# The Impact of Language Anxiety and Language Proficiency on WTC in EFL Context

## L'IMPACT DE L'ANXIÉTÉ LINGUISTIQUE ET LA MAÎTRISE DE LA LANGUE SUR LE WTC DANS LE CONTEXTE DE L'EFL (ANGLAIS COMME LANGUE ÉTRANGÈRE)

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## Abstract

Spontaneous and sustained use of the L2 inside and outside the classroom varies according to a number of linguistic, communicative, social, and psychological factors. Authentic communication in L2 as a result of the complex interrelated system of variables occurs in terms of utilizing L2 for a variety of communicative acts, such as speaking up in class or reading a newspaper, and changes accordingly over time and across situations. By helping the students to decrease language anxiety and increase a willingness to use the L2 inside and outside the classroom, we direct the focus of language teaching away from merely linguistic and structural competence to authentic communication. Willingness to communicate (WTC) model integrates these variables to predict L2 communication, and a few number of studies have tested the model with EFL students. To this end, the current study is an attempt to shed light on the examination of Iranian EFL university students' WTC and its interaction with their language anxiety and language proficiency. Forty nine university students participated in this study, took TOEFL first and then filled out two questionnaires of WTC, MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, and Conrod (2001) and language anxiety, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). For data analysis, Repeated Measures ANOVA and Spearman correlation were run and the results have revealed that Iranian university students' WTC is directly related to their language proficiency but surprisingly higher proficient learners showed to be less communicative than lower proficient ones outside the classroom and this proves the state-like nature of WTC in the present sample. Moreover, the interaction between WTC and anxiety did not turn out to be significant. This shows that anxiety did not affect the learners' participation in communication (WTC). Finally, anxiety and language proficiency are negatively correlated, so the association between language learning experience and L2 anxiety has been confirmed in the results of this study. Therefore, linguistic variables appear to be more predictive of WTC for Iranians, and language instructors should work on their students' English proficiency.

**Key words:** Willingness to communicate; Language anxiety; Language proficiency; EFL context; Iranian students

## Résumé

L'utilisation spontanée et continuelle de la L2 à l'intérieur et l'extérieur de la salle de cours varie selon de nombre facteurs linguistique, communicatifs, sociaux et psychologiques. La communication authentique en L2 est un résultat d'un système complexe des variables survenus en termes d'utilisation de L2 pour une variété d'actes de communication, tels que prendre la parole en classe ou lire un journal, changeant en conséquence au fil du temps et selon les situations. En aidant les élèves à diminuer l'anxiété linguistique et à augmenter la volonté d'utiliser la L2 à l'intérieur et l'extérieur de la salle de classe, nous éloignons les actions d'enseignement des langues de la compétence purement linguistique et structurelle de la communication authentique. Le modèle de la Volonté de communiquer (WTC) intègre ces variables pour prédire la communication L2. Un petit nombre d'études ont testé le modèle avec les étudiants en EFL. À cette fin, la présente étude est une tentative pour faire la lumière sur l'examen du WTC sur les étudiants iraniens en EFL et sur son interaction avec leur anxiété linguistique et leur maîtrise de la langue. Quarante-neuf étudiants ont participé à cette

étude. Ils ont pris le TOEFL en premier et ont ensuite rempli deux questionnaires du WTC, MacIntyre, Baker, Clément et Conrod (2001) et de l'anxiété languistique, Horwitz, Horwitz et Cope (1986). Pour l'analyse des données, les mesures répétées ANOVA et la corrélation de Spearman ont été effectués. Les résultats ont révélé que le WTC des étudiants iraniens est directement lié à leurs compétences linguistiques Mais les apprendis étonnément compétents se montrent moins communicatifs que ceux qui ont moins de compétence en dehors de la classe, prouvant dans l'exemple actuel la nature étatique du WTC. Par ailleurs, l'interaction entre le WTC et l'anxiété ne s'est pas avéré significatif. Cela montre que l'anxiété n'a pas d'incidence sur la participation des apprenants dans la communication (WTC). Enfin, l'anxiété et la maîtrise de la langue sont corrélés négativement, alors l'association entre l'expérience de l'apprentissage des langues et de l'anxiété L2 a été confirmée dans les résultats de cette étude. Par conséquent, les enseignants de langues devrait augmenter de compétence linguistique des apprenants et de leur fournir la commodité.

**Mots-clés:** Volonté de communiquer; Anxiété languistique; contexte EFL; compétences linguistiques

## INTRODUCTION

Willingness to communicate (WTC) has been proposed as both an individual difference variable affecting L2 acquisition and as a goal of L2 instruction (MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998). In developing WTC, social support for language learning should be taken into account since providing opportunity for a foreign language practice and authentic usage can increase WTC among L2 learners. It is highly unlikely that the desire to enter into communication in L2 at a particular time with a specific person is a simple manifestation of such desire in L1. Generally, hand-raising as a non-verbal communicative event indicates a commitment to a course of action in class to show the willingness of respondents to attempt an answer if called upon. Interestingly, those who raise their hands to verbalize the answer actually express WTC in class. To process WTC, the interface between two disparate approaches, linguistic and psychological, in EFL context has been overarching such a sustained commitment to engage in communication. The tendency to communicate with a specific person emanates primarily from affiliation and control motives as potent forces to propel individuals to be involved in interactive

discourse. Unlike the previous studies in EFL context (e.g., Kim, 2004; MacDonald, Clement, & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Conrod, 2001; Peng, 2007; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002), the behavioral intention to use the language has been examined among Iranian EFL university students to eliminate the demarcation between language anxiety as a psychological structure and language proficiency as a linguistic structure. In spite of a variety of variables that may have the potentiality to influence Iranian university students' WTC, the relationship between language anxiety and proficiency as predictive variables to affect patterns of communication in the L2 has been subjected to investigation in the present study. To this end, beyond linguistic and communicative competence as central aspects of language pedagogy, a combination of two interacting linguistic and psychological variables to outline WTC as both trait and state-like construct is the focal concern in the EFL context. As a crucial component of language instruction, WTC, deserves further examination and follow-up studies to direct the attention of instructors and educators to the fact that there are some students who are capable of communicating inside the classroom but unwilling to communicate outside the classroom.

