EXPLORING CHINESE UNIVERSITY EFL LEARNERS' L2 WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE IN ACTION: UNDERSTANDING THE INTERPLAY OF SELF-CONCEPT, WTC AND SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT THROUGH THE LENS OF COMPLEXITY THEORY

By

ZHEN YUE

A Thesis Submitted to the University of Birmingham for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Education

University of Birmingham

November 2016

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

ABSTRACT

Willingness to communicate in a second language (L2 WTC) has become an important focus of inquiry in applied linguistics over the last decade or so. However, little is currently understood about the practical tasks of producing communicatively competent L2 users in Chinese higher education, an aim which has been fully recognized by the English language teaching (ELT) sector in China, but which has been addressed with mixed success. In order to fill this gap, this research study was carried out in one of the universities in mid-east China over a period of one academic term with the aim to produce an empirically-supported fine-grained portrait of Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC in actual communication actions. Informed by a complexity theory as a theoretical lens and by adopting a qualitative multiple case study research design, this research project focused on five first-year postgraduate student participants from different majors and investigated their L2 WTC experiences in communicative actions through multiple sources of data, which included individual life story interviews, ethnographic classroom observations followed by stimulated recall interviews, and photo-based interviews. In line with existing theorizing, the findings confirm L2 WTC as a multidimensional and complex construct. However, in addition to demonstrating that the features and trajectories of individuals' L2 WTC are interrelated, dynamic and largely unpredictable, this study has also identified a construct that seems central to our understanding of Chinese students' L2 WTC in communicative action: their socially constructed future self-guides. The study has shown that while L2 WTC may be much too complex to fit into neat theoretical models, our understanding of students' actual engagement during the acts of L2 communication offers critical pointers for practical interventions for encouraging and supporting language learners' development of a healthy sense of self with regards to L2 learning and, consequently, of their L2 WTC.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special and sincere appreciations go to all people who assisted me throughout this research project.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Magdalena Kubanyiova. I would be nowhere near the completion of this project and the current thesis without her patient guidance and continuous support during the whole process. The immense knowledge, motivation and encouragement I received from Maggie are an invaluable lifelong treasure for me.

I am equally grateful to all student, teachers, and university officials at the University in China who welcomed me, facilitated my access to the university, and made my fieldwork possible. I am especially appreciative to the five research participants who offered their full support and cooperation throughout the whole fieldwork, and even gave me an enjoyable and unforgettable period of time.

I also appreciate to William Kearney's kind help in proofreading my thesis.

My thanks also go to my parents, friends and other doctoral researchers whose understanding and company have certainly made the hardships of my PhD journey endurable and my research life colourful. The sharing of the stressful times and the joyful experiences has been a genuine source of much needed emotional support as well as happiness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why this study

My motivation to conduct the current research project goes back to my past English language learning and teaching experience. I remember vividly how, when I was studying in high school, my English teacher always told us that 'you do not speak well because your English is not good enough, you will naturally speak more when your English becomes better, so don't be lazy, study hard, memorize vocabularies and recite texts'. In the following ten years, I fully complied with my teacher's instruction, diligently learning vocabularies, grammar rules, reciting sentences, and articles.

However, in the real practice of a second language (L2) use, especially when I had the opportunity to study abroad, my experience of using L2 was not consistent with my expectations that were inspired by my English teacher: sometimes I struggled with whether I should start a conversation with the person sat next to me, as I felt I had nothing to say; I tended to be frustrated when people asked me to repeat my words again and again; on some occasions, I found it difficult to engage in group discussions even though I was ready with my opinion as well as with my vocabulary; I felt embarrassed to speak English with the person who came from the same country as me; while at other times I was excited to talk with a stranger on the train even though I made silly mistakes in my speech; I was keen to receive feedback from a native English speaker without any fear of losing face; I felt joy and pleasure when discussing lectures with my classmates even though I had not mastered the relevant terminologies. These and many other experiences arose my curiosity about what seemed to be the 'secret' ingredients affecting my L2 use, which clearly went beyond the principles of

'don't be lazy, study hard, memorize vocabularies and recite texts' which my teacher recommended in my early English language education.

Another memorable experience which further kindled my interest in the topic of this research study came later during my summer internship as an undergraduate teaching assistant in an English language class in a Chinese university. During one of the classes, the English teacher I was working with elicited feedback from the students after a group discussion. One girl indicated her intention to provide her own opinion on the teacher's question by raising her hand enthusiastically, but when she started to speak, the teacher intervened almost immediately by emphasising the correct pronunciation of something that the girl obviously mispronounced. The teacher then wrote a few examples of the relevant vocabulary item in different sentences on the blackboard, and asked the whole class to read after her, after which she required the girl to read the same again on her own. The girl was just standing there, sticking her tongue out, and smiling with embarrassment. After she read the sentences as commanded, the teacher asked her to continue talking about her viewpoint. The girl simply repeated and completed the sentence that she originally started with before being interrupted and with no further elaboration finished her turn swiftly.

At that moment, I became very aware that something had just happened to that girl's enthusiasm to offer her opinion in L2, even though I was not aware at the time of the term 'willingness to communicate' (WTC) that is used to describe this phenomenon in the literature. It was hard to tell whether or not the teacher also noticed this, because she did not show any visible signs of concern. It may well be that she was quite used to the scenarios of this type and considered it as part of her routine and her responsibility to instruct and correct her students' mistakes. In fact, she often told me when we discussed the teaching matters together that these students 'didn't learn with their whole heart', which is why she had to

'always remind them, correct their mistakes promptly, repeat the key points that they should master.' On the one hand, I admired this teacher's conscientiousness and commitment. On the other hand, however, I was also becoming aware of a potential mismatch between what this and other language teachers in the setting that I personally experienced highly valued and were committed to 'delivering' in their English language classrooms and what the students may have actually needed in order to develop their L2 communicative competence. In other words, this episode prompted me to wonder whether language educators, researchers, and administrators might benefit from a fuller knowledge and understanding of what actually happens when students engage, willingly or otherwise, in the acts of L2 communication that become available in their language classrooms and what consequences this may have for their WTC and L2 development more generally.

The situation described above is common in Chinese higher education language classrooms. The general label of silent learners attached to students in Chinese English language classrooms during communication activities has long frustrated language teachers (Hu, 2002; Yu, 2001). It is true that the Chinese government has increased the educational budget and made a significant investment in facilities over the past few decades in order to establish an integrated public ELT system from elementary to tertiary education, and enshrined in policy Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles and practices at different levels. There is substantial anecdotal as well as empirical evidence, however, that these efforts do not seem to have met their originally stated goal of producing competent English users due to a range of social, cultural, institutional and practical factors (Fang, 2001; Shi, 2001; Wu, 2001; Yu, 2015; Zhao, 2012; Zhou, 2015; Zhang and Yang, 2000).

If anything, the demands of the globalized world, in which English has the global status as a tool for worldwide cooperation and communication, have increased, not lessened,

the pressure on the English language education sector in China to deliver on the broader vision to produce competent users of English spelled out in the government policy. Yet, with the largely unchanged EFL assessment system in Chinese tertiary education which continues to prioritize students' grammatical competence embedded in the reading and writing tasks of the College English Test (CET), a requirement for graduation and a ticket to future employment prospects, the Chinese EFL sector experiences a major dilemma: investing considerable efforts into teaching and learning for exams that have serious consequences for the students' futures often leaves little, if any, space for nurturing their desire to develop English communicative competence (Gu and Liu, 2005; Littlewood, 1999; Liu and Littlewood, 1997, Zhou, 2015). In a word, the teachers and students of EFL are facing challenges in reconciling a range of policy-related and system demands with their social and personal objectives for L2 learning.

These challenges of ELT in China are particularly relevant in the context of academic research and theory with regards to the willingness to communicate (WTC). In second language (L2) research, WTC has been conceptualised as a state of being ready to enter into L2 communication at a particular time with particular persons (cf. MacIntyre et al., 1998). Originally conceived of as an individual difference (ID) variable, this construct has been extensively studied in the second language acquisition (SLA) domain across various contexts (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Peng, 2014; Wen and Clément, 2003; Woodrow, 2006; Yashima, 2002, 2009). The reason that L2 WTC has drawn attention of so many researchers and practitioners is no doubt due to the general assumption that WTC directly predicts L2 communication behaviours, while frequent communication practice can, in turn, facilitate L2 acquisition (Lantolf, 2006; Swan, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, L2 WTC is seen as a significant contributing factor to successful L2 development. As MacIntyre et al.

(1998) argued, nurturing language learners' L2 WTC is of paramount importance in L2 instruction.

Understanding L2 WTC has undergone an evolution from being conceived as a trait-like predisposition to a situational variable affected by both trait and situational predictors (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The heuristic model of L2 WTC proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998) highlighted the situatedness of WTC by taking account of context-relevant variables, which signalled the need for more holistic investigations of persons' L2 WTC in specific communicative situations. Although there is growing evidence in current research of embracing the situatedness and complexity of L2 WTC inspired by the heuristic model, a full integration of the person, their WTC and the actual L2 communication context has been an ongoing challenge in research and theory. Typically, the WTC studies have tended to employ self-reported quantitative measures as the main research instrument aimed at identifying potential influential factors in causal relationships with WTC. While generating important insights into these relationships, the line of inquiry informed by this type of design has not allowed a significant move away from largely decontextualized explanations of WTC towards more textured portrayals of the dynamic interactions and fluctuations of WTC in the specific contexts of peoples' actual engagement with L2. Emerging qualitative investigations have certainly offered deeper and more contextualized understandings of L2 WTC phenomena, but it is also true that most such studies have tended to rely on the predominant theoretical model of WTC and have, in essence (though perhaps not always by explicit admission), adopted a largely hypothesis-testing orientation. This in itself is, of course, not a problem and the qualitative data have enriched significantly what we were previously able to claim about WTC based mostly on the quantitative data. Yet, the question remains to what extent the current research endeavours allow a full appreciation of previously unacknowledged facets

and dynamics of the phenomenon. For example, an increasing number of studies investigating Chinese English language learners' willingness and unwillingness to communicate in the L2 classroom (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Wen and Clément, 2003; Woodrow, 2006), while informed by the established L2 WTC model by MacIntyre et al. (1998), have signalled the need to account more substantially for indigenous cultures, L2 learning settings, and aspirations which may not be fully compatible with some of the underlying assumptions of WTC theorising originated in the western societies.

Based on my personal L2 learning and teaching experience, the challenges currently facing ELT in China, contemporary SLA research pointing to the significance of L2 WTC for successful language development, as well as on the emerging gaps in the existing L2 WTC theorising, I embarked on a study of university EFL learners' L2 WTC in China with a focus on an in-depth investigation of language learners' L2 WTC not so much with regards to specific but largely hypothetical communication scenarios but rather with regards to the actual communicative actions experienced by the research participants. Such an investigation has the potential to contribute to current theory, research and practice by 1) gaining a holistic understanding of L2 WTC phenomena of language learners at a specific higher education setting in China, 2) proposing new avenues for advancing L2 WTC research theoretically and methodologically and 3) generating useful pedagogical implications for enhancing EFL education in China as well as in other similar educational and sociocultural contexts.

1.2 The structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided into eight chapters including the current introduction section.

Chapter 2 aims to provide a general context for the generation of the current research by introducing the landscape of ELT in China particular in Chinese higher education. It mainly involves the needs and high value on English language learning in the Chinese sociocultural context, ELT in Chinese tertiary education, and the challenges that ELT faced now.

Chapter 3 presents a theoretical background for the study. The chapter focuses on reviewing the evolution of WTC research in SLA with an emphasis on placing the person at the centre of the inquiry. It maps the different theoretical perspectives in SLA with a focus on the importance of WTC for L2 development. After that, the research related to discussion of the personality traits, the interplay of language proficiency, perceived communicative competence and anxiety, and the emerging significance of self in relation to L2 WTC will be discussed. Finally, MacIntyre et al.'s WTC model will be critically reviewed as a summary of this chapter.

After setting the theoretical scene, Chapter 4 will develop the review of L2 WTC literature further by highlighting the need to take account of contexts in studying and understanding L2 WTC. A number of contextual elements in terms of micro and macro level will be discussed with the aim to develop a theoretical argument for viewing L2 WTC from the complexity theory perspective. I will discuss those features and tenets of complexity theory which have been particularly important in influencing my decision to adopt complexity as a theoretical metaphor guiding the conceptual and methodological orientation of my study.

In Chapter 5, I describe and discuss the methodological design for my study, starting with the rationale and research questions which the study intended to address and the epistemological perspective informing my inquiry. Following that, the specific context for the

research, as well as the theoretical and practical considerations behind the qualitative multiple case study design adopted in this research are presented. The chapter then moves on to a detailed explanation of the recruitment process, the details of the research participants and of the data collection and analysis methods and procedures involved in life story interviews, ethnographic classroom observations plus stimulated recall interviews, and photo-based interviews. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the trustworthiness and ethical issues relevant to this study.

Chapter 6, together with the following Chapter 7, are the main findings parts of this thesis, in which I integrate the data, findings and discussion in order to show the emerging complexities of L2 WTC. In this chapter, I present, analyse and discuss the multidimensional feature of L2 WTC. The chapter starts by discussing the dynamic interplay of key variables in relation to changes of language learners' WTC. Furthermore, based on the prior discussion, I highlight emerging ambiguities with regards to WTC by paying attention to the struggles experienced by the participants during specific L2 communication episodes, to the discrepancy between apparent communication behaviours and learners' own interpretations of those in relation to their L2 WTC, as well as to the different qualities of L2 WTC shaped by different communicative contexts.

Developing the insights presented in Chapter 6, Chapter 7 focuses on the discussion of language learners' self-guided WTC and relevant communicative behaviours in L2 across specific communicative situations. The chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part addresses the role of language learners' current self in a more general term not only in L2 domain on guiding their WTC and communications in L2. The following second part concerns language learners' possible future selves in relation to the fluctuation of their L2 WTC and the language use, which involves the analysis and discussion of the impact of some

of the newly developed concepts, such as the 'inherited' ideal self guide. Data-based vignettes are offered with an aim to demonstrate the dynamic interplay between the participants' self-concepts, L2 WTC and sociocultural context, and indicating the emerging higher level of complexity of L2 WTC.

Finally, in Chapter 8, I conclude with a summary of key insights into L2 WTC in action, before discussing the possible practical implications for current ELT in China, followed by suggestions on directions for future L2 WTC research informed by the findings as well as limitations of the current study.

2 SITUATING THE STUDY OF L2 WTC IN THE CHINESE EFL CONTEXT

This chapter aims to provide a general backdrop for the present empirical study. My investigation is located in China, a fast developing economy on the global scene, with rapidly expanding international trade, science and technology. Chinese speakers with the ability to communicate in English, the most commonly used international language through which such economic and technological exchange is mediated, enjoy a high intellectual and cultural status in Chinese society and, as a result, the value placed on English as a foreign language (EFL) education has gained in prominence over the past few decades (Chang, 2006).

At the same time, and despite the rich intercultural exchanges contributing to this increasingly globalized country, Chinese traditional values have played a significant role in shaping the development of the country's educational system, including EFL education, presenting potential clashes between expectations, purposes, methods and outcomes of language education as portrayed in the 'mainstream' (i.e. published in English by key international publishers) applied linguistics/language teaching literature and those rooted in the historical and cultural tradition of Chinese education. Willingness to communicate in L2, which is seen as the key goal of language education (e.g. MacIntyre, et al., 1998) and assumes a proactive role of language learners, is a concept especially prone to such tensions.

In this chapter, I will discuss the landscape of English language learning and teaching in China as a backdrop for three themes: first, I discuss the generally recognized high value of EFL education as a way of addressing national and personal development. This is followed by a review of current ELT at the tertiary level in the Chinese educational system. Finally, the discussion will outline current challenges faced by EFL education in China.

2.1 A Growing Awareness of the Value of EFL Education in China

Due to the role of English as a global language for worldwide political, cultural and economic exchange and cooperation, competent English language users have been in great demand across all walks of life in China. English language education has, therefore, been highly valued and enthusiastically embraced by different stakeholders in the Chinese sociocultural context.

In early 1960s, English was officially recognised as the first foreign language in middle schools in China, and it was also the first time the concept of a first foreign language had officially been introduced, which indicated an important change in English language policy in China (Chang, 2006). Over the decades that followed, English education has experienced unprecedented development. Prioritizing English in foreign language education policy on the basis of China's political and long-term economic needs has been generally seen as beneficial, particularly in the past two decades (Hu, 2002). Its role as a lingua franca, and its dominant status in China is said to have boosted and consolidated international business relations, communications, and cultural exchanges between China and the outside world, and thus promoted its international relations, foreign trade and economic growth (ibid.). In short, the accelerating development in China has led to strengthening the role of English as the first preferred foreign language and thus strengthening its position in foreign language education in this country.

Over the past decade, the Chinese government has increased its educational budget and facilities investment with the aim of establishing a fully developed comprehensive English teaching system from elementary to tertiary education (Zhao, 2012). Since the mid-1990s, English has been a mandatory subject from Grade 3 in elementary to junior high

school, and it is now well-established as a compulsory subject in the national entrance examinations to colleges and universities (Cheng, 2008, cited in Peng, 2014). Millions of English language learners take regular English courses, normally 4 class hours per week, 18 weeks a term, for 12 terms in middle and high schools and 4-8 terms at universities (Wu, 2001). The time and energy dedicated to learning English for Chinese learners outside of this formal system is in fact considerably more in reality, with many children starting to learn English before they participate in formal schooling, and most school learners and university students engaging in extracurricular English training courses.

This 'craze' (Zhao and Campbell, 1995, cited in Peng 2014, p. 4) of English in China has created a flourishing industry of English language training provision which has mushroomed in recent years. The typical offering of these language education services and institutions ranges from remedial classes and special extracurricular courses with the aim of enhancing speaking and listening competence and avoiding the so-called 'dumb' English which means less skill in oral communication (Zhao, 2012) through to exam-oriented classes designed particularly for university students to prepare them for the College English Test (CET) or for study abroad (IELTS, TOFEL, GRE or English education for specific profession domain, such as business).

Apart from the recognition of the important role of English language learning in one's educational journey, including studying overseas which is becoming an especially popular pursuit among Chinese students nowadays (Jin and Cortazzi, 2006), the enthusiasm of English language learning is also due to its high value in the job market. According to Jin and Yang (2006), competence in English is an asset for one's career and the certificate of College English Band 4 or 6 has become a 'prerequisite' for employment in most cases. Usually,

higher proficiency in English means a prospect of good job opportunities, and other advantages such as a chance for promotion to more senior positions and a significant pay rise.

It has to be said, however, that English is rarely used for internal communication within these settings. From this perspective, then, the practical ability to communicate in English does not play a direct role in determining one's access to economic resources or political power. However, indirectly and substantially, knowledge of English leads to greater opportunities for higher education, career trajectories and social networks, all of which are seen in the Chinese society as key to improving one's social prestige. Furthermore, in the Chinese sociocultural context, one's success is not understood as an achievement that belongs to the individual, but is instead seen as a family honour. Thus, Chinese parents typically place high expectations on their children and go out of their way to support their education, including English language study. The high demand for English in China thus comes from the whole society and is reflected in the education system and in personal/professional values and ambitions of individuals and families.

2.2 English Language Teaching (ELT) and Chinese Tertiary Education

In Chinese higher education institutions, all non-English major students are required to study the so called College English Course, which is a tertiary-level EFL course and is compulsory at least in the first two years of university studies. For English majors, the curriculum understandably places more demands on students and the typical English study would include a mixture of EFL classes (often specializing in specific skills, such as listening, writing, for example.), and modules in English linguistic theory and English literature (cf. Chang, 2006).

Passing the college English course is a prerequisite for all Chinese university students to graduate. In addition, students' English competence is evaluated by a biannual exam called College English Test (CET), which is China's Ministry of Education-sponsored, nationwide and standardised written examination and includes two levels: Band 4 (CET-4) and Band 6 (CET-6). In the majority of China's tertiary educational institutes, undergraduates are required to pass CET-4, and postgraduates to pass CET-6, or are otherwise deprived of the right to be granted the final degree (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996b, cited in Peng, 2014). Moreover, the CET certificate is also regarded as the key evidence for evaluating the college students' English proficiency by the general public and also used by most employers (Jin and Yang, 2006; Zhao 2012). Therefore, Chinese university students usually spend a substantial amount of time of their university studies in preparing for this national examination, as doing well in the CET is likely to have significant future consequences.

Although various ELT theories and methodologies have been introduced to Chinese language education experts and practitioners, governmental policy makers and learners of different levels, EFL pedagogy in China's educational institutions, including at the tertiary level, is still dominated by the so called 'Three Old Centres' paradigm, that is, teacher-centeredness, grammar-centeredness, and test-centeredness (Zhao, 2012). This traditional ELT approach considers language learners to be passive participants in the learning process and language learning a habit generation process whereby the new language knowledge and behaviours can be incrementally acquired and solidified through continuous access to appropriate instruction, imitation and repetition. Accordingly, the drill is seen as a principal technique for a successful acquisition of various aspects of the English language, with the strongest emphasis being placed on grammar, vocabulary and the written discourse, which are perceived as the most important in order to achieve mastery of English (Cortazzi and Jin,

1996b; Hu, 2002; Zhao, 2012). Admittedly, as some authors have noted, Chinese EFL learners have benefited from this approach. For example, McKnight (1994, cited in Zhao, 2012, p. 47) pointed out that although '[o]ur Western methodology textbooks reject this as an outdated and discredited approach to language teaching and learning', it is 'perhaps surprising, therefore, that so many Chinese students of English have achieved such a good command of the language using this approach'.

However, when scrutinized more closely, this obvious success usually corresponds with high scores or even full marks on various English exams. Less favourable accounts of success emerge when students' level of competence in actual communication is considered, which has led many authors to evaluate the traditional teacher-, grammar-, and test-centred education as inadequate support for the development of Chinese students' communicative competence (Hu, 2002; Hao, 2003; Ng and Tang, 1997; Zhao, 2012).

As a response to this negative assessment, various top-down interventions at different levels of English language education have been carried out under the umbrella of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. The adoption of CLT in China can be traced back to Li's work (1984, cited in Yu, 2001, p. 2) in which she stated that 'language is communication, and learning a language is learning to communicate'. This view of language and learning, in line with the general debates in applied linguistics at the time (cf. Savignon, 1991), significantly impacted on the developments on the Chinese ELT scene. In 1992, the State Education Development Commission (SEDC), a division of the central government, set out 'communication' as the primary aim for language teaching (SEDC, 1992). In a response to this document, the government-directed curriculum for college English emphasizes the improvement of competence in listening and speaking as one of the key learning objectives (Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education, 2007, cited in Peng, 2014).

Accordingly, teachers' instruction in the classrooms is expected to be conducted in English and feature more communicatively-oriented activities such as oral presentations and group or pair discussions to encourage students to speak English in the classroom. In some institutions, students of non-English disciplines are offered listening and speaking courses to replace the previously offered college English courses with a heavy emphasis on reading and writing (Zhao, 2012). In this sense, therefore, the tertiary EFL education in China has witnessed profound changes over the past few decades. What is also clear, however, is that these changes have been accompanied by multiple challenges at the implementation level and some of these are discussed next.

2.3 Cultural, Structural and Practical Challenges

Although, as has been mentioned previously, English has acquired a prestigious status in the educational, social and cultural life in China and ELT has, accordingly, become a powerful and ever growing enterprise in this country over the past few decades, its actual outcomes are said to have failed to meet the new demands associated with China's increasing participation in global economy and world affairs (Qin, 1999; Chang, 2006). For example, Wu (2001) has noted that Chinese universities have produced tens of thousands competent English users over the years, and most of them come from English majors in over 300 intensive English programmes. However, promising this observation may sound, the figure clearly represents a small minority when considering China's extensive numbers of university students working towards the mastery of the English language alongside their main specializations. In addition, even the English major graduates, regarded as those with more advanced levels of English proficiency, have faced considerable challenges in meeting new expectations of their prospective employers who are increasingly demanding competent

16

communication skills and in-depth interdisciplinary knowledge rather than just evidence of high test scores (Zhang and Yang, 2000; Fang, 2001; Shi, 2001), a requirement for which intensive English programmes have not been able to prepare the students sufficiently.

Some have closely linked this gap with numerous issues affecting the quality of English language education, prominent amongst which are limitations of the traditional ELT approaches (South Project Group, 1998; Zhang and Yang, 2000; Fang, 2001; Tan, 2000). These approaches, which are concerned with the acquisition of discrete units of language and rely heavily on translation and dependence on teacher-centred, monotonous, force-fed teaching, have been found of little value in developing students' skills to engage in daily communication (Hu, 2002). Although, as pointed out earlier, these approaches may be 'undoubtedly successful in [their] own terms' (Burnaby and Sun, 1989, quoted in Yu, 2015, p. 229), this ELT 'success' does not expand beyond the confines of exam-setting, producing students who are competent at passing exams, but less capable of using English to generate simple conversations or describe daily affairs to speakers of other languages (Zhao, 2012).

The findings that have emerged from an investigation conducted by Wang (2005) sound particularly serious in the context of the previous discussion: among the 239 participant students '88% are unsatisfied with the College English teaching and 50% even lose interest in English after two-year study of College English. After two years' study, 22% informants still have difficulty in understanding teacher's instruction in English. 30% cannot speak English, 58% are not able to speak with foreigners about daily affairs, 22% have difficulty in writing and only 25% can read some articles of medium difficulty level'. In this sense, the traditional model for ELT pedagogy widely adopted in these college courses seems to have been unable to prepare Chinese students for the changing world.

While it is true that the CLT-informed principles and practices entered the public discourse in China decades ago and have played a central role in reforming the EFL education policy, this commitment has not necessarily translated into changed practices, let alone meaningful language learning outcomes for the students (Peng, 2014). One reason for this may be that despite the declared and very public commitment to CLT, many in the Chinese foreign language teaching community, including researchers, educators, and practitioners, are highly skeptical of the actual efficiency and superiority of CLT compared with the traditional teaching approach (Yu, 2001).

A critical and balanced approach to evaluating effective teaching practices is, of course, much needed, but there is evidence in the published debates that the research attesting to the value of traditional approaches to language education may have sometimes been misinterpreted, leading to an uncritical and unexamined advocacy for the 'traditional' on the one hand, and a wholesale dismissal of some of the potentially useful principles of CLT, on the other. For example, Wang's (1999) 5-year longitudinal case study came to the conclusion that both communicative and traditional teaching approaches, have strengths and weaknesses, and should be practised simultaneously in foreign language classrooms. Interestingly, Yu (2015) also highlighted the importance of traditional Chinese language teaching in relation to ELT by giving an example of recitation. She pointed out, however, that contrary to the prevalent beliefs about what recitation is and how it is implemented in contemporary ELT pedagogy in China, the traditional approach of recitation has in fact highly valued wide reading and comprehension. Yu has argued, that this misinterpretation has been translated into the ELT pedagogy in that students are typically forced to memorize texts word-for-word for the sake of completing an assignment or being able to reproduce it in the examination, but without the necessary teacher's guidance to enjoy the beauty of the language and use it later.

Thus, what is practiced out of educators' commitment to 'traditional' approaches may not actually have the benefits originally associated with those approaches and the same could easily be said about CLT (cf. Tan, 2005).

Despite ELT educators and practitioners' ambiguous attitudes towards CLT, the issue cannot be discussed without considering the EFL assessment system in Chinese tertiary education. As has been mentioned before, CET is a nation-wide English proficiency examination and, as one of the requirements for attaining College degrees, is the main criterion for evaluating students' English language proficiency in higher education, and also for employment purposes (Feng, 2009; Liu, 2007). However, it is important to note that English speaking skill was not tested as part of this exam in the first 12 years after CET-4 was administered (Zhou, 2015). Although College English Test-Spoken English Test (CET-SET) was later introduced in 1990, as a response to the call for improving students' communicative competence, it was (and is) only available to students who achieved a score of 550 or above out of 720. In other words, the CET-SET, though available to those who have already achieved the 'foundations', does not enjoy the same compulsory status and is therefore out of reach for many students. Certainly, it is simplistic to assume that the lack of test accessibility is the reason for the lack of communicative competence amongst Chinese English language learners. However, there are serious implications of this policy for the kind of language preparation that individual students can access as part of their core curriculum. In general, then, CET as the national English testing system authorized by the Ministry of Education focuses heavily on linguistic knowledge at the expense of communicative competence, a tendency which has significantly influenced instruction to which most Chinese university students have access. Even with the introduction of the CET-SET, speaking and

communication in general has been positioned much less prominently, both in policy, and practice.

The tension, between the growing emphasis in educational discourse on the importance of students' communicative competence, on the one hand, and the sideline of oral skills in the assessment and in the actual teaching practice, on the other, has been noticeable more generally. Above all, the aim of tertiary EFL education in producing competent language users may not have been jointly shared and understood between ELT participants at different levels. Some scholars have argued that CET is only a way of evaluating language learning outcomes and it is inappropriate to regard passing the CET as an objective of EFL education, and an end in itself (Jin and Yang, 2006; Zheng and Cheng, 2008). Yet, Zhou's (2015) recent investigation has revealed that all participant teachers, and the majority of students, stressed passing CET or achieving higher scores in the CET as the key objective of a university English programme. Even though the administrator explicitly expressed that the aim of EFL education is to teach students to use English, rather than to teach them how to take CET (ibid.). This is in line with the Syllabus for College English Test issued by CET Committee 2006, which states that the purpose of CET is to measure whether students have achieved the required English competence specified in the College English Curriculum (CMoE, 2007). However, this interpretation does not appear to be commonly advocated among teachers, or students, who are more directly involved in the English teaching and learning process.

Another example of the tension relates to beliefs and practices with regards to what constitutes English language competence. Although mastering oral communication is widely acknowledged as important, developing students' reading and listening competence is still the core of an ELT curriculum for the majority of teachers. Zhou's (2015) research has shown

that teachers and even senior university administrators believe that in relation to learners reading and listening skills are more fundamental. They further believe that since classroom oral participation normally requires higher English language competence (e.g. vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, listening and speaking ability), students should concentrate on mastering linguistic knowledge first to consolidate the 'foundations', as well as attaining good results in CET, which is the biggest concern for both teachers and students. This trend is shown in other studies as well (e.g. Xu et al., 2015; Zhao, 2012), and a cursory glance at recent research studies on EFL education in China (e.g. via a Google Scholar search) suggests that most of the published research has focused on discussing reading and writing strategies rather than the aspects of English oral communication.

An additional paradox, which has already been hinted at, is that of students' willingness to improve their English communicative competence, on the one hand, and the pressure to pass exams, in reality, on the other. It has been documented by research that the implementation of CET has had a great impact on Chinese students' English language learning experience in higher education (Cheng, 2008). As has been reported in Zhou's (2015) findings, 78.8% students treated mastering linguistic knowledge and achieving higher scores in CET as their objectives of English study in the university. Due to the overemphasis on CET and examinations, some scholars found that Chinese students tend to be apathetic towards developing their communicative competence in English (Gu and Liu, 2005), and sometimes students may even question the true value of talking in class if the objective remains passing the CET. The Chinese EFL students' passive oral engagement in language classroom learning activities is frequently reported and discussed in the literature (Hu, 2002; Yu, 2001; Peng, 2014).

However, some studies have shown that the apathy and a passive attitude may not necessarily be representative of all students' experiences in China. In fact, a significant part of scholarship has shown that many Chinese students hold aspirations of active participation in the language class (Littlewood, 1999; Liu and Littlewood, 1997). Even in the already cited study, Zhou (2015) has found that 79.8% of interviewed students stated valuing English communicative competence, while 58.7% expressed their expectations of developing speaking skills. Zhou has argued that the prestige that CET has enjoyed and the pressure the students have faced to pass examinations may have led teachers to conclude that their students might be reluctant to improve communicative skills. This mismatch between students' expectations and how teachers interpret them may have led to the lack of teachers' support of students' oral participation in the classroom.

These unfavourable current circumstances facing EFL education in China have often been linked to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures (Hu, 2002; Rao, 1996; Wen and Clément, 2003; Yu 2001), although, as has been noted earlier, some of the interpretations of these differences have been contested. In this part of the discussion, I will offer a few additional arguments that occupy a prominent place in the literature on cultural differences and which have been developed to explain some of the challenges faced by the English language education sector in China.

From a Chinese cultural perspective, learning is often portrayed as a process of accumulating knowledge rather than creating knowledge (Hu, 2002). In traditional Chinese literacy education which can be traced back to Song Dynasty (960 A.D.), the paramount importance placed on accumulation and repetition never seems to fail to feature in the pedagogical debates and practices, as the two famous Chinese sayings go, 'The meaning of a book will become naturally clear when you read it hundreds of times' [du shu bai bian, qi yi zi

xian], and 'He who reads ten thousand books thoroughly can work wonders with his pen' [du shu po wan bian, xia bi ru you shen]. It is only understandable that similar approaches have been co-opted into EFL education (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996b; Hu 2002; Yu, 2015), even though, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the assumptions behind the tradition may not have always been subjected to full critical scrutiny and therefore may have reflected inaccurate interpretations.

Additionally, in Chinese culture, particularly under the influence of Confucian ideas, teachers are perceived as knowledge holders, which means they are seen as failing in their job and duties if they don't impart knowledge but play games together with students in classes (Hui, 1997), the latter being an example of how CLT has often been misinterpreted (cf. Tan, 2005). Moreover, teachers enjoy a very high social status in Chinese society, and students are educated to always show respect, conformity and obedience to their teachers in the same way as they do to their parents (Peng, 1993). Accordingly, in the English language class, the teacher normally plays a dominant role in planning teaching content and instructing learning activities, paying much less (if any) attention to supporting the development of pro-active language users. While the western cultures from which the CLT approach originated stress individualism and democracy (Gao, 2010; Hofstede, 1986), students in the Chinese teacher-centred and collectivist-orientated class are expected to conduct themselves and be respectful to both teachers and peers, pay close attention to the teacher's instructions, sit up straight and be quiet. Any unexpected interactions with others and without the teacher's permission are viewed as interrupting instruction and peers' learning (Hue and Li, 2008; Jin and Cortazzi, 1998a; Zhou and Li, 2015).

Beyond these, another considerable cultural/structural issue relates to insufficient opportunities for teacher development and reflection and negotiation of EFL teaching and

learning experience among teachers as well as between teachers and students. EFL teachers in Chinese higher education tend to be rarely informed of the latest debates and developments in ELT. In most cases, the professional evaluation of teachers by their institution only concerns the textbook units they are required to complete each term, and their teaching is mainly evaluated by whether they have accomplished the assigned texts in the specified period of time (Zhou, 2015). Similarly, the absence of communication and negotiation between colleagues is also identified in Xu et al.'s (2015) investigation of Chinese EFL teachers' English language teaching reflection. They found that opportunities for college English teachers to discuss and share emerging issues in their EFL teaching are very limited due to their heavy teaching and marking workloads. Even though, they occasionally have opportunities to observe their colleagues' lessons as required, teachers tend to only give positive feedback to each other rather than critically discuss their teaching experience, probing issues and challenges occurring in their classroom because of the Chinese culture of 'saving face' and 'giving face' which are essential in developing good interpersonal relationships in the Chinese society. Together with insufficient reflection and training in theoretical and practical knowledge of teacher development, such as journal-reading, attending conferences, and publishing research (Bai and Hudson, 2011; Nunan, 2003; Tran, 2010), a unified view towards the objective of quality EFL education and disciplinary requirements of EFL teaching strategies regulated by the Ministry of Education seem to be far from achieved.

As has been alluded to earlier, ineffective communication channels also exist between teachers and students. In the Chinese context, teachers and textbooks are viewed as authority, which means that students are expected to be obedient and self-disciplined (Xu et al., 2015). Additionally, the EFL curriculum provided for students in China is underpinned by the view

of learning as acquisition of fundamental linguistic knowledge which includes drilling practices such as imitation, repetition, and recitation. It is not a surprise, therefore, that students tend to lack awareness of and skills in critical thinking and reflection about their individual learning demands (Wen et al., 2010). Combined with the pressures of passing CET examination which prioritizes skills of translating, reading and writing rather than speaking and listening (Zhao, 2012), students are expected and also prefer to pay more attention to learning activities that closely relate to the examinations rather than 'talking', especially when the CET results have direct consequences for their graduation. However, as pointed out earlier in relation to research conducted by Zhou (2015), students' neglect of classroom oral participation does not necessarily mean their unwillingness to engage in communicative activities in the classroom, but this seems to be overlooked by teachers due to a lack of communication with their students. For example, teachers reported in Xu et al.'s (2015) study that they don't have time and energy to record and reflect on the issue arising in their classes, and they only deliberate and analyse possible reasons when an unhappy incident occurs. Therefore, the reflection inventory items regarding students' responses, perceptions, and feedback towards the teacher's instructions were found irrelevant to ELT in the Chinese EFL context. In this sense, it can be argued, that the teachers' unexamined assumptions about their students' own goals for EFL education (Tran, 2009), and misunderstanding their students' actual aspirations for EFL, such as their willingness to improve English communicative competence, and being involved in oral participation in the classroom, may increase struggles and challenges that prevent students' development as competent English language learners/speakers (Pomerantz, 2001), and may result in the occurrence of reticence and passive participation in classroom speaking activities. This suggests that a close investigation may be crucial into the students' communicative behaviours in specific oral communication

acts in the classrooms as well as into their actual intentions and interpretations of these participation patterns. It may be that underneath the apparent behaviours lie issues which would contribute greatly to our appreciation of Chinese students' experiences, as Gu and Schweisfurth (2006) argued: situation-specific factors other than culture ought to be taken into account when interpreting students' learning behaviours.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have surveyed the landscape of EFL education in the Chinese sociocultural context by reviewing its high value and demand in the society in meeting both national and individual rapid developmental needs; the current ELT situation in Chinese higher education; and potential challenges Chinese EFL education has confronted of late. Based on this review, it can be seen that EFL education in China has undergone an evolution with a series of reforms and innovations over the past decades, and now enjoys a true boom: the whole society seems to endeavour to educate and produce proficient English users with the goal of "developing English communicative competence" being embraced and advocated vigorously in Chinese education institutions and English training industry. However, underneath the apparent flourish, Chinese EFL learners' speaking skills and oral communication experiences in their daily English language learning seem to be overlooked, and completely taken over by the emphasis on preparing for CET in the tertiary education. When EFL teachers are concerned about their students' reticence and passive oral participation in the classroom, the reality, due to a number of factors discussed in this chapter, may be that they have little knowledge about what their students might be experiencing when involved in the speaking activities, e.g. are they naturally opting to be quiet or do they aspire to talk but are unable to obtain support or are they afraid of engaging in the communication

activities? In other words, EFL education in China has so far not fully succeeded in creating an environment in which students' English speaking skills can be understood and developed. It can be argued that if we want to cultivate and produce competent English speakers, it seems essential to first take a close look at language learners' communication experience, and understand their willingness to communicate in the learning process, and then reflect and find efficient ways of encouraging them to speak and thus improve their communicative skills. This context provides a core rationale for looking inside the learners' experiences of WTC. This brief overview has highlighted the need to look more closely at the multiple dimensions (e.g. students' beliefs and interpretations, teachers' attitudes and instructions, specific learning and communication activities, educational policies, and the Chinese sociocultural values) in the effort to understand Chinese university students' language speaking experiences and their WTC in English. The aim of the following chapter therefore is to offer a systematic review of how research on L2 WTC has been able to integrate these multiple dimensions in its theorizing and research approaches and to demonstrate how this scholarship has contributed to the present study.

3 CHARTING THE EVOLUTION OF 'WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE' IN SLA THEORY AND RESEARCH: TOWARDS PLACING THE PERSON AT THE CENTRE

Promoting language learners' WTC has been argued as a goal of L2 learning and language instruction (MacIntyre et al., 1998). It is believed that by engendering WTC, EFL education can meet its goals in producing more competent English speakers and promote intercultural communication and national contacts. However, WTC is a complicated construct which encompasses psychological, linguistic, educational, and communicative dimensions all together (MacIntyre et al., 2007) has confused and frustrated many L2 researchers, teachers and language learners. Thus, in this chapter, I aim to offer a review of the development in conceptualizing and researching WTC, and then identify potential gaps in the existing WTC studies. First, I will discuss the importance of WTC in SLA as argued from a number of theoretical positions. I will then pay attention to the initial conceptualization of WTC as a predetermined personality trait. After that, other individual related variables including language proficiency, perceived communicative competence, anxiety, and self-concepts which are considered important in relation to WTC will be addressed. Finally, MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC heuristic model in conceptualizing L2 WTC will be discussed.

3.1 SLA Research as a Basis for L2 WTC Inquiry

It is not difficult to find evidence for the claim that a teacher's emphasis on linguistic and grammatical skills tends to produce students who are good at achieving high marks in exams but less capable in authentic use of language. The stress on communicative

competence in some cases result in students being technically amenable in communication especially inside the language class, such as only being able to use dialogues designed in textbooks but not able to use the language flexibly for the purpose of real communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Additionally, sometimes students with excellent test results choose to be quiet in the classroom activities (Gregersen and MacIntyre, 2013). As many EFL practitioners have argued, achieving proficiency measured by standard education does not transfer to successful communication (Yashima, 2012). However, being able to effectively express the intended meaning in communication by using the target language is generally perceived as a prime goal of learning a foreign language. Therefore, creating WTC is the paramount importance in L2 language learning and teaching.

The significance of exploring WTC stems from the recognition that language development can occur through interaction based on a number of theoretical positions. For example, Swain's (1985, 1995) 'Comprehensible Output Hypothesis' argued that output can push learners to process language more deeply with even more mental effort than does input. In the output hypothesis, Swain (1995) claims that producing language facilitates the development of SLA in ways of improving fluency and accuracy. For instance, producing the target language can lead second language learners to consciously recognize some of their potential L2 linguistic problems, and trigger cognitive processes which could either engender new linguistic knowledge or consolidate their existing knowledge (Swain, 1993, Swain and Lapkin, 1994). At the same time, output also allows language learners to try out new language forms and structures, and examine how the target language works in meeting communicative needs (Selinker, 1972; Corder, 1981). Ultimately, by conscious reflection upon their own target language use through negotiation of meaning in interaction, this enables learners to control and internalize linguistic knowledge (Swain, 1995).

The internalization and development of new language through dialogic interaction is also supported in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) which describes learning as a social process and the origination of human intelligence in society or culture. What is believed by Vygotsky is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition, as he argued cognitive development, including language development, arises from the interaction that occurs between individuals (the interpsychological plane). Then, through a process of appropriation, what stems from the social sphere is translated to within the individual (the intrapsychological plane) (Vygotsky, 1986). This internalization process in one's cognitive development as Frawley (1997) pointed out implies the emergence of 'active, nurturing transformation of externals into personally meaningful experience' (p. 95). Thus, from the sociocultural theory perspective, interaction makes the internalization of target language possible, in which language learners stretch their interlanguage, and symbolic artifacts used in L2 related communicative activity, and which can be converted into psychological artifacts that mediate learners' mental activity (Lantolf, 2006). It seems it is this level of output in the interaction which represents the metalinguistic function of using language to reflect on language which allows leaners to control and internalize the target language (Swain, 1995).

With ascribing the role of interaction, Long (1983a), Varonis and Gass (1985b), and others highlighted the significance of conversational interaction for L2 learning by suggesting that it is not input per se that is important to SLA but input which occurs in interaction where meaning is negotiated. It is believed that input becomes more comprehensible under communicative conditions in which input is simplified and modified, thereby the acquisition of a target language results can be achieved through specific interactional and meaning-negotiated conversational turns. In addition, it is assumed that more interaction leads to more

language development and learning (Kang, 2005; Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015). Frequent communication with the target language speaker can broaden opportunities for social activities which may benefit linguistic development. However, on the other hand, unwillingness to maintain contacts with other language users might diminish chances to learn and master the target language.

The significance of communication for second language acquisition has been demonstrated in numerous empirical studies. For example, Muho and Kurani (2014) highlighted the importance of interaction between teachers and students in facilitating L2 language development in class-based learning. Additionally, Lyster (2015) indicated the necessity of corrective feedback in L2 interaction in moving learner's language development forward. Moreover, Ziegler et al.'s (2013) study about eleven intermediate German learners participated in weekly conversation groups shown that L2 communication in an informal, authentic, real-world conversational context can play an important role in providing language learners the acquisition of native-like conversational styles and structures. While, Adams and Boules (2015) pointed out the value of learner-learner interaction in language classrooms rather than native speaker-learner interaction in promoting second language development. These research offered empirical evidence for the value of diverse forms of communications in various contexts for L2 learning and development, at the same time, it also implicates the significance of WTC because WTC has been identified as having a direct link with frequency of communication (Clément et al., 2003; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Yashima et al., 2004). Therefore, WTC should be a paramount component for successful SLA, and needs to be highlighted in L2 education. Now, I will start discussing this construct by reviewing its evolution and relevant research.

3.2 WTC as a Fixed Personality Trait

WTC originated from Burgoon's (1976) concept of unwillingness to communicate. It concerns individual difference in the use of the mother tongue and conceived as a personality trait which is fairly stable over time and across situations. Accordingly, WTC was initially defined as a trait-like predisposition to initiate or avoid communication with others when the individual is free to do so (McCroskey, 1992; McCroskey and Richmond, 1987; 1990). Following this line of personality psychology inquiry, researchers examined numerous personality variables on WTC. For instance, McCroskey and Richmond (1991) identified the development of a person's willingness to engage in communication derived from the individual's introversion and other individual variables such as self-esteem, communication apprehension and perceived communication competence as well. The original focus on such individual difference in determining WTC in L1 interaction soon expanded to empirical exploration of learners' willingness to engage in L2 conversation. In the following sections, I will particularly take account of the attribution of the individual's personality in relation to one's WTC in L2 communications.

According to Pervin and John (2001), personality has been defined as characteristics of the person that 'account for consistent patterns of feelings, thinking, and behaving' (p.4), which indicates the stability attribute of personality. A dominant achievement in this field is the development of the 'Big Five' model which consists five basic personality dimensions including Extraversion-Introversion, Neuroticism-Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Openness to Experience, and each main dimension has several important facets or primary traits. (e.g. Costa and McCrae, 1985, 1989, 1992; Goldberg, 1992, 1993; McCrae and Costa, 1987, 2003, 2008; McCrae and John, 1992). As McIntyre and Charos

(1996) argued, each of the five aspects contributes to developing an individual's motive in language learning and to engaging in communication in L2.

The consideration of the importance of an individual's personality in determining one's behaviour in general, and learning achievement, in particular, might be one of the reasons drawing researchers' intense attention to personality studies. In terms of the link between personality and L2 learning and speaking, there are some appreciably interesting findings. For example, Dewaele and Furnham (1999, 2000) identified in their study that extraverts appear to be more fluent than introverts both in L1 and L2 verbal communication and particularly in formal situations featuring interpersonal pressure. Whereas, introverts tend to hesitate more often, make errors and are less capable in producing utterances of great length due to the perceived increased stress which can inhibit the automaticity of speech production. Similarly, language learners with personality dispositions as extraversion, impulsiveness, socialisation and flexibility were found to be more risk-taking and more willing to engage in communication (Wen and Clément, 2003; Cao, 2011). However, considering high achieving language learners, Ehrman's (2008) study shows that the best learners tend to possess introverted personality. Additionally, MacIntyre et al.'s (2007) study also shows that introvert students performed best when learning in a familiar environment, while at the same time they also point out that extraverts can learn better in more novel conditions. Together with Wakanoto's (2009) investigation on learners' personality and different learning strategies and currently Alishah's (2014) research about the role of situational and personality traits on L2 WTC, these studies suggest that different personality features may have different benefits on L2 learning based on particular situational learning conditions. Consistently, Verhoeven and Vermeer's (2002) study which was the first to apply the Big Five model in L2 research, identified that Openness to Experience is the only one

personality construct correlating substantially with the linguistic abilities of children across all organizational, strategic and pragmatic competence for L2 communication.

These empirical studies provide evidence for the impact of personality traits on one's L2 learning, probability of WTC and quality of L2 production; however, at the same time, they also indicate that personality does not play a determinant role on second language development and utilization because different features of one's personality function in various ways in different learning and communication environments. This seems accordant with investigations of the correlations between personality and academic achievement in a more general term (e.g. Ackerman et al., 2011; Heaven and Ciarrochi, 2012; O'Connor and Paunonen, 2007). Among numerous studies, findings tend to show that the role of personality on one's achievement is relatively limited, and disconnect with the widespread perception of both teachers and parents that the good language learners have prominent personality set-up (Gardner, 1985; Swain and Burnaby, 1976). As Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) argued it is hard to make prediction for one's achievement based on an individual's personality traits, as successful learners can integrate their personality features to achieving best effect by applying their specific strength and amending their potential weakness in responding to the particular context of the learning situation.

The unapparent linear relationships between personality and achievement including L2 learning and using can possibly explain that considerable evidence is emerging to show that personality factors interact with other variables within the learning environment, such as age, educational setting, and course (Skehan, 1989; Farsides and Woodfield, 2003; Noftle and Robins, 2007; O'Connor and Paunonen, 2007). As Pervin and John (2001) argued, 'To a certain extent people are the same regardless of context, and to a certain extent they also are different depending on the context' (p. 290). The recognition of the inseparability of

personality from the context leads to the development of McAdams and Pals's 'New Big Five' (2006) with an aim to explain the dynamic development of real people in actual context (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015). Thus, rather than conceptualizing personality as a direct influence on language development, it seems more proper and important to conceive it as a variable which on the one hand set the context and stage for language learning and L2 communication, while on the other hand, it also can be affected and develops alongside the individual language learners' experiences of L2 learning and using (e.g. McIntyre et al., 1998; Dewaele, 2012a; Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015). In this sense, the recognition of WTC as predetermined personality traits tends to be far more enough due to its flexibility with other variables in communication contexts. Now, I will discuss some other important individual related factors in respect of a person's L2 WTC.

3.3 The Interplay of Language Proficiency, Perceived Communicative Competence and Communication Anxiety

Besides one's personality characteristics, proficiency of the target language will also have considerable influence on the person's willingness to engage in interactions by using that language. In L2 communication, language proficiency is normally described in terms of 'communicative competence' in order to involve the complexities of knowledge and skill essential for communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Due to its importance in L2 learning and using, communicative competence has received great attention in Applied Linguistics over the past decades (e.g. Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983, Canale and Swain, 1980; Teven et al., 2010). According to Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell (1995), communicative competence includes five main constituent abilities ranging from linguistic, discourse, action, sociocultural to strategic competence. Among these, strategic competence which refers to

knowledge of communication strategies that can be used to deal with language-related deficiencies during the conversation, is considered particular important in developing one's linguistic self-confidence and achieving effective communication, as it works as 'first aid kit' that can come into action directly when the speaker encounter difficulties in communication. Therefore, some speakers seem to communicate fluently even with only 100 words (MacIntyre et al., 1998), which may imply that the speaker's actual language proficiency per se does not play a determinant role in one's WTC and effective communication; there are other factors which may interplay simultaneously, thus L2 proficiency has been treated as a distant rather than a proximal influential factor (ibid.).

3.3.1 Language proficiency vs. perceived communicative competence

It seems that there is no doubt that low linguistic proficiency could impede language learners from taking the risk of using the target language in the L2 communications. A number of empirical studies have reported its unfavourable influence on speaker's WTC and L2 using. In Cao's (2011) study, it was found that deficient language competence inhibited L2 communication in terms of both comprehension and production. Either in listening or reading, problems encountered by students in comprehension could cause a decrease of WTC and lead finally to boredom, as a consequence. In addition, a lack of lexical resources for communication would hinder the language learners' willingness to speak with others. These findings seem have been supported in more recent research such as in Peng's (2014) study of Chinese EFL university students' WTC. Difficulty in oral expression was identified as a frequently mentioned factor resulting in avoiding interaction in L2 and reliance on their first language which has been considered as definitely a hamper for WTC and language production

in L2. Moreover, the findings have also shown that discrepant linguistic proficiency and non-standard pronunciation occurred between interlocutors were found likely to cause difficulty in comprehension during interaction. Similar results with regard to the disadvantage of one's language proficiency in relation to WTC can be identified in numerous empirical research across various L2 learning and communication contexts (e.g. Cheng, 2000; Duff, 2001; Feiermuth and Jarrel, 2006; Liu and Jackson, 2008; Kobayashi, 2003).

However, comparing with actual L2 proficiency, perceived communicative competence has been argued as a stronger predictor of L2 performance (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Perceived competence is a cognitive component which refers to learner's self-evaluation of proficiency achieved in L2, and is one of the important constituents of L2 self-confidence (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The construct of L2 self-confidence represents relatively enduring personal characteristics in terms of the overall belief in being able to communicate in an efficient manner (Clément, 1980, 1986; Clément and Kruidenier, 1985; MacIntyre et al., 1998). Self-confidence has been concordantly identified as playing a vital role in contributing both L1 and L2 WTC across different contexts, such as Canada (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; Clément et al., 2003; MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 2001, 2003), US (McCroskey and Richmond, 1991), Poland (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011), China (Peng and Woodrow, 2010; Peng, 2014), Japan (Fushino, 2008; Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004), Korea (Kim, 2004), Iran (Ghonsooly et al., 2012), and Turkey (Cetinkaya, 2005).

As a key contributor of self-confidence, in many communication situations perceived communicative competence tends to exert more direct and powerful impact on determining whether or not the person chooses to engage in the L2 conversation. McCroskey and Richmond (1991) mentioned that although communicative competence is an important antecedent of WTC, WTC will be a function of how the individual perceives his or her

competence rather than the actual linguistic development. As has been argued by Peng (2014), individuals usually decide to approach or avoid communication depending on their self-evaluation of their L2 communicative competence rather than on real objective evidence. Therefore, it seems not difficult to find the phenomenon that many relatively competent communicators choose to avoid L2 communication due to their inappropriate lower estimation that they do not have the necessary competence in themselves, whereas in other cases, some incompetent communicators who believe that they are competent enough in L2 communication will show accordant higher level of willingness to speak.

The pleasant role of perceived communicative competence in encouraging L2 WTC has been embraced and elucidated in many studies in the field of applied linguistics. For instance, both Yashima (2002) and Yashima et al.'s (2004) investigation of Japanese EFL language learners indicated significant positive correlations between perceived communicative competence and learners' WTC in L2, which are congruent and well supplemented with others existing findings (Cao and Philp, 2006; Cetinkaya, 2005; Clément et al., 2003, Ghonsooly et al., 2012, Kim, 2004; Öz et al., 2015; Yousef et al., 2012; Yu, 2008). The construct is usually measured by items which concerns self-judgement of communication competence adopted from McCroskey and Baer's (1985) L1 WTC and later adapted to refer to L2 situations by MacIntyre and Charos (1996). Normally research participants are required to indicate their self-assessed competency in certain situations such as public, meeting, small group and dyad, with each scale between 0 (completely incompetent) to 100 (completely competent).

However, this quantitative measurement seems insufficient in exploring the situated facet of perceived communicative competence. MacIntyre et al. (1998) identified the state feature of perceived competence, which refers to the feeling that one is capable of

38

communicating effectively at a particular moment. This recognition highlighted the important role of specific learning context or communicative activity. As they argued that a situation which has been encountered previously and offered that the speaker developed language knowledge and skills would enhance one's state perceived communicative competence, whereas novel situations in which the language learner cannot ensure his/her communicative proficiency in meeting the speaking demands, appear to be particularly detrimental to WTC. Moreover, the interplay of perceived communicative competence with other variables existing within the communicative context has been evidenced in a number of studies. For example, Öz et al. (2015) found the indirect influence of one's motivation on reducing communication anxiety and enhancing perceived communicative competence. Additionally, in studies of researching perceived communicative competence as a component of self-confidence, Cao's (2011) study of situational WTC indicated the role of increasing familiarity with interlocutors in enhancing perceived communicative competence, and then promoting language learners' situational L2 WTC. More recently, in their qualitative study of an advanced language learner's L2 self-development in Australia over a period of two years, Edwards and Roger (2015) identified that there appear to be a cyclic interaction among L2 proficiency, self-perceived competence, and WTC. In other words, higher perceived competence can promote greater WTC that leads to more language practice and linguistic proficiency which then in turn enhances one's self evaluation of language proficiency. In addition, it was also found that high risk L2 context that may evoke language learner's perception of control can help the development of one's linguistic self-confidence. This emerging evidence showing the situated and complicated characteristic of perceived communicative competence suggest a more detailed and in-depth approach in exploring potential influential factors in relation to a person's L2 WTC.

3.3.2 Individual emotions and L2 WTC: The role of communication anxiety

A construct closely related to perceived communicative competence is communicative anxiety, which is the affective component of self-confidence, referring to the uncomfortable feeling or negative emotional reactions when learning and using L2 (MacIntyre et al, 1998). Communication anxiety is probably the most used term in L2 WTC studies (e.g. Baker and MacIntyer, 2000; Cetinkaya, 2005; Hashimoto, 2002; Kim, 2004), which captures the anxiety tied up with L2 communication not only in educational settings, but also in social interactive situations (Yashima, 2002). Although the concept of anxiety has been consistently attracting attention in the field of SLA studies (e.g. MacIntyre, 1999; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000; Young, 1999), and has been generally conceptualized at trait, state and situation-specific levels, there tend to be an overall uncertainty about whether it should be classified as a motivational component, a personality trait, or an emotion, as it can manifest itself in various forms, such as a fear of speaking, a fear of misunderstanding others, a fear of being misunderstood, a fear of being laughed at, and it also involves other negative feelings, like worry, embarrassment, and self-consciousness (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015). All these negative feelings can cause unhealthy learning behaviours, such as procrastination or the tendency of perfectionism, and may result in individuals giving up their language learning as a further consequence in the longer term (Dewaele and Thirtle, 2009; Gregersen, 2003).

In order to make it researchable, Horwitz and associates (1986) developed a 33-item, 5-point Likert-scale instrument, the widely used Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), to measure anxiety from three dimensions: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluations. The research approach is normally based on how the construct is operationalized in measurement terms, and there are a number of well-established research instruments available and widely used in studies in SLA (e.g. Cheng, 2002;

Elkhafaifi, 2005; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991b, 1994; Young, 1999).

According to these research studies, the detrimental effect of anxiety on L2 performance and achievement is extensively recognized. As MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012a, p. 103) pointed out, 'One of the most consistent findings in the SLA literature is that higher levels of language anxiety are associated with lower levels of language achievement'. L2 language learners who have a relatively higher level of anxiety tend to show avoidance behaviours in their L2 learning, such as missing classes, postponing assignments or avoiding interaction with the use of their L2 (Horwitz et al.,1986). Anxiety as an obstructor in the learning process has been evidenced and documented in various studies across a range of research contexts with different language learners such as Japanese (Aida, 1994; Machida, 2001; Saito and Samimy, 1996), French (Coulombe, 1996; Phillips, 1992), Spanish (Sellers, 2000), Arabic (Elkhafaifi, 2005) and English (Liu, 2006; Woodrow, 2006).

The unhealthy impact of anxiety seems more conspicuous in L2 oral communication situations. As has been argued, the debilitating force of anxiety may occur at different stages of language use from input through language processing to output (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991a, 1991b; MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012b; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000), because 'the brain allocates finite cognitive resources to coping with the anxiety instead of attending to immediate communicative needs' (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015). Language learners may find it difficult to fully express their ideas that they could articulate well in their native language, or they forget things that they otherwise know or make silly mistakes in an anxiety-provoking climate. Such inhibiting influences of anxiety on oral interaction or achievement have been reported in numerous studies (Machida, 2001; Peng, 2014; Phillips, 1992; Woodrow, 2006). For instance, In Woodrow's (2006) study, by measuring 275 international students' speaking anxiety inside and outside of EAP course in Australia with the use of the Second Language

Speaking Anxiety Scale (SLSAS) and a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the author found significant negative correlations between anxiety and oral assessment in IELTS tests. Similar results have been supported in Yashima's (2002) L2 communication model in the Japanese EFL context, in which communicative anxiety was negatively correlated with L2 communication and L2 WTC.

Additionally, empirical research also implicates the close relationship between communication anxiety and the language learning and using context in which the speaker is immersed. For example, Kim (1998) identified that 57 Korean EFL college students, were considerably more anxious in the conversation class than in the reading class. In addition, based on an investigation of EAP students' situational WTC within L2 classroom in a university-based language school in New Zealand, Cao (2011) pointed out that anxiety could be triggered in a whole-class situation where peer pressure was relatively high, in addition, the teacher's presence and participation in group work could also result in students feeling too anxious to speak with L2. More recently, Shahraki and Seyedrezaei (2015) in their study of 60 Iranian EFL language learners not only verified the significant relationship between learner anxiety and WTC, but also identified that the sources of anxiety mainly associate with teachers and classmates, which was in line with Williams and Andrade's (2008) investigation among 243 Japanese students in 31 English conversation classes at 4 universities in Japan.

Moreover, speaker's communicative anxiety also dynamically interacts with his or her perceived communicative competence. Studies have been consistently found that both of them strongly correlate or predict L2 WTC (Liu and Jackson, 2008; MacIntyre et al., 2002; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011, Yashima, 2002), in addition, anxiety appears to negatively affect perceived competence both in L1 (MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 1999; McCroskey et al., 1977) and L2 communication (Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre et al., 1997). In their research

which examined 37 students learning French as an L2 students' anxiety, perceived L2 competence and actual L2 competence, MacIntyre and associates (1997) reported that anxious students tended to underestimate their competence. Concordantly, Hsu (2015) indicated that EFL students who perceived their oral language proficiency to be weaker were more anxious about exposing the limits of their English competence and were likely to feel inhibited and less confident about speaking in class. What is more, both Baker and MacIntyre (2000) and MacIntyre et al.'s (2003) study suggest that the relationship of anxiety and perceived competence with L2 WTC is different and not stable depending on learners' L2 contact and experience. They identified that communication anxiety was a stronger predictor of L2 WTC for students with immersion experience because they are faced with high expectation to acquire L2, while the role of perceived competence was not prominent; it tended to be a more salient factor for non-immersion students in MacIntyre et al. (2003), but appeared to be relatively low in Baker and MacIntyre's (2000) findings due to less frequent chances of L2 contact. This may suggest the importance of taking account learning contexts and individual communication experience, when examining communication anxiety and perceived communicative competence in relation to L2 WTC.

Although anxiety has been extensively investigated. Scovel (2001) argued that it is probably the most misunderstood affective variable of all. Due to its detrimental impact on language learning, communication and achievement is widely recognized, the construct is therefore likely to be considered as an arch-enemy which should be eliminated at all costs especially in the language teaching methodological contexts. However, according to the development of research in anxiety, it has been gradually become clear that anxiety does not necessarily inhibit performance, but in some cases can indeed facilitate it (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015). For instance, according to Oxford's (1990) observation, anxious learners tend to listen

to the teacher's instructions more carefully than their non-anxious peers during language learning activities. Additionally, as MacIntyre (2002) indicated, that an increase in effort is a normal response to anxiety, particularly when it is at a milder level, the overall consequence of being anxious may actually be beneficial.

The positive facet of anxiety tends to have emerged in more recent studies. For example, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) examined the interaction between anxiety and enjoyment in the language learning process. By employing the newly developed Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) scale in web-based questionnaires among 1746 multilinguals, the researchers identified that low anxiety does not necessarily mean high levels of enjoyment, and vice versa; however, instead, they found that a productive interaction of both emotions are needed for adaptive learning behaviours and more successful and active learning, as 'enjoyment encouraging playful exploration and anxiety generating focus on the need to take specific action from time to time' (p. 262). The findings seem to echo Edwards and Roger's (2015) conclusion in their recent study that gaining control in increasing 'high risk' and anxiety communicative contexts, and coming out from one's comfort zones is effective in developing L2 self-confidence and improving language proficiency. The study result may suggest that traditional measurement of communication anxiety is ineffective in exploring and identifying the multi-faceted nature of this construct and its dynamic interplay with other influential variables in relation to an individual's WTC and language development. As has been challenged by Pavlenko (2013, p 6), traditional examination by items with identical content seems decontextualized and 'exhausted its limited explanatory potential' in exploring the emerging complex of anxiety in relation to WTC. Therefore, a new methodological approach which allows for detailed consideration and investigation of individual,

communicative context and complicated adaption on influencing learner's L2 learning and WTC is needed for future research.

Due to these significant potential impacts on language development and WTC, over the several decades, researchers and practitioners had been endeavouring to understand this construct, there are emerging, interesting and important findings. For example, an ongoing inquiry concerns difference between introverted and extraverted personalities in respect to anxiety, which have found that high anxiety particularly when associated with high introversion can result in deterred automatic processing and therefore inhibit L2 fluency (Dewaele, 2002; 2013). Besides, it has also experienced a developed recognition from viewing it as a symptom of cognitive deficit (e.g. Sparks and Ganschow, 1995; 2007; Sparks et al., 2009) to possibly 'both a cause and effect, part of a non-linear, ongoing learning and performance process' (Horwitz, 2000; MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012a, p. 106), and further its dynamics with moment-by-moment changes in relation to WTC such as links between difficulties in vocabulary retrieval in real time and the anxiety experienced by language learners during communication (e.g. Gregersen et al., 2014; MacIntyre, 2012; MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012b; MacIntyre and Legatto, 2011; MacIntyre and Serroul, 2015; Piniel and Csizér, 2015).

