

## Tracking Individual Change in Willingness to Communicate: A Comparison of Whole Class, Group, and Dyadic Interactions across Two Classroom Contexts

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This study aligns with the recent calls in L2 Willingness to Communicate (WTC) research that mark a shift from viewing WTC as a static, trait-like variable to a construct that is dynamic, fluid, and situational. To accomplish this aim, this study collected both interactional and interview data to examine the situational changes of an ESL learner's WTC. The data was from two courses – one ESL course, and one academic graduate seminar – collected during the participant's first semester at an American university. The findings show that the participant's WTC fluctuates according to the course topic, interlocutors, group size, and the anxiety level of the L2 speaker. These findings imply that teachers in L2 classrooms need to take into consideration the various situational factors that promote or inhibit WTC. Other than these pedagogical implications, the study also offers a methodological framework for documenting situational WTC by means of combining interviews with conversation analysis of interactional data.

**Key words:** willingness to communicate, conversation analysis, multimodal, situational, dynamic, L2 speaking

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language learners, on a regular basis, have to choose whether to communicate or not when an opportunity to use their second language arises. Should I raise my hand to answer a question from the teacher? Do I initiate conversation with an L2 speaker that is sitting next to me on a bus? Dörnyei (2005) uses the metaphor *Crossing the Rubicon* to describe how language learners are constantly faced with these decision points where there is no

return. The motivational tendency to speak up or remain silent is a matter of choice, an act of volition (MacIntyre, 2007), and the immediate influences shaping those communicative actions reflect a complex process that involves an interplay between language environment and the psychology of the learner (Dörnyei, 2009).

This study draws on Willingness to Communicate (WTC) to view these volitional processes involved in L2 classroom oral participation. Whereas previous research has been primarily reliant on static, trait-like conceptualizations of WTC, this study aligns with the recent applications of Complexity/Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST; Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2015) to L2 motivation research (MacIntyre, 2012). This approach stands in contrast with previous models in that it no longer views WTC as a linear process but instead, treats WTC as a dynamic and situational construct. In addition, CDST adopts an eclectic, or “idiodynamic” (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011) methodological approach that employs both quantitative and qualitative data, as an attempt to document the contextualized and nonlinear nature of WTC. The present study thereby joins this empirical endeavor by taking interest in the dynamic nature of WTC and examining it through the complementation of survey questionnaires/interviews with observational data. Based upon a comparison of two classroom contexts, the focus will be on describing the micro-level changes that occur in the participant’s WTC behavior as well as the factors that promote or inhibit L2 communication in each interactional context.

## **2. WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE**

McCroskey (1992) used the term WTC to refer to an individual’s personality-based predisposition toward initiating or avoiding communication. WTC was originally introduced with reference to L1 communication, and it was identified as a personality-based, trait-like predisposition that remains stable across situations (McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). Reflecting this view, the majority of L2 WTC research has also been interested in producing trait-level descriptions, laying out the personal variables that may have an effect on one’s WTC. In this sense, two individual characteristics – perceived communicative competence and communication anxiety – are important variables that influence one’s WTC (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre et al., 2001; McCroskey & Richmond, 1991; Pae, 2011). Other individual variables, such as sex and age (MacIntyre et al., 2002), attitudes towards the international community (Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), and prior immersion experience (MacIntyre et al., 2003), have also been found to exert influence on WTC.

While this line of research continued with its development, such trait-like conceptualizations have been challenged by a new perspective: situational variables can

change an individual's WTC. With regard to L2 communication, MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) argued in their pyramid model that WTC should be treated not only as a stable, enduring predisposition, but also as a state of mind that can be influenced by immediate situational factors (e.g., preferences toward a specific person, communicative self-confidence, etc.). MacIntyre et al. (2003) further specify that L1 and L2 WTC are likely to be independent from one another. In other words, L1 WTC does not simply transfer to L2 due to variations in the cultural, political, social, identity, motivational, pedagogical, and other issues that learners must juggle with on-the-fly. The most recent approaches have evolved to conceptualize WTC under the dynamic system approach (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Yashima, MacIntyre, & Ikeda, 2018), where attention is given to even the subtlest changes that occur within a time frame of one or two seconds. Under this dynamic systems perspective, the understanding of WTC extends beyond personality theory to focus on the particular changes that surface within and across communication events.