In everyday communicative behavior, it is probable that an individual is able but unwilling to communicate. To examine the psychological process underlying communication at a particular moment in time, the interrelationship between being willing and being able to be engaged in second language communication has gone rather unnoticed. In situations where a proficient learner is unwilling to communicate, high motivation for learning and high anxiety about communicating may appear to have a direct influence on L2 use (MacIntyre, 2007). When learners are given the choice to use the L2, the volitional process in terms of making decision to communicate at a specific moment with a possibility of initiating, maintaining, and terminating communication as the situation changes may simply demonstrate the complexity of the processes involved in conceptualizing the construct of willingness to communicate (WTC). Willingness to communicate as a newly emergent concept does not deal with communication process but virtually explicates the individual differences in L1 and L2 communication in terms of the level of desire to communicate (Okayama, Nakanishi, Kuwabara, & Sasaki, 2006; Yashima, 2002). In other words, willingness to communicate which exerts a direct influence on actual communication is the byproduct of the underlying desire that comes from affiliation or control motives or both (MacIntyre et al., 2001). Meanwhile, the question that remains unanswered throughout the literature on WTC is that why are some willing to communicate, while others are reluctant L2 speakers (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Donovan, 2002, 2003; Matsuoka & Evans, 2005). The probability of speaking when the opportunity is given is

typically based on the degree of willingness in accordance with the individual, linguistic, situational, and contextual factors that determine the particular predisposition toward verbal behavior (Mortensen, Arnston, & Lustig, 1977; cited in McCroskey, 1997).

## A. The Construct of Willingness to Communicate

Willingness to communicate accounting for differences in individual's first and second language communication is simply defined as a trait-like tendency to approach or avoid communication (Zakahi & McCroskey, 1989). An individual's willingness to communicate may have an important influence on whether the individual will turn into an L2 speaker as a result of a freely chosen process of promoting or inhibiting L2 communication. Considered at the institutional context, L2 use might be attributed to a number of external factors that impact learners' volitional control over L2 communication. Interestingly, the proverb says "where there is a will, there is a way" is indicative of the likelihood of occurrence of communication on the part of less proficient learners who are willing to communicate in contrast to the highly proficient learners who suffer from unwillingness to communicate as a result of communication apprehension (Matsuoka & Evans, 2005). As an indication of an underlying personality variable, willingness to communicate has been originally developed in L1 communication to render a consistent behavioral tendency in terms of frequency and amount of talk. It has also been basically oriented toward the characterization of individuals who are "outgoing", "talkative", and "extroverted" in comparison to those who are characteristically "timid", "reserved", and "introverted" (McCroskey, 1997; Sallinen-Kuparinen, McCroskey, & Richmond, 1991). Generally, individuals display stable behavioral patterns in their amount of L1 talk on the basis of an underlying continuum representing the predisposition toward L1 communication with respect to a number of personality characteristics of individuals, i.e. self-esteem, anxiety, and self-perceived communication competence (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 2002).

To McCroskey (1997), the notion of willingness to communicate which is a behavioral intention to promote communication originally developed in association with the concepts of unwillingness to communicate (Burgoon, 1976), predisposition toward verbal behavior (Mortensen et al., 1997), and shyness (McCroskey & Richmond, 1982). Regarding the operational definition of the construct, the overreliance of WTC on communication apprehension and self-perceived communication competence establishes a causal relationship between WTC and these two moderating variables. In this sense, research has indicated substantial correlation of WTC with the lack of apprehension on the one hand and the perception of competence in communication on the other hand. This implies that those willing in communicating

are not apprehensive while perceiving themselves as a competent initiator and communicator (Matsuoka & Evans, 2005). Communication apprehension as a subcomponent of the construct of situation-specific language anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) has been conceptually similar to anxiety about communicating (Daly, 1991; Hashimoto, 2002). Though McCroskey (1997) in L1 and MacIntyre (1994) in L2 communication used self-perception of communication competence on WTC, the term communicative competence coined by Hymes (1972) generally refers to language proficiency. Seminal work on defining communicative competence was carried out by Canale and Swain (1980) which reflects the four subcategories of the construct of communicative competence, including grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. In this regard, the choice of whether to initiate communication is a cognitively loaded one which is likely to be directed by one's perception of competence of which one is aware than one's actual competence of which one is unaware (MacIntyre et al., 2003). In addition, the use of target language may not be the only factor affecting by L2 confidence and L2 competence, it is clearly an important condition for successful psychological adaptation of social and cultural norms in terms of increase in L2 contact and L2 identity (Clement, 1980; Clement, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003). The most immediate determinant of L2 use, WTC, has taken psychological, educational, linguistic, and communicative approaches to explain why some approach, whereas others avoid, communication (Clement et al., 2003).

## B. The WTC: Definition

Willingness to communicate as a readiness to enter into communicative behavior is marked with certain personality factors, affective perceptions, motivational orientations, and societal variables (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al. 1998; Wen & Clement, 2003). It is evident that communicative behavior as a result of the interplay between complex systems of interrelated variables encompasses WTC to seek out communication opportunities and consequently promote individuals' involvement in conversational interactions. It was further found that WTC in L1 communication captures both trait (stable) and state (transient) properties (MacIntyre, Babin, & Clement, 1999) which may be radically varied from person to person and situation to situation. McCroskey and associates (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987, 1991; all cited in McCroskey, 1997) primarily capture the notion of WTC in L1 communication, which is a more personality trait, with respect to a number of involving factors of communication apprehension, introversion, reticence, and shyness. Later on, MacIntyre (1994) applied the envisaged path model of perceived communicative competence and communication anxiety to L2 communication in which these two moderating variables both impact WTC in a

distinct manner, whereas Clement (1980, 1985) developed a model based on the L2 self-confidence as a higher order construct of L2 competence and L2 apprehension (cited in Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). Combining these two models, a postulation of L2 self-confidence, which is a manifestation of a greater range of communicative competence ultimately leads to L2 use.

