

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATUR REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in Language Learning**

Willingness to communicate (WTC) can be defined as a state of mental preparation to use the Target Language (TL) whenever an opportunity arises (MacIntyre & Clement, 1996 in Kruk, 2019). MacIntyre et al. (1998) examined WTC as a state of mind, willingness, and confidence as a communicator to engage in conversation with a particular person at a specific time. WTC is also a construct that plays a very important role in the activeness or passivity of students in communicating in class. This statement was confirmed by MacIntyre et al. (1998), where the WTC is responsible for some students' being talkative and their reluctance to speak in class (MacIntyre et al. 1998).

WTC investigations initially explored the mother tongue/first language used by McCroskey (1985) and were subsequently associated with second/foreign language learner reluctance to communicate (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The context changes to the WTC model have been reported due to differences in the application of the WTC itself. The application of WTC in the first language will be different if it is applied in learning a second language or a foreign language. MacIntyre et al. (1998) stated that it is almost impossible to equate willingness to communicate using the first language (L1) with WTC in a second language (L2).

Over time, the initial concept of the WTC changed. Originally conceptualized as a stable student characteristic, WTC is now part of behavioral psychology. According to Kruk (2019), "WTC which was originally a characteristic of stable students, is now conceptualized as the result of the relationship of many distal and proximal antecedents that include individual and intergroup tendencies." There have been many studies on L2 WTC that both support and theorize based on the model of MacIntyre et al. (1998). The model consists of dynamic, situation-specific, and stable (such as the nature of

variables). Empirically several studies focused on various aspects such as trait-like (Yashima, 2002), situation-specific (Peng & Wooddraw, 2010), and dynamic and situated perspectives (Kang, 2005).

In a WTC trait-like perspective, there are several variables such as personality (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011), self-confidence (Yashima, 2002; Rainders & Wattana, 2015), motivation and attitudes (Shirvan et al., 2019; Hashimoto, 2002), gender and age (Macintyre et al., 2002), immersion experience (MacIntyre et al., 2003), and international posture (Yashima et al., 2004). These variables can affect students' WTC in L2 communication (Lee & Drajiati, 2019). Meanwhile, other variables such as interlocutor (Cao & Philp, 2006) and class situation (Peng & Woodrow, 2010) have influenced L2 learning among situation-specific scholars.

The advancement of digital media and communication technology provides opportunities for virtual intercultural communication. The latest study has investigated whether affective factors (i.e., motivation, self-confidence, risk-taking, L2 speaking anxiety, and grit) and virtual intercultural experiences are related to L2 WTC in in-class, out-of-class, and digital settings (Lee & Lee, 2019). Research by Lee & Lee (2019) is a quantitative study that tested 176 participants who were Korean EFL undergraduate and postgraduate students. Participants were then adjusted for demographic factors such as gender, age, grade, major, length of time studying English, and overseas experience.

The three main results of Lee & Lee (2019) study with hierarchical regression analysis revealed: first, the presence of higher L2WTC from students with higher levels of motivation and steadfastness and lower levels of anxiety in speaking L2 (in the classroom). Second, there is a higher L2WTC of students majoring in English with higher self-confidence and risk-taking (outside of class). Third, there is a higher WTC of young students with higher self-confidence and engaging in virtual intercultural experiences (digital settings). These results indicate that demographic factors, affective variables, and virtual

intercultural activities play different roles in L2WTC in three different communication contexts.

Based on many definitions related to willingness to communicate, the writer conclude that WTC in language learning can be defined as students' mental readiness to communicate actively using the target language in class when there is an opportunity for them to participate. Mental readiness here can be interpreted as the determination of someone to start or participate in communication activities (Maftoon & Amiri, 2012). The existence of WTC in language learning also cannot be separated from the factors that may influence it. As previously mentioned, several factors such as affective factors (i.e., motivation, self-confidence, risk-taking, etc.), contextual factors (i.e. interlocutor or peers and class situation), demographic factors (i.e., gender, age, grade, etc.), and environmental factors (i.e., digital and face-to-face classroom settings) according to many studies, these factors can affect a person's WTC. As Ushioda (2014) in Cameron (2015) which states that there is a link between the internal and contextual elements of students who are complex and form each other in the L2 or EFL learning system. Henceforth, the explanations related to affective and contextual factors will be explained in the following EFL learning context.

