Being able to communicate in the target language is seen as the main goal of learning processes (MacIntyre, Dornyei, Clement, & Noels, 1998) but the reality shows that some learners are reluctant to speak in the target language (Shao & Gao, 2016; Zaminabadi, 2014; MacIntyre, et al., 1998). In Indonesia, where the concept of curriculum adapts communicative language teaching, this problem also exists as presented in the study by Manipusika (2018), Yulita (2013), and Katemba (2013) that the students remain passive, silent, do not respond on the call, and have quite high anxiety level that may contribute to their low L2 willingness to communicate (henceforth WTC in the classroom).

Previously, the study on students’ WTC had been regarded as part of stable trait that embodied in individual’s personality (Mcroskey & Baer, 1985). This view, however, gradually shifts as MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) study indicates the dynamic factors that may affect someone’s WTC. Understanding that somebody’s WTC is not merely because of personality trait, this study tries to investigate deeper on the situational antecedents of WTC in L2. In Indonesian context, the study on situational antecedents of students learning English as foreign language was still scarce. Furthermore, there was also a need to see whether the students having long time experience in learning English also indicated unwillingness to communicate using the target language, and if so or otherwise, the factors contributing on their L2 WTC are worth investigating because this analysis will be very beneficial both for teachers and other educational stakeholders to empower the students’ competences in using English to communicate in every occasion.

Method: Qualitative case study
Subjects: Twelve students (four students as interviewees) enrolling in a class of an elective course of English language program in a higher education institution in Indonesia
Why: The course offered the students with ample opportunities to communicate using L2. The activities in the class were in the form of student-led presentation followed by a class discussion
Instrument: Observation, questionnaire, and in-depth interview

EMPOWERING INDONESIAN STUDENTS TO WILLINGLY COMMUNICATE ORALLY IN ENGLISH: A STUDY OF SITUATIONAL ANTECEDENTS

Zuhrufi Latifah (zuhrufi@upi.edu)
Dadang Sudana
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia - Bandung, Indonesia
Fozri Nur Yusuf

FINDINGS

The students were generally involved in voluntarily giving comments on the discussion or answering questions. In a whole class discussion, it could be perceived that some students would actively participate while others would constantly keep silent.

Situational antecedents of students’ WTC

- Teacher
  - Teacher’s response towards students’ attempt in communicating ideas using English
  - Teacher’s view on class discussion, whether he or she was for or against all-time lecturing

- Peers
  - Reluctance in communicating when their aspiring ideas were similar with what their friends had already stated
  - Emergency to save the image
  - Fear of being criticized

- Topic
  - Unfamiliar
  - Irrelevant
  - Difficult
  - Not enough preparation
  - Familiar
  - Interesting
  - Relevant
  - Topic that they had partly learned before so they could recall

- Class condition
  - Huge number of students in the classroom
  - Small class size because they found it more comfortable and they felt less pressure since the audiences were smaller

Types of activities

- Voluntarily-speaking activities
- Waiting to be pointed by the teacher to speak up
- Being assessed or not

The underlying dimensions of situation characteristics

Negativity
  - The students’ unwillingness to communicate because of:
    - fear being judged
    - having wrong concept
    - getting criticized and argued
    - giving irrelevant ideas

Positivity
  - The students’ willingness to communicate because of:
    - the students’ feeling of being welcomed by the teacher to express their ideas
    - the teacher’s support that is received by the students on their attempt to communicate in L2
    - the familiarity of interlocutors to have a communication with

Duty
  - A student considered the course as interesting as she took the course as her own choice and led her to have high WTC in the classroom. This is similar with the students who saw communicating as a means to get marks since it is assessed. It can be concluded that they did the activity in the classroom as a mandatory and viewed the course and the task given as a responsibility.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The teachers have to:
- start using English starting from themselves
- provide strict rule and consistency of using L2 in the classroom
- give wide opportunity for the students to express their ideas and respect any of their aspiration
- be capable of reflecting on themselves towards their personality in teaching in the classroom
- make sure that both the students and teachers comprehend what can be done and what cannot based on class composition
- be careful in considering the topic

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