A well-depicted model of L2 WTC forwarded by MacIntyre et al. (1998) represents the complexity of the processes involved in L2 communication which is made up of six layers with twelve variables pertaining to social and psychological factors. The proposed model of a pyramid-shaped heuristic L2 WTC encapsulates both situational and enduring influences on L2 communication. From bottom to top, the societal and individual context of communication involves an interaction between communal and individual values to set the ground for cultivating attitudes and norms of L2 group and establishing intergroup relations among L2 community members. At the outset, it is remarkable that L2 talk is far more sophisticated than L1 talk in terms of a variety of potential influences of L2 contact, L2 confidence, L2 competence, and L2 identity on L2 use (Clement et al., 2003). The social context model expounded by Clement (1980) takes both L2 contact and L2 confidence into account, while addressing L2 use has been remained unresolved. To rectify the situation, the combination of two models emerged from a concern with the functions of L2 use is given a priority in a study carried out by Clement et al. (2003) to support a model in which context, individual, and social factors are all determining variables of actual L2 communication, in spite of variation in the degree of correlational patterns exhibited in a path analysis (MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996).

Affective and cognitive contexts of L2 communication entail intergroup attitudes, communicative experience, and communicative competence. The degree of affiliation (integrativeness) and control (instrumentality) is associated with motivational propensity to propel individuals through intergroup and interpersonal motives to obtain a goal or influence another persons' behavior. The situated antecedents of the L2 WTC model incorporate communicative self-confidence and a desire to communicate with a specific person. A great likelihood of using L2 is based on the cumulative effect of interacting variables mentioned succinctly so far that can be seen as a desire to speak in L2 at a particular time with a specific person. The two final layers depict the underpinning conceptual framework of WTC as a behavioral intention which has a direct influence on second language communication behavior. Individuals with high willingness to communicate would be expected to place themselves in communicative acts more often and use the second language with great confidence and high frequency, while encountering prohibiting forces that call for increase identification with L2 group and increased

psychological adaptation (Noels & Clement, 1996; Noels, Pon, & Clement, 1996; all cited in Clement et al., 2003).

### a) Empirical Studies on L2 WTC

A great deal of research has been exclusively centered on the investigation of the effect of motivational orientations, communication apprehension, and perceived competence on promoting or inhibiting learners' willingness to communicate (MacIntyre et al, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004). Social and learning contexts are believed to strongly influence WTC. MacIntyre et al. (2001) examined the role of social support and language learning orientations on the intention of students of L2 French immersion to initiate to communicate in the second language. Regarding the results, social support, particularly from friends, significantly influenced WTC outside the classroom but played less of a role in the classroom context. More recently, the study conducted by Alemi, Daftarifard, and Pakzadian (in press) among Iranian engineering students indicated a lack of significant relationship between social support and language learning orientations. However, the results also revealed that students who were more integratively motivated were associated with the higher levels of WTC while receiving more social support from the teacher inside the classroom. A cross-sectional study conducted by MacIntyre et al. (2002) was also satisfactorily inspiring which aimed to investigate the effect of sex and age on willingness to communicate among junior high school students of French immersion program and the frequency of communication with the inclusion of attitude and motivation variables in terms of anxiety and perceived competence. Furthermore, Yashima et al. (2004) in the Japanese EFL context examined the attitudinal construct of international posture that leads to WTC and actual communication and run the correlational study of frequency of communication with satisfaction in interpersonal relationship. On the basis of preliminary studies, Yashima (2002) also operationally defined international posture in relation to L2 learning motivation, L2 proficiency, and L2 communication variables. To Yashima et al. (2004), "WTC as a predictor of frequency of communication and motivation as a predictor of WTC, frequency of communication, or both" were given in a large number of studies (e.g., MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre & Clement, 1996; cited in Yashima et al., 2004: 123-4).

Baker and MacIntyre (2000) highlighted the non-linguistic outcomes of two distinct groups of French students enrolled in immersion and non-immersion program. The result suggested that among the non-immersion group, a strong correlation between perceived competence and WTC was quite revealing, while among the immersion group, a correlation between anxiety about communicating and WTC was significantly high. The qualitative study on how situational WTC in L2 may be fluctuated during a conversation revealed a tripartite model of psychological conditions, i.e. excitement,

responsibility, and security, as the offshoot of interacting situational variables, such as topic, interlocutors, and conversational context (Kang, 2005). The pedagogical implications were practical in a way that "the multilayered construct of situational WTC" that may change from moment-to-moment should be implemented within a controlled learning environment to affect any situational and social contextual variables. Reflecting this situational view, Clement et al. (2003) also found that L2 WTC was impacted by the interaction between L2 confidence and L2 norms within the context of intergroup communication. These findings in addition to the previous research that has devoted a great deal of attention to the relationship between trait and situational variables are used to frame the argument that providing opportunities to foster willingness to communicate within the EFL context provoke students' WTC and oral proficiency (MacIntyre et al., 2003; Tiu, 2011).

**b) Willingness to Communicate and Language Anxiety**
To anchor the conceptualization of WTC and extract its possible underlying variables, Wen and Clement (2003) and Peng (2007) have generated a number of moderating factors among Chinese students. According to them, through qualitative inquiry, eight factors are identified as the determinants of L2 use among Chinese university students, naming communicative competence, language anxiety, risk-taking, learners' beliefs, classroom climate, group cohesiveness, teacher support, and classroom organization. What impedes the interaction needed to succeed in communicative behavior has been primarily originated from the emotional arousal such as communication apprehension, shyness, and reticence that engender or cause the speaker to remain silent or avoid communication. The feelings of tension and apprehension accompanied by the trait, situation-specific, and state levels of anxiety deeply rooted in emotional reaction have aroused in conceptual difficulties and ambiguities of learning or using an L2 (MacIntyre, 1999; Scovel, 1978). By establishing social support in L2 community and teacher support and group cohesiveness in institutional setting of language learning and use, then L2 speakers are convincingly engaged in taking an active part in risk-taking activities without a fear of losing face and a negative expectation of the outcome. Under such supportive learning climate, the increase in students' WTC to promote oral proficiency and in their tolerance of ambiguity to understand the level of abstraction necessitates such a sustained commitment to reformulation of the L2 WTC model. The particular predispositions toward communication (willingness to participate in communication) and increased feelings of conspicuousness and wanted attention due to changes in communication apprehension and self-perceived communicative competence have received attention in an L2 classroom (Léger & Storch, 2009; MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010; Tannenbaum & Tahar, 2008).

The unpredictable and variable nature of WTC inside and outside the classroom is associated with a number of affective variables, i.e. motivation, attitude, and anxiety, influencing verbal behavior of communication. Among such variables, anxiety about communicating which has been typically labeled as communication anxiety is related to foreign language anxiety. General anxiety which has been viewed from three levels of trait, state, and situation-specific (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991) is virtually different from the construct of foreign language anxiety. The latter is defined as "a distinct set of beliefs, perceptions, and feelings in response to foreign language learning in the classroom" (Horwitz et al., 1986: 130). To approach the feeling of tension and nervousness in the context of language learning, three componential elements of communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation are clearly identifiable (Horwitz et al., 1986). An individual's fear or anxiety about communicating in the foreign language due to limited source of knowledge or lack of proficiency in signaling and receiving the intended messages through a channel of communication is frequently occurring in the foreign language learning process. The novelty, formality, and unfamiliarity of the situation are of some causal factors attributed to fear of communication (Blood, Blood, Tellis, & Gabel, 2001). The interaction between an influence of anxiety and learners' test taking performance affects the overall academic performance of individuals both negatively and positively. In the case of simple tasks, low level of anxiety is optimal to facilitate task accomplishment; however, when the degree of complexity increases, anxiety level raises in a debilitative manner that test takers perform poorly at each of the input, processing, and output stages (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000; Simpson, Parker, & Harrison, 1995). Test-taking anxiety as an affective factor has been investigated in different contexts to specify the influence of performance and content, e.g. math, anxieties on students' achievement (Knox, Schacht, & Turner, 1993). To this end, the impact of test taking anxiety, such as nervousness, mental blocking, and worry about possible negative consequences, on test performance was examined among Iranian EFL learners to highlight the non-linear relation between anxiety and task performance (Birjandi & Alemi, 2010). Beyond the test taking situation, fear of negative evaluation may contribute to poor public performance in an anxiety provoking condition in which few people are free from such natural ego-persevering fears and uncertainties (Chastain, 1975, 1988).

The defining characteristics of foreign language anxiety are entangled with a close association between self-perception and self-expression. High levels of communication apprehension lead to negative adjustment both personally/socially at the intrapersonal/interpersonal phase. Then reduced interactions and social withdrawals naturally lead to poor self-perception. The low level

of receptiveness and perception of competence in communicating cause to tag those suffering from self-expression as a less competent and less responsive communicator in comparison to those who are more adoptive to shape their messages appropriate to the interaction context (Blood et al, 2001). Thus, the discrepancy between the real self and the presented self in the foreign language as the unique characteristic of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986) contributes to the imperfect foreign language proficiency or limited language ability to present the real self. A number of studies in different contexts have demonstrated the interaction between anxiety and foreign language learning and performance (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; MacIntyre et al., 1997; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991; Saito & Samimy, 1996). When applied to ego-involving activities which call for maximum level of self-consciousness and minimum level of control over the environment, such as speaking, writing, and comprehension, then, the correlation between learners' actual competence, perceived competence, and language anxiety was revealing that anxious students underestimate their language proficiency and engage less in communication (MacIntyre et al., 1997). Among all language skills, Alemi et al.'s (in press) study also revealed that EFL learners were more willing to be engaged in reading activities which are less anxiety-provoking. Accordingly, the findings are in support of those "who are highly concerned about the impressions that others tend to form of them" (Gregersen, & Horwitz, 2002). A high significant negative correlation between language anxiety and speaking/writing achievement and, additionally, an association between students' negative self-perception of their language competence and their high level of writing and speaking anxiety were confirmed in Cheng et al.'s (1999) study carried out among Taiwanese college students. Regarding the proposed model of MacIntyre and Gardner (1989, 1991) to explain development and continuation of foreign language anxiety, it has been confirmed that anxiety as a predictive variable for intermediate and advanced students arises gradually on the basis of students' experience in language learning. Notably, such a model was supported well in Saito and Samimy's (1996) study in which the relationship between anxiety and language performance of American college students enrolling in Japanese course as a foreign language indicated that anxiety has a negative effect on students' performance.

Recently, MacIntyre (2007) and MacIntyre and Doucette (2010) focused on the willingness of those individuals who speak the language but remain silent for any of a number of reasons of affective reactions, such as being disinterested, distracted, and anxious. Extending the notion of crossing the Rubicon (Dornyei, 2005) that may lead to success or failure, it is obvious that "each communication opportunity can be viewed as a language-learner's Rubicon" (MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010: 162). In the face of rising feelings of anxiety at a particular moment in time, the behavior in a specific situation may be invariably subjected to fluctuation due to increased feeling of communication apprehension. In the domain of second language learning, there is a growing concern for students who are willing to communicate but anxious about communicating in language. Therefore, those who study the language but keep quite to use it have been examined in the current study. In this regard, the questions that may be raised are whether those silent speakers are anxious about communicating their messages in language or whether those who are reluctant are not proficient enough to take part in communication interaction.

**c) Willingness to Communicate and Language Proficiency**

The Skehan's (1989) notion of talking in order to learn is reflective of the fact that L2 learners need to communicate with L2 group to enhance their communicative competence and gain confidence in using the L2. But they discourage from participating in communication due to language anxiety and lack of L2 confidence. Contextual factors, such as when and where the interaction takes place and who the interlocutor is, inevitably play a dominant role to affect students' WTC. What learners should acquire is to become able to generate their WTC to promote their L2 proficiency in a way of changing the dynamism of conversational interaction (Yashima et al., 2004; Wen & Clement, 2003). To improve functional skills and communicative competence, one needs to be involved in actual communication and interaction. WTC studies in communication research originally initiated in the United States and subsequently became a matter of scholarly attention (McCroskey, 1997; Daly & McCroskey, 1984, cited in Yashima et al., 2004). The previous research based on literature on language anxiety and language learning motivation to keep track of choosing to initiate communication with a specific person at a particular moment in time have incorporated the relationship between motivational orientations, communication anxiety, and WTC. Likewise, what remains abreast of recent studies is an investigation of possible ways to generate WTC to promote L2 proficiency and L2 success and to provoke in the EFL students the desire to communicate via interactive techniques, such as online chat that may affect feelings of power inequity, intimacy level, and common knowledge among participants (Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006).

Regarding the success of using the second language, the dialectical relation between being able and being willing to successfully communicate and use the L2 requires further investigation. Those who are generally capable of communicating and get high scores in the proficiency test are more willing than those who are not capable communicator and get low scores. The interaction

between the influences of language proficiency and language anxiety on WTC in an L2 learning context among Iranian EFL learners has gone rather unnoticed. To this end, the relation between language proficiency and WTC has been subjected to investigation among Iranian EFL learners. Furthermore, it seems to be found that no studies have as yet dealt with the relationship between willingness to engage in communication and language anxiety in the context of Iran. If effective communication is an important skill for academic success, studies have examined the factors affecting the development of this skill among EFL learners are increasingly become important for fostering the communicative ability of language learners. Hence, communicative effectiveness may have a cumulative impact on language learners' ability to initiate communication and maintain social interactions.

The resulting affective state might be considered to address the following research questions in the current investigation:

1st. Does language proficiency influence Iranian university students' WTC?

2nd. Does language anxiety influence Iranian university students' WTC?

3rd. Is there any relationship between language proficiency and language anxiety for Iranian university students?

## 1. METHOD

This study examined MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model and measured L2 WTC with the scale adapted from MacIntyre et al. (2001). The participants were freshmen university students in the EFL context at Sharif University of Technology in Iran. This study targeted the students' WTC in English as their foreign language.

### 1.1 Participants

The participants for this study were 49 engineering freshmen who were taking a three credit General English course which was compulsory at Sharif University of Technology. These students had recently graduated from high school and were 18 years of age or older. There was no opportunity for the simple random selection of the participants and they were in intact classes, which were selected by the researchers, and filled out the questionnaires. From among this number, six students who did not participate in all stages of data collection were omitted consequently.

### 1.2 Instruments

The data collected and used for the further analyses was gathered via TOEFL (2003) with reliability index of .88 and two questionnaires of language anxiety with reliability of .80 and WTC with the total reliability of .85. The latter was a four-part questionnaire which was in English. The

different parts of this questionnaire were as follows:

**Willingness to Communicate in the Classroom:** (See Appendix A.) The first two parts of the questionnaire were adapted from MacIntyre et al. (2001) to measure WTC in each of four skill areas. It contained 27 items to tackle the learners' willingness to communicate in their EFL class while being assigned the communicative tasks. A 5-point Likert scale was employed to ask the learners to rate their willingness to communicate (with 1=almost never willing, 2=sometimes willing, 3=willing half of the time, 4=usually willing, and 5=almost always willing). The categorization of the items in each section was based on the type of language skill (alpha levels were calculated for the reliability estimates of the items of each skill): speaking (8 items, α=.58), comprehension (5 items, α=.44), reading (6 items, α=.55), and writing (8 items, α=.58). The reason for the inclusion of the four L2 skill areas was to determine which of the skills are the more active (like speaking) and which are the more receptive (like reading) with respect to L2 use. The receptive usage is also related to the concept of WTC because authentic usage of the L2 in form of the receptive skills and tasks may increase the learners' WTC in other domains of language use. The present study was then an attempt to focus on the correlation between the four skill areas.

**Willingness to Communicate Outside the Classroom:** (See Appendix B.) In this section, a total of 27 items written by a graduate from the immersion program in MacIntyre et al. (2001) were used in the present study; however, these items referred to the willingness to communicate of the student out of the classroom context. The respondents were to rate their WTC with the application of the previously used subscales ranging from 1=almost never willing to 5=almost always willing. So, the rating scale was the same used in the previous section, but with different reliability estimates of four language skills: speaking (8 items, α=.70), comprehension (5 items, α=.57), reading (6 items, α=.74), and writing (8 items, α=.72).

**Orientations for Language Learning:** (See Appendix C.) The items employed in this section were adopted from the ones used by Clement and Kruidenier (1983). Students were to choose the extent to which each of the reasons for learning English was true of them using a 6-point Likert scale (where 1= strongly agree, 2=moderately agree, 3=mildly agree, 4=mildly disagree, 5=moderately disagree, and 6=strongly disagree). It enjoyed a reliability of 0.91. There were also five proposed orientations, each with four items: travel (α=0.76), knowledge (α=0.67), friendship (α=0.80), job related (α=0.77), and school achievement (α=0.75).

**Social Support:** (See Appendix D.) There were 6 yes/no questions and students were to answer these questions with regard to the source of support for their L2 learning. This procedure was similar to Ajzen's (1988) method for

testing subjective norms. The participants were to answer "yes" or "no" to the questions about whether these people provided them with support for learning the L2: mother, father, teacher, favorite sibling, best friend, and other friends. The items used in this section were not on a scale, but individually given to respondents. Consequently, reliability estimates cannot be estimated for the individual responses.

**Language Anxiety:** (see Appendix E.) It was taken from Horwitz et al. (1986) and modified and decreased to 10 items. It enjoyed a good reliability estimate of .80. A 5-point Likert scale was used for this 10-item questionnaire, including 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5= strongly disagree. The examples of the items are: "In English classes, I forget how to say things I know" or "In English classes, I tremble when I know I'm going to have to speak in English". The items tackled general English language anxiety of the learner in an English classroom.

### 1.3 Data Collection Procedure

To categorize learners in terms of language proficiency, reading and structure section of TOEFL (2003) were given to the learners. The test enjoyed an acceptable reliability index of 0.88 for 45 items (reading section Alpha = 0.85; structure section Alpha = 0.82). This indicated learners' consistency in responding the questions of the test. Then the students were asked to complete two questionnaires during the time of their regularly scheduled class. They were assured that any information that they would provide would be used anonymously and their names would remain confidential. Answering the items took those who agreed to answer around 30 minutes. The questionnaire, also, enjoyed an acceptable reliability index of 0.80. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the anxiety questionnaire. As is shown in this table, it seems that the students in the present sample are not very anxious (M= 28.59, SD =7.21), they are less than half standard deviation above mean of anxiety test (M=14). Finally, the data was given to SPSS to calculate all reliability of and correlation among different parts.

**Table 1**
**Descriptive Statistics of the Anxiety Questionnaire**

|  | Min | Max | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anxiety | 14.00 | 43.00 | 28.59 | 7.21 |

## 2. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

To answer the questions addressed in this study, different statistical procedures were employed.

### 2.1 Analysis One: Language Proficiency and WTC

To answer the first question of this study as "Does language proficiency influence Iranian university students' WTC?" data was subjected to Repeated Measures ANOVA. Language proficiency was used as fixed factor in this analysis and WTC inside and outside the classroom as two within-subject variables and skills as four between-subject variables. Firstly, the total score of TOFEL was changed into standardized Z score. Secondly, learners were classified into two groups in terms of language proficiency according to the Z score of their total score in the TOFEL they took. Then those students with negative Z score were considered as lower proficient and those with positive Z score were considered as higher proficient learners. The data, then, was subjected to Repeated Measures ANOVA through SPSS. The result indicates that the interaction between WTC and language proficiency was significant, $F (1, 47) = 5.560$, $P < 0.05$. This suggests that learners' willingness to communicate outside and inside the classroom is different across language proficiency.

Looking at marginal estimates of the measures, we found out that there are mixed results concerning the location of WTC across language proficiency. As is shown in Table 2, those with lower language proficiency have higher willingness to communicate outside the classroom, whereas those with higher language proficiency have higher willingness to communicate in the classroom. This might indicate that language proficiency functions as barrier for Iranian students in this sample. Interestingly, learners with higher language proficiency are more communicative inside the classroom than those with lower language proficiency, whereas they are less communicative than those with lower language proficiency outside the classroom. That is, those learners with lower language proficiency are afraid to get evaluated. Or maybe, those with higher language proficiency get more supports from the teacher inside the classroom and that is why they are more communicative and confident in communication. Pedagogically speaking, this indicates that we need more supportive teachers who encourage learners to be more communicative in class.

**Table 2**
**WTC Location Across Language Proficiency**

| LG group | WTC | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low | Inside | 79.68 | 2.75 |
|  | Outside | 86.16 | 3.34 |
| high | Inside | 87.83 | 2.80 |
|  | Outside | 77.54 | 3.41 |

Willingness to communicate can function as both trait (MacIntyre et al., 1998) and state construct (Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; MacIntyre, 2007, Peng, 2007). In the present sample, it seems that language proficiency has

manipulated learners' state because in different situations learners with different language proficiency showed different amount of willingness (see Table 2 and Figure 1). According to McCroskey and Baer (1985), we have extended the trait-like conceptualization of WTC (cited in McCroskey, 1997). Following the two underlying constructs proposed by Clement (1980, 1986), perceived competence and lack of anxiety are two comprising elements of self-confidence. In particular, it is also probable to draw a distinction between the trait-like and momentary feeling of confidence, which is known as state self-confidence (MacIntyre et al., 1998).
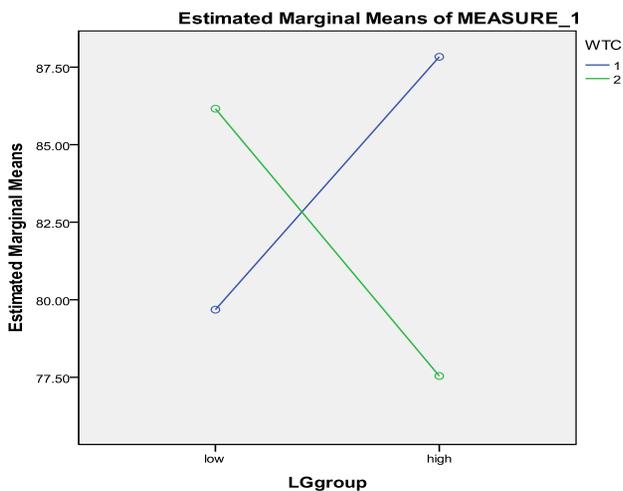


**Figure 1**
**The Interaction Between Language Proficiency and WTC**

## 2.2 Analysis Two: Language Anxiety and WTC

To answer the second question of this study as "Does language anxiety influence Iranian university students' WTC?" another Repeated Measures ANOVA was run. Language anxiety was used as the main factor in this analysis and WTC location (inside vs. outside) as two within-subject variables. First learners' Z score of anxiety was estimated, and then learners were classified into two groups in terms of their levels of anxiety; those with positive Z score were grouped as highly anxious and those with negative Z score were grouped as lowly anxious. (Xz= 1.53, SD = 0.50). The result is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**
**Frequency of Learners' Standard Score on Anxiety**

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| low | 23 | 46.9 | 46.9 | 46.9 |
| high | 26 | 53.1 | 53.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 49 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

To check the influence of anxiety on learners' WTC, the data was subjected to Repeated Measures ANOVA.

The result indicates that there was no significant within-subject effect (WTC F (1, 47) = 0.237, P = NS) nor any significant effect was seen for between-subject factors (anxiety F (1, 47) = 1.115, P = NS). Moreover, the interaction between WTC and anxiety did not turn out to be significant (F (1, 47) = 0.172, p= NS). This shows that in the present sample anxiety would not affect the way learners might decide to participate in communication (WTC). This finding is interesting because in previous research, MacIntyre et al. (2003), Yashima et al. (2004) found that there are correlational relationship between perceived competence, language anxiety, and WTC. It should be noted that L2 anxiety has been studied both as a distinct individual factor and as a contributing variable (Papi, 2010). Considering its interaction with willingness to communicate (e.g., MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre, Baker, et al., 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Papi, 2010), a negative association between these two variables has been confirmed.