Although the theoretical discussions on the situated and dynamic conceptualizations of WTC have had quite a history, there are few empirical studies that demonstrate the moment-to-moment changes in WTC, as suggested by MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) original pyramid model. Early studies investigated how WTC can be affected by social and contextual variables, such as social support (MacIntyre et al., 2001), learning contexts (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000), and frequency and quality of L2 contact (Clément et al., 2003), but it was mainly through self-report questionnaires that only dealt with hypothetical situations, not the WTC characteristics that can be observed *in situ* in actual communicative interactions. According to MacIntyre (2007), methods based on correlation are analogous to a snapshot photo – we are given information about the frozen moment, but not much about the process in motion. A better understanding of the fluctuating processes that both lead to and prevent communicative action is reached through the combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, as qualitative information would add on rich descriptions in the participants' own terms of the dynamic processes.

To this date, only a handful of studies have illustrated the situated and dynamic nature of WTC by means of observational and interview data. One example is Kang's (2005) study that utilized observations, interviews, and stimulated recalls in order to examine how situational L2 WTC dynamically emerges and fluctuates during a conversation situation between language learners and their native-speaking tutors. Based on an eight-week study of four Korean learners studying at an American university, Kang argued that WTC is a multilayered construct that can demonstrate momentary changes across different conversational contexts according to the psychological effect of excitement, responsibility, and security.

This study was influential in leading other researchers to adopt the concept of

“situational WTC,” but a methodological comment should be made about the treatment of observational data. Despite having observed and recorded the participants’ interactions for eight weeks, the article only reported the interview findings. What was learned from the observations was not included anywhere in the article, and in fact, it is not uncommon for research articles to comment on the existence of observational data but exclude the findings from the research report, treating them as “supplementary information” (Jorgenson, 1989). However, observational work often offers another rich perspective that can be distinguished from participant interviews; the role of the researcher can be a tool in qualitative investigations (Maxwell, 2005). MacIntyre and Legatto (2011), as an effort of tracking the rapid changes in WTC, do include observational findings along with interviews, and stimulated recalls, and quantitative analyses of self-rated questionnaires, but the observation report primarily consisted of “subjective” descriptions such as “she seemed uncertain,” “she seemed uncomfortable,” and “she appeared noticeably anxious.” Silverman (2006) contests that these ‘impressionistic’ recordings can be problematic and argues that researchers should be cautious in how they characterize the participants’ appearance and actions by providing fuller details on how the participants produce their activities.

Taken together, these studies not only ask for further investigations on the dynamicity of L2 WTC across different situational contexts, but they also pose the necessity of adding methodological rigor to the use of observational data in WTC research. The aim of this study, therefore, is three-fold:

1. To describe an international student’s L2 WTC as she participates in the situational variations of two classroom contexts – an ESL class and an academic, graduate-level seminar
2. To investigate the factors that influence the L2 WTC in each situation
3. To employ an interactional and multimodal analysis in order to describe WTC-relevant behaviors and to enhance the reliability of presenting observational data.

### **3. THE STUDY**

The present study comes from a larger set of data. In the exploratory stages of the project, ESL students had indicated that their communicative behavior differs in their ESL and in their academic classes. Whereas most of them felt comfortable in their ESL classes, they testified to have experienced difficulties speaking up in their academic content classes. With these initial speculations, the main focus of this study was concerned with the students’ oral participation in their ESL vis-à-vis academic classes and discovering the

factors that influence their WTC. With this aim in mind, a case study that involved video-recordings classroom interaction and participant interviews was conducted with one ESL student, *Dasom*.

### 3.1. Participant

*Dasom* (pseudonym) is a Korean graduate student that had just enrolled in an American University at the time of data collection. She was majoring in Chinese language and literature and had been in America for two months. In this semester, she was taking three ESL classes – Intermediate Listening and Speaking, Intermediate Reading, and Intermediate Writing) – that were part of the university’s English language requirement, one graduate-level course, “Chinese Language Pedagogy,” from her department, and another graduate-level course, “An Introduction to Applied Linguistics” from the Applied Linguistics department.

In the first stage of the project, an interview was conducted with the participant that asked her about her personality and her motivation for learning and using English. In this interview, she noted that she originally has an outgoing personality and on the MBTI test, she belongs to the extroverted category. She said that in her L1 Korean and L2 Chinese, she is very talkative and likes to initiate conversations with other people. But when it comes to English, she said that she becomes shy and anti-social.

She also categorized herself as having a very low motivation for learning English. Ever since she graduated from high school, she stopped studying English and focused only on Chinese. To her, having to study English gives her an “archaic (*keykeymwukun*)” feeling, as if she has to dig up all of the dusty books from her past. She mentioned that she uses Chinese in her department, and she does not have to use English that often because most of her friends are either Korean or Chinese. She is aware of the importance of learning English, especially when she has to take care of paper work or other office businesses as such, but she does not find herself motivated enough to either learn or use the language. She simply avoids situations where she has to speak English. She only uses it when there is no other choice.