Moreover, it has also been investigated with other ranges of diverse emotions that language learners may experience in instructional settings and communicative situations, which then can impact on the quality of their language learning and L2 communications. For instance, wide scope of emotional factors including negative feelings of anxiety, boredom, frustration, embarrassment, anger, or more positive ones such as interest, excitement, enjoyment, satisfaction, responsibility and security were identified as emerging, waxing and waning across communicative situations, and shown as having great influence on the

construction and co-construction of language learners' L2 WTC in a number of empirical studies (e.g. Cao, 2011; Goetz et al., 2006; Hsu, 2015; Kang, 2005; Pekrun et al., 2002; Peng, 2014). In addition, in a more recent study, it was also found that one's ability to recognize one's and other's emotion, and managing these emotions can play a facilitating role in promoting L2 communication (Oz, 2015). All these explorations on the one hand again highlighted the complexity of individual emotions in relation to one's WTC, on the other hand, together with what has been discussed previously, such as personality, the interplay of language proficiency and perceived communicative competence, it also implies a significant link with one's sense of self because it can actively guide and manage an individual's interpretation and responses to different elements existing in language learning and communication context. Now, I will discuss individual's self-related constructs in respect to L2 WTC in the following section.

3.4 Diverse Conceptualisations of 'Self' and 'Context' in Relation to L2 WTC

In SLA, issues of learner individual differences, learner-centeredness, and autonomy have been attracting researchers' keen interest over the years. These placed the learner on the centre stage and highlighted the crucial role individuals play in language development. The core of understanding the individual language learner is the appreciation of their sense of self and how this mediates their language learning experience and use. There is emerging evidence showing the importance of the language learner's sense of self in guiding one's L2 learning and willingness in target language use. For example, an empirical study reported that over concern about how individuals are viewed by their peers, and lose face if they made errors exerted a debilitating effect on their WTC, which is also supported in a number of

studies (e.g. Peng, 2007; 2014; Wen and Clément, 2003). For instance, Peng (2014) found that Chinese students may go through a subconscious process of assessing the meaning or responsibility of speaking up in responding to other's attitudes and views towards them before they took actual action. While on the other hand, face concern may not always work as a threat of one's sense of self, because concerns with saving others' face may help develop language learners' WTC in some cases, such as speaking up in order to break the embarrassing silence for the teacher (ibid.). Therefore, one's sense of self is a significant aspect in respect of one's language development and WTC, thus needs a detailed discussion in the following sections.

3.4.1 Interpretation of one's past experience: Attribution theory

People's subjective attribution of reasons for their past successes and failures is a substantial construct for their future action (Weiner, 1992). Although the attribution theory has not been explicitly applied in L2 WTC research, it seems hard to doubt that language learners' subjective interpretation and evaluation about their prior experience can be an initial constituent in shaping one's L2 motivation and self-concept. This in turn would influence one's L2 learning and WTC in specific language using situations. According to attribution theory, people who ascribe past failure to low ability will be unlikely to try the activity again, while if they attribute the reason to insufficient effort or improper strategies they employed previously, it's more likely for them to have another try. Ushioda's (1996; 1998; 2001) study of Irish learners of English illustrated the vital role of attributional process in language studies with an identification that attributing positive L2 outcomes to personal ability or other internal factors such as investment or perfectionism, while attributing negative L2 outcomes to

temporary deficiencies that might be overcome, such as insufficient effort or lack of opportunity to practice, are essential in constituting healthy L2 learning thinking. Attribution theory underlined the importance of an individual's previous experience in the L2 learning process because a person's interpretation of the prior experiences are closely linked with their future learning process and achievement. At the same time, it implies the significance of individual self in guiding and regulating one's L2 learning behaviours. Moreover, the theory indicated the limitation of traditional survey methodology broadly employed previously in explaining and understanding L2 learning in varied idiosyncratic situations, and opened the door to qualitative inquiry (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2015).

3.4.2 The individual's self-concept

An important dimension of one's sense of self is self-concept. According to Mercer (2011) a person's self-concept concerns a set of beliefs or perceptions one holds about oneself. It has been conceptualized as 'a self-description judgement that includes an evaluation of competence and the feelings of self-worth associated with the judgement in question' in a specific domain (Pajares and Schunk, 2005, p. 105). The construct is defined broadly to capture sets of beliefs related to a specific domain across a range of contexts, and embraces both affective and cognitive dimensions. Mercer (2011) refers self-concept to one's current self-states, which are closely tied to the specific situation, which implies that understanding of self-concept should not be separated from its setting. Additionally, the multi-faceted nature of self-concept has also been revealed in previous research (Marsh et al., 2001, 2001; Schunk, 2003; Yeung and Wong, 2004). It has been argued that different domains of self-concept develop and change in different ways over time (Young and Mroczek, 2003). Moreover,

learners can hold a working self-concept of the moment around their core sense of self which is more stable across time and place (Mercer, 2011). In this sense, considering context in understanding the variability of the self-concept and the ways in which self-concept may interact with and be influenced by other variables would be highly important (Onorato and Turner, 2004).

Concerning the L2 WTC domain specifically, the investigation of self in relation to one's WTC in L2 is in its infancy. Although Lyon's (2014) work does not focus on L2 WTC in particular, his longitudinal study of the L2 self-concept as a factor influencing motivation to learn L2 indicated that learner's WTC with both L2 learners from the same social context and English speakers from different learning contexts is significantly influenced by whether the learner is able to maintain his or her L2 self-concept when facing threats. In addition, by adopting a multi-case study design, Peng's (2016) recent work described the dynamic interplay of an individual learner's self-concept, L2 WTC and the context in the Chinese EFL university, which highlighted the importance of contextual factors in constructing one's self-concept, which in the meantime played a significant role affecting the learners' WTC and communicative behaviours.

3.4.3 Pursuing psychological needs: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

L2 WTC has even been viewed as an extension of the motivation construct (Dörnyei and Skehan, 2003). One of the dominant motivational theories is self-determination theory (SDT) which concerns how human beings pursue three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness and competence (Deci and Ryan, 1985; 2009; Ryan and Deci, 2002). Autonomy refers to the feeling of being in control of one's own behaviour; relatedness is the

need for belonging or being connected to others; and competence concerns the feeling that one is capable or accomplished. Two principal theoretical concepts derived from SDT are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Noels, 2001; 2003; 2009; Noels et al., 2000).

Deci and Ryan (2000) argued that meeting the three core psychological needs can promote intrinsically motivated actions and benefit the integration of extrinsic motivation as well. Intrinsic motivation regards enjoyment and a feeling of satisfaction associated with an activity, and it involves three substrates: knowledge (motivation for gaining knowledge), accomplishment (motivation for achieving goals), stimulation (the sense of reward when performing the task). While, extrinsic motivation concerns regulation of the activity, including external, introjected, identified and integrated, four types of regulations. Respectively, external regulation represents external motive regulated performance of an activity such as for obtaining a better job; introjected regulation concerns the performance of an activity guided by learners' self-induced pressure, like a feeling of guilt if they are not capable of speaking English; identified regulation indicates the incentive to perform an activity is driven by internalised personally important goals; integrated regulation, the highest degree of self-determined regulation, which refers to a state of fully assimilation of an activity into one's values, beliefs or the self.

The framework of SDT theory offered a cognitive perspective while focusing on the micro language learning environment and has been applied broadly in EFL research (Chu, 2008; Wu, 2003; Yashima, 2009), like Noels (2009) indicated that it represents 'the experience of language learners across different contexts' (p. 299). For instance, Deci and Ryan (2000) pointed out that language learners in collectivistic sociocultural contexts tend to highly value relatedness and group norms, and more likely to internalize opinions and choices made by others, which then can influence their language learning and using behaviours.

Consistently, Wen and Clément (2003) identified that group cohesiveness, teacher support and attachment to in-group members, which correspond with relatedness within the SDT, are important factors affecting Chinese students' WTC inside the language classroom. Additionally, in more recent study of 243 Iranian English-major university students' L2 WTC, by using SDT as a motivational framework, Khajavy et al. (2014) found autonomous motivation affected L2 WTC in an indirect way through communication confidence, which suggests that students with higher levels of autonomous motivation are likely to interpret themselves as more competent, then less anxious and more willing to speak in English. At the same time, the results also revealed that L2 achievement as a part of intrinsic motivation was a strong predictor for communication confidence, which in turn promotes language learners' L2 WTC. Moreover, Yue's (2014) investigation revealed that extrinsic motivation such as the feeling of guilt in disappointing parents, and the desire in meeting parents and teachers' expectations, and future career development, exerted powerful impacts on the Chinese university student's L2 WTC in classroom communications.

3.4.4 Language learner's possible selves and self-discrepancy theory

The pursuit of psychological needs relates to future states of one's sense of self which have been conceptualized in psychology as possible selves representing individuals' ideas of 'what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming' (Markus and Nurius, 1987, p. 157). Possible selves concern individuals' as-yet unrealized potential, therefore, in this sense, they function as future self-guides dealing with how individuals are moved from the present towards the future and thus link the current self-system with self-guided behaviour (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009). The Ideal L2 self and the

Ought-to L2 self are the two main types of possible selves identified in SLA domain. The former considers a desirable self-image of the kind of L2 user that one would ideally like to be in the future; and the Ought-to L2 self reflects the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes in the process of L2 learning (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009).

Dörnyei's (2005) employed these two types of possible selves in the L2 Motivational Self System along with the consideration of L2 learning experience. The L2 learning experience addresses the direct impact of the individual's learning environment, such as the impact of the L2 teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, and the experience of success, which highlighted the inseparable relationship between the self-related constructs and the social context. The core tenet is that if people see a discrepancy between their Ideal/Ought-to L2 self and their current state, they may be motivated to learn a new language or develop their language proficiency further in an existing one because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy (Higgins, 1987, 1996). In this vein, it is possible to argue that L2 WTC could be the outcome of one's self-discrepancy reduction process between the current self-state and future possible selves.

Possible selves have been broadly employed in EFL research across various L2 learning contexts, such as Pakistan (Islam et al., 2013), Japan (Ryan, 2009; Uekia and Takeuchib, 2013; Yashima, 2009;), Korea (Cho, 2012; Kim, 2012; Kim and Kim, 2012; 2014; Kang and Kim, 2015), Iran (Papi, 2010; Rajab et al., 2012;), China (Dörnyei and Chan, 2013; Huanga et al., 2015; You et al., 2015; Zhan and Wan, 2016), Saudi Arabia (Khan, 2015), with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. These studies provide empirical evidence in supporting that Ideal/Ought-to L2 self as well as L2 learning experience are significant parts in language learners' L2 learning process. For example, Csizér and Kormos (2014) examined

possible relationships between ideal selves, self-regulation strategies and autonomous learning behaviours among 638 language learners in a Hungarian context. Kim and Kim's (2014) study identified that both the Ideal L2 self and the Ought-to self rather than self-regulated learning skills exerted significant influence on Korean EFL students' academic achievement in English. More recently, Kang and Kim's (2015) study revealed that Ought-to L2 self and L2 learning experience played more important roles than Ideal L2 self in Korean university students' motivation. Additionally, even in similar sociocultural background, Ideal L2 self was identified as the most powerful impetus for motivated behaviours among l667 EFL language learners in a Chinese context in Zhang's (2015) investigation. At the same time, the study also highlighted the importance of visual and imagery in Chinese students' L2 learning.

Considering language learners' WTC in L2, a number of studies have addressed the dispensable role of possible selves. For instance, Yashima's (2009) earlier work of exploring the links between willingness to communicate and possible selves in Japanese EFL context demonstrated a strong correlation between Ideal L2 self and integrated regulation, which suggests that learning and using an L2 become a habitual activity when learning an L2 has been integrated as a natural part of the language learner's self-concept. Moreover, by using structural equation modelling approach, Munezane (2013) found Ideal L2 self was a significant predictor of L2 WTC among 373 Japanese university students. Similarly, Ghanizadeh et al. (2015) examined the relationships between L2 motivational self-system, and WTC among 160 Iranian EFL learners. The results indicated significant and positive correlations between L2 WTC with all three motivational components, and particularly Ideal L2 self, played a more prevalent role than others in promoting effective and enthusiastic language use in the L2 classroom. These empirical research offered substantial evidence for

the importance of possible selves in relation to one's L2 WTC, and highlighted the meaning of careful consideration and investigation of one's sense of self when studying language learners' L2 WTC.

3.4.5 Identity and L2 WTC

Another important facet constituting a person's sense of self is identity. According to Norton (2000, p. 5), identity has been defined as 'how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future'. Prior research inquiry focuses on how the language learners negotiate their sense of self in relation to various contexts with the emphasis of the social nature of the self, a person's relationships with others and the construction of their identity in various settings (Kanno and Norton, 2003; Norton and Kamal, 2003; Ryan, 2006). As Mercer (2011) argued, that different from self-concept which is concerned more with the inner psychological sense of self in a particular domain, identity is considered more the interplay of self with a particular sociocultural context or community of practice. In this sense, self-concept and identity tend to be reciprocally interrelated with each other in which identity is a construct grounded in an individual's self-concept, but focused primarily on the relationship between the individual's sense of self and a particular society.

Considering L2 learning in particular, Norton (2000) related this construct to the motivational concept of 'investment'. It proposes that an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own identity that is constantly changing across time and space. Norton uses the term identity to refer to a person's understanding of his or her relationship with the world and how that relationship is constructed across time and space.

Significantly, the notion of investment presumes a language learner as having a complex social history and multiple desires (Norton, 2000). From this perspective, the significance of the social context and the socially and historically constructed relationships of L2 users to the context are highlighted and this implies the importance of taking account in empirical investigations of the broader context in which L2 communication takes place.

Norton (2000) argued that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but rather they are constantly constructing and reconstructing a sense of self and the relationship with their social world. Although this argument draws on multi-ethnic society, it seems still compatible with monolingual and mono-cultural contexts. In this vein, language learning and use should be considered as a sociocultural and historically situated process (Lafford, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2003; Zuengler and Miller, 2006). Although WTC has originated from a psychological dimension (Burgoon, 1976) and has typically been studied separately from L2 use (MacIntyre et al., 1998), it seems important to aim at understanding WTC through L2 users' actual communication behaviours, their participation in classroom activities and in social networks involving L2 use outside of the classroom, and thus gain an appreciation of the relationships constructed by L2 users within the social context.

3.4.6 WTC as a process of social identification

Rather than a socioculturally neutral educational area, foreign language learning can be influenced by various social psychological factors such as language attitudes, cultural stereotypes, ideologies and even geopolitical considerations. According to Gardner and Lambert's (1972), 'students' attitudes toward the specific language group are bound to

influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language' (Gardner, 1985, p. 6). What underpins this argument is the process of social identification in which language learners 'must be willing to identify with members of another ethnolinguistic group and take on very subtle aspects of their behaviours (ibid., p. 135), by which it sustains the long-term motivation needed for mastery of a second language, and can indirectly affect L2 WTC through interacting with other variables, because the desire to be a part of the target L2 community indicates increased involvement and quality of contact with that community (MacIntyre et al.,1998). This social identification or in Gardner and Lambert's (1972) term 'integrative motivation' has been widely investigated and applied in many L2 WTC research (Clément, 1984; 1986; Clément and Kruidenier, 1985; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 2002; 2003). For instance, Hashimoto (2002) found a significant path from L2 WTC to the process of social identification among 56 Japanese students. Concordantly, strong correlations between L2 WTC and integrative motivation have been also revealed based on results of MacIntyre et al.'s (2002; 2003) research of immersion programme. These studies highlighted the social identification in moving people to make certain choices to engage and persist in their English learning, and also indicated links of antecedent factors, individual difference variables, language acquisition contexts, and learning outcomes in the L2 acquisition process.

3.4.7 Considering WTC in a global community

In the context of the spread of English as a global language where there is no specific salient target group of L2 speakers, the notion of social identification within the target language community was no longer common among language learners (McDonough, 1981;

Clément and Kruidenier, 1985), and usually a foreign language is primarily learned as a school subject (Dörnyei, 1990; 1994; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Warden and Lin, 2000). Therefore, in such a context, identification with the L2 community did not make sense any more, and the explicit path between L2 WTC and the integrative motivation tends to be missing in a number of quantitative and qualitative studies (e.g. Kang, 2005; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Peng, 2007; Yashima, 2002). Moreover, there is emerging research that shows that language learners do not necessarily intend to identify with native English speaking communities but rather adapt to and associate with intercultural communities with a multicultural awareness (e.g. Baker, 2011; Jenkins et al., 2011). For example, Wang (2013) identified that some Chinese students explicitly expressed that they are not yearning for identification with native English speakers when they engage in intercultural encounters. These empirical research indicates an emerging need to reinterpret it with a broader form of identification (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Lamb, 2004; McClelland, 2000).

In responding to the call, Yashima (2000; Yashima et al., 2004) introduced the concept of international posture to reflecting 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 toward different cultures' (Yashima, 2000, p. 57). International posture has been reported as an influential component to language learners' L2 WTC. Yashima argued that it is important 'having things to communicate with the world' (Yashima, 2009, p. 156). It has been identified in a number of studies that international posture had a direct impact on L2 WTC and motivation, whereas motivation affected L2 WTC in an indirect way through the mediation of communication confidence (Cetinkaya, 2005; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Yashima, 2002, Yashima et al., 2004). This may suggest the

significance of self-identification in a broader macro-context in relation to one's L2 WTC experience.

3.5 MacIntyre's L2 WTC Model

The emerging empirical evidence led to the realization that L2 WTC cannot be explained as 'a simple manifestation of WTC in the L1' (p. 546). Therefore, MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1998, p. 547) proposed a multilayered pyramid L2 WTC model (see Figure 3.1) which includes a range of linguistic, communicative, social psychological influential variables, and extended the conceptualization of L2 WTC as 'a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2'. The model comprises six layers representing the proximity of impact of different variables in relation to the top layer, L2 use (Box 1). In this layer, communicative behaviour has been defined in a broad sense, not only including oral activities such as speaking L2 in language class or on the job, but also other types of communication like reading newspapers or writing an email in L2. It is believed that the action of L2 use is an outcome of a complex system of interactive variables (ibid.).
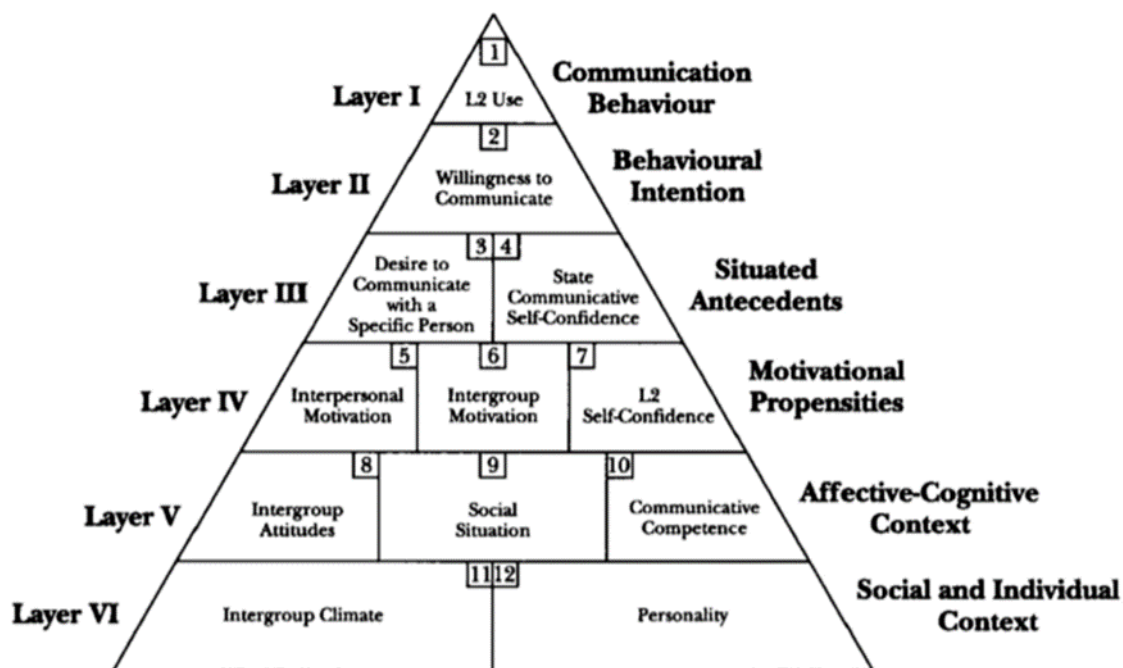
Figure 3. 1 Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547)

The most proximal predictor of the actual L2 use is L2 WTC (Box 2) which is placed in Layer II (Behavioural Intention), and conceived of as the ultimate step in preparing for L2 communication. It is important to note that WTC in this model is a state of readiness occurring in the present moment (MacIntyre, 2007). In other words, it is a particular moment when learners make a choice to initiate communication or remain silent, which will directly link to the frequency of actual L2 use. Thus, people with stronger L2 WTC tend to explore more chances for L2 communication even though circumstances may interfere with the occurrence of final communication behaviours in some cases, such as, when opportunities are not provided by the teacher in L2 class. Therefore, the state of WTC is particularly valuable to explore and be understood, with a careful consideration of the communication situations and

interpretation of evidence, because numerous unpredictable factors can intervene in the course of being ready to speak and the actual L2 use.

Next, desire to communicate with a specific person and state communicative self-confidence which are posited in Layer III (Situated Antecedents) are two situational variables which can exert direct impact on L2 WTC at a particular time. Affiliation and control motives are considered to foster the person's desire to communicate; they work varying across different situations. In addition, state communicative self-confidence is defined as a momentary experience of feeling of confidence, which is transient at a particular time in a given situation. Desire to communicate with a specific person and state communicative self-confidence are perceived as the most immediate determinants of WTC because they reflect the culmination of an influential process of the rest of variables in L2 WTC.

The following three layers represent more enduring influences on L2 communication. Layer IV (Motivational Propensities) addresses levels of motivation in relation to a person's decision to initiate speech in L2, respectively referring to individual features of the communicator; belongingness to a particular ethnic group speaking either dominant or minority languages within a multi-ethnic society; 'the overall belief in being able to communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner' (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 551). Affiliation and control are considered to contribute motivation in interpersonal and intergroup communication in an integrated manner.

Layer V (Affective-Cognitive context) concerns influential variables that are more remote from specific L2 communication situations. It is individually based with a consideration of prior experience, attitudes and motives in a broader sense of an individual. Attitudes towards the target L2 itself, its community and culture may affect motivation to

learn. The positive attitudes can be developed from enjoyable and satisfying L2 learning and using experience. It is important to note that the motivation for language learning might not necessarily be presented in the form of WTC. Besides, Social Situation concerns situational variables of a social encounter in a particular setting, such as participants, setting, purpose, topic, and channel of communication, and finally, as has been mentioned previously, Communicative Competence refers to five aspects of knowledge and skills required for L2 communication (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995).

The bottom Layer VI (Social and Individual Context) considers intergroup and genetic influences, the most distal factors in relation to L2 communication. Intergroup Climate concerns the group members' representation of the L1 and L2 communities, as well as 'the role of attitudes and values regarding the L2 community and the motivation to adapt and reduce social distance between ethnic groups' (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 556). Additionally, Personality in this model not only refers to authoritarian and ethnocentric personality type which concerns beliefs of submission to authority and superiority of one's own ethnic group respectively, but also addresses personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to new experience (Goldberg, 1993). As MacIntyre et al. (1998) argued rather than directly determining a learner's L2 WTC at a particular time, the intergroup climate and personality of the individual set the stage for L2 communication to occur.

The heuristic WTC model worked more as a starting point rather than a completed product (MacIntyre et al., 1998), therefore has not ceased to encourage researchers who are eager to explore its validity and attempt to add other variables that may influence language learners' readiness to initiate and maintain communication in L2. As an outcome, a large number of empirical investigations were conducted across L2 learning contexts with a focus

on various issues, such as the role of context (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; Cao and Philp, 2006; D'Amico, 2012; MacIntyre et al., 2002, Kang, 2005; Yashima, 2012), L2 learning orientations (MacIntyre et al., 2001; Yashima et al., 2004), learners' age and gender (MacIntyre and Baker, 2000; MacIntyre et al., 2002), and ethno-linguistic vitality and norm (Clément et al., 2003) with an aim to verify how and to what extent these variables may affect L2 WTC and its application in different sociocultural contexts.

The creation of the heuristic WTC model extended its conceptualisation beyond viewing WTC as the inherent tendency to engage in communication, and integrated different influential variables as have been discussed previously in a multi-layered, relational way. However, as can be inferred by the model, it tends to focus on examining the individual but with insufficient attention to context and the emerging complexity of WTC. Although there is a consideration of social influence as a primary stage for L2 communication taking place, it deals more with multi-ethnic communities, such as intergroup motivation, intergroup attitudes, and intergroup climate. As Peng (2014) argued it underlines the importance of inter-ethnic relationship and overlooks the influence of local culture in relation to person's L2 WTC. Moreover, studies applied this heuristic model tended to show that WTC seems to be shaped by a number of variables which, in their own right, have been examined as separate constructs. While, as can be seen from the discussions in previous sections, WTC, however, seems to be shaped by an amalgam of these variables. Therefore, the theoretical model of WTC needs to capture this complexity in some way.

Defining L2 WTC as a situation-based variable highlighted the significance of context during the process of becoming ready to communicate, and implicates the need for a careful investigation of both micro- and macro-contexts in relation to one's L2WTC in future research, which has been already shown in a series of empirical studies. For example,

MacIntyre and his colleagues verified the relationship between anxiety and perceived competence with WTC among immersion students (MacIntyre et al., 2002). At the same time, they also identified that immersion students had higher WTC in L2 than non-immersion students, which highlighted the importance of social support in developing and sustaining L2 communication (MacIntyre et al., 2001). Similarly, D'Amico's (2012) study also found that both English learners' fluency and WTC in Spanish increased in the study abroad context but not at-home context. This line of inquiry has been driven by works of Liu and Jackson (2008), Peng and Woodrow (2010), Peng (2012, 2014), Wen and Clément (2003). These studies concentrated on EFL learners in a Chinese context, and demonstrated the crucial role of sociocultural variables in helping to determine the individual's decision on approaching or avoiding communication in L2. In addition, empirical investigations such as Cao and Philp (2006), MacIntyre et al. (2011), Kang (2005), Peng and Woodrow (2010), focused on L2 communications in language classrooms emphasized the complicated impacts of situated variables within the learning setting on learners' WTC in L2 and communicative behaviours. Due to the emerging evidence indicating the role of contextual factors in the process of developing a person's L2 WTC, in the next chapter, I will pay attention to detailed discussion about the interplay of contexts in regard to L2 WTC.

3.6 Summary

This chapter aimed to provide a detailed review of the evolution of WTC theory and research. In order to achieve this, I firstly explained and emphasized the importance of WTC for language development and L2 education from different theoretical perspectives; then I moved on with a review of its prior conceptualization as a predetermined personality trait, and argued, along with many researchers, that this view of the WTC construct proved limited. The

construct of personality itself has undergone substantial revision in the literature: it is no longer seen as an independent and static construct and interacts in complex and dynamic ways with other variables in L2 communication, such as a person's evaluation about his or her language competence. Following the evolving line of inquiry with the focus on individuals' WTC, I discussed the interplay among language proficiency, perceived communicative competence and anxiety in relation to one's L2 WTC. The results of this research have shown that one's actual language proficiency may not necessarily predict or translate to WTC but that the perceived communicative competence might be a stronger predictor for one's L2 WTC. At the same time, the positive and negative impact of anxiety on WTC and its interplay with other variables suggested a need for a more complex approach to studying WTC. The research reviewed in this chapter has also highlighted the emerging significance of one's sense of self conceptualized variously in this literature, for example through the prism of learners' past, current and future possible self-states which relate differently to how an individual may approach or avoid L2 interactions. Finally, this chapter has also summarized and discussed one of the most influential models in the study of L2 WTC, McIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic WTC model which seems to integrate different individual and contextual variables. I concluded, however, that while the model must be seen as ground-breaking in its ambition at such an integration at the time when WTC and individual differences in general were seen largely as fixed and static, the emerging insights from contemporary research in SLA more generally and L2 WTC particularly suggest a need to look at even more holistic approaches to studying WTC of persons in specific communicative situations.

In summary, what this chapter intended to highlight is the crucial focus on 'person' in the study of L2 WTC. Much of the research reviewed above has clearly signalled the importance of various aspects of the person, but it is also clear that a more holistic integration

of the person within the WTC theorizing may be necessary to advance this line of inquiry. Such an integration will, by definition, have to take a fuller account of the social world in which the person is located and acts. While the theoretical frameworks previewed in this chapter, including the most comprehensive and widely cited so far (i.e. MacIntyre, et al., 1998) have attempted to account for the contextual factors, they have tended to portray context(s) as variable(s) in which one's WTC is exercised. The following chapter will engage with the question of context. It will consider research with regard to WTC in relation to different dimensions of context, including the micro-context of the communicative act of meaning making in the specific classroom setting and the macro-context of cultural values, norms and ideologies and offer a theoretical metaphor of complexity theory as a possible way of thinking about WTC as both shaping and being shaped by the multiple dimensions of 'context' in the here-and-now act of communication.

4 UNDERSTANDING THE PERSON'S WTC IN L2 COMMUNICATIVE ACTS THROUGH A COMPLEXITY-INFORMED LENS

Thus far I have reviewed theoretical development and relevant empirical research of L2 WTC with a focus on the perspective of 'person' through detailed discussions of a number of important individual influential factors in relation to language learners' WTC in L2. The overview of existing literature and empirical investigations on the one hand shows the complexity of interplays among different individual variables in respect of L2 WTC; on the other hand, it implicates the emerging role of contextual elements with which the individual variables are closely related. This insight has been theorised by Ushioda (2009, 2012) who has called for the 'person-in-context relational view' based on her qualitative study of 20 Irish young adult learners of French in relation to learning motivation. The findings foregrounded a dynamically evolving relationship between the learner and context in which they respond and adapt to each other, rather than treating the context merely as a static backdrop. From this viewpoint, and translated into the research focus of the present thesis, the individual is an integrated part of the evolving context of the interaction, and cannot be separated from the social environment in which he or she exercises his or her willingness to communicate.

Regarding L2 WTC domain, the contexts which researchers (e.g., Chan and McCroskey, 1987; McCroskey, 1992; McCroskey and Richmond, 1990) took into account in developing their WTC scales in initial investigations included pairs, small groups, meetings and public occasions, with three different types of interlocutors/audiences: friends, acquaintances and strangers. The results obtained from these studies have highlighted the significant impacts of different contexts on language learners' L2 WTC. However, the current existing investigations seems far from sufficient in allowing a careful examination and

understanding of how actually the individual engages and interacts with the communication contexts in real situations, in other words, placing 'persons' in their 'contexts'. In the following sections, I will pay attention to the role of contexts in relation to a person's L2 WTC at both micro- and macro-levels. Then, based on this, I will argue for a complexity perspective consideration in regard to studying and understanding L2 WTC phenomena as an overarching theoretical framework for my current research.

4.1 The Interplay of Micro-Contexts and L2 WTC: A Closer Look Inside the L2 Communication Situations

The extension in defining L2 WTC proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998) intended to highlight its situation-dependent and context-interactive nature in achieving a state of being ready for L2 use. It seems there is no doubt that L2 communication situations that language learners are involved in can exert direct impacts on their WTC in a variety of ways, and the interplay between situated communication contexts and the change of speaker's WTC in L2 has been evinced in a growing number of research. For instance, Cao and Philp (2006) studied learners' WTC in three different classroom arrangements: pair work, group work and whole class, and found that the levels of WTC changed according to different group size, the level of self-confidence, degree of familiarity with other participants in interaction, and the extent of the interlocutors' participation. In addition, Peng's (2014) study of Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC emphasized classroom environment as a situational social context playing a role on L2 WTC by identifying that factors including classroom atmosphere, teachers, interlocutors, communicative situations, group-mates' participation and tasks were crucial in creating moment-to-moment WTC. Similar results were supported in a more recent study, where WTC was concluded as a state of flux depending on situational contextual influential variables

(Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015). These studies provide empirical evidence for the complicated interactions occurring between language learners' WTC and a multitude of influences originating from L2 communication situations. Now, in the following sections, I will address and highlight some key issues in regard to the dynamic interplays between situational communication contexts and a person's L2 WTC.

4.1.1 Topic as the centre of communication

MacIntyre et al. (1998) pointed out that the topic of communication significantly influences the ease of language use. Content knowledge and familiarity with a certain register can enhance one's linguistic self-confidence, which may help overriding certain limitations the speakers potentially have in his/her overall L2 proficiency; while lack of knowledge about a communication topic and lack of familiarity with the register may inhibit self-confidence and then the tendency of communication. Prior empirical investigations have also indicated that background knowledge of a topic is essential for students to develop a sense secure enough to talk (Cao and Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005), because insufficient knowledge about the topic may result in an increase of fear of discontinuing the conversation due to a lack of ideas for communication, and fear of difficulties in comprehension.

For instance, Kang (2005) found that research participants tended to feel more comfortable and secure when discussing Korean culture which they were familiar with, whereas they tried to avoid engaging the conversation when referring to the topic about which they did not have background knowledge. Similarly, in Cao's (2011) study, half of the L2 students reported a feeling of disadvantage when they were talking about topics about which they lacked knowledge. Additionally, in a more recent study of the relationship among WTC,

topic familiarity and writing ability of Iranian EFL learners in higher education, Khorasani and Harsini (2015) identified that although there was no significant relationship between topic familiarity and WTC in the written form, levels of familiarity about the task topic directly determined students' writing performance, which again implicates the importance of background knowledge in L2 communication not only in forms of oral, but written communication, as well.

Besides the requisite background knowledge of the communication topic, speakers' affective perception towards a topic, such as interest, boredom and curiosity, can also affect their WTC. It was found that language learners tended to be reluctant to talk when they considered the topic was not interesting (Cao, 2011). The findings in the study of situational WTC of Korean students reveal that they were more likely to feel excited when they found the topics were interesting, familiar and having experience of (Kang, 2005). Additionally, in developing and validating WTC questionnaires for instructional language teaching and learning contexts, Khatib and Nourzadeh (2015) pointed out that interest and relative newness are important dimensions of conversational topics in enticing language learners to communicate.

4.1.2 The impact of communication tasks

Communication task has been identified as a factor affecting students' L2 WTC in both pair and group interactions in a number of studies (Cao, 2006; Cao and Philp, 2006; Weaver, 2004). Freiermuth and Huang (2012) proposed a model of task motivation which concerns task attractiveness, task innovativeness, perceived need to learn the L2 and general WTC in relation to one's motivation to participate in a task. Although the model does not

address communicative tasks specifically, the findings of their study indeed show that all of these factors closely linked with Taiwanese and Japanese university students' motivation in cross-national online chat discussions, which confirmed that certain features of the task itself can affect WTC and L2 learning motivation. Task attractiveness and innovativeness in this model contributed to Dörnyei's (2009a) conglomerates in which interest as a motivational conglomerate covers a range of motivational influences, such as attractiveness, positive emotional response, and curiosity toward a domain, which work as a whole in affecting language learner's L2 learning and using.

Renninger (2009) pointed out that besides topic, other aspects like surprise or novelty of a task are also important in triggering learner's interest. Ortega's (2007) research revealed that meaningful L2 tasks tend to be more interesting for learners and more productive for L2 development than drilling tasks because rather than simple language based difficulties they provide more conceptual challenges to language learners. In addition, it has been indicated that a task with familiarity but innovativeness in the classroom, such as linking the L2 tasks with learners' experience outside the classroom, can boost students' interest (Freiermuth and Huang, 2012). Moreover, a possibility of autonomy, freedom, and creation of new ideas are also important dimensions of tasks which make them more attractive to learners (Egbert, 2003). This has been supported in empirical studies, for example, students explicitly expressed the importance of attractiveness and easiness of topics in role-plays and group discussion for them, and their interest in games in Eddy-U's (2015) study, because games broke the routine in L2 class and gave something unexpected. Similarly, in Cao's (2011) investigation, the majority of the participants showed their preference for the project work which involved teamwork rather than teacher-fronted activities, because the continuity of teamwork allows more opportunities and freedom to talk to other group members, and helped

sustain their WTC. Therefore, it can be seen that as Kubanyiova (2006) pointed out, tasks featured with meaningfulness, personal relevance and reasonable challenges are likely to encourage students' engagement in L2 learning and communication activities.

However, on the other hand, ineffective or inappropriate tasks definitely diminish learners' intention to participate in communicative activities. Rao's (2002) study with 30 English-major students in a university based in China indicated that these participants showed lower levels of engagement in communicative group tasks due to their perception of ineffectiveness towards the tasks in helping them develop skills to pass standardized exam. Considering communicative tasks as ineffective tends to be particularly prominent in Japan, Korea, China, where a standardized examination is emphasized and encouraged (Butler, 2011; Falout et al., 2009; Kim, 2012; Li and Baldauf, 2011; Pan and Block, 2011; Warden and Lin, 2000). Perceived usefulness of tasks in L2 class relates to a focus on meaning or form. Meaning-focused tasks pay attention on message exchanging in authentic interaction, while form-focused tasks emphasize structural knowledge of the target language. Although focusing on meaning has been advocated as a useful means to encourage and elicit natural language using, it has been argued that the more meaningful the task is, the more learners tend to use their L1 (Bultler, 2011), therefore, it is suggested by researchers that meaning-based tasks should be embedded with form-focused activities (Doughty and Williams, 1998; Ellis, 2002; Long, 1998). For example, Peng (2014) found that higher level of WTC related to tasks that triggered meaningful interaction as well as productive linguistic output. Additionally, aspects of tasks such as irrelevant or humdrum topics, high level of difficulty, and role-play form, were identified as inhibiting participation and L2 use in Ushioda's (2001) study among university students in Ireland learning French as an L2.

Other demotivating factors in relation to tasks include unclear instructions or poor introduction by the teacher (Gorham and Millette, 1997) and lack of authenticity (Leger and Storch, 2009). For instance, based on her findings, Peng (2014) argued that students' reluctance to participate may due to a lack of guidance, ineffective organization or insufficient well-planned syllabus of certain tasks such as games or role plays rather than their unconditioned resistance to the L2 teaching-learning approach. At the same time, this also implicates the important role of a learner's perception of the task. In the proposed task situated WTC model, Eddy-U (2015) highlighted this by arguing that a learner's perception towards reality influences WTC more strongly than does the perception of the task designer, teacher, or group mates, it directly predicting WTC in the task rather than the tasks themselves. This viewpoint underlines the significance of individual language learners when interacting with L2 learning and communication situations in terms of their L2 WTC.

4.1.3 The role of interlocutor, communication participant and the teacher

The interlocutor has been reported as a key factor affecting a speaker's WTC in a number of studies (Cao, 2011; Cao and Philp, 2006; Eddy-U, 2015; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005, Peng, 2014). MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) L2 WTC model considered a range of variables regarding communication participants including age, gender, and social class of the speakers, as well as social relationships between the participants, such as the power relationships, the level of intimacy, shared knowledge and social distance. Particularly, the L2 proficiency level of the interlocutor comparative to the speaker and whether the interlocutor is a native speaker (NS) of the L2 or not are agued by MacIntyre et al. (1998) as especially importance for L2 communication.

In Cao's (2011) empirical investigation, the students explicitly expressed their preference to talk to interlocutors who were more competent than them, with a talkative and outgoing personality, and had many ideas to share. At the same time, the students also perceived as more interesting when they talk to interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds than those from the same country, not only due to being able to learn about different cultures and different ways of thinking, but also because they felt more freedom and comfort to talk to "foreigners" who were considered less knowledgeable about their own cultures. Similarly, Kang (2005) found that native speakers of English was reported as making them most excited, whereas Koreans was regarded as the least preferable communication partners who would most decrease their interest and excitement. However, this seems not always the case, communicating with native speakers has been identified as the most frequent source of anxiety among 275 interview participants in Australia universities in Woodrow's (2006) study. It is important to note that it also links with other aspects of communication participation such as the degree of familiarity and number of interlocutors, as the interview participants pointed out that they tended to feel more stressed when they talked to native speakers within a small group than in pairs, or whom they didn't know or were not familiar with.

Kang (2005) argued that language learners tend to feel insecure about making mistakes and were more reluctant to talk in L2 among unfamiliar interlocutors. Additionally, the number of interlocutors also affect learners' sense of security. It was found that the learners' security tended to be decreased, and became more anxious when the number of people in a conversation increased (ibid.). Moreover, the number of interlocutors in a conversation can also influence language learner's sense of responsibility which has been defined by Kang (2005, p. 285) as 'a feeling of obligation or duty to deliver and understand a

message, or to make it clear'. It was identified that the language learners were more likely to feel responsible to engage in L2 communication when there were fewer number of people in the L2 conversation. In addition, interlocutor's interest and attention also contributed in developing the learners' sense of responsibility to produce the message in details as an outcome of personal, interpersonal and intergroup pressures or motives. This responsibility orientation has been examined and validated as one of six key instructional WTC components based on a recent study of Iranian EFL learners as well (Khatib and Nourzadeh, 2015).

Lippi-Green (1994, p. 185) argued that 'the burden of communication is shared' by each member of the conversation. Concordantly, Jenkins (2014) also pointed out that no matter international or local speakers of an L2, both parties should accommodate and cooperate in order to achieve communication purposes. One of the crucial issues is the different levels of L2 proficiencies between or among speakers, which definitely plays a role on affecting their WTC. Kang (2005) in his study found that all participants clearly indicated a sense of insecurity and reluctance to speak English in front of non-native speakers who spoke English more fluently than them. It seems this also relates to the learners' perceived communicative competence based on the comparisons made between their peers and interlocutors. A fear of making mistakes, over concern of others' negative evaluation, and worries of interrupting the class, annoying others, or wasting others' time as a result of lower estimation regarding one's L2 proficiency comparing with peers were identified as reasons for low or non-participation in classroom activities for Taiwanese university freshmen (Hsu, 2015). The concern of lost face as a factor affecting language learners' WTC in L2 may be particularly prominent in Asian sociocultural context, I will address this again later when discussing the role of context in a broader sense.

Despite how they perceive their L2 competence, the discrepancy between speakers' actual L2 proficiency indeed affect their WTC and production in L2 conversations. For example, in Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak's (2015) investigation of Polish EFL learner's change of WTC in the course of a conversation in pairs, difficulties in understanding their interlocutors' output were frequently reported as a main factor discouraging their WTC. At the same time, a lack of balance in the interaction with a dominance by speakers with superior L2 proficiency was also mentioned as a reason for why one's WTC dropped off. MacIntyre et al. (1998) emphasized the importance of allowance for the speaker's limited proficiency between conversation partners by simplifying one's speech and being a facilitator in negotiating meaning for successful communication. Dörnyei and associates (Dörnyei, 2007a; Dörnyei and Murphey, 1999, 2003) also highlighted this issue by arguing for the significance of generating group cohesiveness in L2 class. It is believed that how language learners perform, cooperate, support and show allowance to participants when communicating or fulfilling a task as a group will greatly influence L2 interaction and the success of language learning (Clément et al., 1994; Dörnyei and Murphey, 2003; Wen and Clément, 2003; Senior, 2001). For instance, Peng (2014) identified in her empirical research that the language learner opted to speak English when he was influenced by his interlocutor who persisted in using English in the group discussion even though he tended to always speak Chinese. In some cases, the language learners' WTC declined due to their interlocutor or fellow participants' unpleasant responses.

Most communicative interactions take place in the language classroom, especially in the EFL contexts where English is taught as a subject at different educational levels. Inside the L2 classroom, the teacher not only plays a role as an instructor who dominates the language teaching-learning process but also directly being involved in classroom interactions

as an interlocutor, which undoubtedly can influence their students' learning psychology and communicative behaviours. Wen and Clément (2003) pointed out that the teacher's involvement, attitude, immediacy and teaching style exerts a significant and determining impact on language learners' engagement. Teacher immediacy which concerns students' perceptions of degree of physical and psychological closeness to their teacher was especially highlighted by researchers as a crucial factor directly affecting students' affective/cognitive learning and language WTC (Andersen, 1979; Richmond et al., 1987; Sanders and Wiseman, 1990; Wen and Clément, 2003, Zhang and Oetzel, 2006).

Cao (2011) found that the students tended to be more willing to ask questions and participate more actively in classroom activities when they liked the teacher of that class, perceived their teacher as friendly, and supportive as a more competent interlocutor and an elder student. The teacher's active participation in group discussion contributed to the development of interpersonal closeness which consequently boosted the students' WTC. As Kang (2005) argued that teacher's support including help, friendliness, trust and interest in students (Dorman, 2003) is particularly importance in helping students to generate a sense of security and promoting their situational WTC. It shows that when the teacher listened to their students' conversation carefully, smiling, or offering active responses, the students were more likely to feel free from the anxiety of failing to be good communication partners. Peng (2014) also identified that teacher support and immediacy such as giving feedback, providing Chinese explanations, chatting with students, and being humorous were especially appreciated by the research participants. At the same time, teaching styles, teaching approaches, and classroom procedures were also reported by the participants as playing roles on their language learning behaviours. A rapport between the teacher and students has been conceived as a major factor constituting a healthy classroom social environment which in turn motivates

students' L2 learning and involvement in various educational motivation research (Boekaerts, 2001; Ryan and Ratrick, 2001; Wosnitza and Nenniger, 2001).

However, an unpleasant relationship and nervous learning environment usually discourages students' L2 language learning and using behaviours. Shahraki and Seyedrezaei's (2015) study showed that communication uneasiness with teachers and teachers' questions were two of the main sources for students' language anxiety, which resulted in lower levels of WTC in L2. This finding confirmed the association between anxieties and teacher identified previously in Williams and Andrade's (2008) investigation among 243 Japanese students in 31 English conversation classes at four universities in Japan. Teachers are often viewed as the authority in class especially in the Asian socio-cultural context, therefore, students tend to more likely perceive a pressure from their teachers. As Woodrow (2006) found that English language learners from Confucian Heritage Cultures, such as China, Korea and Japan were more anxious language learners than other ethnic groups. Besides, de Courcy (2002) recognized that when teachers exerted external control over student behaviour, placed constrains on their freedom, and limited their autonomy through typical and strict classroom management, requiring L2 practices and testing in class, prohibiting L1 use inside the classroom, students tended to be frustrated with the L2 learning process, then felt negatively about their teachers, which consequently was not helpful in providing an encouraging classroom environment for L2 learning and participation.

4.1.4 The influence of specific communication patterns and atmosphere

Interlocutors' participation can shape certain patterns as well as the atmosphere of communication, which conversely can impact speaker's ongoing WTC and communicative

behaviours in L2. In a communicative context, especially a classroom where L2 learning and communication most frequently occur, patterns of interaction usually present in whole-class/public, small group and dyad forms. Previous research indicates that L2 language learners' preferences for different interactional patterns are not consistent. Some learners prefer to work within small-groups or in pairs while others may feel more comfortable in teacher-fronted activities. However, according to prior investigations, students tended to show their preferences in group or dyad than whole-class activity in both ESL and EFL settings in a general term (Cao and Philp, 2006; de Saint Léger and Storch, 2009; Liu, 2005). For example, Cao (2011) identified that students show their preference towards small groups rather than pair discussions because ideas could be generated and shared among group members. On the other hand, pair works sometimes were also advocated by some students due to its less competitive turn-taking. Similarly, Peng (2014) also found a higher level of WTC associated with group or dyad discussions among the research participants, in which the main interlocutors were peers.

It seems that the role of interlocutors was particularly prominent in group and dyadic communicative interactions. Dörnyei (2002, p. 152) found that one would be more likely to speak more if his/her interlocutor produced more speech 'simply by reacting to complete adjacency pairs'. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the speaker's WTC behaviours in such pattern communications tended to be co-constructed according to the interlocutor's 'pulling force'. However, it is important to note that the degree of actual difference on WTC would be impossible to measure based on partnership or participation of interlocutors because participants might randomly partner in different communication situations (Cao and Philp, 2006). Additionally, as has been mentioned before, cohesiveness including acceptance, cooperation and commitment of group members is especially significant in encouraging

learners' WTC in group work. Group pride would be another factor contributing to the internal cohesive force which binds the group together. The sense of belongingness and closeness within a group can undoubtedly promote learners' willingness to participate in group work, particularly in Asian sociocultural context where unity and interdependence are highly prized.

Whole-class/public interactions which usually involve teachers as the interlocutor were usually described and perceived by language learners as anxiety-provoking situations (Cao, 2011; Liu and Jackson, 2008; McCroskey and Richmond, 1991; Peng, 2014; Wen and Clément, 2003). On one hand, as Peng (2014) identified students tended to feel constrained when talking with the teacher due to their concern of being negatively evaluated if they were providing incorrect answers. On the other hand, standing up and speaking in public in front of others also presented peer pressure and were potentially face-threatening especially without proper preparation. The uncomfortable and anxious feeling when speaking in the class or other public situations has been broadly reported as a reason hindering language learners' participation in a number of empirical studies (Cao, 2011; Hsu, 2015; Kitano, 2001; Mak, 2011; Peng, 2014), which supported McCroskey and Richmond's (1991) argument that the larger the number of interlocutors, the lower level of WTC the individual experiences. Additionally, the reluctance of participation in whole-class interactions was also attributable to the level of difficulty of questions asked by the teacher to the whole class, whether the answer had been provided by other students, familiarity among classmates, and also the atmosphere in here-and-now communications.

Communication atmosphere refers to the mood, tone and climate perceived and shared by the interlocutors, which is generated depending on the degree of involvement and participation of all parties. According to Peng (2014), atmosphere within the L2 class was an

ongoing co-construction by both the teacher and students, and it was more experiential than rational. It was found that an enthusiastic atmosphere with active participation always promoted the students' L2 WTC, whereas a dull atmosphere in L2 class would obstruct their participations. The critical period for establishing the grand 'tone' for communication was particularly highlighted by Peng (2007b). As she pointed out the beginning of a semester is especially important for the teacher to develop a relaxing and active learning and communication climate for their students, otherwise, once the atmosphere was filled with silence and reluctant participation, the students would likely be to stay the same way. Providing a relaxing and supportive atmosphere and L2 environment has been emphasized in various empirical inquiries. For example, Kubanyiova (2016) argued for 'humour, personalized digressions from more structured dialogues' teaching strategies as an effective way in enhancing students' learning motivation in the L2 classroom. More recently, Montasseri and Razmjoo (2015) highlighted the significance of cooperative teaching approach for creating a stress-free environment for learners based on their study of Iranian EFL learners' WTC. The links between higher level of WTC and stress-free communicative climate have been confirmed in a number of studies (e.g. Zeng, 2010; Cameron, 2013).

4.2 L2 WTC as Embedded in the Macro-Contexts of Sociocultural Norms, Values and Ideologies

Tudor (2001, p. 35) argued that the classroom is a 'socially defined reality and is therefore influenced by the belief systems and behavioural norms of the society of which it is part'. In other words, each communication situation is a miniature of the bigger society, which reflects and exchanges cultures, values and norms embedded in a particular sociocultural context. In L2 WTC model, MacIntyre and associates (1998) addressed the impact of social

context by emphasizing the more enduring influence of intergroup climate on one's L2 WTC. Prior to this, Clément's (1980; Clément and Kruidenier, 1985) social context model, though does not deal with L2 usage particularly, however figures out the correlations among interethnic contact, L2 confidence, L2 competence and L2 identity, which highlighted the role of L2 group. Additionally, by studying Anglophone (majority) and Francophone (minority) students in a Canadian bilingual university, Clément et al. (2003) found that subjective norms in different social contexts predicted students' L2 confidence and frequency of L2 use. Moreover, Baker and MacIntyre (2000), MacIntyre et al. (2002), Yashima's (2012) investigations about contributing factors of immersion and non-immersion students' WTC, and D'Amico's (2012) comparison of changes in English learners' WTC in Spanish in study abroad and at-home contexts, highlighted the role of social context in relation to students' L2 confidence, anxiety, perceived competence and the development of L2 oral proficiency.

However, communication considered in the broadest term, from a multilingual, western 'ethnolinguistic vitality' perspective may not be suitable for monolingual communication contexts, and may overlook influences from indigenous culture on one's communicative behaviours. Researchers tried to fill this gap by emphasizing the significance of indigenous sociocultural influences on language learners' L2 WTC in a number of empirical studies. For instance, King (2013) identified acceptance of sleeping in the class within Japan's wider education system as one of reasons resulting in language learners' silence in the L2 classrooms of Japanese universities. In addition, according to investigations in Thai EFL classroom context, Pattapong (2009) concluded that L2 WTC was a process of mutual interplays between cultural practices and cultural mentalities both internal and external to L2 language learners. What is more, Liu and Park's (2013) study of Korean EFL Learners' WTC and motivation highlighted Korean's culture such as concern of social evaluations, the

authority of teacher and textbooks, high value of parents' opinions, and expectations, exerted significant influence on students' English language communication behaviours and learning motivations. Likewise, Woodrow's (2006) examination of anxiety in relation to L2 speaking among students enrolled on university courses in Australia indicated that Japanese, Korean and Chinese participants who shared Confucian Heritage Cultures tended to be more anxious than other ethnic groups when performing communications in English. All of this research implicated that social culture is an important part in shaping one's L2 WTC, such as what in one context may be deemed as lack of WTC in another reflects accepted and well-established norms, therefore in this sense, sociocultural contexts give meaning to specific communicative behaviours. In the following sections, I will pay attention to certain macro-contextual factors in relation to L2 interactional behaviours and WTC.

4.2.1 Chinese reverence for knowledge and education

The current phenomenon of EFL education in China is inextricable from the indigenous culture and historical values of the society, and it is similarly true when viewing and studying Chinese learners' WTC and communicative behaviours in L2. Most particularly, Chinese culture is deeply influenced by the dominant strain of Confucian thinking, one of whose features is reverence for knowledge and education (Yu, 2015). The old saying san ren xing, bi you wo shi 'in the company of three, one always can find a teacher', and wan ban jie xia pin, wei you du shu gao 'everything is low, but education is high', express the honouring of knowledge, learning, and education, as well as the respect towards people who are knowledgeable in Chinese culture. Confucius not only highly valued the role of education in cultivating people and strengthening a nation, but also recognized its utilitarian function in

bringing social recognition and material rewards (Lee, 1996; Llasera, 1987; Zhu, 1992). Therefore, education as a goal in itself has permeated Chinese society, and inspired generations of Chinese people to pursue success in education.

In addition, education not only emphasizes intellectual development, but also includes the cultivation of moral virtues which focuses on teaching people how to relate to others in society, how to be a good person, and encourages the imitation of socially valued models such as modesty, courtesy, compliance and the collectivism (Cheng, 1994; Guo, 2001, Zhu, 1992). In this sense, teachers who are charged with chuan dao, shou ye, jie huo (preaching, instructing, and dispelling doubts, which means delivering morals, imparting knowledge, easing one's concerns respectively) have a high social status in Chinese society, which can be reflected in the popular saying, yi ri wei shi, zhong sheng wei fu (a teacher for a day is a father for life), in other words, it is expected that people should always show respect, conformity and obedience to their teacher in the same way as they treat their parents (Peng, 1993).

Teacher-centred practices are typical in Chinese educational institutions throughout the whole educational system. In the classroom, the teacher is usually viewed as an authority, and is expected to be knowledgeable, competent in presenting and transmitting knowledge, and responsible for students' satisfactory progress (Brick, 2004; Cheng, 2000; Ross, 1993), while students are expected to respect and appreciate their teacher's hard work with attentive, submissive, disciplined and earnest learning behaviours, not challenge or confront the teacher. Starting from the schooling, students are taught to sit in straight lines and rows, listen to the teacher quietly during instruction, and this is true even in today's formal educational institutions (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a, Zhao, 2007). Taking the initiative to voice opinions or ask questions without being invited to do is viewed as an interruption of the teacher's talk,

and against the goals, duties, and great benefit of the whole class, which should not be performed by 'good students'. Thus, such sociocultural context values are the norm with minimal interaction in class. This is apparently contrary to the teaching and learning approaches in which authentic communication is advocated. In this sense, the classroom behaviours of being quiet and reticent tend to be commonly accepted and may even be perceived as well disciplined and given priority, which in a way may go against language learner's WTC.

4.2.2 The 'Chinese' future sense of self: Other-directed self

Kessing (1974) argued that culture offers its members an implicit theory of how to behave in different situations, and how to interpret the behaviour of others in these social practices, and then conversely how others may perceive our own behaviours. Being influenced by collectivism, an individual self is incomplete in Chinese sociocultural values. Self is defined by relations with others (Sun, 1991) rather than as 'an independent entity with free will, emotions and personality' (Gao, 1996, p. 83) which are constructed in order to maintain solidarity and social belongingness within the community. In Confucian philosophy, a person cannot exist alone, and separate him or herself from obligations to others even as an active and reflective entity who is responsible for what he or she is (King and Bond, 1985). For example, a man in Chinese culture tends to view himself as a son, a brother, a husband, a father, with various roles, identities, social relationships and responsibilities, but hardly ever only as himself or one who can behave as a free and independent entity without considering opinions, attitudes, obligations in regard to others (Chu, 1985). Therefore, Other-directed self

is a Chinese featured sense of self, which can significantly influence people's interactional behaviours.

The hierarchical relationships in Chinese society particularly foster the other-directed self, as people in this relational network tend to be sensitive to his or her social positions or status above, below, or equal to others (Chu, 1985; Fairbank, 1991; King and Bond, 1985). This specific way of defining self and interpreting the relations with others in Chinese culture provides explanations for norms of communication and interaction in interpersonal relationships. For example, han xu (being reserved and implicit) and zhong yong (modesty and humbleness) are crucial rules in interpersonal communication (Gao, 1998), therefore, performing assertively or being vastly different from others is not socially encouraged in communication in Chinese society.

Moreover, the Chinese self is underpinned with the high value of importance attached to others. As Yang (1981, p. 161) pointed out the 'Chinese self represents a tendency for a person to behave in accordance with external expectations or social norms, rather than with internal wishes or personal integrity, so that he [or she] might be able to protect his [or her] social self and function as an integral part of the social network'. In other words, Chinese people's sense of self-worth tends to be derived from and aligned with values, norms, and expectations advocated and prioritized by the outside world of others such as parents, teachers, institutions, and the society at large. As a consequence, Chinese people are inclined towards being submissive to social expectations, they worry about others' opinions with an attempt to achieve reward attainment, social acceptance, and avoid punishment, embarrassment and conflict (ibid.).

A crucial concern of many Chinese refers to not letting others down (dui bu qi) which as Gao (1998) identified is not only used as a form of self-reproach or apology, but also employed as a control mechanism. For instance, it is common for Chinese parents to guide their children to behave in certain ways by telling them doing poorly in school is not only letting himself or herself down, but also the parents themselves. In this sense, it can be seen that the orientation of others' needs, wishes, and expectations is an essential part of a Chinese person's self-development, and the Chinese sense of self must be recognized, defined, and completed by others. This other-directed self can exert significant impact on a person's social practice, communication behaviours and WTC specifically through the concern with what is termed face.

4.2.3 Face concerns and L2 WTC

Due to this other-directed orientation in one's construction of self, Chinese people are particularly concerned by the concept of face in their society. According to Gao and Ting-Toomey (1998, p. 53), face refers to 'an individual's claimed sense of positive image in a relational and network context'. In China, people are educated to check their speech and behaviours since they are very young. Appropriate behaviours are normally appreciated and praised by teachers, parents and other adults, and gradually people become sensitive to social evaluations and their own self in relation to others, so that they are especially cautious about their behaviours in public in order to avoid disproval. Ren yao lian; shu yao pi (a person needs face like a tree needs bark) is a commonly recognized metaphor emphasizing the importance of face for a person in Chinese culture. Losing face means bringing disgrace and humiliation

to the person and his or her family in Chinese society, and conversely one's accomplishments may gain face for the family.

The concern for face may particularly affect students WTC and communications in L2. As Dörnyei (2007a, p. 723) argued, the language classroom is an 'inherently face-threatening environment'. In the language learning context, learners with limited L2 competence face the risk of making mistakes, being ridiculed or negatively evaluated by others, which would be the equivalent of placing 'ego outside the society of decent human beings and security' (Hu, 1944, p. 50) in the context of Chinese culture. Therefore, low risk-taking can be often observed with Chinese EFL learners (Peng, 2007b; Wen and Clément, 2003). In order to avoid these potential risks and protect face, Chinese students tend to adopt face-saving strategies such as silence or communication reduction (Liu, 2001). A number of empirical studies have found the fear of losing face as a reason in explaining Chinese EFL learners' silence, reduced WTC and unwillingness to communicate in different L2 learning contexts (Fu et al., 2012; Liu, 2002; Liu and Jackson, 2008; Mak, 2011; Hsu, 2015). The face concern is also reflected in considering saving-face for others in Chinese culture. For example, researchers identified that Chinese students are reluctant to initiate questions with their teacher because they intend to save face for their teachers by not challenging their authority (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996a; Liu and Littlewood, 1997). In this sense, face concern which implicates the Chinese cultural values, norms and expectations could be a crucial influential factor in shaping language learners' L2 WTC and communication behaviours.

4.2.4 The 'Chinese' way of learning in relation to L2 development and WTC

Indigenous Chinese culture is also embodied in the way of learning, which could undoubtedly affect the learning behaviours of a new language. From the traditional Chinese perspective, learning has been viewed more as a process of accumulating knowledge than as a practical process of creating and utilizing knowledge for instant purposes (Hu, 2010). Such a view seems incompatible with the purpose of acquiring a new language which usually aims at achieving immediate effective utilization and communication. The perception of learning may be attributed to Chinese conceptions of the source of knowledge. Chinese people traditionally believed that true knowledge has resided in paradigms of the classics, and authoritative antiquity (Pratt, 1992; Scollon, 1999; Wang, 2001), and people who were thoroughly acquainted with these would know not only how to behave properly, but also be capable to apply this knowledge as government officials (Scovel, 1983). Therefore, scholars tended to spend years reading and repetitively memorizing in order to master the true knowledge. In other words, learning is much equated with reading books in Chinese culture. This is reflected in various Chinese proverbs such as kai juan you yi (it is always useful to open a book) and shu dao yong shi fang hen shao (when the time comes to you to use your knowledge, you will hate yourself for having read too little). The paramount importance of reading is also emphasized in traditional Chinese literacy education, as the saying goes 'du shu po wan juan, xia bi ru you shen' (He who reads ten thousand books thoroughly can work wonders with his pen' (Yu, 2015) and du shu bai bian, qi yi zi xian (when a book is read a hundred times, its meaning will naturally clear), which implicates that both extensive and intensive reading are significant for internalization of learning materials and output.

This learning style with memorization, repetition, and recitation is inevitably and naturally extended to learning a foreign language. It can be commonly observed that Chinese

students spent a large amount of time and effort repetitively memorizing or reciting English vocabulary, grammatical rules or texts. While many researchers have considered this learning approach will ultimately lead to deep learning with profound understanding (Biggs, 1996; Marton et al., 1996), it seems far more sufficient and effective when employed in L2 learning, as like various SLA theories (e.g. Long, 1985; Swan, 1995; Vygotsky, 1986) argued that frequent practical creative use or negotiation with the target language is essential for language development. Therefore, this probably explained why many Chinese students who are good at grammatical-based written examinations, but still have difficulty in communicating effectively (Wen and Clément, 2003). Additionally, the learning styles with repetitive memorization and recitation nurture Chinese students' lower tolerance of ambiguity. Students tend to monitor themselves by constantly checking their output against the conscious knowledge of English that they had memorized. This can result in hesitation and frequent self-correction during communication. This lack of fluency may discourage language learners, and lead to decreased WTC and speaking avoidance behaviour (ibid.).

Moreover, learning and education have been regard as serious undertakings associated with deep commitment and painstaking effort in Chinese culture. Learners are expected to be prepared to sacrifice other pursuits for the sake of study (Hu, 2002). Therefore, light-hearted approaches to learning, such as, games or communicative activities are perceived more as entertainment for Chinese students. This implicates that, on the one hand the aforementioned approaches tend to be contrary to Chinese learners' belief about the source of knowledge that language knowledge or proficiency should be based on the teacher's authoritative lecturing rather than their own practice, which therefore may not be considered practically valuable for obtaining high academic achievement in order to bring honour to their families. On the other hand, it is incompatible with the emphasis of self-effort, determination, perseverance,

mentally active rather than verbally active (e.g. silence is gold) associated values in Chinese culture. In this sense, the Chinese way of learning seems to be an inevitable component in Chinese EFL learners' L2 development, communicate and L2 WTC.

4.3 Integrating Person, Context and L2 WTC: Complexity Theory as a Guiding Metaphor

Through the above sections, I addressed the impacts of contextual variables on individual language learner's L2 WTC at micro- and macro-levels. According to the discussion, it can be understood that the relationship between context and person is far from one-directional, but rather they tend to be a dynamic response and adaptation to each other, such as sociocultural values and norms giving certain meanings to learners' learning and communication behaviours, while at the same time, learners interpret and negotiate with the surrounding contexts through such behaviours. In other words, language learners actively participate in shaping the development of the contextual interaction. However, on the other hand, as has been reviewed, what the current existing L2 WTC research does is examine functions of different classified contexts e.g. cultural settings, learning environments, instructional conditions on language learners' L2 WTC, in which contexts and learners are treated as distinct and separate entities, and in this sense L2 WTC is still measured in a rather decontextualized manner. In other words, what seems missing from the previous L2 WTC research is the exploration which can capture more fully the co-adaption and unfolding interaction between person and context in the process of developing L2 WTC.

Concerning this gap, complexity theory as a metaphor offers a productive way in thinking, researching and understanding the issue. Complexity theory has been used to study

complex, dynamic, nonlinear, open systems, and aims to account for how the interacting parts of a complex system produce the system's collective behaviour and also how such a system interacts with its environment simultaneously (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2007; 2008). A complex system is defined as 'one that emerges from the interactions of its components that can be agents or elements' (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008, p.200). Therefore, it provides a useful way to think about applied linguistic matters that usually deal with complex dynamic systems. Larsen-Freeman (1997; 2002a) explicitly stated the value of viewing second language acquisition from a complexity theory perspective, followed by a number of researchers who have applied the theory in various areas of applied linguistics such as multilingual proficiency, second language acquisition, or language and discourse (see Meara, 2004; 2006; de Bot et al., 2005; 2007; Herdina and Jessner, 2002; Lee and Schumann, 2003). However, to date, applying complexity theory to studying L2 WTC phenomena is in its infancy, and I will demonstrate why employing it as a theoretical lens guiding research in L2 WTC may be a productive avenue for future inquiry.

