

Chinese L2 Learners' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in the TEFL Classroom

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Abstract: With a significant number of Chinese students pursuing higher education in English-speaking countries, their classroom participation and willingness to communicate (WTC) in English are of paramount importance. Despite their strong English grammar skills, Chinese students often remain quiet in international classrooms, which impedes their oral proficiency development. This study, drawing from MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of WTC, investigates the factors influencing Chinese L2 learners' WTC in the context of TEFL classrooms. The research aims to identify strategies to boost communicative confidence and WTC among Chinese students to facilitate their adaptation to academic environments abroad. The findings provide insights for educators to foster an engaging classroom atmosphere conducive to active student participation, ultimately enhancing their English language skills.

Keywords: Willingness to Communicate, Chinese L2 Learners, English as a Foreign Language, Classroom Participation, Communicative Confidence

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, as a large number of Chinese students choose to further their study in an English-speaking country, such as UK, USA and so on, English as a second language seems an important issue for each student to study in a new cultural environment. Also, there are some concerns existed with Chinese students' behavior in the classroom. One of the concerns is that Chinese students are regarded as the quiet group of people in international classrooms, lacking of questioning and participation during the class. Although some of Chinese students have high English proficiency, they seldom speak in front of their classmates but always keep silent in group discussions or questioning. It is easy to see that Chinese students are unwilling to express themselves in the class. Therefore, willingness to communicate (WTC) becomes a very hot topic in linguistics and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) education all around the world.

The notion of WTC is a model that learners communicate in a second or foreign language in second language acquisition. According to Wen and Clément (2003), it was widely recognized that Chinese students were good at grammar-focused examinations rather than good English speakers, they were considered as poor English speakers who lacked the WTC. Within the context of TEFL (Teach English as a Foreign Language) classroom in the University of Birmingham, two thirds of the students are from mainland China. Their first language is Chinese Mandarin, while they have learned English for more than ten years since they were in primary school. When they further their study in UK, communicating in English seems like the first problem that Chinese students have when they study in the university. Willingness to communicate is part of being fluent in a second language, which often is the ultimate goal of L2 learners (MacIntyre and Doucette, 2009). Therefore, how to generate L2 learners' WTC in the study abroad contexts in order to improve their oral English proficiency seems like an important issue for educators and scholars.

This paper is based on MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC), to illustrate the factors which influence Chinese L2 learners' WTC in the TEFL classroom within the University of Birmingham. The purpose of this study is to encourage Chinese L2 learners to build up their communicative confidence and raise up their WTC inside and outside the classroom. Based on the research findings, discussion on how to develop students' WTC will be provided, which

could help Chinese L2 learners adapt to abroad environment easily and more successfully. Additionally, it is good for EFL teachers to understand and help students facilitate their WTC in the class, which could probably be a good solution to develop Chinese L2 learners in language learning in an abroad context. Moreover, some suggestions will be showed for overcoming Chinese L2 learners' unwillingness to communicate in English in the end.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since 1950s, foreign language researchers and scholars have realized that language learning and teaching is not a simple process of obtaining language skills. Given its relevance to language teaching and learning, there has been increasing attention to research on WTC as situated in L2 classrooms. Also, a number of factors has been proposed as likely to affect WTC including social, individual, situational, and motivational (Lightbown and Spada, 2013), while these factors have gained an extensive attention in the field of EFL. However, personal characteristics were believed by scholars like Wen and Clément, which had impacts on learners' communicative confidence.

In the literature review, the author will divided it into two sections. First of all, definitions of WTC will be provided to get a basic understanding of this term. Then, studies on L2 learners' WTC will be demonstrated as well to further discuss in order to understand it better. In the second section, the author will illustrate these studies on WTC in the classrooms settings, to better analyze the factors which have impacts on L2 learners' WTC.

The following section is a brief review of the relevant literature on WTC and studies on WTC in the classroom settings.