### 3.2. Data Collection

The data collection occurred for over a period of one month and consisted of (a) six hours of video- and audio- recordings, (b) a 60-minute stimulated recall and follow-up interview, and (c) WTC questionnaires that were administered both in the initial and final stage of the project. The video- and audio- recordings were taken during two 75-minute sessions from the Intermediate Listening and Speaking class and two other 75-minute

sessions of a graduate-level seminar from Applied Linguistics. As presented in Table 1, the data collection was conducted across three stages: (a) background questionnaire and interview, (b) videorecordings of classroom interaction, and (c) follow-up interview and questionnaire. The WTC questionnaire in Stage 1 was adapted from Hashimoto (2002) for the purpose of gaining insight into the participant's L2 WTC at the trait level<sup>1</sup>. The WTC questionnaire in Stage 3 consisted of the situations that arose from the participant's own data. Stage 3 was a partial replication of the recall task in MacIntyre and Legatto (2011).

**TABLE 1**  
**Stages of Data Collection**

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
- Interview on personality & motivation - WTC questionnaire	- Video-recordings of classroom interaction (4 75-min class sessions)	- Stimulated recall & follow-up interviews (60 mins) - WTC questionnaire

The participant, while viewing videos of her class performance, was asked to rate on a percentage scale (0-100%) how willing she was to communicate in for example, a small-group discussion in her ESL class versus a whole-class discussion in her graduate-level course. This questionnaire was, then, used as the basis for selecting specific parts of the video to focus on, and in a follow-up interview, the participant was asked to describe her WTC in each situation. The answers from the questionnaire and interview served the purpose of providing an overview of her situational WTC in each interactional context.

### 3.3. Analysis

All classroom interaction was video- and audio- recorded and analyzed by two methods: (a) coding of turn frequency and types and (b) a micro-analysis of classroom interaction. The coding of turns was in response to previous studies that have defined WTC through turn-taking switches wherein frequent self-selected turns are taken as an indication of high

**TABLE 2**  
**Types of Class Interactions**

1 <sup>st</sup> Class	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	4 <sup>th</sup> Class
Small-group discussion	Pair discussion	Small-group discussion	Small-group discussion
Whole-class discussion	Whole-class discussion	Small-group discussion with professor Whole-class discussion	Whole-class discussion

<sup>1</sup> This data greatly overlaps with the micro-analysis and interview findings. To avoid redundancy, the results of this questionnaire were excluded from this report.

WTC over other-selected turns (Yashima et al., 2018). The micro-analysis, on the other hand, was conducted as an attempt to provide a contextualized and fine-grained perspective of what the participant was actually doing in the classroom.

The first step was identifying the types of classroom interactions. The common ones that happened in both classes were small-group and whole-class discussions, and there were some special situations in the graduate-level content class where the participant was involved in a pair-discussion and a small-group discussion where the professor was present. Table 2 lists the types of interactions that occurred in each setting.

### 3.3.1. Coding turn types and frequencies

For each type of class interaction, only the first ten minutes were observed and analyzed as the length of discussions differed amongst each class session. The coding involved counting the number of turns and then classifying them according to the “participant structures” in classroom settings developed by Philips (1983). The following turn-type categories were identified: (a) raising questions, (b) open floor or bidding, (c) individual nomination, (d) back-channeling, and (e) assisting other’s word search. Raising a question literally refers to the moments when the participant casted a question to another person. Open floor or bidding refers to the voluntary, self-selected turns in a conversation when there was no specific person nominated to be the next speaker. Back-channeling are tokens like “I see,” or “uh-huh” that show a speaker that you are following what they are saying. This category was included to document when the participant was verbally expressing her listenership to others. And lastly, assisting other’s word search was included as a separate category. Each of these five categories can be viewed as carrying different loadings of WTC. For example, if the participant produced more questioning and bidding turns, they could be taken as indicators of active involvement and possibly high WTC. On the other hand, if higher frequencies of individual nomination and back-channeling occurred, the participant could be positioned into a relatively passive role in the conversation. This is not to be taken as an absolute rule, however, because although one may not be taking a self-initiated turn, they may display active involvement by means of nonvocal resources (e.g., nodding, gestures, etc.). A more contextualized and fine-grained analysis of the emergent interaction is necessary – hence, the reason for conducting a micro-analysis of the classroom interaction.

