2 education and pedagogy. What the present study has shed light on is that both social and cognitive

variables appear to affect learners' WTC behaviour in class. Further research on WTC should focus on this construct by incorporating it into both the L2 acquisition process and L2 pedagogy to provide useful insights into SLA and more effective suggestions for L2 pedagogy. Future studies that would contribute to a fuller understanding of WTC are warranted, and several possibilities are presented below.

The findings of the study have revealed that the underlying social and cognitive variables of WTC consisted of a multifaceted, dynamic and interwoven set of relationships. The analysis has shown that the interrelationships were so complex that it was not adequate to isolate the factors and quantify them one at a time to measure their effects on WTC separately. The complexity and the depth of the interrelationships between the individual, environmental and linguistic dimensions were best understood through an in-depth holistic qualitative analysis. However, the extent to which these dimensions exerted a co-influence on WTC within the L2 classroom is an issue that has not yet been fully addressed in the present study. More research is needed to clarify the interplay of the individual, linguistic, and environmental factors in future.

Certain hints in the data led to the findings suggesting the presence of a set of hierarchical ecosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1993) including the mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. Because the present study solely focused on WTC within the microsystem of the immediate L2 classroom setting, it did not address the influence of these higher systems. Future research should look into these ecosystems other than the microsystem of the immediate classroom and explore potential interactions between these systems. For example, an ethnographic study informed by the ecological perspective could focus on the classroom WTC behaviour within the school and in relation to the wider environment to capture the complexity and the interrelationships occurring between the nested systems. Such research is necessary to explore how the sociocultural contexts influence WTC behaviour when students interact outside the classroom with their peers, friends, and hosts.

This study correlated learner perceptions of the factors impacting on their situational WTC with classroom observations of their WTC behaviour. It confirms

the usefulness of employing the combined methods of observation, stimulated-recall interview and reflective journal in identifying WTC within the classroom context. To better understand the complexity underlying WTC behaviour, a dialectical approach to combine findings from both quantitative and qualitative studies is warranted (MacIntyre, 2007; Yashima et al., 2004).

The focus of this thesis was on understanding the nature of situational WTC and unpacking the underlying influences of this construct in the L2 classroom. A number of questions still remain unaddressed. They include: 1) Are learners with high WTC necessarily successful learners? 2) What is the relationship between WTC and L2 learning or development? Prior to the exploration of the possible facilitating role that WTC can play in L2 development, it was essential to provide an answer to this question first: what exactly constitutes the WTC construct in an L2 classroom environment? Thus what I have achieved in this thesis is to describe classroom WTC and measure it. It serves as a stepping stone to the investigation of the relationship between WTC and L2 learning.

APPENDIX A: WTC CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SCHEME

WHOLE CLASS	CODES	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
TEACHER-STUDENT(S) / STUDENT(S)-TEACHER	tP						
1a. Volunteer an answer [to general T-solicit]	WC-tS--Va						
1b. Volunteer a comment	WC-tS--Vc						
2a. Give [answer to] group [T-solicit]	WC-tS--Gg						
2b. Give [answer to] individual [T-solicit]	WC-tS--Gi						
2c. Give [answer to T-solicit] - Private response	WC-tS--Pr						
3a. Ask [the teacher a] question	WC-tS--Aq						
3b. Ask [the teacher for] clarification	WC-tS--Ac						
4. Guess [the] meaning [of an unknown word]	WC-tS--Gm						
5a. Try [out a difficult] Lexical [form]	WC-tS--TrL						
5b. Try [out a difficult] Morphological [form]	WC-tS--TrM						
5c. Try [out a difficult] Syntactical [form]	WC-tS--TrS						
STUDENT-STUDENT / STUDENT-CLASS	sS						
6. Talk [to] neighbour	WC-sS--Tn						
7. Talk [to a] group [member]	WC-sS--Tg						
8. Talk [to an] other [group member]	WC-sS--To						
9a. Present [own] opinion [in class]	WC-sS--Po						
9b. Respond to an opinion	WC-sS--Ro						
10. Volunteer [to] participate [in class activities]	WC-sS--Vp						
<i>TOTAL for each student</i>							

PAIR/GROUP	CODES	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
TEACHER PRESENT	tP						
1a. Give [answer to] group [T-solicit]	PG-tP--Gg						
1b. Give [answer to] individual [T-solicit]	PG-tP--Gi						
2a. Ask [the teacher a] question	PG-tP--Aq						
2b. Ask [the teacher for] clarification	PG-tP--Ac						
3. Talk [to] neighbour	PG-tP--Tn						
4. Talk [to a] group [member]	PG-tP--Tg						
5. Talk [to an] other [group member]	PG-tP--To						
6. Guess [the] meaning [of an unknown word]	PG-tP--Gm						
7. Try [out a difficult form: Lexical/ Grammatical/ Syntactical]	PG-tP--Tr						
8a. Present [own] opinion [in pair/group]	PG-tP--Po						
8b. Respond to an opinion [in pair/group]	PG-tP--Ro						
TEACHER ABSENT	tA						
9. Talk [to] neighbour (<i>respond, explain, comment, ask, initiate</i>)	PG-tA--Tn						
10. Talk [to a] group [member] (<i>as above</i>)	PG-tA--Tg						
11. Talk to a student from another group (<i>as above</i>)	PG-tA--To						
12. Guess [the] meaning [of an unknown word]	PG-tA--Gm						
13. Try [out a difficult form: Lexical /Grammatical/Syntactical]	PG-tA--Tr						
14a. Present [own] opinion [in pair/group]	PG-tA--Po						
14b. Respond to an opinion [in pair/group]	PG-tA--Ro						
<i>TOTAL for each student</i>							

APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

[Indicates overlap with portion in the next turn that is similarly bracketed.
→	Line to be discussed in the text.
CAPS	Small caps in the discourse are used to show the speaker's emphasis.
?	Rising intonation.
,	Slight rise in the intonation.
.	Falling intonation.
(())	Comments enclosed in double parentheses.
:	Elongation of a syllable.
(.)	Brief pause.
(...)	Longer pauses.
(#)	Timed pause.
○ ○	Reduced volume – soft voice.
○○ ○○	Reduced volume – whispered.
○○○ ○○○	Reduced volume – very soft whisper, with consonant sounds articulated and certain vowel sounds difficult to determine.
T:	The teacher in the particular excerpt.
S1:, S2	Unidentified student.

APPENDIX C: JOURNAL ENTRY (PHASE I)

Instructions:

1. I would like you to reflect on any of the classes (in this afternoon program only) you attended this week. Indicate on the scale below, the percentage of your willingness to talk in this particular **CLASS**.

0% = I didn't feel like talking at all, 100% = I always felt like talking



2. Think of a particular event/situation in this class when you felt encouraged or discouraged to talk.

- A. Indicate on the following scale, the percentage of your willingness to talk in this particular **EPISODE**.

0% = I didn't feel like talking at all, 100% = I always felt like talking



- B. Consider the factors that caused you to feel like above (feel like talking, or not feel like talking) in this situation. Set out below is a list of possible factors. Tick (✓) those that applied to you and circle the corresponding number that indicates the **extent** to which they applied to you. Please comment on these factors by providing some detail about how and why they affected you.

1 = completely applied to me

2 = generally applied to me (generally true but liable to exception)

3 = somewhat applied to me (might be true in some circumstances)

4 = generally did not apply to me

5 = completely did not apply to me

1.) Confidence in your language ability	1	2	3	4	5
2.) Your partner(s) in pair/group work	1	2	3	4	5
3.) Size of class (or group)	1	2	3	4	5
4.) Interest level of tasks and activities	1	2	3	4	5
5.) Topic for discussion	1	2	3	4	5
6.) Opportunity for talking	1	2	3	4	5
7.) Teacher's expectations	1	2	3	4	5
8.) Classmates' expectations	1	2	3	4	5
9.) Your mood	1	2	3	4	5
10.) Cultural background	1	2	3	4	5
11.) Other factors (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D: STIMULATED-RECALL INTERVIEWS (PHASE I & PHASE II)

I. General questions

1. How did you feel about today's class?
2. What did you feel happy/unhappy with?
3. Did you feel like talking in today's class? Why/Why not?

II. Stimulated-recall part

Instructions:

What we are going to do now is to listen to the recordings from the class. I am interested in what you were thinking at the time you were talking. What I would like you to do is tell me what you were thinking, what was on your mind at the time.

You can pause the recorder any time you want. If you want to tell me something about what you were thinking, you can push pause. If I have a question, I'll push pause and ask you to talk about that part of the recording.