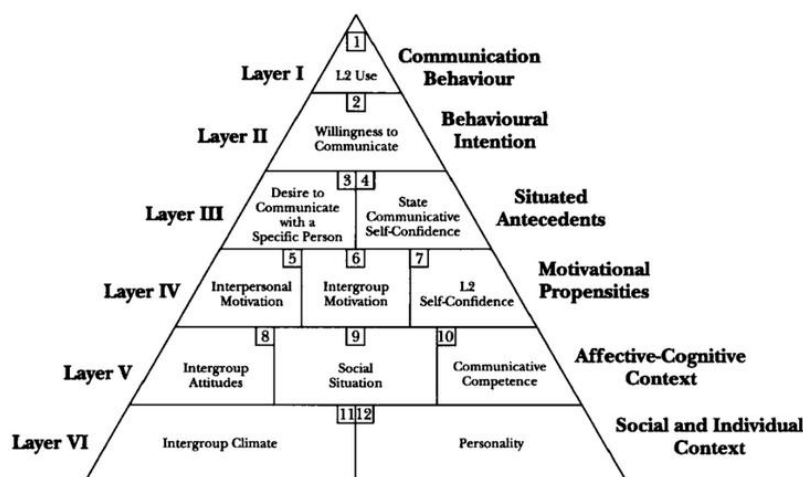
2.1. Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Within the context of second language acquisition, willingness to communicate can be defined as learners' intention to communicate with different people in second language classrooms. A learner's WTC may change with the number of people, the conversation's topics, the environment, and even the speakers' emotional changes (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). It is true that a range of learners' variables has been found to have influence on WTC, including communicative confidence (Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre, 2003), personality characteristics (Wen and Clément, 2003) and motivation and attitudes (Hashimoto, 2002) and so on.

In a series of studies that Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) had investigated that learners' WTC was shaped by their communicative confidence. They found that two variables how relaxed L2 learners are and how component they feel about their L2 ability were related to communicative confidence (Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre, 2003). They had argued that these factors were regarded as the primary reason to L2 learners' communicative confidence. This research had showed a clear relationship between WTC and second language acquisition, which was beneficial to EFL teaching and learning.

MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC) is adopted as a theoretical foundation in this research. MacIntyre and his colleagues tried great efforts to propose WTC as the primary goal of language instruction by setting up an heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC), which was likely to be influenced directly by communication apprehension and communicative competence. According to Zarrinabadi, Ketabi and Abdi, (2014,p:213), this model described these factors "that had the potential to influence the learners' tendency to communicate in a particular situation (e.g., classroom)", which was divided into two parts, containing six layers The three layers (I, II, & III), that represent "situation-specific influences on WTC at a given moment in time"; and the latter three layers (IV; V, & VI), which represent "stable, enduring influences on the process" (MacIntyre, Clément, Dornyei, Noels, 1998). Here is a figure of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC) as follows.

FIGURE 1
Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC



Based on the research context, this research will adopt the first three layers as the literature background, to illustrate Chinese L2 learners' WTC in the TEFL classroom in the University of Birmingham.

2.2. Studies on WTC in the L2 Classroom Settings

Recently, classroom-based WTC has gained great attention by researchers and scholars, exploring the influence of a range of learners' variable in the EFL/ESL settings. According to Cao (2014), WTC in the classroom context cannot be fully explained by every single factors, such as learners belief, learners' communicative confidence and so on, but these individual factors can be combined together in a particular situation, for example, in a socio-cognitive perspective on L2 classroom's WTC.