### 3.3.2. Micro-analysis of classroom interaction

While the analysis of coded classroom data gives a quantified view of the participant’s overall oral engagement and WTC in each interactional setting, a micro perspective using

Conversation Analysis (CA; see Markee, 2000; ten Have, 1999 for a full, introductory overview of the method) was taken to conduct a fine-grained analysis of the participant's WTC-relevant behaviors. The core of CA analysis, which relies greatly on the analysis of turn-taking organization and sequencing of talk, can reveal what participants are doing with respect to management of turn-taking (and thus "floor," "participation," and "WTC").

Multimodal analysis, which is often combined with CA, is also a useful method for analyzing engagement and participation displays. As in Figure 1, Goodwin (1981, 2007) and Goodwin and Goodwin (2005) demonstrate in their embodied participation framework how body arrangement, gestures, eye gaze, and other nonverbal resources can project the interlocutor's participation role, stance, and affect towards the co-participants as well as the conversational activity in hand. Such public displays of alignment and disalignment by one party toward another can be referred to as engagement displays and thus indicative of one's WTC-relevant behaviors.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Engagement and Disengagement Displays**

(Goodwin, 1981, pp. 99-100)



At first glance, this agenda may appear as a misinformed application of CA, especially considering CA's agnosticism toward mental representations of knowledge. CA is solely based on publicly observable social actions that are made relevant by the participants in and through temporally unfolding interaction. Emerging work in applied linguistics, however, have increasingly employed CA to discuss cognitive topics such as motivation and avoidance (Burch, 2016; Markee, 2011). Here, cognition is conceptualized as a social activity and analytic interest is placed on the methods, identities, and stances that the participants themselves make relevant and consequential in their practices. In other words, cognitive topics as such are not etic labels placed on the data, but an *emic activity* that participants observably orient to during their language learning and use.

The combination of CA with self-reported data such interviews and questionnaires may also initially seem incompatible with the CA framework, which refrains from asking the participants what they think. Yet, it should be emphasized that this study in line with the



theoretical and methodological eclecticism that recent WTC and motivation research adopts. Hence, CA will be used as part of an “idiodynamic” methodological endeavor (MacIntyre, 2012; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011) to document in full detail the contextualized and dynamic nature of WTC-in-interaction and to *complement* quantitative analyses of WTC questionnaires and interview reports. When conducting the analysis itself, however, the principle of “ethnomethodological indifference” (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, p. 340) will be strictly applied. All external information will be bracketed, and the analysis will be solely based on what the participants themselves demonstrably make relevant in the interaction.

### 3.3.3. Thematic analysis of interview

Because the factors that influence engagement and WTC displays are ambiguous in observational data, the triangulation of data and analysis was considered a necessary process. Therefore, classroom observation and recordings were followed by an interview with the participant (conducted in Korean and translated by the author into English). The interview data was coded through a thematic analysis to extract the range of factors that influenced the participant’s situational WTCs.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Frequency of Turn Types

Table 3 shows the (a) categories of turns, (b) their frequencies, and (c) the percentages of each turn-type out of the total amount of turns taken by all of the participants. First, the coding of turn frequencies and types revealed that the participant rarely took turns during the seminar’s small-group and whole-class discussions. That even verbal back-channeling was absent from her behavior imply the reserved stance that she took in these interactions. The only time when the participant produced a substantial amount of turns was when she was involved in the pair-discussion. Here, she took part in 44 percent of the total number of turns. These turns, however, mostly consisted of other-initiated turns and back-channeling tokens, thereby suggesting that she was still playing a passive role in the conversation.

**TABLE 3**  
**Turn Types and Frequencies in Each Class**

Class/Turn Types	Raising Questions	Bidding or Open Floor (Self-selected Turns)	Individual Nomination (Other-selected Turns)	Back-channeling	Assisting Other's Word Search	Total
ESL small group	2 (2%)	16 (12%)	7 (5%)	15 (12%)	3 (2%)	43/130 (33%)
ESL whole class	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2/36 (6%)
Content pair	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	12 (24%)	8 (16%)	0 (0%)	22/50 (44%)
Content small group	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1/73 (1%)
Content small group with professor	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0/101 (0%)
Content whole class	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0/51 (0%)

In her ESL class, she appeared to be more proactive. The turn-type frequencies in the small-group discussion display that she often bid for her own turn and sometimes asked questions to others. Verbal back-channeling tokens were also common. There were even situations when she was providing help to other co-participants who were engaged in a word search, and she volunteered an answer twice during whole-class discussions.