## 2.3 Analysis Three: Language Proficiency and Anxiety

To answer the last question of this study as "Is there any relationship between language proficiency and language anxiety for Iranian university students?", then, Spearman correlation was run between TOEFL score (interval scale by nature) and Anxiety score (ordinal scale by nature). As displayed in the Table 4, anxiety and language proficiency have a negative relationship which means that with higher language proficiency the amount of anxiety decreases. This is not surprising and is fully supported in the literature (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 1997; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986). This is also true for TOEFL components. This finding is revealing that anxious people are generally less communicative in comparison to non-anxious ones. This might be due to the fact that they are not able to communicate well in terms of output quality. In this regard, anxiety affects both what the students say and how they say it (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). The close connection between self-perception and self-expression in authentic communication makes a significant departure from the postulation of other academic anxieties (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Horwitz et al., 1986).

**Table 4**
**The Relationship Between Anxiety and Language Proficiency**

|  | TOEFL (Items N=45) | Structure | Reading | Anxiety |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TOEFL (Items N=45) | 1 |  |  |  |
| Structure | .88** | 1 |  |  |
| Reading | .86** | .57** | 1 |  |
| Anxiety | -.61** | -.66** | -.45** | 1 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Willingness to communicate is offered to account for the individuals' differences in their first and second language communication (Zakahi & McCroskey, 1989). It is believed that WTC is an indicative factor of whether the individual will turn into an L2 speaker. Then there are a number of factors contributing to the quality and quantity of WTC in the EFL context (Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1994; Peng, 2007; Wen & Clement, 2003), naming communicative competence, language anxiety, risk-taking, learners' beliefs, classroom climate, group cohesiveness, teacher support, and classroom organization.

Research on WTC is not very old; it has originally developed in first language acquisition (McCroskey & Baer, 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1982; all cited in McCroskey, 1997). The core issue of WTC is that there is a dialectical relation between being able and being willing to communicate through L1 and L2 language. The factor contributing to WTC is then highlighted when other impeding factors such as anxiety and language proficiency are taken into account. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relation between language proficiency, language anxiety, and WTC among Iranian EFL learners. To this end, the following questions were posited:

1st. Does language proficiency influence Iranian university students' WTC?

2nd. Does language anxiety influence Iranian university students' WTC?

3rd. Is there any relationship between language proficiency and language anxiety for Iranian university students?

As displayed in the current study, there were mixed results concerning the location of WTC across language proficiency. Lower proficient learners indicated to have lower WTC inside the classroom in comparison to those with higher language proficiency who exhibited higher willingness to communicate in the classroom context. Contrary to our expectation, the higher proficient learners showed to be less communicative than those with lower language proficiency outside the classroom. This proves the state-like nature of WTC in the present sample. WTC as one of the necessary components of becoming fluent in L2 inevitably functions in correspondence with the "situated" model which varies over time and across situations. In favor of the proposed model by MacIntyre et al. (1998) to account for individual differences in the willingness to communicate, then, WTC is closely tied to the situational factors that determine one's intention to engage in communication. The result of this study is supported by Matsuoka and Evans (2005) who, through structural equation modeling, found that language proficiency, along with motivational constructs are indicative factor of WTC. Also, it is supported by Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide's (2008) research who found that the development of proficiency and frequency of communication are fully entangled with the active participation in the community of practice through content-based approach. This implies that having self-confidence in communication is crucial for affecting how one is willing to be engaged in L2. Moreover, this suggests that success will come to those who are more willing to initiate in L2 communication, likewise, WTC may function as a situated construct or situated model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) where contextual fluctuations and modifications like language proficiency might have different results on learners' WTC. As Cao and Philip (2006) note, WTC varies in terms of factors associated with the specific situation, topic, interlocutor, and the confidence of learners to accomplish the task.

It was found to be that neither significant within-subject effects nor significant between-subject factors contributed to L2 WTC. Moreover, the interaction between WTC and anxiety did not turn out to be significant. This shows that in the present sample anxiety, the psychological aspect of the original WTC model, would not affect the way learners might decide to participate in communication. This has not gone along with previous studies where the correlation between perceived competence, language anxiety, and WTC was significantly high (MacIntyre et al., 2003; Yashima et al., 2004). Then it can be concluded that L2 anxiety has been studied both as a distinct individual factor and as a contributing variable (Papi, 2010). Considering its interaction with willingness to communicate (e.g., MacIntyre, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Papi, 2010), a negative association between these two variables has been confirmed. The non-significant interaction between anxiety and WTC in this study might be due to some reasons. First, the number of participants in this study was not large enough to represent the magnitude of real difference among the variables under the investigation. Second, another moderator variable might be required for anxiety to affect WTC. Clement (1980, 1986) and Clement and Kruidenier (1985) proposed self confidence as intervening variable for both anxiety and perceived competence. According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), L2 anxiety as an enduring personal characteristics results variations in L2 self-confidence; however, based on situations, the fluctuation may still exist in terms of the degree of anxiety and L2 use.

In the current study, the findings revealed that anxiety and language proficiency are negatively correlated. This indicates that, in the present sample, anxiety has a debilitative influence on WTC. This is not surprising and is fully supported in the literature (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 1997; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986). When applied to L2 use, anxious students communicate less in comparison to those who are non-anxious. In addition, anxious students are not able to communicate well in terms of output quality. In this regard, anxiety affects both what the students say

and how they say it (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). In the specific anxiety-provoking contexts, there is a high degree of negative correlation between L2 anxiety and L2 performance. Typically, a lower level of anxiety and perception of L2 competence lead to a higher level of WTC (Yashima, 2002). The association between language learning experience and L2 anxiety has been confirmed in the results of the study conducted by Aida (1994) and Young (1991). The results indicated that negative language learning experience leads to increase in L2 anxiety, while, positive language learning experience contributes to decrease in L2 anxiety. Concerning the location of WTC across language proficiency, the future directions in L2 WTC study and attempts to extend the construct of WTC inside the classroom to bring learners and outside the classroom to bring nations into contact receive considerable attention. Conceptually, according to MacIntyre et al. (1998), generating a WTC lends support to the ultimate goal of language learning, that is, intercultural communication between persons of different language and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the interactions between linguistic variables and WTC are the concluding remarks of the study. This study utilized language proficiency, the linguistic aspect and language anxiety, the psychological aspect of the original WTC model. However, the students' language proficiency appears to contribute to their participation in communication. To explain why some approach, whereas others avoid, communication then the linguistic variables should be taken into consideration in the EFL context. Therefore, language teachers should increase learners' language proficiency as a predictive variable of WTC and provide convenience for their learners' communicative behavior.