Stimulated-recall questions:

1. What were you thinking right then/at this point?
2. Can you tell me what you were thinking at that point?
3. I saw you were laughing/looking confused/saying something there, what were you thinking then?
4. Can you remember what you were thinking when she said that/those words?
5. Can you tell me what you thought when she said that?

Probing questions

I was wondering if I could ask you something. I'm just curious. I noticed when you were talking about the recording you mentioned ...quite a lot. Is that what you are most concerned about when you are speaking? Can you say a bit more about this?

APPENDIX E: BIOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Age: _____
Gender: _____ Male _____ Female Nationality: _____
First language(s) _____

Where have you studied English? (tick as many as you need)	How long? (years)	Native English speaker? (yes/no)
Kindergarten	_____	_____
Primary school	_____	_____
Secondary school	_____	_____
High school	_____	_____
University	_____	_____
Language schools	_____	_____
Private tutoring	_____	_____

How do you rate your overall proficiency in English?

Good Above average Average Below average Poor

Have you ever taken the IELTS or TOEFL test?

Yes ____ No ____ What was your score _____

How many hours per week do you spend using English outside class to ...

Do homework	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Prepare for quizzes and exams	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Listen to language tapes	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Read for fun	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Listen to music	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Watch TV, videos & movies	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Talk to friends	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Talk to tourists	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more
Talk to family members	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 or more

How long have you been in New Zealand?

1-3 months 4-6 months 7-12 months More than a year

Have you ever been to an English-speaking country (UK, Canada, USA, Australia, etc.)?

Yes ____ No ____
If yes, how long were you there? ____ What did you do there? _____

Have you ever been to a country where you spoke English to communicate (Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, etc.)? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, how long were you there? ____

Besides your first language and English, do you know any other languages? Yes ____
No ____

If yes, which languages? _____

How well do you know them? _____

APPENDIX F: JOURNAL ENTRY (PHASE II)

Challenges and Joys of Speaking English in NZ

In class

Think of an afternoon class you attended this week...In one of the class activities, I really felt like talking because...well, that activity happened on... (session/date). In that activity we (describe the activity)...And I was doing that activity with...(persons). Or I didn't quite feel like talking in that activity because...

Out of class

Tell me about a time when you talked a lot in English this week: (Where? Whom with? Why?)

Tell me about a time you didn't use much English this week: (Why not? With whom? Where?)

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS (PHASE II)

I. Preliminary teacher interview guide

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been teaching at this school?
3. Which courses have you taught at this school?
4. Could you describe the goals and content of the course you're currently teaching?
5. The participants in my study include Hwan, Onyx, Rainny, Irene, Lai, Reo, Queenie, Ran and Ryan. What do you think their levels of English are like, particularly speaking?
6. What's your general impression on their participation in class?
7. How would you describe them in terms of their personalities, learning styles and enthusiasm in learning English?
8. What do you think an active learner in class is like? Can you name some of the students who are active in this class and explain why?
9. Do you have any students whom you would consider very quiet in class? What do you think inhibited them to communicate in class?
10. Do you have any student whom you would consider more or less willing to communicate in a particular context, for example, whole class, small groups, or pairs? What clues do you have that lead you to perceive them as behaving as such? Will you do anything to encourage the students who are less willing to communicate?

II. Final teacher interview guide

1. Did you have any student whom you considered active or quiet in class? What do you think encouraged or inhibited them to communicate in class?
2. Did you have any student whom you considered more or less willing to talk in a particular context, for example, whole class, small groups, or pairs? What clues did you have that lead you to perceive them as behaving as such?
3. Did you do anything to encourage the students who appeared to be quiet in class?
4. For those students who were less/more willing to communicate in class, do you think their behaviour impacted their course achievement? How would you rank these students?
5. Did you have any expectations regarding students' performance at the beginning of the course based on their participation in class?

APPENDIX H: PHASE III INTERVIEW

1. How many papers have you done in this program? What papers have you done?
2. How do you find the program (easy or demanding)?
3. Thinking back to the language course you did at ELA, what are the differences in studying in the language program and in this undergraduate/postgraduate program?
4. Do you think you tend to participate more (or less) in this program than previously in the language program?
5. What kind of factors do you think affect your participation in this program?
6. Can you tell me one particular lecture/tutorial in which you particularly felt like participating?
7. How did you feel about today's lecture/tutorial? Did you enjoy it?
8. Were you motivated to learn in this lecture/tutorial?
9. Did you feel like talking in today's lecture/tutorial?

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