## 4.2. Micro-analysis of Classroom Interaction

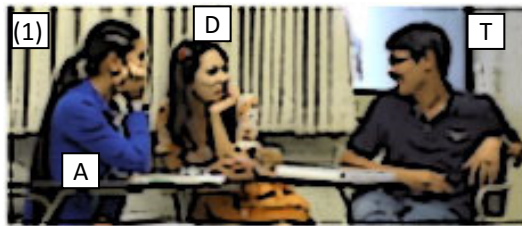
Whereas the quantitative data of turn-type frequencies provided us with a general picture of Dasom's participation status, the interactional data illustrates in detail the WTC displays in action. A multimodal and CA analysis of the video data revealed the different types of engagement and WTC displays that Dasom made available in the situational variations of whole-class, small-group, and dyadic interactions in each class. Only the small-group discussions will be presented as examples of how Dasom differed in her WTC behaviors between the ESL class and graduate-level seminar.

### 4.2.1. ESL small group discussion

Extract 1 was part of a discussion activity that was routinely done in the beginning of every class. On this day, the students had just come back from Halloween and they were asked to share what they did.

Extract 1. What did you do on Halloween?

- 1 T: I didn't go out
- 2 A: hm:::
- 3 T: I stayed
- 4 (2.0)



- 5 D: <sup>(1)</sup>boring too [boring=
- 6 A: do [not
- 7 T: [not boring [hehh
- 8 D: [hhhe
- 9 A: do nothing?
- 10 D: heh
- 11 A: do nothing?
- 12 T: yeah:: no not really
- 13 D: ah::



- 14 T: I had assignment so I (xxx)

- 15 D: <sup>(2)</sup>I had assignment too  
 16 A: I [had  
 17 D: [I didn't- didn't do(<sup>(3)</sup>hehe)  
 18 T: But you a good student you know hhehhehhh  
 19 A: I have a test tomo:rrrow  
 20 D: test hehhh  
 21 T: where did you go

In extract 1, Dasom actively engages in what could be called as a ‘teasing’ activity. When T mentions that he did not go out for Halloween, Dasom makes a remark, “boring too boring” in line 5 while she jerks her upper-body away from T and makes a squinting face. Her verbal comment as well as her bodily and facial expressions could be understood as if she was scolding him, but clearly, T orients to the playfulness implied in the action and responds with a brief denial (“not boring”) which is then followed by a mutual laughter between T and Dasom (lines 7-8).

The “joking frame” continues on in the ensuing interaction. When T gives an excuse for not having gone out (“I had assignment”), Dasom dismisses the justifiability of the excuse by saying that she also had an assignment which she did not end up doing, and she produces her words in overlap with A, accompanying her statement with a noticeable pointing gesture and exaggerated facial expression (lines 15, 17). In this small-group interaction, Dasom is visibly engaged in the conversation through displays of playful disalignments, active gestures, facial, and body movements, and self-selected turn-openings that are sometimes produced in overlap with another interlocutor’s utterance. Her utterances are not necessarily lengthy, but she manages to participate in the conversation without hints of hesitation or difficulty.

Extract 2 is another illustration of Dasom as she persistently bids for her own turn in the conversation. Prior to this extract, the students had been discussing that Halloween is the time for people to dress like ghosts or supernatural beings so that they can scare off all evil spirits.

Extract 2. What do you think about Halloween



82 T: =and <sup>(1)</sup>(.) and the ghost (0.2) cannot recognize you as



83 A: <sup>(2)</sup>um:::



84 T: just think you are <sup>(3)</sup>the same sth (.) uh (0.2) uh (.) with them



85 D: <sup>(4)</sup>uh:

86 A: a lot [ of- ] a lot of historical stories=

87 D: <sup>(5)</sup>[ta-]

88 T: =um um=



- 89 A: =ab[out Halloween]  
 90 D: [uh:::] >okay< ] [hh] I heard about  
 91 Halloween uh: is (0.2) to adore? adore?  
 92 T: =to adore?  
 93 D: evil? Evil

In this extract, T had been explaining that ghosts cannot recognize you as a human if you wear a scary costume. Up to line 85, several features characterize Dasom as “doing being an attentive listener.” First, we can observe that her eye gaze is always directed to the speaker of the moment. Her gaze is fixed at T as he talks in line 82, but it rapidly shifts to A as she produces a backchanneling (“um”) token in line 83. When T resumes his talk in line 84, Dasom’s eye gaze returns to T once again, thus displaying her hearership and engagement within the talk (Goodwin, 1981).

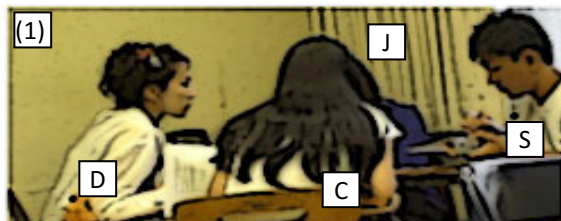
A behavioral change, however, embarks in line 85 where Dasom shifts her participant role from being a hearer to being a speaker. She produces an acknowledgement token (“uh”), and simultaneously, her posture rises and leans slightly forward. The position of her hand is also removed from her chin, possibly signaling that she is about to initiate an action. Finally in line 87, she bids for her turn as it is accompanied with a small hand gesture, but occurring in overlap with A’s talk, Dasom relinquishes that turn and returns her hand to the resting position on her chin. Soon in line 90 however, she marks her second attempt with a larger hand gesture and a hearable inbreath (“.hh”). Her turn once again occurs in overlap with A, but she is able to push through and gain the floor this time. Like Extract 1, Dasom utilizes an ensemble of gazes, inbreath, and gestures not only to display her attentiveness to other speakers, but to proactively create an interactional space for her own turn in the conversation. By zooming in on the nonvocal details of Dasom’s

interaction are we given access to the nature of her emergent WTC. Up to this point, Dasom can be seen as actively taking up the speaking opportunities that arise in ESL's small-group discussions.

#### 4.2.2. Content class small-group discussion

When it came to the graduate-level seminar, the count of turn frequencies and types revealed that Dasom was relatively reserved in both the small-class and whole-class discussions. Her participation behavior was different from the ESL class in that she did not only speak up much, but even her backchanneling behaviors, including nodding, as well as her gaze displayed less engagement.

Extract 3. Weaknesses of the article



64 S: um (.)<sup>(1)</sup>but if you look at the results (.) at the table (.) one, (.)  
 65 C: umhm



66 S: it says (0.7) PPP::: (.) ten (xxxxx) ten <sup>(2)</sup>(0.4) >°I don't <sup>(3)</sup>know°<  
 67 J: um

- 68 C: it says on what page  
 69 S: um? it's:: (.) 276  
 70 C: yeah  
 71 S: that's the number of participants right?  
 72 J: yeah:: =  
 73 S: =it says ten ten ten

In Extract 3, J, S, and C are critiquing a research article that they had to read for the current class session, and Dasom does not produce any talk during this discussion. However, of interest here is not just the status of her verbal contributions, but the change in her posture that is more suggestive of her participatory stance towards the interaction. In the beginning part of the extract, she was leaned toward the group members, possibly displaying a behavior of some engagement. But starting from line 66, as S slightly pauses during his talk, Dasom suddenly withdraws her body and gaze away from the group. She then drops her gaze to the floor and maintains that posture until the end of this segment.

During the same discussion, there was a time when the professor suddenly joined the group. The addition of another interlocutor, especially one that is of a leading status in the class, could have an effect the dynamics of the discussion. In fact, the other students became more active, and C, who did not talk as much before, started to speak a great deal during this interaction. Dasom, however, still remained silent, and there were frequent moments when her bodily position and eye gaze were withdrawn from the conversation.

Extract 4. Corrective feedback



- 223 C: I will just assign them the word order problem  
 224 I let them change them by themselves  
 225 S: um[hm=  
 226 J: [oh::  
 227 C: =yeah  
 228 S: so you are against the idea of corrective feedback?





- 229 you think you shouldn't give (.) <sup>(1)</sup>explicit(.) um:: feedback  
 230 C: yeah  
 231 J: um:::



- 232 S: you're <sup>(2)</sup>against that=  
 233 C: =yeah because if you don't (.) give them any clue::s  
 234 they don't know which part is wrong which part is right  
 235 S: so you like more implicit ways of (.) um: grading  
 236 C: um:: (0.3) yeah

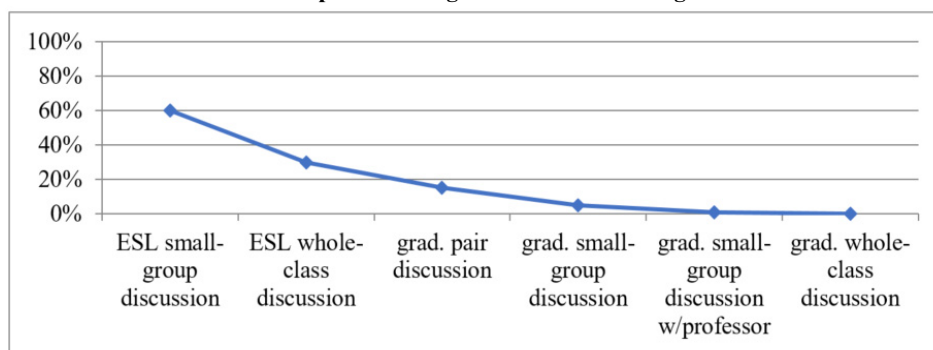
What is observable from this segment is first of all, Dasom's posture. Her body is lower than the other co-participants and both of her hands are gathered in front of her chest, making her appear as if she is in cringing position. Also noticeable is her eye gaze. Whereas in the ESL small-group discussion, she coordinated her eye gaze with even the slightest shifts in speakers, her gaze in this group discussion is withdrawn and fixed at a midway position. It even drops at one point in line 229, and when she brings her gaze up, it is once again headed somewhere midway, not directly towards to the speakers (line 232). Here, analyses of Dasom's nonvocal behavior appears to confirm her low participation as indicated by the infrequent self-selected turns.