4.3.1 Complexity theory: Key definitions

Complexity theory is an umbrella term that not only includes complexity theory but is also closely linked with chaos theory, dynamic systems theory, and complex systems theory (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008). The theory works at the system level, and explains the system's behaviour rather than at the level of individual agents or elements. It is significant to note that the key to investigations from a complexity theory approach is to explore the dynamic nature of complex systems with change and variability (ibid.). In other words, it aims to understand how the interactions of the parts give rise to new patterns of behaviour,

and from the trajectory of the system it is possible to try to reconstruct the elements, interactions and change processes of the system (Byrne, 2002).

Additionally, instead of investigating single variables, complexity theory deals with modes of system change that normally involve self-organization and emergence. Change on one level of social grouping or on the timescale of a system results in a new mode on another level or timescales, by which emergent properties or phenomena occur (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008). Accordingly, co-adaption is constructed to describe this kind of mutual causality that change in one system leads to change in another system connected to it, and this mutual influencing continues over time (ibid.). Concerning this process in the L2 communication, for example when teachers and students continually co-adapt in trying to establish the patterns of familiar activities and routines, from which at one level within the student as an individual, it leads to the emergence of new language resources to communicate, and at another level, it produces the lesson (ibid.).

4.3.2 Language, language learner, and language learning context as complex systems

From the complexity theory perspective, language can be considered as a complex system where cognitive, social and environmental factors continuously interact. Language cannot be a separate entity; it only exists in the fluxes of language use in a particular given speech community (Klein, 1998). Creative communicative behaviours emerge from socially co-adapted interactions. Abounding with flux and individual variation, language is a by-product of communicative processes rather than a collection of static rules and target forms to be acquired (Ellis, 2007). For example, in the language classroom, even if a stabilized version of the language is used in a syllabus, it becomes dynamic as soon as the language is operated

in the classroom or in the minds of language learners, which leads to the emergence of individual learners' growing language resources and classroom dialects, and even the emergence of the variety of lingua franca (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2007; Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004).

Moreover, language learners can be conceptualized as a complex system with a variety of interacting internal dynamic subsystems, such as a dynamic constellation of cognitive, affective, motivational and behavioural characteristics, which operate with a multitude of other external dynamic systems within the social system (de Bot et al., 2007; Dörnyei, 2009). It is believed that the language learner has his/her own internal subsystem consisting of intentionality, intelligence, motivation, aptitude of L1 and L2. These learner-internal elements are closely related to the extent of exposure to language, maturity and level of education, which is inevitably linked to the social system. Each of these internal and external systems will always be changing, in flux and construct the current state of the system as input for the next one (de Bot et al., 2007). For example, in the case of a language learner's self and identity system, while it is theoretically located within the person, the sense of self and social identities are defined, negotiated or contested relationally in interactions with other people's social identities in the surrounding context (Ushioda, 2015).

In this sense, as Ushioda (2015) has argued, it would be problematic in trying to separate the language learner from context like the poet W.B. Yeats asking whether it makes sense to separate the 'dancer from the dance' (quoted by Kramsch, 2002b). In applied linguistics, the context of language use is not pre-existing and outside the language user any more. In other words, context is not a stable background variable external to the individual in influencing linguistic choice; however, instead, the context itself can change in a process of co-adaption between the individual and the environment (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron,

2007). The context of language learning or language use includes the intrinsic dynamics of the learner, the cultural context, the social context, the physical environment, the socio-political environment and so on, and many of these contextual conditions will be complex, dynamic and adaptive systems as well. Language learning and L2 communicative events take place and emerge from these adaptive contextual conditions, and therefore it is impossible to separate the learner, their language learning and L2 communication from the context when studying and understanding them (Larsen-Freeman and Camerson, 2008).

4.3.3 Theoretical perspectives encompassing complexity thinking

The symbiotic co-adaptive relationship between language learner, communication, and context, and the interconnectedness of internal and external systems can be well described from an ecological perspective. An ecological view emphasizes the 'study of the relationships between all the various organisms and their physical environment' (van Lier, 2002, p. 144). Exploring the dynamic interaction between human beings and the environment is the focus of this paradigm. Context in language learning as a central theme is considered as socially constructed and dynamically negotiated on a moment-by-moment basis (van Lier, 2000; 2002). Interdependence is the central idea of ecosystems which contains four layers of structures: micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1993). From the ecological perspective, students, teachers and their surrounding micro classroom contexts and macro institutional environments are intricately weaved into a web of relationships. All elements in this are interconnected and inseparable.

The ecological perspective on language learning received considerable attention in general SLA research, primarily advocated by van Lier (2004). The application of this

approach is contextualized, situated and observation-based, which emphasizes contextual analysis, learners' action in the context and seeking patterns that are associated with the complex process of integration (van Lier, 2004). van Lier (2003) highlighted the value of this approach by employing it in examining the impact of the interdependent forces on the use of computer technology in language classes. Specifically related to WTC, Cao (2009) applied the ecological perspective to investigate the dynamic nature of L2 WTC in language classrooms. Moreover, Peng (2007, 2014) has generated crucial insights into Chinese EFL students' L2 WTC in the classroom by utilizing this approach. However, the classification of ecosystems with different levels and the focus on interconnectedness may in a way overlook elements or processes psychological and historically internal to the person, such as memories and life experiences, that is, the components across different timescales and spaces but which nevertheless actively contribute to shaping L2 WTC in the here-and-now communication behaviours.

In addressing this issue, Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) (e.g., Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008) pushed L2 WTC research forward by approaching WTC through viewing it as a complex system that evolves over time and depends on the interplay of numerous variables. An important contribution shed light on this line of inquiry approach to investigate L2 WTC and came from MacIntyre and Legatto's (2011) idiodynamic method in exploring rapid fluctuations of the speaker's affective states in L2 communication. The researchers focused on the impact of task type, learner self-rated changes of WTC duration communicative task as well as explanations offered for the fluctuations of their WTC. The findings provide evidence for searching memory for vocabulary and language anxiety as key components operating to affect WTC. Similarly, in a more recent study, Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2015) adopted this approach with an aim to investigate the dynamic

nature of L2 WTC among 8 Polish university students. The analysis provided evidence for WTC as indeed a state of flux, reflecting changes in a set of factors, such as topic, planning time, cooperation and familiarity with the interlocutor and others. Although the idiodynamic approach seems effective in capturing the dynamic changes of L2 WTC and represents a significant innovation in this line of inquiry, it is less capable of integrating a fuller scale of individual characteristics, such as motivation, self-concept, identities and life histories, and reaching beyond the micro-context of the classroom. In addition, the approach usually focuses on one type of communicative activity with a frequent interruption for the purposes of the speaker's self-rating of WTC based on time scales arranged in advance, which seems incompatible with the natural condition of authentic interaction or the progress of communication in regularly scheduled classes.

4.3.4 Complexity theory as a productive metaphor for L2 WTC research

The issues discussed so far with regards to the interconnectedness between persons and contexts, as well as the theoretical insights emerging from current L2 WTC research lend themselves to the adoption of complexity theory perspective in future L2 WTC research. Complexity theory as a metaphor brings together various factors that interact in a complex system of language learning and use, integrates dynamic changes and interactions of people, L2 WTC and contexts across timescales and space, and therefore is considered as providing a helpful way of thinking and researching L2 WTC phenomena.

L2 WTC has been defined as the desire to engage in a communicative event by using L2, which indicates that it is impossible to separate WTC from individual learner and language communication activities. Applying the theoretical metaphor, WTC can be

conceived as a complex system in which different elements or systems internal and external to the language learner interact and adapt to each other in giving rise to affordances for certain WTC and communicative behaviours to occur across timescales and spaces. Affordances address emergence when aspects of the environment interact with an agent (Gibson, 1979), and according to Cameron (2015), the emphasis is that a particular aspect of the environment offers different affordances to different agents. It implicates the active participation of agents and meaning-making in constructing the evolving contexts. This seems accordant with Ushioda's (2009) argument that the unique local particularities of the person as self-reflective intentional agent are inherently part of and shaping his or her own context, so each individual acts as a unique learning context for producing L2 WTC.

Therefore, a complexity metaphorical perspective in viewing L2 WTC suggests the importance to gather 'noisy', 'messy' and rich data that can capture L2 users' actual investment in L2 communicative events, which is considered particularly significant in filling the gap in the current existing L2 WTC research, namely integrating person, L2 WTC and context together, and investigating the individual learner's L2 WTC in real communication actions through grappling with the complex interactions between the learner and contexts. In this sense, a complexity theory offers a useful theoretical lens that can inform the future study of WTC, particularly in the way in which context is conceived of. In other words, the context should be conceived of as a part of the system in empirical research on WTC, as context is inseparable from the system in complexity theory, and complex systems are usually thought to be sensitive to changes in context and adapt dynamically to them (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008). Thus, it is important to collect thick descriptions of individual learners, groups that individuals are involved in, environment in which their language learning and L2 use take place, and all of them ought to be considered as interconnecting systems.

In addition, the language learner's WTC can be conceived as a part of the learner's ecosystem, which interacts dynamically with a changing social environment and also a learner's cognitive and affective attributes (Howe and Lewis, 2005; Nowak et al., 2005; van Geert and Steenbeek, 2005). This implicates that research into individuals' L2 WTC should be located in the dynamic activities of social systems or communities of learners, where individuals continuously and mutually influence each other and where the construction of WTC reflects individual's L2 beliefs, L2 motivation, prior language learning experience and subjective evaluation about the affordances and constraints of the current situation identified by language learner themselves (de Bot et al., 2007) but also acknowledges their embeddedness in the societal values, structures and ideologies. In other words, it is expected to gain insights about individual language learners, embedded in their cultural, social and educational backgrounds, prior language learning experiences, L2 motivations, social relationships, and L2 communicative activities in their local communities, in order to achieve an in-depth understanding of language learners as complex systems and how they interact with other systems in the social world and, ultimately, how this complex process constructs their L2 WTC. Moreover, complexity theory is more about dealing with processes than states, becoming not being (Gleick, 1987), so change or interaction is conceived as movement in a trajectory across state or phase space (Larsen-Freeman, 2014). This, therefore, allows a careful investigation and understanding about the shaping process of an individual's L2 WTC retrospectively (rather than predictively), an emphasis which is currently missing in the contemporary L2 WTC research.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, following the focus on the individual person in relation to L2 WTC research, I extended the discussion to the role of contexts in shaping language learners' L2 WTC at micro and macro levels, respectively referring to specific L2 communication situations with a focus of topics for communication, communication task, interlocutor, interactional pattern and communication atmosphere; additionally, as regards the Chinese sociocultural context is especially attentive to the key issues of reverence for knowledge and education, other-directed self, face concern, and Chinese way of learning. According to the discussion, it can be seen that L2 WTC is sensitive to both individual language learners as well as contexts in which the individuals are located.

At the same time, regarding the emerging complex interaction between the person and contexts in shaping one's L2 WTC, complexity theory is believed to offer a productive way of viewing and researching L2 WTC. Although traditional quantitative approaches typically aim at establishing correlations of variables affecting WTC (e.g. MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Peng and Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002, Yashima et al., 2004) have made a significant contribution to our understanding of influential elements which contribute to L2 users' WTC, they have not been able to capture sufficiently L2 WTC in its messiness, complexity and movement over different timescales, something which is increasingly being recognized in research on learner individual differences more generally and in L2 WTC research particularly. In addition, while there have been a number of qualitative studies which have highlighted the importance of subtle changes in the context in shaping WTC (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; Kang, 2005; MacIntyre et al., 2011), research within this line of inquiry has tended to rely on the previously described WTC model (MacIntyre et al., 1998), a theoretical framework developed from research with a predominant

hypothesis-testing orientation and primarily conducted in western countries (Wen and Clément, 2003), which on the one hand may not compatible with Asian or monolingual contexts, on the other hand may be insufficient in grappling with the complex and dynamic interactions between individual and contextual influential variables in the process of developing L2 WTC occurred in authentic L2 communication actions. Therefore, complexity theory as a metaphor which particularly concerns change and interactions between elements or systems, namely person-context, as well as processes and trajectories across timescales and space could be especially meaningful in filling the gap identified in the current existing L2 WTC literature.

By applying complexity theory as a metaphorical theoretical framework for my research (in other words, I am using it as an overarching heuristic structure informing my research, including the epistemological orientation and design, rather than an explanatory theory for the findings), I aim to generate theoretical insights into Chinese university students' L2 WTC in action and thus contribute to the development of complexity-informed research more generally. With a focus on studying learners' L2 WTC in actual oral communication actions, I hope to obtain a rich picture of L2 WTC with a careful consideration about its relevant interconnectedness, interactions, change, processes from a system perspective. Approaching learners' L2 WTC in this way can enrich the current understanding of L2 WTC phenomena, and provide practical implications for L2 learning and teaching in the higher education sector in China and similar L2 learning contexts.

5 RESEARCHING L2 WTC IN THIS STUDY

The previous chapters have considered the evolution of L2 WTC conceptualization and relevant research that has pushed the field's understanding of this construct forward. Based on this, I identified a gap in the existing L2 WTC research which, though increasingly committed to studying the construct's complexity and situatedness, has not yet found methodological and perhaps conceptual ways in which to place the persons more firmly in the multiple contexts of their communicative activity. In this chapter, I will illustrate one possible way of attempting such an endeavour by introducing the research project which forms the basis for this thesis. I will start by a reminder of the rationale for this study and by explaining the epistemological stance that I have adopted to address this rationale in the research design that underpins my empirical study. I will then provide details on all relevant aspects of the study, including the research questions, the specific context of a Chinese higher education institution in which my inquiry was located, and the research design. I will then proceed with an overview of the students who participated in my research and of the methods of data collection and analysis that I adopted in order to arrive at the key findings of this project. I will conclude this chapter by reflecting on the issues of trustworthiness and ethics.

5.1 The Rationale and the Research Questions

As noted throughout the previous chapters, the current study is informed by an overarching purpose: to offer in-depth insights into the L2 WTC of language learners studying English at a specific higher education institution in China. Based on the gap identified in the current research, I aim to do this by adopting a complexity lens which affords, theoretically at least, a fuller integration of the person, their L2 WTC and the multiple

contexts of time and space in which the L2 WTC is located at any specific moment of the communication opportunity. I aim to explain throughout this chapter how this theoretical ambition has been translated into practical choices with regards to the design of this study. More generally, my aim was to examine specific language learners' communicative behaviours which were relevant to the contexts of their L2 engagement mostly in the classroom but also outside of it. I wished to gain a better sense of how students' participation in these communicative events may have been shaped by the temporal and spatial micro- and macro-settings of their here-and-now action. In line with complexity theory, I was not interested in explaining an object of inquiry, that is, language learners' L2 WTC, merely at the level of its parts or focus solely on the individuals. Nor did I aim to arrive at some sort of causal relationships in making sense of the observed WTC phenomena (cf. Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008). Rather, my aim was to paint a more holistic picture of what may be hidden underneath specific students' behaviours which are labelled in particular ways (see my discussion of this issue in Section 2.3) and in this way to expand the theorizing of L2 WTC. To pursue this rationale, I identified the following research questions for my study:

> RQ1: What kinds of opportunities for English (L2) oral communication exist for Chinese university EFL learners in their L2 classroom?

> RQ2: In what way does the context of L2 communicative activity shape the learners' WTC in L2?

> RQ3: In what way do the learners' prior and current language use and learning experiences in a broader social world influence their L2 WTC?

> RQ4: In what way do the learners' L2 WTC trajectories develop and change over time and space?

The first question refers to potential L2 communicative chances existing for language learners in their L2 learning environment. The focus is not only on the availability but also language learners' recognition and perception towards potential chances, such as whether they consider them as opportunities for L2 learning and use. RQ2 and RQ3 intend to address contextual influence in shaping language learner's L2 WTC at the micro- and macro-levels. For the purposes of clarity, I addressed the issue of context in two separate questions, with RQ2 focusing on the impact of the micro-contexts of the communicative situation (as addressed in Section 4.1), while RQ3 examining the sociocultural values and norms influencing language learners' experiences in the classroom as well as in their larger social worlds (as discussed in Section 4.2). I was fully aware, however, that a separation between the two may not only be impossible but was, in the context of the overarching theoretical lens of complexity, undesirable. This will have implications for how I deal with these questions in the discussion of findings, an issue to which I return in the relevant chapter. Finally, RQ4 is concerned with possible dynamic development trajectories of L2 WTC in shorter or longer term of what the insights on these could add to current theory.

Approaching my research questions through the complexity perspective has several implications concerning methodological principles and choices. Above all, change and emergence arising from interactions of the components of the system are central to the study of complexity theory (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). In other words, the theory deals with becoming not being (Gleik, 1987). From this perspective, instead of viewing WTC as static entities, it needs to be conceived of as dynamic and process-oriented construct, and the focus will be on this 'becoming' process of WTC, that is the WTC trajectories.

Additionally, the nonlinearity of self-organization and co-adaption of a complex system makes outcomes unpredictable in the sense of conventional predictability. Therefore,

describing systems and behaviours retrospectively after change has happened is the central work of a complexity theory approach (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008; Larsen-Freeman, 2015). In this sense, L2 communicative behaviour usually as an outcome or evidence of the change of WTC provides a starting point for investigating the dynamic process of WTC. In addition to the unobservable nature of L2 WTC in action, retrospective or retrodictive approach allows for a more textured study. It allows the researcher to consider a wider range of data, including learners' past, present and anticipated life experiences across different domains of their lives to contribute to the interpretation of the 'here-and-now' action.

Related to this is the way in which contexts have been understood by complexity theory. Because they include the physical, social, cognitive, and cultural, and cannot be separated from the larger system (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008), this research study aimed to integrate different sets of data to understand both what individuals bring to the activity, that is, the cognitive and emotional contexts, and the sociocultural, pedagogical and sociopolitical contexts that are thought to be external to the language learner. My study, in accordance with the principles of complexity theory, did not intend to portray these as separate from each other but rather understand how these different facets of context interact in producing learners' L2 WTC. This methodological ambition meant that my study had to find a way of generating data about the nested contexts of the communicative activity on the one hand while gathering rich data on each individual participant's experiences over time.

In short, complexity theory as a metaphor allowed me to ponder the research questions that needed to be asked as well as the epistemological and methodological implications of my desire to understand L2 WTC of specific persons in their contexts. I offer an explanation of the epistemological stance next before launching into a detailed description of the methodological and analytical tools for advancing my inquiry.

5.2 The Epistemological Perspective: 'Seeing' WTC in Action

As has been stressed on multiple occasions throughout this thesis, the way I treat L2 WTC in this study is closely linked with how phenomena are viewed through the complexity lens: as an interconnected phenomenon that links the individual language learner, L2 communication act, and the multiple layers of the temporal and spatial contexts in a dynamic relationship. As articulated earlier, my commitment to placing the individuals in their contexts when studying L2 WTC implies a close examination of the actual communicative practices in which L2 WTC may become relevant. That is, instead of treating L2 WTC as a self-reported phenomenon in relation to a set of usually hypothetical communicative situations, I wanted to seek its evidence in the actual communicative practices in which individuals invest their knowledge, beliefs, values, negotiate meanings: in short, I was interested in 'seeing' WTC in action.

In line with the socially-informed perspectives, for instance, in the broader SLA field (Atkinson, 2011) or language teacher cognition (Kubanyiova and Feryok, 2015), I treated WTC not as mental constructs which participants can readily access and articulate in a research interview or survey, but rather as 'dynamic and evolving outcomes of individual and communal acts of meaning making' (Skott, 2015, cited in Kubanyiova and Feryok, 2015, p. 438). This means that in order to make knowledge claims about WTC, I needed to engage in the process of interpretation of these meaning making practices, whether these were part of the learners' participation in classroom tasks or in data collection methods, such as my research interviews.

As Creswell (2009) has argued, the knowledge that we generate as part of our research derives from a complexity of subjective meanings constructed by individual experience. The epistemological stance that I have adopted here and which broadly reflects the 'participation

metaphor' (Sfard, 1998), however, stipulates that these meanings are not necessarily reported as facts by our research participants. The researcher, instead, has to become a 'traveller' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 57) who enters inside the language learners' communication actions and endeavours to understand, through the examination of their current and past practices, what can be said about their WTC relevant to those specific actions. In this sense, data is not viewed as 'valid reports' which should somehow be 'mined from' the participants (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Instead, when participants talk about their WTC in a research interview, for instance, this in itself is a meaning-making practice which requires the researcher to unpack carefully the specific purposes, perspectives, or desired audiences for those claims and thus appreciate a fuller context for the individuals' WTC. In other words, interviews, classroom practices, diaries, and data coming from other data collection methods are understood as contexts for meaning making, rather than objective facts and the task of the research is to travel across these data sets in order to make claims about the participants' WTC.

At the same time, however, the researcher's interpretive process is clearly an outcome of his or her own epistemological stance (cf. Kubanyiova and Feryok, 2015) and the findings or, in other words, what is treated as evidence of a phenomenon under study, may differ depending on the researchers' own positionalities. This is in line with the complexity theory viewpoint and, as Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) have argued, this should not be perceived as a problem, but simply as a fact, because the researcher can never occupy a position outside of the system which he or she is studying. Thus, the conceptualization of the phenomena, data collection methods, and data analysis approaches are all a reflection of how the researcher approaches knowledge. Being transparent about my own epistemology has allowed me to reflect on the new understandings as well as their implications more deeply but

also opened my analysis to a legitimate critique and scrutiny by those coming from different epistemological positions.

5.3 The Research Context

The current study was conducted in a Chinese EFL learning context in which all participants were first-year postgraduate students who learn English as a second language in general terms and not as a speciality major. The university setting is located in the north part of China, and it is one of top ten universities in that country. It is not specialised in simplex area; however, it has high quality of teaching and researching across various fields. In this sense, it is quite representative of the current general situation of Chinese higher education. English is taught as a foreign language, and the university provides various teaching and learning resources and facilities in EFL teaching.

Over the last few years, the university has made a series reforms in EFL teaching (Zhao, 2012). One of these concerns offering students of non-English disciplines, an unattached Listening and Speaking course which has normally combined with a college English course in the form of academic reading and writing (ibid.). Specifically, the university offers both general English classes (e.g. International Communication) typically taught by Chinese teachers and foreign English classes (e.g. Listening and Speaking) taught by native speakers of English for postgraduates. English classes usually take place once a week with an allocation of three hours per week for the International Communication class (referred to as Class A from now on) and two hours for the Listening and Speaking class (Class B). Both classes were arranged in the same term, however, students were required to attend these classes in two separate terms and were grouped based on their initial assessment results.

Students with higher scores attended Class A, while those with lower scores were enrolled in Class B. Both types of classes normally consist of students from various majors except English-major students who usually have their own specialist language classes in their department. The graded class depending on the enrolment exam is another aspect of reforms carried out by the university, at the same time, in order to motivate the students' English learning, those who perform well can transfer from the lower-level class to higher ones in which lectures delivered will be more difficult and faster (Zhao, 2012).

The study intends to focus on Chinese EFL learners in higher education, because this group language learners have ample of L2 learning experience, which permits them to develop their own reflections, interpretations, attitudes towards English language learning. Additionally, their life and social experience forms certain personalities, self-concepts, identities, possible selves and values, which are considered significant in offering unique platforms and initial conditions for their L2 learning and communication behaviours, while, at the same time, university students are also in the stage of frequent interaction and explore the surrounding world through engaging various learning and social activities, which may then conversely co-construct self-perceptions, values, and conceptualisation, it is therefore considered particularly valuable in offering significant of potential for investigation concerning their WTC in L2.

5.4 The Research Design

5.4.1 Qualitative multiple case study

Based on what has been discussed above in regard to viewing and accessing L2 WTC, it seems quantitative data such as experiments with few controlled variables or questionnaires

with limited number of questions are far from capable of contributing the questions and then bridging the gap identified in the existing L2 WTC research. Whereas, qualitative data can offer a great potential in understanding L2 WTC phenomena in reality, as they can provide rich information, thick description and explanation about individual learners, L2 communication actions, and contexts that bind them more than offering independent self-rated categories usually obtained through quantitative measurements and therefore allow the researcher to engage in participants' actual communication practices, as well as their own interpretation and meaning-making of L2 WTC related experience.

According to these considerations, qualitative multi-case study design was employed for the current study with an aim to address the research questions listed earlier which I was particularly interested to explore. The intention for doing case study research is to capture the complexity of a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real world context, usually by using multiple sources of evidence (Creswell, 2009; Flick, 1998; Stake, 1995, Yin, 2013). In addition, including multiple cases (i.e. language learners for my study) in the study is regarded more 'robust' (Herriott and Firestone, 1983, cited in Yin, 2013, p. 57) in achieving literal or theoretical replication which refers to prediction of similar or contracting results by offering more valuables evidence obtained from different cases (Yin, 2013). In this sense qualitative multi-case study design can serve my research well to answer the question of 'complexity', which is particularly accordant with my research focus in thinking and accessing L2 WTC phenomena, through ways that firstly, the assumption of indistinguishable relationship between the studied phenomena and its real-world context enables me to investigate L2 WTC through engaging language learners' actual communication practices, and how they interpret and make sense about their communicative behaviours, L2 WTC experience, and the surrounding world, as Miles and Huberman (1984) argued that a 'case'

always occurs in a specified social and physical setting, therefore, qualitative case study provide potentialities to explore 'naturally occurring' phenomena (i.e. L2 communication interaction and WTC) in their physical space (Stake, 1998); secondly, using multiple methods of evidence or data collection allows me to gain rich and detailed multiple sources of information, which is particularly beneficial for exploring complex interconnectedness and interactions among individual learners, socio-cultures, and more situated influential factors associated with specific L2 communicative behaviours and WTC. In this way, it can support obtaining 'noisy' data and variability advocated in complexity theory with an aim to achieve in-depth and holistic understanding of L2 WTC phenomenon; thirdly, data gained from diverse language learners can deepen my understanding about L2 WTC phenomena by engaging evidence which insights similar conclusions, and also broaden the comprehension about this construct by considerations and appreciating distinctions. Thus, based on these three points, qualitative multi-case study differentiates itself from other research approaches as a better and proper research design in contributing to my current research.

In short, qualitative case studies can contribute to what quantitative measures cannot achieve in researching language learning-related experience (Punch, 2005). In recent reviews Duff (2008) and van Lier (2005) indicated that case study approach has been productive and highly influential in researching applied linguistic phenomena, it is especially competent to document and analyse the complex phenomenon of language acquisition and use (Dörnyei, 2007a), and allows for researching 'changes in complex phenomena over time' in specific language learning contexts (van Lier, 2005, p.195). Therefore, as van Geert (2011, p. 276) argued that while individual case studies may not be able to prove much concerning the population of language learners, they indeed 'have a direct bearing in theory'. This indicates that the aim of case study is not to produce outcomes that are generalizable to all populations

(Hyett et al., 2014; Thamos, 2011); even a single case may provide meaningful theoretical insights and valuable implications for similar phenomena. Now, I would like to introduce my empirical study and explain its structure and procedures in real practice.

5.4.2 The study

The empirical research was located in a university in mainland China. The selection of the research context was based on the considerations that the university is located in my hometown, which is important for empirical operations in conducting the research, as the study required an immersion within the research context and intensive contact with the participants. Additionally, as mentioned earlier the university can be representative of the current general situation of Chinese higher education in term of its ranking in overall teaching and researching qualities across various fields in mainland China. At the same time, the university also has experienced a series of reform in EFL education, which seems can offer greater potential for exploring students' L2 learning and WTC experience, even though I recognized the limitation of what is particular research context can contribute to knowledge of L2 WTC as compared with other possible research contexts (Adamson and Holloway, 2012; Bronken et al., 2012; Colón-Emeric et al., 2010; Jackson et al., 2012; Mawn et al., 2010).

Within this particular research context, I intended to pay attention to a number of university students as individual cases and explore their L2 WTC in specific communications activities based on my research questions by utilizing multiple data collection methods. Potential research participants were intended to be accessed in L2 language classrooms through a combination of convenient and purposeful sampling strategies by identifying volunteers who shown interest in participating in the current study with a consideration of a

list of criteria (a more detailed discussion will be mentioned in the section of Research Participants). Based on that I immersed in the research context with the research participants during the research period of 15 teaching sessions in total and per session each week proximately. Above all, it is crucial to construct an initial context or condition for understanding learners' L2 WTC at the primary stage of the research as I have discussed before. Thus, I spent three weeks in frequent contact with the participants inside as well as outside the language classroom to acquire as much information as possible about their background, L2 motivation, L2 attitudes, prior language learning experience, personal life, future plans etc. in order to capture a whole picture about individual learners, their language learning and personal living contexts, and L2 learning with real communicative behaviours. It is also important to have conversations with their teacher and peers to collect sufficient information about the research context, the learners and their social relationships.

After gaining this initial information, I paid attention to participants' L2 learning experience inside the language classroom and stayed together with the students ethnographically in following ten teaching-learning sessions in order to observe, record, and reflect on their L2 communicative behaviours and try to understand their willingness to engage in L2 interactions. After that, the students would be provided with opportunities (i.e. stimulated recall interview) to reflect on their own L2 communication experience, made their own interpretation towards their L2 WTC and communicative behaviours.

In the meantime, the research was kept open by involving data concerning participants' L2 communication taking place outside of the language class if students wanted to provide. In that case, research participants would be given chances to capture and reflect on situations where they use L2 for communication outside the language classroom, and photography is considered to be a practical and effective instrument for capturing, displaying, and

understanding students' L2 communicative phenomenon in a broader social context. Again, research participants were offered opportunities (i.e. photo-based interview) to describe, reflect on, interpret and clarify their L2 communicative behaviours and relevant WTC based on the photos they presented and selected.

In this way, the current study was designed and structured in a multifaceted multilayered manner which covers dimension of individual language learners' contexts, actual L2 communicative behaviours, and also their personal learning and life experience in broader sociocultural context. The use of multiple methods on one hand enable me to describe, interpret, and understand the complex phenomena of Chinese EFL university learners' L2 WTC, on the other hand, as a strategy enhanced rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and secured an in-depth understanding of the research questions. The whole structure and data resources for the current study is presented in Figure 5.1 and Table 5.1 below, and a detailed discussion in regard to participants and specific data collections methods will be followed in the next sections.

L2 WTC Research Project
- 15 weeks (13 teaching sessions in total with 1 two-hour teaching session each week; 1 week national holiday; 1 week prepare for finish research project)

Stage One
- Accessing potential research participants
- Identifying 6 volunteer participants

Stage Two
- Frequent contact with research participants and construct rapport with them (3 weeks)
- Collect information concerning their background, L2 beliefs, L2 learning experience, language learning contexts, social & living contexts etc.
  - Life story interviews
  - Conversations with teachers and peers

Stage Three
- Classroom-based research (10 weeks)

Ethnographically-oriented study of learners' L2 communicative behaviours and L2 WTC in classroom language learning context, and provide opportunities for learners to self reflect on their L2 WTC
  - Ethnographic classroom observation
  - Audio-recording L2 conversations
  - Stimulated recall interviews
- L2 use outside classroom (10 weeks)

Capture learners' L2 communication and L2 WTC outside the classroom in local community, and offer possibilities for learners to interpret their communicative behaviour and WTC by themselves
  - Photovoice
  - Photo-based interviews

Figure 5. 1 The overall design of the research study

Table 5. 1 A summary data resources of research project

Types of data resources	Sessions
Life story interviews	7
Ethnographic classroom observation	44
Stimulated-recall interview	42
Photovoice	5
Photo-based interview	5

5.5 Research Participants

A combination of convenient and purposeful strategies was adopted in sampling potential research participants. It is important for the study to include individual learners who were accessible initially however at the same time concordant with the research focus, such as somehow showing the engagement in L2 communication, which allows an investigation of their L2 WTC. One of prior considerations concerns the number of participants that I would concentrate on during the available period of research. The aim of the current study is to achieve an in-depth understanding concerning individual language learners' L2 WTC, in this sense, acquiring data intensively regarding each participant rather than extensively by involving a large population is more crucial for the study. As Yin (2003) pointed out, for qualitative investigation, studying a single participant 'can represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory building' (p. 40). This means that a few of the participants (about 5-6 students) can be considered sufficient and meaningful as examples which jointly contribute to our understanding of L2 WTC phenomenon. Tendencies or patterns from different

participants would provide evidence to support certain theoretical explanation, while any incompatibility emerging from the data resources may offer possible insights for the multi-faceted phenomenon (Robson, 2011).

Despite the issue of accessibility to certain groups of participants, for example accessing a specific class needed permission and following instructions from the rector of the university, it is desirable to involve individual learners who show active L2 communicative behaviours in different L2 learning contexts with various learning and living backgrounds. For the sake of this purpose, I decided to adopt purposeful sampling techniques which emphasize selecting participants who share the following characteristics that interested me, and enable me to answer my research questions. Particular characteristics were taken into account as sampling criteria in participants recruiting procedure: 1) Learning contexts, as L2 communicative context is closely related to learners' L2 WTC, which was one of main aspects the study would focus on, I wanted to recruit participants from both Class A and Class B, where classes were structured differently and were taught by Chinese teacher and L2 native speaker respectively. 2) Willingness and Volunteering, this was the prior criteria for identifying potential participants after obtaining the permission from the teacher in charge when accessing the research contexts. Students who showed an interest and were willing to join in the research project would be identified and involved after getting consents from them. It was important to recognize that language learners who were willing to participate in the study have already been differentiated with others who were not interested in the study in terms of their L2 WTC. 3) L2 communicative behaviours, as I was particularly looking for the development of language learners' WTC during L2 communication process, active communicative behaviours would be especially desirable for the study. However, it is realized that this characteristic was difficult to recognize at the very beginning stage of sampling

procedure. In this case, it is more realistic and practical to start with volunteers who show willingness and interest in participating in the research study, as to some extent being volunteering was already a representation of active approaching L2 learning and communication. Simultaneously, I also kept open to include other potential participants if their active communication behaviours can be identified at the later stage. 4) Learning and personal backgrounds, this criterion concerns L2 learners' personal backgrounds, previous and current L2 learning experiences, which was considered important in understanding their L2 WTC. Therefore, I was seeking participants with various lifestyle and learning backgrounds.

Bearing these criteria in mind, I started the recruiting process by explaining the purpose and procedure of my research project to the potential participants after I obtained teachers' permission to access the classes. Volunteers who showed willingness to participate in the study were identified and oral consents were acquired from them in the class. I also organized a brief meeting with the aim to provide further information on the project, elicit any questions or concerns from the participants and clarify the issues for the students. More information about the research including the research procedure, what they were expected to do and kinds of data they were asked to provide were explained to the participants. Additionally, participants were informed of ethical issues of anonymity, confidentiality, and their rights' to withdraw the current project. After that, I provided participant information sheets (see Appendix I) and asked them to sign the consent forms (see Appendix J) for me if they had made their final decisions to join in the study. The same procedure was conducted in both Class A and Class B. At the initial stage, I recruited 3 volunteers (2 males and 1 female) from Class A and 4 volunteers (all females) from Class B. In the following 3 weeks, I intended to frequently contact them, including informal classroom observation, daily

conversation, online chatting, life-story interview, in order to build a rapport with my participants, generate initial contexts for each individual students and also identify other possible participants that were perceived interesting for my study.

During this period, I found that participants revealed diverse performances, motivations, attitudes and learning experiences with interesting communication behaviours in L2, which was accordant with my prior selecting principles and was believed could offer a great potential for answering research questions. In the meantime, the two male participants withdrawn from the study, and a new volunteer shown interest to join in the study, however was not included in the study due to no active L2 communicative behaviour was identified based on observation, therefore the total number of participants were 5 students, 1 from Class A, and 4 from Class B. A brief summary of research participants is displayed below (see Table 5.2), in addition summary information about individual participants are presented as abbreviated vignettes.

Table 5. 2 A brief summary of research participants

Name (pseudonym)	Age	Gender	Major	Class (A/B)
Jenny	24	Female	Law	A
Sarah	25	Female	Microbiology	B
Emily	24	Female	Human Resource	B
Vivian	25	Female	Finance	B
Grace	25	Female	Microbiology	B

Jenny was assigned to Class A at the time of the study based on her prior English assessment results. She considered herself as open, sunny and independent. She received informal English education from her father when she was three years old. At that time, she learned English in a passive way mainly by reciting without understanding the meaning. Later, she became interested and confident in English thanks to her mother's encouragement in participating in English interest class in primary school, and the experience of being English representative in the class in middle and high schools. During that period, she developed a good relationship with her English teachers and actively participated in English communication activities representing for her schools. Comparing undergraduate study, she perceived great pressure currently in English learning especially in understanding academic articles, journals, textbooks and using English to analyse cases in study of law. Concerning her future plan, she intended to take an IELTS test very soon and prepare to study abroad.

Sarah is a first-year postgraduate student majoring in microbiology. She started to learn English when she was 5 years old and developed in interest in learning English gradually thanks to her positive language learning experience. This preference feeling was intensified after she went to a middle school which especially emphasized English education by using different curriculum and offering extra practice opportunities. However, this experience no longer existed after she went to high school, and she almost lost interest in English due to her teacher's humdrum and ineffective teaching strategies. Therefore, during that time, she frequently jointed in various extra curriculum English courses in order to improve her English exam results. In the current study, she indicated a preference to attend Class B, as, according to her, the learning atmosphere in that class was more relaxed, the foreign teacher was more encouraging and there was no pressure to produce correct answers in class discussion.

Emily is 24 years old, she studied Human Resource as her postgraduate major. At the time of study, she was assigned the monitor of Class B. Generally, she was a confident person as her parents' always shown their trust to her. She started to learn English in primary school. Following years of learning experience, she developed good learning habits of English because of her English teacher's supervision, and she believed the paramount importance to master English is persistence. Emily already passed IELTS test, and as she perceived this experience encouraged a systematic learning and intensive practice, however, she was still eager to pursuit a higher mark in the future. Currently, she was relatively confident about her English competence, especially speaking skills. In regard to her desired future, she wants to become a teacher teaching in the university, just like her supervisor now.

Vivian considered herself as positive and vigorous. 'We must be loving English' is her attitude towards English learning. In addition, she believed English is for utilization and development in the future. English learning was always the priority for her, and the significance of learning English was instilled from parents and teachers since she received the formal schooling. Compared with previous learning experience which was mainly for passing exams, she now approach to English learning in a more positive and active way with an emphasis for practice utilization. At the time of the study, she considered speaking is her strength, and she indicated a preference of Class A which was perceived as more practical and useful with a focus on reading and academic writing which were exactly what she wanted to improve now. Vivian planned to do IELTS and study abroad, she hopes English could be a part of her life in the future.

Grace was 25 years old, and assigned in Class B at the time of the study. She started learning English from middle school, during that period, she perceived learned English very well as 'always number one' in her class, however then became bored and depressive in

learning English due to a change of unhealthy learning environment in high school where comparison was emphasized by the teacher. Generally, Grace considered her English learning was only for examinations, and she gruffly found difficult in English study, particularly in writing, like 'squeezing toothpaste' as she perceived. For Grace, English would not be relevant for her future development even though it was still closely linked to her major which she was currently studying. Thus, rather than keeping trying, Grace did not want to suffer from this 'frustration' anymore, however she still desired a continuing education which normally requires proficiency in English if it would be possible.

5.6 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

As has been justified before, the aim of approaching in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the complexity, interactions and changes in the process of shaping the participants' L2 WTC requires that the data collection methods should enable to describe the contexts where L2 learners were located and capture the happening and emerging L2 WTC related actions within the situated contexts. Based on this, life story interviews, ethnographic classroom observation, and photovoice were considered as allowing different dimensions of investigation and jointly contributing to deepen the understanding about Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC phenomenon. Now, I would like to describe and explain these specific data collection method and instruments in detail.

5.6.1 Life story interviews

As has been discussed before, generating initial contexts for each individual language learner is considered primarily important for the current study inspired by the complexity

theory. Accordingly, life story interviews which have been broadly adopted in life-course sociology, anthropology, communication studies and education, is perceived capable enough in offering a strong alternative for intensive investigation about the individual person's life over time and in society (McAdams, 2008b). The key concept of this approach is narrative identity which refers to 'an individual's internalised, evolving, and integrative story of the self' (McAdams, 2008b, p. 242). It is believed that the process that the individual structure and make meaning of the life stories is the process that they construct their own narrative identities which not only situate the person within the complex social ecology, but also manifest the most significant and intricate relations with culture and society (McAdams, 2006; 2008b; Rosenwald, 1992). In other words, the link between the individual self and the social context can be reflected through narrative identity. From this perspective, the life story interview is particularly consistent with the emphasis of the interdependence and interconnection between agents (i.e. L2 language learners) and the context where the phenomena (L2 learning and communication in this case) taken place, prominently argued for in both complexity theory and qualitative case study investigation approach. Therefore, by collecting information concerning the individual learner's life and language learning experience, such as background, language learning environment, relationship with others, L2 learning history, L2 beliefs, possible selves., it can offer a relatively comprehensive profiles for each individual research participants, which on one hand works as an initial context for who, what, and where the research project is involved in; on the other hand, offers fundamental channels to access to language learners and making sense of their L2 WTC through engaging in the stories and narrative identities that the learners constructed and attached meaning with. In a word, it acted as a base for addressing all the inquiries in the

current study, particularly the issue of prior life and L2 learning experiences in relation to learners' L2 WTC.

Life story interviews were conducted at the earlier stage of the study. Starting with being a part of the participants in the first three teaching sessions, I intended to develop a rapport with the students, become familiar with each individual and also the language learning setting. During this period, the interviews were carried out respectively for each individual after classes in an informal and conversational form in order to encourage participants to provide as much narrative as possible. The interviews aim to achieve integral stories in regard to individual's L2 learning. Therefore, rather than selecting particular topics, the interview was structured according to participants' different living and L2 learning stages with an account of high points, low points, turning points, and other emotionally charged events regarding students' English language learning experiences. As shown in Appendix A, an outline for life story interview was deliberated and prepared in advance, which covers research participants' background information; general impression towards English language learning; reflections on L2 learning experiences at stages of preschool (if applicable), primary school, middle/high school, university/higher education respectively.

In practice, rather than going through each structured interview questions, I created and asked specific and in-depth questions according to the participants' responses and the evolvement of the conversation. All the interviews were conducted in Chinese according to the participants' preference to minimize misunderstandings between the researcher and the individual participant. In some occasions, the interviews were manipulated with more than one entry due to participants' private commitments. During the process, the interviews were audio-recorded, and then were organized and transcribed into transcripts preparing for further analysis. The data was saved electronically under different files named with different

participants. A summary of dates, entries and the total length of life story interviews conducted with research participants were shown in Table 5.3 below. These narrative data constructed different images about individual participants with rich and detailed information regarding their personality, growing up background, L2 learning experience, and relevant social interactions and relationships in the Chinese sociocultural context, which is believed offering an initial and essential framework for exploring and interpreting their L2 WTC for later stage analysis when integrating with data obtained from other resources.

Table 5. 3 A summary of life story interview data

Name	Dates	Sessions	Length
Jenny	27th March 2012	2	1h40mins
Sarah	26th March 2012	1	1h53mins
Emily	26th March 2012	2	1h36mins
Vivian	28th March 2012	1	1h27mins
Grace	28th March 2012	1	1h25mins

5.6.2 Ethnographic classroom observation and stimulated recall interviews

Research participants' L2 communication and WTC in the classroom context is the main focus for the current study. Concerning the classroom context, a prominent area of classroom research is ethnographic studies that consider classrooms as subcultures whose complexities need to be explored through sustained qualitative and intensive engagement by drawing on the insider's accounts (Dörnyei, 2007a). Ethnography aims at describing and analysing the practices and beliefs of cultures which not limited to certain ethnic groups but can refers to any bounded units (Harklau, 2005), in this case, I'm talking about the L2 language classroom. The main goal of ethnographic study is to produce a 'thick description'

about the culture of a group, which describes richly and in-depth the daily life of the community, and also the cultural meanings and beliefs the participants attach to their activities, events, and behaviours (Dörnyei, 2007a, Greertz, 1973). In other words, obtaining the participant meaning from the perspective of the insider is crucial to understanding the specific phenomenon, culture and context, and is also at the heart of ethnographic research. Accordingly, participant observation involving full immersion in the day-to-day lives of the people being studied is closely associated with the process of an ethnographic study, and considered as an effective way to approach participant meaning from the insider's accounts (Harklau, 2005; Robson, 2011). In SLA domain, ethnographic approach has been utilized by scholars for contextualized analysis of classroom discourse and school learning (e.g. Duff, 2002; Gebhard, 2002; Harklau, 2000; 2005; Lin, 1999; Moll et al., 2001).

Regarding the current study, ethnographic-orientated classroom observation is considered especially valuable in investigating Chinese EFL learners' L2 learning practices, engagement in these L2 communicative activities, and relevant fluctuation of their L2 WTC, particularly the impact of situational context on shaping the individual's L2 WTC in the language classroom. Firstly, the classroom is a social context where English communications frequently take place for Chinese EFL learners. By studying their L2 WTC in the real EFL contexts and interactions, it locates individual language learners, their language use and their L2 WTC in the specific conversational context within a particular social institution in the society, by which it serves the understanding of L2 WTC from complex systems perspective with an attempt to honour the profound situatedness as well as wholeness of social phenomena and individuals in the social world (Atkinson, 2002). Secondly, ethnographic classroom observation is particularly looking for communicative processes that usually include iteratively and recursively interactions and co-adaption at different levels, so it offers

a great potential to explore patterns of L2 communicative behaviours and L2 WTC variations in the classroom context. Thirdly, these communicative interactions attach social constructed explanations and meanings regarding L2 WTC, which could be approached through learners' self-interpretation and reflection on their L2 communication in the situated L2 conversation.

Concerning practical implementation, after obtaining permissions from the teachers and students from both Class A and Class B for carrying out my field work in the following ten English language teaching sessions, I accessed and fully immersed in both classes every Tuesday (for Class B) and Wednesday (for Class A) respectively during the research period with an intention to collect sufficient rich and intensive data about the participants' L2 communication in the classrooms. As an observer, in order to ensure all the research participants can be observed effectively while at the same time minimize the impact of my presence on participants' and other L2 learners' learning and communication, I chose to situate myself at the back of the classrooms. Figure 5.2 and 5.3 below shown briefly the different arrangements and participants' and researcher's situations in Class A and Class B. Participants' positions were normally fixed, but students in Class B might change their seats occasionally according to different classroom activities. During the observation process, no attempts were made to manipulate what was going in the classrooms, and data were naturally generated from the emergence and occurring in the classrooms.

△Teacher's position ★Participants' position ☆Researcher's position ×Other students
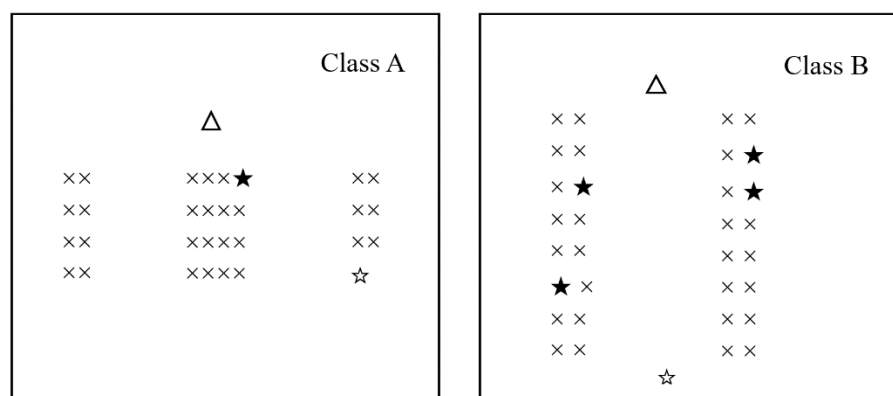
Figure 5. 2 Brief diagrams of research context
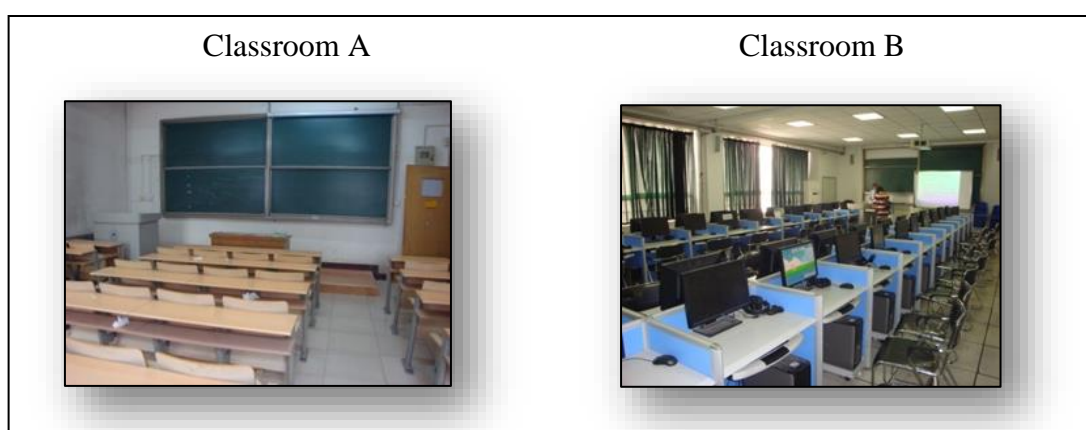
Figure 5. 3 Photos showing settings and arrangements in Classrooms

The aim of the classroom observation was to achieve a deep understanding about the shaping and change process of participants' L2 WTC in the classroom, and L2 communicational behaviours were considered as typical reflections of one's L2 WTC. To this end, L2 communication related activities, events and happenings were the main focus for the observations (see Appendix F). Additionally, I paid attention to situated contexts, such as teachers' instructions and interventions, the climate of learner group and rules in the

classrooms, which were essential in interpreting the L2 WTC phenomena in the classroom. At the same time, I also broaden my inquiry to include other forms of interactions and learning situations occurring in the classrooms, such as L1 using among peers. Based on these consideration, an observation scheme with items of potential WTC behaviours was constructed in advance, which were used as a general guideline rather than a strict checklist for ticking each item. As the Table 5.4 illustrates that I approached the classroom observation in a relatively loose way without predetermined frameworks in order to capture emergencies and happenings that I perceived significant in specific moments and situation in contributing the understanding of L2 learners' WTC.

Table 5. 4 Classroom observation scheme

Class/ Date / Time

Classroom context:
- Atmosphere
- Classroom arrangement
- Teaching and learning facilities
- Rules and cultures in the classroom

Teacher's instructions and interactions
- Topic and teaching aim/purpose
- Teaching resources and instruments
- Learning materials
- Teachers' actions/talks/responses/interventions/emphases
- Tasks/activities delivered and in what way

L2 learners' communicative activities:
- What activities/events/tasks and purposes
- Group size/pairs/who is involved in
- Climate and context of learner group
- Rules/norms for group interaction
- Participants' engagement and saying (When, to whom, how, in what manner, contents, turn-taking patterns, using L1 or L2, L2 competence, status or roles within the group, facial expression, body language, other related behaviours)

Potential L2 WTC behaviours in the classroom:
- Answer a question in public
- Response to the teacher (not necessary providing answers) in public
- Discuss with the teacher in public
- Ask questions in public
- Play jokes in public
- Check answers in pairs/ with group member
- Talk in pairs
- Discuss in pairs/ with group members (regarding the topic)
- Ask questions in pairs/ groups
- Asking questions after class

During the observations, each of the participants had an audio recording device to record their individual communication in L2, at the same time; I also attached one myself to record the whole teaching session. All the devices were ensured in place and running before the start of the teaching, however, some unexpected faults with the audio recorders were

happening during the observation, such as the recorders were unintentionally paused by the participants, which resulted in some portions of the individual's data were missing occasionally. The discourse produced by the participants was the main data resource, which can capture the general framework of learners' formulated ideas, and also it implies particular social, cultural and institutional structure, values and learner identities in the specific context (Sapsford and Abbott, 1996). In addition, field notes were taken as supplementary data for the recorded classroom interactions. As a part of the observation rather than separate activity, it was considered essential to keep track of the EFL classroom context, situated L2 communicative interactions, students' intended L2 communicative behaviours and so on. My initial field notes mainly concerned with descriptions of what was happening in the classrooms and my immediate interpretations for what significant. After each observation sessions, I summarized and organized the notes according to different participants with my reflections, which was particularly meaningful in proving rich and detailed context for the recordings, and also worked as an effective strategy in enhancing the trustworthiness because these reflective commentaries are particularly important in monitoring the researcher's own developing constructions, and should inform the development of research and part of project results (Shenton, 2004).

These refined notes were then integrated with the recordings, and were reviewed purposively. This process is characterized by 'progressive focusing' including listening to recordings iteratively, sifting, sorting, making notes, reviewing field notes, with an intention to identify up to 5 significant episodes concerning individual learner's L2 WTC which I was particularly interested and valued. Specific questions regarding each episode were generated, which constructed the focuses for further investigation through the following up stimulated recall interviews which are particularly important to obtain participant meanings in terms of

their L2 WTC. According to Gass and Mackey (2000), stimulated recalls can be used effectively to prompt the learners to recall thoughts and feelings they had while performing a L2 task or participating in a L2 communicative event in the classroom. The stimulated recall interviews were normally conducted the day after the class, individually, with the participant in order to maximize the possibility for learners to revive clear memories and produce affluent reflection regarding the happing communicative situations in the L2 classroom. Primarily, I played the recorded identified episodes for the participants to remind them about the situation. After ensuring their memories were evoked, I used the questions prepared before as a guide to elicit the students to talk about their thoughts and feelings relating their L2 WTC at that moment. According to the development of conversations, further questions were emerged and explored in details. During this process, participants were given opportunities to confirm researcher's interpretations regarding specific inquires, such as I usually repeated participants' intended meaning to ensure that I got a proper interpretation, once any contradiction was identified, participants were expected to explain, clarify or provide more contextualized information. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards, which constitutes the paramount important database allowing us to engage in L2 WTC phenomena occurred in the language classroom, and interpret the classroom context in relation to the change of WTC with participants' meanings.

Table 5. 5 A summary of observed classes and stimulated recall interview

Research Participants	Sessions of Classroom Observation (CO)	Total Length of CO	Sessions of Stimulated Recall Interview (SRI)	Total Length of SRI
Jenny	4	12h 15mins	2	1h 05mins
Sarah	10	20h 30mins	10	5h 10mins
Emily	10	20h 16mins	10	4h 30mins
Vivian	10	19h 40mins	10	4h 05mins
Grace	10	19h 45mins	10	4h 45mins

5.6.3 Photovoice and photo-based interviews

Besides the classroom as the main context for L2 communication, language learners may engage in activities using L2 beyond the language classroom environment, which would provide a significant potential to supplement data obtained from the classroom context, and deepen our understanding about Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC. As the current study is particularly interested a detailed and contextualized understanding of language learners' L2 communicative behaviours and relevant L2 WTC during the process, I utilized photovoice as a data collection method which allows me to acquire interpretive qualitative data that enables describing and explaining the L2 WTC trajectories retrospectively. Photovoice developed by Wang and Burris (1997) has been originally used as a community and participatory action research methodology in a variety of community research project. It is considered as an engaged, dialogical and self-reflective method, and capable to collect rich, qualitative and interpretive data. As Chalfen (1998) argued that photographs are symbolic forms embedded in a communication process, which much can be learned about people as social and cultural beings in a broader social world and can be used as an approach for reflection in the research

process, then therefore by using photos as a form to record L2 using process flexibly, it allows that learners' language learning experience and their WTC in L2 can be interpreted and reflected by both language learners and the researcher. By using photograph as the medium, it captures learners' L2 learning, using and communicative experience in the local community. Moreover, photographs as communication can also offer potential to reconstruct implicit and explicit relations in society (Chio and Fandt, 2007), which is believed can provide valuable insights in understanding participants' communicative behaviours. At the same time, it provides opportunities for language learners to self-reveal their WTC and construct their own interpretation concerning the emergence and change of their L2 WTC.

In practice, participants were welcome to take photos by themselves if they were willing to do so whenever and wherever they were engaged in L2 oral communication outside classroom during the data collection period. The pictures can refer to anything that represents a communicative event, including signs or words, objects, people, scenes, with an aim to remind the learners what exactly happened during the L2 communication then and there. Based on the photos received, I intended to conduct photo-based interviews with the participants as soon as possible. In reality, one of participants (Jenny) sent photos during the first two weeks. By talking with other participants, I noted that the main reason for other participants not willing to provide photos was due to a lack of opportunities they perceived to participate in L2 communication. To some extent, it could constitute a part of data, as on one hand, it implicated the insufficient chances for English using outside of the classroom context in China; on the other hand, at the same time it also pointed out an important issue of learners' initial motivation for exploring and engaging potential opportunities for using L2. For example, Jenny participated in an English corner off campus every week when she was free. The English corner was organized by a native speaker of English (the teacher in Class B) at

her home once a week, which was open and welcoming all students (both Chinese and oversea students) in the university to join in. In trying to expand L2 using chances for research participants, I informed other students about this available opportunity and also suggested other possibilities could be explored, for instance, having lunch together with the teacher or organizing a picnic with the teacher or with other overseas students at weekends. Unfortunately, they showed implicit refusal regarding these options with excuses such as 'no time', 'not convenience', 'maybe next time' or even 'don't want to'. Thus, even though opportunities were available, it was more a matter of individual's willingness to decide whether to approach or avoid these L2 communication potentials. In this case, I decided to focus on Jenny's L2 communicative activities in the English corner in the local community.

The collection of photos from Jenny was flexible. She sent me pictures on the day that she went to the English corner no matter once or every two weeks, because the participant could not ensure her attendance due to occasional personal affairs. After receiving the photos from the participant, photo-based interviews were normally carried out in the following one or two days depending on her schedule. An interview outline with questions that particularly intended to address and would guide the development of the interview was deliberated and prepared in advance (see Table 5.6).

Table 5. 6 Photo-based interview outline

1) Why do you choose this picture?
2) Can you describe this picture in detail?
- Where were you?
- Who was there?
- How many people were there?
- What was happening there?
- What were you doing?
- What were you talking about?
- Who was involved in the conversation?
- What activities did you do?
- How was the atmosphere?
- What did you do after you arrive?
- How did the conversation start?
- Who started the conversation?
- How did you think the topic or contents you were talking about?
- In what way you engaged in the conversation?
3) What was the most impressive moment? Why?
- Can you remember the moment that you were excited or willing to talk? Why?
- Was there any moment that you were trying to avoid or unwilling to talk? Why?
- How did you evaluate your participation? Why?
- Were there any people or things having impact on you during the conversation? In what way?
4) Do you think this experience would influence your English learning or using in the near future?

As shown above, the questions were used as prompts for the participant to encourage and elicit as much information as possible. During the interview, the participant was asked to describe and interpret the photos she had taken, which offered a self-reflection in an indirect way concerning the L2 communication occurred previously. At the same time, specific questions were created as the interview unfolds in order to elicit more deep and detailed reflection on the issues that I was interested in. All interviews were audio-recorded, and then transcribed for analysis at a later stage. Jenny's data of photovoice and interviews were summaries in Table 5.7. By involving Jenny's data of her L2 communication outside the classroom context, I believed that the data would work as a form of the learner's active voice

in terms of L2 WTC, which located the L2 WTC phenomenon in a broader sociocultural context. In this sense, it would serve the meaningful understanding of how the components in a situated L2 conversation interact, co-adapt and cooperate with other elements in a broader social context lead to the learner's decisions on whether or not to engage in L2 interaction at a particular time, place, with specific person or persons.

Table 5. 7 A summary of data for photovoice

Name	Number of photos	Sessions of photo-based interview	Total Length
Jenny	5	5	3h35mins

5.7 Data Analysis

Empirical data resources for the current study were mainly taken from life story interviews, ethnographic classroom observations with audio-recordings and stimulated recall interviews, as well as several entries of photovoice and photo-based interviews. In this case, most data tend to be narrative with participants' attached meanings, interpretations and voices that they intended to convey in regard to their L2 WTC. These data obtained from a variety of resources were considered especially significant and meaningful, as on one hand it supports the triangulation which is conceived as an important and effective technique in increasing the trustworthiness of a research by adopting different data collection methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Loh, 2013, Shenton, 2004). Though the initial purpose with using different methods was not achieving an overlap and confirmation but rather with an intention in seeking for particular information according to research focuses, they indeed cooperated in concert in compensating for individual limitations and develop respective benefits.

For instance, life story interviews offer background knowledge about each individual participant, which would help explain their communicative behaviours and WTC in L2 in the specific situations. In addition, stimulated recall interviews could shed light on WTC in question with detailed contextual information and meanings supplied by the research participants, which allows verification of particular details emerged from empirical observation and interpretation from both researcher and participants' perspectives. What is more involving documents from a broader social context via photos and photo-based interviews provides a wider spectrum in viewing WTC phenomena. In this sense, it can be said that it is accordant with Richardson's (1997) crystallization process as a dispute of narrow conception of triangulation, that is multiple lenses not the triangle, as has been mentioned before in offering a diversity of directions in viewing the reality of WTC.

On the other hand, these qualitative data also make the 'thick description' possible. Detailed description of the phenomenon which have been investigated is essential for promoting trustworthiness as it helps to convey the actual situation under scrutiny (Shenton, 2004). By this way, the detailed information concerning individual research participants as well as their L2 communicative behaviours in specific situations enables the reader to assess how far the findings embrace the real phenomena in terms of L2 WTC. Therefore, in this sense, it can be said that the integration of data collected from the various sources were consistent with the inspiration of complexity theory, which allows for multilayered analysis and interpretation, teasing out potential complex relationships from the 'noisy' details, and then leading to a theoretical explanation and understanding in regard to L2 WTC phenomena.

5.7.1 Grounded theory approach

In order to achieve a holistic and theoretical comprehension of L2 WTC, grounded theory analytical approach was selected. Grounded theory is a method of qualitative inquiry, which is divergent in nature according to its beginnings. As a legacy of sociology, specifically from symbolic interactionism, the constructivist perspective grounded theory conceives that meaning is negotiated and interpreted via interactions with others in social processes (Blumer, 1986; Dey, 1999; Jeon, 2004). The central aim of grounded theory is to generate an explanatory theory of basic social processes, investigated in the contexts in which they take place (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This researching approach attempts to see the studied phenomenon from the inside, and usually both researcher's and participants' accounts in co-constructing data through interaction are taken (Charmaz, 2011). Therefore, it is featured with that data collection and analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process (ibid.).

As has been shown in previous sections, the data analysis actually started at the very beginning as soon as possible after I made the initial contact with the research context and research participants, and it is an on-going and iterative process throughout the whole research procedure. For example, the analysis of audio-recording and field notes obtained via classroom observation informed the directions and focuses for the following on stimulated recall interviews, and these data would be reviewed and integrated at a later analytical stage. In this sense, adopting a grounded theory approach in analysing data is considered particularly appropriate and helpful as it encourages the researcher to become actively engaged in analysis by going back and forth between analysis and data collection, asking analytical questions of these data, and prompts the researcher to interact with participants, data and emerging analysis. Through these interactions, the nascent analyses emerge and take form, which allows

the researcher to raise the abstract level of analysis to explain what is central in the data (Charmaz, 2006; 2011; Punch, 2009). Inspired by this approach, an integration of data from different resources, a multilayered analysis with iterative process including intensive interpretations, re-interpretations, and linking, and accompanied by further reading of relevant literature, then developing a meaningful theoretical explanation in regard to L2 WTC is expected. Details in terms of relevant guidelines of grounded theory analysis and specific analytical process will be demonstrated in the following sections.

5.7.2 Data storage and Transcription

All interviews, observations and photos were digitally recorded and stored electronically as files under individual folders. Each file was labelled with relevant information such as dates and sorts of data for efficient identification and access (Richards, 2009), and were allocated separately in different folders according to individual participants, for example, under the folder named with research participant's name 'Jenny' (pseudonym), there are sub-folders labelled as Life story interview, Classroom observation, Stimulated recall interview, Photos, Photo-based interview, and Transcripts respectively, then each subfolder contains relevant documents such as digital recordings, notes, questions emerged for SRI, photos or transcripts. In this way, documents and even specific parts of the documents could be accessed easily. Except the copy stored in my computer, original audio-recordings were kept in the recorder until the research project had been fully completed in case of missing or destroying. Interviews were transcribed in English either verbatim or partially, and all the transcription were typed up as word documents and stored electronically. Similarly, Classroom observation field notes were also word-processed as transcripts, and

stored together with the corresponding audio-recordings. All of data were additionally backed up in the university service which is more secure in terms of storage and confidentiality.

5.7.3 Data Analysis with a use of NVivo

Principles and guidelines

Qualitative analysis has been considered as inherently subjective because the researcher is the instrument for analysis in which he or she makes all the judgments about interpreting, coding, categorizing, and assembling the data (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). Different approaches have their own strategies for monitoring, documenting, and evaluating the analytic process as well as the role of researcher to ensure trustworthiness. The logic of grounded theory approach is studying and interacting with data by moving through comparative levels of analysis.

First, it starts by comparing data with data as codes have been created, next it addresses comparing data with codes; after that, by comparing codes, significant codes are raised to tentative categories; then it focuses on comparing data and codes with these categories; subsequently, major categories are emerged as concepts, and lastly comparison is made between concepts with concepts, which may include comparing the emerged concepts with disciplinary concepts (Charmaz, 2011). This iterative process of inquiry allows a rigorous examination of data, emerging ideas and theoretical concepts, and helps lead to a theoretical understanding of the question that been brought to the empirical world.