Factors which influenced L2 learners' WTC also has been investigated by Chinese scholars in a L2 setting recently. For example, Peng (2012) conducted a multiple case study on Chinese EFL learners' WTC through a qualitative research, which identified six factors that influence learners' WTC in the classroom. It revealed that learners' beliefs, motivation, cognitive factors, linguistic factors, affective factors and classroom environment were have a strong relationship with learners' WTC in EFL classroom setting. The findings implicated that the L2 learners' WTC was influenced by a various of individual and environmental factors. Additionally, Zhong (2013) did a research on Chinese learners' WTC in a New Zealand ESL classroom, investigating the factors which had impacts on learners' WTC based on Ajzen's theory on planned behavior. This research revealed that four factors linguistic factors, socio-cultural factors, self-efficacy and learners' beliefs, which influenced their WTC in the ESL setting.

Despite the rich findings from previous studies, this study will try to find out the factors which have impacts on the Chinese L2 learners' WTC in the TEFL classroom under the instruction of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC).

3. METHODOLOGY

Briefly, this research design included context, research questions, instruments and data collection procedures.

3.1. Context

Within the context of TEFL classroom in the University of Birmingham, this study aims to investigate the factors that contributing to Chinese L2 learners' WTC.

3.2. Research Questions

This study seeks to identify the answers to these two research questions showed below.

What factors influence Chinese L2 learners' willingness to communicate in the TEFL classroom? And why do these factors have impact on WTC?

3.3. Participants

Two participants in this research are TEFL students from China. Their first language was Chinese, and they learned English as a second language since they were in primary school for more than ten years. One of the participants was majored in English when she obtained her bachelor's degree in China, and the other participant was majored in Education. Both of them came to UK to further their study in TEFL, teach English as a foreign language. Mary was the girl who majored in English, has already passed the TEM-4 (Test for English Majors-Band 4) and TEM-8 (Test for English Majors-Band 8). Linda was the girl who majored in Education, has already passed the CET-4 (College English Test- Band 4) and CET-6 (College English Test-Band 6). All of these tests mentioned above did not required to take an oral English test. Both of these two girls have taken IELTS (the International English Language Testing System) test, Mary achieved 6.5 in speaking, while Linda achieved 5.5 in speaking. Above all, we can see that Mary achieve higher English proficiency than Linda.

3.4. Instruments

Data collection instruments include semi-structured interviews and reflective journals (see appendix C).

In order to investigate deeply, semi-structured interviews will be adopted in this research. Two of the participants will take part in the interviews which will last approximately 25 to thirty minutes. Audio-recorder will be used to collect data and then will be translated into transcriptions (see appendix B). Before conducting these interviews, the researchers will explain to the participants that the process of interview will be recorded, as well as explain the purpose of this research. As long as the participants give their permissions to record, the interview will be carried on under instruction.

Additionally, participants' reflective journals will be used to analyze the data. The researcher encourages the participants to write journals to reflect their WTC twice a week. They will explain what they did during the class and how they felt in the group discussions and so on. These reflective journals are evidence to show these two participants' progress in WTC.

Above all, all of these data will be kept in a safe place, and only the researcher can get access to them. When the research has finished, all the original data will be destroyed. Each participant will receive an email about research findings and great thanks for their contribution.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Qualitative data were collected from semi-structured interviews and reflective journals. In this part, based on MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC) as discussed in the literature review section, the first three layers were used as the theoretical background to analyze the data as follows. Besides, the following sections reported the findings from the two instruments of the study.

4.1. Layer 1: L2 Use

According to MacIntyre et al.'s (1998), communication behavior based on L2 use was a broad sense, which included speaking in L2, reading in L2, or watching TV programs in L2. Learners can seek opportunities for L2 communication and create WTC in the communicative process. Chinese L2 learners further their study in UK, the first problem they came across was speaking English, especially during class group discussion. Let's see what Mary and Linda think of their L2 use in the TEFL classroom and how it affects their WTC.

Excerpt 1:

As a non-native speaker in TEFL class, I feel no confident and uncomfortable to communicate in the classroom.....Although I have learned English for many years, the level of English proficiency is not enhanced a lot, I cannot speak English as fluent as native speakers.....