#### 4.3. Factors Perceived to Influence WTC Behavior

Both the turn-type frequencies and the analyses of classroom interaction serve to indicate that the participant varies in her WTC and engagement displays according to each

interactional context. The self-report WTC questionnaire that was implemented at the final stage of the study summarizes the changes that occurred in her situational WTC. Figure 2 shows the results of the questionnaire.

**FIGURE 2**  
Self-reported Ratings of WTC in Percentages



According to the questionnaire, the participant does not report a WTC that is higher than 60%. The figure shows that her WTC is relatively lower in the seminar than in the ESL, with the lowest WTC being in situations when the professor joins the group (1%) and in whole-class discussions (0%). Her WTC also seems to decrease as the group-size becomes larger.

Once again, all the findings converge to depict the participant's situational L2 WTC. However, why her WTC behaviors changed according to these situations is still left unanswered. Therefore, in this section, results from the follow-up interview will be discussed to address the factors that the participant perceives as having an impact on her WTC behavior. Table 4 is a summary of the interview findings. WTC (+) means that the participant mostly associated the situation with high WTC, WTC (-) means low WTC, and WTC (+/-) means a mix of both high and low WTC.

According to the participant, (a) group size, (b) relationship with the interlocutors, and (c) their English level were recognized as the most influential factors contributing to or reducing WTC. For the ESL class, she noted as having high WTC in general, but group size explained why her WTC was lower in whole-class discussions than when she was in small groups. Fewer, rather than larger, numbers of interlocutors led to higher WTC, supporting McCroskey (1992) and MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) speculations that most people would be more willing to communicate in a dyadic context than in a public speaking situation. The whole class context, as it has a larger group of people, may provide learners with less communal support and the feeling of security to speak up in class.

TABLE 4

## Factors that Contribute to WTC

Context	ESL Small- group	ESL Whole- class	Graduate Pair	Graduate Small-group	Grad. Small- group w/prof	Grad. Whole- class	
WTC (+/-)	WTC (+)		WTC (+/-)	WTC (-)			
Factors	Number of interlocutors	Few	A lot but WTC (+)	Only one so no choice	Few but WTC (-)	Few but WTC (-)	A lot so WTC (-)
	Relationship w/ interlocutors	Familiar and close		Not close WTC (-)	Not close	Not close & an assessor	Not close
	Interlocutors' English level	Similar		Native	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Interlocutors' listenership	-		Very attentive so WTC (+)	Probably low	Probably low	Probably low
	Topic	A lot to say	Easy	-	Lack of topic knowledge	-	-
	Pace of conversation	-	-	Slow so WTC (+)	Fast	Fast	Fast
	Anxiety	None	A little but WTC (+)	A little	High	Very high	Not much

Note. The '-' indicates that the participant did not associate the factor with this interaction.

When it came to the seminar, however, relationship with the interlocutors and their English level seemed to have a larger impact than group size. The participant associated low WTC with all of the class interactions, regardless of the group size, because she did not feel close to the students in that class and most of her classmates were fluent speakers of English. In the ESL, she said that she was good friends with everyone, and her group members were those that she regularly talked on the phone and met out of class. She also felt safe to speak up because everyone had similar levels of English proficiency. No one would judge her speaking and even if she made mistakes, she felt that her ESL classmates would not care.

The seminar, on the other hand, was different because she had hardly had conversations with any of them. She mentioned that she barely said 'hi.' As a result, she reported feeling very uncomfortable whenever they had to discuss as a group. Also, although most of her group members were international students, she perceived them as having higher levels of English proficiency than herself. She clearly stated: "I don't want to say anything when I know the other person speaks better English than me. I just become too self-conscious." She explained that when she speaks in English, it is not usually smooth and it takes time for her to formulate her sentences. When the other interlocutors are fluent speakers of English, she feels that they will not wait for her to finish, and even if they do, she is afraid that they will be frustrated and not understand what she is saying. She fears that she would

end up interrupting the flow of the conversation. The overall thought of having to deal with those uncomfortable situations, she says, discourages her from wanting to speak.