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## Appendix A

### WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Directions: This questionnaire is composed of statements concerning your feelings about communication with other people, in English. Please indicate in the space provided the frequency of time you choose to speak English in each classroom situation. If you are almost never willing to speak English, write 1. If you are willing sometimes, write 2 or 3. If you are willing most of the time, write 4 or 5.

> 1 = Almost never willing
> 2 = Sometimes willing
> 3 = Willing half of the time
> 4 = Usually willing
> 5 = Almost always willing

**Speaking in class, in English**

1. Speaking in a group about your summer vacation.
2. Speaking to your teacher about your homework assignment.
3. A stranger enters the room you are in, how willing would you be to have a conversation if he talked to you first?
4. You are confused about a task you must complete, how willing are you to ask for instructions/clarification?
5. Talking to a friend while waiting in line.
6. How willing would you be to be an actor in a play?
7. Describe the rules of your favorite game.
8. Play a game in English, for example Monopoly.

**Reading in class (to yourself, not out loud)**

9. Read a novel.
10. Read an article in a paper.
11. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English.
12. Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.
13. Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy.
14. Read reviews for popular movies.

**Writing in class, in English**

15. Write an advertisement to sell an old bike.
16. Write down the instructions for your favorite hobby.
17. Write a report on your favorite animal and its habits.
18. Write a story.
19. Write a letter to a friend.
20. Write a newspaper article.
21. Write the answers to a "fun" quiz from a magazine.
22. Write down a list of things you must do tomorrow.

**Comprehension in class**

23. Listen to instructions and complete a task.
24. Bake a cake if instructions were not in English.
25. Fill out an application form.
26. Take directions from an English speaker.
27. Understand an English movie.

## Appendix B

### WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Directions: Sometimes people differ a lot in their speaking, reading, and so forth in class and outside class. Now we would like you to consider your use of English outside the classroom. Again, please tell us the frequency that you use English in the following situations.

Remember, you are telling us about your experiences outside of the classroom this time. There are no right or wrong

answers.

1 = Almost never willing
2 = Sometimes willing
3 = Willing half of the time
4 = Usually willing
5 = Almost always willing

**Speaking outside class, in English**

1. Speaking in a group about your summer vacation.
2. Speaking to your teacher about your homework assignment.
3. A stranger enters the room you are in, how willing would you be to have a conversation if he talked to you first?
4. You are confused about a task you must complete, how willing are you to ask for instructions/clarification?
5. Talking to a friend while waiting in line.
6. How willing would you be to be an actor in a play?
7. Describe the rules of your favorite game.
8. Play a game in English, for example Monopoly.

**Reading outside class, in English**

9. Read a novel.
10. Read an article in a paper.
11. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English.
12. Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.
13. Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy.
14. Read reviews for popular movies.

**Writing outside class, in English**

15. Write an advertisement to sell an old bike.
16. Write down the instructions for your favorite hobby.
17. Write a report on your favorite animal and its habits.
18. Write a story.
19. Write a letter to a friend.
20. Write a newspaper article.
21. Write the answers to a "fun" quiz from a magazine.
22. Write down a list of things you must do tomorrow.

**Comprehension outside class**

23. Listen to instructions and complete a task.
24. Bake a cake if instructions were not in English.
25. Fill out an application form.
26. Take directions from an English speaker.
27. Understand an English movie.

## Appendix C

### ORIENTATIONS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

We are interested in your reasons for studying English. Please indicate the extent to which you consider each of the following to be important reasons for you to study English. Write the appropriate number in the space provided.

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Moderately agree
3 = Mildly agree
4 = Mildly disagree
5 = Moderately disagree
6 = Strongly disagree

**Studying English is important because:**

1. It will be useful in getting a good job.
2. I would like to travel in Vancouver.

3. I would like to meet some English people.
4. It will help me understand English Canadians and their way of life.
5. I will need English for my career in the future.
6. I would like to go to England.
7. I would like to be friends with some English people.
8. It will help me to be successful in business.
9. It will help me to get a better paying job.
10. It will make me a more knowledgeable person.
11. It will help me if I travel.
12. It will enable me to make friends more easily among English-speaking people.
13. It will help me acquire new ideas and broaden my outlook.
14. I would like to travel to a English-speaking area.
15. It will help me get to know English-speaking people.
16. It will help me learn about myself.
17. It will help me to get good grades.
18. It will help me get into better schools later in life.
19. It will give me a better education.
20. I get high marks in English.

## Appendix D

**SOCIAL SUPPORT**

Circle "yes" or "no" for each of the following items. If you don't know how to answer, leave it blank.
21. My mother wants me to speak English.
22. My father wants me to speak English.
23. My favorite sister/brother wants me to speak English.
24. My best friend wants me to speak English.
25. My other friends want me to speak English.
26. My teachers want me to speak English.

## Appendix E

**English Language Anxiety Scale**

Please circle answers below.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **strongly disagree** | **disagree** | **neutral** | **agree** | **strongly agree** |

1. In English classes, I forget how to say things I know.
      1    2    3    4    5

2. In English classes, I tremble when I know I'm going to have to speak in English.
      1    2    3    4    5

3. In English classes, I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation.
      1    2    3    4    5

4. In English classes, when I speak English, I feel like a different person.
      1    2    3    4    5

5. In English classes, even when I'm prepared to speak English I get nervous.
      1    2    3    4    5

6.  In English classes, I'm afraid that my teachers are ready to correct every mistake I make.
    1        2        3        4        5

7.  In English classes, sometimes I can't express my true feelings in English and this makes me uncomfortable.
    1        2        3        4        5

8.  In English classes, I get nervous and confused when I'm speaking English.
    1        2        3        4        5

9.  In English classes, there are so many rules in English, I feel like I can't learn them all.
    1        2        3        4        5

10. In English classes, I'm afraid that advanced English speakers will laugh at me when I speak English.
    1        2        3        4        5