By adopting a grounded theory analytical approach, the researcher usually engages with the analysis as a faithful witness to the accounts in the data (Starks and Trinidad, 2007).

By immersing oneself in the data, the researcher should be honest and cautious about his or her own perspective, pre-existing thoughts, beliefs and hypotheses. In this case, the researcher engages in a self-reflective process of 'bracketing', whereby s/he recognizes, puts apart but not abandon the priori knowledge and assumptions, and keeps an open mind with taking the participants' accounts (Gearing, 2004; Sokolowski, 2000; van Manen, 1990).

Different stages of coding constitute the major process of constant comparison of coding and analysing data in achieving the conceptual analysis. Firstly, the primary level of analysis is named 'open coding' which concerns examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing the data (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). At this stage, the textual data is split into discrete parts which can be a long phrase, a line, a sentence, or a short paragraph. Each of these segments is assigned one or several codes or labels which may be considered fall within one more conceptual categories. The codes can be descriptive or more inferential. It should be borne in mind that open coding is essentially interpreting rather than summarizing (Robson, 2011). The emphasis at this stage is on stimulating new ideas and teasing out the theoretical possibilities in the data (Dörnyei, 2007a). In this sense, it is an abstracting process from data to first-order concepts.

Then, the first-order concepts can be extended to higher-order concepts through 'axial coding' or 'theoretical coding' which refers to reassembling and interconnecting data into groups based on relationships and patterns within and among the categories identified in the data. In this level of analysis, the researcher makes connections between categories with an attempt to integrate them into more inclusive concepts which contains several subcategories. Glaser (1992) argues that the form of axial codes should emerge from the data rather than being forced into any particular pre-determined pattern. Dörnyei (2007a) suggests that the relational propositions usually primarily emerge in the researcher's memos which is an

integral part of grounded theory analysis. By constructing such relationships, the researcher already began to highlight certain categories in the centre of coding process, which forms the basis for the next phase of analysis. During this process, reviewing the data collection or re-analysing the existing data in order to refine the newly established connections between the categories are usually involved (Creswell, 2005).

Finally, the ultimate analysis stage is 'selective coding' which focuses on identifying and describing the core category in the data (Dey, 1999; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The core category will be the centerpiece of the proposed new theory, which needs to be sufficiently high level of abstraction in being able to bring together other categories in a coherent manner. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest that this can be approached via a core story with a single storyline that is the proposed theory. In other words, the researcher seeks a core conceptual category which enables his/her to understand the story line. The theory or story may also be evaluated against the existing literature to rich understanding and explanation power (Fassinger, 2005).

Analysis in practice

Stage one: Meeting and Opening up data

According to these guidelines, in practice the primary analysis was started as soon as after making the initial contact with the research context and research participants. Specifically, this process of qualitative analysis worked simultaneously with the transcribing process. I firstly started with documents of the research participants' life story interviews. After I transcribed the recordings on a word processor as a document, I highlighted segments that I considered important in the transcripts by using a different colour of pen, at the same

time I noted down my own interpretation and inserted relevant comments. In this case, I conducted open coding, and tentative codes such as high value on exams, peer pressure, attitudes towards L2 learning, intention to improve L2 competence etc. were generated. Then, I started doing a reflection based on the data and my emerging thoughts, and this reflective process on the data with an expanding of my thoughts and understanding were carried out from the initial beginning until the very last phase of the data analysis. In the meantime, I paid attention on the emerging categories emerged from the data with simple notes, descriptions, and summaries. This open coding process was perceived particularly important, because it not only allows me to have a good appreciation of what I have captured overall based on the current available data, but also enable me to prepare the empirical field work on the next subsequent stage of data collection and analysis particularly for stimulated recall interviews.

Similar to the analytical process carried out for life story interviews. Normally, I started with looking through the classroom observation field notes recorded in the classes and then listening to the corresponding previously audio-recorded interviews. In this process, codes were created in a loose way, and at the same time I identified significant points, either interesting or puzzling, concerning the research participants' WTC in L2. Further, I made notes and summarized questions that I felt intriguing and wanted to explore further. This process of data analysis was particularly important for me to prepare sufficiently for stimulated recall interviews, so that themes identified through the coding of initial analysis could be explored in follow-up interviews, and new information could be incorporated into subsequent encounters. Then, after completing the subsequent interviews, I did the similar open coding procedure for listening recording, transcribing them into word documents, reading and interpreting, and wrote relevant summaries with notes and comments. A similar analytical procedure was conducted with data of photo-based interviews. Meanwhile, I also

highlighted and wrote memos on potentially important emerging themes that I felt needed to be followed up in the next phase of the field work.

Stage Two: Growing up ideas

When I completed all the transcriptions, I had already become familiarised with the data and had developed a list of emerging categories, themes and possible relationships between them. In this sense, I prepared myself with further systematic analysis with the use of NVivo 10 software. I imported all the data sources and relevant word documents that I transcribed and processed before as Internals according to the sources classification in NVivo. After that, I started doing coding at three different stages according to the guidance of grounded theory analysis mentioned before. Although the process appears to be sequential, which moves from descriptive to the abstract, it was processed and occurred iteratively and recursively. As substantial analytical work had already been done before, I had developed a relatively clear picture of my data and could begin with a purposeful and systematic exploration of the emerging relationship between categories.

Firstly, I established some nodes according to the primary analysis I already completed. Then, based on numerous repeated readings of the transcribed data, new interpretative and analytical nodes (Richards, 2009; Richards and Morse, 2007) were created and entered (see Appendix E) into my nodes list and at the same time, new thoughts, ideas and comments were explored and expanded by adopting some effective analytical tools available in NVivo, and different tools fulfilled different function in efficiently exploring and analysing the data. Above all, annotations were used by functioning as scribble notes that stayed 'behind' the text and were always available for specific parts of data documents linked

to particular phrases, sentences or paragraphs in the text. For example, Appendix E.1 illustrates that when I perceived a concrete part, e.g. Jenny's reflection about her L2 WTC in doing a speech in public, as particularly interesting and significant, I selected it and it was automatically highlighted in blue colour. Then this part of data was numbered automatically and matched with relevant interpretations and comments I made as shown in grey. In this case, I interpreted Jenny's L2 WTC as negatively affected by audience attitudes and reactions. These annotations were especially effective and helpful in leading to the creation of meaningful codes/nodes, as in this case, audience's reaction could be identified and generated as a node as a factor which affects the learner's change of WTC in L2. This theme could then be further revisited and explored.

Based on doing annotations and revisiting them, I used analytical memos to reflect on emerging ideas, which, according to Dörnyei (2007a) are where the actual analysis occurs. When my ideas grew and became complex, I wrote memos to reflect further on those new ideas. As Appendix E.2 shows, different important insights and thoughts were written and labelled separately based on different themes and these were listed in the analytical memos folder in NVivo. Within each memo, I recorded my ideas towards a particular issue, reflected on relevant literature and made links to supporting examples in the data sources. In this way, the process of growing up ideas is recorded in the log trail document. Writing memos throughout the analysis was a reflexive practice which helped me to examine how the thoughts and ideas evolves as I engaged more deeply with the data (Cutcliffe, 2003; Finlay, 2002). In this sense, memos can serve the function of establishing an audit trail, whereby the documents of thoughts and reactions as a way of keeping track of emerging impressions of what the data mean, how they relate to each other, and how engaging with the data shapes the

ultimate understanding and recommendation (Cutcliffe, 2000), which is an important technique helping ensure the trustworthiness (Loh, 2013; Shenton, 2004).

Besides these, 'see also' links as shown in Appendix E.3 was utilized simultaneously, which was invaluable in allowing me to cross-reference relevant data records, memos, nodes or data segments in constructing theoretical codes, teasing out relationships among categories and interconnecting them in attending axial stage analysis. It worked particularly effectively when conducting summaries of individual research participants and integrated the identification towards the final presentation of the project results. In addition, modelling was also a useful way of handling my discoveries. As Appendix E.4 illustrates, models, which were generated based on emerging theoretical nodes, enabled me to create visual displays of what was happening in the data, and the emerging complex relationships between a variety of components, in turn, illuminated a new story of the studied phenomenon.

Stage Three: Revisiting records and up to the themes

The final stage was revisiting and reviewing data records, which was an iterative process that occurred concurrently with all the other analytical processes. At this stage, I re-read and reflected on my data as well as on analytical records including nodes, annotations, memos with relevant links, and models. During this process, I made a number of analytical revisions and corrections. For example, I may have realised that a particular piece of data should not have been coded under a specific node as it reflected a theme that was substantially different from the one that the original node was created to contain. In that case, I would either rename the node (especially if other pieces of data coded at this node also corresponded with the new understanding of the concept) or recode this specific segment of data under a new or another existing node. In this way, I engaged in the processes of analytical revision of

my coding tree, asking questions about the relationships between the nodes. It was through this analytical inquiry that I eventually reached data saturation and arrived at the themes presented in this thesis, as illustrated below.

The nodes were organised around what became the core themes across all participants' data (as identified through the above process): *dynamics of L2 communication actions*, *ambiguous nature of L2 WTC*, and *the role of self-concepts in relation to L2 WTC*. Specifically, *dynamics of L2 communication actions,* which referred to all data with regards to participants' communicative actions, consisted of 1) *L2 motivation/its interplay with perceived communicative opportunities and L2 WTC*. Data under this umbrella node referred to evidence of individual participants' L2 motivation and how it guided their perceptions towards particular communication instances, i.e. whether they considered them as opportunities to learn and use L2; 2) *perceived communicative competence,* which concerned the role of perceived communicative competence in changing one's L2 WTC and its interactions with anxiety and learners' previous experience; 3) *social comparison*, focusing on its facilitating or inhibiting function; 4) *communication atmosphere*, labelling all data with regards to the role of various facets of communication atmosphere in directing one's L2 WTC, such as L1 use as a dominant climate, reticence/vibrant communication climate, as well as different components of L2 speaking environment, including communication interlocutor and social relationships.

Besides the dynamic dimension of L2 WTC, the analysis also highlighted the aspect of *ambiguity* of this construct, which became the second major theme of this project. Data were gathered under three categories: 1) *struggles during L2* communication, which contained various difficulties and frustrations in L2 expression and comprehension due to the limitation of their actual L2 proficiency, topical knowledge, critical thinking or certain types of

147

communication activities, and how they dealt and negotiated with these troubles such as L1 use as a cue of L2 WTC, as well as a variety of affective feelings associated with these WTC process; 2) *WTC-related communication events,* which referred to emerging discrepancies between communicative behaviours displayed at face value and the meaning they acquired with regards to L2 WTC; 3) *real/fake WTC*, which referred to data that suggested different qualities of WTC across similar L2 communication events. All three sub-sets of coded data pointed to the need to inquire into the nature and quality of WTC, which became a recurrent theme across participants and situations.

Finally, my analytical process led to the identification of the significance of *self-concepts in relation to L2 WTC* in these dynamic interactions. This theme included data in relation to: 1) *the impact of current self on L2 WTC*, which concerned the role of different facets of current self-concepts, e.g. healthy/pessimistic self, and how they were mediated through social comparison in shaping one's L2 WTC; and 2) *the role of inherited ideal self and L2 WTC*, which particularly pointed to participants' internalization of external references and for which existing constructs in the literature (such as ideal or ought to self) did not seem to offer sufficient explanation. A detailed discussion regarding to each theme will be presented in the following two chapters.

5.8 Establishing Trustworthiness

The greatest concern arose regarding qualitative case study, namely the rigor in doing the research. Qualitative inquiry does not value 'objectivity' or 'scientific' the same as in quantitative research such as a set of operational measurements followed with systematic procedures, and replicable research results (i.e. internal validity, external validity, reliability)

due to their difference in viewing knowledge and the way of accessing the knowledge (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Robson, 2011). Richardson (1997) used crystal as a metaphor to describe qualitative inquiry, as it has been said 'crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions' (cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p. 8). In the crystallization process, the researcher tells the same story from different points of view. This means that researchers 'subjective' interpretation and meaning are the value and beauty of qualitative research. What we as researchers engage in the inquiry and tell what we have learned are by no means exclusive to particularly ontological and epistemological standpoints, through which we construct and produce new knowledge. However, this does not mean that qualitative inquiry is less reliable, it also has its own judgments to ensure the quality of research.

A number of qualitative research developed concepts and criteria that are used to evaluate case study quality and guide the researcher with key characteristics that are essential for achieving methodological rigor (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln, 1995; Sandelowski and Barroso, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985) created 'trustworthiness' as an alternative term instead of validity, reliability and generalizability normally used as criteria in quantitative paradigm together with a list of techniques to ensure good qualitative research (as shown in Table 5.8).

Table 5. 8 Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness criteria and techniques for establishing them (cited in Loh, 2013)

Criteria	Techniques
Credibility (internal validity)	1) Prolonged engagement 2) Persistent observation 3) Triangulation (sources, methods, investigators) 4) Peer debriefing 5) Negative case analysis 6) Referential adequacy (archiving of data) 7) Member checks
Transferability (external validity)	8) Thick description
Dependability (reliability)	9) Overlap methods (Triangulation of methods) 10) Dependability audit - examining the process of the inquiry (how data was collected; how data was kept; accuracy of data)
Confirmability (objectivity)	11) Confirmability audit - examines the product to attest that the findings, interpretations & recommendations are supported by data
All 4 criteria	12) Reflexive journal (about self & method)

The criteria have been extensively and intensively cited and discussed by qualitative researchers (e.g. Creswell, 2009; Creswell and Miller, 2000; Loh, 2013; Maxwell, 2005; 2009; Silverman, 2006; Silverman and Marvasti, 2008; Yin, 2011) with the intent to appreciate and highlight the value of qualitative inquiry, and supplemented or subtracted with various standards according to the form and purpose of inquiries change (Sparkes, 2002).

Regarding the current study, the research tried to establish trustworthiness in a variety of ways. Firstly, the inclusion of multiple cases can provide greater potential for detailed exploration if any incompatible cases or communicative behaviours were identified (i.e.

native cases). Actually, these incompatibilities were welcomed as they would offer interesting and meaningful insights in understanding the multiple facets of L2 WTC phenomena. Secondly, using multiple sources of data may achieve a triangulation, even though these data collections methods were designed with a particularly focus in gaining specific kinds of data, they can integrate and cooperate in contributing to increasing trustworthiness. Thirdly, the research design, especially the use of ethnographic classroom observation is accordant with Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Erlandson et al.'s (1993) recommendation of 'prolonged engagement' as a way to increase credibility. This technique emphasizes lengthy and intensive contact with the phenomena or participants in order to gain an adequate understanding of the setting, to establish a relationship of trust between parties, and especially to identify saliencies in the situation. At the same time, immersing in the L2 learning contexts with ethnographic-oriented observations in the classroom was consistent with the technique of 'persistent observation' justified by Lincoln and Guba (1985) in ensuring the trustworthiness. Persistent observation focuses on in-depth pursuit concerning those were perceived particularly salient and interesting through prolonged engagement (Lincoln and Guba, 1986). Fourthly, offering opportunities for participants to reflect on and interpret their own L2 communication experience and WTC was an alternative for member checks. Member checking refers to a process in which report or specific description or themes are taken back to the research participants to provide them a chance to give more detailed information about context and an alternative interpretation regarding the actual experience occurred (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002). The emphasis is on whether the participants consider that their words match what they actually intended, and therefore is considered as the most important strategy in bolstering a research's credibility (Brewer and Hunter, 1989; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, the interviews followed up with the classroom observation

and recording allow the participants to offer explanations for their particular communicative patterns observed and recorded by the researcher, and provide views towards the researcher's interpretation in regard to their WTC in L2, in this sense, it is not only a process of data collection but also a part of data analysis and verification, as Van Maanen (1983, cited in Shenton, 2004, p. 69) argued that

> 'analysis and verification…is something one brings forth with them from the field, not something which can be attended to late, after the data are collected. When making sense of field data, one cannot simply accumulate information without regard to what each bit of information represents in terms of possible contextual meanings'.

However, this technique has been facing critiques centred on that informants may have an agenda or purposes different from the researcher's which can lead them to misreport when they refute or disagree with the investigator's interpretations (Bloor, 2001, Fielding and Fielding, 1986, Silverman, 2006). Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that member check is not member validation, the purpose should be creating 'an occasion for extending and elaborating the researcher's analysis' (Bloor, 2001, p. 393). Finally, techniques and tools such as writing memos, developing audit trail as well as iterative and recursive reading, revisiting and reviewing data and records are important and effective way to examine the process of inquiry and ensure the trustworthiness.

5.9 Ethical Issues

With regard to the ethical considerations, during the process of implementing actual of the research project, data analysis and the report of research results, I paid attention to the following issues. Above all, in recruiting research participants, the class teacher and I both emphasized that the students' participation is entirely voluntary and does not form part of

their course. Their acceptance or refusal to take part in my study will therefore have no effect whatsoever on their studies and the same is true of their withdrawal, should they decide to do so at any stage of the project. The whole language class group will be approached on the same day and after my explanation of the project, their consent will be sought to carry out my observations of their lessons while their peers are participating in the study. I intend to gain their oral permission by asking them in front of the whole class.

After identifying volunteers, more information about the research including the research procedure, what they are expected to do and kinds of data they are asked to provide were explained to the participants. Additionally, participants will be informed of ethical issues of anonymity, confidentiality, and their rights' to withdraw the current project. I gave them an opportunity to ask any questions they may have and leave them time to think about whether they wish to participate. I contacted them at a later point to confirm their decision, and sign the consent form. The consent form includes three parts (see Appendix J), one is the basic information about the research project, another part shows the realization about participant's rights, and final part is about questions concerning participant's consent showing that they are entirely voluntary to engage in current project. The participant's rights to withdrawing from the study were explained in advance. Should any of the participants want to withdraw from the study, they were asked whether they consent to their data being used for research purposes. Data would be destroyed permanently should the withdrawing research participants withhold such permission.

Anonymity of participants and confidentiality of data will be kept in mind and ensured during the research process and in reporting of the findings. Any identifiable code referring the participants' identity were avoided in recording, transcribing and reporting data, e.g. their names, ID number, specific features that would enable identification. Pseudonyms as shown

previously were utilized in both data managing and reporting processes, paper copy of consent form containing participants' personal information were stored in a folder and ensured no one except the researcher could access it. Photos would be blurred or not used if participants' permission were not given. Narrative data should be reported selectively and worded carefully in order to avoid tracing back details to an individual participant. It is also important to keep the data securely without any accessing, changing, copying or destroying by other people. The data was only used for a purpose of the research project and would not be accessible in their entirety to any third party. On the other hand, the highly contextualised information that is needed for my study (e.g. data from observation field notes, stimulated recall interviews, photo-based interviews) admittedly presents a "microethical" dilemma that could potentially jeopardise anonymity of the research participants in processing and reporting this information (Kubanyiova, 2008). As a researcher I have responsibility to honestly report the research findings and make the best effort possible to respect persons by adhering to the macroethical principles and applying some of the advice suggested in the literature as mentioned above, I endeavoured to apply my ethical sensitivity throughout the data collection and reporting stages of the case study project.

5.10 Summary

In this chapter, I have offered a detailed discussion of the present research project. I started with clarifying my rationale for conducting the current research and outlined the research aims and questions that I intended to explore. I also made a case for an epistemological stance that underpinned my methodological and analytical decisions. With this background in mind, I will now proceed to discussing the findings with regards to Chinese university students' L2 WTC. Before I do so, however, I wish to emphasize that my

overarching aim is to contribute to theorizing in L2 WTC research and thus, by reflecting on numerous data-based vignettes from across the dataset, uncover and illuminate important facets of this construct. Taking an epistemological perspective that places the study of WTC in the actual action has offered me a productive way to integrate the person, L2 WTC and the context together in my effort to fill the gap in the existing L2 WTC literature. While the importance on focusing on individual human stories as the starting point for the inquiry must not be underestimated, it became clear to me through the analytical and writing-up process that the richness of these experiences could be brought to life more effectively not by separating the inquiry for each individual learner but by engaging deeply with the themes that connected these 'persons' in their 'contexts'. In this way, I hope that have done justice to both the lives of the individual persons that participated in this study and to the overarching aims of my research: to advance the theory of L2 WTC. In this vein and in line with the suggestions in the case study literature on reporting case-study findings (e.g. Yin, 2013), my analysis in the next part of this thesis will be focused on WTC-relevant themes in a cross-case discussion from the outset rather than on single case studies.

6 L2 WTC AS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND DYNAMIC CONSTRUCT

One of significant contributions that has been broadly appreciated across L2 WTC research is recognising WTC as a situational construct rather than a trait-like predisposition. This has highlighted the important role of a variety of influential factors affecting L2 WTC, and indicated a need to explore further the potential variables and understand the ways that they may give rise to L2 WTC. Previous studies are crucial in contributing to our knowledge of what these variables are from different domains, such as linguistic, communicative, social psychological, and their relations to WTC. However, findings generated from the current study seem to challenge this, not in denying the significance of these influential components in shaping WTC, but in terms of simple classification and categorization of the variables as well as their direct causal relationship with L2 WTC, and therefore the relevant limitations in achieving a rich and in-depth understanding of L2 WTC phenomena. In other words, the important components in constructing L2 WTC were previously approached and discussed in a relatively independent way, and separated from the actual communicative contexts in which language learners actively engaged, interacted and made meanings in regard to their L2 WTC, and thus were perhaps less effective in our collective efforts to comprehend the complexity of L2 WTC phenomena.

Bearing this in mind, as has been mentioned before, in reporting the findings, I intend to pay attention to specific L2 communicative actions, and highlight important issues of L2 WTC which have emerged from the current study by drawing on supporting evidence across participants. In this way, thick description in terms of the real communication activities, participants' communicative behaviours, their own interpretations in regard to L2 WTC will

be provided, which according to Loh (2013) is considered as a crucial strategy in helping achieving verisimilitude and utility, which concerns a sense of being true and useful respectively, and are important aspects of trustworthiness of research, since by the detailed description of the context and the action situated within context allows the audience to have a vicarious experience of the subjective world of the participants, and thereby able to understand the decisions and meanings made by the participants and to judge the extent of transferring the answers of inquiry to a different and yet similar contexts.

In this sense, presenting and discussing the study around the emerging significant issues with detailed supporting evidence from difference participants is considered particularly sensible and meaningful for readers. This chapter endeavours to obtain deep understanding of the multidimensional dynamic feature of L2 WTC by focuses on discussing: first, the complex and dynamic interactions among numerous components, such as, L2 motivation, perceived communicative opportunities, perceived communicative competence, social comparison, communication atmosphere within the L2 communicational context in shaping Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC in various ways; secondly, its emerging ambiguities which include struggles that language learners experienced in L2 communication, discrepancies between the apparent communicative behaviours and individual learners' actual meaning-making, and different qualities of L2 WTC, which will jointly contribute to our understanding of the first two research questions.

6.1 Emerging Dynamics within L2 Communication Actions

Distinct from what has been traditionally found and discussed in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) L2 WTC model and other prior studies (e.g. Kang, 2005; MacIntyre, 2007; Yashima,

2002; Cao and Philp, 2006), the distinction between enduring and situational influences on L2 WTC was not prominently presented in the current study, rather the L2 WTC process in actual communication was not shown to be straightforward, in other words, both enduring and situational factors that previously distinguished and conceptualized tended to cooperate simultaneously in shaping the dynamic change of L2 WTC. For instance, the desire to speak to a specific person that has been treated as a more situational variable can either be a result of enhanced L2 self-confidence through comparing with a specific communication interlocutor who is less competent in L2 at particular moment during the conversation, or a familiarity of social relationship developed by frequent contact with that particular person in a long term.

Thus, in the latter case the desire to communicate with that particular individual seems to play a more enduring and stable influence on one's L2 WTC. What importance is that this developed relatively stable influence may be suddenly crashed or changed due to unpredictable significant factors such as a dispute occurring with that person. Thus, from a complexity theory perspective (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008), even when a system is in a stable mode, it is not fixed but rather it is still continually changing in order to retain a degree of stability. In this vein, the stable influences can be conceived as a result of continuous and gradual situational variability over time, which highlights the importance of examining and understanding the fluctuations, unpredictable variabilities, interactions and co-adaptions occurring among different components giving rise to L2 WTC rather than focusing on independent variables separately. Therefore, it is important to note that though I will discuss the following themes respectively in different sections, during the process, other related important elements mentioned before, after or not yet mentioned may also addressed, and they will be integrated and interconnected together in contributing to the development of understanding of the L2 WTC phenomena.

6.1.1 Language learners' L2 motivation as an initial context for WTC

Data from this project suggests that in order to truly understand the language learners' L2 WTC process, it is important to investigate their L2 learning purposes, attitudes and motivational orientations that they held and brought in when they engaged in specific communication activities much more thoroughly; not so much in terms of whether the language learners were motivated to pursue their L2 learning and development, but what motivates them. Now, I start this inquiry by first looking at the research participants' motivation to learn English in a general term by highlighting some common issues and then discussing their more personal learning motivations respectively.

Learning English for exams and future development as a general trend

Above all, data indicated that the participants' motivation to learn English tended to be tightly related to the pressure of passing exams, graduation, further education and future career. Particularly, passing exams is the dominant motivating factor for both previous and current English learning reflected by all participants. For example, as Emily pointed out what she learned was '*all for exams*' (Emily, Life story Interview, 26 March 2012). She completed IELTS test in her undergraduate study due to a peer pressure that friends around her were all preparing and participating the test, even though she was not clear the specific reason and purpose for taking the test at that time. The preference of taking the IELTS tests can also be identified among other participants. In addition, what Sarah mentioned may provide a possible explanation for her exam-orientated learning motivation. Sarah stated that '*English is compulsory for almost all kinds of exams in China, if you want to continue studying from middle school, undergraduate, postgraduate and even to find a job in the future, you must learn English well*' (Sarah, Life story Interview, 26 March 2012). This statement highlights

the significance of successful English learning in relation to one's series of future development in Chinese sociocultural context such as further education and a good career, however passing exams seems to be the precondition to all of these. Therefore, it can be said that participants' motivation in learning English is especially regulated by exam orientation.

What is more, all participants showed their pursuits for further education. What is interesting is that all participants indicated their ambition in doing PhD for further education either in China or abroad after postgraduate study which normally requires higher level of English competence particularly in professional domains as they perceived. For example, Emily pointed out the need for her to improve IELTS test results if she would study PhD abroad. Similar to Emily, Grace also expressed the significance of improving her English competence in listening, speaking as well as in her own discipline in meeting the needs for a further education. In other words, the data revealed a tight link between these participants' enthusiasm for English learning and their desire of pursuing further education. More importantly, recognition of the value of further education in relation to future success seems explained their motive to invest effort on L2 learning at the current stage. For instance, Vivian clearly pointed out that '*there is a big difference between a PhD and a Master graduate, if I want to be an executive in the future, Master graduates are usually less competitive because they will have fewer opportunities for promotion and overseas visit study, therefore, a PhD graduate means a higher starting point, and I may start the position as a manager, so I plan to do a PhD either abroad, or stay here in the first two years then exchange for another two to three years later*' (Vivian, Life story Interview, 28 March 2012). It can be seen that Vivian perceived obtaining a PhD degree could be a stepping-stone for achieving a glorious future, and on the way leading to this, English learning would be one of crucial door openers either for doing a PhD or visiting abroad in the later stage.

In addition, Sarah conveyed a similar opinion towards her career development in relation to current English learning. From her perspective, '*English would be a crucial advantage for finding a good job in the future*', because as she recognized institutions normally require certain level of English competence, and they usually ask potential candidates to provide relevant certifications (e.g. CET) to prove their English capacity. Additionally, if there is any opportunity to go abroad in the work track, they would definitely choose the one who has a higher English competence, '*so English could influence my whole life, and it should be always the priority for me*' (Sarah, Life story Interview, 26 March 2012). According to Sarah's statement, it is clear that the motivation for her to insist on English language learning is due to the desire to meeting the needs of a better future development. In other words, investment to English learning were perceived essential for obtaining a satisfying work, having more opportunities for promotion, and a bright future. Therefore, it can be said that participants' motivation on L2 learning tended to be closely related to exams and future development, which offered an initial context for understanding their L2 learning, communication and WTC in a later stage.

Personal motivations on learning English

A closer examination of more specific L2 learning and practices in participants' personal life uncovers different attitudes, purposes, and specific motives towards English learning held by individual participants, which warrants further inquiry on their more individualized motivation in involving L2 learning. For Emily, currently she particular wanted to pay attention on improving her listening and speaking, and she planned to take another IELTS test in the near future in order to get '*a permit*' as earlier as possible, so that she could have more liberty in considering whether to study abroad. According to her previous IELTS learning experience, one critical aspect that she concerned and wanted to

learn was different ways of thinking and expression between language of English and Chinese, and the only possible and effective way to learn it was through frequent contact with the native speaker of English as Emily perceived, therefore, communication with her foreign teacher is especially highly valued for Emily in the L2 classroom.

Comparatively, Sarah seems to come with a relatively general goal of L2 learning either inside or outside the L2 classroom. What she desired to achieve in her words is '*no difficulty in communication*' which means no mistakes occurred in the speaking, and being able to flexibly use simple and clear vocabularies to express her meanings. Practicing more in the L2 classroom is considered by Sarah as a way to achieving this goal. What important identified regarding Sarah's L2 learning attitudes and motivation is underline of importance of exam. She believes that being capable to communicate in English in daily life is generally good, but '*if I want to have a brighter future, I should be good at taking exams, and if I will take exam in the future, I should study intensively*' (Sarah, Life story Interview, 26 March 2012). It appears that comparing with improving English communicative competence, Sarah preferred to invest more effort on examination related L2 learning.

According to Vivian's interview data, it is not difficult to identify that she has a strong desire to go abroad, United States, and she felt that '*it will be a lifelong regret for me if I never been there*' (Vivian, Life story Interview, 28 March 2012). In this case, she was aware that the importance of achieving a higher level of competence in English. However, she perceived difficult for her to arrange time and invest much effort on L2 learning in her spare time in the current stage, thus practices in English in the L2 classroom was considered particularly valuable by Vivian. In addition, she felt what the teacher taught in class was practical and easy to practice, and she believed that by practicing English in the L2 classroom

as much as she can, hopefully she could '*just blurt out fluently in English*' (Vivian, Life story Interview, 28 March 2012).

Grace, on the other hand, seems not eager to go abroad, and as far as she perceived currently, English would not be much significant for her future development depending on her possible plan to do a PhD. As she mentioned, '*English is important for my current stage learning, because I need to read relevant literature in my own professional domain, but if I will find a job in a state-owned enterprise, English will not be very important for me*' (Grace, Life story Interview, 28 March 2012). It seems that the main motive for Grace on L2 learning should be related to her major currently. While, Graces also expressed her tiredness and boredom on keeping on learning English so hard in so many years, and her willingness to stop the 'frustration' and start an easier and happy life. Therefore, in regard to the L2 classroom, Grace pointed out that language practice in class would be especially meaningful for people who plan to go abroad, however not such important for her, but she considered it was still good to learn and practice English in the classroom.

Different from Grace, Jenny had more specific aims and purposes on L2 learning and improving her English competence. At the current stage, she particularly wanted to improve her writing and speaking, and she planned to take an IELTS test very soon and aimed to obtain a high mark in order to be able to apply a university abroad. As Jenny described '*I will apply a university in the next semester, hopefully during this period I can improve my English competence, so that I can adapt to the life abroad as quickly as I can*' (Jenny, Life story Interview, 27 March 2012). It can be seen that Jenny's motive is dominated by her strong ambition to study abroad which requires an investment on English learning and improvement of the language competence in a relatively short time. However, the L2 classroom focused on teaching reading and academic writing that she currently assigned in was perceived as

insufficient in offering opportunities for communication in English, therefore, she preferred to explore more chances outside classroom to practice listening and speaking, such as participating English corner organized by the foreign teacher. The above findings highlight that research participants came with their personalized attitudes, purposes and motivation on L2 learning and communication, which provides important implications for their communication behaviours and WTC.

6.1.2 Dynamic interplays of language learners' L2 motivation, perceived communicative opportunities and L2 WTC

One of intriguing findings originated from the current study concerns the dynamic interplays of the language learners' motivational orientations, perceived communicative opportunities, communication behaviours and WTC in L2. The data shows that one's L2 motivation played a key role in guiding participants' involvement in communication activities, as well as the quality of their communication and WTC. Language learners tended to be more active in seeking communicative opportunities and perceiving them as potential chances for learning and improving the target language when they have a stronger and clearer motivation on L2 learning. It is during this process, WTC were more likely to occur. Now, I would like to discuss this issue in details by focusing on two examples referring to Sarah and Emily respectively among the dataset.

One of the routine communication activities in the L2 classroom was doing oral presentation in English based on topics assigned by the teacher. Usually, if students learned a topic of culture this week, normally four students were assigned to do presentations individually about this topic in the following class next week. Doing presentation was

compulsory for all students in the class, and would be evaluated by the teacher, then calculated as a part of students' final exam results. On the face level, participation in this classroom activity seems to be difficult in representing participants' WTC in L2, because on one hand the activity was a kind of exam-related task which was obligatory for all students; on the other hand, using L2 was mandatory in order to successfully complete the task. However, according to the observations, some behaviours shown during the presentation process provided important insights on different L2 motives held by the individual learners in relation to their perception towards the communication activities and WTC at that time. It seems when the learners perceived an activity as an opportunity for L2 communication, they tended to be more willing to initiate and engage in L2 interaction.

For example, Sarah was assigned to do a 15 minutes presentation about her holiday based on the contents that students discussed in the previous class. According to the observation, during the presentation she showed lack of eye contact with the audience, her facial expression was relatively nervous, she spoke fast, sounded like reciting texts, and she completed her speech in a relatively shorter time compared with other peers. Therefore, it can be said that there was no evidence reflecting her willingness to interact with the audience even though she was engaging a real speaking activity in L2. By linking her behaviours in doing the presentation with her reflection concerning that situation, an accordance in terms her perceptions towards the activity and lower level of WTC at that moment can be identified. In the stimulated recall interview, Sarah stated that

> I don't think it's a kind of communication, it's more about presenting my work, the interaction is not important for me, I know sometimes people ask questions at the beginning or at the end of their presentation, but for me, I don't think it is necessary. (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012)

It can be seen that Sarah did not perceive doing a presentation as an opportunity for L2 communication, rather she conceived it as reporting or submitting her own work. This interpretation seems consistent with her L2 motivation that has discussed earlier. For Sarah, exam-orientation was a powerful motive encouraging her L2 investment, and this again was reflected in Sarah's answer when she was asked if she would like to do the presentation voluntarily to practice her speaking in L2, as she said that '*If it's not relevant to the mark, I think I will not do it, because it will take me much time to complete it, so if it doesn't relate to the exam, it's not worthy*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). In this sense, Sarah's high value on the exam played an important role in directing her perception towards doing the presentation as reporting her individual work as part of the exam results instead of a chance for L2 communication, which then resulted to lack of WTC and relevant interactive behaviours in L2.

On the contrary, in Emily's case, she displayed frequent L2 interactive behaviours in the similar activity of doing a presentation about cultures in the L2 classroom. In this activity, Emily was assigned to deliver a presentation about Duan Wu Festival, a traditional festival in China, to the whole class. Based on the observation, there were a number of points showing evidence of her willingness to initiate interaction with the audience during the activity. At the beginning of the presentation, Emily used a rice-pudding prepared before to generate conversation regarding to the topic by asking questions to audience and obtaining responses from them. Meanwhile, she had frequent eye contacts with the teacher, because as she reflected later in the interview (Emily, SRI, 11 April 2012), she wanted to convey the message which she intended to express, and vice versa to gain a response which indicated that she was understandable through the teacher's eyes and facial expressions. This was perceived important by Emily, as obtaining the teacher's satisfaction was crucial in developing confidence at that moment. At the same time, Emily also showed the use of body language

and a flexible change of intonation during the presentation. As she perceived, it was more vivid and powerful to use body languages when she wanted to convey and emphasize some messages clearly to others. Additionally, the body language was also helpful in '*immersing herself in the presentation*' as well as conveying a sense of self confidence she perceived at that moment to the audience, '*just like Steve Jobs usually did in his presentation*' (Emily, SRI, 11 April 2012). In this sense, these body languages offered an important cue in showing Emily's willingness to interact with the audience. After the presentation, Emily initiated conversation in L2 with the teacher privately by asking the result and discussing with the teacher in regard to suggestions for future improvement in doing a good presentation.

According to these significant points identified above, it can be said that Emily demonstrated an active engagement in that activity with more enthusiasm to initiate and maintain interactions with the audience, particular the teacher, by using the target language. These active interactive behaviours were closely connected with her perceptions about doing a presentation as well as her L2 motivation. Regarding doing the presentation, she perceived that '*it is a good opportunity to practice, and communicate with my teacher, I would like to improve my English by participating this kind of practice*' (Emily, SRI, 11 April 2012). Besides, Emily also indicated her willingness to do a presentation voluntarily even though it was non exam-related. This means that rather than treating doing presentation as an exam-related task which was compulsory to be completed, Emily preferred to interpret it as opportunities for communication and improving her L2 competence in the classroom. This perceived opportunity for communication and practicing was crucial in impelling her willingness to initiate interactions with the audience in that situation. This emerged connection between learner's perceived L2 communicative opportunities and WTC is supported by previous studies in which they argued that perceived opportunity for talking in

L2 is regarded as an important factor contributing to learner's WTC (Cao and Philp, 2006; Cao, 2011).

Emily's perceived opportunity for communication tended to be mediated by her L2 motivation, especially the high value on frequent contact with the foreign teacher in order to improve her L2 competence. As shown below, Emily indicated in the stimulated recall interview that

> The most important thing for me attending this class is to communicate with our foreign teacher, all other things are not so important. Although information technology is well developed nowadays, and we can acquire various knowledge online whenever and wherever, opportunities to communicate with foreigners face-to-face are really scarce in our daily life. The key point to improve one's L2 competence is insistent practice, especially for speaking, and one important factor I realized affecting our understanding of English is the different logics hold by Chinese people and native English speakers, which can only be understood and habituated through frequent contact and communication with them. I think this class provides exactly such opportunities to learn directly from our teacher, so that through conversations, I can know immediately the mistakes I made, how she uses specific words and grammars in a particular way, how she expresses meanings in her logic. I think that is the right way to improve my English competence substantially. (Emily, SRI, 27 March 2012)

From the above, it can be seen that the recognition of difference between Western and Chinese way of thinking, learning the way of expression from native English speakers, and current learning contexts, shaped her personalized motivation and focuses on L2 learning in the language classroom. Therefore, communicating with the foreign teacher in the classroom was particularly important and meaningful for Emily, which then worked as a powerful motivator in guiding Emily to seek and perceive potential activities as opportunities for communication in L2. In this case, Emily were more willing to initiate and engage in L2 interactions.

In summary, both Sarah and Emily's cases discussed in details above give examples in showing the dynamic interplays of learner's L2 motivation, perceived communication opportunities, L2 WTC, and relevant communicative behaviours. What highlighted from it is that comparing what communication chances are available for language learners, how individuals perceive and understand particular situations as opportunities for communication with the use of target language matters more in relation to their L2 WTC, which therefore implicates the emerging significance of learners' own interpretation and meaning-making in L2 communications. One of crucial aspects illuminated from my data concerns the role of individuals' perceptions and evaluations about their own L2 communicative competence on L2 WTC. Now, I will move to a detailed discussion about this issue.

6.1.3 How learners perceived their L2 communicative competence matters more on L2 WTC

Through investigation cross L2 communicative events, participants' interactive behaviours, and their reflections, a finding emerged from dataset refers to that students' perceptions about their own communicative competence in L2 played a powerful role on directing their WTC and L2 use. When individuals feel that they were capable to communicate in an efficient manner at that particular moment, they tended to be more willing to engage in communication by using the target language. Whereas, WTC tended to be inhibited when they held passive estimations concerning their competence in L2 communication. Now, I will draw on some interesting examples in detail which showed evidence of dynamic interactions of language learners' perceived L2 communicative

competence in relation to fluctuations of their enthusiasm of involving in particular L2 interactions.

Perceived communicative competence as a healthy stimulator of L2 WTC

This example came from Emily's dataset, which concerns her L2 interaction experience in participating in a classroom activity, a game called 'jeopardy' designed by the teacher with an aim to help students reviewing and mastering vocabularies which they had learned. In this activity, students were divided into two groups, and each group chose a 'smartest' person each round as representative to play the game and compete with other groups. The chosen person could select different topics that students learned before such as travel, career, or culture, and values $100, $200 or $300 on questions boxes which indicated difficulty levels for each questions. Once the question box was opened, they could see a sentence which gave cues for a particular vocabulary, then the representatives should speak out the correct vocabulary as fast as they could, and the first person who provided the correct answer would be the winner.

According to my observation, at the beginning of the activity, the atmosphere tended to be relatively reticent, so that the teacher had to choose someone from group A to join in the game. However, when she was looking for volunteers from group B, Emily raised up her hand to indicate her willingness to participate in the game. Then, she smiled and excitedly walked to and stood in front of her group. At the same time, she also clarified the rules by asking the teacher if she could seek support from her group members during the game. In reflecting that situation, Emily pointed that

> I was very confident about myself at that time, I believed that I could guess the word successfully, and win the game. I wanted to challenge myself, and I really wanted to have a try and have fun, so I just voluntarily joined in. (Emily, SRI, 21 May 2012)

From the above statement, it can be seen that Emily's positive perception about her competence in successfully completing the task played a dominant role in evoking her willingness to engage in the activity at that particular moment. According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), communicative competence includes various dimensions of competence, such as linguistic knowledge, ability of understanding the discourses etc., which were essential for an individual when engage in an interaction activity; however, what highlighted in the data is that rather than objective evidence of Emily's actual L2 proficiency, her personal positive perception about being able to effectively and successfully doing the activity triggered the proportionately higher level of willingness to participate in the game at that moment.

Interactions of perceived communicative competence and anxiety

The data suggested that individuals' perceived communicative competence was helpful in reducing anxiety and supporting their WTC in L2 communications. For instance, Emily displayed active interactive behaviours even in a stressful situation of taking oral exam. The speaking test included two parts: an individual interview in which students had two minutes to develop a conversation in responding to teacher's questions based on the topic that the student picked up; and making a dialogue according to a particular topic given by the teacher with a partner whom they had chosen before. In such an occasion, Emily was observed as relaxed and eased during the exam. For example, she made simple greeting with her teacher by using L2 when she entered into the classroom. During the exam process, she tended to respond to the teacher's question in a flexible and confident way, such as by saying '*well, it's a difficult question*' as a start to developing the conversation. Her intonation seems

to be changefully and the speed was well controlled. The statement and argument that Emily developed in the conversation were clear and coherent.

These noted interactive behaviours were consistent with Emily's interpretation afterwards which shown evidently her perceived communicative competence, confidence, perception of sufficient preparation for the exam at that moment, therefore rather than feeling anxious indicated by other participants, Emily expressed that '*I was very excited, and felt very happy when I saw our teacher*' (Emily, SRI, 04 June 2012). In this sense, perceived communicative competence worked effectively in helping Emily to overcome anxiety but evoking more positive emotions, i.e. excitement and happiness, then facilitating L2 WTC in that communication event.

While, on the other hand, participants' data also indicate that pessimistic perception towards one's L2 communicative competence might result in anxiety, and then a decrease of WTC and L2 use in L2 interactions. For example, Grace's communicative experience in a group role play activity in the language classroom illustrated this dynamic interplays. This activity concerned reporting news happening in different areas of the global world. Grace's group was assigned a topic of selection of new president in France. Students were required to prepare as a group in advance, and presented it in the class the week after.

As had been observed, Grace played the president in the role play, and during her presenting she shown various behaviours with a blush, shivering voice, and spoke in a relatively shorter time compared with her group members. These behaviours indicated that Grace experienced anxiety when doing the role play, which was also reflected by herself in the stimulated recall interview, as she mentioned

> I think I recited fluently for preparation and I shouldn't be nervous, but when I stood there in front of the audience, when everyone looked at me, and they all were listening

172

to my talking, I became nervous automatically without control, I just wanted to finish my words as soon as possible. (Grace, SRI, 28 May 2012)

From this reflection, it seems anxious feeling impacted Grace's behaviours in two ways, on one hand, it motivated Grace to invest more effort to prepare the activity such as recite it fluently, which seems supported what Dörnyei (2005, p. 198) argued that 'the complex construct of anxiety is difficulty to define, widely misunderstood and often wrongly seen as being a purely debilitative factor'; while on the other hand, anxiety appeared to work negatively in inhibiting her willingness in using L2 in real communication situations. The provoked anxiety could not separate from her lower estimation about communicative competence, as shown in her interpretation '*I think I always likely to make mistakes, forget words, and not speak fluently especially when I speak in public*' (Grace, SRI, 28 May 2012).

Data from the study supported a well-established body of research on anxiety in L2 learning, including its detrimental effect on WTC (Liu and Jackson, 2008; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima, 2002). Different forms and representations of anxiety were frequently mentioned cross research participants, such as worries of making mistakes, forgetting things to say, the incidence of getting stuck, nervousness, fear of losing face, being concerned about other's thinking, and pressure of performing well, which influenced individuals' L2 learning, WTC and L2 production in various ways. As has been discussed above, how individuals perceived their communicative competence dynamically interplayed with these complex affective feelings, and give rise to different communicative behaviours and WTC, and what more important emerged from the data is that one's perceived communicative competence closely related to personal previous experience.

Perceived communicative competence and individual previous experience

There is emerging evidence from data showing that language learners' perceived communicative competence is not static, rather it varied according to the interaction with other elements in guiding learners' L2 WTC in specific communications. One of elements in contributing to perceived communicative competence refers to language learners' previous experience. For instance, data concerning the speaking exam situation that has been discussed earlier showed an interaction between Emily's previous IELTS learning experience and perceived communicative competence in helping overcome potential anxiety and promoting L2 WTC. In reflection her experience, Emily indicated that she didn't pay particular attention on preparing specific topics and relevant contents for the exam, rather she mainly focused on reviewing IELTS that she learned before especially connection words and phrases for speaking test, because she perceived that the exam was similar to the IELTS test, and she was familiar with this form of speaking test according to her previous learning experience. It seems that this sense of familiarity with the similar speaking experience in L2 tended to be supportive in developing and enhancing Emily's confidence in her communicative competence for taking the exam, as she stated regarding her preparation and the exam '*I thought what I prepared was sufficient, I was confident about myself, I didn't think it was necessary to practice each specific topics*' (Emily, SRI, 04 June 2012). According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), perceived competence would arise when the people in a situation that has been encountered previously, which offered that one has developed the knowledge and skills of L2, then WTC would be more likely occur.

In this sense, it can be seen that the familiarity of using the IELTS techniques based on previous L2 learning experience contributed to Emily's perceived communicative

competence which then promotes her positive affective feeling and boosted her enthusiasm to speak more in that situation. As Emily reflected

> I think I spoke more under this formal exam communicative situation, and my speech was more fluent as I perceived. I would like to make our conversation more integrated, I talked about more things, for example, we started with greeting with each other at the beginning of our conversation, you know, to make the conversation more authentic and affluent. […] I used the IELTS technique, like I said 'it is a difficult question' to win more time for thinking about what I should say next. […] I changed another way to express my meaning when I encountered some words that I couldn't remember clearly. (Emily, SRI, 04 June 2012)

According to her reflection, it can be seen that as Emily perceived during the exam, the quantity and quality of her speaking in L2 tended to be elevated in that situation. It seems that she didn't only want to speak more but also desire to speak better. One possible and reasonable explanation for her WTC could be the motive to achieve a better result in the exam. However, what important here is the familiarity or master of IELTS techniques that she developed according to her previous L2 learning supported her perceived communicative competence which encouraged her willingness and at the same time enabled her to exert these techniques in order to speak more, therefore as Emily indicated that even when she had difficulties during the communication, she still intended and was able to express her ideas effectively in another way by using the target language.

A similar example could also be identified in Sarah's data. Topical interest and relevant background knowledge developed from individual previous experiences tended to be helpful in constructing the learner's more optimistic perception towards their communicative competence, which then effectively boost one's willingness to initiate communication in L2. For instance, in a group discussion that students were talking about holidays, Sarah showed the tendency to actively interact with others by using L2.

L2 Communication Excerpt 1 (26 March 2012)

Teacher: First I would like you to talk about what you have already know about western holidays, which holidays do you know, and what do you know about these holidays, ok Christmas, what do people do to celebrate Christmas? What do westerners do to celebrate Christmas?

Sarah: Christmas tree (to the person next to her), Christmas trees (to the teacher).

Teacher: Few minutes. (the teacher didn't recognize Sarah's answer)

Sarah: Christmas star. Christmas gift, and socks, they usually put socks on the… on the bi lu, bi lu zen me shuo? (how to say fireplace in English?)

Group member: hao xiang shi (seems like that).

Sarah: oh, fireplace, yeah, fireplace, and they put gifts under the Christmas tree.

From the above excerpt, it appears that Sarah was trying to generate or engage in the conversation with both her teacher as well as her group member by using the target language at that moment. Regarding her relatively strong desire to express her thoughts in that situation, Sarah reflected in the stimulated recall interview by saying that

> I was very excited because I'm interested in these, western cultures, festivals, my uncle often told me a lot about these, you know festivals, gifts, such as Easter egg, they are made of chocolate, and Christmas trees and socks, sometimes he bought amazing gifts to me and talked about his travel experience with me, so I talked about what I know to the person next me, but it seems she didn't know, so I just spoke out,…It's good to tell people what I know, I mean share with others, as they may not know about these interesting things. (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012)

According to what Sarah mentioned about her WTC at that moment, it is not difficult to sense that relevant topical background knowledge that were accumulated from her personal living experience, particularly the sharing of travel experiences in western countries with her uncle, played a key role at that time in enhancing Sarah's perception about communicative competence especially when she recognized her peer's lack of knowledge in this field, which therefore efficiently assisted her enthusiasm to speak in L2. In this case, it seems that being knowledgeable is contributive for developing her perceived competence in communication.

There are a number of previous studies provide evidence that superior content knowledge and topical familiarity could improve one's self-confidence with more feelings of security, and may override certain limitations the speakers may have in their overall L2 proficiency, and lead to being more communicatively forthcoming (Cao, 2009; 2011; Cao and Philp, 2006; Kang, 2005; Peng 2014; Zuengler, 1993). Thus in the above case, even though Sarah encountered difficulties in expression in L2, her WTC in keeping on L2 using was not affected and waning. Besides, topic interest seems also important in evoking Sarah's WTC in the mean while. As Sarah mentioned in the reflection, an affective feeling of elation was perceived at that moment when she found the discussion topic was what she was interested in, which seems stimulated her willingness to talk about something in the relevant topic. The interplay of topic interest, perceived positive emotion and WTC were also identified prominently among other research participants. The learners expressed that they would be more willing to speak when they found the topic was interesting, for example, like Emily said that: '*Normally if I'm interested about a topic, I'm willing to talk first, if not I don't like to say anything, but prefer to listen to others to talk firstly*' (Emily, SRI, 27 March 2012).

Based on the discussions developed so far, the findings seem to provide supportive evidence for the existing studies. According to Clément's (1980, 1986) description, perceived communicative competence and a lack of anxiety are two important components in constructing one's L2 self-confidence. The role of the self-confidence as an important factor in directly affecting learner's WTC has been widely investigated and confirmed (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; Clément et al., 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2001, 2003; Yashima, 2002). As Peng and Woodrow (2010, p. 855) claimed based on their empirical study, communication confidence is a primary and universal precursor to L2 WTC regardless of regional diversity. Emily's case also implicates that language learners who have a more positive and higher

177

evaluation of their L2 competence and less anxiety seems to be more likely arouse WTC and enter into communication in L2. What comes next is a further analysis and discussion in regard to interaction of individuals' perceptions of L2 communicative competence and social comparison frequently occurred in L2 interactions in relation to one's WTC.

6.1.4 Social comparison in relation to threat to self

As has been shown in the last section, how learners view their L2 communicative competence could significantly affect their L2 WTC during communications, and it can be decided based on other influential factors. One critical factor emerged from the research participants' empirical data have been identified played a prominent role in directing the learners' evaluation regarding their capacity of L2 communication and following WTC and speaking in L2 is social comparison. Positive perception of one's L2 communicative competence and self-confidence could be effectively acquired or improved within a short time through social comparison with other interlocutors during L2 conversation.

Among the dataset, an interesting example from Sarah's case could demonstrate it well. In the classroom, students were doing an activity of listening to a learning material about computer problems and making a dialogue in pairs. They were asked to take notes, and then discuss the answers for the listening material by making a conversation with their partner based on their notes. From the recording, it was found that Sarah tended to dominate the conversation by asking her partner to read and ask questions to her, and she provided answers for all the questions in English in that communication activity.

L2 Communication Excerpt 2 (14 May 2012)

Partner: Wo men yao gan ma? (What should we do now?)

Sarah: Tao lun da an. (We should talk about the answers.)

Partner: Wo mei tai ting dong, mei ji xia lai. (I didn't quite understand and write down much.)

Sarah: Ni wen wo, wo shuo. (You ask these questions and I answer them.)

Partner: Hao de, ni zhen li hai! (Ok, you're so great!)

Sarah: Mei you, yi ban ban. (No, just so so.)

Partner: What's the problem with this computer?

Sarah: It crashed yesterday, and I lost my files, my photos just disappeared from the screen.

Partner: Any other problems?

Sarah: The computer is strange all the week, and it is very slow, and my files has no copy.

Partner: What he did with the computer?

Sarah: Firstly, searching, and the second is rebounding, but he didn't know how to do with the second solution.

Partner: What's the suggestion?

Sarah: The technician suggested just leave it, and don't do anything.

The above communicative excerpt shows that at the beginning they were using L1 to clarify tasks and individual responsibilities, which explains that the reason for Sarah to dominate the conversation was due to the difficulties that her partner encountered in understanding and recording the listening materials, so that it can be seen that during the conversation Sarah produced more L2 speaking by answering the questions asked by her partner. However, what more important can be found from Sarah's reflection about that situation concerns her evoked communicative competence through social comparison. As she perceived that

I was very happy and proud of myself when she said I was so great, although I showed my modesty at that time, when I realized that she didn't quite understand the listening materials, I asked her to read the questions for me, even though I just wrote down key words and phrases, I was absolutely confident that I could remember the original words and say the whole sentences. (Sarah, SRI, 14 May 2012)

According to this reflection, it can be seen that there was a social comparison with her partner occurred in that situation, so that Sarah's self-confidence and perceived L2 communicative competence tended to be effective enhanced at that moment. It seems that when she realized that her partner had difficulties in comprehending the listening materials and making relevant notes, a comparison made with her interlocutor together with her interlocutor's praise words encouraged her positive perception of her L2 competence and pleasant affective feelings, which then worked powerfully in kindling her willingness to speak more, producing more integrated sentences in L2, even though she might be not sufficiently prepared originally.

Moreover, the social comparison can be supportive even when there is a threat to the language learners' sense of self. For instance, Jenny's case offered a representative example showing the dynamic interplay between social comparison, the change of self-confidence and L2 WTC. The situation was about an English speech competition that Jenny participated outside the language classroom organized by her department in the university. The competition was carried out with two round, in the first round, participants were required to present a speech that they prepared before according to specific topic which they selected around the main theme, while, the second round was about making an improvisational speech depending on the topic they picked up on spot. A photo was taken in the second round, as reflected in the photo-based interview that due to her dissatisfaction about her performance in the first round, she felt relatively nervous at the start of the second round. However, this

negative emotion was dramatically reduced because of a comparison she made with other participants' performance at that moment. As she mentioned

> During the waiting time, I realized other participants didn't prepare well either, some were nervous, some forgot what they want to say, only 3 or 4 of them as I noticed performed very well, so from that moment, I became more relaxed and confident about myself, so I didn't feel nervous anymore. (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 04 June 2012)

It seems that this kind of peer comparison is similar to Pellegrino's (2005) social-environmental cues in constructing a sense of self. According to Pellegrino, when language learners are using L2, they are presenting their self through the language use, however their ability to control their self-image is vitiated in the L2 environment, they may feel anxious that their self along with their linguistic and intellectual status is threatened. This seems exactly happened in Jenny's case in which as she mentioned in the interview, due to the second round competition was conducted in a form of picking up the topic randomly, she couldn't prepare the content in advance, therefore, she felt more nervous about the situation that she had less control with.

However, as Pellegrino (2005) suggested, when language learners identify familiarity and commonality with their interlocutors, their social and psychological security in communicating in L2 increases, because the threat to their status decreased. In this sense, when Jenny realized her competitors also showed nervousness and unsatisfying performance, her perceived competence was recovered and her self-confidence in L2 was effectively enhanced at that moment. Therefore, this suggests that a comparison perceived between her own and her peers' L2 competence especially supportive in reducing anxiety, improving perceived communicative competence and enthusiasm in L2 speaking. As Jenny reflected at the end of the interview, she was very satisfied with her performance in the second round, the

only imperfect was she spoke too much so that she didn't finish her speech within the required time. In this case, Jenny tended to experience a higher level of WTC and L2 use at that moment.

However, on the other hand, social comparison may not work as a contributor for one's L2 WTC in all cases. In some situations, a comparison happened between the learners' English competence of themselves with their peers could result in a sense of threatening to their self, which was detrimental for the shaping of one's WTC in L2. An intriguing example can be found in Grace's datasets. In a group discussion that students were talking about their travel experiences, Grace showed frequent use of Chinese in her L2 speaking even though she was able to produce L2 phrases initially.

L2 Communication Excerpt 3 (27 March 2012)

Grace: I haven't travelled many places, but I've been Ha Er Bin for four years, Ha Er Bin, it's a very beautiful and famous ice city, and in winter, dong ji, zai dong ji (in winter), you can sailing (should be skating), hua bing (skating), you can see many beautiful ice…er…

Partner: say again

Grace: Bing diao (ice sculpture)

The excerpt displayed that Grace tended to use Chinese to repeat and instead of L2 speaking when she described her travel experience to her conversation partner. Concerning this communicative behaviour and her WTC at that moment, Grace reflected that on one hand, she repeated what she spoke in order to clarify her speaking because her partner couldn't hear clearly in some cases, on the other hand, she used L1 to repeat because she perceived that it was more effective to use Chinese to clarify her meaning. Besides these, what identified most

interesting concerns the following conversation between Grace and the researcher (Grace, SRI, 27 March 2012).

> **Researcher:** Ok, so using Chinese is more effective for you.
>
> **Grace:** Yes, and also, we learned different English in our major, so when I communicate with people from other majors, such as people from economic and financial background, I felt uncomfortable.
>
> **Researcher:** Why you were not comfortable? What do you mean by you learned different English?
>
> **Grace:** Well, I mean apparently their English are better than me, I know my English competence, so in some occasions I can't catch up or don't know how to say something in English, but I felt embarrassed to ask questions, I didn't want to ask, so when I don't know or was not quite sure, I used Chinese.

It can be seen from the above interview data that a comparison was made by Grace between herself and her interlocutor concerning L2 communicative competence at that moment, which apparently was not supportive in building up Grace's self-confidence and enthusiasm in L2 speaking, but rather resulted in a lower estimation about herself competence and a threat to her sense of self with a fear of being embarrassed or losing face if she displayed some behaviours which as she interpreted may indicate her lower level of communicative competence compared with her peers, such as don't know how to use L2 and ask a question.

Therefore, as a consequence, Grace showed a preference in using Chinese in her L2 speaking, however, in this case, the L1 use did not implicate the desire in developing the L2 conversation, but rather it is a sign of lower evaluation concerning herself L2 competence due to the social comparison, an indication of lack of L2 self-confidence, and an intention of avoiding use L2 that may threat to her sense of self. Thus, as has been argued before, one's WTC and L2 use can be affected in multiple and dynamic ways due to the social comparison

made between the language learners themselves and people who are involved in the L2 communication events, which highlighted a further inquiry of looking at the interactions between communication participants, such as certain communication atmosphere created and perceived by the speaker and interlocutors in a specific communication event, which could be sensitive to the fluctuation of one's L2 WTC.

6.1.5 Communication atmosphere in directing one's L2 WTC

Perception of communication atmosphere is more dependent on individual subjective experience, and normally refers to the degree of group members' participation and involvement. The findings indicate that communication atmosphere can be an important influential aspect of the dynamic fluctuation of a learner's WTC. Data suggests that a taciturn climate in L2 using can restrain the learner's participation in L2 communication, while active and enthusiastic atmosphere in communicative situation can efficiently boost the learner's WTC in L2. Like Grace pointed out in a stimulated recall interview, she felt speaking English needs an atmosphere in which everyone was talking in English, and when people were all speaking English, she tended to unconsciously started using English for communication (Grace, SRI, 27 March 2012). In the following sections, I will pay attention to discussing how communication atmosphere constructed and being co-constructed in relation to the shaping of language learners' WTC in L2 communication events.

L1 use as a dominant climate in communication activity

Findings shown that when communicative climate that the L2 learner immersed in is filled with L1 using, the use of L1 is likely to become an accomplice in killing the language

learner's willingness in L2 using. Examples concerning such communication climate in inhibiting language learners' L2 WTC can be found across research participants' datasets. For instance, in an activity, the teacher tried to organize and arrange students into different groups for discussion about science and technology questions according to their month of birth, she required the students to ask each other and sat within the same group. In this situation, it was interesting to found that the learners insisted to use their L1 rather than L2 to ask questions and communicate with other people, even when the teacher tried to stop them by emphasizing the use of L2 for communication in this classroom. Regarding this communicative phenomenon, Sarah stated in the stimulated recall interview that

> We all used Chinese at that situation, I realized that the teacher reminded us to use English at that moment, but as you can see all others were still using Chinese, and they just made their voice lower, so I felt embarrassed to speak English, because I didn't feel good when all others spoke Chinese, but I spoke English, I felt it's not the right time to use English, it's better to follow the general trend. (Sarah, SRI, 08 May 2012)

From Sarah's statement above, it can be seen that Sarah tended to experience peer pressure of using L1 in that situation in which the communication atmosphere surrounding her was filled with using Chinese for interaction at that moment. In this case, when the communicative atmosphere was dominated by L1 using, it seems difficult for Sarah to generate willingness to talk in L2 even when she realized that she was required and ought to use L2 for communication in the classroom, because, as Sarah mentioned above, such interactive climate became a pressure for her if she interacted by L2, and resulted in negative emotions of '*embarrassed*' and uncomfortable, and her perception of inappropriate to answer her peer's questions in English while others were all speaking in Chinese at that moment. As existing studies identified that it is natural for the language learners incline to use L1 when they all speak the same L1 (Duff, 2001; Kobayashi, 2003), however, in this case, such

communication atmosphere prevailed with L1 using definitely worked in a powerful way in hampering the learner's WTC in L2 and led to inefficient production in the target language, so that even though Sarah realized the teacher's emphasis of L2 using, she was still reluctant to exchange from L1 to L2 use in order to be concordant with the interactive climate.

Reticence in L2 communication

Besides the frustration of L1 use as a dominant climate for interaction, the negative effect of a reticent communicative atmosphere during the communication tended to outperform the positive effect in relation to one's WTC in L2 although the language learners may produce L2 with an intention to break the silence in some cases. For instance, the following conversation was captured in a group discussion in which students were talking about technologies.

<div align="center">

L2 Communication Excerpt 4 (07 May 2012)

</div>

Emily: Do you think robot will cause unemployment in the future?

Group member: Robot?

Emily: Robot, ji qi ren (robot), What do you think?

(Silence)

Emily: What do you think robot should be used for?

Group member: for dangerous work.

Emily: Yes, however if people who need the money, and robot replaced their work, these people will lose their jobs.

(Silence)

Emily: We have other questions, what social changes the cell phones made?

Group member: Huan ge hua ti ba (Let's change another questions).

Group member: Good and bad points of using computer?

Group member: Bad for our health.

Group member: entertainment.

(Silence)

Emily: the relationship, people feel far away from each other.

(Silence)

Group member: Zhao ge jian dan dian de (Let's find an easier question).

From the above conversation transcript, it can be seen that the communicative climate within the group tended to be reticent with frequent silences happened during the discussion, the conversation seems hard to be developed, and there was a frequent change of discussion questions, and the L2 speaking produced by the students during the communication was relatively short. In such a situation, Emily's communicative behaviours was changed from asking questions and eliciting other's speaking in order to develop the group conversation in L2 to handing over the initiative by responding with simple answers, which to some extent indicate the fluctuation of Emily's WTC from a relatively higher to a lower level. Regarding the communicative situation and her interactive behaviours at that moment, Emily reflected that

> I think our discussion was not good enough, because we often got stuck during the conversation due to the topic and also vocabularies, so we couldn't produce the whole sentences, and the atmosphere was not right, everyone was not willing to talk, I tried to ask some questions, but we couldn't think of and talk more about it, so people asked to change questions frequently, I felt very uncomfortable with this, and they might also feel embarrassed when we got stuck, so I just let it go. (Emily, SRI, 08 May 2012)

According to Emily's statement, it appears that the group climate in this communicative situation did not provide a productive and supportive environment for L2 communication. The happening of silence and reticent atmosphere in the discussion caused Emily's negative emotions such as uncomfortable and embarrassment, which then reduced her enthusiasm to speak in L2. Additionally, it seems that the construction of the discussion atmosphere depends on an interplay of various factors, such as speakers' topical background

187

knowledge, linguistic competence, affective feelings, which can then direct the potential of learners' engagement. In this case, the interplay of these factors resulted in difficulties in L2 oral production and the development of the conversation. Vice versa, this dumb communication atmosphere resulted in Emily's disappearance of WTC as a consequence.