Another factor that distinguished her WTC behavior between the seminar and ESL class was topic familiarity and interest. As MacIntyre et al. (1998) and Kang (2005) claimed, content knowledge and familiarity will result in an increase in one's linguistic self-confidence, while lack of topical knowledge may inhibit communication. The ESL usually covers general topics so that anyone can have a say in the discussion. For instance, when asked to discuss about Halloween, the participant reported that she was excited to share about the costumes that she saw in Waikiki. The seminar, on the other hand, deals with topics that are all new, unfamiliar, and academically serious. She said that because she is just too busy trying to understand the content, she does not have the time to think about her own answers to the discussion questions. The pace of the conversation is also fast in the seminar that she cannot earn the time to prepare for her talk. Even if she does have a comment about the discussion topic, by the time she is ready to speak, the right moment had already passed.

In general, the participant had low WTC in the seminar, but the pair-discussion seemed to be an exception. Similar to the other seminar interactions, the topic was once again heavy ("linguistic capital"), the partner was an American student, and it was the first time that they spoke with each other. Placed in a one-on-one situation, however, the participant said that she had no choice but to speak up. Feeling a bit anxious and uncomfortable, she admitted to have minimized her talk in the beginning, but she later realized that her partner was making the effort to elicit her talk, he was speaking slowly so that she could understand, and he showed interest in her responses. She said that her partner's display of attentiveness made her feel as if she was being understood, and her motivation to talk gradually increased throughout the conversation.

Lastly, anxiety emerged as another theme in the interview. Researchers have pointed out that language anxiety is negatively correlated with L2 WTC (MacIntyre et al., 2002). In fact, when the professor joined one of the group discussions, the participant reported that she had an anxiety attack. She tried her best to avoid eye contact with others so that she would not be selected to speak whatsoever. In ESL's whole-class discussions, she said that she also felt a little nervous, but she was still eager to volunteer an answer in front of everybody. It was because she perceived her teacher and peers as being very supportive, and somehow, the class environment was set so that everybody was actively competing for a turn. Meanwhile, she said that she did not feel any anxiety in the seminar's whole-discussion because she did not feel the need to speak up. She knew that others would talk and all she had to do was listen.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The current study began by asking how and why an individual's WTC might change across different contexts. While previous research was devoted to describing the enduring patterns and relationships among trait-level variables, the interactional and interview data in this study present in detail the situational changes of one's WTC, how L2 speakers deal with speaking opportunities that arise in a specific time, context, and with a specific person (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The findings indicate that WTC can be strengthened or weakened according to a variety of factors associated with the particular situation, topic, interlocutors, group size, and the anxiety level of the L2 speaker.

An implication of this study is that the interactional context has the potential of encouraging or inhibiting WTC among L2 speakers. Teachers may stimulate greater classroom participation by considering these different factors into their classroom instruction. Interlocutor familiarity was considered quite important, which points to the necessity of promoting good relationships among the class members, possibly through icebreakers or other team-building activities in the beginning of the semester. Also, teachers should be facilitators of a safe and supportive classroom environment so that the students are motivated to speak up and they are attentively listening to each other with mutual respect. And to assist the issue of topic unfamiliarity, teachers could make available the PowerPoints or discussion questions beforehand so that the students can prepare better in advance. They could also be more sensitive in choosing topics and materials that are likely to match up with the students' interests and needs.

Another aim of this study was methodological. While previous WTC studies mostly focused only on self-reports and the perceptions of the learners, this project took the undertaking of foregrounding observational data, and in a way that is approached and presented in a more rigorous and reliable manner. By means of adopting a multimodal CA analysis, the readers are not only given more detail of the classroom interactions, but also more insight into behavioral displays of WTC that are publicly made available by the participant.

An obvious limitation of this project is that it is based on a single individual, and future research should look into larger groups, those of differential L2 proficiencies, and situated across a variety of contexts. The full potential of CA for investigating WTC could also be further realized if applied to data extracts wherein the participants display fluctuating WTC even within a single interactional episode, not just across different contexts. Furthermore, a closer look into the nonvocal behaviors of L2 learners could bring further insights about their WTC-related activities and identities. Despite these shortcomings, this study is an attempt that exemplifies the usefulness of combining observation and reflective interviews in identifying WTC across different situations. Through the triangulation of data and the

combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, more studies should be done on situational WTC, for the sake of better understanding the construct of WTC and further discovering its pedagogical implications for language learning, teaching, and use.

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