### **2.1.1 Affective Factors in EFL Learning**

According to Lee & Lee (2019) and MacIntyre et al. (1998), affective factors such as L2 motivation, personality, self-confidence, and speaking anxiety are self-variables that can influence L2 learners' WTC and, potentially, actual communication. For example, regarding L2 motivation, EFL English learners with higher motivation levels tend to increase L2 WTC and engage more actively in every activity in class (Khajavy et al., 2016). Then, regarding personality, extroverted personalities in language learning, such as a pleasant personality and openness to experience, can help students be more confident in

interacting and communicating with people (MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Lin, 2018).

Related to self-confidence, those confident in using L2 are more likely to initiate L2 communication in the classroom (Khajavy et al., 2016). According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), self-confidence is a variable that is determined by communicative competence, communication experience, and the pattern of the interlocutor's personality variable. Then, L2 speaking anxiety is understood as 'an individual's level of fear or anxiety related to natural or anticipated (oral) communication with another person or persons' and is negative toward L2 WTC (Khajavy et al., 2016; Lee & Lee, 2019). The anxiety about discouraging students' colleagues affect the willingness to communicate learners (Dornyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015).

### **2.1.2 Contextual Factors in EFL Learning**

Contextual variables are factors embedded in the classroom context, including topics, teachers, classmates, types of assignments, classroom atmosphere, interactional contexts, and physical location as sub-variables (Cao, 2009; Syed & Kuzborska, 2018). According to MacIntyre (1998), in the third layer of the WTC pyramid model, there are situated antecedents such as factors in the form of situational or contextual variables such as teachers, classmates, class atmosphere, and topics of discussion. According to the Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) in Cameron (2015), contextual variables can affect language development. The existence of individual and contextual variables may interact simultaneously during students' English communication courses from a dynamic and situational perspective (Lee & Hsieh, 2019).

In the research of Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), it is shown that Asian L2 students tend to feel nervous and embarrassed more easily in front of teachers and peers which makes them unwilling to communicate. Variables such as interlocutors (or peers), teachers, and task topics that have the potential to facilitate or otherwise weaken students' L2 WTC in the classroom (Khajavy et al., 2016; Lee & Lee, 2019). According to Lee & Lee (2019), the teacher

adequately develops the level of confidence, L2 risk taking, and provides opportunities for students to practice communicating before placing the student in a situation with an unknown interlocutor in a relatively unpredictable L2 situation. In addition, teacher behavior has a strong influence on participants to participate in class activities (Syed & Kuzborska, 2018).

Dornyei (2009) in Syed, H., & Kuzborska, I. (2018), says that having an interesting topic will provoke students' interest and curiosity as well as feeling happy about the topic. Class atmosphere concerns the moods or emotions that are felt and owned by students (Peng 2012 in Syed & Kuzborska, 2018). According to Dornyei et al. (2015) state that the type of topic or task and the presence of peers in certain situations can increase or decrease the motivation of learners to participate in class activities. Reinders and Wattana (2015) suggest that EFL students prefer to remain silent in class because they are worried about making grammatical errors and being judged negatively by teachers and peers.

## **2.2 Blended Learning in Language Teaching**

There are many definitions of formally blended learning. Many researchers argue that blended learning is related to face-to-face and online environments. In terms of language, according to Prasetya et al. (2020), blended learning refers to two terms, blend and learning. Blended learning can be described as a hybrid of face-to-face learning and various types of online-based learning (Prasetya et al., 2020). According to Graham (2013) in Taghizadeh & Hajhosseini (2020), blended learning is a combination of face-to-face learning and learning using technology to improve student-centered forms of learning.

Cronje (2020) describes blended learning from a modern perspective, where blended learning is a combination of online, face-to-face instruction and learning theory. Sharma (2010), in the journal Taghizadeh & Hajhosseini (2020), describes that blended learning tries to produce a harmonious balance between face-to-face interaction and online access to knowledge by

considering the attitudes and talents of teachers and students. According to Chaeruman (2018), Blended learning is a mixture of face-to-face teaching (synchronous interaction) and full e-learning (asynchronous).