A similar example can be identified in Vivian's case in which the taciturn conversation atmosphere within the group discussion hindered her willingness towards L2 use for interaction even though she showed her enthusiasm initially. In that situation, students were divided into different groups according to poker cards given by the teacher, so that students can talk to new peers. At the beginning of the discussion, Vivian tended to be active in initiating the conversation with her group members by asking their names and majors, and generating the discussion by expressing her own opinions for the discussion question and followed by asking others' viewpoints as well. However, the group climate was not developed warmly as Vivian expected. As she described in her stimulated recall interview concerning the communication situation and her WTC at that moment

> I found they were very quiet, and we were not familiar with each other, so I asked their names and majors, but I felt a little bit uncomfortable, because the atmosphere was so cold, it seems they are introverted, and don't like to talk, so I was trying to warm up the atmosphere in our group, so I asked questions to encourage them to speak more, however, they were still very quiet, and I could feel that nobody wanted to talk, so the atmosphere was not good, if they didn't talk, I didn't want to talk either, because I was not happy when I was the only person who kept on talking in the group. (Vivian, SRI, 12 April 2012)

Vivian's reflection shown that there was a dynamic interplay between the language learner and the communication climate in the group discussion. Initially the reticent atmosphere in the group was sensed uncomfortable for Vivian, at that moment, her willingness to initiate communication seems to be evoked in order to break the quietness and avoid embarrassment occurring within the group, which is evidently shown in her

communicative behaviours, such as greeting others and asking them questions in L2 with an intention to warm up the group climate as Vivian interpreted. Similar phenomena were also frequently mentioned among other research participants, in which the language learners were willing to initiate interaction in L2 when the group climate was reticent in order to avoid embarrassment. However, it is important to note that, although such communication atmosphere may provoke the happening of L2 production in some cases, a careful investigation indicated that it is not essentially supportive and healthy in promoting and sustaining the language learners' enthusiasm in L2 engagement, especially once the language learner realized that others' participation cannot not be activated, they still tended to be impeded by the reticent climate with a decreased WTC as a result. As shown in Vivian's case, being influenced by others' reluctance of joining in the discussion, she became less willing to interact with the group members, because it was frustrating to talk alone in the group as Vivian perceived.

L2 WTC in a vibrant communication mood

There seems to be no doubt that an active and harmonious climate for L2 communication can effectively kindle and facilitate language learners' WTC and using in L2. Findings emerged from the current study confirmed this by showing that a warming interaction between group members is helpful in evoking learner's topical interest which is significant in supporting one's L2 WTC. As has been mentioned previously, interest is a motivational concept in the second language domain, which has been conceived as a significant factor for achieving successful L2 learning. In L2 communicative interactions, it more refers to an intriguing feeling that the learner possessed concerning the topic and content that he or she is engaging in specific situation, and it usually combined with other positive affective feelings such as excitement, curiosity and enjoyment. Data in the study suggests that

189

topical interest and its associated emotions can be generated and developed through interactive conversation, especially when the learner has more liberty in initiating different topics and relevant contents.

For instance, among numerous examples from the research participants, a typical one was came from a communicative situation recalled by Jenny in her photo-based interview which displayed a dynamic interplay between communication climate, emerged topical interest and her change of WTC in L2. The communication took place in the English corner held at the foreign teacher's home, where students came occasionally when they were available to use as an opportunity to meet the teacher and peers and to practice their English. An impressive communicational episode described by Jenny in one of her photo-based interviews concerns a scenario that they were eating cakes made by the teacher and chatting together. She described that on that day the teacher made a cake for them to greeting students who came to the English corner, after they arrived at her home an hour later, the cake was ready, so they sat around and started enjoying eating the cake. Meanwhile, some students asked the teacher why she wanted to make a cake, how she made it, what kind of ingredients she needed, and how long it would take, etc. At beginning of the conversation, Jenny was indifferent about these questions until someone asked the teacher whether she likes doing cooking, as Jenny reflected below

> At the beginning, I was just eating and listening to others' talking about how to make this cake, because I was not quite interested in that, when someone asked the teacher whether she likes doing cooking in the kitchen, there was a funny thought appeared in my mind that usually it is women who doing cooking for their families in China, but most of chefs are men, I found it was very interesting, so I was really curious whether it is the same in America, so I asked the teacher to tell me something about this, since then our following conversation was developed around this topic, I asked many questions and talked a lot, and I found myself really enjoy our conversation at that time. (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 20 April 2012)

According to this reflection, it is not difficult to identify the important facilitating role of the active interaction occurred within the communication situation, particularly the inspirational question of cooking asked by her peer at that moment, on arousing Jenny's topical interest, curiosity as well as her critical thinking, and provoking her willingness to engage in the L2 conversation. So that, in this case, it can be said that Jenny transformed herself from being reticent, and almost an outsider of the L2 conversation (e.g. only eating and listening to others' talk) to an active participant, an insider with a true feeling of enjoyment of the L2 communication due to the vibrant interactive atmosphere within that situation.

Dynamic interplays between communication interlocutor and one's L2 WTC

Discussion that had been developed so far presented how communication atmospheres give rise to one's L2 WTC and use in a variety of ways, while at the same time, it also hinted at the important role of interlocutors in constructing different climates for L2 communication. Data indicated that interlocutors' active engagement and supportive communication responses are significant in constructing a facilitating group climate for L2 communication and promoting the development of the speaker's L2 WTC and use. Viewing across research participants' datasets, the language learners frequently expressed that they were more willing to talk to interlocutors who were more competent, talkative, responsive and had many interesting ideas to share with. As an example, a communication scenario from Sarah's data showed the fluctuation of her L2 WTC in relation to different qualities of interlocutor's engagement. In the communication situation, students were asked to doing a 4-minutes discussion across persons within their group about how they spent their holiday of Labour Festival as a warm up activity for their class. According to classroom observation, Sarah

displayed different extents of participation when she communicated with two different interlocutors. As the L2 communication excerpts shown below:

L2 Communication Excerpt 5 (07 May 2012)

Interlocutor A: Wo men shuo shen me? (What should we talk?)

Sarah: Shuo yi xia jia qi zen me guo de. (We should talk about how we spent our holidays.)

Interlocutor A: I have (had) a three-day holiday, I go (went) to my boyfriend's home, and I read some books and watched motives during the holiday.

Sarah: Well, on the labour's holiday, I had three days off, so I go (went) shopping, shopping, and shopping, all the three days.

Interlocutor A: How much did you spend?

Sarah: A lot of money.

(Silence about 30 seconds, when the teacher passed by, she asked them to talk across group members, so Sarah changed another interlocutor to talk with.)

Interlocutor B: Let's talk about our holidays, how was your holiday?

Sarah: On the Labour's festival, I have three days off, so I went to shopping, the first day I go (went) myself, I went to Silver Plaza, the second day I went to Henglong and Baisheng shopping malls with my friend, and the third day I went to Silver Plaza again with my mother, and I finally find out it's only when you go with your parents, can you buy a lot of things.

Interlocutor B: Baisheng is a new place opened recently, right? I went to there, but I didn't feel good, how do you think?

Sarah: It only has few…pin pai (brand), brand?

Interlocutor B: Yes, brand.

Sarah: It only got few brands, and I don't really like the style.

Interlocutor B: Why you don't like it?

Sarah: fan zheng bu shi hen xi huan (just don't like it, anyway).

Interlocutor B: How do you think Wanda?

Sarah: Wanda is better than Baisheng, Baisheng is more like Renmin shopping mall.

Interlocutor B: Well these three are very similar, and they are the same to me, to boys.

Sarah: Haha, that's right. I understand.

Interlocutor B: In my holiday, I went to the Flower Exhibition Garden.

Sarah: Wow, where is it?

Interlocutor B: It's in Changqing, it is very large, larger than I thought before, I spent 4 hours walking along the lake, but couldn't finish viewing the whole garden.

Sarah: Whom you went with?

Interlocutor B: With my friends.

Sarah: How many people?

Interlocutor B: Only two of us.

Sarah: Oh, I see, your girlfriend, right?

Interlocutor B: Yes, haha.

(Their conversation were continuing.)

From the above L2 communicative excerpts, it can be seen that the conversation between Sarah and the interlocutor A was not developed in an easy way, and the contents they produced was relatively general and stayed at a face level. Regarding their communication, Sarah interpreted that because interlocutor A only described her holiday in a general term, she couldn't find any interesting points that she was willing to ask, and in responding she tended to interact in a similar way. In other words, interlocutor A offered a particular communicative atmosphere at that time, in this case, it was not perceived by Sarah as productive and facilitating for developing their conversation furthermore, therefore, being affected by this climate, Sarah tended to avoid producing more speaking in L2 either.

However, in communication scenario with interlocutor B, Sarah tended to become more active in participating the communication in L2, behaved in a more interactive way, and produced more L2 using with specific and detailed contents. In this case, the conversation was developed naturally and authentically with frequent and interactive turn takings between

Sarah and her interlocutor. In reflecting her communicative behaviours and WTC in L2 at that

moment, Sarah stated that

> The teacher asked us to change partner, but actually we talked about the same topic, so
> I've already got something ready in my mind, in addition, my partner talked a lot, and
> he asked me many questions, so our conversation became more interactive, I was very
> happy and felt comfortable in developing the conversation, I didn't feel pressure to
> thinking about questions that I should ask, so the conversation just happened naturally.
> I also felt that he listened to me very carefully, and was curious about what I said,
> which made me more willing to talk and tell him. When he talked about his holiday,
> he talked about many detailed things, which seems aroused my curiosity, so I would
> like to ask further questions, I mean if he just said I played game during my holiday, I
> would feel that, ok, you played game, that's all, I wouldn't be interested about that, so
> I wouldn't be willing to ask him questions, just like my previous partner, so because
> he talked his experience in details, I found it was very interesting, in that case, I was
> willing to ask specific questions. (Sarah, SRI, 08 May 2012)

Based on what Sarah stated above, there were two important factors worked

corporately in promoting her WTC and communication in L2. On one hand, familiarity with

the discussion topic developed based on her previous communication with interlocutor A

allowed her to preparing and having something to say. Therefore, from the recording (it may

not be able to reflect from the above excerpt), it could be found that Sarah's speaking became

more fluent compared with her talking in the previous conversation, and as shown in the

excerpt Sarah's speaking was more productive as well. On the other hand, what more

significant is that interlocutor B played a crucial role in contributing to a supportive and

encouraging communicative climate for WTC and L2 using. The engagement of interlocutor

B was perceived by Sarah as talkative, interactive, productive, and interesting, so that in this

case, Sarah felt she was well listened and responded. Meanwhile, rich communication

contents produced by interlocutor B kindled Sarah's interest and enthusiasm to develop the

conversation further. therefore, it can be said that group members' active and productive

engagement is essential for developing a healthy L2 communication environment which is

relaxing, interesting, and secured, so that when language learners felt effectively 'comfortable', they would be more willing to initiate and interact by using the target language (Cao and Philp, 2006; Cao 2011; Kang 2005; Liu 2005; Peng, 2014), and the L2 conversation more likely occurred naturally and authentically, otherwise, they would be uncomfortable in engaging in L2 communications, such as pressure in producing something and thinking of a respondent question.

Insufficient engagement and less supportive reaction from the interlocutors were frequently mentioned by the research participants as a negative factor in impeding their L2 WTC in various communication situations. For instance, Sarah reported her experience of reluctance to communicate with her partner due to lack of reactions and interactions obtained from the interlocutor when they were discussing about traveling in a communication task.

L2 Communicative Excerpt 6 (27 March 2012)

Sarah: I travelled many places, such as Hangzhou, Guilin, and some places in Shandong province.

(Silence)

Sarah: and…and…and…the most beautiful village is in Guilin, the water is green, the mountain is small but green.

(Silence)

Sarah: Wo men shi yi qi shuo ma? (Should we discuss together?)

Interlocutor: Ni xian shuo, ji xu (You first, moving on).

Sarah: and…and…the most unforgettable trip was with my friend, we went to Hong Kong.

From this short excerpt, it can be seen that the L2 conversation was no developed effectively with frequent stops, silences, and moved bit by bit. Additionally, there was almost no interaction occurred between Sarah and her interlocutor, the only one turn concerns Sarah's invitation to her interlocutor to join in the discussion, however was refused as a

response. Regarding this communicative experience, Sarah reflected that she didn't want to continue the conversation at that moment, because the interlocutor didn't provide any response at all, which made her feel uncomfortable and '*weird*', as she pointed out that '*I think it would be better if we talked in a more interactive way, I'm more willing to say when I'm speaking something and my partner can respond in English at the same time*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012).

It appears that Sarah's communicative experience captured at that moment was accordant with her own interpretation afterwards. In other words, Sarah underwent a lower level of WTC due to failing obtaining her interlocutor's immediate supportive reactions. In this sense, it can be said that indifferent L2 communicative behaviours produced by surrounding conversation interlocutors particularly in dyad interaction likely resulted in unfavourable communicative atmosphere and relevant negative emotions, then inhibited the speaker's passion in L2 production.

Emerging role of social relationships in L2 WTC

Besides, another element contributed to communication atmosphere and language learners' L2 WTC concerns social relationships between communication interlocutors. Data suggested that familiarity or close relationship, such as friendship, with a particular someone is helpful for constructing a favourable communication climate which then can enhance one's willingness to talk with that certain person in L2 communication. As an example, Grace's case demonstrated the role of social relationship in relation to her L2 WTC in a group discussion. In that speaking activity at the beginning of the class, students were required to talk about their holidays with each other in 4 minutes. According to my observation as well as the recording, Grace produced a lot of L2 speaking with her interlocutor during the

communicative activity, especially when she recalled and described her experience of getting a new cellphone. At that moment, she tended to be active and excited in developing the L2 conversation by providing many detailed information about her experience. Regarding this communication situation and her L2 WTC, Grace reflected that

> It was mainly because I was familiar with my partner and we have a very good relationship, so I wanted to tell something to her, just like we chat in the daily life, so I was willing to talk to her, and also I was very excited about my new phone I bought in the holiday, it has many new functions, so I was very happy to talk about these with my partner. (Grace, SRI, 12 April 2012)

This shows that Grace's willingness to communicate with her interlocutor in L2 was evoked mainly due to the familiarity and close relationship with that person constructed in daily life. This intimate social relationship with the interlocutor offered a relaxed, free and secure communicative context for Grace, in which her desire to share personal experience with that person was aroused, without any pressure but just like a usual daily chat with a close friend. This kind of communicative atmosphere might be particular important for Grace to evoke and promote her willingness to speak, because according to the discussions mentioned previously either in her life story interview or stimulated recall interviews about specific communication activities, Grace tended to be diffident about her L2 proficiency, in this case, a sense of security with the communicative environment was essential to facilitate her WTC and L2 speaking. In this sense, it supported Kang's (2005) identification that familiarity among the interlocutors played a significant role in shaping learners' sense of security, while among unfamiliar interlocutors, learners tended to feel less secure of making mistakes, and were more reluctant to speak L2.

6.2 Ambiguous Nature of WTC

So far, I have discussed intricate interconnectedness, interactions and changes occurred in relation to language learners' WTC in L2 communication actions. By engaging in these dynamic interplays and movements in the shaping process of language learners' L2 WTC, I became aware that contingencies and ambiguities were happening during the WTC process simultaneously, which shed light the need for further exploration. In other words, different from what has been defined in regard to one's willingness, that is the 'readiness', a nice and optimistic state, however, actually WTC also involves difficulties, struggles, negotiations, high and low points in specific L2 communication actions.

Recognizing and understanding the ambiguous dimension of WTC is significant, because it allows ELT scholars and practitioners to recognize what their students actually experienced with their WTC in L2 communications. In the following parts, I will pay attention to discuss the ambiguous feature of L2 WTC from aspects of struggling encountered by the language learners during L2 communication; emerging discrepancies between apparent L2 communicative behaviours and learner's own interpretation based on a closer look at WTC-related communicative event; and different qualities of L2 WTC, i.e. real or fake WTC.

6.2.1 Struggles during L2 communication

It is not surprise that language learners may encounter various difficulties and frustrations during their language learning process including communication, however, how they struggled and negotiated with these troubles in relation to their WTC in L2 speaking has not been explored and comprehended thoroughly. Data from the study indicated that

difficulties in expression and comprehensions in L2, topical knowledge, critical thinking, task types, as well as associated affective feelings can direct impact on the dynamic change of language learners' WTC during L2 interactions.

Actual L2 proficiency matters to L2 WTC

Although perceived communicative competence has been identified playing a crucial role in determining one's L2 WTC. Difficulties encountered in expression, particularly insufficient lexical resources in L2, are frequently addressed by the research participants as a prominent influential factor impeding their WTC and development of communication in L2. A communication scenario from Vivian's data offered an example in addressing this issue. In role play activity, students were required to imitate a situation of IT service inquiry in pairs, in which students communicated though heir cellphones in real, and one would play a role of customer who looks for help concerning some problems encountered with the computer, the other person would pose to be an IT technician who will giving suggestions and helping the customer to solve problems.

Vivian played a role of customer initially and then exchanged roles with her partner to be an IT technician who had to answer a number of questions randomly asked by her conversation partner later. Regarding this communication activity, Vivian reflected that she felt especially difficult in developing the conversation as an IT technician due to lack of lexical resources in that professional area, which then hampered her willingness to produce more speaking in L2 and a 'passive' performance at that moment, as she stated that

> It was not as good as being a customer, as this time I played the role of IT technician, although I would like to talk with my partner, this time I performed more passively, as I really found difficult to answer her questions mainly due to the vocabularies. […] What I could think of immediately in my mind was just very simple words that I already known but not be able to express my meanings as an IT technician, the role I played at that moment, so it's difficult to think of and use the vocabularies in that area,

and organize them into a complete sentence even though the teacher had taught some vocabularies before the discussion, so I just responded in a simple way, and was relatively passive in answering her questions and giving suggestions. (Vivian, SRI, 14 May 2012)

According to Vivian's statement, it seems that the role of an IT technician may require a higher L2 proficiency, especially certain terminologies in the IT area. In this case, insufficient lexical resources within Vivian's current L2 competence was not able to meet the demand for effective meaning expression. Therefore, limited vocabulary was the main reason affected Vivian's L2 WTC and speaking in that communication action. In addition, it also indicated that even though lexical resources were provided by the teacher before the communication activity, when the learner had not been able to master them, L2 were not a part of the language learner, thus Vivian may encounter difficulties in selecting, structuring and applying the target language. MacIntyre et al. (1998) used the term discourse competence to refers ability of selecting, sequencing and arranging words, structures and sentences to achieve a unified text, and highlighted it as an important dimension of one's communicative competence that are essential for a condition of WTC and achieving effective communication. Combined with what has been discussed before in regard to the powerful role of perceived communicative competence, this examples offered empirical evidence for existing studies which suggests that both actual and perceived competence are related to WTC (Cao, 2011; Liu and Jackson, 2008; Freiermuth and Jarrel, 2006; Peng and Woodrow, 2010; Peng, 2014).

Topical knowledge, critical thinking and L2 WTC

Beside L2 competence, the study also found topical knowledge and critical thinking as influential factors in affecting language learners' L2 WTC. The research participants frequently reported that when they had lack of content knowledge and thoughts regarding the communication topic, they would be reluctant to engage in interactions with others by using

the target language. For instance, Vivian's communicative behaviours displayed in a pair discussion about relationship offered a typical example in showing her struggles of WTC in L2 during the communication process. In that speaking activity, students were asked to discuss a number of questions regarding family relationships with their partner in 5 minutes. Each question describes a conflict happened between family members, and students were expected to discuss these by giving suggestions of how they intended to solve the problems if they encountered in real life.

As had been observed, Vivian showed her reluctance to initiate the conversation by asking her partner to talk about the question firstly. Regarding her L2 WTC at that moment, Vivian pointed out that because she didn't have any idea about the topic they were discussing about, she preferred to listen to her partner to talk about the question first (Vivian, SRI, 17 April 2012). In addition, according the recording, Vivian inclined to repeat her partner's opinion followed with a short statement about her own argument in L2 in responding to her interlocutor. In the stimulated recall interview, Vivian interpreted her L2 WTC and communicative behaviours in the way that

> I didn't have much thought concerning the topic, so I repeated my partner's opinion just to make my speech sounds more affluent and integrated, but I don't know, I didn't have that feeling, you know, the feeling that I really want to talk about something, just not willing to talk […] the discussion for me at that moment was more like going through the motions, as the teacher asked us to discuss the questions, so I couldn't keep silence. (Vivian, SRI, 17 April 2012)

From the above statement, it can be seen that Vivian encountered difficulties in generating knowledge as well as critical thinking in reasoning and making argument concerning that certain topic, which then seems inhibited her WTC and the L2 production. In this case, Vivian's L2 speaking much more depended on repeating her interlocutors' viewpoints due to the feeling of '*not willing to talk*'. This can be supported by MacIntyre et

al.'s (1998) argument that certain register with a topic of the communication will boost one's linguistic self-confidence, and the ease of language use. In other words, if the language learner has nothing to say about a particular topic, it is very unlikely for him/her to develop the desire to engage in communication by using L2.

More interestingly, although Vivian experienced difficulties in creating independent argument in regard to the communication topic, which seems frustrated her and resulted in a lower level of L2 WTC, she still held an intention to make her speech more '*affluently and integrally*' in her L2 production by repeating her interlocutor's opinion. In this case, it appears that Vivian experienced a negotiation with her L2 WTC, that means she struggled with the difficulties in expression, however at that same time, she made effort in fighting against her reluctance and frustration to speak in L2 by trying to organizing and producing more L2 using. In this sense, it may hint at that L2 WTC is not always a straightforward process, but rather it may include the language learner's frequent negotiation with him/herself concerning the willingness to speak. In this case, the struggles and negotiation can be interpreted as the evidence of Vivian's L2 WTC, even though it had been hindered by the original difficulties Vivian encountered. A sense of duty in completing the communication task and meeting the teacher's requirement in the L2 class seems played a role in promoting the occurring of negotiation in regard to WTC and production in L2 in this communication situation based on Vivian's reflection mentioned above.

L2 WTC in different types of communication activities

Emerging evidences from the study shown that types of communicative activities and forms of tasks can influence language learners' WTC in L2 communication interactions. It was found that the research participants showed higher level of WTC when they perceived the

communicative activity as innovative, interesting, practical, somewhat challenging and with more liberty to manage. For instance, in the same scenario of IT service communication activity as mentioned earlier, Grace displayed an active engagement in the role play according to the classroom observation captured. During the conversation, as an IT technician, Grace gave focused attention on listening to the phone, noted down what she heard, and responded her partner's question in a slow but clear speed, although there were stops and repeats happened sometimes in the meantime, as the recording shown, she was active in thinking, organizing and producing the speaking in L2. Her communicative behaviours displayed at that moment seems accordant with what she described in the stimulated recall interview, as she reported that

> It was very different from communication face-to-face, it was more difficult, as you need to listen very carefully through the phone, but I found it was more attractive for me comparing with the group discussion that we usually did. I felt I was more engaged in and I talked a lot in the conversation at that moment. I listened carefully about what my partner said, ensured I understand her meaning, and tried to offer advices for her request, it was more like real conversation, I was just imagining what would happen if that situation occurred in real life one day when I'm go abroad perhaps (Grace, SRI, 14 May 2012)

According to Grace, this communication activity was interpreted as innovative and different from the activities that they usually practiced in the L2 classroom. This role play task although was more challenging as it required careful listening as well as immediate comprehension and responding, it was more 'attractive' and could arouse the learner's curiosity, because it provides more potential and flexibility for meaning negotiation and cognitive thinking. In addition, the activity was also perceived as closely related to daily life and practical, which offered the probability to evoke the learner's vision and imagination about her future life, therefore, encouraged Grace's willing to engage in the conversation and produced more in the target language at that moment.

However, certain types of communication tasks may inhibit language learners' WTC and L2 production. Data indicated that speaking activities including closed-ended or sensitive questions were likely to arouse negative feelings which would not support the development of language learner's enthusiasm in L2 participation. A representative example can be found in Sarah's case. In a pair discussion, students were asked to talk about a list of questions concerning movies which includes questions of what kind of movies do you like the best? Who is your favourite actor or actress? What movies have you seen recently? How often do you watch movies or videos? What movies do you want to see? In this communicative activity, Sarah was observed relatively reticent during the communication. Regarding this situation, she mentioned that

> That may because of the kinds of questions that the teacher asked us to talk about, such as what kinds of films do you like, you know, such kind of 'what' questions, but not 'why' and 'how' questions. I don't need to think a lot about these questions, simple answers with one or two words would be enough, so I felt a little bit boring about these questions, they were not attractive for me. (Sarah, SRI, 23 April 2012)

As can be seen, the type of communication activity was the main factor affecting Sarah's L2 WTC at that moment. Specifically, the closed-ended questions with the speaking task which do not require much cognitive thinking and linguistic resources could not offer sufficient interaction potentials, then may easily cause negative emotions such as boredom, and hampered the language learner's enthusiasm to speak more in L2. Therefore, as has been mentioned in Grace's case, it suggests that more open-ended communication activity which offers more flexibility for interaction and certain level of challenges in L2 might be essential in encouraging language learner's willingness to speak.

Despite feeling of boredom as a factor in killing language learner's WTC, another emotion frustrated the research participants and repeatedly reported across dataset concerns

the sense of embarrassment, gan ga in Chinese, which can be evoked by certain kinds of communicative topic and discussion questions. For example, in the communicative situation that students were required to give suggestions concerning how they would deal with the conflicts happened between family members, Grace engaged in a conversation of dealing conflicts between a mother and a daughter who was pregnant, as shown below

L2 Communicative Excerpt 7 (16 April 2012)

Grace: I think…er (smiled embarrassed), I will tell the mother to take care of her.

Interlocutor: Yes, I agree.

(silence)

Grace: er…and wait for the baby's coming, and give more love to the baby (smiled gain).

Interlocutor: The girl should be a good mother.

Grace: right

(silence)

Grace: so give the baby more love, shi ba (right)? haha (smiled).

It was noticed that she tended to experience a passive oral participation and frequent silence during the communication interaction as shown in the above communicative excerpt. Regarding this communicative experience, Grace reflected that

> I didn't feel very comfortable in that discussion, we talked in pairs and I got a new partner, a boy, but the topic we discussed concerned about pregnancy, and giving suggestions to a girl who was pregnant and to help her dealing with relationships with her mother, I felt so embarrassed to discuss this topic with a boy, so I think I was not really enjoying the discussing at that moment. (Grace, SRI, 17 April 2012)

From her statement, it appears that Grace struggled with the feeling of embarrassment during the conversation due to her perception about the inappropriateness to discuss a girl's topic with a male. This evoked feeling of embarrassment functioned as an inhibiting factor

205

leading to Grace's lower level of willingness to develop the conversation with the target language. What is more, as Grace mentioned that she would feel more comfortable and no worries if she discussed this topic with girls, because girls tend to share similar thoughts. From this, it can notice that the embarrassment also related to her concern of not being approved by the interlocutor, which is similar to the concern of disagreement from other students if an opinion is expressed as a reason of why students were unwilling to speak out in a Japanese university language class identified by Greer (2000). In this case, silence as a defensive strategy of avoiding the embarrassment is the much-preferred choice (King, 2013). Even though, Grace produced some L2 speaking in the communication activity, it is not difficult to sense that the avoiding rather that approaching tendency with a struggle of feeling of embarrassment, uncomfortable and insecure in respect to her L2 WTC and communication engagement.

L1 use as a cue of L2 WTC

Another struggle in L2 communication may represent in the use of L1. For example, referring back to the communication scenario of discussing western cultures in Sarah's case as has been mentioned previously (see L2 Communication Excerpt 1), Sarah shown exchanges between L2 (English) and L1 (Chinese) during her speaking about the festival of Christmas in the group discussion. On one hand, it indicates that Sarah encountered difficulties in L2 expression due to the trouble of recalling the vocabulary that she tried to use in L2, on the other hand, the use of Chinese did not inhibit her WTC, but rather actually facilitated her L2 use at that moment, because it gave more time for the language learner to consider and pick up the word that she intended to use in L2, thus supported the development of communication. In this sense, it challenged what traditionally interpreted regarding using L1 in the L2 communication as a reliance that leads to lack of WTC and production in L2 (Cao, 2011).

By viewing across the research participants' datasets, L1 using instead of L2 were frequently reported as an effective way to communicate when they encountered difficulties in expression in English. For example, in Emily's case, when she discussed Chinese festivals with her interlocutor, she showed a frequent exchange between L1 and L2. Regarding this, she pointed out her difficulties in thinking of appropriate vocabularies that she intended to use, and expressed how she used L1 in helping her expressing thoughts in some occasions during the conversation (Emily, SRI, 27 March 2012). Similarly, Grace also indicated that

> It is impossible for us not to use Chinese during our communication, I think we haven't achieve such level that we can use English only to express our thoughts, our feelings and our emotions, so we need Chinese to assist our communication in some occasions in order to let others understand our meaning and to help our conversation developed fluently. (Grace, SRI, 12 April 2012)

Just like Grace pointed out, L1 use might be necessary in assisting L2 communications in order to avoid the happening of stuck during the interaction, and ensure the development of the conversation for Chinese EFL language learners. In this sense, adopting L1 use or exchange between L2 and L1 actually evinced language learners' willingness to engage in and develop L2 communication, because it not only supports the language learners' oral expression of what they really desired to say, but also represents their investment to overcome difficulties and struggles that they encountered during L2 communication and sustain their enthusiasm in L2 speaking. Therefore, the current findings implicate that the use of L1 can be an important cue of language learners' WTC in L2, even though it is may not always the case, such as L1 use as a communication climate.

6.2.2 WTC-related communicative event

The discussion developed so far presented difficulties, struggles, and negotiations that language learners encountered in relation to their L2 WTC. On one hand, it further consolidated the dynamic nature of L2 WTC by displaying various complex interactions occurred within communication actions, on the other hand, it elicits further inquiry in understanding WTC-related communicative event because the examples have been discussed in many cases gradually shown a discrepancy between the language learners' communicative behaviours displayed on the surface and the meaning they made in regard to their L2 WTC, which implicates that students' classroom behaviours cannot be taken to represent their WTC at face value. Instead, a careful analysis of the nature of their participation in these communicative events is the only way of truly understanding how they treat or orient to those events and the extent to which WTC becomes relevant.

As WTC is unobservable, it seems the only reasonable and operational way to seek evidence of the language learners' WTC is through their observable behaviours in actual L2 communication actions. In this sense, these observable behaviours provide evidence in illuminating fluctuation of language learners' WTC. Thus, WTC is usually measured by employing strictly a sort of observation scheme with a check list of WTC behavioural categories in many previous studies. However, current study found that looking language learners' participation behaviours at the face level is insufficient in achieving a real comprehension of their L2 WTC, because there are intricate interactions and ambiguities underneath the apparent communication related behaviours. In the following part, I will focus on one communicative event from Sarah's dataset in details as a typical instance to emphasis this issue.

In a classroom activity students were asked to get into different groups in 4 or 5 persons according to numbers on pokers that were distributed from the teacher. After the teacher introduced the topic of 'culture' to the class, a list of questions regarding the topic were dispatched to each group, such as How do people in your culture feel about criticizing people who are more senior than themselves? Do people prefer to work in groups or on their own in general? How important team working in the company in your country? How important long time relationship in business? Do people think guidelines are important or they prefer to be improvising? Then, students were given 8 minutes to discuss these questions. Before the discussion, questions were gone through one by one, and new vocabularies were taught at the same time. After the discussion, the teacher discussed these questions with the whole class. The conversation occurred in this situation was partly transcribed as shown below.

L2 Communication Excerpt 8 (27 March 2012)

Teacher: Ok, guys, talk about these questions, 8 minutes, everyone speaks.

(Students were reading the questions)

Sarah: Tao lun yi xia wen ti (Discuss these questions)… (silence)… the first question, I think they're a kind of rude, dui ba (right)? ... a kind of rude, because as juniors, they are, er, senior people have their own ways to do things, maybe follow their experiences, they can't quickly accept new things, so they make mistakes, but they soon, er, they soon accepted them. As a junior, we can, we can give advice, but do not, er, can't criticize the senior people.

(silence)

Student X: Let's look at the second one.

(silence)

Sarah: Zhe ge shui shuo (Who will talk about this one)?

(Another student read the next question, and students answered the questions one by one.)

Sarah: The fifth question, I think They both are very important, because even you make a plan…

(Group discussion was stopped by the teacher, and the whole class interaction began).

Teacher: Ok, time's up, it seems you talk a lot about your culture, are you able to think of examples about the culture, different situations? … … Ok, the first question, any idea?

In this L2 communicative activity, there are some significant points of communicative behaviours which can be evidence reflecting Sarah's L2 WTC , such as starting the conversation at the beginning of the L2 activity, expressing opinions for the first discussion question, and keeping engaged in the conversation during the development of group discussion. Therefore, it is easy to draw a simple and straightforward conclusion that Sarah experienced a relatively higher level of WTC in L2 at these moments. However, when these behaviours are explored in-depth, the WTC-related communicative event becomes more intriguing and complicated.

Above all, regarding Sarah's interactive behaviour of generating the conversation in the group discussion, data from her stimulated recall interview offered more insights in understanding the nature of her L2 WTC at that moment. It seems that rather than shown from the above excerpt that Sarah initiated the discussion directly, an interaction and negotiation were occurred in forming her ultimate WTC and L2 using. According to Sarah mentioned in the interview, she was '*interested*' and '*got some ideas to say*' concerning the first question that they were going to talk about. However, her WTC was not strong enough at that moment, as she interpreted regarding her behaviour of prompting others to speaking in L1 and the appearance of silence at the beginning, '*I was waiting for others' speaking, but I realized it was silent at that time, sometimes if nobody starts speaking within the group, I need to talk first, because we can't just stuck there*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). It seems that a more dominant power in stimulating her WTC came from her sense of responsibility in breaking

the quietness and completing the group task. This sense of obligation seems also relates to Sarah's perception about herself, as she indicated in the interview, she considered herself as a '*hero*' who broke the ice by start talking and saved the situation of '*embarrassment*'. I will discuss the role of sense of self on one's L2 WTC in detail later, what important to highlight here is the meaning of a deeper gaze at these superficial and common behaviours through the language learners' eyes, as this would enable me to make sense of what actually happened with the student's L2 WTC underneath the behaviours.

Moreover, from the above excerpt, it is not difficult to notice an exchange from L2 to L1, after Sarah started expressing her opinion. As has been discussed before, L1 using in many cases can be a sign of WTC rather than conceived as evidence of lack of WTC in L2, this situation is exactly the case. According to Sarah's reflection, she intended to use Chinese to '*attract other group members' attention*' to listen to her speaking in L2, because she realized there was no response from others, so she started to doubt whether her group members were listening to her or not. In this sense, L1 use worked in a way of supporting the development of Sarah's discussion in L2 at that moment. In the meantime, the failure of obtaining satisfied response from the group members seems diminished her WTC, like Sarah indicated when she recalled the communication situation: '*I was a little bit influenced by their response, well, I mean no response, so I was not excited anymore, I just wanted to finish my talking*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). The role of interlocutors for WTC has been reported by Kang (2005), in which when interlocutors are perceived as conversation partners who could contribute to the communication and help improving L2 speaking skills, participants tended to be more willing to engage in the conversation. However, in this case, no response from the group members after she expressed her opinion discouraged her enthusiasm to speak more. Therefore, from the above excerpt, it can be seen that when she faced the second discussion

question, she intended to hand over the opportunity of speaking to others by using L1, in this case, the exchange to L1 use is not a sign of L2 WTC but rather an indicator of unwillingness to continue participation.

Furthermore, as shown from the above excerpt, it seems another significant point relating to Sarah's L2 WTC can refer to her autonomous discussion about the last question until she was interrupted by the teacher. While, when explore it deeper by taking account of Sarah's own interpretation about her communicative behaviour in L2, it portrayed a different picture. In the stimulated recall interview, Sarah expressed her real feeling that: '*I wasn't really interested about the last question, I found it was boring, I didn't get many ideas, so I didn't really want to talk*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). This statement indicated Sarah's reluctance to initiate talking in L2 at that moment due to her indifference, boredom, and have nothing to say about the discussion question. As Yashima (2009, p. 155) argued that, 'unless one has something to say about a topic or opinions to express about an agenda, one does not have an urge to communicate'. What intriguing is that she actually produced L2 speaking with her opinions. Sarah explained this experience by mentioning that when she realized that there was no one spoke in her group again, and it came to her turn to talk about the question, she decided to speak something, because '*each one should be responsible for one question*' is an unwritten rule in the L2 classroom. As Peng (2014) found in her study that classroom environmental factors can exert more situated influence on one's WTC in L2. In this case, it seems that Sarah experienced a negotiation about the intention of obeying the rule in the classroom in relation to her reluctance to generate L2 speaking, in which the former triggered her following communicative behaviours at that moment. In this sense, it can be said that the production of communicative behaviour was not much relating to her genuine desire to speak, but rather much refers to common behaviour of obeying a social rule in the institution.

In addition, Sarah's reflection regarding the situation when her speaking was disrupted by the teacher as shown in the above excerpt also supported this. As she expressed, '*I was very happy because I didn't have to continue speaking more*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). Although it is a common behaviour for the student to stop talking when the teacher required them to do so, Sarah's interpretation at that moment, indicated that she realized there was no more obligation to speak, in other words, displaying her WTC by displaying the desirable behaviour in the classroom. In this sense, the 'happiness' perceived by Sarah is a release of her reluctance to speak. The discussion developed so far shows the emerging discrepancies between students' communicative behaviours displayed at face value and the WTC experienced through their own eyes. Therefore, on one hand, it highlights the significance of a careful analysis of the nature of student's engagement in these communicative events; on the other hand, it warrants further inquiry of the quality of language learners' L2 WTC in specific communicative situations.

6.2.3 Real or fake WTC? Similar L2 communicative behaviours, different essence

There is emerging evidence across datasets from current study indicating that individual language learners underwent different qualities of WTC during L2 communications. In some L2 communicative situations, although communicative behaviours are similar, the essence are in fact different. It is possible to argue that what normally interpreted as a sign of L2 WTC may not always reflect one's genuine desire to communicate in particular situations. In other words, language learner's L2 WTC can be fake, which means they are not actually meaningful in representing an individual's real investment in certain L2 communications. In

addition, how I define the real WTC is similar to Hanauer (2012) argued in meaningful writing, it concerns the true desire for self-expression, in which the second language becomes an 'owned' language to meet the personal expression and communication needs of individual's innermost thoughts and experiences. Normally, during the process it is accompanied with more positive emotions such as enjoyment, excitement, happiness etc. Rather than conceptualizing and classifying L2 WTC as real or fake, the key point in this section is to discuss and understand different qualities and nature of L2 WTC in communications.

Among the research participants' datasets, there are many examples shown how dynamic interactions between language learner and particular communication context give rise one's real L2 WTC, for example, the communicative situation shown in Figure 6.1 below from Jenny's case offered a typical instance for illuminating this. The communication scenario was taken place in the English corner outside the L2 language classroom, where Jenny together with another 6 people including the foreign teacher, an exchange student from America, and another four Chinese students were talking about the April Fool's day. In the photo-based interview, Jenny mentioned that this was one of the most impressive moments for her in regard to her WTC experience during the L2 communication in the English corner, as she described that

[The photo is redacted from the e-thesis in order to avoid copyright infringement and protect privacy.]

Figure 6. 1 A photo captured by Jenny during the communicative activity outside L2 classroom

We were talking about the experience on the April Fool's day, the foreign teacher told us that when she was in high school, she told her mum that she got pregnant on that day, so her mum was very angry, then she told her mum to calm down, it was just a joke to celebrate the festival, after we heard about this, we all laughed about it, we were so surprised and amused with my teacher's story. We all were enjoying listening to her experience, and we also actually started to sharing our own funny and interesting experiences, you know, not shy anymore, as at the beginning I felt embarrassed to talk about this kind of experiences either you tricked somebody or you were fooled by others, but after she told us her experience, I felt there was nothing embarrassing, it was just sharing funny experiences with others, so I talked about how I tricked my teacher when I was in high school, and they were all astonished and laughed about it. At that moment, I was very excited in talking about my experience, I was speaking out directly while I was thinking off something, not like before, I usually need to organize my speech in advance, but at that time it was different, just like telling my own story, I also felt we were all excited at that moment, all of us wanted to join in the interesting conversation, so the atmosphere was very active. (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 27 March 2012).

From this reflection, it can be seen that there were dynamic changes in relation to Jenny's WTC from reluctant to talk about her personal experience on April Fool's Day to become really enjoyed sharing her own story with other interlocutors during the development of the L2 conversation. It seems that the initially feeling of embarrassment and shyness perceived by Jenny regarding the discussion topic of 'tricking' or 'being fooled' inhibited her enthusiasm to initiate L2 interaction at that moment. However, teacher's participation with a share of her own experience with the students played an important role in warming up the atmosphere and creating a relaxed, interesting, secure and supporting communication context. Within such climate, Jenny's concern of being embarrassed had been effectively dispelled, and talking about embarrassing experiences with others became an interesting, funny, and quite enjoyable thing that Jenny was really excited to do. In this case, it can be said that Jenny engaged in the L2 communication with talking about her own experience on April Fool's Day is not due to she considered she ought-to say something or she could produce something in L2, but rather because she really desired to do so. In other words, the genuine willingness to share

her own story with others was effectively triggered with an association of joyfulness, as Jenny mentioned that '*at that moment, I was very excited in talking about my experience*' (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 27 March 2012). What more important is that English almost become her owned language at that time, in which Jenny didn't need to consider and prepare her utterance in her mind in advance as what she usually did, however, in that case, the target language was just blurted out directly, and used for meeting her needs of self expression.

Another intriguing example in shedding light on the real L2 WTC came from Vivian's dataset, which concerns a communicative situation where students were discussing the importance of teamwork in people's daily life in groups in the L2 classroom. Based on the observation, Vivian shown active participation in the L2 group discussion with arguing that teamwork is not effective all the time. As had been captured, during the speaking process, Vivian addressed examples that she experienced in her daily life to consolidate her argument, and used body languages frequently combined with a change of her intonation especially when she wanted to emphasize her opinions. These behaviours signalled that Vivian experienced a relatively higher quality of WTC in L2 at that moment. A careful analysis with taking account of Vivian's own perception and interpretation seems support this. In the stimulated recall interview, Vivian reflected her L2 WTC experience by saying that

> I remembered one thing which I think can be used as a very good example to argue that teamwork is not always as good as we thought. I attended a debate the day before our class, and I felt very impressively that in some cases, although teamwork is important, it is not effective all the time, however sometimes independent work is much more useful. This is my personal experience, I really wanted to share this with others, I felt what they talked were just staying on the surface, so I wanted to express my different opinion, I think we really should think one thing critically, and I'm this kind of person […] for me, I don't think the longer time you prepared, the better, once I got the thought in my mind, I just spoke out, I don't know why, like people in our group this time, they spent too much time on thinking alone and remaining silently, when I wanted to say something, I just say it. (Vivian, SRI, 27 March 2012)

What can be noticed from Vivian's statement is that the active engagement of L2 communication was an outcome of her genuine desire to express her own opinion and share her personal experience with her peers regarding the specific topic. In this case, her personal life that beyond the L2 classroom enabled Vivian 'having something to say', which effectively facilitated her L2 WTC in situational communication. In addition, from Vivian's interpretation, it may also indicate that a social comparison was made by Vivian between herself and her interlocutors in terms of critical thinking, which led her to perceive that her opinion was more innovative and deliberate comparing with her group members. In this sense, it can be said that Vivian's L2 WTC at that moment more referred to the desire of expressing or presenting herself as a kind of person who could think critically, innovatively and independently. In this case, thinking quietly, preparing or organizing language and ideas like other group members did were perceived not necessary anymore by Vivian. Although the language learners may encounter various difficulties, struggles and negotiations during the L2 communication process, more truly and genuine willingness to express personal innermost thoughts and feelings seems especially effective to overcome them.

However, on the other hand, L2 communication behaviours in certain situations may fail to represent efficiently language learner's genuine investment and meaningful expression, in this sense, it is possible to argue that the WTC displayed by the language learner tended to be fake. A communicative event from Jenny's data offered a representative example to illustrate this WTC phenomenon. In a learning situation in the class A, students were required to translate a letter about attending a conference in order to review and practice the knowledge that the teacher taught. The L2 interaction happened between the teacher and whole class including Jenny was captured and part of this is transcribed as shown below

Teacher: (to the whole class) It is almost the same, right? Let's just try to remember immediately. How do we say? The first sentence?

Jenny: (talk to herself in a low voice) Thank you for your letter.

Teacher: (to the whole class) Yeah, thank you for your letter…9th of …

Jenny: (talk to herself in a low voice) 9th of October 2012

Teacher: (to Jenny) Yeah, you please. Let's do one by one, you do the first one.

Jenny: Er…Thank you for your letter 9th of October 2012…

Teacher: Yeah…

Jenny: …inviting me to attend the first international conference on the telemedicine information society to be held in Amsterdam…Er…

Teacher: Yes, er… yes…Where do you put this "and inviting me"? Yes?

Jenny: and inviting me…

Teacher: (to the whole class) Yes, alright. Any other still remember? 'and inviting me to hots the conference' Who still remember?

Teacher: Where did he put it? Pardon?

Teacher: Yeah, attend and chair, so that's enough. So thanks for your letter…attend and chair what? a session?

The above excerpt showed that after realizing the teacher asked students to translate the first sentence, Jenny started to talk to herself in a very low voice. This L2 speaking behaviour is likely to be interpreted as an evidence in showing Jenny's L2 WTC at a face value; however, when exploring it further, it is possible to argue that this behaviour tended to have nothing relating to her L2 WTC. As Jenny mentioned when she recalled this situation

> I perceived the teacher's question is for the whole class, and she didn't indicate any individual to answer the question primarily, so…I thought the teacher hoped the whole class to answer it together. […] In Chinese classroom in higher education, most of questions the teacher asked are for the whole class. If she didn't indicate any particular student and called the specific name of a student, the question is for the whole class. Students can think about it in their heart or think aloud. (Jenny, SRI, 28 March 2012)

From this statement, it can be seen that, asking and answering a question is the main form of teacher-student interaction in this specific classroom. From this perspective, exploring the opportunity to answer the question is to explore the opportunity to communicate in L2, and might indicate the language learner's WTC. However, due to the rules established in this classroom, at least in this specific situation, Jenny could not interpret it as the opportunity of using L2, but rather the normal discourse happened between the teacher and student, which have many implications for Jenny, such as the teacher's question was for the whole class, the teacher expected the answer from the whole class rather than specific person, and not necessarily to answer it. Therefore, in this classroom context, or other similar learning context in HE, the communication behaviours, either answering a question and talking to oneself, in the classroom cannot be interpreted as relating to WTC, but obeying the norms established in the classroom context. Moreover, this kind of classroom context is interpreted as traditional Chinese way of teaching and learning according to Jenny, which has been constructed according to years of teaching and learning experience and internalised in the language learner, such as rules, expectations, discourses, which has a significant impact on guiding the learner's learning behaviours and WTC in L2. Therefore, rather than speaking out directly or indicate the teacher her willingness to answer the question, Jenny inclined to talk to herself.

What is more, concerning Jenny's behaviour of standing up and providing the answer for the teacher's question, Jenny reflected that

> I was asked to answer the question so I had to answer it, but I was not sure about the answer, so when the teacher asked me, I felt that I was enforced to answer the question, if I'm quite sue about the answer, and I prepare well to answer it, I will use eye contact to tell the teacher that I would like to answer the question, then she can call me to answer it, but in that case, I didn't do this. (Jenny, SRI, 28 March 2012)

It seems difficult to sense any sign indicating Jenny was willing to answer the teacher's question autonomously from what she mentioned above. The uncertainty about the correct answer indicated that Jenny was not ready in involving in the interaction in L2, however, as she interpreted, she '*had to*' respond to the question because the teacher was expecting the answer from her. This reluctant but 'had to' behaviour was certainly not an outcome of her true desire of L2 communication, but rather a result of the internalisation of meeting teacher's expectations in the classroom. In this sense, the interactive behaviour is however an indication of fake WTC. Only when Jenny shown '*eye contact*' with the teacher, could it be interpreted as a sign for her real WTC.

The discordance between the essence of L2 WTC and the displayed communicative behaviours can also be reflected in a communicative activity from Sarah's dataset. In this L2 interactive scenario, as shown in the communicative excerpt below, the teacher asked students to discuss about their holidays at the beginning of the class.

L2 Communicative Excerpt 10 (09 April 2012)

Teacher: Good morning.

Class: Good morning.

Teacher: How was your holiday? Qing Ming Day? Well, I'm gonna to give you a chance to talk about your holiday, you're gonna to talk about it with a partner, we're going to count off around the room, say your number aloud, so odds go with odds, evens with evens, odds numbers are 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, even numbers are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, say your number around the room.

(Class were counting off)

Teacher: You may switch places, talk to person across from you, how was your holiday, what did you do, in English, 4 minutes.

Sarah: Ok, Qing Ming Day. I went to Xia Men to spend my holiday, the first two days I stay in Xia Men, the third, and forth day, I went to Gu Lang Yu, and…and…and five days in total, and…and four days for the tour, one day…er…er…zen me shuo (how can I say)…er…one day on the way.

Interlocutor: How long did you spend on the plane?

220

Sarah: About two hours, so what's your holiday?

This communicative episode shown Sarah's L2 participation in pair discussion by initiating the conversation firstly. This communication behaviour together with the L2 production were usually treated as evidence indicating the significant point in respect of Sarah's WTC in using the target language. However, considering this communicative experience and L2 WTC at that moment, Sarah interpreted that

> This discussion for me is more about a form, as I already did a presentation about my holiday before, my classmates already known about it, so I really felt nothing else I can talk about, but I knew that everyone needs to participate in the discussion, I need to talk about it sooner or later, because it's the rule in the classroom, so I just described it generally in the few sentences, and when I see my partner want to say something, I just stopped and asked her to talk about her holiday, because I really didn't want to talk about it again at that moment. (Sarah, SRI, 11 April 2012)

The statement indicates that Sarah's enthusiasm in L2 speaking was in fact not truly enough at that moment, because of her previous L2 speaking experience which made her feel bored in repeating the similar communication activity. While, at the same time, Sarah perceived the responsibility in completing the task based on the rule of 'everyone should participate in the discussion' established in this classroom. Although, Peng (2014) argued that when the students appraised the significance of responsibility to communicate, the students show higher WTC, in this specific case, though Sarah produced L2 speaking due to an obligation of obeying the rule in the classroom, the actual quality of her WTC seems to fail in representing her meaningful investment on L2 communication and using of the target language. Perceiving the communication as a matter of routine, talked in a relatively general and brief manner, and handed over the priority of speaking to her interlocutor when having a chance to do so however signalled that Sarah's L2 WTC tended to be fake but not meaningful in reflecting her innermost desire to approaching the L2 communication.

Similarly, an intriguing instance was also identified in Grace's case. In a four-minute pair discussion talking about the holiday in the language classroom, Grace showed active interactive behaviours in L2 by frequently asking her interlocutor questions as the communicative excerpt shown below

L2 Communicative Excerpt 11 (07 May 2012)

Grace: How was your holiday?

Interlocutor: I went to Hong Ye Gu, a kind of botanic garden with my friends.

Grace: Does it need a ticket?

Interlocutor: Yes, we got them on the internet.

Grace: How much?

Interlocutor: It's normally 40 yuan, but we got 10 yuan.

(Silence)

Interlocutor: It's a …three…gong jiao zen me shuo (how can I say bus in English?)…oh bus, we went there by bus.

Grace: bus?

Interlocutor: Yes, and…it's not very big…and…

Grace: Does it have anything special?

Interlocutor: Er….it has many very old house, and spring….

(Silence)

Grace: Does the spring like Bao Tu Spring? very big?

This excerpt concerns a normal conversation happened between the students in the L2 classroom. From the above transcript, interactive turns run through the conversation including Grace's frequent engagements can be identified. These displayed L2 communicative behaviours can be easily interpreted as typical evidence showing Grace's L2 WTC at that moment, however, when taking a deeper gaze at this common behaviour through Grace's own

eyes, the secret of her L2 WTC behind the communicative behaviour unveiled. In the stimulated recall interview, Grace indicated her own interpretation in regard to her WTC

> I just couldn't think of the things I wanted to talk, and I also couldn't reflect the words that I intended to use in my mind at that moment, that's why I kept on asking many questions when I was listening to her, so that to avoid the happening of silence, otherwise, if she stopped, I would have nothing to talk about. (Grace, SRI, 08 May 2012)

Comparing the communicative behaviours presented in the above excerpt at face value, evidence emerged from Grace's own reflection shown that L2 WTC experienced at that moment did not effectively represent the meaningful investment in communication but in fact a tendency of avoiding the L2 conversation. It can be noticed that Grace encountered some difficulties in L2 using in that situation, in this case, because not being able to produce some speaking or 'have nothing to talk' may usually cause a feeling of losing face for Chinese learners, in order to avoid this potential negative consequence of failing producing L2 speaking, Grace inclined to choose a relatively conservative face-saving option by listening to her interlocutor's speaking and asking relevant questions. In this sense, the behaviour of proposing questions actually an indication of a fake WTC, because this pretended willingness to speak was in fact for the purpose of avoiding or delaying the 'true' participation in the L2 conversation such as sharing her own experience on holiday with her interlocutor. Therefore, it can be said that depending on specific communication situation, WTC may not always meaningful when considering the essence language learners' L2 communication behaviours, which suggest a possible more fine-grained conceptualisation of WTC might be needed.

6.3 Summary

This chapter has focused on specific L2 communication action and looked at the WTC-related communicative interactions within contexts in detail, through which I portrayed a picture of WTC phenomena in which dynamic and unpredictable reciprocities between various influential factors ranging from difference domains occurred, and cooperatively shaped language learners' WTC in L2. More importantly, these influential elements such as L2 motivation, perceived communicative competence, L2 proficiency, emotions, social comparison, communication atmosphere, types of communication tasks etc. tended to work in a reciprocal complex way with each other, therefore cannot be conceived as separated independently entities. Additionally, these intricate reciprocities also refer to frequent difficulties, struggles, frustrations, and negotiations in shaping language learners' L2 WTC, which indicates that WTC is not a straightforward process. Meanwhile, these dynamic interactions created different qualities of WTC, namely, real or fake, which suggests that traditionally conceived as evidence in showing WTC or un-WTC at the face value may not always able to show the true essence of WTC, such as the use of L1 as a cue for L2 WTC etc. Moreover, emerging evidences indicated the role of the language learners' self in making meanings of the specific WTC-related communicative situations, guiding the development and different qualities of their L2 WTC, and highlighted the importance of their own interpretations in understanding L2 WTC as a multidimensional dynamic construct. Therefore, a discussion about language learner's self, including both current and future, in relation to their L2 WTC will be followed in the next chapter.

7 THE ROLE OF CURRENT AND FUTURE SELF-CONCEPT IN RELATION TO L2 WTC

So far I have analysed and discussed in detail the emerging dynamics and ambiguities of language learners' WTC in L2 communicative actions, By viewing datasets across participants, one aspect appeared to play a dominant role in guiding the L2 WTC concerns the language learners' meaning-making, especially in regard to their self, such as self-confidence, self evaluation of L2 communicative competence, individual affective feelings, perceived L2 communicative opportunities, social relations, or interpretation towards conversation interlocutors' reactions etc. All these issues highlighted the significance of individual's self in shaping one's L2 WTC. Therefore, in this chapter, I will pay attention to the research participants' sense of self and discuss the interconnectedness and complex interactions with the development of their WTC in L2 communicative actions.

By drawing on 'self-concept' which is defined as a self-description judgment that includes an evaluation of competence and the feelings of self-worth associated with the judgment in question' (Pajares and Schunk, 2005, p.105), I will address learners' current as well as future selves across different domains rather than only in L2 domain, and their interactions with L2 WTC. Meanwhile, the emerging links with their personal life and language learning experience in a broader Chinese sociocultural context in relation to their current and future selves and then L2 WTC will be discussed. By this way, it aims to address RQ 3: In what way do the learners' prior and current language use and language learning experiences in a broader social world influence their L2 WTC? and jointly with what has been discussed in the previous chapter, they can shed light on our understanding of RQ 4: In what way do the learners' L2 WTC trajectories develop and change over time and space?

7.1 The Impact of Current Self on L2 WTC

7.1.1 'I' m a leader': a healthy self in supporting L2 WTC

Data indicated that an individual's perception of his or her current self state not only in L2 domain but also in other domains could work powerfully in guiding WTC and communicative behaviours in L2. Findings shown that positive and healthy self images held by language learner can support and facilitate one's WTC and L2 using. A representative example can be identified in Emily's case. In a communicative activity of reporting news in the L2 classroom, students were divided into groups of four or five, and each group was required to report news happened in different areas in the global world, and preparations for presenting the news within the group were expected.

Emily's group was asked to present news occurring within the province which she lived in. They chose to report a piece of news about the opening of a shopping mall in a city. Emily played the role of a reporter who was in charge of reporting and directing the progress of the story, and other groups member played roles as the shopping mall manager, customer, and the governor respectively, and each person had certain contents that they were responsible to deliver in the group presentation. As a reporter, Emily seems to have more frequent interactions with other group members, because despite introducing and concluding the news, she was also responsible for introducing other group members' roles, and guiding the development of the report. Regarding this 15-minutes role play presented in front of the whole class, Emily reflected that

> I was very excited, and really immersed in that role. When I sat there, I felt like a real reporter in the studio, and everyone was listening to me, the feeling was like you can control everything, like a leader. Before that, one of group members worried that if I sat in front of the class, I would be nervous when people were all looking at me, but actually I think I was totally in that role myself at that moment, I didn't notice how others view me. (Emily, SRI, 28 May 2014)

226

According to Emily's statement, it seems that she was almost engaged her own 'transportable identities' which are defined by Richards (2006), as latent or implicit identities but can be invoked during the interaction for particular reasons. In other words, Emily tended to speak as a leader who controls the progress of everything by using the target language at that moment, rather than as a student who was merely practicing the language or completing the task in the L2 classroom. The images of reporter as well as leader invoked at that time are actually a part of Emily's current self-concept, as she mentioned later in the interview, she perceived herself as '*the kind of person who prefers to control and make decision, like a leader*' (Emily, SRI, 28 May 2014).

Based on Emily's reflection, the role of this self-concept started to work in guiding her L2 behaviours even at the preparation stage for the news report, such as deciding the topic for the group, designing different roles for each group member, choosing her own role as a reporter, making and revising PPT after obtaining materials from other group members. Although these behaviours were not directly related to L2 speaking, it shows explicitly that Emily's self-concept as a leader motivated her investment on L2 related learning outside the classroom. Similarly, in the specific communicative situation of reporting news, this self-concept as a leader tended to be invoked when she played the role of the reporter, so that when she sat and spoke in front of the class, her WTC tended to be effectively enhanced, therefore, rather than feeling nervousness, Emily however perceived excitement in immersing the role of the 'reporter', and speaking as a 'leader'.

Similarly, the function of one's current self-concept in guiding WTC was also found in Sarah's dataset. In the communicative situation where students were talking about relationships as has been mentioned in pervious chapter. Regarding her L2 communicative behaviour of breaking the quietness within the group by initiating L2 interaction at the

227

beginning of the group discussion, Sarah reflected this in the stimulated recall interview by saying that

> I was waiting for others' speaking, but I realized it was silent at that time, sometimes if nobody starts speaking within the group, I need to talk first, because we can't just stuck there. I'm a hero (laugh), if they don't speak, I just do what I should do. (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012)

From Sarah's own interpretation mentioned above, it seems that Sarah's self-concept as a hero tended to play a dominant role in stimulating her willingness to engage in the group discussion at that moment. From Sarah's viewpoint, when group discussion came to the deadlock, someone should save the situation by breaking the ice, and according to her perception, she is exactly this kind of person who played a role as a hero within the group and has the responsibility to develop the conversation and complete the group task. Therefore, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, although Sarah showed a kind of reluctance in initiating talk by waiting for others' speaking initially, but when she noticed the quietness within the group, her self-concept as a hero worked effectively in evoking her WTC and supporting her L2 using immediately.

7.1.2 'I'm lazy and less competent': a pessimistic self and L2 WTC

However, on the other hand, one's current self does not always work in a facilitating way in nurturing WTC and communication in L2. Data shown that when language learners hold pessimistic perception about themselves, especially in the L2 domain, the benefit for encouraging WTC and relevant L2 use would be narrowed. For instance, as has been mentioned in previously, in the similar situation of reporting news, Grace's group chose a topic about selecting a new president in France, and Grace decided to play the role of the

president in this group work. According to the observation, she was the second person came to the stage, in which she was interviewed by a journalist posed by another group member, and talked about pledges and tributes as a president. Concerning this communication scenario, Grace reflected her L2 behaviours by indicating that

> I think I recited fluently for preparation and I shouldn't be nervous, but when I stood there in front of the audience, when everyone looked at me, and listened to my talking carefully, I became nervous automatically without control, I just wanted to finish my words as soon as possible. (Grace, SRI, 28 May, 2012)

Different from the scenario in Emily's case as has been discussed earlier, there seems to be less evidence indicating Grace's willingness to speak in that situation, even though she did stand there and have produced L2 speaking at that moment. It appears that rather than enjoying the speaking, Grace tended to be less confident about her ability in successfully producing the L2, therefore, what she experienced was worries, stress, and nervousness. What is more important, this unfavourable L2 WTC experience has a close relationship with her self-concept, which can be captured when she explained the reason of why she chose that particular role to play, as she mentioned that

> I thought it was the easiest role because the content was relatively independent and short. I worried if I would forget to say and miss my turn. I'm the kind of person who likely to make mistakes, and forget words, so if I chose this role, when the turn came, I could just speak, then I finished, as there was no more I need to talk, so I don't need to remember anything else to do. (Grace, SRI, 28 May 2012)

From this reflection, it can be seen that due to perception about herself as a kind of person who is less competence in L2 speaking, she opted to play the easiest role without extra communicative interactions in order to avoid possible negative consequence such as forgetting to speak. Additionally, the role of self-concept also showed in the preparation stage, in which, rather than cooperating with the group work actively, she tended to behave as an

outsider. She adopted the materials searched by other group members, and merely recited the original documents without her effort in thinking and revising, as she said '*I'm lazy, if someone had already organized the material, I don't have to do other work*' (Grace, SRI, 28 May, 2012). Therefore, it can be said that the self-concept held by Grace did not promote her L2 learning and WTC, but hindered her enthusiasm and investment in both group preparation work as well as the situational communication in group presentation. Although she participated and produced L2 speaking in that communication activity, however, her L2 WTC was more referring to the intention to complete the task, and the desire to finish her speaking in a short time in order to avoid making mistakes due to the relatively pessimistic perception about herself.

The tendencies of avoiding rather than approaching communicative activities guided by self-concept can be frequently identified across Grace's dataset in the current study. The following example also provides evidence on how her self-concept impeded L2 WTC in a specific communicative event. In a classroom activity, students were divided into groups of four or five to discuss a list of questions concerning science and technology. Data from the observation shown that Grace tended to be reticent during the whole process of group discussion. In reflecting her behaviours and WTC experience, Grace mentioned that

> I found the questions were difficult, the topic concerned about technology, and I found vocabularies in this field are very complicated and I didn't really touch before, but the questions seem required more advanced, profound and complex answers that I felt hard to think of and organize, so in this case, people with higher competence in English would have advantage and more opportunities to speak, apparently, I'm not that kind of person. It was hard for me, my ability to express my ideas was limited, I even couldn't catch up with what they said, so I had been trying to listen to them carefully, I think that was what I could do at that moment. (Grace, SRI, 08 May 2012)

What Grace stated above suggests that on one hand, actual L2 communicative competence tended to be an important factor influencing her WTC in that situation, as Grace

encountered serious troubles in both comprehension and production, including insufficient lexical resources, difficulty in generalizing ideas and organizing words and utterances to express ideas, and listening and understanding other interlocutor's meanings. According to Grace's own interpretation these difficulties may to a large extent be due to the unfamiliarity and lack of linguistic resources about that particular topic. In this case, L2 communicative competence played a crucial role in hindering Grace's willingness to engage in the group discussion.

While on the other hand, it seems how Grace perceived her sense of self worked more powerfully in impeding her participation at that moment. She tended to divide herself from the group of people who have higher proficiency in L2, because she didn't conceive herself as 'a kind of person' who is capable enough and should have more opportunities to enter into the conversation by using L2. In this sense, it can be seen that Grace's self-concept as a person who is less competitive and should not have the advantage in entering into such L2 conversation resulted in avoiding participation in the L2 communication, but staying reticent by listening other's talking as an outsider.

What is more, by reviewing across Grace's dataset, it can be found that her relatively pessimistic view about her current self particularly in the L2 domain have a close relationship with her previous L2 learning experience. In the life story interview (28 March, 2012), Grace indicated that she believed she was born with the gene of biology study, but not English learning. She reflected her English language learning experience that no matter how hard she tried on learning English, there was still little progress. Based on the previous learning experience, the constructed L2 self influenced on her current attitudes towards L2 learning and communication in the L2 classroom, as Grace stated that although learning and practice in the L2 classroom is important and useful for the future development, it is not such relevant

and significant for her, because she didn't want to invest much effort on things that she was not good at and impossible to change, and be hard on herself anymore. In this sense, it can be seen that previous learning experience played a significant role in shaping one's current, even the future, self-concept. This finding can support the prior study that personal contextual factors are an important internal references in self-concept formation (Mercer, 2011).

Furthermore, her learning experience also conceived her that she cannot improve her English competence dramatically through her insistent investment and effort. In other words, Grace tended to hold a perception that successful language learning depends on a natural, innate talent rather than their own efforts and hard work that within their control (Dweck, 2006). However, this perception was not as effective in developing a more positive self-concept, and encouraging a learner to work autonomously and actively towards improving one's abilities (Mercer and Ryan, 2010). Accordant with this, various examples in Grace's dataset presented that she tended to avoiding rather than approaching the L2 communication even when the opportunities are available in front of her. For instance, when she was invited to having lunch together with the foreign teacher after the class, she refused the invitation by saying that '*I don't like to take part in this kind of activity, I will find nothing to talk with her, it is fine for me to do activities in the classroom, but I think I will be very embarrassed if I go there*' (Grace, SRI, 14 May 2012). It seems that Grace was not willing to invest more effort in her L2 learning and using, mainly due to her pessimistic self-concept in L2.

7.1.3 The role of social comparison in developing one's self-concept and L2 WTC

Besides the previous learning experience, social comparison which concerns learners' comparison of their perceived performance and competence with those of others (Mercer,

2011) is also identified to play a prominent role and function cooperatively in shaping individual self-concept and then impact on one's WTC in specific L2 communication. As has been illustrated in previous chapter, in many cases, social comparison can work effectively in improving one's perceived communicative competence, reducing anxious feeling, and therefore stimulating the emergence of WTC in L2 communications. In regard to the self-concept, it seems that social comparison involves a negotiation between one's self with the external context where the ongoing L2 learning experience occurred. In an example of Vivian's dataset, she showed a reluctance to interact with her interlocutor when they were required to talk about holidays in pairs. According to the observation and recording, what she did most time during the communication were listening to her partner's speaking and asked her to repeat her words, as she mentioned in the stimulated recall interview

> She spoke in a very low voice, I couldn't hear clearly, I asked her to speak louder several times, but I still found very hard to understand her, for example, she said 'walking along the street' many times, I still couldn't recognize what she said, you know, very difficult. I also felt she was very shy, and was not very good at English, her speaking was not very fluently, so I felt difficult to understand her and also to ask questions. She and me are not the same kind of person, she was not open, and her life was relatively monotonous, she told me she found nothing to do, so she spent two hours walking along the street, I really didn't know what kinds of questions that I could ask her based on what she told me like this, so I felt it was difficult for me to develop conversation with her. (Vivian, SRI, 12 April 2012)

Besides the factors such as difficulties in listening and comprehension during the interaction as well as the interest about the topical content produced by the interlocutor, what played a more dominant role simultaneously in this case regards Vivian's perception of the differences between her self-concept and her interlocutor's. It can be seen that according to the L2 speaking produced the interlocutor, Vivian started to make judgements and compare herself with her interlocutor. The evaluation Vivian made towards her interlocutor including various aspects, such as personality, L2 competence, and lifestyle. From Vivian's view point,

her interlocutor is a kind of person who is shy, not open, less competent in English, with a lifestyle which was monotonous. All of these seems were interpreted by Vivian as negative, or at least discordant, with her perception and evaluation in relation to her sense of self.

According to Gee (2000), people in the society seek and participate in certain social practice and through sharing a particular sort of 'lifestyle' in order to accomplish or expect a particular identity to be recognized. In this sense, rather than acknowledging her interlocutor's lifestyle and personality, Vivian tended to distinguish herself from this disapproved person by making the conclusion that '*she and I are not the same kind of person*'. In this sense, it can be said that the social comparison of self-concepts led to a lower level of acceptance of her communicative interlocutor, ineffective understanding, and less interest in L2 interaction. In other words, this discordance between one's self-concept with other's can result in a reduced enthusiasm to approach communication with that particular person by using the target language.

While, on the contrary, the developed concordance between one's self-concept with other person's through social comparison tended to work supportively in creating L2 WTC. For instance, in communicative situations where students were discussing a list of three questions based on the reading material in pairs, Vivian tended to be actively engaging in the discussion with her interlocutor as the communicative excerpt shown below.

L2 Communicative Excerpt 12 (27 March 2012)

Vivian: What do you think the time that a child should start learning English?
Vivian: I think they should start from kindergarten.
Interlocutor: I think they shouldn't start learning too early.
Vivian: You think they should start from…
Interlocutor: Yeah, from they already know our own culture.

Vivian: Own culture?

Interlocutor: Yeah, own culture, after they have something or basic knowledge in their mind about our own culture, then they can learn English and understand the western culture.

Vivian: Ok, yeah, why I think they should start learning English in the very early stage is because when they are very young, they can acquire knowledge very quickly compared with after people get elder. I think they should start as earlier as possible, but I also agree with you that children should also learn our own culture and Chinese at the same time.

Interlocutor: Yeah, do you agree the technology can help English learning?

Vivian: Absolutely, I think the answer is yes, we can use mp3 or computers everywhere to learn English even without the teacher, so high technology can improve our learning efficiency, for example, listening English music, read e-books…

Interlocutor: yes, more possibilities to access…er…occasions…access English.

This L2 conversation transcript represents a significant point regarding Vivian's WTC, in which she expressed her own ideas, and frequently interact with her interlocutor by exchanging different opinions, and effectively produced L2 speaking in developing the discussion with her interlocutor. When she reflected her communicative behaviours and related WTC in L2, she indicated her preference and willingness to talk with her interlocutor, as she pointed out

> We are very good friends, very familiar with each other, and we have the same supervisor in our department, we normally learn and spend spare time together. Now, for this class, we were also assigned in the same class. I think we have a lot of similarities, so we can understand well when we talk about something. I think her English is very good, I feel she might also be the few tops in this class. She might be better than me, so I can learn many things from her when we have conversation together. She is very good at expressing in L2, and critical thinking. I also think critical thinking is very important, so I like to talk with this kind of person, because by speaking with her, my ideas can be broadened. (Vivian, SRI, 27 March 2012)

From what Vivian stated above, it appears that Vivian's preference to communicate with her interlocutor is not only because of the familiarity and friendship developed gradually based on their similar life experiences, but also a sense of similarity or concordance as a same

kind of person who has a higher competence in L2 and more advanced ability in critical thinking. In other words, the advantages or the character that she highly valued or even expected to own in regard to self was accordant with her interlocutor's based on the social comparison. In this sense, the ongoing L2 communication may involve a construction and reconstruction of self-concept, in which when the language learner perceived a concordance between her self-concept with others', she inclined to approach, engage and further consolidate her self-concept. It is during this process, Vivian's willingness to speak with this particular person is likely to be evoked, because by communicating with this person, she was portraying a self who are competent and being able to think critically. However, this developed concordance may not always work well, in some occasions, sharing similar thoughts with each other may result in boredom and reduced WTC as Vivian mentioned few times in her data. This implicates a changing trajectory of dynamic interactions and reciprocal impacts on one's WTC in L2 across time.

7.2 Possible Selves: Dynamic Relations Shift towards ownership

7.2.1 'I need to talk, because teacher means marks': The role of inherited ideal self and L2 WTC

Besides the language learners' perception about their current self state, emerging evidence from the dataset of the current study indicates that they also have constructed different images concerning their future possible selves. For example, the participant learners tended to have different plans and expectations for their future development, and they may want to become different kinds of persons. The data suggests that these possible selves held by the language learners can work as a self-guide in affecting their L2 WTC in various

complex ways. In the following section, I will explore in detail about the one's possible selves in relation to L2 WTC and one's previous and on-going L2 learning experiences in a broader sociocultural context.

The dominant possible self identified among the participant learners concern inherited ideal self. This term is adapted from the term ideal self which is adopted from Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 motivational self system, and refers to the attributes that one would ideally like to possess, and has been distinguished from the concept of ought-to self that refers to attributes that one believes one ought-to possess, in other words the attributes that are possibly forced onto us by others such as parents, teachers or social pressures.

However, in the present study, the boundary between these two constructs is relatively vague, they tend to be integrated and embedded within each other. Based on the analysis of participant learners' previous and current life and L2 learning experiences, it indicates that external rather than internal references, such as exam orientation, parental support, expectations from teachers, institutions, and society, are closely attached and involved as important components in constructing the language learners' possible selves. Moreover, these external references inclined to be internalized within the learner's sense of self. In other words, attributes that the language learners believed they ought-to possess as a person originally tend to be internalized as a part of their ideal selves during the long-term and on-going L2 learning and social practices processes within the Chinese sociocultural con-text, but they still inherited with the external references. Therefore, the term 'inherited ideal self' has been utilized to implicate internalized and embedded future possible selves.

Significant others' expectations, inherited ideal self, and L2 WTC

According to the data, the inherited ideal self can exert powerful roles in enhancing the language learners' WTC and promoting the target language using in specific communicative situations. By viewing cross the participant learners' datasets, Sarah's data provided numerous examples for the inherited ideal self guided WTC and L2 using. A typical example concerns the situation in which the teacher asked feedbacks from the whole class after group discussion was conducted as has been mentioned in the previous chapter when I was talking about WTC-related communicative event. In that communicative situation, Sarah seems actively participated in the whole class L2 interaction by raising up her hand, indicating her intention to speak and stood up to answer the teacher's question when the teacher asked feedbacks about the first discussion question.

Regarding this WTC-related behaviour, Sarah stated that '*because I talked about the first question in the group discussion, so I had already organized my speech and was well prepared, so why didn't I speak?*' (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). It seems that the previous speaking experience regarding the question in the group discussion seems to be useful in helping her to organize and prepare what she wanted to say. Pellegrino (2005), it worked as a kind of interaction preparation which is one of strategies that the language learners uses to reduce their anxiety, so that they can improve their success and ensure a greater sense of security in L2 speaking through preparing themselves. Although she did not use the group discussion intentionally as a practice, the speaking experience within the group did support her WTC to answer her teacher's question in public.

What more important is that meanwhile Sarah's vision concerning what would happen of herself in the possible future especially obtaining a higher score in the final exam

functioned as a powerful catalyst for her willingness to speak. As Sarah pointed out, she perceived the teacher's question as a good opportunity to let the teacher know her and left a good impression on her, so that the teacher would probably give her '*an emotional mark*' that is a higher mark probably given by the teacher based on subjective evaluation according to her performance in the final L2 examination (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012). In this case, it can be seen that the vision with the image of herself who would probably gaining a higher score in the future exam was created by Sarah, and the intention of pleasing the teacher and meeting what the teacher expected in order to pursuing the likelihood of achieving a higher score in the future worked as a future self-guide at that moment in encouraging her to explore and grasp this potential opportunity which offers possibilities for her to move towards what she desired to become. Therefore, it is during this process, Sarah's willingness to interact with the teacher by using the target language was evoked, and the communicative behaviour occurred.

The orientation of pleasing the teacher and high value on the examination result seems to be particular prominent in Sarah's case. As has been mentioned before, Sarah's motivation on English language learning tended to be exam dominated. Sarah related her English language learning closely to examinations and also future success, as she pointed out English is compulsory for almost examinations in China, if people want to continue education from middle school, to high school, undergraduate, postgraduate, and even to find a good job in the future, it is essential to learn English well (Sarah, Life story Interview, 26 March, 2012).

Except the emerging sense of the close relation between English learning and future success, the desire of becoming the person that parents expected and avoiding disappointing the parents seems particularly effective in guiding Sarah's learning. Concerning the popularity and recognition of the importance of English as a global language in Chinese sociocultural context, Chinese parents tends to pay great attention on their children's English language

learning, and supported them in diversified ways, such as teaching English in person or other family members, encouraging them to participate English interest classes or tutorials, buying a variety of learning materials, and even making decisions for their schoolings. These emphases and interventions on English study usually went through their primary, secondary even higher educations in some cases, which therefore had significant implications for the internalization of these external expectations. For example, as Sarah mentioned

> They encouraged and applied many extra training classes for me, which changed my mind and perception regarding English learning, because I started thinking that I was not bad at English, why my parents still required me to attend these classes, then I realized that it must be that this subject is really important, so that my parents paid a great attention on it, and they hoped me to pay particular attention on it as well and expected me to learn it well. In this way, I got the idea that English is very important, and I should learn it well. (Sarah, Life story Interview, 26 March 2012).

This reveals that by involving in the English related activities that the parents encouraged and supported, the language learner spontaneously started recognizing and accepting the conception of the importance of English learning although these ideas may actually have been forced on the learner by the parents originally. At the same time, she also began to make sense of what her parents expected from her, and what she ought-to do in order to meet the expectations. As she indicated, she felt that her family members always care about her so much, if she failed to learn well or do something for which they would be proud of her, she would feel so guilty, and actually this sense of feeling became a dominant and powerful impetus for her in motivating to achieve her targets in most cases (ibid.). In this sense, it can be seen that parental support is a crucial component for the construction of one's inherited ideal self which attached with the references that parents placed on the language learners originally however have be internalized and transformed to the attributes that one would desire to possess as well.

High value on exams in Chinese culture, inherited ideal self, and L2 WTC

The exam orientation is common among other participant learners'. For instance, in Grace's case of conducting the presentation, her inherited ideal self with meeting the teacher's expectation and obtaining a higher score showed a dominant role in guiding her L2 investment not only at the preparation stage but also the actual presenting situation and L2 learning afterwards. The only purpose for Grace to do the presentation as she specified, was to acquire a good mark, otherwise as she indicated she would be unlikely to do the presentation voluntarily when it is not exam related. In other words, exam-oriented communicative events tend to more likely involve Grace's participation due to a sense of ought-to completing the activity and also pursuing a better result that she ideally wanted to accomplish. The exam result has been interpreted by Grace with more implications rather than just a score. As Grace stated

> It is a criterion to evaluate your investment and effort you made, and it represents whether you did it well or not. It is not worth that you invested a lot but finally you can't get the teacher's approval, and that may also mean that you still have a distance to what you should achieve. (Grace, SRI, 17 April 2012)

According to this statement, it seems that gaining a good exam result means being approved by and satisfying the teacher, which as Grace conceived not only proved the effort she made during the process but also the quality of her accomplishment. What is even more important, meeting the teacher's expectation and obtaining a good mark tend to be the ultimate goal for Grace, and failing to do this may implicate the meaninglessness of her effort paid on the L2 learning activity. In this sense, it can be seen that this inherited ideal self might not only involve an internalized ought-to self that the learner desired to be approved by the teacher but also a feared self that she tried to avoid the negative consequence of the worthlessness of her investment. It seems that this self-guide contains powerful impetus for

Grace in motivating her to work hard on it, therefore, as she reflected that she perceived she used two weeks to work on and recite it fluently in order to prepare the presentation sufficiently. However, due to her shyness, even the sufficiency on preparation did not work effectively in overcoming the nervousness when Grace stood in front of and faced the class.

Comparatively, the teacher played a rather more prominent role in this case in finding her communicative confidence back at that moment. As Grace mentioned, she felt much better and much more confident when she realized the teacher smiled and nodded her head to her (Grace, SRI, 17 April 2012). In this case, it seems that obtaining the teacher's support or approval in some ways that the student desired with could efficiently support her situational confident and WTC, and the moving towards a more positive psychological shift. After the presentation, Grace checked the result with her teacher, and she was really satisfied with the mark her teacher gave her. According to Grace, as she mentioned above, the score would tell her the discrepancy between the selves who she currently are and who she should become in the future, and in this way it gave direction to where she should move toward. In this sense, the good result she acquired this time was attributed to her sufficient preparation, therefore, as she indicated she would be willing to give her enough time to prepare diligently and adequately next time. From this perspective, it can be said that this inherited ideal self, impacted Grace's both situational and long-term L2 learning and using conspicuously.

'Being good student' as inherited ideal self

The role the teacher in developing one's inherited ideal self, particularly the sense of being a good student, is also reflected in a representative example addressed in Emily's case. During the oral examination, Emily tried to help her partner to understand the teacher's

question by using L2 to prompt after she completed her own task. Regarding this, Emily stated that

> When my partner got the question, he didn't hear clearly, he thought he was asked to talk about a piece of news, but actually the teacher asked him to talk about his favourite one from the news we reported in the last session, after the teacher repeated the question, he was still thinking, so I said of course it is one our group did, then the teacher looked at and smiled on me, I knew I would leave her a good impression, I felt so good at that moment. (Emily, SRI, 4 June, 2012)

This indicates that the willingness to enter into the conversation between her teacher and her partner seems mainly derived from her desire to please and impressing the teacher. It seems by showing the teacher that she could understand the meaning of the teacher's questions and be able to provide relevant response, she tended to show the teacher that her L2 competence is good, so that she might possibly gain a higher mark in the exam. In Emily's words mentioned in the interview, she intended to show herself as 'a good student', because teachers like good students. The teacher's reaction seems confirmed with what Emily expected in getting a higher mark, therefore, she perceived a positive feeling at that time. What more important is that the image of 'a good student' working an inherited ideal self guide in promoting Emily's WTC, seems to have a close relationship wither her previous learning experience. By viewing Emily's life story interview (26 March 2012), a learning experience in middle school is considered interesting and important to mention at this point:

> **Emily:** My English teacher is the teacher charge our class, her attention was only paid on our learning, the most impressive memory was reciting English texts, even the paragraph was very long, we had to recite it on the same day we learned it and she would check on the next day.
>
> **Interviewer:** Do you like this teacher?
>
> **Emily:** Yes, I quite like her, as she had a great impact on my personal development.
>
> **Interviewer:** In what aspect?
>
> **Emily:** Learning, I think, a strict teacher produces outstanding students, she always emphasized the importance of learning and examination, and never allow lazy and

indolence, she placed high expectations on me, which made me feel that I was different from others, I was a good student, and also she supervised and urged me to learn, so that I would not delay today's work to tomorrow, then day after day, gradually I changed my learning habit and attitude, I became more independent and autonomous on my study, and I knew what I should do. We also wrote a summary each week to summarize and reflect what we did and what we learned this week, and this then should be signed by our parents, then my teacher read each summary and made comments on it, it worked very well for me, and I also think it was a good way to communicate with parents.

What Emily stated above indicates the significant role that her EFL teacher played in affecting her learning in both short and long term in a relatively positive way. It seems that what the teacher highlighted regarding the importance of learning and exams is accordant with the mainstream value in the society. To some extent, this can be considered as the specific representation and execution of the high value on learning and examination dominated in the Chinese sociocultural context. In other words, except the parental support and encouragement, within the educational setting it is the teachers who as the medium providing channels for the language learner to sense such cultures and values in the society, emphasizing the expectations from the parents, the teachers, the settings and the society placed on them, and making the learner to realize and understand that she was expected and ought to invest effort on her study. From this perspective, it can be seen that the individual's learning activities and behaviours are closely interrelated with the learning context that she is located in.

Moreover, in addition to the teacher's impact on her learning attitudes and habits, an important aspect that Emily perceived on her personal development concerns her self-related beliefs and concepts which is crucial in determining her following learning motivation and behaviours. It is meaningful to note that in this long-term process, teacher's expectations on Emily shows a vital role in helping Emily to construct a sense of 'a good student', and

'different from others' about herself, which accompanied with teacher's other positive interventions, finally shaped her learning autonomy gradually. Furthermore, the embeddedness of the teacher's and parents' expectation are represented and reinforced through a way of communication and encouragement of parental supervision, which also influences Emily's learning and the sense of self that she is expected and ought-to be. Gradually, this sense of ought-to be a good student has been internalized within Emily's self, and became an ideal self which as can be seen that worked as a possible self-guide in encouraging her WTC and L2 production in specific communication situation.

Reconsidering the value of inherited ideal self in relation to the quality of L2 WTC

However, the inherited ideal self may not always work productively, in some cases it may inhibit the learners' real WTC even though the L2 speaking is produced as an outcome. As an example, in the group discussion that students were talking about festivals, she showed her interest concerning this topic and discussed actively with other group members, however, when the teacher was getting around the group and standing beside her, she tended to become cautious by slowing down her speaking even though she still kept on saying something. What Sarah stated when she reflected on this communicative situation and her WTC at that moment seems interesting.

> I became a little bit nervous at that time, I just make sure what I was going to speak out as accurate as possible, you know, cause you were facing the teacher, I mean I need to talk, because teacher means marks. I don't know, it's kind of psychological habit developed from previous learning experience, for example, in high school, when we had exams in the class, teachers usually walked around you to see how you did in the exams, whether you did correctly or wrong, if you did it wrong, teachers would not be happy, so you would be very nervous at that moment, so day after day, if the teacher stands beside or near me, I felt nervous, so you know, I need to make sure my performance is good, and my answer is correct. (Sarah, SRI, 27 March 2012)

From what Sarah mentioned above it is not difficult to sense viewing the teacher as marks led to the over concern of pleasing the teacher, pursuing accuracy and ensuring the good performance, which were actually distract her attention and resulted in nervousness, and then caused the hesitation, cautions, and less enthusiasm in expressing and producing the communication. It seems this internalized ideal self tended to be tightly related to her previous learning experience in which the she used to pleasing the teacher by pursuing good performance in front of the teacher. Although Sarah produced some L2 using at that moment, this inherited ideal self with over concerning teacher's expectations indeed resulted in negative emotion, and prohibited the evoking of the learner's real WTC and the effective using of the target language.

A similar example can be identified in another communicative situation in Sarah's case. In the classroom activity, students were required to listen to a material and made notes for a list of questions. After that, they were given 5 minutes to discuss answers for each question according to their notes, and practiced conversation in pairs. Following the group work, the teacher asked feedbacks from the whole class concerning questions that students discussed before, and in this case, Sarah was pointed by the teacher to answer the question. What seems interesting is that according to her reflection her perceived confidence was transiently decreased when the teacher asked feedback from her after the pair discussion even though she had already talked about the question, therefore, she provided a relatively shorter answer with stutters and in a low voice when she stood up and answered the teacher's question in this situation, as she mentioned in the interview

> At the beginning I was very confident about my answer, but when the teacher called my name, I became not sure about the answer I was going to provide, I don't know why, maybe at that moment, I became caring too much about whether it is correct or not, because I wanted to answer it correctly, maybe just want to satisfy the teacher. (Sarah, SRI, 14 May 2012)

On one hand, it can be seen that the learner's communicative self-confidence can dynamically fluctuate according to the development and change of the situational communication context. On the other hand, in this circumstance, it seems that pursuing of accuracy in order to meet teacher's expectation actually led to the emergence of anxiety of being negatively evaluated by the teacher or failing to satisfying the teacher. In this sense, the inherited ideal self did not assist the evoking of the language learner's WTC in L2, but rather caused negative feeling of afraid of making mistakes which is not helpful in consolidating Sarah's communicative self-confidence, then ultimately affected the quality of her WTC and inhibited L2 production.

Grace's dataset seems provide another representative example in supporting the above argument. In the group discussion, students were required to talk about different cultures between eastern and western. According to the field notes and recording, when Grace was talking about her own opinions, the teacher came to her group, listened to their discussion and provided some explanations. At that moment, Grace's speaking tended to become intermittent with frequent stops and thinking. In the stimulated interview, Grace reflected her communicative behaviours and related WTC regarding this situation.

> I was talking freely at that time, but after I realized the teacher came to us, I started to feel nervous and consider whether it was proper to speak in this way, and how the teacher would think about my talking, I felt I didn't speak well, I was worried about the teacher was not satisfied with what I said, so I began to consider these things, and that affected my attention and emotion. The most important thing I think is that I was feared about teachers, I don't know, it might be developed according to previous learning experiences, teachers are all awesome for me. (Grace, SRI, 27 March 2012)

According to what has been reported above, it can be seen that Grace experienced a dynamic emotional change from a more relaxed and comfortable affective feeling to becoming nervous and worrying when the teacher appeared and involved in the group

discussion. It seems that this anxiety and nervousness seems to a large extent to be due to the pressure of caring about the teacher's thinking and the desire of meeting the teacher's expectation or in other words the pursuit of inherited ideal self.

As has been argued earlier, the internalization of this possible self tightly related to the language learner's previous learning experience within the Chinese sociocultural context. This means that in the Chinese setting, teachers are placed in the position of authority and significant others, and the Chinese are sensitive to the evaluations of significant other and care about their own self in relation to others, especially the teacher who is closely related to the exam results in Chinese students' eyes (Wen and Clément, 2003). Therefore, when Grace perceived teachers as non-approachable based on her previous experiences, the figure of authority might become a source of threat to her, in which she felt emotionally insecurity about herself status due to a concern of not being able to satisfy the teacher. In this case, a sense of anxiety and nervousness emerged, which led to a decreased enthusiasm and production in L2. This again suggests that the inherited ideal self may not effective in all cases in facilitating high quality of the language learner's L2 WTC.

7.2.2 'Using L2 is easier than Chinese': The shift from inherited ideal self to owning the language

So far I have analysed and discussed the role of one's inherited ideal self which is particular dominant for the Chinese participant learners in guiding their WTC and language using in L2. The constructing components of meeting significant others' expectations such as teachers and parents, and pursuing good exam results tended to tightly related to the language learners' previous life and learning experience, which functioned powerfully in enhancing

one's WTC and encouraging L2 speaking. However, findings also suggest that this self-guide may not always work effectively, in many cases, it might inhibit the evoking of language learners' real WTC considering the quality of WTC due to the over concern about the one's behaviours, e.g. performance in front of the significant others. Emerging evidence from the data indicate that when the language learners are engaging or approaching references of self that they truly valued and wanted to become from their own innermost heart rather than external references associated, they would be encouraged to move forward to owning the target language in meeting the needs of self-expression, during this process, more genuine L2 WTC is likely to be evoked.

Reducing discrepancy between current and future selves

Among the research participants' dataset, an interesting L2 WTC phenomenon was identified by viewing across Vivian's dataset, she shown frequent use of English in the L2 classroom even when L2 using is not explicitly required, such as in the group discussion. As an instance, in the communicative situation that the teacher asked students to move around and change seats to group together and prepare the discussion. Different from other students who usually chose to use Chinese for communication, Vivian tended to use English to interact with her peers during this process, such as she said '*quickly, quickly, guys*' when she changed the seat and moved around, and she used 'excuse me' when she was passing through. Regarding this communicative behaviour and her enthusiasm in frequent using the target language, Vivian stated that

> I have a dream that one day I can do very professional and authentic presentations, and I can just blurt out fluently in English, but now I think my English is still not good enough, so I have an intention to practice as much as I can, normally I pay attention on opportunities for practicing English, so I use English whenever and wherever I could. (Vivian, SRI, 12 April 2012)

According to the above quote, it is not difficult to identify that Vivian had a clear evaluation about her current English competence, at the same time, she also created an image relating to her L2 self that she preferred to become in the future, that is being able to produce and use professional and authentic English for effective communication. In this sense, there is an emerging and recognized discrepancy between her current self and the self in the domain of L2 that she really wants to become in the future. It seems that once this discrepancy has been realized and the language learner has an intensive and truly desire to reduce this gap by approaching English competence that she wish to achieve, it became a powerful impulse in encouraging the learner to explore and acknowledge L2 communicative potentials, and evoking the learner's willingness to use to target language in order to move towards the future self state that she wants to become in the future. In this sense, the use of L2 tended to be naturally occurred during the process of one's approaching to a desired self.

Engaging transportable identities: speaking as themselves

From what has been analysed and discussed so far, one emerging self related construct seems bridging one's current and possible self, and playing significant role in encouraging the language learner's real WTC concerns transportable identities. It seems that role of the learners' selves both currently and possible not only in L2 domain but also other dimensions tended to closely linked with broader sociocultural context in guiding their willingness to engage in L2 interactions in specific communicative situations. In other words, there is an emerging complexity of one's sense of self, and its intimate connections with various references, such as social relationships, previous and on-going L2 learning and living experiences, and also the communicative context. It is based on these social interactions and interpersonal practices, the language learners would possibly engage in one's transportable identity in particular situated communication, and by engaging in the transformed identity, the

250

learners are actually investing in the kind of person who they see themselves as, whom they want to become and whom they actually become (Ushioda, 2011). Therefore, by engaging in the transportable identity, the language learners are more likely to generate more genuine WTC in L2, the owning of language and approaching towards the self that they truly want to become. There are numerous examples across the empirical datasets supporting this argument.

An interesting and typical example showing learner's evoked transportable identities and the engagement of the truly desired self in producing genuine L2 WTC, and speaking as oneself refers to a group discussion in which Vivian displayed a strong intention in sharing her different opinions with others as has been mentioned in the previous chapter. During the discussion of a numbers of questions regarding the issue of culture, Vivian tended to be active in speaking out her opinions particularly when they were talking about the importance of teamwork. As has been discussed earlier, her WTC was evoked mainly due to her strong desire to express her different opinions concerning teamwork based on her personal life experience. What is more important here in regard to the role of self is that a person who can think critically tended to be highlighted by Vivian in this case and also other cases across Vivian's dataset, such as '*I think we really should think one thing critically*' (Vivian, SRI, 27 March 2012). In other words, a critical thinking person is a self image that Vivian constructed for herself and also the self that she truly highly valued and wants to become. In this sense, when she was approaching the self that she really wants to be, Vivian seems actually engaged the self as a kind of person who has different viewpoints based on her own personal feelings, thoughts, understandings and meanings she interpreted, and who linked the language learning in the classroom to the life surrounding. In other words, Vivian engaged in a transformed identity as an individual human being who has particular personal history and experience, a teamwork experience for debate in this case, and who constructed certain values,

understandings, and opinions towards this experience, which vice versa promoted and informed the self and identities she currently perceived and will become through the medium of learning and using the target language.

In this sense, L2 learning turned to be an integrative constituent of her real life, which according to Legenhausen (1999) can enable the language learner to 'speak as themselves' instead of behaving as 'language learners' practicing the L2. When she really wanted to express her innermost thoughts and experiences in L2 as a certain person, the moment will be powerful and significant, since the WTC in L2 tended to be directed triggered as an outcome, as Hanauer (2012, p. 110) argued that 'extending language use will result from the true desire for personal expression'. By speaking out her innermost thoughts and opinions concerning the issue of teamwork, she was enabled to engaging the self as a person who can think critically and also moving towards the future self that she highly valued. At that point, by using Hanauer's words (2012, p. 111), 'a second language ceases to be a tool and becomes a personal resource and an "owned" language'. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand what Vivian said '*sometimes, I found it is easier and more simple to express something in English than in Chinese, so in many cases, I use English instead of Chinese*' (Vivian, SRI, 27 March 2012), since in some cases, she was almost owning the language, and English became a part of her language for personal understanding and expression.

Similarly, in the same communicative situation, after the group discussion, teacher initiated whole class discussion by asking feedback from each group. Vivian tended to be eager in initiating interactions in L2 with the teacher, which is evinced in her behaviours in indicating to the teacher her desire to answer the question, such as she giving eye contact by looking at the teacher when she realized the question that she was interested was coming, and then when teacher did not choose her at the first time, she was continuously showing her

intention by raising her hand until the teacher called her name and gave her the chance to speak. What is more important is, rather than repeating what she already discussed in the group discussion, Vivian expressed her new thoughts concerning that issue to the whole class, as she reflected that

> I really wanted to share my opinion with others, I got the very impressive feeling regarding that topic, so I really wanted to talk about it, and I was very confidence with my opinion, I got new ideas to talk about at that moment, I didn't repeat what I said before, as I don't like to do that, it's not meaningful, the most important thing for me is that I expressed different and innovative ideas, as the discussion we did within our group was not as effective as I anticipated before, and I didn't get any valuable opinion and responses from the group, so in this case, I wanted to express my opinion to the whole class, you know, arouse their thinking and responses, like this time, I got some new ideas I didn't talk before in the discussion, and at the same time I thought it was worthwhile to share with more people, so I was really want to talk about my ideas. (Vivian, SRI, 27 March 2012)

It seems that the above statement explained how Vivian's situated WTC at that moment was evoked and directed by her inmost personal expressive needs. According to what Vivian mentioned, her personal experience, impressive feelings and interpretations towards the experience tended to be helpful in promoting cognitive thinking and constructing new critical opinions and ideas. At the same time, the true desire to share her experience and understandings enabled Vivian to express what she really want to say. In this case, rather than saying the thing in L2 because she can, which is the classroom experience frequently faced by language learners as Widdowson (1993) pointed out, Vivian expressed herself with new ideas that involved her own meaning-making which may implicate who she is and the self that she valued. This seems to some extent accordant with what Little (2004, p. 106) argued, 'what they learn becomes part of what they are'. It is possible to say that by engaging, negotiating, evaluating, and sharing her experience and ideas, the person that she wanted to become started to emerging and developing as a dynamically co-constructed process.

Moreover, this process also brings into sharp belief the intimate connection between the self expression of autonomy. It seems that the learner autonomy promoted during the self exploring, expression and communicative practices. This can also be supported by an example in a similar whole class discussion. When the speaking opportunity was limited by the teacher as one chance per person, the true desire of expressing her thoughts and exploring what she really interested guided Vivian to request one more chance to ask questions to her classmates and discuss relevant issues, then ultimately expanded the communication in L2 (Vivian, SRI, 24 April 2012).

Another example concerns the communicative situation of the computer technician role play in the L2 classroom I mentioned in the previous chapter, Sarah's data provided evidence on showing how her transportable identity was aroused during the conversation with her interlocutor and its effect on stimulating her WTC at that moment. When she reflected the communicative situation, she said that

> As a technician, she didn't try to muddle through her work, she was active in designing questions for our conversation, and she played like the person in real life. What I mean is she didn't just give me short answers because we were doing an English role play, she was really engaged in, we were just like in the real situation in our daily life, she played like real technician to provide support, just the same like when I dial the hotline in my life, so I felt I was like a real customer who encountered some problems with the computer, so it drove me to talk more, to give more detailed information and ask further questions, and it also helps me to know what kinds of questions the technician would ask and what information I need to provide as a customer if I will encounter similar problems in the future, like living abroad. (Vivian, SRI, 14 May 2012)

Based on what Sarah stated above, it seems that her interlocutor played a crucial role in driving and encouraging her participation and talking in L2. Due to the active engagement and immersion in the role her partner was playing, Sarah was affected by the person she was interacting with and also the enthusiastic situational atmosphere that she was located in. In

254

this case, by engaging the role that she was involving with, Sarah tended to engage in her transportable identity which seems connecting her previous living experience, herself that the role she was playing as a customer, and also herself living abroad in the possible future. At that moment, the transportable identity stimulated a much higher Sarah's personal involvement, as rather than positioning herself as a language learner who was merely practicing and showing the knowledge of the language, as Sarah said, she was asking questions, solving the problems and expressing her ideas as a customer, in this sense, Sarah was speaking as herself, as a person who was trying to solve the problem in real life or the problem she may encounter in the future life through the target language. Therefore, at that time Sarah's willingness for communicative interaction was effectively invoked and enhanced.

Investment of self and owning the language

As has been discussed earlier, language learners may encounter difficulties, frustrations, and negotiations in L2 communication. These struggles also refer to one's construction of self-concept, particularly when there are more reference involved within the communication contexts. Comparatively, the communicative situations outside the L2 classroom allows the language learner to enact more social roles and identities during the development of the conversation in the broader sociocultural context, which has important impacts on learner's WTC. It seems that the role of transportable identities was particularly prominent across Jenny's dataset regarding her L2 using outside the language classroom. Concerning the situation that Jenny had a lunch together with her friends and the foreigners, one scenario impressed her was about translating the menu and explaining ingredients for each course to the two foreign teachers. Referring this, she reflected that

> I think I talked quite a lot at that time, although I found it was a little bit difficult, but
> it didn't affect my mood to enjoy the conversation, as it was interesting and more like

daily conversation between people, like friends get together, then eating and chatting, I remember one thing was funny that I was trying to explain the sow thistle cold and dressed with sauce, but I don't know how to say sow thistle in English at that moment, so I used the word 'bitter' instead, after listening, the two teachers were so confused about what I said, so one boy explained after my words by saying that if you have a bad mood, you need to eat this, it taste bitter, so anyway, the important thing is that everyone could engage in our conversation and we really had fun. I also learned how to use the word 'acid', as when I explained the boiled fish with pickled cabbage and chili, I used the word 'acid', then our teacher pointed out that acid should be used in industry not in food. […] I mean although I made some mistakes, and my friends as well, we didn't worry too much about it, in such kind of context, you would not feel you lost your face, while sometimes you felt you brought happiness to others. (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 12 June 2012)

According to this reflection, it seems that Jenny tended to experience a higher level of enthusiasm to initiate interaction with others and a more effective oral production by using the target language at that moment. Accompanying this process was her perceived relatively positive emotion with interest, enjoyment and happiness. However, this doesn't mean that Jenny didn't encounter any difficulty during the conversation. From what Jenny stated above, it can be seen that she actually experienced some difficulties in oral expression due to the limitation of lexical resources particularly when she tried to translate and explained the food in English to the foreign teachers. Rather than giving up or ceasing talking, Jenny tried to use other vocabularies to instead in expressing her meanings even though the words she used was not proper enough and even caused misunderstandings.

However, what is important here is that this process presents Jenny's real investment on the L2 communication and learning, which includes Jenny's negotiating meanings and ideas with the interlocutors and also the cooperation with other participants by using the target language as a person in the society, a friend as Jenny interpreted, not a language learner or a student anymore. That is to say, by engaging in the conversation at that moment, Jenny experienced a transformed identity, so that she was talking and expressing as a friend such as

introducing the food to her friend rather than producing something because as a student she ought to submit something to her teacher. It can sense that the engagement of transportable identity also involves transformed social relationships from teacher-student to friend-friend.

Therefore, as Richards (2006) pointed out, transportable identities will necessarily involve an investment of self, with all the emotional, relational and moral considerations that this entails. Here, in this case, it can be seen that although engaging the transportable identity may also involve struggle, negotiation, and potential threatening of making mistakes and losing one's face, it provides a relatively secure scope of Jenny's current communicative ability within which she could speak as herself, learning L2 through the negotiation, and shifting gradually and smoothly towards what she would become in the future. Thus, as Jenny said that rather than feeling lost face, she actually perceived more happiness from the interaction, and comparing with the communication in the class-room, she thought their conversation was 'more effective and useful' for L2 learning.

It seems that through engaging the transportable identity that Jenny preferred to invest in, she experienced a growing and changing process of her identity and disposition, from a student concerned with losing face to a friend who didn't worry about making mistakes in using the target language, which inevitably guided her WTC during this process. The dynamic trajectory seems more prominently evinced in Jenny's quote referring her reflection about another communicative scenario as shown in Figure 7.1 below and also her experience of participating into the communicative activities outside the classroom for a relative long-term, as she stated

[The photo is redacted from the e-thesis in order to avoid copyright infringement and protect privacy.]

Figure 7. 1 Communicative activity in English corner captured by Jenny

Everyone was high, especially when they were dancing, so it was more like a part of my life, I mean at the beginning I went to there with a purpose to practice and improve my speaking, but after these period, we got familiar with each other, the teacher and peers, they are nice, so it is more like friends getting together and having fun together, I think if I have time, I would go there every week. (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 20 April 2012)

This quote concerns Jenny's interpretation of a high point of her WTC in L2 in the English corner where she was using L2 to encouraging her peer and teacher to dance after the boy told them he could dance, and they had fun together. According to what she said, it can be seen that the transportable identity was invoked through the communicative interaction, and Jenny transformed her identity from an outsider who participate in the L2 communication simply as an L2 learner to someone who really enjoyed using L2, and who was engaging activities with a broader social meaning through the medium of L2. In this sense, transportable identity is significant for Jenny, as at that moment, she was not a passive L2 learner any more, but almost speaking as herself with real L2 WTC. What is more, this process seems also includes the adaption of social relationships such as getting familiar and knowing better between each other through long-term interactions to becoming a part of Jenny's life, and this would have further implication for her motivation and willingness to participate L2 communicative event afterwards. It is therefore accordant with what Ushioda

(2011, p. 22) argued that 'it is through social participation in opportunities, negotiations and activities that people's motivations and identities develop and emerge as dynamically co-constructed processes'. It is through this trajectory we can see how the student related to the target language and how she used it to develop and express herself.

In arguing how one's future possible selves are closely related with the current self states, Markus and Nurius (1986) emphasized that they are a reality for the individual: people can 'see', 'hear' and 'smell' a possible self. If this is the case, transportable identity should be the channel and enable the language learners to sense their current real self and touch the possible self that desired to be. For instance, based on the review of Jenny's life story interview, concerning her current L2 self she showed less satisfaction with her current English competence, at the same time, based on that, it is also identified that she generated a desired end-state concerning her L2 learning in the future, such as being able to communicate more fluently, especially in her professional area, getting a higher mark in IELTS test in the coming future, studying abroad, becoming a famous lawyer one day, and L2 will be used as a main language in her future daily life.

According to this, it is possible to notice that there is an emerging discrepancy between the current and the future L2 possible self states perceived by Jenny, and these possible selves are not only relating to the L2 domain, but also other self related dimensions in broader society such as becoming a famous lawyer in the future prospects. This implicates that the close link between the current L2 learning and the possible selves in L2 and also other domains has been recognized by Jenny. In this case, the desire of reducing the discrepancy and moving towards what she would like to become in the future provides incentive, direction and impetus for Jenny to invest more effort on her current L2 learning and using, and it is during this process willingness to participate in L2 communication is potentially generated.

For example, Jenny was active in exploring communicative opportunities outside the L2 classroom not only in participating the English corner but also English speech competition organized by the department.

Regarding the case of joining in the English communicative activity arranged by the school, Jenny reflected that she perceived it as '*a valuable opportunity to practice L2 speaking*', such as how to organise the idea, how to manage the speech, and also how to response to the judge's question in a short time, in this sense, it is not only very helpful in improving L2 competence but also her psychological quality (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 4 June 2012). It seems that although her initial intention originated from her premier interest and also the instrumental orientation of the possibility to apply for the expense of IELTS test, what important is she also recognized the potential of becoming the person who is more competent in L2 through engaging in this L2 activity. What even more significant is that involving such communicative event was actually engaging in her current self and a transformed identity through making relevant decisions such as the topic that she wanted to present and also the way that she preferred to express and negotiate in delivering her own meanings. For instance, rather than pleasing judges by choosing a simple and determinate topic, Jenny decided to use a new buzzword on the internet, 'Loser' (diao si in Chinese), as her topic in order to challenge and change people's opinions towards this word, because this word has been traditionally conceived as ambiguous, rough and cannot be broadly accepted by the public, as Jenny stated that '*I wanted to challenge, I wanted to tell others, there will be different understandings about this word, not only as how they interpreted, there is more positive interpretations attached with it*' (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 4 June 2012).

According to this, it can be seen that in that situation Jenny was not speaking as a student who was only enthusiastic in pursuing a higher mark in the competition, but as a

person who really wanted to express and communicate her inmost and distinctive ideas and meanings with the public by using the target language. In this sense, Jenny's L2 WTC in this case tended to be more genuine and effective in generating meaningful investment. This meaningful investment also involves an investment of self as has mentioned before such as uncomfortable and threatening experiences. In Jenny's case, due to the controversial topic she has chosen, she perceived less confidence and was worried about the audience's reaction and also the consequential results before the start of competition. Additionally, according to her reflection, she actually experienced a difficult and tough time during that process. As she mentioned, she realized many judges laughed weirdly, frowned, shook their heads and sneered about what she said concerning her topic. These reactions obtained from the audience made her realize how hard it is for the public to accept the idea she intended to deliver, and also caused her uncomfortable feeling of nervousness or even forgetting what she was going to say.

This kind of struggle and negotiation according to McCaslin (2009) are necessary for emerging self and identity, since they promote particular response patterns, such as Jenny mentioned how to response the judges' questions, which express and inform one's self and identity. In other words, this process enables the student to accomplish dynamic co-construction of one's self, and move from the current self state towards the person she wants to become or grow to value. Therefore, as Jenny mentioned although people who couldn't accept it gave her very low mark, but people who appreciated it marked with very high scores, and she entered into the final round competition successfully through her investment and negotiation during the communication. Regarding this experience, Jenny eventually reflected that

For me, I think attending the Chinese's teacher's class was not very effective and useful, I mean the textbook is very good and practical, but it's not necessary to be instructed by the teacher, we can learn it independently. What is most important for me, and I felt most helpful in improving my English competence is participating communicative activities outside the classroom, like this competition and the English corner, although sometimes I felt very tired to go there after classes, especially the weather became warmer and warmer, but now I would like to thank for my insistence, my listening and speaking improved dramatically. At the beginning, I couldn't quite catch up what the teacher talked about and afraid of speaking in front of others, but now I can understand them easily, we have a lot to talk about and I'm not afraid anymore like what I did in the competition. (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 4 June 2012)

From what Jenny stated concerning her experience of participating in this competition and English corners outside the L2 classroom, the emerging discrepancy perceived by the student and possible self-guide tended to exert powerful roles on one's WTC and L2 learning not only in specific communicative event but also long-term motivational trajectories. It seems that the discrepancy perceived and images of future self created by Jenny provided directions for her to making meaningful choices on learning and practices potentials that she valued in order to move towards possible selves she wants to become in the future. Comparatively, as Jenny indicated, communicative activities outside the classroom tend to be more meaningful and effective than L2 learning inside the classroom in improving her L2 competence and reducing the emerged discrepancy between her current and future self. Therefore, she was motivated to invest more effort in exploring and engaging communicative events even though difficulties and challenges may appear like tiredness and weather problems mentioned by Jenny.

Emerging developmental L2 WTC trajectories and language ownership

During the insistent L2 learning process, there are various high points and low points in language learners' WTC in specific communicative activities as shown in examples mentioned previously due to complex dynamic interactions within the particular situation.

However, it is not difficult to identify when view the trajectory retrospectively, language learners were gradually moving towards the person they would like to become, particularly in the domain of L2 such as being more competent in speaking and listening, more capable in communicating with the foreigner, and becoming more confident when speaking in front of others thanks to their long-term insistence and frequent interaction and negotiation in using the target language. In other words, a self-guided enables the language learner to feel, sense and engage the current self by negotiating, participating and sharing ideas and experiences with the use of the target language, at the same time, it also allows them to engage and adapt directly to future possible self as the owner of the target language, which is crucial in nurturing L2 WTC and owning the target language in a longer term. Now, I will use Jenny's case as a typical example to discuss the emerging L2 WTC developmental trajectory of shifting from the inherited ideal self guide towards the owning of the target language across the time and spatial scales in an integrated way.

When she joined in the English corner, she felt embarrassed in talking about her previous experiences on April Fool's day at the beginning due to over concern about other people's opinions that inherited in indigenous Chinese culture. However, when the teacher started to talk about own personal experience, it aroused Jenny's excitement and the desire to share her own story with others, at that moment, she was genuinely willing to participate in the conversation and speaking as herself in L2, just as she said '*I was excited in talking about my story, so I was speaking out directly while I was thinking, not like before, sometimes I need to organize my speech in advance*' (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 27 March 2012). On the other hand, difficulties in understanding foreign student's speaking inhibited her WTC in some occasions, and the use of English for communication seems mainly due to the reason that 'Chinese is not allowed in English corner' perceived by Jenny, in other words, the

inherited ideal self with meeting the teacher's expectation remains dominant roles in guiding the learner's L2 learning and using.

Few weeks later, concerning the impressive moment in the English corner that Jenny really wanted to engage in the L2 interaction, she reflected that she very happy, and that was the happiest day since she had been there. They got cake, music, and dancing, everyone was high, especially when they were dancing. At that moment, Jenny perceived that '*it was more like a part of my life, I mean at the beginning I went to there with a purpose to practice and improve my speaking, but after these period, we get familiar with each other, the teacher and peers, they are nice, so it is more like friends getting together and having fun together*' (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 20 April 2012). It seems that the fluid of the social relations in the communicative context that the learner embedded in, particularly intimate relations had been gradually developed, provided a social not merely learning environment in which Jenny felt safe, desirable, exciting, and willing to involving and sharing her life and happiness. In this sense, language learning is not just about practicing the language, it turned to become a part of the learner's life, and an issue of exploring one's self and the surrounding world through 'participation in opportunity' (McCaslin, 2009), such as dancing.

Moving forward, as a consequence of the development of social relations and the converging and integrating between the English learning in the English corner and Jenny's personal life, opportunities for social participation and negotiation tended to be expanded, as Jenny indicated that at the beginning, her communicative topics were come from news, but after this period, she developed some tacit understanding with others, so they had more topics to communicate with, they can discuss any topic they wanted to, in her words '*there is no worries any more, I can talk whatever I want to say*' (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 04 June 2012). In this case, the expansion of social participation opportunities promoted the tendency

for the learner to sharing her life experience with others and expressing her thoughts and feelings, which as a result promoting and expanding the target language use, and therefore improved Jenny's English competence especially in the aspects of listening and speaking. This surely supported the owning of the language, since difference from beginning Jenny couldn't quite catch up the teacher's talking and afraid of speaking in front of others, but she now could understand them easily and talk freely following her desire, thanks for her insistence during this period as she perceived.

At this stage, Jenny is almost owning the language, as she pointed out when reflecting on the final scenario of the English corner, although she found it was a little bit difficult in introducing and explaining the Chinese menu, it didn't affect her enthusiasm to enjoy the conversation, because in that situation, it was interesting and more like daily conversation between people, like friends get together, then eating and chatting. During this interactive process, although she made some mistakes, she didn't worry anymore, and feel losing face, but rather sometimes she felt bring happiness for others (Jenny, Photo-based Interview, 12 June 2012). In this sense, it can be said that English became Jenny's personal, emotional and expressive resources for meeting her needs for self expression and making meaning of the world which she lives in, rather than an instrumental tool. Meanwhile, as McCaslin (2009: 137-138) argued that 'what we do and in connection with whom inform who we might become', in other words, by negotiating the meaning and bring the happiness to others, the language learner was engaging, showing and developing a certain kind of self-concepts and identities that one valued through the ownership of language.

7.3 Summary

This chapter has discussed in detail the role of language learners' past, present and future facets of their selves in guiding the development of their WTC in specific L2 communication acts in a variety of ways. The discussion has also pointed to the dynamic interactions among these facets and their interconnectedness with both micro- and macro-contexts, resulting in different qualities of WTC only some of which result in language learners' actual acts of 'speaking as themselves'. The data-based examples in this chapter have shown that the research participants' self-concepts and identities were constructed and internalized through their participation in the practices of the broader sociocultural context and that these had consequences for the here-and-now behaviours in L2 communication practices, while simultaneously feeding into the participants' re-constructions of their sense of self.

More specifically, the findings showed that the self-concept development is 'a continuous process with each stage building on previous stages in a more fluid ongoing sense' (Harter, 1999a; 2006, cited in Mercer, 2011, p. 78). Generally, Chinese students start L2 learning at a very young age in the context of sociocultural heritage that places a high value on knowledge, evidenced in parents' recognition of the importance of English learning for future success and, consequently, high expectations placed on their children's education. According to Harter (ibid.), at this age, young children are not able to abstract or generalise, and their self-description tends to be tied to actual specific behaviours, thus these language learners inclined to construct self-image depending on external others rather than by initially their own in their very early age. Through involvement in these parent-supported activities, children gradually realise and make sense of parental expectations with regards to, for example, 'being a good student', 'studying hard' and 'learning English well'. Through this

process of sense making, these social interactions feed the process of constructing images of who the children are and who they are expected to become.

These self images tend to intensify with the expansion of the sociocultural contexts in which the language learners participate, such as schooling where teachers emphasize the importance of study, significance of English learning, examinations for future success, expectations from parents, institutions as well as the whole society. In this way, these embedded expectations inherited from the external social world tend to become internalized within these language learners' self-concepts and become a part of self that they ideally would like to be, particularly when they are engaged in the experience of intensive learning, pursuing higher exams marks and meeting the teachers' and parents' expectations. These external expectations clearly coincide with the learners' own expectations, in other words, the learners themselves also want to be good students who would be the honour of their teachers, schools, and their whole families.

At the same time, as they progress through their education and personal experiences, young people start to develop more internally-relevant references of self, such as being a leader, being a critically-thinking person, or using English as a main language for communication in the future. These desired self-images dynamically interact with other facets of the language learners' selves and contextual factors in guiding their L2 learning, WTC and communicative behaviours in particular situations. What this study chapter has shown in particular is that these more internally-relevant desired selves were more effective in developing language learners' WTC of the kind which allowed them to 'speak as themselves'. In other words, the WTC fed by internally-relevant images of selves appeared to be of a very different quality from WTC informed largely through the sociocultural heritage: it led to communicative practices in which L2 became an 'owned' language for meaningful personal

expression, even though the inherited ideal self still worked powerfully in motivating and orientating the language learners' investment in communication. These diverse on-going L2 communication experiences in turn re-constructed the learners' self-concepts and contributed to the next stage of their learning and communication in L2. In short, understanding the L2 WTC phenomenon though this integration of language learners, their past, present and future self-concepts and multi-layered contexts shed new light on L2 WTC and its different layers and qualities.

8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

L2 WTC of Chinese EFL learners has become a growing interest among ELT practitioners in China in their efforts to educate more competent English users and thus meet the increasing demands for individual as well as national development. In the previous chapters, this thesis reported a qualitative multiple case study of EFL students' L2 WTC with regards to their actual communication actions in a specific higher education institution in China. Findings revealed a complex but rather picturesque landscape of the research participants' L2 WTC. They showed that L2 WTC is certainly complex and dynamic, as previous research has confirmed, but also unravelled a more complicated picture demonstrating an often ambiguous nature of L2 WTC relative to contexts of communication action and pointed to a significant role of the participants' personally embraced while at the same time socially-constructed self-concepts, both current and future. The data generated in this study also foregrounded the participants' 'ownership' of the language in L2 communication in which complex dynamic interactions between persons, contexts and L2 WTC across temporal and spatial scales come into play. In this concluding chapter, I will summarise some of these key findings from the study in the light of the implications they have for L2 educational research and practice.

8.1 Key insights into WTC in action

8.1.1 Complexity and dynamics of L2 WTC

The current study presented a rich picture of Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC phenomena, one important aspect concerning the complexity and dynamics of L2 communicative actions. Findings displayed considerable interconnectedness, interactions, and change across different dimensions of an L2 communication action, including the *individual*

(L2 motivation, perceived communicative competence, emotions), the *situational* (communication topic, interlocutor, types of communication activities, communication atmosphere) and the *sociocultural* (high societal value of exams, other-directed orientation, meeting expectations of being 'a good student' embedded in the Chinese cultures, social and cultural values and norms). Not all of these showed to be prominent equally and at all times, but rather the different dimensions appeared to work dynamically and cooperatively in complex ways in shaping language learners' WTC in specific L2 communication actions. In this sense, the findings from the present study have corroborated the need to approach L2 WTC from a complexity perspective, as has been advocated in past research (Kang, 2005; Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015; Peng, 2014; Peng and Woodrow, 2010).

By a more in-depth immersion in the L2 WTC phenomenon, this study has also captured more fine-grained insights into the nature of this complexity. More specifically, it has been shown that whether or not the research participants' displayed L2 WTC depended not only on the interactions among the individual, situational and sociocultural dimensions, but also on different timescales. For instance, the participants' interpretations of their life histories shaped their perceptions of what to treat as a potential L2 communication opportunity in the present and therefore directed their communicative efforts towards that situation or away from it. Similarly, whether or not one's perceived communicative competence functions as a crucial factor in guiding one's anxiety and L2 WTC in actual communication is closely related to that person's past life experience and how they have come to interpret the significance of specific past events. Another example of a temporal effect concerns the role of positive attitudes of speakers towards each other. This study has shown that social relationships between speakers cultivated over longer-term shape the communication atmosphere and thus the interlocutors' WTC differently than is the case

among interlocutors whose relationships, though positive they may be, have been established over a shorter-term. And finally, language learners' sense of self, particularly what has in this thesis been termed an 'inherited ideal self', is actively shaped throughout the participants' life histories. Thus, concerns such as significant others' expectations, high value placed on exams, or a desire to be a good student, which were all shown to feed into Chinese students' self-concept at different points in their life histories, similarly exert different influence on the construction of their L2 WTC in any one communicative event. Taken together, then, the current research has expanded our understanding of the complexity and dynamics of L2 WTC across temporal and spatial scales.

8.1.2 Self as a core guide in L2 WTC development

Another significant finding refers to language learner's self which, as the extensive evidence presented in this study has shown, worked powerfully in guiding the students' WTC in L2 communications. Findings have shown that, similarly to conclusions presented in Section 8.1.1, the research participants held different self-concepts and identities depending on their own previous personal experience. Different self-concepts such as 'leader', 'hero', 'a lazy one' or 'a critically-minded person', directed language learners' L2 WTC in a variety of ways. Generally, positive and optimistic self-images were more likely to evoke one's L2 WTC, while a pessimistic and frustrated self was unlikely to generate a person's enthusiasm to engage in L2 communication. Once again, however, these self-concepts were far from static. Instead, they dynamically interacted with the relevant facets of the here-and-now communicative situation, such as the interlocutor, communication climate, communication topics, social comparison, and many more. In other words, not only do the learners' self-

concepts shape their L2 WTC, they also gain meaning from and are significantly shaped by the learners' actual and ongoing communication experience.

This study has also identified a concept of 'inherited ideal self' as a dominant future self-guide for the Chinese EFL students in this research project affecting their WTC. This self-guide, while closely associated with external references, such as parental and teacher's expectations and societal values, norms and ideologies, was, however, deeply internalised within one's possible future self and worked prominently in provoking language learners' L2 speaking in communication activities. However, further scrutiny of the empirical data suggested an intriguing finding: these 'inherited ideal selves', while effective in orienting learners' communicative efforts, may not necessarily facilitate their 'genuine' WTC and thus reflect their 'ownership' of the target language. This study has problematized this finding by suggesting tentatively the possibility of a *real versus fake L2 WTC*. While admitting that such a terminology may mislead, especially since this research by no means intends to suggest that L2 WTC inspired by 'inherited ideal selves' is somehow unreal, the actual quality of WTC is something that is worth pondering in future research. This study, for instance, has generated substantial empirical evidence that while students' concerns about the teacher's or peers' evaluations (i.e. 'inherited ideal selves') certainly lead to communication, they do not seem to allow the students to 'speak as themselves' and thus engage in more personally meaningful communication (Ushioda, 2011). Given these results, then, it may make sense in future research to distinguish among different qualities of WTC and acknowledge that what has typically been treated in past research as evidence of WTC may have to be further unpacked in relation to the quality and meaningfulness of the actual communication it leads to.

The crucial role of self in mediating one's L2 WTC and participation were also reflected in a way of individuals' meaning-making not only in relation to themselves but also

to the communicative situations as well as the surrounding world in a broader sense. This corresponds with findings in research at the interface of language learning and teaching (Kubanyiova, 2015), which have shown the critical role of teachers' future self guides in their sense making in action and which, in turn, has significant consequences for language learning opportunities for the students. In this study, the evidence has pointed to the prominent role of learners' meaning making in shaping their WTC, central to which were their future self guides. This means that all the concepts identified in this study as relevant to WTC (e.g. L2 motivation, perceived communicative opportunities, perceived communicative competence, emotions, social comparison, communication atmosphere, struggles, frustrations, negotiations, investment, speaking as themselves) were highly dependent on individual research participants' meaning making which was guided by the images of future selves that these participants internalised throughout their life histories situated in their specific social worlds. Thus, this study has reaffirmed the role of numerous psychological, situational and sociocultural factors in shaping individuals' WTC. At the same time, it has brought critical insights into how these various factors may interact and what, if anything, connects them. The current findings put individuals' emerging and socially constructed as well as constrained sense of self at the centre of their meaning making, which, in turn, shapes their WTC and the quality of their engagement in L2 communicative action.

8.1.3 Contexts give rise to the meaning of L2 WTC

Studying Chinese EFL learners' L2 WTC in here-and-now actions allows holistic and in-depth exploration and understanding of WTC phenomena, because the communication actions provide the context for meaning-making. Therefore, in reporting the findings in this thesis, detailed description about communication contexts and excerpts from those contexts

were important for understanding the intricate dynamics of a person's WTC. Because the particular time and space are unique for the emergence of WTC, the phenomenon cannot be interpreted beyond that original context. This means that, as has been alluded to in the previous section, individuals' meaning making can only be appreciated, if not fully understood, in reference to those unique contexts. All the important 'components' of WTC already identified in past research as well as in this study, only come into prominence and acquire meaning in the actual context of the communicative activity, which is embedded in a whole web of micro- and macro-contexts, subsuming the psychological, situational, societal and normative dimensions. Understanding why people act in certain ways involves researchers' efforts to understand the contexts of those acts. In other words, our efforts to describe and explain the phenomenon of WTC must include our commitment to describe and explain the contexts in which it emerges for it is the unique contexts through which the unique meanings of WTC arise. Treating context as one of many, however important, variables, may not do justice to the intricate and contextually-embedded complexity of the phenomenon that we endeavour to understand and thus may not give us insights into possible pedagogical interventions for enabling students to navigate the L2 communication landscape and engage with it meaningfully.

8.1.4 Conceptualising L2 WTC as a process of 'becoming' rather than a state of being

Complexity theory has offered a useful and meaningful lens to view and study university EFL learners' L2 WTC in China. Applying it as a guiding metaphor allowed this study to place the person in real L2 communication actions and thus enable an in-depth examination of dynamic interactions in relation to L2 WTC. These dynamic interactions are

evidence of developmental trajectories in shaping a person's L2 WTC. On the basis of the findings generated in this study, it can be argued that the conceptualisation of the construct of L2 WTC should be expanded if not entirely revised to refer to WTC as a *process of becoming ready* rather than simply *a state of being ready*, currently used in WTC literature. As this study has shown, this process of 'becoming' clearly involves, among many others, language learners' struggles, negotiations, transformations and re-constructions. In other words, L2 WTC, as portrayed through the findings of this study, is about a process; a process of self-investment, a process of reducing discrepancies and moving forward to become a better and truly desired self, a process of coming to own the target language. In short, L2 WTC is a process of becoming ready to engage in meaningful communication with the other. The opportunities are not always, if ever, 'given' (as the traditional definition assumes) but have to be worked on and such a process, as has been shown extensively throughout the discussion of findings, while clearly depending on individuals' meaning making, is far from an individual endeavour. To claim complexity theory as a guiding framework means to acknowledge this process of becoming in how we conceptualise WTC and, consequently, how we go about researching it.

8.2 Implications for pedagogy

The key insights emerged from the current research implicated a number of issues for EFL pedagogy with an aim to nurturing language learners' L2 WTC and improve their communicative competence in L2. Above all, it is important for ELT practitioners to understand the nature of their students' L2 WTC with a consideration of both dynamic and ambiguous features, and being tolerant and considerate about that students may experience difficulties, struggles, negotiations during the process of L2 communication. In addition, they

should also realize the discrepancy between what they observed the communicative behaviours at face level and learners' interpretations in regard to their communication experience and different qualities of L2 WTC that they underwent, and cannot make simple judgement and evaluation according to the apparent behaviours, but try to make sense of their WTC from their students' perspective. Moreover, the numerous influential elements and their dynamic interactions emerged from the study suggested that teachers should pay attention to influential factors not only that promote WTC but also that inhibit, as well as a provision facilitating factors instead of focusing on one. Furthermore, the significance of one's self-concepts in guiding a person's L2 WTC hinted that teachers should help their students to construct positive, realistic self-concepts that they genuine want to be, probably through a variety forms of interactions such as journals, conversations, role plays in teaching, certain topics about self or future plan for communication together with teachers' feedbacks to students. Besides, viewing L2 WTC as a process of 'becoming' also implicates that EFL practitioners should be confident in believing that their students' L2 WTC is not a static and a perfect state, however, it is an adaptable and developing process which is sensitive to their engagement and intervention from different aspects, such as linguistic, emotional, pedagogical; levels, such as individual, situational, and sociocultural, and any point on the timeline.

Finally, the study may also offer implications for current reform of EFL education in China. Concerning the policy of abolishing English from the college entrance examination in China, although lots of people and students support this, the identification of inherited ideal self from my study indicates that the high value on examination has already been internalized within Chinese students' self-concept, and powerfully encourages their English learning in some ways. For example, research participants highlighted the significance of examination for

their personal development, indicated the tremendous effort they invested in English learning in prepare for college entrance examination, however, tended to become indifferent on English learning after completing the exam. Therefore, it may suggest that rather than abolish the English exam from the college entrance examination, it would be more meaningful to reform the current assessment system by changing to more authentic utilisation and communication focused form instead of standardized written test.

8.3 Limitations and directions for future research

The focus of the current study was on L2 communication actions in language classroom in a specific Chinese university, which on one hand offered a rich contextualised description and explanation for Chinese university EFL learners' L2 WTC phenomena, however, on the other hand, it suggests an involvement of different EFL instruction and learning contexts in future research, such as L2 classes from different universities. Additionally, the involvement of participants' communication actions outside the classroom contexts, even though was relatively limited and not the focus in the current study, however, provided valuable insights in understanding the language learner's L2 WTC, particularly its dynamic interplays with self-concepts and cultures. Therefore, it would be meaningful to pay attention to language learners' L2 WTC experiences in broader sociocultural contexts in future studies. Moreover, the study highlighted the significant role of teachers in learners' L2 learning and the construction of self-concepts, thus, it is worthwhile for researchers to take a step further and systematically investigate the teachers' interventions, views and interpretations in the unfolding of language teaching and learning inside as well as outside L2 classrooms. Furthermore, although the study indicated how individuals perceived their communication competence played a dominant role in L2 communication and WTC, the data

also shown that limitation of one's objective L2 proficiency is an issue in resulting in difficulties and struggles and inhibiting L2 WTC, therefore, future research will shed more light on L2 WTC and educational implications if the effect of WTC on the development of learners' language proficiency can be investigated. Besides, the current study provided significant evidence of dynamic changes of WTC over time and cross situations, which implicates that future research can explore further the developmental trajectories of L2 WTC on a longitudinal time frame. Finally, complexity theory provides a very useful and valuable perspective in researching and understanding L2 WTC, and the complexity theory inspired research approach and methods were capable in capturing situatedness and complexity of L2 conversations, communicative behaviours and learner's own interpretations in regard to L2 WTC in real communication actions to achieve a rich and in-depth understanding of L2 WTC phenomena.

This thesis has also pointed to methodological directions for the study of WTC and language learning phenomena more broadly. Informed by complexity theory, the methodology I adopted in the current study embraced more ethnographic orientations compared with the mainstream complexity theory-informed research in SLA, e.g. idiodynamic methodology (MacIntyre and Legatto, 2010). The multiple case study which was central to this thesis allowed me to focus on individual persons involved in specific communication practices in their culturally bound social worlds. This 'person-in-context' methodological approach has enabled a study of WTC which allows complexity-informed interpretation: it captures the texture, fluctuation and complexity of language learner's WTC as it plays out in the actual participation in communication acts while being firmly embedded in interactions with the broader social, cultural, and political context. This study, with its methodological and epistemological orientations, fills a significant gap in existing L2 WTC

research but also points to productive directions for complexity-informed research in the broader domain of SLA.

List of References

Ackerman, P. L., Chamorro-Premuzic, T. & Furnham, A. (2011) Trait complexes and academic achievement: Old and new ways of examining personality in educational contexts. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 81, 27-40.

Adams, R. J. & Boules, M. A. (2015) An interactionist approach to learner-learner interaction in second and foreign language classrooms. In N. Markee (ed.). *The Handbook of Classroom Discourse and Interaction* (pp.198-212). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Adamson S, & Holloway M. (2012) Negotiating sensitivities and grappling with intangibles: Experiences from a study of spirituality and funerals. *Qualitative Research*, 12 (6), 735–752.

Aida, Y. (1994) Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's Construct of Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Students of Japanese. *The Modern Language Journal,* 78 (2), 155-168.

Alishah, A. R. (2014) Is willingness-to-speak more of a context-sensitive nature or personality? *ELT Research Journal,* 3 (4), 169-180.

Atkinson, D. (2011) *Alternative approaches to second language acquisition*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Atkinson, D. (2014). Language learning in mind body world: A sociocognitive approach to second language acquisition. *Language Teaching*, 47, 467–483.

Amuzie, G.L. & Winke, P. (2009) Changes in language learning beliefs as a result of a study abroad. *System* 37 (3), 366-79.

Andersen, J. F. (1979) Teacher immediacy as a predictor of teaching effectiveness. In D. Nimmo (ed.), *Communication Yearbook* 3 (pp. 543-559). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Atkinson, D. (2002) Toward a sociocognitive approach to second language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal,* 86, 525-545.

Bachman, L. F. (1990) *Fundamental considerations in language testing.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bai, L. & Hudson, P. (2011) Understanding Chinese TEFL academic's capacity for research. *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 35 (3), 391-407.

Baker, W. (2011) Intercultural awareness: modelling an understanding of cultures in intercultural communication through English as a lingua franca. *Language and Intercultural Communication,* 11 (3), 197–214.

Baker, S. & MacIntyre, P. D. (2000) The role of gender and immersion in communication and second language orientations. *Language Learning* 50, 311-41.

Biggs, J. B. (1996) Western misperceptions of the Confucian-heritage learning culture. In D. A. Watkins and J. B. Biggs (eds.) *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences* (pp. 45-67). Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Bloor, M. (2001) Techniques of validation in qualitative research: A critical commentary. In R. M. Emerson (ed.), *Contemporary field research: Perspectives and formulations,* 2nd Ed. (pp, 383-395). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press Inc.

Blumer, H. (1986). *Symbolic interactionism.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Boekaerts, M. (2001) Context sensitivity: Activated motivational beliefs, current concerns and emotional arousal. In S. Volet and S. Järvelä (eds.) *Motivation in Learning Contexts: Theoretical Advances and Methodological Implications* (pp. 17-31). Bingley: Emerald Group.

Brewer, J. & Hunter, A. (1989) *Multimethod research: a synthesis of styles*, Newbury Park: Sage. Sage Library of Social Research Series, 17.

Brick, J. (2004) *China: A handbook in intercultural communication*. (2nd edition). Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.

Bronken B. A, Kirkevold M., Martinsen R, & Kvigne K. (2012) The aphasic storyteller: Coconstructing stories to promote psychosocial well-being after stroke. *Qualitative Health Research*, 22 (10), 1303–1316.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1993) The ecology of cognitive development: Research models and fugitive findings. In R. H. Wozniak and K. W. Fischer (eds.) *Development in Context: Acting and Thinking in Specific Environments* (pp. 3-44). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bulter, Y. G. (2011) The implementation of communicative and task-based language teaching in the Asia-Pacific region. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, 36-57.

Burgoon, J. K., (1976) The unwillingness to communicate scale: development and validation. *Communication Monographys* 43, 60-69.

Burnaby, B. & Sun, Y.-L. (1989) Chinese teachers' views of Western language teaching: Context informs paradigm. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23, 219-238.

Byrne, D. (2002) *Interpreting quantitative data*. London: Sage.

Cameron, D. (2013) Willingness to communicate in English as a second language as a stable trait or context influenced variable: Case studies to Iranian migrants to New Zealand. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 36 (2), 177-196.

Cameron, D. (2015) Embracing connectedness and change A complex dynamic systems

perspective for applied linguistic research. *AILA Review* 28, 28–48.

Canale, M. (1983) From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. C. Richards and R. W. Schmidt (eds.), *Language and communication* (pp, 2-27). Harlwo, England: Longman.

Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.

Cao, Y. (2006) Temporal fluctuation in situational willingness to communicate in a second language classroom. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 12 (2), 1-16.

Cao, Y. (2009) An ecological view of situational willingness to communicate in a second language classroom. In H. Chen and K. Cruickshank (eds.) *Making a Difference: Challenges for Applied Linguistics* (pp. 199-218). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholar Press.

Cao, Y. (2011) Investigating situational willingness to communicate within second language classrooms from an ecological perspective. *System*, 39, 468-479.

Cao, Y. & Philp, J. (2006) International context and willingness to communicate: a comparison of behavior in whole class, group and dyadic interaction. *System*, 34 (4), 480-493.

Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z. & Thurrell, S. (1995) A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6, 5-35.

CET Committee (2006) *CET 4 syllabus*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press [in Chinese].

Cetinkaya, Y. B. (2005) *Turkish college students' willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University.

CMoE document (2007) *College English curriculum requirement*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press [In Chinese].

Chalfen, R. (1998) Interpreting family photograph as pictorial communication. In J. Prosser (ed.) *Image-based research*, 3rd Ed. (pp747-762). London: Falmer.

Chan, B. M. & McCroskey, J. C. (1987) The WTC scale as a predictor of classroom participation. *Communication Research Reports*, 4, 47-50.

Chang, J. (2006) Globalization and English in Chinese higher education. *World English*, 25 (3/4), 513-525.

Charmaz, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis (Introducing Qualitative Methods series)*. London: Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2011) Grounded theory methods in social justice research. In N.K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th Ed. Thousand Oaks:

Sage Publications.

Cheng, K. (1994) Issues in decentralization: What the reform in China tells. *Educational Research*, 21(8), 794-828.

Cheng, L. (2008) The key to success: English language testing in China. *Language* Testing, 25 (1), 15-37.

Cheng, Y.-S. (2002) Factor associated with foreign language writing anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals,* 35 (5), 647-656.

Cheng, X. (2000) Asian students' reticence revisited. *System* 28, 435-446.

Chio, V. C. M. & Fandt, P. M. (2007) Photovoice in the Diversity Classroom: Engagement, Voice, and the "Eye/I" of the Camera, *Journal of Management Education,* 31 (4), 484-504.

Cho, Y.-G. (2012) The relationship between L2 learning motivation and context among Korean EFL students. *English Teaching*, 67 (1), 79.

Chu, G. C. (1985) The changing concept of self in contemporary China. In A. J. Marsella, G. DeVos and F. L. K. Hsu (eds.) *Culture and self: Asian and Western perspectives* (pp. 252-277). New York: Tavistock Publications.

Chu, H-N. R. (2008) *Shyness and EFL learning in Taiwan: A study of shy and non-shy college students' use of strategies, foreign language anxiety, motivation, and willingness to communicate.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas as Austin.

Clément, R. (1980) Ethnicity, contact and communicative competence in a second language. In H. Giles, W. P. Robinson, and P. M. Smith (eds.) *Language: Social psychological perspectives* (pp. 147-154). Oxford, England: Pergamon.

Clément, R. (1984) Aspects socio-psychologiques de la communication interethnique et de l'identitie sociale [Social psychological aspects of interethnic communication and social identity]. *Recherches Sociologiques*, 15, 293-312.

Clément, R. (1986) Second language proficiency and acculturation: An investigation of the effects of language status and individual characteristics. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 5, 271-290.

Clément, R. Baker, S. C. & MacIntyre, P. D. (2003) Willingness to communicate in a second language: the effects of context, norms, and vitality. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology,* 22 (2), 190-209.

Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z. & Noels, K. (1994) Motivation, self-confidence, and group cohesion in the foreign language classroom. *Language Learning,* 44, 417-448.

Clément, R. & Kruidenier, B. G. (1985) Aptitude, attitude and motivation acquisition in second language proficiency: A test of Clément's model. *Journal of Language and Social*

Psychology, 4, 21-37.

Coetzee-Van Rooy, S. (2006) Integrativeness: Untenable for World Englishes learners? World Englishes, 25 (3/4), 437-450.

Colón-Emeric C. S, Plowman D, Bailey D, Corazzini K, Utley-Smith Q, Ammarell N, et al. (2010) Regulation and mindful resident care in nursing homes. *Qualitative Health Research*, 20 (9), 1283–1294.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008) *Basics of qualitative research*, 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Corder, S. P. (1981) *Error Analysis and Interlanguage.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cortazzi, M. & Jin, L. (1996a) Cultures of learning: Language classrooms in China. In H. Coleman (ed.) *Society and the Language Classroom* (pp. 169-206). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cortazzi, M. & Jin, L. (1996b) English teaching and learning in China. *Language Teaching* 29, 61-80.

Costa, P. T. Jr. & McCrae, R. R. (1985) *The NEO Personality Inventory manual.* Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Costa, P. T. Jr. & McCrae, R. R. (1989) *The NEO-PI/NEO-FFL manual supplement.* Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Coulombe, D. (1996) *Anxiety and beliefs of French-as-a-second-language learners at the university level.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Laval.

Creswell, J. W. (2005) *Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Upper Saddle River, N. J.: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Creswell, J. W. (2009) *Designing a qualitative study: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*, 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2009) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd Ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2013b). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*, 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. & Millers, D. L. (2000) Defining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 39 (3), 124-130.

Csizér, K. & Kormos, J. (2014). The ideal L2 self, self-regulatory strategies and autonomous learning: A comparison of different groups of English language learners. In K. Csizér & M. Magid (Eds.), *The Impact of Self-Concept on Language Learning* (pp. 73–86). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (2000). Methodological issues in grounded theory. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 31, 1476-1484.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (2003). Reconsidering reflexivity: Introducing the case for intellectual entrepreneurship. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13, 136-148.

D'Amico, M. L. (2012) L2 fluency and willingness to communicate: the impact of short-term study abroad versus at-home study. *US-China Foreign Language*. 10 (10), 1608-1625.

de Bot, K., Lowie, W. & Verspoor, M. (2005) *Second Language Acquisition: An Advanced Resource Book*. London: Routlege.

de. Bot, K. Lowie, W. & Verspoor, M. (2007) A dynamic systems theory approach to second language acquisition. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition,* 10 (1), 7-21.

de Courcy, M. (2002) *Learners' experience of immersion education.* North York, ON, Canada: Multilingual Matters.

de Saint Leger, D. & Storch, N. (2009) Learners' perceptions and attitudes: Implications for willingness to communicate in an L2 classroom. *System*, 37, 269-285.

Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (1985) *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.

Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (2000) The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychology of Inquiry*, 11 (4), 227-268.

Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (2009) Self-determination theory: A consideration of human motivational universals. In P. J. Corr. and G. Matthews (eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personality psychology* (pp. 441-456). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*, 4th Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewaele, J.-M. (2002) Psychological and sociodemographic correlates of communicative anxiety in L2 and L3 production. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 6, 23-39.

Dewaele, J.-M. (2012a) Learner internal psychological factors. In J. Herschensohn, and M. Young-Scholten (eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 159-179). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dewaele, J.-M. (2013) The link between foreign language classroom anxiety and psychoticism, extraversion, and neuroticism among adult bi-and multilinguals. *The Modern Language Journals*, 97 (3), 670-684.

Dewaele, J.-M. & Furnham, A. (1999) Extraversion: The unloved variable in applied linguistic research. *Language Learning,* 43 (3), 509-544.

Dewaele, J.-M. & Furnham, A. (2000) Personality and speech production: A pilot study of second language learners. *Personality and Individual Differences,* 28, 355-365.

Dewaele, J.-M. & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014) The two faces of Janus? Anxiety and enjoyment in the foreign language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 4 (2), 237-274.

Dewaele, J.-M. & Thirtle, H. (2009) Why do some young learners drop foreign languages? A focus on learner-internal variables. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 12 (6), 635-649.

Dey, I. (1999) *Grounding grounded theory: Guidelines for qualitative inquiry*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Dorman, J. P. (2003) Cross-national validation of the What is Happening in this Class? (WIHIC) questionnaire using confirmatory factor analysis. *Learning Environments Research*, 6 (3), 231-245.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994) Motivation and motivation in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78 (3), 273-284.

Dörnyei, Z. (2002) The motivational basis of language learning tasks. In P. Robinson (ed.) *Individual Differences and Instructed Language Learning* (pp. 137-158). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005) *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition.* Yahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007a) *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007b) Creating a motivating classroom environment. In J. Cummins and C. Davison (eds.), *The handbook of English language teaching* (pp.719-731). Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009) The L2 Motivational Self System. In Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds.) *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009a) Individual differences: Interplay of learner characteristics and learning environment. In N. C. Ellis and D. Larsen-Freeman (eds.), *Language as a complex adaptive system* (pp. 230-248). Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Dörnyei, Z. & Chan, L. (2013) Motivation and vision: An analysis of future L2 self images, sensory styles, and imagery capacity across two target languages. *Language Learning*, 63,

437–462.

Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K. & Németh, N. (2006) *Motivation, language attitudes, and globalization: A Hungarian perspective.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei. Z., MacIntyre, P., & Henry, A. (eds.) (2015) *Motivational dynamics in language learning.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z. & Murphey, T. (1999) Group dynamics in foreign language learning and teaching. In J. Arnold (ed.) *Affective Language Learning* (pp. 155-169). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. & Murphey, T. (2003) *Group dynamics in the language classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. & Ryan, S. (2015) *The Psychology of the Language Learner Revisited.* New York, N.Y.: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z. & Skehan, P. (2003) Individual differences in second language learning. In C. Doughty and M. Long (eds.). *The handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 589-630). Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

Dörnyei, Z. & Ushioda, E. (eds.) (2009) *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Doughty, C. & Williams, J. (eds.) (1998) *Focus of Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Duff, P. (2001) Language, literacy, content, and (pop) culture: Challenges for ESL students in mainstream courses. *The Canadian Modern Language Review* 58, 103-132.

Duff, P. (2002) Research approaches in applied linguistics. In R. B. Kaplan (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Duff, P. (2006) Beyond generalizability: contextualization, complexity, and credibility in applied linguistics research. In M. Chalhoub-Deville, C. A. Chapelle, and P. Duff (eds.) *Inference and Generalizability in Applied Linguistics: Multiple Perspectives.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Duff, P. (2008). *Case Study Research in Applied Linguistics.* Mahwah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dweck, C.S. (2006) *Mindset: the New Psychology of Success.* Random House, New York.

Eddy-U, M. (2015) Motivation for participation or non-participation in group tasks: A dynamic systems model of task-situated willingness to communicate. *System* 50, 43-55.

Edwards, E. & Roger, P. S. (2015) Seeking out challenges to develop L2 self-confidence: A

language learner's journey of proficiency. *TESL-EJ,* 18 (4), 1-24.

Egbert, J. (2003) A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, 87 (4), 499-518.

Ehatib, M. & Nourzadeh, S. (2014) Development and validation of an instructional willingness to communicate questionnaire. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 36 (3), 266-283.

Ehrman, M. E. (2008) Personality and good language learners. In C. Griffiths (ed.). *Lessons from good language learners* (pp. 61-72). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005) Listening comprehension and anxiety in the Arabic language classroom. The *Modern Language Journal*, 89, 206-220.

Ellis, R. (2002) Does form-focused instruction affect the acquisition of implicit knowledge? A review of the research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 24, 223-236.

Ellis, R. (2008) Learner beliefs and language learning. *Asian EFL Journal* 10 (4), 7-25.

Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L. & Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: a guide to methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Fairbank, J. K. (1991) The old order. In R. F. Dernberger, K. J. DeWoskin, J. M. Goldstein, R. Murphey, and M. K. Whyte (eds.) *The Chinese* (pp. 31–37). University of Michigan: Center for Chinese Studies.

Falout, J., Elwood, J. & Hood, M. (2009) Demotivation: affective states and learning outcomes. *System*, 27 (3), 403-417.

Fang, J. (2001) Wai yu zhuan ye zai zishi ji mian lin de wei ji yu dui ce [Crises and strategies of foreign language majors in the 21st century]. *Higher Education Exploration,* 1, 76-79.

Farsides, T. & Woodfield, R. (2003) Individual differences and undergraduate academic success: The roles of personality, intelligence, and application. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 34, 1125-1243.

Fassinger, R. E. (2005) Paradigms, praxis, problems, and promise: grounded theory in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52 (2), 156-166.

Feng, A. W. (2009) English in China: Convergence and divergence in policy and practice. *AILA Review*, 22 (1), 85-102.

Feriermuth, M. & Jarrel, D. (2006) Willingness to communicate: can online chat help? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 16 (2), 189-212.

Finlay, L. (2002) "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12, 531-545.

Fielding N. & Fielding J. (1986) *Linking data*. London, England: SAGE.

Flick, U. (1998) *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Frawley, W. (1997) *Vygotsky and cognitive science: Language and the unification of the social and computational mind.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Freiermuth, M. R. & Huang, H. C. (2012) Bringing Japan and Taiwan closer electronically: A look at an intercultural online synchronic chat task and its effect on motivation. *Language Teaching Research*, 16 (1), 61–88.

Fu, L., Wang, X. & Wang, Y. (2012) The Research on willingness to communicate in Chinese students' EFL study. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research,* 3 (1), 112-117.

Fushino, K. (2008) *Measuring Japanese university students' readiness for second language group work and its relation to willingness to communicate.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Temple University.

Glaser, B. (1992) *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emergence Versus Forcing*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Gao, G. (1996) Self and other: A Chinese perspective on interpersonal relationships. In W. B. Gudykunst, S. Ting-Toomey and T. Nishida (eds.) *Communication in Personal Relationships across Cultures* (pp. 81-101). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gao, G. (1998) "Don't take my word for it." -Understanding Chinese speaking practices. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22 (2), 163-186.

Gao, G. (1998) An initial analysis of the effects of face and concern for OTHER in Chinese interpersonal communication. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22 (4), 467-482.

Gao, G. & Ting-Toomey, S. (1998) *Communicating effectively with the Chinese*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Gao, Y. L. (2010) *A table of two teachers: Chinese immigrant teachers' professional identity in US foreign language classrooms*. Doctoral dissertation. Retrieved from http://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/93898/1/Gao_umn_0130E_11192.pdf.

Gardner, R. C. (1985) *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation.* London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R. C. & Lambert, W. E. (1972) *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Newbury House: Rowley, MA

Gass, S. M. & Mackey, A. (2000) *Stimulated Recall Methodology in Second Language Research.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ.

Gearing, R. E. (2004). Bracketing in research: A typology. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14, 1429-1452.

Gebhard, M. (2002) Fast capitalism, school reform and second language literacy practices. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 59 (1), 15–52.

Gee, J.P. (2000) Identity as an analytic lens for research in education. *Review of Research in Education*, 25, 99-125.

Ghanizadeh, A., Eishabadi, N. & Rostami, S. (2015) Motivational dimension of WTC in L2: The impacts of ideal L2 self, family influence, and attitudes to L2 culture. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 5 (1), 13-24.

Ghonsooly, B., Khajavy, G. H. & Asadpour, S. F. (2012) Willingness to communicate in English among Iranian non-English major university students. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 31 (2), 197–1972.

Gibson, J. J. (1979) *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Glaser, B. G. (1992) *Emergence vs. forcing: Basics of grounded theory analysis.* Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory; Strategies for qualitative research.* Chicago: Aldine.

Gleik, J. (1987) *Chaos: Making a New Science*. New York: Penguin Books.

Goetz, T., Pekrun, R., Hall, N. & Haag, L. (2006) Academic emotions from a socio-cognitive perspective: antecedents and domain specificity of student affect in the context of Latin instruction. *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 76, 289-308.

Goldberg, L. R. (1992) The development of markers for the Big-Five factor structure. *Psychological Assessment*, 4 (1), 26-42.

Goldberg, L. R. (1993) The structure of phenotypic personality traits. *American Psychologist*, 48, 26-34.

Gorham, J. & Millette, D. M. (1997) A comparative analysis of teacher and student perceptions of sources of motivation and demotivation in college classes. *Communication Education*, 46 (4), 245-261.

Gearing, R. E. (2004) Bracketing in Research: A Typology. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14 (10), 1429-1452.

Greer, D. L. (2000) 'The eyes of *hito*': A Japanese cultural monitor of behavior in the communicative language classroom. *JALT Journal*, 22 (1), 183-95.

Greertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books

Gregersen, T. (2003) To err is human: A reminder to teachers of language anxious students. *Foreign Language Annuals*, 36, 25-32.

Gregersen, T. S. & MacIntyre, P. D. (2013) *Capitalizing on language learners' individuality*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Gregersen, T. S., MacIntyre, P. D. & Meza, M. (2014) The motion of emotion. *The Modern Language Journal*, 98, 574-588.

Gu, W. & Liu, J. (2005) Test analysis of college students' communicative competence in English. *Asian EFL Journal* 7, 118-33.

Gu, Q. & Schweisfurth, M. (2006) Who adapts? Beyond cultural models of 'the' Chinese learner. *Language Cultural and Curriculum* 19 (1), 74-89.

Guo, J. (2001) Zhong guo ying yu jiao yu jian lun [A brief study of the English education in China]. *Journal of Foshan University (Social Science)*, 9 (2), 50–56.

Hanauer, D. I. (2012) Meaningful literacy: Writing poetry in the language classroom. *Language Teaching,* 45, 105-115.

Hao, X. (2003) Educational Conflicts between the Chinese Immigrants and ESL teachers in Western Countries. *Journal of Kuming University of Science and Technology,* 3 (1), 96-99.

Harklau, L. (2000) From the "good kids" to the "worst": Representations of English language learners across educational settings. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34 (1), 35–67.

Harklau, L. (2005) Ethnography and ethnographic research on second language teaching and learning, In E. Hinkel (ed.) *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning.* Mahwah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Harter, S. (1996a) *The construction of the self: A development perspective*. New York, NY: Guildford Press.

Harter, S. (2006) The self. In W. Damon and R.M. Lerner (eds.) *Handbook of child psychology: Social, emotional, and personality development,* vol. 3, (pp. 505-570). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Hashimoto (2002) Motivation and willingness to communicate as predictors of reported l2 use: the Japanese ESL context. *Second Language Studies*, 20 (2), 29-70.

Heaven, P. C. L. & Ciarrochi, J. (2012) When IQ is not everything: Intelligence, personality, and academic performance at school. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 54, 518-522.

Herdina, P. & Jessner, U. (2002) *A Dynamic Model of Multilingualism.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Higgins, E. T. (1987) Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review*: 94, 319-340.

Higgins, E. T. (1996) The 'self-digest': Self-knowledge serving self-regulatory functions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71 (6), 1062-1083.

Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education (2007) *College English Curriculum Requirements.* Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Hofstede, G. (1986) Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 10, 301-320.

Horwitz, E. K. (2000) It ain't over till it's over: On foreign language anxiety, first language deficits, and the confounding of variables. *The Modern Language Journal*, 84 (2), 256-259.

Horwitz, E. K. (2001) Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics,* 21, 112-126.

Horwitz, E. K. (2010) Foreign and second language anxiety. *Language Teaching,* 43, 154-167.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B. & Cope, J. (1986) Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal* 70 (2), 125-132.

Hsu, W.-H. (2015) Transitioning to a communication-oriented pedagogy: Taiwanese university freshmen's views on class participation. *System* 49, 61-72.

Hu, B. (2010) The challenges of Chinese: a preliminary study of UK learners' perceptions of difficulty. *Language Learning Journal*, 38 (1), 99-118.

Hu, S. C. (1944) The Chinese Concepts of "Face". *American Anthropologist*, 46 (1), 45-64.

Hu, G. (2002) Potential cultural resistance to pedagogical imports: The case of communicative language teaching in China. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 15 (2), 93-105.

Huanga, H.-T., Hsua, C.-C. & Chenb, S.-W. (2015) Identification with social role obligations, possible selves, and L2 motivation in foreign language learning. *System*, 51, 28-38.

Hui, L. (1997) New bottles, old wine: Communicative language teaching in China. *Forum,* 35 (4), 38.

Hue, M. & Li, W. (2008) *Classroom management: Creating a positive learning environment.* Hong Kong, China: Hong Kong University Press.

Hyett, N., Kenny, A. & Dickson-Swift, V. (2014) Methodology or method? A critical review of qualitative case study reports. *Int J Qual Stud Health Well-being*, 9, doi: 10.3402/qhw.v9.23606.

Islam, M., Lamb, M. & Chambers, G. (2013) The L2 Motivational Self System and National Interest: A Pakistani perspective. *System*, 41 (2), 231-244.

Jackson, C. B., Botelho, E. M., Welch, L. C., Joseph, J. & Tennstedt, S. L. (2012) Talking with others about stigmatized health conditions: Implications for managing symptoms. *Qualitative Health Research,* 22 (11), 1468-1475.

Jenkins, J. (2000) *The Phonology of English as an International Language.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2014) *English as a Lingua Franca in the International University: The Politics of Academic English Language Policy*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Jenkins, J., Cogo, A. & Dewey, M. (2011) Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca. *Language Teaching* 44 (3), 281-315.

Jeon, Y. H. (2004) The application of grounded theory and symbolic interactionism. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 18 (3), 249-256.

Jin, L. & Cortazzi, M. (1998a) Dimensions of dialogue: large classes in China. *International Journal of Educational Research,* 29, 739-761.

Jin, L. & Cortazzi, M. (2006) Changing practices in Chinese cultures of learning. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 19 (1), 5-20.

Jin, Y. & Yang, H. (2006) The English proficiency of college and university students in China: As reflected in the CET. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 19 (1), 21-36.

Kang, D. H. & Kim, D. K. (2015) L2 Motivation and Its Effects on Motivated Behavior in Korean University Contexts. *The Journal of Human Studies*, 36, 23-42.

Kang, S.-J. (2005) Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language. *System* 33, 277-292.

Kanno, Y. & Norton, B. (2003) Imagined communities and educational possibilities: Introduction. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 2 (4), 241-249.

Kessing, R. M. (1974) Theories of culture. Annual Review of Anthropology 3, 73–97.

Khajavy, G. H., Ghonsooly, B., Fatemi, A. H. & Choi, C. W. (2014) Willingness to Communicate in English: A Microsystem Model in the Iranian EFL Classroom Context. *TESOL Quarterly*, 1-27.

Khatib, M. & Nourzadeh, S. (2015) Development and validation of an instructional

willingness to communicate questionnaire. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 36 (3), 266-283.

Khorasani, M. & Harsini, M. A. (2015) The relationships among willingness to communicate, topic familiarity and Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing ability. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)*, 8 (1), 186-196.

Kim, S. Y. (1998). *Affective experiences of Korean college students in different instructional contexts: Anxiety and motivation in reading and conversation courses.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin.

Kim, S. J. (2004) *Exploring willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among Korean EFL (English as a foreign language) students in Korea: WTC as a predictor of success in second language acquisition.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University.

Kim, T.-Y. (2012) The L2 motivational self system of Korean EFL students: Cross-grade survey analysis. *English teaching* 67 (1), 29-56.

Kim, Y.-K. & Kim, T.-Y. (2012) Korean secondary school students' L2 learning motivation: Comparing the L2 motivational self system with the socio-educational model. *English Language & Literature Teaching* 18 (1), 115-132.

Kim, Y.-K. & Kim, T.-Y. (2014) EFL students' L2 motivational self system and self-regulation: Focusing on elementary and junior high school students in Korea. In K. Csizér and M. Magid (eds.) *The Impact of Self-Concept on Language Learning* (pp. 87-107). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

King, J. (2013) *Silence in the Second Language Classroom.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmilan.

King, J. (2013) Silence in the Second Language Classrooms of Japanese Universities. *Applied Linguistics*, 34 (3), 325-343.

King, A. Y. & Bond, M. H. (1985) The Confucian paradigm of man: A sociological view. In W. S. Tseng and D. H. Wu (eds.) *Chinese Culture and Mental Health* (pp. 29-45). Orlando, FL: Academic Press, Inc.

Kitano, K. (2001) Anxiety in the college Japanese Language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85 (4), 549-566.

Klein, W. (1998) The contribution of second language acquisition research. *Language Learning*, 48 (4), 527-550.

Kobayashi, M. (2003) The role of peer support in ESL students' accomplishment of oral academic tasks. *The Canadian Modern Language Review* 59, 337-368.

Kramsch, C. (2002b) Introduction: How can we tell the dancer from the dance? In C. Kramsch (ed.). *Language Acquisition and Language Socialization: Ecological Perspectives* (pp. 1-30). London: Continuum.

Krashen, S. (1998) Comprehensible output? *System* 26, 175-182.

Kubanyiova, M. (2006) Developing a motivational teaching practice in EFL teachers in Slovakia: Challenges of promoting teacher change in EFL contexts. *TESL-EJ*, 10 (2), 1-17.

Kubanyiova, M. (2008) Rethinking Research Ethics in Contemporary Applied Linguistics: The Tension Between Macroethical and Microethical Perspectives in Situated Research. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92 (4), 503-518.

Kubanyiova, M. (2015) The role of teachers' future self guides in creating L2 development opportunities in teacher-led classroom discourse: Reclaiming the relevance of language teacher cognition. *The Modern Language Journal,* 99 (3), 565-584.

Kubanyiova, M. (2016) *Teacher development in action: Understanding language teachers' conceptual change*. Basingstoke: Palgrave

Kubanyiova, M. & Feryok, A. (2015) Language Teacher Cognition in Applied Linguistics Research: Revisiting the Territory, Redrawing the Boundaries, Reclaiming the Relevance. *The Modern Language Journal,* 99 (3), 435-449.

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2009) *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing,* 2nd Ed. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Lafford, B. A. (2007) Second language acquisition reconceptualised? The impact of Firth and Wagner (1997). (Focus issue). *Modern Language Journal* 91, 735-756.
Lantolf, J. P. (2006) Sociocultural theory and second language learning: state of the art. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28, 67-109.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (1997) Chaos/complexity science and second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics,* 18 (2), 141-165.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2002a) Language acquisition and language use from a chaos/complexity theory perspective in C. Kramsch (ed.). *Language Acquisition and Language Socialization.* London: Continuum.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2014) It's about time. Perspectives. *Modern Language Journal*, 98 (2), 665-666.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2015) Ten 'Lessons' from Complex Dynamic Systems Theory: What is on offer. In Z. Dörnyei, P. MacIntyre and A. Henry (eds.) *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 11-19). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Larsen-Freeman, D. & Cameron, L. (2007) *Complex Systems and Applied Linguistics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. & Cameron, L. (2008) Research methodology on language development from a complex systems perspective. *The Modern Language Journal,* 92 (2), 200-213.

Lee, N. & Schumann, J. (2003) *The evolution of language and of the symbolosphere as complex adaptive systems.* Paper presented at the American Association of Applied Linguistics Conference, Arlington, VA, March.

Lee, W. O. (1996) The culture context for Chinese learners: conceptions of learning in the Confucian tradition. In D. A. Watkins & J. B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences* (pp. 25-41). Hong Kong: The Comparative Education Research Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong.

Legenhausen, L. (1999) Autonomous and traditional learners compared: The impact of classroom culture on attitudes and communicative behavior. In C. Edelhoff and R. Weskamp (eds.) *Autonomes Fremdsprachenlernen* (pp. 166-182). Ismaning: Hueber.

Leger, D. & Storch, N. (2009) Learners' perception and attitudes: implications for willingness to communicate in and L2 classroom. *System,* 37, 269-285.

Li, M. L. & Baldauf, R. (2011) Beyond the curriculum: a Chinese example of issues constraining effective English teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45 (4), 793-803.

Li, X. (1984) In defense of the communicative approach. *ELT Journal,* 38, 2-13.

Lin, A.M.Y. (1999) Doing English lessons in the reproduction or transformation of social worlds, *TESOL Quarterly*, 33 (3), 393-412.

Lincoln, Y. S. (1995). Emerging criteria for quality in qualitative and interpretive research. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 1(3), 275-289.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985) *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1986) But is it rigorous? Trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. *New Directions for Program Evaluation*, 30, 73-84.

Lippi-Green, R. (1994) Accent, standard language ideology, and discriminatory pretext in the courts. *Language in Society*, 23 (2), 163–98.

Little, D. (2004) Democracy, discourse and learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom. *Outbuilding & Demokrati*, 13 (3), 106-126.

Littlewood, W. (1999) Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics*, 20 (1), 71-94.

Littlewood, W. (2010) Chinese and Japanese Students' Conception of the 'Ideal English Lesson', *RELC Journal*, 41 (46), 46-58.

Liu, J. (2001) *Asian Students' Classroom Communication Patterns in U. S. Universities: An Emic Perspective*. Westport, CT: Ablex.

Liu, J. (2002) Negotiation silence in American classrooms: Three Chinese cases. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 2 (1), 37-54.

Liu, J. (2007) *Learner autonomy and Chinese university students' English proficiency: A quantitative and qualitative study*. Doctor of Education Thesis. Regent University.

Liu, M.-H. (2005) Reticence in oral English language classrooms: a case study in China. *TESL Reporter*, 38 (1), 1-16.

Liu, M. (2006) Anxiety in Chinese EFL students at different proficiency levels. *System*, 34 (3), 301-316.

Liu, M.-H. & Jackson, J. (2008) An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92 (1), 71-86.

Liu, N. & Littlewood, W. (1997) Why do many students appear reluctant to participate in classroom learning discourse? *System*, 25 (3), 371-384.

Liu, Y. & Park, H. (2013) A Study of Korean EFL Learners' WTC and Motivation. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics,* 16 (2), 35-58.

Llasera, S. (1987) Confucian Education through European Eyes. In R, Hayhoe and M, Bastid (eds.) *China's Education and the Industrialized World: Studies in Cultural Transfer* (pp. 21-32), Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Loh, J. (2013) Inquiry into issues of trustworthiness and quality in narrative studies: a perspective. *The Qualitative Report*, 18 (65), 1-15.

Long, M. H. (1985) Input and second language acquisition theory. In S. M. Gass and C. G. Madden (eds.). *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 377-393). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Long, M. H. (1998) Focus on form: Theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty and J. William (eds.). *Focus on Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 15-41). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyon, D. (2014) The L2 self-concept in second language learning motivation: A longitudinal study of Korean university students. In K. Csizér and M. Magid (Eds.). (2014). *The impact of self-concept on language learning* (pp.108-130). Bristol, United Kingdom: Multilingual Matters.

Lyster, R. (2015) The relative effectiveness of corrective feedback in classroom interaction. In N. Markee (ed.). *The Handbook of Classroom Discourse and Interaction* (pp.213-228). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Machida, S. (2001) Anxiety and oral performance in a foreign language test situation. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24 (1), 31-50.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1994) Variables underlying willingness to communicate: A causal analysis. *Communication Research Reports* 11, 135-142.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1999) Language anxiety: A review of the research for language teachers. In D. Young (ed.) *Affect in Foreign Language and Second Language Learning* (pp. 24-46). Boston: MacCraw-Hill College.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2002) Motivation, anxiety and emotion in second language acquisition. In P. Robinson (ed.), *Individual differences in second language* acquisition (pp. 45-68). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2007) Willingness to communicate in the second language: Understanding the decision to speak as a volitional process. *Modern Language Journal,* 91 (4), 564-576.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2012) The idiodynamic method: A closer look at the dynamics of communication traits. *Communication Research Reports,* 29 (4), 361-367.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Baker, S. C. (2000) The Role of Gender and Immersion in Communication and Second Language Orientations. *Language Learning,* 50 (2), 311-341.

MacIntye, P. D., Babin, P. A. & Clément, R. (1999) Willingness to communicate: Antecedents and consequences. *Communication Quarterly*, 47 (2), 215-229.

MacIntyre, P., Baker, S., Clément, R. & Conrod, S. (2001) Willingness to communicate, social support, and language-learning orientations of immersion students. *Studies in Second Language Acquision* 23, 369-388.

MacIntyre, P., Baker, S., Clément, R. & Donovan, L. (2002) Sex and age effects on willingness to communicate, anxiety, perceived competence, and L2 motivation among junior high school French immersion students. *Language Learning*, 52 (3), 537-564.

MacIntyre, P., Baker, S., Clément, R. & Donovan, L. (2003) Talking in order to learn: willingness to communicate and intensive language programs. *The Canadian Modern Language Review/ La Revue canadienne des langurs vivantes*, 59 (4), 589-607.

MacIntyre, P. D., Burns, C. & Jessome, A. (2011) Ambivalence about communicating in a second language: A qualitative study of French immersion students' willingness to communicate. *The Modern Language Journal,* 95 (i), 81-96.

MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z. & Noels, K.A. (1998) Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situated model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *Modern Language Journal* 82, 545-562.

MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R. & Noels, K.A. (2007) Affective variables, attitude and personality in context. In D. Ayoun (ed.), *Handbook of French applied linguistics* (pp. 270-298). Philadephia, PA: John Benjamins.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Charos, C. (1996) Personality, attitudes, and affect as predictors of second language communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 15 (1), 3-26.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Gardner, R. C. (1991a) Language anxiety: Its relation to other anxieties and to processing in native and second languages. *Language Learning*, 41, 513-534.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Gardner, R. C. (1991b) Methods and results in the study of anxiety in language learning: A review of the literature. *Language Learning*, 41, 85-117.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Gardner, R. C. (1994) The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning,* 44, 283-305.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Gregersen, T. (2012a) Affect: The role of language anxiety and other emotions in language learning. In S. Mercer, S. Ryan, and M. Willians (eds.). *Psychology for language learning: Insights from research, theory & practice* (pp. 103-118). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Gregersen, T. (2012b) Emotions that facilitate language learning: The positive-broadening power of the imagination. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 2 (2), 193-213.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Legatto, J. J. (2011) A dynamic system approach to willingness to communicate: Developing an idiodynamic method to capture rapidly changing affect. *Applied Linguistics,* 32 (2), 149-171.

MacIntyre, P. D., Noels, K. A. & Clément, R. (1997) Biases in self-ratings of second language proficiency: The role of language anxiety. *Language Learning,* 47, 265-287.

MacIntyre, P. D. & Serroul, A. (2015) Motivation on a per-second timescale: Examining approach-avoidance motivation during L2 task performance. In Z. Dörnyei, P. D. MacIntyre and A. Henry (eds.). *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 109-138). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Mak, B. (2011) An exploration of speaking-in-class anxiety with Chinese ESL learners. *System*, 39, 202-214.

Markus, H. & Nurius, P. (1986) Possible selves. *American Psychologist* 41, 954-969.

Markus, H. & Nurius, P. (1987) Possible selves: The interface between motivation and the self-concept. In K. Yardley and T. Honess (Eds.), *Self and identity: Psychosocial perspectives* (pp. 157-172). Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons.

Marsh, H.W., Kong, C.K. & Hau, K.T. (2001) Extension of the internal/external frame of reference model of self-concept formation: importance of native and non-native language for Chinese students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93 (3), 543-553.

Marsh, H. W., Köller, O. & Baumert, J. (2001). Reunification of East and West German school systems: Longitudinal multilevel modeling study of the big-fish-little-pond effect on

academic self-concept. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38, 321–350.

Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G. & Kun, T. L. (1996) Memorizing and understanding: The keys to the paradox? In D. A. Watkins and J. B. Biggs (eds.) *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences* (pp. 69-83). Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Mawn B, Siqueira E, Koren A, Slatin C, Devereaux Melillo K, Pearce C, et al. (2010) Health disparities among health care workers. *Qualitative Health Research*, 20 (1): 68–80.

Maxwell, J. A. (2005) *Qualitative research design: an interactive approach,* 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Maxwell, J. A. (2009) Desinging a qualitative study. In L. Brinkman and D. J. Rog (eds.). *The Sage handbook of applied social research methods,* 2nd Ed. (pp214-253). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

McAdams, D. P. (2006) *The redemptive self: Stories Americans live by.* New York: Oxford University Press.

McAdams, D. P. (2008b) Personal narratives and the life story. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins and L. A. Pervin (eds.) *Handbook of Personality: Theory and research*, 3rd Ed. (pp242-262). New York: Guilford Press.

McAdams, D. P. & Pals, J. L. (2006) A new Big Five: Fundamental principles for an integrative science of personality. *American Psychologist,* 61, 204-217.

McCaslin, M. (2009) Co-regulation of student motivation and emergent identity. *Educational Psychologist* 44 (2), 137-146.

McClelland, N. (2000) Goal orientations in Japanese college students learning EFL. In S. Cornwell, and P. Robinson (eds.). *Individual differences in foreign language learning: Effects of aptitude, intelligence, and motivation* (pp. 99-115). Tokyo: Aoyama Gakuin University.

McCrae, R. R. & Costa, P. T. Jr (1987) Validation of the five-factor model of personality across instruments and observers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 81-90.

McCrae, R. R. & Costa, P. T. Jr (2003) *Personality in adulthood: A five-factor theory perspective,* 2nd Ed. New York: Guilford Press.

McCrae, R. R. & Costa, P. T. Jr (2008) The five-factor theory of personality. In O.P. John, R. W. Robin, and L. A. Pervin (eds.) *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*, 3rd Ed. (pp159-191). New York: Guilford Press.

McCrae, R. R. & John, O. P. (1992) An introduction to the five-factor model and its applications. *Journal of Personality*, 60 (2), 175-215.

McCroskey, J. C. (1992) Reliability and validity of the willingness to communicate scale.

Communication Quarterly, 40 (1), 16-25.

McCroskey, J. C. (2009) Communication apprehension: What have we learned in the last four decades? *Human Communication,* 12 (2), 157-171.

McCroskey, J. C. & Baer, J. E. (1985) *Willingness to communicate: The construct and its measurement.* Paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, Denver, CO.

McCroskey, J. C., Daly, J. A., Richmond, V. P. & Falcione, R. L. (1977) Studies of the relationship between communication apprehension and self-esteem. *Human Communication Research* 3, 264-277.

McCroskey, J. C. & Richmond, V. P. (1987) Willingness to communicate. In J. C. McCroskey, and J. A. Daly (eds.), *Personality and Interpersonal Communication* (pp. 129-156). Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.

McCroskey, J. C. & Richmond, V. P. (1990) Willingness to communicate: differing cultural perspectives. *Southern Communication Journal* 56, 72-77.

McCroskey, J. C. & Richmond, V. P. (1991) Willingness to communicate: A cognitive view. In M. Booth-Butterfield (ed.) *Communication, Cognition, and Anxiety* (pp. 19-37). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

McDonough, S. H. (1981) *Psychology in foreign language teaching*. London: Allen and Unwin.

McKnight, A. (1994) Chinese Learners of English: A different view of literacy? *Australian Journal for Adult Literacy Research and Practice,* 4 (2), 39-52.

Meara, P. (2004) Modeling vocabulary loss. *Applied Linguistics*, 25 (2), 137-155.

Meara, P. (2006) Emergent properties of multilingual lexicons. *Applied Linguistics,* 27 (4), 620-644.

Mercer, S. (2011) The beliefs of two expert EFL learners, *The Language Learning Journal*, 39 (1), 57-74.

Mercer, S. (2011) Understanding learner agency as a complex dynamic system. *System* 39, 427-436.

Mercer, S. & Ryan, S. (2010) A mindset for EFL: learners' beliefs about the role of natural talent. *ELT Journal* 64 (4), 436-444.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1984) *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook,*

2nd Ed. California: Sage.

Montasseri, Z. & Razmjoo, S. A. (2015) The Effect of Using Competitive and Cooperative Teaching on the WTC of Iranian EFL Learners. *International Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics,* 1(3), 54-61.

Muho, A. & Kurani, A. (2014) The role of interaction in second language acquisition. *European Scientific Journal,* 44-54.

Munezane, A. (2013) Attitudes, affect and ideal L2 self as predictors of willingness to communicate. *EUROSLA Yearbook,* 13 (1), 176 –198.

Ng, C. & Tang, E. (1997) Teachers needs in the process of EFL reform in China-a report from Shanghai. *Perspectives [City University of Hong Kong Department of English Working Papers],* 9, 63-85.

Noels, K. A. (2001) New orientations in language learning motivation: Toward a contextual model of intrinsic and extrinsic, and integrative orientations and motivation. In Z. Dörnyei and R. Schmidt (eds.) *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 43-68). Honolulu, HI: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Noels, K. A. (2003) Learning Spanish as a second language: Learners' orientations and perceptions of their teachers' communication styles. In Z. Dörnyei (ed.), *Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning* (pp. 97-136). Oxford: Blackwell.

Noels, K. A. (2009) The internalization of language learning into the self and social identity. In Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds.) *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 self* (pp. 295-313). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Noels, K. A., Pelletier, L. G., Clément, R. & Vallerand, R. J. (2000) Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and self-determination theory. *Language Learning,* 50 (1), 57-85.

Noftle, E. E. & Robins, R. (2007) Personality predictors of academic outcomes: Big Five correlates of GPA and SAT scores. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 93, 116-130.

Norton, B. (2000) *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change.* Harlow: Pearson Education.

Norton, B. & Kamal, F. (2003) The imagined communities of English language learners in a Pakistani school. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 2 (4), 301–307.

Nowak, A., Vallacher, R. R. & Zochowski, M. (2005) The emergence of personality: Dynamic foundations of individual variation. *Developmental Review* 25, 351-85.

Nunan, D. (2003) The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region. *TESOL Quarterly,* 37 (4), 589-613.

O' Connor, M. C. & Paunonen, S. V. (2007) Big Five personality predictors of postsecondary academic performance. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 43, 971-990.

Onorato, R. S. & Turner, J. C. (2004) Fluidity in the self-concept: the shift from personal to social identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34 (3), 257-278.

Onwuegbuzie, A., Bailey, P. & Daley, C. E. (2000) Cognitive, affective, personality, and demographic predictors of foreign-language achievement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 94, 3-15.

Ortega, L. (2007) Meaningful L2 practice in foreign language classrooms: a cognitive-interactionist SLA perspective. In R. M. Dekesey (ed.), *Practice in a second language: Perspectives from applied linguistics and cognitive psychology* (pp. 180-207). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oxford, R. L. (1990) *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House.

Oxford, R. L. & Shearin, J. (1994) Language learning motivation: Expanding the theoretical framework. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78 (1), 12-28.

Oz, H. (2015) Emotional Intelligence as A Predictor of L2 Communication, Social and Behavioral Sciences 186, 424-430.

Öz, H., Demirezen, M. & Pourfeiz, J. (2015) Willingness to communicate of EFL learners in Turkish context. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 37, 269-275.

Pan, L. & Block, D. (2011) English as a "global language" in China: an investigation into learners' and teachers' language beliefs. *System,* 39, 391-402.

Pajares, F. & Schunk. D. H. (2005) Self-efficacy and self-concept beliefs. In H. W. Marsh, R. G. Craven and D. M. McInerney (eds.). *International advances in self research*, vol. 2, (pp 95-121). Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age Publishing.

Papi, M. (2010) The L2 motivational self system, L2 anxiety, and motivated behavior: A structural equation modeling approach. *System*, 38 (3), 467-479.

Pattapong, K. (2009) *How does students' willingness to communicate in L2 work in a Thai EFL context?* Paper presented at the American Association for Applied Linguistics Annual Conference, Denver, CO.

Patton, M. Q. (2002) *Qualitative research and evaluation methods,* 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Pavlenko, A. (2013) The affective turn in SLA: From 'affective factors' to 'language desire' and 'commodification of affect'. In D. Gabrys-Barker and J. Belska (eds.). *The affective dimension in second language acquisition* (pp.3-28). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Pawlak, M. & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, A. (2015) Investigating the dynamic nature of L2 willingness to communicate, *System* 50, 1-9.

Phillips, E. M. (1992) The Effects of Language Anxiety on Students' Oral Test Performance and Attitudes, *The Modern Language Journal,* 76 (1), 14-26.

Piechurska-Kuciel, E. (2011) Willingness to communicate in L2 and self-perceived levels of FL skills in Polish adolescents. In J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.) *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning* (pp. 235-250). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag.

Platt, E., & Brooks, F. B. (1994). The "acquisition-rich environment" revisited. *The Modern Language Journal,* 78 (4), 497-511.

Pekrun, R., Gietz., T., Titz, W. & Perry, R. (2002) Academic emotions in students self-regulated learning and achievement: a program of qualitative and quantitative research. *Educational Psychologist*, 37 (2), 91-105.

Pellengrino, V. A. (2005) *Study Abroad and Second Language Use: Constructing the Self.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Peng, J. E. (2007b) Willingness to communicate in the Chinese EFL classroom: A cultural perspective. In J. Liu (ed.), *English language teaching in China: New approaches, perspectives, and standards* (pp. 250-269). London: Continuum.

Peng, J. E. (2007) Willingness to Communicate in an L2 and Integrative Motivation among College Students in an Intensive English Language Program in China. University of Sydney Papers in *TESOL,* 2, 33-59.

Peng, J. E. (2012) Towards an ecological understanding of willingness to communicate in EFL classrooms in China. *System*, 40 (2), 203-213.

Peng, J. E. (2014) *Willingness to Communicate in the Chinese EFL University Classroom: an Ecological Perspective.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Peng, J. E. (2016) The Context-Sensitivity of Self-Concept and Willingness to Communicate in the Chinese EFL Classroom. In J. King (ed.), *The Dynamic Interplay between Context and Language Learner* (pp.84-103). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Peng, J. E. & Woodrow, L. (2010) Willingness to communicate in English: A model in the Chinese EFL classroom context. *Language Learning*, 60 (4), 834-876.

Peng, S.S. (1993) Fostering student discipline and effort: Approaches used in Chinese schools. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 363562).

Pervin, L. A. & John, O. P. (2001) *Personality: Theory and research,* 8th Ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

304

Piniel, K. & Csizér, K. (2015) Changes in motivation, anxiety and self-efficacy during the course of an academic writing seminar. In Z. Dörnyei. P. D. MacIntye and A. Henry (eds.) *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 164-194). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Pomerantz, A. I. (2001) *Beyond the good language learner: Ideology, identity, and investment in classroom foreign language learning.* PhD Thesis. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania.

Pratt, D.D. (1992) Chinese conceptions of learning and teaching: A Westerner's attempt at understanding. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 11 (4), 301-319.

Punch, K. F. (2005) *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches,* 2nd Ed. London: Sage.

Punch, K. F. (2009) *Introduction to research methods in education.* London: SAGE.

Qin, J. (1999) The status quo of FLT at tertiary level. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research,* 117, 3-6.

Rajab, A., Far, H. R. & Etemadzadeh, A. (2012) The Relationship Between L2 Motivational Self-System and L2 Learning among TESL Students in Iran. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 66, 419–424.

Rajabpour, M., Ghanizadeh, A. & Ghonsooly, B. (2015) A Study of Motivational Facet of Language Use in the Light of Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self-system. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 2 (5), 179-196.

Rao, Z. (1996) Reconciling communicative approaches to the teaching of English with traditional Chinese methods. *Research in the Teaching of English* 30, 458-471.

Rao, Z. H. (2002) Chinese students' perceptions of communicative and non-communicative activities in EFL classroom. *System*, 30, 85-105.

Renninger, K. A. (2009) Interest and identity development in instruction: an inductive model. *Educational Psychologist*, 44 (2), 105-118.

Richards, L. (2009) *Handling qualitative data: A practical guide,* 2nd Ed. London: Sage.

Richards, K. (2006) 'Being the teacher': Identity and classroom conversation. *Applied Linguistics*, 27 (1), 51-77.

Richards, L. & Morse, J, M. (2007) *Read me first for a user's guide to qualitative methods*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Richardson, L. (1997) *Fields of play: Constructing an academic life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Richmond, V. P., Gorham, J. & McCroskey, J. C. (1987) The relationship between selected immediacy behaviors and cognitive learning. *Communication Yearbook* 10, 574-590.

Robson, C. (2011) *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers,* 3rd Ed. Oxford: Blackwell Press.

Rosenwald, G. C. & Ochberg, R. L. (1992) *Storied lives: the cultural politics of self-understanding.* New Haven: Yale University Press

Ross, H. A. (1993) *China learns English: language teaching and social change in People's Republic.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Ryan, A. M. & Patrick, H. (2001) The classroom social environment and changes in adolescent's motivation and engagement during middle school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38 (2), 437-460.

Ryan, S. (2006) Language learning motivation within the context of globalization: An L2 self within an imagined global community. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 3 (1), 23-45.

Ryan, S. (2009) Self and identity in L2 motivation in Japan: The ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English. In Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds.). *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self.* Multilingual Matters: Bristol.

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2002) An overview of self-determination theory: An organismic-dialectical perspective. In E. L. Deci, and R. M. Ryan, (eds.). *Handbook of self-determination research* (pp. 3-33). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Saito, Y. & Samimy, K. K. (1996) Foreign Language Anxiety and Language Performance: A Study of Learner Anxiety in Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced-Level College Students of Japanese, *Foreign Language Annals*, 29 (2), 239-249.

Sandelowski, M. & Barroso, J. (2002) Reading qualitative studies. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 1 (1), 74-108.

Sanders, J. & Wiseman, R. (1990) The Effects of Verbal and Nonverbal Teacher Immediacy on Perceived Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Learning in the Multicultural Classroom. *Communication Education*, 39, 341-353.

Sapsford, R. & Abbott, P. (1996) Ethics, politics and research. In R. Sapsford and V. Jupp (ed.). *Data collection and analysis.* London: SAGE.

Savignon, S. J. (1991) Communicative language teaching: State of the art. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25 (2), 261–277.

Schunk, D. H. (2003) Self-efficacy for reading and writing: Influence of modeling, goal setting and self-evaluation. *Reading and Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties*, 19 (2), 159–172.

Scovel, T. (1983) The impact of foreign experts, methodology and materials on English language study in China. *Language Learning and Communication*, 2(1), 83-91.

Scovel, T. (2001) *Learning new languages: A guide to second language acquisition*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Scollon, S. (1999) Not to Waste Words or Students---Confucian and Socratic Discourse in the Tertiary Classroom. In E. Hinkel (ed.) *Culture in second language teaching and learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Seidlhofer, B. (2001) Closing a conceptual gap: the case for a description of English as a lingua franca. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* II, 133-158.

Seidlhofer, B. (2003) *Controversies in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University.

Seidlhofer, B. (2004) Research perspectives on teaching English as a Lingual Franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24, 209-239.

Selinker, L. (1972) Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 10, 209-31.

Sellers, V. D. (2000) Anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annuals*, 33 (5), 512-521.

Senior, R. M. (2001) Creating safe learning environments: Developing and maintaining class cohesion. *Intercultural Education*, 12 (3), 247-259.

Sfard, A. (1998) On two metaphors for learning and the dangers of choosing just one. *Educational Researcher*, 27 (3), 4-13.

Shahraki, N. R. & Seyedrezaei, S. H. (2015) The relationship between EFL learners' language anxiety and their willingness to communicate. *Journal of Language Science & Linguistics*, 3 (5), 96-101.

Shenton, A. K. (2004) Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information* 22, 63-75.

Shi, Y. (2001) Xin shi ji nong lin gao xiao ying yu zhuan ye fa zhan mian lin de tiao zhan yu dui ce [English majors in higher institutions of argriculture and forestry in the new century]. *Journal of Shandong Agricultural University (Social Science)*, 3 (1), 90-92.

Silverman, D. (2006) *Interpreting qualitative data,* 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Silverman, D. & Marvasi, A. (2008) *Doing qualitative research: A comprehensive guide.* Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage Publications.

Skehan, P. (1989) *Individual differences in second language learning.* London: Edward Arnold.

Skott, J. (2015) The promises, problems, and prospects of research on teachers' beliefs. In H. Fives and M. Gregoire Gill (eds.) *International handbook of research on teachers' beliefs* (pp. 13–30). New York: Routledge.

Sokolowski, R. (2000) *Introduction to phenomenology.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

South Project Group (1998) Guan yu wait yu zhuan ye jiao yu gai ge de jian yi [Suggestions on the reform of educating foreign language majors]. *Foreign Language World*, 3, 1-4.

Sparkes, A. (2002) Telling tales in sport and physical activity: A qualitative journey. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. *Qualitative Health Research,* 17 (10), 1372-1380.

Sparks, R. L. & Ganschow, L. (1995) A strong inference approach to causal factors in foreign language learning: A response to MacIntyre. *The Modern Language Journal,* 79, 235-244.

Sparks, R. L. & Ganschow, L. (2007) Is the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale measuring anxiety of language skills? *Foreign Language Annuals,* 40 (2), 260-287.

Sparks, R. L., Ganschow, L. & Humbach, N. (2009) Long-term relationships among early first language skills, second language aptitude, second language affect, and later second language proficiency. *Applied Psychologistics,* 30, 725-755.

Starks, H. & Trinidad, S. B. (2007) Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory. *Qualitative Health Research,* 17 (10), 1372-1380.

Stake, R. E. (1995) *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stake, R. E. (1998). Case studies. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* Vol. 2, (pp. 86-109). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

State Education Development Commission of China (1992) *English teaching syllabus.* Beijing, China: People's Education Press.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998) *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory,* 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sun, L-K. (1991) Contemporary Chinese culture: Structure and emotionality. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 26, 1-41.

Swain, M. (1985) Communicative competence: some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Grass and C. Madden (eds.). *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235-256). New York: Newbury House.

Swain, M. (1993) The output hypothesis: just speaking and writing aren't enough. *Canadian Modern Language Review* 50, 158-164.

Swain, M. (1995) Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook and B. Seidlhofer (eds.). *Principle & Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in honor of H. G. Widdowson* (pp. 125-144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. & Burnaby, B. (1976) Personality characteristics and second language learning in young children: A pilot study. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, 11, 116-128.

Swain, M. & Lapkin, S. (1994) *Problems in output and the cognitive process they generate: A step towards second language learning.* Manuscript. Toronto: Modern Language Centre, OISE.

Tan, W. (2000) Wo guo wai yu zhuan ye jiao yu gai ge shi zai bi xing [Reform, a must for the education of foreign language majors]. *China Higher Education,* 9, 83-84.

Tan, C. (2005). How culturally appropriate is the communicative approaches for primary school children in Singapore? *The Reading Matrix*, 5 (1), 2135.

Teven, J. J., Richmond, V. P., McCroskey, J. C. & McCroskey, L. L. (2010) Updating Relationships between Communication Traits and Communication Competence. Communication Research Reports, 27 (3), 263-270.

Thomas, G. (2011) A typology for the case study in social science following a review of definition, discourse, and structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6), 511–521.

Tran, L. T. (2009) Making visible 'hidden' intentions and potential choices: International students in intercultural communication. *Language and Intercultural Communication,* 9 (4), 271-284.

Tran, L. T. (2010) Embracing prior professional experience in meaning making: Views from international students and academics. *Educational Review,* 62 (2), 157-173.

Tudor, I. (2001) *The Dynamics of the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Uekia, M. & Takeuchib, O. (2013) Forming a clearer image of the ideal L2 self: the L2 Motivational Self System and learner autonomy in a Japanese EFL context. Innovation in Language *Learning and Teaching*, 7 (3), 238-252.

Ushioda, E. (1996) Developing a dynamic concept of motivation. In T. J. Hickey (ed.). *Language, education and society in a changing world* (pp. 239-245). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

 Ushioda, E. (1998) Effective motivational thinking: A cognitive theoretical approach to the study of language learning motivation. In E. A. Soler and V. C. Espurz (eds.). *Current issues in English language methodology* (pp. 77-89). Castelló de la Plana, Spain: Universitat Jaume.

Ushioda, E. (2001) Language learning at university: Exploring the role of motivational thinking. In Z. Dörnyei and R. Schmidt (eds.). *Motivation and second language acquisition*

(pp. 91-124). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Ushioda, E. (2008) Motivation and good language learners. In C. Griffiths (ed.) *Lessons from Good Language Learners* (pp.19-34). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ushioda, E. (2009) A Person-in-Context Relational View of Emergent Motivation, Self and Identity, in Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds.). *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 215-228). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Ushioda, E. (2011) Motivating learners to speak as themselves. In G. Murray, X. Gao, and T. Lamb (eds.). *Identity, motivation and autonomy in language learning* (pp.11-24), Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Ushioda, E. (2012) Motivation: L2 learning as a special case? In S. Mercer, S. Ryan and M. Williams (eds.). *Psychology for Language Learning: Insights from Research, Theory and Practice* (pp.58-73). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ushioda, E. (2015) Context and Complex Dynamic Systems Theory. In Z. Dörnyei, P. MacIntyre and A. Henry (eds.). *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 47-54). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

van Geert, P. & Steenbeek, H. (2005) Explaining after by before: Basic aspects of a dynamic systems approach to the study of development. *Developmental Review* 25, 408-42.

van Geert, P. (2011) The contribution of complex dynamic systems to development. *Child Development Perspectives*, 5 (4), 273-278.

van Lier, L. (2000) From input to affordance: Social-interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In J. P. Lantolf (ed.) *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 245-259). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Lier, L. (2002) An ecological-semiotic perspective on language and linguistics. In C. Kramsch (ed.) *Language Acquisition and Language Socialization: Ecological Perspectives* (pp. 140-164). London: Continuum.

van Lier, L. (2003) A table of two computer classrooms: The ecology of project-based language learning. In J. Leather and J. van Dam (eds.) *Ecology of Language Acquisition* (pp. 49-63). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.

van Lier, L. (2004) *The Ecology and Semiotics of Language Learning: A Sociocultural Perspective*. Boston: Kluwer Academic.

van Lier, L. (2005) *Case study. In E. Hinkel (ed.). Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Mahwah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

van Manen, M. (1990) *Researching lived experience: Human Science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, Ontario, Canada: State University of New York Press.

Van Maanen, J. (1983) The fact and fiction in organizational ethnography. In J. Van Maanen (ed.). *Qualitative methodology* (pp37-55), Beverly Hills: Sage.

Varonis, E. Marlos & Gass, S. (1985b) Non-native/non-native conversation: a model for negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics* 6.1, 71-90.

Verhoeven, L. & Vermeer, A. (2002) Communicative competence and personality dimensions in first and second language learners. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 23,* 361-374.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) *Mind in society*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L. S (1986) *Thought and Language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wakanoto, N. (2009) *Extroversion/introversion in foreign language learning: Interactions with learner strategy use*. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.

Wang, S. C. (2001) Improving Chinese language schools: Issues and recommendations. In X. Wang (ed.) *A view from within: A case study of Chinese heritage community language schools in the United States* (pp. 63-67). Washington, DC: National Foreign Language Center.

Wang, Q. (2005) *Towards an Integrated Model of College English Teaching.* Wuhan, China: Hubei Education Press.

Wang, Y. (2013) Non-conformity to ENL norms: a perspective from Chinese English users. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca,* 2 (2), 255–82.

Wang, Y. (2015) Book review. Willingness to communicate in the Chinese EFL university classrooms. *ELT Journal,* 69 (4), 466-470.

Wang, Z. (1999) Trends of ELT in China. *Foreign Language, 6,* 36-41.

Wang, C. & Burris, M. A. (1997) Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education & Behavior*, 24 (3), 369-387.

Warden, C. A. & Lin, H. J. (2000) Existence of integrative motivation in an Asian EFL setting. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33 (5), 535-547.

Weaver, C. (2004) *Learner's Willingness to Communicate within a Language Classroom.* Paper Presented at the Inaugural CLS International Conference, Singapore.

Weiner, B. (1992) *Human motivation: Metaphors, theories and research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Wen, W. P. & Clément, R. (2003) A Chinese Conceptualisation of Willingness to Communicate in ESL. *Language, Culture and Curriculum,* 16 (1), 18-38.

Wen, Q. F, Wang, H. M., Wang, J. Q., Zhao, C. R. & Liu, Y. P. (2010) A comparative study of critical thinking skills between English and other liberal arts majors. *Foreign Language*

Teaching and Research, 42 (5), 350-355.

Widdowson, H. G. (1993) The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28 (2), 377-389.

Williams, K. E. & Andrade, M. R. (2008) Foreign language learning anxiety in Japanese EFL university classes: Causes, coping, and locus of control. *Electric Journal of Foreign Language Teaching,* 5, 181-191.

Woodrow, L. (2006) Anxiety and speaking English as a second language. *RELC Journal*, 37 (3), 308-328.

Wosnitza, M. & Nenniger, P. (2001) Perceived learning environments and the individual learning process: The mediating role of motivation in learning. In S. Volet and S. Järvelä (eds.) *Motivation in Learning Contexts: Theoretical Advances and Methodological Implications* (pp. 171-187). Bingley: Emerald Group.

Wu, Y. (2001) English Language Teaching in China: Trends and Challenges. *TESOL Quarterly,* 35 (1), 191-194.

Wu, X. (2003) Intrinsic motivation and young language learners: The impact of the classroom environment. *System*, 31 (4), 501-517.

Xu, J., Li, B. & Curtis, A. (2015) Validating an English language teaching reflection inventory in a Chinese EFL context. *System* 49, 50-60.

Yang, K. S. (1981) Social orientation and modernity among Chinese students in Taiwan. *Journal of Social Psychology* 113, 159-170.

Yashima, T. (2000) Orientations and motivations in foreign language learning: A study of Japanese college students. *JACET Bulletin,* 31, 121-133.

Yashima, T. (2002) Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context. *Modern Language Journal,* 86 (1), 54-66.

Yashima, T. (2009) International posture and the ideal L2 self in the Japanese EFL context. In Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (eds.). *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 144-192). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Yashima, T. (2012) Willingness to communicate: momentary volition that results in L2 behaviour. In S. Mercer, S. Ryan, and M. Williams (eds.). *Psychology for language learning: Insights from research, theory and practice* (pp.119-135). Basingstoke: Palsgrave Macmillan.

Yashima, T., Zenuk-Nishide, L. and Shimizu, K. (2004) The influence of attitudes and affect on willingness to communicate and second language communication. *Language Learning* 54, 119-152.

Yeung, A.S. & Wong, E.K.P. (2004) Domain specificity of trilingual teachers' verbal self-

concepts. Journal of Educational Psychology, 96 (2), 360–368.

Yin, R. K. (2003) *Case study research: Design and methods,* 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R K. (2013) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods,* 5th Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

You, C., Dörnyei, Z. & Csizér, K. (2015) Motivation, Vision, and Gender: A Survey of Learners of English in China. *Language Learning,* 1-30.

Young, D. J. (ed.) (1999) *Affect in foreign language and second language learning.* Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Young, J. F. & Mroczek, D. K. (2003) Predicting intraindividual self-concept trajectories during adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 26 (5), 586-600.

Yousef, R, Jamil, H. & Razak, N. (2012) Willingness to communicate in English: A study of Malaysian pre-service English teachers. *English Language Teaching,* 6 (9), 205-216.

Yu, M. (2008) *Willingness to communicate of foreign language learners in a Chinese setting.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

Yu, L. (2001) Communicative language teaching in China: Progress and Resistance. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35 (1), 194-198.

Yu, X. (2015) Traditional Chinese Language Teaching Revisited: The Example of Recitation. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research,* 6 (4), 824-829.

Yue, Z. (2014). Chinese university students' willingness to communicate in the L2 classroom: The complex and dynamic interplay of self-concept, future self-guides and the sociocultural context. In K. Csizér and M. Magid (eds.). *The Impact of Self-Concept on Language Learning* (pp. 250–267). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Zeng, M. (2010) *Chinese Students' Willingness to Communicate in Canada*. Windsor, Ontario: Canada.

Zuengler, J. & Miller, E.R. (2006) Cognitive and sociocultural perspectives: Two parallel SLA worlds. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40 (1), 35–58.

Ziegler, N., Seals, C., Ammons, S., Lake, J., Hamrick, P. & Rebuschat, P. (2013) Interaction in conversation groups: The development of conversational styles. In K. McDonough and A. Mackey (eds.). *Second Language Interaction in Diverse Educational Contexts* (pp. 269-292). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.

Zhan, Y. & Wan, Z. H. (2016) College Students' Possible L2 Self Development in an EFL Context during the Transition Year. *English Language Teaching*, 9 (1), 1-10.

Zhang, Q. (2015) A Study on Chinese Students' Perceptual Learning Styles, Ideal L2 Self, and L2 Motivated L2 Behavior. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 38 (1), 93-109.

Zhang, Q. & Oetzel, J. G. (2006) Constructing and validating a teacher immediacy scale: A Chinese perspective. *Communication Education*, 55, 218–241.

Zhang, S. & Yang, Z. (2000) Gao xiao wai yu zhuan ye zai xin shi ji mian lin de wei ji yu dui ce [Challenges and strategies for the foreign language majors in higher institutions in the new century]. *Foreign Language World,* 3, 2-7.

Zhao, Y. (2007) Cultural conflicts in an intercultural classroom discourse and interpretations from a cultural perspective. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 16 (1), 129-136.

Zhao, Z. (2012) EFL Teaching and Reform in China's Tertiary Education. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research,* 3 (6), 1098-1104.

Zhao, Y. & Campbell, K.P. (1995) English in China. *World Englishes,* 14 (3), 377-390.

Zheng, Y. & Cheng, L. Y. (2008) College English test (CET) in China. *Language Testing*, 25 (3), 408-417.

Zhou, N. (2015) Oral participation in EFL classroom: Perspectives from the administrator, teachers, and learners at a Chinese university. *System* 53, 35-46.

Zhou, W. & Li, G. (2015) Chinese language teachers' expectations and perceptions of American students' behavior: Exploring the nexus of cultural differences and classroom management. *System* 49, 17-27.

Zhu, W. (1992) Confucius and traditional Chinese education: An assessment. In R. Hayhoe (ed.) *Education and modernisation: The Chinese experience*. Oxford, New York, Seoul, Tokyo: Pergamon Press.

Zuengler, J. (1993) Encouraging learners' conversational participation: The effect of content knowledge. *Language Learning,* 43, 403-432.

Zuengler, J. and Miller, E. R. (2006) Cognitive and sociocultural perspectives: Two parallel SLA worlds? *TESOL Quarterly*, 40 (1), 35-58.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Life Story Interview Guide

Background
1) Tell me something about your family/parents and your role in your family. 2) Where is your hometown? In Jinan or Not? If not in Jinan, why do you come here to study? 3) Do your parents pay great attention on your study/living? 4) Do they support your English language learning? Why/Why not? 5) How do they support your English language learning? 6) In your view, why do they support your English language learning in this way?
English language learning/living experience
1. General impression:

1) When did your start learning English? How many years?
2) What's your general feeling about English language learning?
    • Do you think it is easy/difficult?
    • Are you interested in learning English?
    • What's your purpose for learning English?
    • How do you think your competence in English?
    • What's your advantage/disadvantage?

2. Reflection on language learning/ life experiences:
2.1 Preschool
1) How do you think about English language learning at that time? 2) What's the main way in learning English at that time? 3) Did you have fun in learning English at that time?
2.2 Primary school

1) What's your attitude towards English language learning at that time? (attitude)
2) Did you enjoy English learning at that time? (interest)
3) (Inside classroom, teacher, classmates)
   - What's the main way in teaching English in the classroom at that time?
   - How did you learn in the classroom at that time?
   - How did you interact/communicate with your teacher and your peers in the classroom?
4) (Outside classroom, parents, friends, other members in the society)
   - How did you learn English after class at that time? (e.g. not learn, play games, do homework, go to training class, tutoring)
   - In what way did your parents/friends/others influence your learning?
5) (Impressive experience)
   - Are there any person, thing, experience important or impressive for you during that period?
   - How did that affect your learning/living afterwards?

2.3 Middle/High School

1) How did you understand English language learning at that time? (attitude)
2) Did you still enjoy learning English? (Interest)
3) What was the purpose for you to learn English at that time? (e.g. Interest, pressure, exams)
4) (Inside classroom, teacher, classmates)
   - What's the main way in teaching English in the classroom at that time?
   - How did you learn in the classroom at that time?
   - How did you interact/ communicate with your teacher and your peers?
5) (Outside classroom, parents, friends, other members in the society)
   - How did you manage your time/ways in English language learning and using outside the classroom at that time?
   - In what way did your parents/friends/others influence your learning?
6) (Difference with previous experience)
   - Are there any difference between your English language learning inside/outside the classroom in primary school and middle/High school?
7) (Impressive experience)
   - What's the unforgettable experience for you during that period?
   - How did these influence your experience afterwards?
8) (Major and Future development)
   - Did you talk about your plan of major or future development with your parents/friends/ teachers/others?
   - How did they influence your learning/living in the future?

2.4 University/Higher Education

1) How do you understand your English language learning/living at present? (attitude/perception)
2) How do you think your competence in English at present?
3) Are you satisfied with this? (e.g. Your oral communicative competence)
   - Do you think your pay equals your gain?
   - Are there any aspects you want to improve? Why? How?
4) What is your major?
5) To what extent does it relate to English?
6) (Inside classroom, teacher, classmates)
   - What is the main way in teaching English in the classroom?
   - How do you learn in the classroom?
   - How do you interact/ communicate with your teacher and your peers?
7) (Outside classroom, parents, friends, other members in the society)
   - How do you manage your time/ways in English language learning and using outside the classroom?
   - In what way do your parents/friends/others influence your learning?
8) (Difference with previous experience)
   - What's the difference between your present and previous English language learning and living experience?
9) Are there any unforgettable experiences during this time?
10) (Idealized self in the future)
   - What's your plan for your future development?
   - What's the role of English in your future development?
   - What's your idealized self in your future life?

Appendix B: Sample Interview Data from Life Story Interviews

(Sarah's data, 26th March 2012)

R: Did you feel your parents have a great influence on your English learning?

S: Yes, definitely, you can see that they encourage me to take part and applied many extra training classes for me, which changed my mind and perceptions concerning English learning, because I would think that I was not bad at English, why my parents still required me to attend these classes, then I would realize that this subject must be very important, as my parents paid a great attention on it, and they hoped I could also pay attention on it and they hoped I could learn it well, so I would develop such kind of conception that English is important, I should learn it well.

R: How did this affect your learning afterwards?

S: I think because I was enlightened and learned English early, so comparing with others, I learned relatively easy and better than others, then I could get better examination results, and I felt much more confident, which again could be a motivator for my learning afterwards, so you see, I mean it bring out the best in each other.

…..

R: So, you were quite enjoy your learning at that time?

S: Well, the first years were the stage for assimilating, digesting, and a comprehensive study of English, which was interesting, and we had lot of fun, but you know, it was still not mature enough, and hadn't achieve mastery, however, since the third year, I started really enjoy the fun the learning English, because, that was a stage for me to actually utilize what I had learned and accumulated before, we made conversation ourselves, we created role plays in our group, and we got English speech and drama competitions, and we even assessed through

these kind of activities, so I felt that I could produce something that based on my knowledge, that was really amazing for me. I think among these subjects in the middle school, English was the best one.

R: How about in the high school?

S: My high school English teacher in the first year was a young and vigorous woman, I had a very good relationship with her, so my English was very excellent at that time, but in the second year, we changed a teacher who was gloomy, I didn't like her, so my English was retrogressive, and then after we changed another teacher in the third year, I developed good relationship with that teacher, my English was improved dramatically and was excellent again.

R: So, the role of the teacher seems very important for you?

S: Yes, very very important, you know what, the teacher in the second year made to almost lost my learning interest in English at one time, because except the kind of affinity between people, I felt her teaching methods were so boring and I found difficult for me to accept, and personally I also thought she was not responsible enough, for example, for she explained questions to us, she explained in a more general way, not clear, it seemed she was also not quite sure about the answer, so she was not quite responsible, however, comparing the teacher who taught us in the first year, she was also not quite sure about answers for some questions we asked, but she explained to us that she was not sure at the moment, and she would search and find the right answer for us later, so you see, that is the responsible teacher, and also, sometimes, we played joked each other, we play drama in her class and we often chatted with each other, so she was very good.

R: What was your purpose for learning English at that time?

S: For examination, mainly for examination in high school, while I hadn't consider much

about what learning English is for in middle school, but in high school, it was clear that you had to learn English well, because you would face various and very important examinations.

R: How did the teacher in the classroom in your middle school?

S: Normally, we did dictation in the beginning of every class, then the teacher would check recitation of texts, individual student would be picked up to recite in the class, others would listen to find mistakes for the reciter or they may recite themselves murmurously, I remembered it was very nervous if you didn't prepare well before, and depending on different learning texts, sometime, it was very difficult to recite the whole text. After that, the teacher would teach new texts, sometimes, we got group discussions, play games and play dramas, so I learned according to the teacher's instructions, and normally I did what the teach asked us to do.

…..

R: To what extent you think your major is related to English?

S: I think they're quite related with each other, most literature I read are written in English, and also sometime I do presentation in English. For my major, the most advanced research are published in the foreign countries, there are many terminologies, so you have to know them.

R: How do you think the teaching in the classroom currently?

S: Well, in the Chinese teacher's class, the teaching is still in the form of teacher-dominant, the teacher teaches general communication now, so normally she provides a sample to show us how the application or invitation letter or emails should be look like, then she instructs us to go through details, so most of time, it is the teaching speak in front of the class. As for the foreign teacher's class, Listening and Speaking, she always encouraged us to speak, she provides an environment for us to speak.

R: Have you perceived any difference between these two kinds of classes?

S: Yes, they are quite different, one thing I find annoying me and also as a big difference is that there were always one correct answer in the Chinese answer, for example, if you translate something, you may say it in different ways, but whatever, the teacher will give you ab accurate answer that considered by her and all the students as the only correct answer, which personally I think really restrict my thinking; however, in the foreign teacher's class, everybody talks about different thoughts, you know, drawing on the wisdom of the masses, there is no right or wrong about the answer. So I think, it is more input focused in the Chinese teacher's class, and more sharing and communicating in the foreign teacher's class. Actually, to be honest, I don't like the Chinese teacher, she is so boring, she often criticized students in public, she criticized one of my classmate's pronunciation as "terrible", I think I couldn't agree with what she did, and I don't think her pronunciation is perfect. If she would like to give the student suggestion, she would better to talk to the student individually after the class. Our foreign teacher, if you as her your presentation results, she normally told you individually and suggests some aspects that you need to improve, I think she always can find some advantages on students, she never stint praise to the students, for example, you did presentation, she always said "good" to encourage you, and pointed out your merits, such as very good structure or nice pictures, these kinds of details.

Appendix C: Sample Interview Data from Stimulated Recall Interviews

(Jenny's Data, 28th March 2012)

Classroom observation

T: It is almost the same, right? Let's just try to remember immediately. How do we say? The first sentence?

J: Thank you for your letter (talk to oneself).

T: Yeah, thank you for your letter…9th of …

J: 9th of October 2012

T: Yeah, you please. Let's do one by one, you do the first one.

J: Er…Thank you for your letter 9th of October 2012…

T: Yeah…

J: …inviting me to attend the first international conference on the telemedical information society to be held in Amsterdam…Er…

T: Yes..er… yes…Where do you put this "and inviting me"? Yes?

J: and inviting me…

T: Yes, alright. Any other still remember? "and inviting me to hots the conference"…Who still remember?

T: Where did he put it? Pardon?

T: Yeah, attend and chair, so that's enough. So thanks for your letter…attend and chair what? a session?

Stimulated recall interview

R: This is one communication episode I captured this morning.

J: I didn't talk much this morning.

R: Let's listening this first.

J: OK.

(Play the recording episode)

J: Haha…my voice is so weird…oh no…haha….so weird

J: OK, I remembered, it was a translation

R: Yeah, translation about a letter for attending a conference. So, why you started to talk to yourself immediately after the teacher required to translate the first sentence?

J: Cause, the teacher asked the question, I was trying to answer it.

R: Was it a process for thinking and preparing your answer, so you talked in a very low voice?

J: Yeah, the teacher asked the question, I thought I may know the answer, so I was thinking about how to express, and trying to tell her the answer…She taught a similar sample before, I had only got general idea, so I was thinking and trying to say…maybe it was not accurate enough, but I was just trying to say…

R: So, you had an intention to speak out instead of thinking in your heart when you were trying to generate the answer?

J: I think, it more tended to be a habit, I don't like to think in my heart, I'd like to trying to speak out…I don't know, maybe I think that's helpful in remembering things.

R: Why didn't you speak out loudly or raise your hand to answer the question?

J: Cause I perceived the teacher's question is for the whole class, and she either didn't indicate any individual to answer the question primarily, so…I thought the teacher hoped the whole class to answer it together.

R: So, you didn't provide the answer voluntarily....but how did you perceived whether the teacher hope the whole class to answer it or actually she was looking for individual to give an answer?

J: In Chinese classroom in higher education, most of questions the teacher asked are for the whole class. If she didn't indicate any particular student and called the specific name of a student, the question is for the whole class. Students can think about it in their heart or think aloud.

R: Is it like unwritten rules in the classroom?

J: Yeah…it is different, you don't need to stand up and answer it, she required you think about it.

R: Ok, but afterwards the teacher did indicate you to answer it…how did you feel at that moment? Did you prepare well for your answer?

J: No, I was a little bit nervous, cause I was not quite sure about my answer…I was just thinking about the very beginning of the sentence, I had not prepared the whole sentence… so when the teacher asked me translate the first whole sentence, I was a little bit nervous…not quite sure…but I was asked to answer the question so I had to answer it…

R: So, it tended to be a relatively passive rather than you were actively willing to say?

J: Yeah, I think in that case…yeah…little bit. If I'm not sure about the answer, when the teacher asks me, I will feel that I'm enforced to answer the question. I'm the person that if I'm quite sure about the answer and I prepare well to answer it, I will use eye contact to tell the teacher I would like to answer the question, you can call me to answer it….but in that case, I didn't do this…

R: Do you think you need to prepare your speech well every time before you are engaging a talk? How about the discussion with your classmates?

J: Not really, when you talking with your teacher or answering questions in the classroom, it is formal, and sometimes there is…like…psychological obstacle…I mean if you are not clear about the answer, you will be afraid of saying it….but it's more relaxed when talking with classmates…you can talk about straightly while you are thinking of something…even

you just know little…not sure…you can say directly…it really doesn't matter…and we have similar English competence, so nothing to be afraid of, it's more relaxed.

R: Did you notice any difference between communication with the foreign teacher and with the Chinese teacher?

J: I think it's easier and more relaxed to communicate with the foreign teacher, cause for example, if you talk about different cultures, she is not familiar about this, so one thing I feel is that even you made a mistake, she will not realize it, so I mean, at least, you're not afraid of talking about this, another thing is about a sense of achievement when you tell someone something she doesn't know.

R: OK…

J: Yeah…but if you talk with the Chinese teacher, she knows much more than you in every aspect, so I'll be worried about making mistakes, which will become an obstacle for communication….er….and also…I think I'm the person who are curious about everything, I mean it's my personality, I like to chat with people, if there are something I don't know, I'd like to ask and find out the answers, when I talk with the foreign teacher, I'm very interested in their culture, and I'd also like to ask some questions, so maybe that is another reason why I'd like to talk with the foreign teacher.

R: Ok, so your personality and interest about western cultures….how do you think the communication opportunities provided and the atmosphere constructed in the language classroom?

J: Well, of course the communicational atmosphere is disappointing….but this course is more academic, liking how to writing a letter, announcement….er… I think although the teaching styles is one factor, it also depends on the students…cause we have been receiving a more passive learning or education from very young, maybe teachers want to save more time and be more effective, so they would like to choose to input the knowledge more directly instead of creating activities that encouraging everyone to participate in. Once this kind of passive learning has become a habit and accepted by both teachers and students, it is very difficult to change, so I think both teachers and students face obstacle to break this teaching and learning style.

R: Ok, so you realized the very limited communication opportunities in this classroom, are you trying to capture these opportunities? If yes, how?

J: Yeah, although I told myself I should try to speak more in the classroom, I still focus on the teacher's questions. For other things, if I'm not interested in, I don't want to talk.

Appendix D: Sample Interview Data from Photo-based Interviews

(Jenny's data, 27th March 2012)

R: How did you usually engage in the conversation?

J: It depended in different situations, if I had some interesting things or news I would like to share, I would start talking first, if I felt nothing I wanted to share, I would listen their conversation first, then I would ask some questions or talked about my idea based on what they had talked about.

R: How about the conversation last week?

J: It was me proposed that topic, cause I watched *Desperate Hoursewives* last week, the character was killed by his debtor, so I would like know something about the gun problem in America….I asked both the foreign teacher and the foreign student, but maybe this is a masculine topic, females are not interested in it, so most time, it was the foreign student who was talking about this to us.

R: what was the most impressive communication situation for you?

J: I think one was we were talking about the gun problem, another was we were talking about the experience on the April Fools' Day…haha, I still wanted to laugh about it…the foreign teacher told us that when she was in high school, she told her mum that she's got pregnant on the April Fools' Day, her mother was very angry, and she told her mother to calm down, it was just a joke to celebrate….we all laughed about it, and we were so surprised that when she was a high school girl, she played such kind of jokes to her mother, it was so funny. We all were enjoying listening her experience, and …we actually started sharing our funny and interesting experience…you know, not shy anymore…cause at the beginning we felt embarrassed to talk about these experiences on April Fools' Day either you tricked somebody or you were fooled by somebody, but after the foreign teacher told us her experience, I felt there was nothing embarrassed, it was just sharing funny experience with others, so I talked about how I tricked my teacher when I was in high school…haha…and they were all astonished and laughed about it.

R: So, you were excited at that moment?

J: Yeah, I was excited talking about my experience…so I was speaking out directly while I was thinking about something, not like before, sometimes I needed to organize my speech in advance….and I thought we were all excited at that moment, cause we fund the topic was interesting, and all of us wanted to join in the conversation, so atmosphere was very active,

……..

J: I was also more active in listening to others, but when the foreign student was talking, I don't know why, maybe it was cause his accent, I found it was very difficult to understand, not only me, we all found we couldn't hear clearly, always he needed to speak twice, so we could make general sense about what he was talking about, but we didn't talk about this to his face, we talked about that afterwards.

R: So you mean his accent affected your communication?

J: Yeah, I prefer to talk to the teacher rather than him, cause it was very difficult to understand him…I don't mean that we don't want to talk to him, actually we'd like to listen to him talking, he know much more than the foreign teacher, but because of the accent, well, I think not only accent, and also the expression, the teacher used more simple sentences, but he used different expression, more complex, not easy to understand, and sometime, when he was talking something he was familiar with, he talked very fast, so we couldn't react. I think maybe this was the first time he came here, it will be better after we are familiar his accent and the speed of his speech.

R: Ok, so what did you do when you were not hearing clearly?

J: I asked him to speak again, or I asked people besides me whether they understood what he said?

R: In English or Chinese?

J: Of course in English, cause Chinese is not allowed in English corner, when you speak English, the teacher will remind to speak in English, you will feel embarrassed, so even you can't express clearly and accurately, you need to try to express your idea in English, sometimes, if you forgot or don't know how to say, people around you will help or remind you to speak.

R: Does this help your communication in the class?

J: No, as in the class, the teacher taught about academics mainly, but it helps communication with peers after class.

R: In English?

J: No, in Chinese, haha….I mean it broaden our topics, as sometimes, we misunderstand American cultures, so if I learned something from the English corner, I will tell others when we chat together, and I also talk about interesting things happened in the English corner.

R: Ok, in the English corner, do you talk about what you learned or what happened in the classroom?
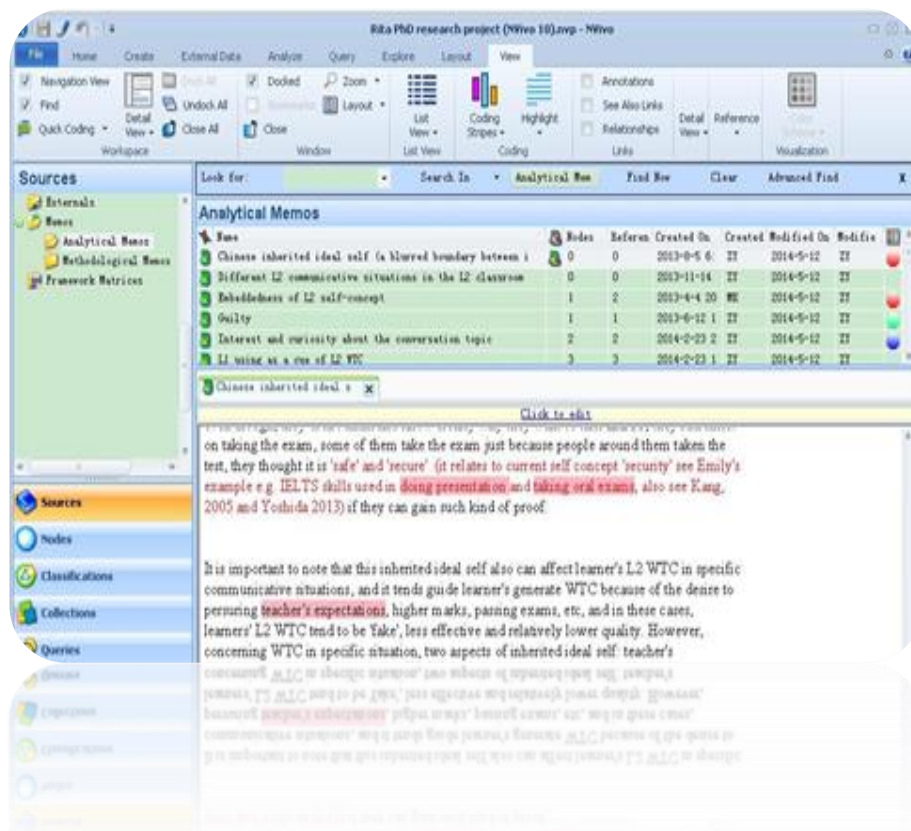
J: No, I don't, cause what taught in the class is more academic and boring, it is not suitable to talk about these in the English corner.

Appendix E: Sample NVivo Screenshots of Coding, Annotations Analytical Memos and Models
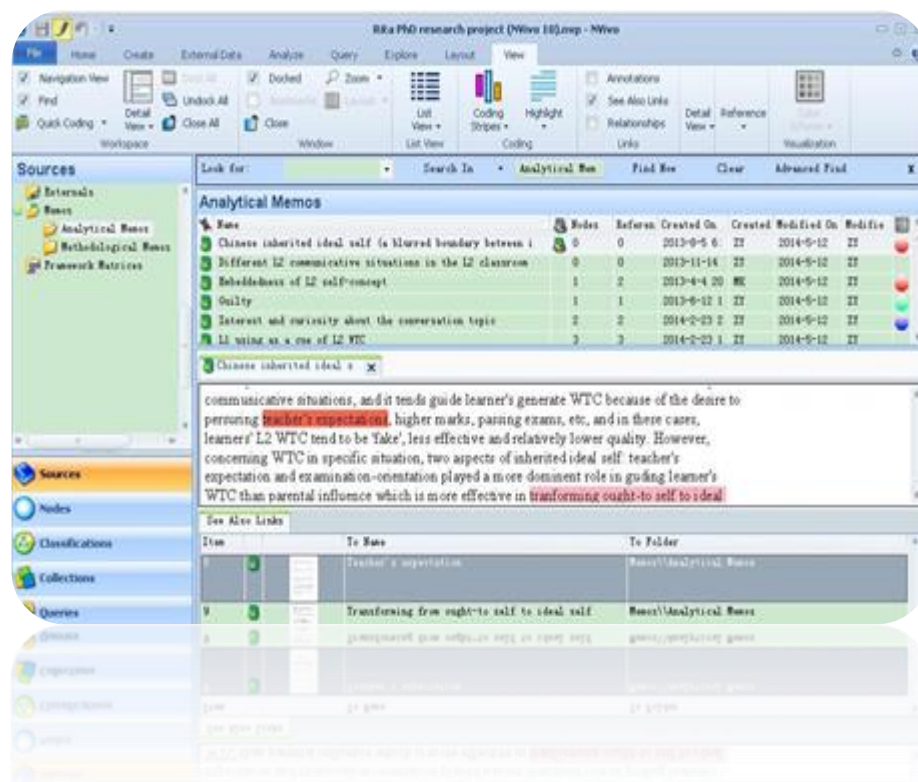
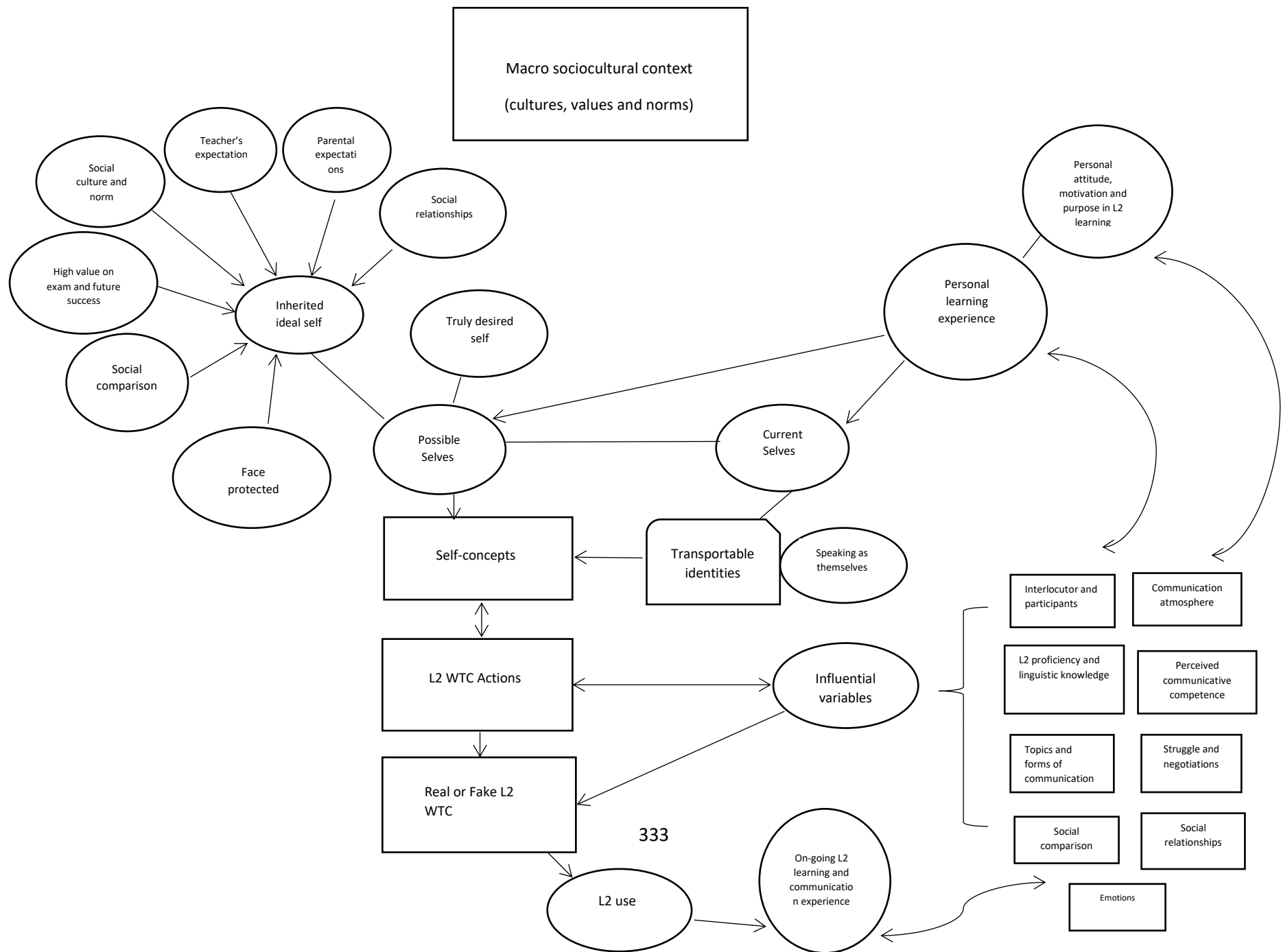## E. 1 Sample NVivo output of an annotated observation transcript
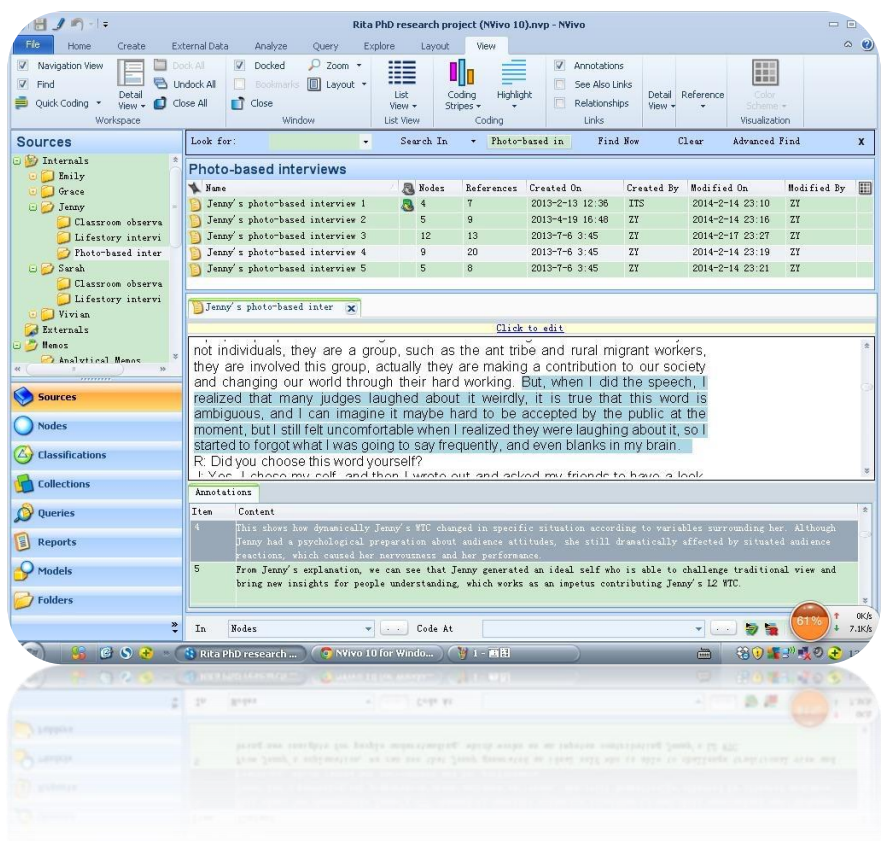
E.2 Sample NVivo output of an analytical memo

E. 3 Sample NVivo output of a memo cross-referenced through 'see also' links

E. 4 The emerging complex interactions among nodes displayed as a model

Macro sociocultural context

(cultures, values and norms)

Social culture and norm

Teacher's expectation

Parental expectations

Social relationships

High value on exam and future success

Inherited ideal self

Social comparison

Truly desired self

Personal learning experience

Personal attitude, motivation and purpose in L2 learning

Face protected

Possible Selves

Current Selves

Self-concepts

Transportable identities

Speaking as themselves

L2 WTC Actions

Influential variables

Interlocutor and participants

Communication atmosphere

L2 proficiency and linguistic knowledge

Perceived communicative competence

Real or Fake L2 WTC

333

Topics and forms of communication

Struggle and negotiations

L2 use

On-going L2 learning and communication experience

Social comparison

Social relationships

Emotions

Appendix F: Sample Communicative Tasks Used in the Observed

F.1 List of classroom activities

	Classroom Activities	**Description**
A	Game e.g. Jeopardy	Games normally designed by the teacher with an aim to help consolidate learning and practice L2.
B	Group Discussion (4-5 persons)	The most common communication activities in the classroom. Normally conducted at the beginning of the class with the purpose to review last lesson, and warm up the class. It also usually occurred after teacher introduced new lesson with an aim to provide opportunities for students to practice L2 and consolidate linguistic knowledge. Members in the group are not fixed, and students may be arranged into different groups through a variety of ways.
C	Dyad Discussion	Usually occurred in warm up stage, or for short conversation between pairs. In some cases, group discussion may become dyad discussion due to some reasons, e.g. participants' positions or social relationships.
D	Role Play (Group/Dyad)	Group role play normally conducted as a task and requires preparation within the group in advance. Dyad role play can be a form of communication practice in combination with other learning activities, with an aim to comprehend conversation context and consolidate linguistic knowledge.
E	Listening Activity & Dyad Discussion	Refers to practicing listening skills by use of certain materials available in textbooks, and followed by a short discussion between pairs, e.g. checking answers, discuss relevant topics or practice communication episodes in the listening materials.
G	Presentation	Compulsory for every student. Topics are assigned by the teacher depending on what they learned previously
H	Speaking Test	Formal oral exams including 1) an interview between teacher and student based on specific topic which the student picked up 2) making a dialogue with a conversation partner whom the student identified before. Test is evaluated by the teacher according to a number of criteria.

F.2 Sample learning material used in communication activities

At The Movies

Group Activity

In groups discuss these questions:

What kind of movies do you like the best?

Who is your favorite actor? Actress?

What movies have you seen recently?

How often do you watch movies or videos?

What movies do you want to see?

By Yourself

Make three riddles for movies that you have seen:

Movie1:   It's a _____
            _____ is in it.
            It takes place _____
            It's about _____
            In the end, _____

Movie2:   It's a _____
            _____ is in it.
            It takes place _____
            It's about _____
            In the end, _____

Movie3:   It's a _____
            _____ is in it.
            It takes place _____
            It's about _____
            In the end, _____

Group Activity: Share your riddles and your group will try to guess the answer.

Describing a Film

Read the following conversation between Simon and Rebecca about the film 'Saving Private Ryan'. Focus on and think about the meaning of the words/phrases in BOLD.

Rebecca:
'One of my favourite films is Saving Private Ryan. I know it's a war film, but I love it.'

Simon:
'It's a classic. It's got a brilliant **cast**, there are so many excellent actors in it like Matt Damon, Vin Diesel etc... And of course, there is Tom Hanks as the **main character** Captain Miller. It's one of his best films.'

Rebecca:
'Plus there are some very good **cameo** roles. The famous actor Ted Danson is in the film for about 3 minutes. It's a shame that he wasn't in the film for longer. Also, do you know that although the film is **set** in France during the D-Day invasion, it was actually **filmed** in the south of England?'

Simon:
'Yeah, I read it somewhere. I think it was one of the best films **directed** by Steven Spielberg. I love the opening **scene** when they are landing on the beach on D-Day. That scene has some of the best twenty minutes of action in the whole history of cinema for me. The **special effects** are excellent, with the explosions and the people being blown up. It looks so real.'

Rebecca:
'It's an excellent scene, I always remember the **stunt** of the men on fire. But for me, I like the scene when the men are walking in the countryside and talking about why they have to save Private Ryan. The **dialogue** is excellent, I can imagine that I would say that if I were in a similar situation.'

Simon:
'The film has an intriguing **plot**. How they have to go and save a soldier whose 3 brothers have all died fighting and how they have to go behind enemy lines to do it.'

Rebecca: Rebecca:
'I think it's a real story, although they probably changed some things. To be honest, I can't remember the film's **score**. Can you remember the music in the film?'

Simon:
'Not really. I think there was some music with trumpets at the beginning in the graveyard. But apart from that, I only remember the Edith Piaf song at the end. But that's not part of the score. Did I tell you that when the film came out in 1998, I was living in Madrid? So, the first time I saw it, it was **dubbed** into Spanish. I didn't speak much Spanish then, so I didn't understand a lot. It's a shame that it didn't have **subtitles**, so I could have read the dialogue.'

Rebecca:
'Dubbed films are strange. The voices are always very different to the original voices of the actors. Oh, by the way, have you seen the TV series Band of Brothers?'

Simon:
'No I haven't.'

Rebecca:
'Well, it's very similar to Saving Private Ryan. It's set during the second world war and it follows a group of American soldiers. It stars a lot of unknown young actors as the soldiers.'

Simon:
'I'll have to watch the series.'

F.3 Sample assessment criterial for speaking test

F.4 Sample PowerPoint for a presentation did by research participant

F.5 Sample of homework for students

Appendix G: Sample Photos from Photovoice

G.1 A box of snacks shared in English corner

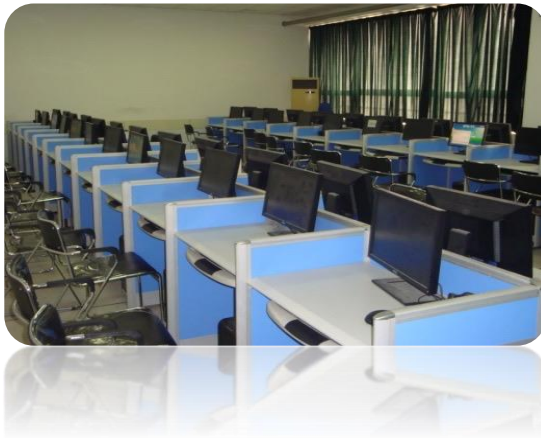G.2 Group photo of a communicative event

[The photo is redacted from the e-thesis in order to avoid copyright infringement and protect privacy.]

Appendix H: Pictures from the Research Site

H.1 Classroom arrangement in Class A

H.2 Classroom arrangement in Class B

H.3 Photos of the university environment

Appendix I: Participant Information Sheet

Study title:

Exploring Chinese university EFL students' L2 willingness to communicate in English from the complex systems perspective.

Researcher:

Zhen Yue, PhD researcher, School of Education, University of Birmingham

Research Supervisor: Dr Maggie Kubanyiova, Lecturer in Educational Linguistics, School of Education

You are being invited to take part in the research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

1. **What is the purpose of the study?**

    The study intends to explore Chinese university students' English (second language) willingness to communicate (L2 WTC) in the Chinese language learning context, particularly how changing and dynamic variables within the context continuously interact and function at a system level in shaping second language willingness to communicate. The main aims of the research are:

    ● To enrich understanding of willingness to communicate in the Chinese context from a complex systems perspective.
    ● To refine the conceptualization of L2 WTC.
    ● To improve English as a foreign language teaching (EFL) in China or in other similar contexts.
        To help EFL learners making sense of their L2 WTC and then identifying possible ways to develop English communicative competence.

2. **Why have I been invited to participate?**

I would like to invite six Chinese university students as individual cases to participate in the current study. Participants share a common educational and English as a foreign language learning experience in China. Non-English major postgraduate students are preferred to represent the general experience of EFL learning in China.

3. Do I have to take part?

Participation in the research is entirely voluntary. *It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. It is important to note that* choosing to either take part or not take part in the study will have no impact on your marks, assessments or future studies.

4. What will happen to me if I take part?

Your involvement in the study would be expected to make effort in the following research scenarios during the research period of time with approximately 15 weeks:

- Life story interview
  You will take part in the interview where we talk about your background, English language learning history, language learning experience, life stories that you think meaningful on influencing your English language learning, your ideal self, future study, work or job you desired in the future. I prefer to conduct the interview in a more conversational form at the beginning of the research, and to be recorded possibly after obtaining your permission.

- Ethnographic classroom observation
  You are expected to involve in classroom observation in about 12 weeks time. In this research scenario, I would like to get your permission allowing me to observe, take field notes and record your behaviour, performance and L2 conversation in the class.

After that, I would like to identify some interesting points and discuss WTC issues with you in stimulated recall interview, you will recall, reflect and interpret your L2 communicative actions and willingness to communicate at that time.

- Photovoice

    This research scenario concerns your English learning, using, shaping of L2 conversation outside of classroom in your local community. You will be required to take photos concerning your English communicative activity in your daily life, then, select and submit them once a week. After that, you will take part in photo-based interview to describe the photos (e.g. who, what, where, etc.) in great detail, and share your feelings, experience and interpretation about your willingness to communicate. Your will also be asked further questions based on the information you provided.

Please note that you have the right to refuse to answer any question when you are interviewed, you do not have to answer all interview questions if you do not wish to do so.

It is also important for you to realize your right to withdraw from the study for whatever reason. You will be able to contact me directly to request withdrawal from the study. My contact details are at the end of this participant information sheet. However, please be aware that the deadline for requesting withdrawal is *31/07/2012*, and your data will be removed from the study if you contact me on or before this date.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part? (where appropriate)

I have not yet identified any potential disadvantages and risks to you of taking part in the study. As the study requires highly contextualised information for intensive understanding of learners' willingness to communicate, the data will involve information referring your life and language learning experience, but it is important for you to understand that this information will be kept strictly confidential.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

- To understand the concept of L2 willingness to communicate.
- To have a chance reflecting and evaluating your English language learning, using and communicative experience, so to identify and construct your own way in enhancing

your willingness to engage in L2 conversation, and improving English communicative competence.

- As a kind of compensation, I will share my life and learning experience in the UK with you as a cultural and academic exchange, which I think will benefit your English language learning.

7. Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All information collected about you during the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any identifiable code referring your identity will not be recorded in transcribing and reporting data, e.g. your name, ID number, specific features that would enable identification. Photos will be blurred or not used if you withhold your permission. Narrative data will be reported selectively and worded carefully in order to avoid tracing back details to an individual participant. It is also important to keep the data securely in paper or electronic form without any accessing, changing, copying or destroying by other people. The data will not be displayed in any way, except for research purposes and dissemination in publications, and at no point will data be displayed in their entirety. Your participation in this study will not be discussed with other participants. I am not under an obligation to report anything you say that could be defined as illegal. However, disclosure may be required if you were to say something that potentially indicated that you or someone else was at risk of harm. If you said something of this type I would inform the university or local authority immediately about the matter, wait for their response and follow their advice. You could then choose whether or not to continue taking part in the study.

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will be used in my PhD thesis. Findings will also be shared with professionals in applied linguistics, which will contribute in better understanding L2 WTC. I will be happy to provide an overall result of the research for you if you requested. If you would like to be informed the results of the project, please indicate at the end of the consent form, and I will email you the results in a user-friendly summary.

9. **Who is organising and funding the research?**

   I'm conducting the research as a research student at the University of Birmingham, School of Education.

10. **Who has reviewed the study?**

   The research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, University of Birmingham.

   Contact for Further Information

   Zhen Yue

   Academic supervisors

   Dr. Maggie Kubanyiova

   Professor Angela Creese

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, please contact the School of Education, University of Birmingham.

Thanks for taking time to read the information sheet. If it is possible for you to participate in the study, please sign the consent form in the following page.

02/13/2012

Appendix J: Consent Form

My name is Zhen Yue, a research student at the University of Birmingham, School of Education. I am doing research of a project entitled *Exploring Chinese university EFL students' L2 willingness to communicate in English from the complex systems perspective*

I am directing the project and can be contacted at

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Please tick box

	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	☐	☐
5. I agree to my L2 communicative activity in the classroom being audio recorded	☐	☐
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes and photos in reporting and publications	☐	☐
7. I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) and may be used for future research.	☐	☐

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

Please send a report on the results of the project:

 YES   NO   (circle one)

Address for those requesting a research report

_____

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project.

Appendix K: Ethical Review Form

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW	*OFFICE USE ONLY:* Application No: Date Received:

1. TITLE OF PROJECT

Exploring Chinese university EFL students' L2 willingness to communicate in English from the complex systems perspective

2. THIS PROJECT IS:

University of Birmingham Staff Research project ☐

University of Birmingham Postgraduate Research (PGR) Student project ☒

3. Other ☐ (Please specify):

4. INVESTIGATORS

  a) PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS OR SUPERVISORS (FOR PGR STUDENT PROJECTS)

Name: Title / first name / family name	Maggie Kubanyiova
Highest qualification & position held:	Ph.D., Lecturer in Educational Linguistics
School/Department	Education
Telephone:	
Email address:	

Name: Title / first name / family name	
Highest qualification & position held:	
School/Department	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

  b) PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF ANY CO-INVESTIGATORS OR CO-SUPERVISORS (FOR PGR STUDENT PROJECTS)

Name: Title / first name / family name	
Highest qualification & position held:	
School/Department	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

  c) In the case of PGR student projects, please give details of the student

Name of student:	Zhen Yue	Student No:	
Course of study:	MPhil. Education (FT)	Email address:	
Principal supervisor:	Dr Maggie Kubanyiova		

5. ESTIMATED START OF PROJECT Date: 13/02/2012

  ESTIMATED END OF PROJECT Date: 27/05/2012

6. FUNDING

List the funding sources (including internal sources) and give the status of each source.

Funding Body	Approved/Pending /To be submitted
NA	

If applicable, please identify date within which the funding body requires acceptance of award:

Date: [   ]

If the funding body requires ethical review of the research proposal at application for funding please provide date of deadline for funding application:

Date: [   ]

7. SUMMARY OF PROJECT
Describe the purpose, background rationale for the proposed project, as well as the hypotheses/research questions to be examined and expected outcomes. This description should be in everyday language that is free from jargon. Please explain any technical terms or discipline-specific phrases.

The current study aims to understand Chinese university students' second language willingness to communicate (L2 WTC) from the complex systems perspective, particularly how changing and dynamic variables continuously interact and function at a system level in producing second language willingness to communicate. Willingness to communicate (WTC), traditionally defined as a trait-like stable predisposition (McCroskey and Richmond, 1987, 1990), has recently been conceptualised as a situated and dynamic composite construct from a situated approach (MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 1998). In the most recent theorising, WTC has been conceived of as a dynamic system that changes over time and is interconnected with linguistic, social, cognitive and emotional systems (MacIntyre and Legetto, 2011). Although WTC has been extensively investigated across different research contexts, such as (Kang 2005; MacIntyre et al., 2001, 2003, 2011; MacIntyre 2007; Peng and Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002), most of this research has adopted a quantitative approach using self-report instruments as data collection method. Although the findings have illuminated important aspects of WTC, this approach has not been able to account sufficiently for the dynamic nature of WTC and for the complex and often unpredictable interactions among a range of variables contributing to L2 users' WTC. Additionally, most of current theorising is grounded in Western sociocultural settings and further insights are needed into this construct from a wider range of settings. What is more, classrooms or experimental contexts dominate WTC studies, but we know very little about L2 WTC of L2 users outside of the classrooms. This study has been inspired by the belief that contexts in which L2 users communicate outside as well as inside the classroom offer great potential to deepen our inquiry into the dynamics influencing peoples' WTC in L2 in a range of communicative situations across social contexts.

This study is situated in the Chinese context and aims to address the following research questions:
1) What kind of English (L2) communication activities do Chinese English language university learners engage in inside and outside of the classroom?
2) In what way does the social context of L2 communication shape the learners' L2 WTC?
3) In what way do the learners' prior language learning experiences influence their L2 WTC?
4) In what way does the learners' L2 WTC change over time?

8. CONDUCT OF PROJECT

Please give a description of the research methodology that will be used

Approaching this theme through the complex systems lens has several implications regarding the methodological choices. First, the construct of WTC needs to be conceived of as dynamic, unpredictable and process-oriented rather than static and cause-effect oriented and the data collection methods adopted for this study must be capable of capturing this dynamic and unpredictable nature. Rather than focusing on drawing causal relationships and predictions, then, I will be interested in explaining the WTC trajectories retrospectively. Second, because context is an intrinsic part of a system rather than a background variable against which action takes place, a detailed understanding of the context for the studied communicative behaviours must become an integral part of the design. Based on these key principles inspired by the complexity approach, I intend to adopt a case study approach and obtain rich qualitative data to generate a thick description and explanation of the dynamic processes of Chinese English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners' L2 WTC. The study will focus on five individual Chinese EFL learners in a university in mainland China. The data will come from the following methods of data collection:

- Life story interviews
  The life story interview is believed as a competent method to collect in-depth data concerning individual learner's life and language learning experience, such as background, language learning environment, relationship with others, L2 learning history, L2 beliefs, possible selves etc. On one hand, it constructs an initial context for the who, what, and where of the research participant's WTC. On the other hand, the stories that learners construct and make meaning can situate them within the context as a part of the complex social and ecological system, which offers a fundamental channel to access to language learners and to understand the WTC across all research questions, particularly the influence of prior language learning experience on their L2 WTC.

- Ethnographic classroom observation
  It is developed by adopting an ethnographic approach in order to produce a thick description about learners' L2 communicative phenomena inside the classroom, and explain in great detail about the dynamic and complex process of L2 WTC in situated L2 conversation and classroom interaction. With a combination of taking field notes, audio-recording L2 conversation and stimulated recall interview, I intend to explore how social and contextual variables in the language learning context interact and co-adapt in an unpredictable trajectory in shaping learners' WTC, and how learners interpret and attach social meanings and beliefs on their L2 WTC.

- Photovoice
  Photovoice is considered as an engaged, dialogical and self-reflective method to collect rich, qualitative and interpretive data about learners' L2 communication in the local community outside of language classroom. By utilizing photograph as the medium, learners are provided opportunities to reflect on their WTC and construct their own perception regarding the shaping and emergence of their L2 WTC by interconnecting various components in prior life and language learning experience, situated L2 communicative context, L2 conversation, sociocultural variables etc. within a complex system. Together with ethnographic classroom observation, the photovoice is hoped to help me to identify the changing and dynamic trajectory of learners' WTC over time.

9. DOES THE PROJECT INVOLVE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE OTHER THAN THE RESEARCHERS AND SUPERVISORS?

Yes ☒   No ☐

Note: "Participation" includes both active participation (such as when participants take part in an interview) and cases where participants take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time (for example, in crowd behaviour research).

If you have answered NO please go to Section 18 . If you have answered YES to this question please complete all the following sections.

10. PARTICIPANTS AS THE SUBJECTS OF THE RESEARCH
Describe the number of participants and important characteristics (such as age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc.). Specify any inclusion/exclusion criteria to be used.

As mentioned above, I intend to involve up to six Chinese university students as individual cases for the current study. They will be postgraduate students in a university in eastern part of mainland China. The university is one of top 10 universities for higher education in China, so students in the university are usually considered to be of high intellectual ability. However, it is important to acknowledge that although the student population in this university would be viewed to be of high intellectual ability, which can have a significant impact on the research findings, I'm in fact interested in understanding the phenomenon in more general terms. I will pay great attention to findings that may only apply to this specific university context, and in practice, hopefully any findings of this nature would be a springboard for further investigations considering Chinese university students across different university settings. Participants share a common educational experience in China, where English is a foreign language and also a compulsory subject from primary education to higher education. Additionally, exam-oriented nature of the education system is inherent in China. Non-English major students will be preferred in order to represent the general experience of EFL learning in China. What is more, as non-English major students, they are usually required to attend both general English classes taught by Chinese teachers and foreign English classes usually taught by foreign language teachers, which on one hand can maximize the opportunity of accessing the participants, on the other hand can ensure the collection of sufficient data within different micro-learning contexts.

11. RECRUITMENT
Please state clearly how the participants will be identified, approached and recruited. Include any relationship between the investigator(s) and participant(s) (e.g. instructor-student).

Note: Attach a copy of any poster(s), advertisement(s) or letter(s) to be used for recruitment.

As explained above, the current research project requires an extensive effort for engagement during the period of research, it is more practical to start with recruiting six volunteers who would like to participate in the study. The teacher will be contacted in advance, and participants will be contacted at the outset of the project, so the researcher will not have been familiar with them before the project starts.I intend to contact the teacher who is in charge of the language class in advance. After obtaining the permission to conduct the research in her classroom, the teacher will introduce me to the whole class. The class normally include students from various majors except English-major students who usually have their own specialist language classes in their department. I will describe my project to the students and explain to them that I am looking for six volunteers who are willing to take part in the current study. The class teacher and I will both emphasize that the students' participation is entirely voluntary and does not form part of their course. Their acceptance or refusal to take part in my study will therefore have no effect whatsoever on their studies and the same is true of their withdrawal, should they decide to do so at any stage of the project. Students who show an interest in the present research will be recruited. I will meet with the volunteers after class and explain more details about the project by taking them through the information sheet. I will give them an opportunity to ask any questions they may have and will give them time to think about whether they wish to participate. I will contact them at a later point to confirm their decision. However, it is possible to involve other participants if some typical or particularly interesting cases are suggested by the teacher which could potentially contribute in meaningful ways to the understanding of WTC in my project. In this case, I will approach the students directly and seek their consent to participate in the project in the same way as for the other research participants (full informed consent will be sought) of participants in case of participant withdraw from the project during the research. If none of the students approached to take part volunteer for the study, I will contact and approach another class of students. I can confirm that students will not be compelled or obligated to participate in the study.

12. CONSENT

a) Describe the process that the investigator(s) will be using to obtain valid consent. If consent is not to be obtained explain why**.** If the participants are minors or for other reasons are not competent to consent, describe the proposed alternate source of consent, including any permission / information letter to be provided to the person(s) providing the consent.

After identifying volunteers to participate in the research project, an oral consent will be obtained from each individual participant. I will organise a brief meeting with the aim to provide further information on the project, elicit any questions or concerns and address them. More information about the research including the research procedure, what they are expected to do and kinds of data they are asked to provide will be explained to the participants. Additionally, participants will be informed of ethical issues of anonymity, confidentiality, and their rights' to withdraw the current project. After that, I will provide a written summary and ask them to sign the consent form. The consent form includes three parts, one is the basic information about the research project, another part shows the realization about participant's rights, and final part is about questions concerning participant's consent showing that they are entirely voluntary to engage in current project. (a copy of the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form are attached). The whole language class group will be approached on the same day and after my explanation of the project, their consent will be sought to carry out my observations of their lessons while their peers are participating in the study. I intend to gain their oral permission by asking them in front of the whole class. I will not continue with my research project in that class if there are any individual students who do not wish to be observed.

Note: Attach a copy of the Participant Information Sheet (if applicable), the Consent Form (if applicable), the content of any telephone script (if applicable) and any other material that will be used in the consent process.

b) Will the participants be deceived in any way about the purpose of the study?   **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒

If yes, please describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Include how and when the deception will be revealed, and who will administer this feedback.

```




```

13. PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Explain what feedback/ information will be provided to the participants after participation in the research. (For example, a more complete description of the purpose of the research, or access to the results of the research).

I will be happy to make the results of this research available to participants if requested. At the end of the consent form, they will be asked whether they would like to be informed the results of the project. If the participants expect to be informed, an overall results of the research will be emailed to them in a user-friendly summary.

14. PARTICIPANT WITHDRAWAL

a) Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project.

The participants will be informed at the beginning of the research that their right to privacy are always respected and they are within their right to refuse to answer questions or to withdraw from the study completely without offering any explanation. Explanation about participants' rights to withdraw during the research procedure and the deadline for requesting withdrawal will also be mentioned in the participant information sheet and consent form. It is important to ensure that participants realize and are clear that they are free to withdraw from the research either at the beginning or any time during the research until the end of the data collection phase of the research project. They will not be compelled to complete the whole research procedure. They have the right to leave for whatever the reason. It is a matter of being fair to the participants and not abusing their good will. Based on this clear understanding, participants will be required to sign the consent form.

b) Explain any consequences for the participant of withdrawing from the study and indicate what will be done with the participant's data if they withdraw.

The participant's withdrawing from the study may lead to insufficient cases and data involved in the research project. I intend to pre-empt this situation by recruiting a few more participants than is strictly necessary for research of this kind (6 participants already allows for such unexpected scenario). Should any of the participants want to withdraw from the study, they will be asked whether they consent to their data being used for research purposes. If they give permission, the data gathered will be used, but will be destroyed permanently should the withdrawing research participants withhold such permission.

15. COMPENSATION
Will participants receive compensation for participation?

i) Financial   **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒

    ii) Non-financial   **Yes** ☒ ✕ **No** ☐

If **Yes** to **either** i) or ii) above, please provide details.

As a kind of compensation, information referring to British culture, living and language learning experience in the UK will be provided with a purpose of cultural and academic exchange. This could also be considered as potential benefits for students obtained from participating in the current research project, because Chinese students are usually very interested in such kind of information concerning experience of studying abroad.

If participants choose to withdraw, how will you deal with compensation?

If participants choose to withdraw from the project, the compensation will not be continued any more due to the disappearance of frequent contact.

16. CONFIDENTIALITY

a) Will all participants be anonymous? **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
b) Will all data be treated as confidential? **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐

Note: Participants' identity/data will be confidential if an assigned ID code or number is used, but it will not be anonymous. Anonymous data cannot be traced back to an individual participant.

Describe the procedures to be used to ensure anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of data both during the conduct of the research and in the release of its findings.

Anonymity of participants and confidentiality of data will be kept in mind and ensured during the research process and in reporting of the findings. Any identifiable code referring the participants' identity will be avoided in recording, transcribing and reporting data, e.g. their names, ID number, specific features that would enable identification. Photos will be blurred or not used if participants' permission is not given. Narrative data will be reported selectively and worded carefully in order to avoid tracing back details to an individual participant. It is also important to keep the data securely without any accessing, changing, copying or destroying by other people. The data will only be used for a purpose of the research project and will not be accessible in their entirety to any third party. On the other hand, the highly contextualised information that is needed for my study (e.g. data from observation field notes, stimulated recall interviews, photo-based interviews) admittedly presents a "microethical" dilemma that could potentially jeopardise anonymity of the research participants in processing and reporting this information (Kubanyiova, 2008). Although as a researcher I have responsibility to honestly report the research findings and make the best effort possible to respect persons by adhering to the macroethical principles and applying some of the advice suggested in the literature as mentioned above, I cannot rule out the possibility that further dilemmas may arise at the micro-level. However, I endeavour to apply my ethical sensitivity throughout the data collection and reporting stages of the project which will allow me to become aware of issues that are not captured in this review but that may unexpectedly arise in the course of this case study project.

If participant anonymity or confidentiality is not appropriate to this research project, explain, providing details of how all participants will be advised of the fact that data will not be anonymous or confidential.

17. STORAGE, ACCESS AND DISPOSAL OF DATA

Describe what research data will be stored, where, for what period of time, the measures that will be put in place to ensure security of the data, who will have access to the data, and the method and timing of disposal of the data.

Field notes of classroom observation will be summarized and transcribed to an electronic form after each teaching session. Recording of L2 conversation and stimulated recall interviews will also be transcribed immediately. Additionally, photos are going to be collected electronically from the participants, and photo-based interviews will also be transcribed as soon as possible. All of the hard copy of data will be arranged in a file that other people will not have access to. All the electronic data will be saved and organized within different folders with a label according to its content and the time the data obtained. In order to keep the data safely and not to be destroyed by accident, the data will be kept in two copies electronically, and others will not have access to them. The data will not be displayed in any way, except for research purposes and dissemination in publications. This will be made clear to the research participants prior to commencing of the research project. However, at no point will data be displayed in their entirety. In accordance with Data Protection guidelines on data storage, after the end of the research, I will keep the data for a minimum of 10 years to allow access in confidence to other authorised researchers for verification purposes and for discussions with other research workers.

18. OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED? e.g. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ NOT APPLICABLE

If yes, please specify.

19. SIGNIFICANCE/BENEFITS

Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research

The current research project aims to understand Chinese university EFL students' L2 WTC comprehensively from complex systems perspective, which is considered innovative and valuable in developing and enriching WTC studies. Concerning the theoretical dimension, it uses complexity theory as an umbrella to provide a helpful and new way in viewing and understanding WTC. Moreover, by being inspired by the complexity theory approach, research methods are newly designed, such as life story interview and photovoice, which have never been used in prior WTC research. In this sense, this project has the potential to contribute to important and new ways of thinking about and understanding L2 WTC, and, possibly, even a radical innovation in conceptualizing L2 WTC. In other words, the project has potential to add in significant ways to contemporary WTC research in applied linguistics as well as complexity-informed research. Nowadays, developing communicative competence is emphasized in EFL teaching in China, however, Chinese EFL learners are normally considered as reticent in language classroom. Thus, the current WTC research in a Chinese context is essential and particularly meaningful to bring practical insights in improving EFL teaching, learning and communication in China and other similar EFL contexts as well. At the same time, it also offers great benefit for Chinese language learners. On one hand, they will be the direct beneficiary in terms of the improvement in EFL teaching. On the other hand, either as research participants or the potential audience of the research, the study provides opportunity for language learners to understand their willingness to communicate by self-reflecting and evaluating their language learning and L2 communicative experience, which can enable language learners to identify and construct their own ways to enhance their willingness to engage in L2 conversation and enhance their L2 competence in general.

20. RISKS

a) Outline any potential risks to **INDIVIDUALS**, including research staff, research participants, other individuals not involved in the research and the measures that will be taken to minimise

any risks and the procedures to be adopted in the event of mishap

> I have not identified any potential risks to individuals at the moment. In the very unlikely event that risks arise or illegal activities are identified during the research, I will inform the university or local authority immediately about the matter, wait for their response and follow their advice.

b) Outline any potential risks to **THE ENVIRONMENT and/or SOCIETY** and the measures that will be taken to <u>minimise</u> any risks and the procedures to be adopted in the event of mishap.

> NA

21. ARE THERE ANY OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES RAISED BY THE RESEARCH?

Yes ☐   **No** ☒

If yes, please specify

>

22. CHECKLIST

Please mark if the study involves any of the following:

- Vulnerable groups, such as children and young people aged under 18 years, those with learning disability, or cognitive impairments ☐

- Research that induces or results in or causes anxiety, stress, pain or physical discomfort, or poses a risk of harm to participants (which is more than is expected from everyday life) ☐

- Risk to the personal safety of the researcher ☐

- Deception or research that is conducted without full and informed consent of the participants at time study is carried out ☐

- Administration of a chemical agent or vaccines or other substances (including vitamins or food substances) to human participants. ☐

- Production and/or use of genetically modified plants or microbes ☐

- Results that may have an adverse impact on the environment or food safety ☐

- Results that may be used to develop chemical or biological weapons ☐

Please check that the following documents are attached to your application.

	ATTACHED	NOT APPLICABLE
Recruitment advertisement	☐	☒
Participant information sheet	☒	☐
Consent form	☒	☐
Questionnaire	☐	☐

355

Interview Schedule ☐ ☐

23. DECLARATION BY APPLICANTS

I submit this application on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will be used by the
University of Birmingham for the purposes of ethical review and monitoring of the research project described
herein, and to satisfy reporting requirements to regulatory bodies. The information will not be used for any
other purpose without my prior consent.

I declare that:
- The information in this form together with any accompanying information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.
- I undertake to abide by University Code of Conduct for Research (http://www.ppd.bham.ac.uk/policy/cop/code8.htm) alongside any other relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines.
- I will report any changes affecting the ethical aspects of the project to the University of Birmingham Research Ethics Officer.
- I will report any adverse or unforeseen events which occur to the relevant Ethics Committee via the University of Birmingham Research Ethics Officer.

Name of Principal investigator/project supervisor:	Zhen Yue
Date: 02/11/2011	

Please now save your completed form, print a copy for your records, and then email a copy to the Research Ethics Officer, at aer-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk. As noted above, please do not submit a paper copy.

I confirm that the University's Code of Practice for Research and the information and guidance provided on the University's ethics webpages (available at http://www.rcs.bham.ac.uk/ethics/links/index.shtml) have been consulted and taken into account when completing this application.

Appendix L: Ethical Approval for the Research Project

The approval letter is redacted from the online version in order to protect confidentiality.