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 27th Oct. 2023

Excerpt 2:

I was not majored in English when I was in my undergraduate study. When I came here, I was not confident about my oral English. I thought it was strange with accents.....

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 16th Nov. 2023

From these two excerpts, Mary and Linda were non-native speaker, and their first language were Chinese. Both of them expressed their unwillingness to speak L2 in the TEFL class. One of the reasons was they thought their L2 proficiency was not as high as native speakers. However, they didn't mention their communication behavior on L2, whether they seek opportunities to speak L2 inside and outside the classroom remained a mystery to the researcher.

4.2. Layer 2: Willingness to Communicate

The author has discussed WTC in the previous section of literature review that WTC can be seen as intention which L2 learners have during the L2 communication. WTC strongly implicated the learner's intention to speak in L2 and communicate with others. However, WTC can be easily influenced by learners' individual difference, such as English proficiency, communicative confidence, motivation and even learners' relationship.

Excerpt 3:

Researcher: OK, were you willing to speak with your classmates? And why?

Mary: Communicate in English is good for my second language learning, but sometime, because of a variety of reasons, I cannot communicate with them because they spoke too fast and I can't catch.

Researcher: All right, what did you think of your willingness to communicate?

Mary: I think my willingness to communicate is not that strong. Sometimes I was afraid to talk with others so I just kept silent.

.....

Excerpt 4:

In group discussion, when I sat in a group with foreign students, I was afraid to express my own ideas with them, because they were very confident and very talkative. When I wanted to say something, the discussion was stopped by the tutor. I didn't have chance to share my ideas.....

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 17th Nov. 2023

Excerpt 5:

.....If I am divided into a group with the classmate I am not familiar with, I will not speak, but if I am asked to express my opinion, I would do that. I feel so shy to speak in front of the stranger.....

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 27th Oct. 2023

From these excerpts, both Mary and Linda felt nervous when they spoke English with classmates. On the one hand, Mary wanted to express her ideas but when she thought she was ready to discuss, the discussion was stopped. That showed she had a sense of WTC, but she just lacked confidence especially when she sat in group of foreign students. She also mentioned that her WTC was not so strong, because she was afraid to make any mistakes. Additionally, Linda said that she didn't speak at all when she sat with unfamiliar friends, but if she was asked to answer the tutors' questions, she would express her ideas even though she felt shy to do so. It was not difficult to see that these two learners they have their willingness to communicate with others sometimes, and they absolutely knew why they felt comfortable when they spoke English with others. One of good things was that they were encouraged to communicate with classmates, and they would do better as well as raise up their WTC in the future.

4.3. Layer 3

4.3.1. Desire to Communicate with a Specific Person

According to Lippa (1994), research in social psychology implicates that people were willing to communicate with whom are physically attractive, and those who were familiar with each other. In L2

classrooms, it was easy to see that learners prefer to communicate with people who shared similar cultural background or similar interests. Based on socio-psychological perspectives, L2 interlocutors were expected to communicate with people according to the tasks-related situation.

Excerpt 6:

Researcher: What did you think influence your engagement in the group discussion?

Mary: Many reasons can influence my engagement, such as my relationship with my classmates, probably if I sat with familiar Chinese friend, I engaged more actively because sometimes we can change ideas in Chinese.

.....

Excerpt 7:

Researcher: OK, were you willing to speak with your classmates? And why?

Linda: It depends. In small group with familiar friends, I was willing to express my ideas, but when I was in a group with international student, I felt nervous to speak with them, because I was afraid to make mistakes.

Excerpt 8:

In group discussion, when I sat in a group with foreign students, I was afraid to express my own ideas with them, because they were very confident and very talkative.....Additionally, when I sat in a group with my Chinese friends, at the beginning, we shared opinions in English. Then we began to speak in Chinese.

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 17th Nov. 2023

Excerpt 9:

I feel free to express my ideas in the small group with familiar classmates.....If I am divided into a group with the classmate I am not familiar with, I will not speak, but if I am asked to express my opinion, I would do that. I feel so shy to speak in front of the stranger.

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 27th Oct. 2023

From these excerpts, we can see that both Mary and Linda expressed that they prefer to speak in L2 with their familiar Chinese classmates. One of the similar things that they had was that they were afraid to make mistake in front of classmates, especially in front of the international students. They thought that other foreign students in that TEFL classroom had higher English proficiency than themselves, so that they seldom express their own opinions. That was why they loved to sit with Chinese classmates rather than other international students, because they shared the same similarity and same interests. Therefore, a group of Chinese L2 learners sat together in a TEFL classroom was easily to be seen.

4.3.2. State Communicative Self-confidence

Communicative self-confidence was another factor which influenced L2 learners' WTC. According to Fu, Wang and Wang (2012), students with higher self-confidence were often engaged actively in the class discussions, while students with lower self-confidence were remained silence or seldom expressed their thoughts. Confident student has good control about their learning ability, and they know what role they were played in the group discussion. However, learners who lacked confidence also lacked WTC in the communication. The problem was that learners need to improve their self-confidence and then WTC can be raised up.

Excerpt 10:

Researcher: Were you confident to express your ideas in front of your classmates?

Mary: Em... Actually, I was not confident to express my ideas. Especially when I was in a group discussion with my foreign friends, their oral English were very excellent. So I lacked confidence in my L2 speaking.

Excerpt 11:

A: Were you confident to express your ideas in front of your classmates?

B: Well, I thought that I was lacked of confidence, I felt very very nervous in front of the international students, especially when I spoke to people who had a high English proficiency. I was afraid of losing face in front of them.

Excerpt 12:

.....Although I have learned English for many years, the level of English proficiency is not enhanced a lot, I cannot speak English as fluent as native speakers. So, I am not confident to communicate a lot with my classroom.....

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 27th Oct. 2023

Excerpt 13:

.....And they have very high English proficiency. I can see that they are very confident. However, sometimes, they speak too quickly, I can not follow them.

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 7th Nov. 2023

From the excerpts above, we can see that Mary and Linda lacked confidence to use L2 in classroom discussion, they seldom spoke out their thoughts to other speakers. Or that was to say, they were not reluctant to communicate with other people in L2. There were several reason for that, one of these was they felt shy to express, another reason was that they were not confident with their oral English proficiency.

4.4. Discussion

Based on the MacIntyre and his colleagues' model of WTC, this study reveals the factors which influenced Chinese L2 learners' WTC in the international study context, including L2 use, willingness to communicate, desire to communicate and communicative self-confidence. However, there are other factors influenced Chinese L2 learners' WTC, according to MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of willingness to communicate (WTC), such as motivation, L2 self-confidence, communicative confidence, personality traits and so on. Besides this, environmental, individual and linguistic factors also influenced L2 learners' WTC as well. Because of the own limitations of this research, this study will just focus on the first three layers of factors that had impacts on WTC. This study need to be improved in the future by investigating the other three layers of factors that influenced learners' WTC.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the factors which had impacts on Chinese L2 learners' WTC in the TEFL classroom in the University of Birmingham. Interviews and reflective journals were adopted as methods to collect data, while transcriptions were used to analyze data. Two participants from TEFL classroom were students from China, with different WTC in the L2 setting. The results showed that these two participants' WTC were influenced by their L2 use, desire to communicate with people and communicative self-confidence. It relates closely to individual and environmental factors to some degree.

This study provided a relevant literature review on the L2 learners' WTC, and studies on WTC within an abroad study context, which was well-explained the importance and meaning of this current study. In addition, this research has found some support from previous studies on Chinese learners' WTC in a L2 context. They have distinguished the factors which influenced Chinese L2 learners' WTC, including socio-linguistic, socio-cognitive, individual, cultural factors and so on (Cao,2014; Fu, Wang, Wang, 2012; Peng, 2012; Zhong, 2013).

In light of the research findings, it is necessary for EFL/ ESL teachers to find a way to help Chinese L2 learners overcome their fear to speak in front of other international students, as well as to encourage them to communicative with others inside or outside the classroom. English tutors should arrange some familiar and interesting topics related to tasks-based situations for students to motivate their WTC. During group discussions in the class, the teacher should come over to each group and see

whether individual group member seek guidance or help. Encouragement from tutors is very essential for Learners to improve their communicative confidence and WTC. Moreover, L2 learners' themselves also need to seek opportunities to be exposed to L2 environment. When they become familiar with L2 environment, they will be more willing to communicate in L2 rather than their first language in an English speaking country.

In a broader context, research on WTC is considered as a very hot topic in the field of EFL/ESL education. Further investigation on WTC is recommended to link individual differences to the factors that influenced WTC. It is reasonable that researchers can investigate the relationship between WTC and L2, which is regarded as an interesting topic for most scholars. Therefore, further research on WTC will explore other social and environmental factors that influenced L2 learners' WTC.

As an attempt, this research has its own limitation and still needs to be improved. However, the author hopes that this study can help a little bit to the L2 language teaching and learning.

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APPENDIX A

Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. Think of one class you attended last semester, for example, the second language learning module on week seven, in one class activity, what did you think of your participation?
2. Well, in that activity, did you remember what did you do at that time?
3. Were you willing to speak to your classmates? Why? And why not?
4. What did you think of your willingness to communicate?
5. Did you think you were engaged actively during the class?

6. What did you think influence your engagement in the group discussion?

7. Were you confident to express your ideas in front of your classmates?

APPENDIX B

Transcription 1:

A= Researcher B=Mary

A: Think of one class you attended last semester, for example, the second language learning module on week seven, in one class activity, what did you think of your participation?

B: I think I participated a little bit negatively in the last semester's class activities, and I spoke less in that classroom.

A: Well, in that activity, did you remember what did you do at that time?

B: Yeah, I remembered, during that activity, we talked about the theme of individual difference and I just listened the opinions of others and talked less.

A: OK, were you willing to speak with your classmates? And why?

B: Communicate in English is good for my second language learning, but sometime, because of a variety of reasons, I cannot communicate with them because they spoke too fast and I can't catch.

A: All right, what did you think of your willingness to communicate?

B: I think my willingness to communicate is not that strong. Sometimes I was afraid to talk with others so I just kept silent.

A: Did you think you were engaged actively during the class?

B: I think I didn't engage in the activity 100 percent. Because communicate is a very important part. I seldom speak, and I seldom communicate.

A: What did you think influence your engagement in the group discussion?

B: Many reasons can influence my engagement, such as my relationship with my classmates, probably if I sat with familiar Chinese friend, I engaged more actively because sometimes we can change ideas in Chinese.

A: Were you confident to express your ideas in front of your classmates?

B: Em... Actually, I was not confident to express my ideas. Especially when I was in a group discussion with my foreign friends, their oral English were very excellent. So I lacked confidence in my L2 speaking.

TRANSCRIPTION 2:

A= Researcher B=Linda

A: Think of one class you attended last semester, for example, the second language learning module on week seven, in one class activity, what did you think of your participation?

B: I think I just do what the tutor asked us to do, for example, in one classroom activity, I thought my participation just followed the tutor's guidance.

A: Well, in that activity, did you remember what did you do at that time?

B: Yeah, I still remembered that I spoke to three people and exchanged our ideas and opinions. I felt very nervous to one Japanese man, but I felt very relaxed when I talked to a Chinese girl. I talked to an Africa student later, he was a good English speaker, I enjoyed talking with him. He guided me to speak to the topic, and I just followed his guidance.

A: OK, were you willing to speak with your classmates? And why?

B: It depends. In small group with familiar friends, I was willing to express my ideas, but when I was in a group with international student, I felt nervous to speak with them, because I was afraid to make mistakes.

A: All right, what did you think of your willingness to communicate?

B: Actually, I didn't think I participate very fully in the class discussions, I was quite silent in the whole class.

A: Did you think you were engaged actively during the class?

B: Actually, I didn't engage very actively in the class activity. If nobody asked me to express my opinions, I would keep silent.

A: What did you think influence your engagement in the group discussion?

B: Well, I thought my engagement didn't make any sense, because my ideas were not creative, it just...it just didn't make any sense.

A: Were you confident to express your ideas in front of your classmates?

B: Well, I thought that I was lacked of confidence, I felt very very nervous in front of the international students, especially when I spoke to people who had a high English proficiency. I was afraid of losing face in front of them.

APPENDIX C

Here is part of Mary's reflective journals on her process of WTC.

As a non-native speaker in TEFL class, I feel no confident and uncomfortable to communicate in the classroom. There are several reasons that why I am reluctant to participate and speak in classroom with my classmates. Although I have learned English for many years, the level of English proficiency is not enhanced a lot, I cannot speak English as fluent as native speakers. So, I am not confident to

communicate a lot with my classroom. What's more, many of my classmates are experienced teachers that they have taught English for several years, but I am a student just graduated from university, so, sometimes, I do not have opportunities to speak in class and I am afraid to make mistakes. However, it is fortunate that my instructor often encourages us to speak in classroom.

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 27th Oct. 2023

Teachers are so friendly and they will come to every group to communicate with the students, listen to their students opinions, give guidance to students, and answer their questions. They encourage every students to discuss in the group. Especially in SLL class. In this case, I'd love to express my own feelings with my classmates and engaged in the group discussion. However, I still didn't raise my hand to questioning. I just sat down and listened to others.

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 5th Nov. 2023

In group discussion, when I sat in a group with foreign students, I was afraid to express my own ideas with them, because they were very confident and very talkative. When I wanted to say something, the discussion was stopped by the tutor. I didn't have chance to share my ideas. Additionally, when I sat in a group with my Chinese friends, at the beginning, we shared opinions in English. Then we began to speak in Chinese. Actually, this didn't help us to improve our understanding. Sometimes I felt very upset.

-----Mary's Reflective Journals 17th Nov. 2023

Here is part of Linda's reflective journals' on her process of WTC.

Actually, I think I am a silent student in the class, I never have a public speaking in the class, but I would like to participate in the group discussion, I feel free to express my ideas in the small group with familiar classmates. Directly speaking, I am afraid to make mistakes, and might be laughed at. Thus, If I am divided into a group with the classmate I am not familiar with, I will not speak, but if I am asked to express my opinion, I would do that. I feel so shy to speak in front of the stranger.

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 27th Oct. 2023

However, I think students from other countries except China, are willing to speak in class, no matter express their ideas or ask questions. Maybe one of the reasons is that their first language is English, so they do not have language problems. Therefore, they can express their ideas and opinions very freely. I also want to do that. Besides, their opinions are very creative. Sometimes, I just think why I cannot raise some questions like these? And they have very high English proficiency. I can see that they are very confident. However, sometimes, they speak too quickly, I can not follow them.

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 7th Nov. 2023

I was not majored in English when I was in my undergraduate study. When I came here, I was not confident about my oral English. I thought it was strange with accents. Some of my friends would correct my pronunciation when I was in pre-sessional language course. When I started my MA study, I noticed that I need to open my mouth and take part in the discussions in the class, but I just lacked confidence. I was afraid to make mistakes and be laughed at. I would feel more comfortable when I speak to my Chinese friends, and I felt so nervous and stressed when I sat with my foreign friends, and I even didn't want to speak with them.

-----Linda's Reflective Journals 16th Nov. 2023

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY



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