Blended learning provides a middle ground in education, and it comes in various forms, shapes, and sizes (Akbaba & Baskan, 2017). Blended learning not only focuses on student needs but also increases flexibility, satisfaction, and critical thinking (Osgthorpe & Graham, 2003 in Taghizadeh, 2020). According to Kaur (2013), blended learning has three essential components: learning environment, instruction, and media. According to Tang & Chaw (2016), blended learning provides flexibility to the learning management system, such as access anytime and anywhere.

There are many benefits of blended learning. Some potential benefits revolve around accessibility, pedagogical effectiveness, course interaction, increasing learning effectiveness, expanding reach, optimizing business results, and optimizing business outcomes (Prasetya et al., 2020). In addition, if face-to-face learning is compared with technology-based learning, according to Cronje (2020), technology-based learning is better than face-to-face learning in some contexts. This statement is supported by research by Seoiro (2012) in Cronje (2020), which states that technology-based learning can describe how deaf students can benefit from community learning experiences through strategies and pedagogical tools that never exist face-to-face.

In language teaching or applied linguistics, blended learning must pay attention to the importance of second-language acquisition (SLA) insights. For example, SLA insights are related to the extent of constructive input, the role of motivation, attitudes, and individual differences (Jun, 2018). According to McCarthy (2016), designers of varied learning activities need to take advantage of the latest SLA and applied linguistics findings. This statement is supported by Jun (2018), who says that regarding the importance of insight related to the SLA, considerable attention and consideration are needed for curriculum designers and teaching materials for blended learning itself.

A teacher review of professional development is required in a blended learning environment. This review is because, in blended learning, the role and status of the teacher have changed (McCarthy, 2016). Different learning objectives from blended learning place greater demands on teachers. Teachers have to master the teaching techniques needed and be able to use them well, following the learning objectives of blended learning (Jun 2018). In addition, Jun (2018) says that a teacher must have the necessary solutions if problems occur in online or face-to-face interactional activities (e.g., technology and pedagogy). One of the core problems in learning a second language in online classes is the development of students' speaking skills. According to several findings, this problem states that computer-based technology in asynchronous learning provides a lot of time and opportunities for students to speak outside the classroom with a wider output in the target language (McCarthy, 2016; Jun 2018).

From the many definitions that explain blended learning, the writer can conclude that a Blended learning Classroom is learning that is interspersed with face-to-face classroom settings and digital settings that aim to meet learning needs according to existing situations and conditions. In blended learning, a teacher needs to be able to exceed the needs of students. It is intended that the consistency of students' learning process will be maintained so that they will achieve the learning objectives. In addition, a language teacher must provide many opportunities for students to be active in learning activities, especially in students' speaking skills. Then, skills in using creative and innovative media using technology will provide opportunities for students to increase their motivation to want to learn.

### **2.3 Previous Study**

Willingness to communicate (WTC) in a second language (L2) is one of the entries in the list of individual differences variables (Syed & Kuzborska, 2018). WTC is an intentional decision to participate in L2 communications with a

particular person or group. WTC was identified as a direct predictor of L2 use and has been proposed as one of the main goals of L2 pedagogy (MacIntyre et al. 1998). The L2 WTC conceptualization by most studies has been shaped by the pyramidal model of MacIntyre et al. (1998). It is well known that MacIntyre et al. (1998) conceptualized L2 WTC as a complex variable that is determined by several situated and persisting variables, not by a single variable. The desire to communicate and express self-confidence is a situational antecedent. Then the surviving variables include motivational tendencies, affective-cognitive context, and individual-social context. Thus, according to Syed & Kuzborska (2018), the MacIntyre et al. (1998) model is based on a linear, causal relationship between psychological and contextual variables.

In conducting the research, the researcher has analyzed several relevant previous studies to support and prove the originality of this research. The first is a study by MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, and Noels (1998). This study aims to explain the linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables that might influence a person's "willingness to communicate" in a person's second language (L2). This research moves beyond linguistic or communicative competence as a primary goal of language teaching and is a genuine attempt to propose WTC as a primary goal of language teaching.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) applied the L2 construct to WTC and proposed a situational model of the second language WTC. This study reports several situation-specific variables that influence learners' feelings and tendencies to communicate in certain situations (e.g., classrooms). These factors can be situation-related or contextual variables (i.e., teachers, classmates, class atmosphere, and discussion topics), or they can be stable (e.g., personality). In addition, another goal of MacIntyre's research is to provide suggestions for potential relationships among existing variables by describing a comprehensive conceptual model that may be useful in describing, explaining, and predicting L2 communication.

The second relevant research is that of Cameron (2015). This study discusses the latest theory of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and provides an overview of studies on the differences in individual WTC factors carried out in Iran and New Zealand (NZ). This study identifies the implications of the results of this study for English teachers in the context of ESL (English as a Second language/migrant). The study was conducted over two semesters (one year) with four pre-university ESL (English as a Second Language) students the researcher interviewed after completing a written questionnaire. Typical qualitative research methods such as interviews, observation, and textual analysis are used in this study to investigate and describe the WTC behavior of a small group of student participants in a holistic manner. Factors considered by students to have an important influence on their WTC were found (among others: language learning experience, personality, anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation). Then the difference between learning English in Iran and New Zealand led to a situational change in students' WTC due to the contrast in teaching methods and classroom environment. The presence of external factors in students' personal and family lives also impacts their attendance and behavior in class and their strong commitment to their new life in NZ.

The third relevant research is that of Lee and Hsieh's research (2019). This study is a quantitative study that describes the relationship between affective variables (i.e., L2 self-confidence, L2 anxiety, L2 motivation, and fortitude) and willingness to communicate (WTC) in contexts inside the classroom, outside the classroom, and digital settings. Descriptive data were used to observe the demographic characteristics of the participants and to describe the level of affective variables and L2 WTC. The sample was taken from 261 Taiwanese EFL undergraduate students, and identified two main findings. First, students with higher grit levels and L2 Confidence had higher WTC L2 in all three communicative settings. Second, lack of L2 anxiety was a significant predictor of students' L2 WTC only in non-digital environments (in-class and out-of-class contexts). The study also explains that digital

environments can provide additional social support and psychological benefits, potentially creating a less anxiety-provoking L2 environment for EFL students.

The fourth relevant study is that of Lee, Lee, & Hsieh (2019). This study examines Korean and Taiwanese EFL students' L2 WTC levels and the influencing factors in three communication contexts (i.e., in-class, out-of-class, and digital settings). This study tested 143 Korean EFL students and 261 Taiwanese EFL students. Follow-up interviews were also conducted to identify factors that might affect their L2 WTC (n= 20). The results of this study reported the lowest WTC L2 scores of Korean and Taiwanese participants in the classroom. Qualitative data from this study showed that L2 speaking anxiety affected the L2 WTC of both groups. Other results indicated that Korean students had higher WTC L2 scores outside the classroom than Taiwanese students and Taiwanese students got higher WTC L2 scores in digital settings than Korean students. According to Lee, Lee, & Hsieh (2019), an English language environment and teaching practice may be a factor in the different results from the qualitative data. This statement shows that East Asian learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) can be more willing to communicate when there is sufficient opportunity to use the English language provided through instructional and institutional support.

The fifth relevant study is that of Lin (2018). This study investigates the variables that influence willingness to communicate (WTC) in English as a foreign language (EFL). The variables in this study were ten variables, namely openness to experience, awareness, motivation, perceived self-confidence in communicating, EFL WTC, and frequency of using English in the classroom (for the construction of the EFL WTC model). Lin's research (2018) hypothesizes the WTC EFL model with six layers focusing on related factors. In addition, individual differences have been proposed, and a serial mediation model was reported as a result of reinterpreting the WTC EFL model. This study was conducted in Taiwan with 701 students as participants. Lin (2018)

adopted stratified random sampling and questionnaires. The results of the structural equation modeling stated that the WTC EFL model was quite suitable for the Taiwan context and validated the reinterpretation of the model as a serial mediation model. The findings validate the mediating effect of affective factors, motivation, language competence, and communication anxiety on EFL WTC.

This study raised the theme of the factors that might influence the willingness to communicate to five EFL pre-service teacher candidates at a university in Cirebon. This research comes from the writer's observations, which, as is well known from previous studies on the WTC, have not been fully explored WTC in the digital class. In addition, according to the writer's knowledge, there are still few studies that focus on the individual factors that EFL pre-service teachers regard as influential in their WTC in blended learning contexts (face-to-face and digital settings). As a research urgency, this study discusses their individual WTC factors more deeply. This study was adopted from research by Cameron (2015) and MacIntyre et al. (1998) using qualitative case study methods and using IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis).